# INTERNATIONAL COMMUNAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION

# Communal living on the threshold of a new millennium: Lessons and Perspectives.

## Proceedings of the Seventh International Communal Studies Conference.

## June 25-27, 2001

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# Acknowledgements

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# International Communal Studies Association

The International Communal Studies Association (ICSA) promotes the world-wide study of communal groups of all kinds, including communes, kibbutzim, religious groups, ecovillages, collective settlements, cohousing groups, housing co-operatives, etc. ICSA also promotes the exchange of information between communal scholars and community members. ICSA functions as a clearing house for research projects, encourages comparative studies, and maintains a list of communal organisations and individuals active in communal research.

ICSA was founded in 1985 through collaboration between the Communal Studies Association, of USA, and the Kibbutz Studies Centres, of Israel.

ICSA publishes a twice yearly Bulletin which is posted to all members. The ICSA web site is: www.ic.org/icsa/ . ICSA has its headquarters at Yad Tabenkin Kibbutz Research Centre, Ramat Efal, 52960, Israel (e-mail: yadtab@inter.net.il). Membership is (US)$25 per year for individuals, and (US)$40 per year for institutions.

The Executive Director of ICSA is Professor Yaacov Oved, of Yad Tabenkin, Israel. The Board of Directors of ICSA is: Dr Bill Metcalf, Australia; Dr Sonia Ramagen-Bloomfield, Brazil; Dr Uriel Leviatan, Israel; Dr Saskia Poldervaart, The Netherlands; Professor Don Pitzer, USA; Dr Baruch Kanari, Israel; Professor Tim Miller, USA (President); Dr Peter Forster, Fiji; Dr Gila Adar, Israel; Professor Pearl Bartelt, USA; Dr Yuval Dror, Israel; Dr Schlomi Ravid, Israel; Albert Bates, USA; Professor Menachim Rosner, Israel; Dr Graham Meltzer, Australia; Professor Max Stanton, Hawai'i, Professor Dennis Hardy, United Kingdom; Dr Menachem Topel, Israel, Dr Daniel Greenberg, USA; Dr Deborah Altus, USA and Mr Sol Etzioni, Israel.

While many ICSA members are academics from around the globe, many others are members of communal groups. ICSA's involvement in a wide range of communally related issues is determined by its membership.

We invite you to join ICSA, the International Communal Studies Association, and to take part in future activities, and to learn and contribute more to our understanding of the fascinating communal living groups around the globe.

Dr Bill Metcalf

# A word from the editors

The papers collected here were presented at the 7th conference of the International Communal Studies Association (ICSA) at ZEGG, Belzig, Germany from the 25th to 27th June 2001. They have not been through a selection or review process. Presenters who asked for their papers to be included here have been included, as long as they were on the theme of the conference. The content of papers represent the views of the authors themselves and not of ICSA, ZEGG, nor the conference sponsors.

We have attempted to retain the original formatting of the authors, wherever possible, although translations between word processing applications, platforms and media have resulted in occasional lapses from this intent.

The decision to produce an eBook of the proceedings was motivated by a desire to make them available to the widest possible audience at the lowest possible price and also to minimise the cost to ICSA. This means that they have been produced by academics rather than book publishers. Whether this is repeated for future conferences depends on how satisfying readers and authors find the outcome.

This conference was the first held by ICSA within an intentional community. Comments by both participants and presenters at the end of the conference were almost all positive. We hope that some of this feeling comes through the collection of papers that follow.

Peter Forster and Graham Meltzer

# A word from the president

This e-volume of the proceedings of the 2001 triennial conference of the International Communal Studies Association provides a limited but tantalizing look at a few of the thousands of intentional communities that represent a deep commitment to nothing less than saving the planet - through environmentally sound living, the improvement of human relationships, and showing the larger culture just what a positive future can look like.

The International Communal Studies Association is a multidisciplinary organization providing a common framework for scholarly exchange regarding communes, intentional communities, collective settlements and kibbutz throughout the world. The ICSA functions as a clearinghouse for research projects, encourages comparative studies, and maintains a list of communal organizations and individuals active in communal and kibbutz research. The Association holds international and local conferences and publishes a semi-annual bulletin.

The ICSA is dedicated to the study, in an atmosphere of respect and support, of the world's intentional communities in all their diversity. We invite scholars, practising communitarians, and persons who are simply interested in the fascinating world of community to join us. Check us out at http://www.ic.org/icsa/ or look for our conferences at http://www.antenna.nl/icsa/ Our headquarters is at Yad Tabenkin Institute, Ramat Efal 52960, Israel. Our e-mail address is yadtab@actcom.co.il.

Timothy Miller
President, 2001-2004

## Part 1
## 1.1 Communities across time

# Pacifist Communes
# Yaacov Oved
# Yad Tabenkin, Israel

From 1939 to 1945 there was a hiatus in the formation process of communes. This was an interim between two periods in the history of 20th century communes. Up to the outbreak of World War Two, many communes had been established: some secular, like the kibbutzim in Israel, and also some that were socialist, communist, or anarchist and also religious communes. From the 60s onward came the flood tide of hippie communes and intentional communities that were founded in the later decades of the last century.

The first new shoots of a communal renascence during World War Two sprouted in pacifist circles of conscientious objectors (COs), who were held in detention camps in the countries that formed the allied forces. In these pacifist circles one could find a desire to convey a positive message at times of war and afterwards, that was expressed in an aspiration to lay the foundations of communities of interpersonal peace, harmony and solidarity. This trend of pacifist communes as evidence of an alternative way of life came to fruition in the United States and its successes in founding enduring communities were greater. In the United States pacifist conscientious objectors were detained in Civilian Public Service (CPS) camps where they performed public works.
The varied attempts of the conscientious objectors to hold common activities in the camps served to heighten the desire to co-ordinate these activities with the aim of becoming a public movement after the war. At the end of the 40s, the pacifist conscientious objectors found in the appearance of the communes one of the few ways in which they could constructively continue to fulfil the ideals of fraternity and non-violence.

The new communal communities organized themselves into The Fellowship of Intentional Communities that was the main focal point of communal activity in the
50s. The Fellowship numbered about a dozen communities, the majority of which had been founded and run by pacifists. Two of these communities, Macedonia and Koinonia, constituted the core of the Fellowship. They existed for a long period and there is a special interest in their histories, for despite their common pacifist background their way was different and in both the pacifist motivation to maintain a stable commune was evident. Therefore I have chosen them as case studies.

### Macedonia

In 1946 a pacifist group that had been formed in a CPS camp settled at Macedonia, Georgia. The group was characterized by openness and tolerance towards different beliefs, and among its members were also a number of atheists. The veteran members viewed the settlement as a model of co-operation and tolerance designed to project its influence on the environment, and they made efforts to convey their message outwards, beginning with their neighbors. They encouraged mutual visits and took part in the local community's festivities and attended the

local church, albeit with only few results. The problem in the early years was to lay economic foundations for their subsistence.

In 1946 they commenced production of wooden toys and furniture for educational institutions. By 1952 their economic consolidation got under way with the increased production and profitability of the toy factory that was called Community Playthings. In the same year they invited Henrick Infield, a sociologist who studied co-operation, to conduct a sociometric study of the commune in order to evaluate their development. Infield's study showed a high degree of satisfaction and esprit de corps within the group, and according to his findings. Macedonia was in good economic and social shape.

A short time after the conclusion of the sociometric study, a dramatic turnaround took place in the life of the community that radically changed the atmosphere. In the autumn of 1952 the settlement was beset by a number of setbacks. In October the main building that served as living quarters and the community center burned to the ground, leaving them without a dining room, kitchen, kindergarten, library and music losses. At the same time there was an outbreak of jaundice that laid low the majority of the members for a prolonged period. From an economic standpoint, this was a very hard year and these difficulties not only lowered morale but also caused a number of central members to leave. Some of those who remained hoped to find a cure for their ills by seeking a new common belief that would give meaning to their lives.

At the end of 1953 there was a kind of religious revival that led them to seek contacts with religious communes. This search also reinforced their ties with nearby pacifist communes in the framework of The Fellowship of Intentional Communities. The Fellowship held two general meetings a year, in winter and summer, and at these meetings contacts were established with various personalities from cooperative groups from North America and other countries. The meetings were attended by delegations from the Bruderhof who at the time were settled in Paraguay and who had begun to visit the communes in the United States from .1949 In the autumn of 1953 the Bruderhof were invited to visit Macedonia and the delegation stayed for several weeks. During this time there was much discussion on the subject of the meaningful basis of community life. The Bruderhof delegation radiated confidence. Their communes, with a thirty-year history behind them, had proven stability and economic success. Their pacifist beliefs and communal living arrangements captivated some of Macedonias members and they favored a union with the Bruderhof. These meetings finally led to the decision to join the Bruderhof and split Macedonia into two: a group of 22 adults and 11 children decided to move to the Bruderhof community. Among those who decided to stay were members who were unconvinced of the need for a Christian basis. The split was undertaken in a spirit of understanding and they reached agreement on the division of the toy factory.

In the year following the split, Macedonia underwent a difficult period. The search for an anchor of stability and co-operation went on, and it moved slowly and gradually towards a communal model that would emphasize the individuals commitment to the needs of the collective. They slowly became convinced that in order to uphold the individuals commitment to the group, they would have to formulate a unified basis of religious belief.

In the summer of 1957 contacts with the Bruderhof were renewed and a Bruderhof delegation was again invited for talks on belief and religion. The Macedonia people felt inferior to their Bruderhof counterparts. In September 1957 a joint declaration was published in which the members of Macedonia admitted that after a series of clarifications, at the center of which was a joint reading of the New Testament, all those who had taken part in the discussions had reached the conclusion that they were prepared to adopt the Bruderhof beliefs, and that the inter-faith basis of Macedonia was unsuitable for meeting the existential needs as a commune. In January 1958 the members of Macedonia asked to be accepted into the Bruderhof, and in June 1958 the farm was sold by auction.

And so, after two rounds of ideological discussions, Macedonia was dismantled and merged with the Anabaptist commune movement, the Bruderhof. Foreign observers found it difficult to explain why the conversion of a pluralistic community like had taken place. One assessment was that the members of Macedonia were exhausted after their prolonged struggle for existence that had not yielded the expected fruits while the Bruderhof could show a successful tradition of stability that had lasted for over 30 years. The dismantling of Macedonia was a severe shock to the FIC group of communes. Furthermore, a short time after the people from Macedonia joined them, the Bruderhof informed the Fellowship that it was leaving. Once the FIC framework was dismantled, the majority of its member groups were also dismantled. Among those that continued to exist, the most notable and singular was Koinonia that upheld its general missions and was not tempted to join the Bruderhof, despite the good relations formed with them in the past.

## Koinonia

The settlement was founded by Clarence Jordan (b. Georgia, 1912), a graduate of the department of agriculture at the University of Georgia, Athens. While still a student he adopted two philosophies that shaped his future life: opposition to racial discrimination and rejection of violence in all its forms. Some years later, in 1933, inspired by the New Testament, he became an active pacifist. The Acts of the Apostles demonstrated to him the sacred tradition of the brotherhood of the believers in the early Christian community. It was in The Acts that he discovered the Greek word Koinonia as a concept whose deep meaning is commonality of life, and he reached the conclusion that it was a Christians moral duty to live in a community of full material and spiritual co-operation.

In the summer of 1941 he was active in the Fellowship of Reconciliation where he found some friends with whom he purchased an old farm in Sumter County in south-western Georgia. Thus the Koinonia community was founded. From 1949 they began organizing their way of life as a commune. Immediately after the war they made contact with the pacifist groups that had formed cooperative communities in the conscientious objectors detention camps. Many of them, who were seeking a community of cooperative living where the members cared for one another, had made contact with Koinonia during the war and some were absorbed into the community after their release from detention. From its inception Koinonia devoted itself to the advancement of racial integration while paying special attention to the problem of the black people of the South. Their unique way of advancing these objectives was through a communal life in which interracial co-operation was fulfilled in practice. However, as time

went by they realized that the three objectives could not be attained equally, and that not only did the communal way of life not help them to advance the first two objectives, it actually weakened the community's attraction for Afro-Americans, who had reservations about the need to relinquish private property and waive wages.
In the late 50s racial equality became a cardinal issue in the United States. The southern states witnessed a struggle against segregation in schools and public places, and Koinonia, as a community fighting for racial equality, found itself at the center of the storm. 1954 saw a rise in the tension between Koinonia and its surroundings, the background of which was the ferment in the South. In 1956 an economic boycott was imposed on Koinonia and they could neither deposit money in the bank nor buy and sell within a 100 mile radius of the settlement. Business people avoided contact with them for fear of damage to their businesses. In the winter of 1956-1957, the settlement was fired on by hoodlums driving along the main road, and this became a matter of routine. The attacks intensified when the Ku Klux Klan held meetings of incitement close to the settlement. At these meetings they accused the Koinonia members of communism and told them to leave Georgia. The boycott and attacks on Koinonia by the people of the south aroused a wave of support from liberal circles in the northern states. In 1957 numerous groups rallied to help and an association called The Friends of Koinonia was formed. They viewed their support of Koinonia as a part of the struggle against racism, but while the outside help contributed towards economic rehabilitation, it could not solve all the problems. Some time later it became clear that the economic boycott, external pressure and physical terrorism had weakened the commune socially. The shortages and hardships caused internal tension among those who remained, fear for the children grew, and there were those who sought refuge in the North, particularly the black members whose physical wellbeing was under threat. The internal crisis reached its climax in 1957 It became clear that their total support for the struggle of the civil rights movement would not enable them to attain a reasonable integration of their aims. The harnessing of Koinonia to the struggle against racial discrimination posed a dilemma that would trouble its members for the next decade. During these years the question recurred of whether to stay in the South and continue the battle for black integration or to move elsewhere and maintain their cooperative community in peace and quiet. The disagreements were settled by a compromise whereby they decided to wait and keep the option of a move open should the situation deteriorate. The members of Koinonia decided to remain in the South because they were conscious of their contribution to the struggle going in their county.

While their persistence in the civil rights struggle stabilized Koinonia as a settlement, it did not prevent its disintegration as a commune. Involvement in these struggles often brought the problem of Koinonias identity to the fore and also raised the question of whether the existence of a commune was vital. In early 1962 the dilemma worsened and discussions began at Koinonia on the possibility of giving up economic co-operation. Evidence of the seriousness of the situation was the position adopted in these discussions by the communes founder, Clarence Jordan, who felt that continued communal co-operation was no longer possible. He claimed that over the years he had seen that communality obliged its members to behave contrary to their will and personal ambitions. Jordan ceased to believe that economic co-operation is a condition for spiritual co-operation. Moreover, he felt that releasing people from financial interdependence would give them more time for intentional co-operation. These discussions led Koinonia to a new organizational structure. The commune's economy was

divided into different sectors and each family was responsible for one of them. The families could organize their work as they saw fit and also hire outside workers. Each family was responsible for its own livelihood and was required to pay community taxes. The land and the principal means of production remained in the hands of the community. In 1963 the members of Koinonia decided that the farm would be kept as their cooperative property and that food and medical services would remain as they were, but each family would take the responsibility for revenue-generating enterprises. Thus they abandoned their original ideology of full co-operation in order to preserve their mission in the fight for integration. In 1970 they shifted the main thrust of their activities to an enterprise building inexpensive housing for low income black families, and changed their name to Koinonia Partners, which underscored the transition from a commune to a limited partnership as partners in a non-profitable charitable organization.

Koinonia and Macedonia have been taken as test cases. They constituted a special chapter in the history of pacifist communes: At their founding they were characterized by the desire to show that pacifism could be constructive and that the ideology of peace could shape the basic principles of communal communities whose ways of life could fall into line with the values of the pacifist world.

From the experience of these two communes it appears that while pacifist theory could bring its adherents to initiate the establishment of communes, it did not succeed in creating a cohesive set of values that could establish a stable communal life. At a certain stage in their development, other causes of attraction diverted the pacifist focus and integrated it into other philosophies. Macedonia
as a secular pacifist commune, lost its belief in its unique message, broke up and merged with the Anabaptist commune movement.

Koinonia, which at its inception was a religious pacifist commune, succeeded in surviving as a commune while becoming involved in the struggle for interracial integration in the South. Yet it, too, lost its original message, becoming a small intentional community that maintained partial communality: cooperative ownership of its land, farm buildings and branches, and family privacy while maintaining mutual aid. Instead of the pacifist message and the fight for racial equality, it shifted to serving the low income strata mainly through its construction company for inexpensive housing for the economically distressed black population.

Pacifism in the United States after World War Two neither succeeded in creating a stable communal movement nor establishing exemplary settlements that would cast their influence over a broad periphery. It did not, however, vanish from American public life. It still had roles to play in the struggle against the Vietnam war, and the fight for peace became a central part of the counterculture ethos. It also did not vanish from the world of the communes, for not much time passed before the establishment of other communes in America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand that adopted the aspiration towards peace as one of their declared and principal elements. But they also had other aims, and the aspiration to prove the constructive element of pacifism was not the central one.

## 1.2 Communal Overview

# Utopia Britannica
# Chris Coates
# Diggers and Dreamers

"The value of communities is not what they have done,
But the revolution which they indicate is on the way. "
Emerson

At the year 2000 UK inter-communities volleyball tournament, whilst I was halfway through the research for Utopia Britannica, a visitor said that they would never join an intentional (utopian) community because they were in reality pretty insignificant. This was pretty much a red rag to a bull. So here gleaned from my research are a few 'insignificant moments' from the history of intentional communities in England, Scotland, Wales & Ireland.

- The introduction and popularisation of the ideas of Italian educationalist Heinrich Pestalozzi by the Sacred Socialists(c1840s) and the Owenites(1830s/40s) which now underpin our entire education system so securely that few have ever heard of him let alone challenge his ideas.
- The clothes we all stand up in - otherwise known as 'Rational Dress' ("unusually comfortable, loose-fitting clothes") promoted by Godfrey and Ethel Blountof Haslemere Peasant Industries (c1896), through the Healthy and Artistic Dress Union and pioneered in utopian communities up and down the country at the turn of the 20th century. (Oh, add to that, multi-width shoes introduced by Clarks, Quaker shoe makers from Street in Somerset.)
- Our entire Town and Country Planning system, carefully crafted by Raymond Unwin and his band of Arts & Crafts movement architects from the Garden City ideas of Ebenezer Howard.(1890s - 1920s) (On a recent flight to Denmark almost every North of England town viewed from a mile up appeared to be ringed by developments that bear all the hallmarks of Parker & Unwin Garden Village plans.)
- Social work - pretty much invented by Octavia Hill and the University Settlement Movement at the end of the 19th century.
- 4 Prime Ministers resident in utopian communities. Ramsay MacDonald at the Fellowship of the New Life, Herbert Asquith educated by the Moravians at Fulneck, Clement Attlee, secretary of Toynbee Hall and Harold Wilson, homeowner in Hampstead Garden Suburb.
- Struggling a bit for successful sportsmen I will have to settle for tennis champion Fred Perry from the Brentham Club and vegetarian walking champion George Allen resident of Whiteway who smashed a whole week off the record for Land’s End to John O'Groats in 1904.
- And finally perhaps the biggest utopian experiment of them all - the Welfare State. Penned by William Beveridge, former secretary at Toynbee Hall & editor of the Ruskinite paper St George, it was in essence an attempt to distil the experiences of 200 years of small-scale utopian experiment into a grand practical plan to deliver utopia to the masses.

The historic impact of small-scale experimental utopian communities
- misrepresented, maybe - insignificant, I don't think so.

**Can we learn anything from our utopian ancestors?**

As I have travelled through both time and geography a sort of hidden utopian landscape - Utopia Britannica - has revealed itself to me; a garden village here, a land settlement there, further on a religious community, in the next town a freehold land club, then a Chartist colony, over the next hill a model village, round the next bend a settlement house..... a landscape peppered with people's hopes and aspirations for a better world. There seems to be what I have termed a 'utopian tendency' to human nature, an innate drive to make the world a better place. For some, the tendency works in relation to their immediate surroundings and close relative; others are driven to apply it to the whole of society.
One of the problems surrounding any discussion of attempts to set up ideal societies is the confusing interplay between fictional utopias and practical utopian experiments. When is a fiction a plan? Is a plan fiction? What happens when a plan is put into action? What about experiments with no plans; are they utopian? What if the reality doesn't match up to the plan: is the community a fiction? Lucy Sargisson in her book Contemporary Feminist Utopianism suggests that in women's science fiction utopia is no longer a fixed, completely-defined plan that can be deemed to have been attained or not, but instead a dynamic ongoing process that we have to participate in. Perhaps utopianism has always been a dynamic ongoing participatory process. We just happen to view it through freeze-frame-snapshot-spectacles. If we take a long, wide-angle view of utopian history the sheer scale of wave after wave of utopian experiments looks less like a catalogue of broken dreams & more like a guidebook for the journey to that another place, a better place - the better place that is no-place - utopia. Statistical analysis of my research shows that approximately 60% of all religious based communities lasted less than ten years with secular groups only doing slightly better at 57%. With such short lifespans for many communities can we really make any claims for widespread influence? – either historically or at the present time. Especially when there is also a tendency for the groups that do survive to loose much of their initial radical edge as time progresses. The Sociologist Nick Crossley has recently argued that we should see small-scale social experiments that fall short of their complete aspirations as - Working utopias. " they are working models..... having an educative role ...showing that things can be done differently."2 Lucy Sargisson sees the utopian tradition as having an even more positive cultural role to play. 'Utopias, ... are an invaluable resource for political thought. Not only do they offer critique; but they also add to this imagination and play and creativity. In addition they are spaces (physical, fictional, imaginary and real) in which we can think about things differently..... as easily identifiable spaces, they can act as points of inspiration. Visitors from the mainstream can enter them and engage in utopian dialogue, returning marked by the encounter.." 3

I would like to end with a question, a piece of what you might call intuitive history – Writing a history of Utopian experiments I have been struck by the connections between people/groups. I asked myself the question - are we talking about a living tradition? I know that we acknowledge a tradition that stretches back to the 17th Century Diggers and beyond – but is this really just a historical paper trail or could we talk about a real person to person, group to group, generation to generation continuum? So the question is does anybody here know anybody who knew somebody, who knew somebody……who knew Gerrard Winstanley? - Nobody – Well perhaps you do now!

I know/knew Freer Spreckley – one of the founder members in the 1970's of Lifespan a community in Northern England, Freer was an ex-pupil of Summerhill – the radical school in Suffolk where A. S. Neil was head. Before Neil moved his school to Suffolk it was based in Dorset from where he would drive at weekends to exchange notes with the Headmaster of Dartington School in Devon,W. B. Curry. At Dartington at the time was a young artist in residence potter Bernard Leach, who would almost single-handed revive the art of the craft potter from his studio at the artists Colony at St Ives. Also at St Ives were the Sculptor Barbara Hepworth and artist Ben Nicolson – who incidentally sent their children to school at Dartington. Nicolson along with the likes of Henry Moore, Augustus John and Eric Gill formed the Artist International Association, an anti-fascist group whose aim was to establish an 'army of artists' to oppose the advance of 'philistine barbarism'. They organised a number of exhibitions 'Against Fascism & War'. Eric Gill, renowned sculptor and founder of 3 of his own artistic communities, links back from to the first generation of the arts and crafts movement – he knew C. R. Ashbee founder of the Guild of Handicrafts and if he didn't know William Morris directly he certainly moved in circles that did. William Morris at this stage was in his anarcho-marxist-revolutionary phase and working for a revolution through the Socialist League. One member of the Socialist League was Edward Thomas Craig, known as ET to his friends, the elderly Craig was renowned for his phrenology reading carried out in the parlour at Kelmscott Manor, but in his younger days he had been not only a Chartist but before that an Owenite and had in fact been the manager of the Owenite community at Ralahine in Co. Clare Ireland and a personal acquaintance of the grand old man of socialist & co-operative movement and key mover and shaker of early 19th century utopian communities - Robert Owen.

At this point I was feeling quite please if not somewhat amazed – direct person-to-person links from here and now 200 years back to Robert Owen. Could we now stretch it back to Gerard Winstanley striding up St George's Hill in 1649? Owen reprinted a book by a Quaker of the name of John Bellars *Proposal for raising a College of Industry of all Useful Trades and Husbandry* who was probably aware of Winstanley and his work…. That however does not really count. Owen did meet poet laureate Robert Southey, who along with that other Radical romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge. In 1794 set about founding their enlightenment utopian - Pantisocracy. Another Pantisocrat was the poet Robert Lovell a second generation Quaker from Bristol who by inference must have known first generation Quakers – which gets us back to the right period, but not the right place.

One last try – In 1793 a group known as the Philadelphians established The South Place Ethical Society that eventually evolved into the first humanist society in the UK and still runs Conway Hall in Red Lion Square in London as a radical meeting place.4 IF these are connected to the same Philadelphians run by the mystics Jane Leade and John 'Abraham' Pordage then, via Rev Pordage who was a radical preacher during the English Civil War at Bradfield in Berkshire, we have our link to the Diggers. Pordage ran a sort of Open house or 'family communion' and one of the residents at this 'Ranters Commune' was a certain William Everard thought to be the same William Everard who was present with Gerrard Winstanley when the Diggers squatted St Georges Hill in 1649.5 And finally a message from Gerrard, or maybe we can call him Gerry – after all he is the friend of a friend, so to speak.

" Words and writing were all nothing and must die, for action is the life of all. And if thou dost not act, thou dost nothing."

Gerrard Winstanley. A Watchword to the City of London 1649

Notes:
1. Quoted by T. Adams. How to Solve the Problem of Rural Depopulation. 1906
2. N. Crossley. Working Utopias and Social Movements. Sociology 33(4), 809-30. 1999
3. Lucy Sargisson. Utopian Bodies and the Politics of Transgression
4. http://www.ethicalsoc.org.uk. (16.6.2001)
5. Details of William Everard in Christopher Hill's The World Turned Upside Down 1972

**AUTHORS BIOGRAPHY**

Chris Coates; Born 1957 in Leicester a proud product of the comprehensive education system. Squatter, street performer, carpenter, father, anarchist and communard, lived for twenty years at People in Common a small alternative community based in Burnley Lancashire that grew out of the radical underground of the 1970's. He was a founder member of a building co-operative and Altham Hardwood Centre an ecological timber co-operative specialising in sustainable use of English Oak. He has been one of the editors of Diggers & Dreamers, the Bi-Annual Journal and directory of communal living, since its inception in 1989 and before that a contributor to Communes Network. Currently works as a freelance consultant for community based building projects, balancing writing about communities with building them. Has spent the last 3 years researching a history of British Utopian experiments entitled: Utopian Britannica (Pub date 1.9.2001)
To contact author e-mail: catandcoat@compuserve.com
Website **www.utopia-britannica.org.uk** (Due to be launched Sept 2001)

**Extracts from Utopia Britannica Gazetteer – mentioned in text above**

Concordium 1842 – 48 **FOUNDER/ LEADER :** J. P. Greaves
Community and school set up by followers of Sacred Socialism at Alcott House on four acres of land with extensive gardens planted with fruit trees. Also a playground, lawns, walkways, arbours and summerhouse. The residents lived a spartan life of Physical Puritanism, eating a raw vegetarian diet and subscribing to a whole range of 'new' ideologies, including phrenology, hydropathy, mesmerism and celibacy. They promoted their ideas through printing The Heathian and New Age magazines. They established The British and Foreign Society for the Promotion of Humanity and the Abstinence of Animal Food, a forerunner of the Vegetarian Society. In 1848 the community disbanded, and the building was used as a cholera orphanage for girls, later known as `The National Orphan Home'. The building was replaced in 1862, and its use was subsequently changed to a private residence, `South Lodge' and more recently into luxury flats.
**GRID REF:** Ham Common Richmond. **REF:** Search for a New Eden.
The Haslemere Peasant Industries 1896 - ? **FOUNDER/LEADER**: Godfrey Blount.
The Haslemere Peasant Industries set up by Godfrey Blount and his wife Ethel was an artistic community with the aim of integrating work, leisure and the country life and the philanthropic principles of the home industries movement. The Peasant Industries was an umbrella organisation of small workshops that employed local craftworkers. It also ran a shop in London. Along with C. R. Ashbee's wife Janet the Blounts were prominent members of the Healthy and Artistic Dress Union(1890) which promoted the wearing of "unusually

comfortable, loose-fitting clothes made of hand-woven cloth."
**GRID REF**: SU904328 Haslemere **REF**: The Arts & Crafts Movement. E. Cumming & W. Kaplan

Toynbee Hall 1888 ? **FOUNDER/LEADER**: Canon Barnet
First of the University Settlement houses. Set up by Canon Barnet to bring middle-class students in touch with working class communities and carry out social relief work. Among the students to pass through its doors were C. R. Ashbee. William Beveridge and Clement Attlee.
**GRID REF:** Whitechapel **REF**: Heavens Below

Dartington Hall 1925 - present **FOUNDER/ LEADER:** Leonard & Dorothy Elmhirst
Successful experiment in rural regeneration financed by New York heiress's fortune. Inc: 800 acres of farms & forestry, experimental school, art college & open-air theatre, cider press, glassworks and various research projects. Became a series of trusts in 1931 and managed to maintain its radical edge beyond the death of its founders.
**GRID REF:** SX 800626 **REF:** The Elmhirsts of Dartington.

St Ives Artists Colony 1885 -
The best known of the English artists colonies. Originally known for its mainly foreign landscape painters. Was always more cosmopolitan than its sister colony at Newlyn. Enjoyed a renaissance when discovered by a new generation of modern artists in WW2, becoming home to Barbara Hepworth & Ben Nicholson. Still a magnet for the art world with the recent opening of the new Tate Gallery there.
**GRID REF:** SW515404 **REF:** Stanhope Forbes & the Newlyn School / The Good & Simple Life.

Rahaline Agricultural & Manufacturing Ass. 1831 Co Clare Ireland **FOUNDER/LEADER:** J. Vandeleur / E. T. Craig.
Owenite-inspired community set up by landowner John Vandeleur after disturbances on his estate, with E. T. Craig the editor of the Lancashire co-operator as manager. A successful co-operative agricultural community was established on the 600 acre estate. Cottages and communal facilities were built, a school and library established. The community was run by an elected committee who introduced a labour credit system. Weaving was introduced and they brought in the first reaping machine to be used in Ireland. The community was wound up after 2 yrs existence when Vandeleur lost his estate in a bet.
**REF:** Robert Owen & the Owenites in Britain & America / Co-operation & Owenite Socialist Communities.

Bradfield 1649 -1654 /1665- **FOUNDER/ LEADER :** 'Father Abraham' John Pordage.
Pordage, radical rector of Bradfield, kept open house or 'family communion'. Other members included; Diggers' leader William Everard, Ranter Abeizer Coppe, vegetarian ascetic Roger Crab & Millenarian Tomas Tany. Pordage went on to set up the Phildelphians with Jane Leade.
**GRID REF:** SU 605724 **REF** Heavens Below / World Turned Upside Down

St Georges Hill Diggers Colony 1649 - 50**LEADER/FOUNDER:** Gerard Winstanley
On April 1st 1649 half a dozen men began to dig common land at St George's Hill - the best-documented 'Diggers Colony'. Soon joined by others, they attempted to tend the heath as a "common treasury for all", building huts, grazing livestock and cutting firewood. Continually harassed & attacked by local landowners the Diggers, or True Levellers as they called themselves, were forced off St George's Hill and moved to Cobham a few miles away. Through Winstanley's writing others were inspired throughout England to take up their

spades and start to cultivate the commons.
**GRID REF:** TQ125664 **REF:** World Turned Upside down
**WEBSITES:** www.tlio.demon.co.uk/diggers.htm www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~royhan/film/

Some interesting statistics

Having read How to Lie with Statistics whilst studying A level sociology I am wary of statistical summaries. Nevertheless, with a fair amount of calculated guesswork where accurate information was not available, of some 350 groups that made-it into existence between 1600 &1945 the numbers break down as:

NUMBERS OF COMMUNITIES

| | |
|---|---|
| 1600 - 1800 : | 30 or so predominantly religious based groups. |
| 1800 - 1850 : | Over 70 mainly early socialist. |
| 1850 - 1900 : | 115 groups. 84% secular based. |
| 1900 - 1950 | 116 groups. 79% secular based. |

LIFESPAN OF COMMUNITIES

| Age/Years | Religious | Secular |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 2 | 20.5 % | 9% |
| 2 to 5 | 27.25% | 30% |
| 5 to 10 | 13.5% | 18.5% |
| 10 to 25 | 8.25% | 15.5% |
| 25 to 50 | 12.5% | 17.5% |
| 50 to 100 | 11% | 7% |
| 100+ | 7% | 2.5% |

Religious groups fail to survive the first few years due mainly to persecution and few survive beyond 10 years, though if they do they often manage to stabilise and reach a good age. A large number of all types of groups manage to survive for up to 5 years. Secular groups have a better % survival in the 5 to 50 year range though they often loose their initial radical edge as time progresses. And of those that reach a century of existence, whilst it is a higher % of religious based groups, the actual numbers are slightly in favour of secular communities.(7Rel. & 9 Sec.)

# Out to Save the World: Why Communal Studies Matters for the Twenty First Century


## Timothy Miller
## University of Kansas


We live in a world that needs community as never before. Community is a buzzword today, on the lips of many, but it is not unreasonable to declare that never before in human history has real human community been in such serious decline as it is today. Especially in the "developed" countries of the western world, egotism and selfishness have become paramount values, while traditional values, such as close, nurturing community, have marched steadily toward oblivion.

Today I want to address a terrible irony in the contemporary world. On the one hand, the world is drowning in its own material and cultural excesses, and an important root cause of that suffering is the retreat from community we see all around us. On the other hand, communal studies, one of the few places that stand to make a real contribution to the restoration of community as a vital principle in human culture, is a field inhabited by the smallest handful of scholars, communitarians, and preservationists. Some few hundreds of thousands live communally, and a relatively few more support the communal ideal through such intercommunal organizations as the United Kibbutz Movement, the Ecovillage Network, the Fellowship for Intentional Community, the various European communal networks, and other such groups. As a percentage of the world's population they aren't very numerous, but they look like a huge throng compared to the few hundred persons worldwide who are involved in the International Communal Studies Association and its sibling groups. Yet despite our small numbers I am convinced that our work is vital. While I would not be so arrogant as to say that we ICSA members uniquely of all the world's people have the answers the world needs, I do believe that we do have some saving knowledge - some idea of how we can make human culture fulfil its promise in a better way. And my call is for us to our apply our important knowledge to a world that stands to benefit greatly by having it.

What I would call the crisis, or at least the malaise, of the contemporary world is made up of elements quite familiar to all of us. Perhaps foremost is our continuing assault on our common global environment. For many decades we have known that our lifestyle is devastating the earth, but our excessive behaviors just get worse, not better. We continue to pour carbon dioxide and other gases into the atmosphere, making global warming an imminent environmental disaster. We continue to drive ever more cars ever more miles, consuming more and more petroleum, paving over farmland, and pouring vast quantities of greenhouse gases into the air we breathe. We spray endless tons of chemicals on our farmland, thus poisoning both the earth and the water that runs off the land. We cut down vast tracts of forest land, the lungs of the earth, and we destroy yet more land by strip-mining. The ozone that protects us from deadly ultraviolet radiation is vanishing due to our activities. We continue to create nuclear waste that will be with us for hundreds of thousands of years.

But you know all that. Instead of making this lecture simply a catalog of the ills of the world,

let me simply affirm that there plenty of them. We have crime. We have poverty. We have widespread social injustice. We have racism. Prejudice against women, against homosexuals, against certain ethnic groups, and against unpopular religions continues to thrive. War and other kinds of violence remain ever with us.

So where do these terrible, seemingly intractable, social problems come from? I would maintain that they stem from a variety of human activities. Industrial capitalism has led to a society in which a small elite controls enormous resources while vast numbers waste away in poverty. Urbanization has contributed to an unwholesome physical environment. Alienation is everywhere. Our technology has only fueled our race into a world of anti-community. Our cars have given us sealed little anonymous environments in which we do not have to interact in a human and personal way with others. Television has taken us out of the public square and isolated us in our living rooms. The vast flow of information now coming through computers takes us out of libraries and has us sit alone in front of screens. Western culture glorified rampant individualism of the worst kind - not the kind that embraces creativity and diversity, but the kind that promotes a "me first" attitude that puts the selfish interests of the individual ahead of the common good.

The causes of our social situation are many and complex, but they are of our own making. Ultimately, perhaps, they arise from human nature itself. But certainly one prime element of the social crisis is the breakdown of community. Where the tribe, the family, the clan once dominated one's life, alienated isolation now reigns supreme. Without community our world is simply falling apart.

Again, I disclaim any ability to discern a perfect solution to this situation. Indeed, I am convinced that we will not make great headway against them in my lifetime or in my great-grandchildren's lifetime unless some dramatic catastrophe grabs and shakes us. Because we do eventually need to make some headway against them, however, I believe that we need to propose the best solutions we can and start working on them. If not us, who? If not now, when?

At the risk of sounding simple-minded, I must say that the solution to the breakdown of community is the creation of more community. That is exactly what the world is calling out for at this difficult moment in its history.

I would recognize at the outset that there are many types of community, so many that ultimately the word loses a great deal of its specific meaning. Broadly speaking, community means building intimate and supportive human relationships. It can mean neighborliness, or simple gestures of charity, helping the downtrodden and unfortunate.

The word "communitarianism" is now used in the United States by some to denote this kind of pursuit of broad, common values in opposition to the prevailing pattern of individualism. Most of us can endorse that program, at least in its general intent. Anything we can do in the direction of bringing people together for the common good surely deserves applause and assistance.

Community, however, can mean something much deeper, or at least more specific, than that as well. It can mean an overhaul of one's lifestyle in which one not only tries to live a good and helpful life but also tries to use one's life to bring about deep social change in concert with others. For those whose level of dedication to their ideals is especially high, living in an intentional communities is perhaps the best of all possible ways to exist.

Although the number of persons living in intentional communities is small, as I have said, communities do provide a crucial model of another way of life that the people of the world need to see. Or perhaps I should say "models," in the plural, because communities take a wide variety of forms. Some today, as in the past, continue to be heavily communal, with all members living from a common treasury and giving up virtually all private property. Some have a heavy focus in a particular religious outlook, or in a similarly central secular philosophy. In the last few years two types of intentional community have seemed to emerge as especially appropriate to the spirit of our time: ecovillages and cohousing. At the same time, the traditional religious communitarians, such as the Hutterites, are still an enormous part of the overall communal scenes. The kibbutzim of Israel remain world leaders as communal pioneers. The many egalitarian communities founded during the last thirty-five years or so are continuing to make an enormous contribution. The world of community is a diverse one.

Those of us who work as academics are as a matter of principle supposed to be impartial observers and analysts, not advocates. While I do believe we do need to keep a good deal of objectivity in our work, however, I think it eminently reasonable to believe that the focus of our studies needs encouragement as well as observation. It seems to me entirely reasonable to believe that the massive celebration of individualism of the destructive sort, of anti-community, of the last two or three hundred years has produced some dreadful consequences, and that the return to community in its many forms, and the development of more intimate and supportive human relationships, are major parts of the answer to the problem.

And that, in short, is why I think communal studies matters, and why the International Communal Studies Association is important. My many scientist friends have made huge contributions to human well-being through their work that has led to the wonders of modern medicine, among other things. I would only hope that communal studies scholars could have the same dedication to a socially beneficial outcome to their work.

Now, that makes it sound as though the ICSA is only for and about scholars, but the ICSA to which I am proud to belong has far broader horizons than that. One reason that I am such an enthusiastic participant in the ICSA is that it fully and eagerly embraces not only academics but also practicing communitarians. My larger academic involvement is in religious studies, and when I go to the annual conference of our major national professional association, the American Academy of Religion, I find myself in the company of about 8,000 scholars of religious studies and only a tiny handful of practitioners who are not also scholars. That has its value, but it doesn't ignite my passion the way the ICSA does. The interaction between scholars and practicing communitarians, and of course the inclusion of many individuals who are both at once, is a key part of the genius of this organization.

I would go farther than that and say that the two principal constituencies of our organization, the scholars and the practicing communitarians, actually need each other. For scholars, I suppose that's obvious: we do, after all, need subjects for our research. As a scholar I would say that if intentional communities did not exist we would have to invent them, if only to keep us in bread and butter.

But the other side of the equation is equally important: communitarians and communities today need scholars. We all know that some communities are suspicious of scholarship of the type practiced in modern universities and close themselves off, but most do not, fortunately, and over time most do come to realize just what they have to gain from scholarly attention. A major reason why communities need scholars is that communities, for all their strengths, are widely regarded by the general public as cesspools of odd and deviant human behavior. In the United States word "commune" is hardly used any more because it carries so much negative baggage. A word with an even more negative connotation than "commune" is "cult," or Europeans would say "sect," which in popular use may basically be defined as a group of which one disapproves, which one thinks is somehow sinister or dangerous. And for many citizens of the modern world, there's really no difference between commune and cult. People who do things differently are suspect. It has been the case over and over that when an intentional community tries to buy land on which to establish itself, local people resist letting these terrible undesirables into the neighborhood. Once a community gets established and the neighbors find out just how positive it can be, then things change. But the social stereotypes and prejudices are enormous, by and large.

Let me provide a case in point: in Chicago a large Christian commune called Jesus People USA has been in operation for over 25 years. It typically has around 500 members and thus is hard to ignore, but over time its neighbors came to see the dedication and hard work of the members, as well as their provision of extensive social services to the poor and homeless, and members had reason to think they were overcoming all of the typical anti-communal prejudices and settling in as respectable members of society, even if a lot of their members continued to look like punks and hippies. Then, a few months ago, the Chicago Tribune newspaper published a scathing series, based heavily on accounts provided by hostile ex-members, that pulled just about all of the classic stereotypes into play: these people were brainwashing their members so that the leaders could control them. They were amassing huge amounts of money for which they were not accounting. The leaders were living very well while the common members were living in poverty. And so on and so forth - everything that is commonly believed about a "cult" was there.

JPUSA has been struggling mightily since then to reclaim what should rightfully be a positive public image. And how has it undertaken that? In significant part it has done it with the help of outside academic scholars. Over the years quite a few scholars have come to know a lot more about the real nature of the organization than a newspaper reporter with a negative agenda did. Those scholars provided statements in rebuttal of the manifest errors and misjudgments of the newspaper stories, and thus helped JPUSA overcome unfair and biased criticism.

And there are other reasons why communities need scholars. Another contribution scholars

can make to communities is the provision of an understanding of history. Communities have been around for several thousand years, and often the past has lessons that can be exceedingly useful to the present. Scholars can provide those lessons for communitarians who can genuinely use them. After all, we don't need to reinvent the wheel every time someone decides to start an intentional community. Furthermore, scholars can evaluate and criticize intentional communities, which, it must be said, do not always recognize some of their own shortcomings and problems.

The simple fact is that scholars need communities, and communities need scholars. If for no other reason, the ICSA has a most valuable role to play. It is my hope that we can strengthen it and make it live up to its very considerable potential.

One of the best known of the American communes of the 1960s era was the Farm in Tennessee, USA. Beginning as a loose group of spiritual seekers in San Francisco, the people who eventually became the residents of the Farm piled onto a long caravan of buses and finally, after months on the road, settled down to build a commune. They continued, however, and continue today to perform tireless work for social and environmental justice and reform. About three years after arriving in Tennessee they published what was one of the most evocative primary documents of the communes of that time, a colorful book called Hey Beatnik: This Is the Farm Book, written largely by the Farm's charismatic leader Stephen Gaskin. One of the short articles in the book is entitled "This country needs in great numbers to become voluntary peasants." I will end my own remarks by quoting Stephen's clarion call in that essay:

"That's what I go around the country . . . for: to try to talk to lots and lots of people. . . . And it says on the front of our bus: OUT TO SAVE THE WORLD. That phrase is chosen from the old thing, "Well, I ain't out to save the world, but . . ." We are. Out front. I don't know anything else to do that seems worthwhile. I can already feed myself. I already was a college professor. Not as much fun as this. Want to help?"

## 1.3 Communal History

# Interpreting the Oneida Community and its Legacy: Competing Agendas and Audiences


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[Please note: some abbreviations are used in this paper:
OC: Oneida Community;
OCMH: Oneida Community Mansion House
JHN: John Humphrey Noyes
PBN: Pierrepont Burt Noyes]

The origins of this paper are several. Late last summer, I first began thinking about what would be a useful and interesting paper for this gathering. In the United States, we were approaching a Presidential election, and there was much comment about President Clinton's "legacy"--in other words, how would history remember him? I am an historian. I really like the word "legacy". Yet it is very difficult to determine a legacy, is it not?

Also last summer the Communal Studies Association (CSA) distributed its bi-annual Newsletter, for which scholar Dr. Timothy Miller contributed an article marking the 25th anniversary of many communal societies in the United States. It was a long, impressive list. I began thinking about the intentions and hopes of these communities' founding members. These communes are aging. Members are beginning to wonder how they will preserve their histories and their archives,--in short, how to manage their legacies. The CSA is receiving more inquires from communities, for example, about how and where to preserve their historical records.

Another source of concern for the "legacy" of a community is my on-going research about the Oneida Community, Oneida, New York (1848-1881) of which I am an interpreter/scholar. This Community disbanded one hundred and twenty one years ago, but it continues to fascinate. Descendants, scholars, corporate executives, funders, museum officials, journalists, students and countless others have struggled to interpret the Oneida Community--on the one hand, trying to be candid about the intentions and truths of the nineteenth century communards' lives, and on the other hand, attempting to make the Oneida Community both relevant and interesting to a twenty-first century audience. The community home (O.C. Mansion House: OCMH) which embodies its history so marvelously, has recently been

legally severed from the silverware corporation, Oneida Ltd., which cared for it for more than a century. A non-profit organization has been formed to maintain the 300-room Mansion House, to establish a museum there, and to attract contemporary visitors. As a scholar of the Oneida Community I have been fortunate to be consulted about some of these recent developments.

Yet, the compelling question remains: what is the legacy of the Oneida Community, or any other community? What message or lesson, if any, did the members of the original community intend to convey to "outsiders", both contemporaries and those of the future? Did they, in fact, even ponder their legacy, and did they make efforts to shape their legacy? What I would like to do today is to use the Oneida Community as an example for raising wider questions about the lessons of communal living, and specifically, the legacy of each intentional community. Many people who are here at the conference have dedicated their lives to building communities, and have no doubt been impelled to do so by many diverse motivations. I am not a communard, but rather, an historian. Yet, I hope to raise questions not only for those of us who study communities, but also for those who do the hard work of building living communities all around the world.

It is a truism in the historical profession that, when analyzing social phenomena, there is no such thing as objective truth--that each historian will interpret her subject through the filter of her own time and of her own value system. Nevertheless, an historian of intentional communities attempts to be faithful to the people she studies, asking: what were they about? what did they mean to do? what did they intend their legacy to be? This leads me to ask another question: can a community control its legacy or even influence it? Or having once disbanded, does a community's legacy succumb entirely to the vicissitudes of its subsequent interpreters, that is, to the interpretation of people like me?

In the case of the Oneida Community, these are important questions, because this experiment in Bible Communism was certainly not a mainstream institution in any sense of the word. In fact, it was "counter-cultural" before the word was invented! Under the leadership of a charismatic, self-assured leader, John Humphrey Noyes (1811-1886), members of the Oneida Community built an institution of more than three hundred people, and practiced social relations that were unusual and not particularly approved-of by nineteenth century Americans. These practices included: 1) complete communism of work and income; 2) a eugenic experiment in human reproduction ("stirpiculture") during which 58 children were born in the last decade of the OC's existence; 3) communal childbearing by adults other than biological parents; 4) a unique system of birth control called "male continence" (coitus reservatus); 5) plural marriage, a system wherein all adults (age 14 and above) theoretically became heterosexual partners; and 6) a patriarchal ideology called the "ascending fellowship" in which males (the spiritual superiors) "fertilized" females (the spiritual inferiors) during sexual intercourse.

When the Oneida Community disbanded in 1881 and re-formed into a joint-stock company, many descendants had to go out into the "outside world", having no experience with money or conventional employment. Further they were branded as libertines and, in the case of the children, bastards, by many of their immediate neighbors. So it should not be surprising to

learn that many Community descendants wanted to become "normal" as quickly as possible and to suppress knowledge of the Community's distinct social/sexual practices.
Like many intentional communities, and despite concentrated attempts at communal socialization, the Oneida Community had difficulty keeping its children and grandchildren in the fold. The problems of passing on one's commitments to the next generation and of counting on them to continue one's legacy are common to many communities. Some OC descendants turned their back on the religious and social inheritance given to them by their elders. In other words, they spurned the legacy. Other descendants sanitized it.

The corporation (Oneida Community, Ltd.) that succeeded the Oneida Community did ultimately become successful, and provided many descendants with jobs and dividends. Although some former communards moved away and severed all connections, a number of descendants stayed nearby; some roomed in the Mansion House. They met often to socialize and to hold reunions. To this day, the descendants of the OC hold a "Homecoming" each summer at the Mansion House. They have published a necessarily complicated genealogy of the Community. They know their history. **(1)** Picking and choosing what they wished to emphasize and what they wanted to suppress, the descendants pretty much controlled the OC legacy until about 30 years ago. In the late 1960s, a new generation of historians and sociologists, motivated by the social reform movements of their time, took up the serious study the OC. At approximately the same time Oneida, Ltd.* underwent changes.
These introductory remarks give a brief sketch of the Oneida Community. Now I will fill in some of the details that I believe are pertinent to its legacy.

*Oneida Community, Ltd. was renamed Oneida, Ltd. in 1935.

Motivations of the Founding Generation: Leader and Followers

It is a daunting task to try to figure out more than 120 years later and based on scant sources, what motivated members of the Oneida Community to join this very unique human community, and what legacy they hoped to leave. The public, professed purpose of the leader, John Humphrey Noyes, was to build a living Eden, where women and men could live perfect lives as promised in the Bible. They would, at least symbolically, escape the four scourges of humanity as outlined in the Book of Genesis: estrangement from God; heavy labor; painful childbirth; and finally, death itself. **(2)**

Early joiners to the Oneida Community adhered very closely to Noyes' vision, most often mentioning spiritual motivation as their primary reason for joining. **(3)** For at least a decade, Community children were taught to "confess Christ a pure heart" and to refer to John Humphrey Noyes and his wife, Harriet Holton Noyes, as "Father and Mother", suggesting that the Community firmly hoped to replace the biological family with the larger, spiritual one they were fashioning.**(4)** Yet the motivations of joiners were probably multi-causal and included a search for economic security, and, for single parents (of whom there were a surprising number, both men and women), help raising their young children who accompanied them into the Bible Communist family. Whatever the motivations of the founding generation and those who joined over the years, it is not at all clear that the view of the Community they wished to perpetuate was successful, even during their own lifetimes. Certainly Noyes

thought about the legacy of his theology and Community, but probably many members did not. Rather, they were fixated on making the Community a meaningful experience during their lifetimes. That was work enough.

Nineteenth- Century Interpreters of the Oneida Community

Nineteenth century interpreters held a wide range of views about the Community. Some read about Noyes' theology and social practices, packed their bags, and presented themselves for membership.**(5)** Others were indifferent, or amused. **(6)** Still others, particularly Protestant clergymen, found the Community an affront to respectable Christian society, and set out to destroy it. **(7)** After an initial period of adjustment , neighboring farmers and merchants in upstate New York decided to "live and let live", especially because the Community provided business and trade for them, and employed their daughters and sons in Community businesses. **(8)** Near the end of the Community's existence an inquiry by local clergy into the sexual behaviors of the communards stirred trouble in surrounding towns and cities, but most analysts of the Community believe that these actions were not decisive in bringing an end to the OC. Rather, the Break-Up of 1881 was caused by internal divisions, an inability to secure the commitments of leading members of the second generation, and the challenges of younger men to Noyes' diminishing leadership. **(9)**

The OC made a relatively smooth transition to a joint-stock company and attempted to provide some economic security in the form of stock options for members. The Oneida Community, Ltd. businesses continued in a rather desultory fashion. Noyes died five years after the Break-Up, and had nothing to do with subsequent OC business developments. Many descendants in the immediate post-Community period experimented with various nineteenth century spiritualist fads like mesmerism, rappings, and so forth. Both the businesses and the descendants seemed to be adrift. Doubtless, very few people were thinking about the Oneida Community's legacy in the late nineteenth century.**(10)**

Conflicts over the Oneida Community Legacy: 1900-1970

By the turn of the century, two descendants held in their hands the keys to the Community's legacy. One was Pierrepont Burt Noyes (PBN, 1870-1959), J.H. Noyes' son, sired during the stirpiculture period with a younger Community woman, Harriet M. Worden P.B. Noyes was bright and ambitious--a born leader. He reorganized the company's businesses to focus on tableware manufacturing, and rallied many other male descendants to build a modern corporation from the ruins of the old Community. P. B. Noyes married another stirpicult, Corinna Ackley [Noyes] (1872-1968), who was in fact, JHN's granddaughter on her maternal side. The couple made their home in Kenwood, New York near the old Community factories and OCMH. They became the "King and Queen" of the re-born business, which steadily grew and prospered, and of the reconstituted social circle of descendants. **(11)** In the 1930s, Pierrepont B. Noyes handed over the leadership of the corporation to his equally able and ambitious son-in-law, Miles Robertson, who continued the policy of editing and censoring the OC story.

The other keeper of the legacy was George Wallingford Noyes (1870-1941). He was an exact

contemporary of PBN, also a stirpicult child, born to George Washington Noyes (JHN's younger brother) and Tirzah Miller, (JHN's niece, daughter of Charlotte Noyes Miller). George Wallingford Noyes worked for Oneida Community, Ltd., but his real passion was preserving and interpreting the records of the former Oneida Community, to which he was entrusted by his first cousin, Theodore Noyes. After a time George Wallingford Noyes retired from the corporation and began systematically organizing the OC's archival legacy. His first two books dealt with the evolution of Noyes' religious views. He also exerted control over the first authorized biography of JHN which was generally respectful of the OC and its founder. **(12)** Before his untimely death in 1941, George Wallingford Noyes planned four more volumes on the OC. He knew that conflict over the Community's legacy existed. Because of this conflict he prepared typescripts of selected primary sources and scattered four or five copies of these among various trusted friends and institutions. Only one (partial) copy survived.

After his death, various company executives (most of them descendants of the OC) entered George Wallingford Noyes' home and burned all of the Community records in the fireplace. It took three days.**(13)** With the destruction of these documents, which Community members had so self-consciously prepared and preserved (even learning a type of shorthand in the 1870s in order to be able to do accurate, word-for-word transcriptions of meetings), the most valuable resource of the Community's legacy perished in the flames. **(14)**

Why were the records burned? What was the basis of the conflict over the Oneida Community's legacy at this time? Essentially, it involved a business point of view versus a socio-religious point of view. Those descendants and corporate managers working to make the business a success were disinclined to allow any publicity that would sully the wholesome family image that the corporation's advertisements promoted. Nothing could be permitted to harm the business. **(15)**

In addition to sensitivity about OC sexual practices, the corporate leaders had another problem. OC members had forthrightly called themselves "Bible Communists". In the virulent anti-Communism of the 1950s (McCarthy) period in America, that name would not do. It contaminated the patriotic reputation that the corporation had so carefully constructed during World War II when it temporarily converted from tableware manufacture to the production of war-related materials. Any association with Communism was repugnant. So, the businessmen sought to suppress both the socio-religious and economic content of its predecessor, the Oneida Community.

Whereas the founding generation of the OC had viewed its various business ventures as a secondary means to an end--the end being the building of an Eden on earth--the second generation made business its primary pursuit. Probably George Wallingford Noyes had had a pretty lonely vigil, trying to preserve the archives of what he considered a noble socio-religious legacy. In any case, he died before Pierrepont B. Noyes. The corporate point of view prevailed. Ah, but did it?

The Oneida Community Legacy Reexamined: 1970 - Present

This brings me to the fourth chapter of the Oneida legacy. As we well know, each generation brings its own concerns and sensibilities to its interpretation of history. Circumstances change, and so do the principal actors in the historical pageant. During the last decades of the twentieth century, everything changed for the Oneida legacy.

First, the United States was gripped by a youth rebellion and a reexamination of many of its values, including social and sexual behaviors. Some of these rebellious youth were, in fact, the great-grandchildren of the OC founders. They were not as cautious or fearful of their family history as their elders. They adopted a more open attitude regarding their legacy, and invited others (the feared "outsiders") to study their heritage. A new generation of outside scholars, themselves motivated by interests in social change, began to study and publish their findings regarding the OC.

At Oneida, Ltd., a similar shift occured. A new generation of managers, with a modern and internationalist perspective, took charge. It was no longer sufficient to rely primarily on descendants' sons and sons-in-law for upper management. In 1981 the first non-descendant became CEO of Oneida, Ltd. **(16)** Fearing a hostile takeover or an unsympathetic merger in the wake of these changes, the descendants of the OC realized that they had to take steps to protect the beloved Mansion House, which had been a benevolent project of the corporation for so long. Because it was a financial drain on the company, it might be sold, or worse, it could be torn down!

In 1988 Oneida Ltd. donated the building and the grounds of the OC to Oneida Community Mansion House, Inc., a not-for-profit, tax-exempt corporation with an essentially educational and service mission. OCMH is made up mainly of descendants who took responsibility for the substantial upkeep of the Mansion House. Having lost a good portion of the corporate subsidy, they needed new sources of income to maintain the Mansion House. This required a reexamination of the legacy of the Oneida Community itself. These developments led eventually to historic landmark status for the Mansion House and ambitious plans for a museum and interpretive center to tell the story of the OC. Architects, educators, museum experts, archivists, curators, grant-writers, scholars and more were enlisted to help the Mansion House and the Oneida Community legacy make the transition into the twenty-first century. In 2000, an Interpretive Plan was developed. One question that still remains is to what extent the radical religious and sexual/social content of the original Community will be scrubbed and and sanitized for twenty-first century visitors. Giles Wayland-Smith, a fourth-generation descendant and President of OCMH, sees it as the "third incarnation", the first being the original OC, and the second Oneida, Ltd. Wayland-Smith interprets the OCMH mission as "not just maintaining the building and the story of the original Community, but also continuing the values and the dialogue that the Community began, e.g., on issues like the organization of the family, child-rearing, gender, and workplace." **(17)**

The final piece in the evolution of the Oneida legacy is perhaps the most remarkable. Although scholars and descendants believed that almost all the primary sources of the OC had been burned during the infamous arson of 1941, it gradually became evident that many grandchildren and great-grandchildren held precious primary documents which "Uncle George" [Wallingford Noyes] had never had possession of. Eventually most descendants were

persuaded to donate these documents to the Special Collections Department of the nearby Syracuse University Library, where they became available to public scrutiny in 1993. These primary documents comprise 78 boxes of material--much of it letters, because OC members often wrote to each other, even though they lived under the same roof!

Because of the availability of these new materials, several revisions of the Oneida legacy have recently been published **(18)**, the most astonishing of which is an intimate personal diary of Tirzah Miller (George Wallingford Noyes' mother* and JHN's niece) in which she chronicled a year and a half of her love life during her thirties. She and all the girls of her generation were initiated into sex by JHN; many remained emotionally loyal to him for the rest of their lives. Her diary is a frank chronicle of sexual intrigue, jealousy and manipulation (much of it cynically managed and encouraged by JHN and his sister, Harriet Noyes Skinner, the leading woman of the OC). Miller's diary indicates that many of OC's second generation were in thrall to their numerous sexual adventures and to their secret, forbidden attachments. Miller's snapshot of the OC in the 1870s is quite different from the decorous public face the OC presented to the public through its newspaper, books, and pamphlets. Her memoir is but the first in a new revisionist history to be revealed by scholars of the OC, based on the availability of the new materials, as well as on new perspectives that are emerging in graduate disciplines. More revisions will appear, and hopefully, some interpretations will be written by descendants themselves. The OC legacy will continue to unfold.

*His mother's memoir is one of the sources GWN managed to save.

Conclusions and Questions

I have used the Oneida Community as an example of the perils of establishing a legacy because its history is so colorful and its narrative is so compelling. Yet I raised the example with another purpose in mind: to pose questions about a community's legacy. From this brief summary of the conflicting interpretations of the Oneida Community over the past 120 years, we can conclude that many external circumstances impinge upon a community's legacy, probably overwhelming whatever the actual communards might have hoped or intended. This conclusion leads me to the questions which I raised at the beginning of the paper: Can a community control or even influence its legacy? If yes, how? If not, why not? Is control of one's legacy even a desirable goal for a community?

I cannot answer these questions. Perhaps people in the audience would like to share their views during the discussion period.

**FOOTNOTES**

1) The Oneida Community Journal, a quarterly, has been published continuously since 1986 by OCMH. It contains reports about the nonprofit corporation which oversees OCMH, as well as news of OC descendants. It is one of the contemporary instruments for molding the OC legacy. See also John B. Teeple and the Oneida Community Historical Committee, The Oneida Family: Genealogy of a 19th Century Perfectionist Commune (Cazenovia, N.Y.: Gleaner Press, 1985) which traces up to four generations of OC descendants, many of whom

intermarried.

2) Marlyn Klee-Hartzell, "The Oneida Community Family," in Communal Societies, v. 16 (1996),15-22, based on Oneida Association, Bible Communism (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Office of the Circular, 1853), 1-35. OC scholar Lawrence Foster believes that J. H. Noyes' first priority was not building a Perfectionist community, but rather, publishing his theological views in the various publications which the OC supported. (Personal conversation with the author.) There may be some truth to this interpretation, as Noyes later testified that with his 1838 marriage to Harriet Holton," . . .besides herself, . . .I obtained money enough to build me a house and a printing-office, and to buy a press and type." Robert Allerton Parker, A Yankee Saint: John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Community (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1935), 64.

3) Teeple, 1.

4)see Marlyn Klee-Hartzell, "Family Love, True Womanliness, Motherhood, and the Socialization of Girls in the Oneida Community, 1848-1880," in Wendy E. Chmielewski, Louis J. Kern, and Marlyn Klee-Hartzell, eds., Women in Spiritual and Communitarian Societies in the United States (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 184-200.

5) One such joiner was James Herrick who "left wife and children and a high church pulpit in New York City to come to the Community and thereafter his wife taught his children that their father was insane." Pierrepont Burt Noyes, My Father's House: An Oneida Boyhood (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc.: 1937), 28. At the time of the Break-Up, JHN put considerable energy and money into helping Herrick get a divorce from his long-suffering wife, and then matched him in marriage to Noyes' favorite lover and niece, Tirzah Miller.

6) George Bernard Shaw wittily remarked about the stirpiculture experiment, that "the question of what sort of man they should strive to breed [was] settled at once by the obvious desirability of breeding another [J.H.] Noyes." (JHN, in fact, sired nine of the 58 stirpicult children, more than any other OC man.) Shaw took an interest in the OC and perhaps intended to do a study of it. He was very skilfully thrown off the scent by a formidable OC descendant, Hope Emily Allen. With her successful intervention, we are thus deprived of what would probably have been Shaw's highly original and entertaining interpretation of the OC. see Hope Emily Allen and George Bernard Shaw correspondence, 1924, Box 77, Oneida Community Collection, Syracuse University Library, Special Collections.

7) see Lawrence Foster, Women, Family, and Utopia: Communal Experiments of the Shakers, the Oneida Community, and the Mormons (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1991), 103-120.

8) Issaac G. Reed, Jr., "The Oneida Community of Free Lovers," Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newsletter, April 2, 1870, 38 ff. Reed observed". . . a considerable amount of money is expended in and about the town by the believers . . .; so that it is next to an impossibility to induce an inhabitant of the town of Oneida to utter any opinion, save a favorable one. . ."

One young woman whose sister worked for the OC silk-works said "they were as nice a people as any girl ever worked for." The landlord of the Oneida town hotel remarked: "there were very nice people--a very nice and hospitable people, indeed; who knew how to make money and when to keep it, and when to spend it."

9) Constances Noyes Robertson, Oneida Community: The Breakup, 1876-1881 (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1972) is a good source. She was a granddaughter of JHN and daughter of PBN. Her husband, Miles Robertson, was CEO of Oneida, Ltd., 1930s-1960. She fiercely guarded the reputation of the OC and the corporation as she saw fit. In 1971 she refused the author's access to primary sources of the OC, because "unfortunate experiences [of interpretation by outsiders] have made it necessary to make rules [non-access to sources] and to keep them." (Personal letter to the author, March 4, 1971). It is possible that this was her rule alone, and not the formal decision of any official committee of descendants.

10) Parker, 290-92 and Maren Lockwood Carden, Oneida: Utopian Community to Modern Corporation (New York, N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1971), 119-24.

11) Author's interview with President of OCMH, Giles Wayland-Smith, a fourth-genetration descendant of the OC, March, 2001. In his boyhood memoir, op. cit., P.B. Noyes remarked that "the pressure to elevate the love emotion [among stirpicult children, away from their biological parents and toward an abstract communal love] reacted with us as a suppression and, at least in my own case, oriented my interest toward material things.", My Father's House, 72.

12) George Wallingford Noyes' two published works on the OC are: Religious Experience of John Humphrey Noyes, founder of the Oneida Community (New York; Macmillan, 1923) and John Humphrey Noyes, the Putney Community (Oneida, N.Y.: privately published, 1931). The authorized biography is by Parker, previously cited.

13) File #50, Boxes 8 and 9, Maren Lockwood Carden [1961] interviews, Oneida Community collection, Syracuse University Library, Department of Special Collections. This interview was with Pierrepont "Pete" Trowbridge Noyes, who said that GWN's collection amounted to one-half the space of his office, and included cross-indexed materials. PTN and Robert Wayland-Smith, both executives of Oneida, Ltd., read some of the materials before they were burned. PTN said that they covered "the problems of daily life" at the OC. A fourth-generation descendant told the author that as the fireplace ashes were carried from the house, the carpet became covered with fine, white dust. and a path of footprints through it. This image has apparently haunted some descendants.

14) The Oneida Circular of December 9, 1867 enumerated the variety and volume of the records the OC retained: ". . .The Oneida Community will need a fireproof building before long for its archives. The accumulation of papers is incredible. . ." The article mentioned among its holdings: daily journals; correspondence and transactions; transcriptions of "Home-Talks" by JHN; reports of evening conversations and family criticism; personal testimony and confession; and foreign correspondence. It is believed that all sexual intimacies were

recorded as well (probably by JHN's sister and chief enforcer among the women, Harriet Noyes Skinner). Carden, 54

15) Geoffrey Noyes, great-grandson of John Humphrey Noyes, related to the author the story of his aunt's [Constance Noyes Robertson, whose father, husband and brother each headed the corporation at different periods] reaction to a somewhat titillating article by Donovan Fitzpatrick, "Father Noyes and His Fabulous Flock" in True; a Man's Magazine, March 1960, which she felt might damage the company's image. She chauffeured her teenaged nephew, Geoffrey Noyes, around the environs of Oneida, N.Y. where she dispatched him into all the newsstands/drugstores, to buy up every copy of the offending magazine. See also the Allen-Shaw correspondence, op.cit., footnote 6, for Shaw's pithy characterization of the shame of some OC corporate descendants (specifically that of Pierrepont B. Noyes), and their attempts to suppress the OC's legacy.

16) Spencer Klaw, Without Sin: The Life and Death of the Oneida Community (New York: The Penguin Press, 1993), 290.

17) Interview with the author, March 2001.

18) Robert Fogarty, ed., Desire & Duty at Oneida: Tirah Miller's Intimate Memoir (Bloomington, Ind.: University of Indiana Press, 2000). Other recent books which challenge a sanitized version of the OC include: Jane Kinsley Rich, ed., A Lasting Spring: Jessie Catherine Kinsley, Daughter of the Oneida Community (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1983); Spencer Klaw, op. cit. footnote # 16; and Robert Fogarty, ed., Special Love/Special Sex: An Oneida Community Diary (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1994)

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The author has elected not to publish a separate bibliography for this paper, but has made every effort to include mention of much of the recent scholarship on the OC in the footnotes. Dr. Marlyn McGary Klee, 6/2001

Some useful websites and addresses are:

1) For OC photos from Syracuse U. Library collection:

http://libwww.syr.edu/digital/collection/oneida/photos/ocphotos.htm

2) To reach Special Collections Department of Syracuse University Library:

arents1@library.syr.edu

3) To reach Carolyn A. Davis, Head of the Special Collections Department at Syracuse

University Library:

cadavis@library.syr.edu

4) To reach Bruce Moseley, Executive Director of OCMH:

bmoseley@dreamscape.com

5) To reach the OCMH website and e-mail address:

website: www.oneidacommunity.orge-mail: ocmh@dreamscape.com

6) To reach Giles Wayland-Smith, President of OCMH:

gwayland@dreamscape.com

7) Oneida Community Mansion House
Oneida, N.Y. 13421
telephone: (315) 363-0745

# Kibbutz. From Idealism to Pragmatism
## David Merron

On my recent visit to Israel, I phoned a friend at a kibbutz up north. 'Well, that's it,' he said. 'From Sunday next, we are no longer a kibbutz. The bank has taken over and we are just working to eat and pay off the debts.'

This was not an isolated incident. The whole kibbutz movement is in deep crisis. Very many kibbutzim are no longer economically viable and the failure of the younger generation to continue the project has created an insoluble social and manpower situation. As a result some kibbutzim have already cased to be communal settlements and it is highly probable that in the near future, only a minority will remain recognisable kibbutzim as we have known them. Perhaps no more than a handful.

It would seem that the Kibbutz movement, after reaching great heights to become a shining beacon world-wide, has like a Supernova consumed its essential material and is now collapsing in on itself.

How is it that a once idealistic and vibrant movement of over 200 settlements has in the space of some twenty years come to this sorry state? More importantly, what are the lessons that can be drawn from this?

Many blame the decline on the financial disaster of the late '80's and the subsequent economic collapse, when kibbutz movement central funds were squandered on a stock market failure (though how that was allowed to happen was symptomatic). These were however merely accelerating factors however and whilst writing my book *Collectively Yours*, I realised that I was describing the start of this decline in the fifties and sixties.

So what, one might say? Kibbutz has had a good run and has provided inspiration and moral support to communal societies world-wide. And in the wider scheme of things, does it matter? I believe that it does, and that what has happened is relevant to all communal societies as will be outlined in the conclusion.

The present situation in the kibbutzim has in my opinion been brought about by:

1. Dedication to national pioneering tasks
2. Changing socio-economic and political situation in Israel
3. Changing kibbutz population, through unselective absorption large numbers of non-committed new members.

### 1. National Pioneering Tasks

The origins of the kibbutzim were in a few small agricultural communes in the early 1900's with an ethos of an intellectual peasantry and egalitarian principles, in what was then northern Palestine. In the twenties and thirties, partly from the impetus of the Russian revolution their number rapidly expanded. Unlike many communes which deliberately set themselves apart from mainstream society, the kibbutz wanted to be an integral part of the rebirth of the Jewish people in its homeland.

Spearheading this return to the soil the kibbutz became all things to everyone and were expected to do everything: draining the swamps, taming the mountains, making the desert bloom, defending the borders and providing cheap food in the early years of the State. With their idealism and social cohesion, only they could have settled remote inhospitable areas and

stuck. it out.
The kibbutzim became the darlings of the country and of Zionist movement, and perhaps unique for alternative communal settlements, an integral part of the establishment, (with the paradox of wealthy American Jews willingly donating money to Marxist Leninists of the Artzi kibbutzim!). Though their communal, egalitarian values were grudgingly respected, they were loved not for what they were, but for what they were doing.
There was nothing new in this phenomenon. Throughout history, communal movements with their idealism and social cohesiveness were often exploited by establishments to further their aims, e.g. the Tabori of Bohemia by the Hussites to fight the Holy Roman Empire, the Levellers in Cromwell's New Model Army, and various communal groups in colonising America. Inevitably, having done their job they were ostracised or destroyed by those very establishments – much as the kibbutz is being marginalised, discredited and economically destroyed through the banks by the Israeli establishment today.
Nevertheless, even those of us who saw the communal enterprise as the essential purpose, succumbed to the thrill and took pride in carrying out these pioneering tasks. Unfortunately, fulfilling these functions served to deflect the emphasis and energies of kibbutz from its true purpose; that of developing and consolidating the ideals of an alternative communal society.

**2. Changing socio-economic situation in Israel.**
During the British mandate and the early years of the State, Israeli society had a social-democratic nature with prominent workers movements, etc. From the Fifties onwards, the emphasis changed to that of a full-blown market economy. This occurred in agriculture as well with creation of large scale private farms based on seasonal hired labour, ostensibly reducing the economic importance of the kibbutzim.
After the Six Day War, with the feeling of security and the role of defence taken over entirely by army, border kibbutzim seemed less vital.
.Kibbutzim were associated with the European 'old timers', allied to the ruling Mapai Labour party. The mass immigration of Oriental Jews with little modern political understanding allowed the rise of demagogic nationalism and of the right wing *Likud* party which had no connection or sympathy with the kibbutz movement. In addition most kibbutzim were in the opposition Peace Movement camp.
In this changed political environment, although the financial crash at the end of the eighties affected many sections of the Israeli economy, when the banks pressed for repayment of loans, the kibbutzim with their 'collateral' of land were a soft target and the right wing establishment had no wish to help them out
Notwithstanding the influence of all these factors, had the kibbutz membership been sufficiently strong and resolved, with a 'battening down of hatches' and conviction of purpose they could have weathered these storms. The fact that they could not was due to the changing nature of their population.

**3. The Changing Population.**
In the inter-war years, the kibbutz movement expanded and was consolidated through a steady flow of highly committed idealists who were the results of a severe selection and self-selection process in Central European youth movements. Owing to the shortage of land and settlement funds, along with establishing new kibbutzim, there was also an organic reinforcement of the existing kibbutzim,

In every kibbutz there had always been a periphery, but it was small and uninfluential and the essential character was maintained by a committed, idealistic majority core. In the early fifties however, the situation changed radically with a rapid expansion of the uncommitted periphery, as described below.

As a result of the Holocaust, the traditional Zionist youth movements were practically wiped out, cutting off the flow of idealistic reinforcements. After the war, the few members remaining coalesced into new groups but these were augmented by large numbers of survivors heading for Palestine. For most of these, the idea of kibbutz was an attractive option. It offered a surrogate family and community for that which had been destroyed, as well as security in starting a new life in a strange and difficult country. Whilst accepting and paying lip service to kibbutz ideals and way of life, this new membership had undergone very little selection and had no real deeper education of, or commitment to its principles.

With the creation of the new State, over a few short years these relatively large numbers were added to the kibbutz movement, many of them in small widely dispersed settlements along the borders, where the national tasks often took precedence. A side effect was that the older kibbutzim were no longer provided with reinforcement groups.

For the new immigrants, as long as the kibbutz provided a secure environment, integrating them into the new country and allowing them to learn the language and new trades, they went along with the kibbutz way of life. But as time passed and they became established and more confident, some left for town and most of those that remained added to the periphery.

To this new unselective influx were added large numbers from Israeli youth movements. In the pre-state Israeli movements, there was also a selection process prior to their going to kibbutz. With compulsory military service however, whole groups now went to the army, and without any selection process came into the kibbutzim primarily as social groupings,(*khevreh*).

Having only a small principled nucleus, for most of these kibbutz became a 'time out' before either moving back to town and career or remaining in the kibbutz just as somewhere to live and work.

The result of both these influxes was that in most kibbutzim, a large periphery, unselected and having no ideological depth now often outnumbered the idealistic core.

This enlarged periphery radically altered the character of the kibbutz causing:

a) a neglect of basic kibbutz principles, and
b) the disenchantment of the younger generation.

a) <u>Neglect of Kibbutz Principles.</u>

For the periphery, raising the standard of living and building a successful economy to support this became the prime motives. Creating and consolidating an alternative, communal society was not their main concern. The periphery was conscious of the rising standard of living in the towns, and principles that interfered or became awkward to maintain were abandoned in the pursuit of a higher standard of living and economic success. Pragmatism had eventually burst through their thin veneer of idealism. (It is symbolic that during this time, the term '*meshek*' -farm, become common parlance in lieu of 'kibbutz'). The idea that the benefits and satisfaction gained from communal living and creating a new society would more than compensate for a possible lower standard of living than in town, was an anathema to this periphery.

The emphasis on economic success led to an increase in hired labour. Through fear of losing members, breaches of sharing and equality through receiving presents and personal money

were ignored. Profitability had become the main aim and this also led to each branch striving for its own success as opposed to integration into the general scheme. Many kibbutzim neither assessed nor established new industries in accordance with their own manpower resources and as a result, further unselective absorption took place to provide the industrial hands required, or more hired labour was employed.

The concentration on economic success also led to the differential valuing of work – the most profitable branches becoming the most important. The result was the devaluing of 'services' branches, and the confining of women to these services branches through ‘economic necessity’. This in turn exacerbated problem of women in the kibbutz, with the result that even many women originally committed to communal living became disillusioned, devoted more to the family room and added to those calling for the abolition the children’s houses and communal dining room

The abandoning of principles led to a weakening of social cohesiveness and mutual respect and responsibility together with lack of willingness to accept responsibilities. This rebounded on the ‘economists’ as the periphery, lacking communal responsibility readily agreed to unsecured bank loans, not for investment but to raise standard of living. The breakdown of mutual responsibility also led to lack of communal efforts such as projects in children’s houses, a reluctance to turn up for seasonal mobilisations, etc.

A side effect of this concentration on economic success was the creation an economic/financial hierarchy, instead of a rotation of functionaries essential for true democracy.

The net result of the above process was a constant struggle of the principled, idealistic and now minority nucleus to try and maintain kibbutz principles, against the inertia of the large periphery. It was wearing and usually ended up in a rearguard action. In addition the scattering of population in many small settlements led to splitting up of idealistic cores into small fragments that were even more susceptible to erosion. (It didn’t help that in each kibbutz, this nucleus was further depleted as some of its central figures were absorbed into the education system.)

The ‘economists' primacy extended up to kibbutz federation level, and it is most probable that the lack of a principled moral control allowed the unsupervised stock market speculation resulting in the subsequent financial debacle.

The end result of the above processes, was that by the eighties the kibbutz movement had lost much of its character and idealism. As the ex-partisan kibbutz poet Abba Kovner had once put it : ‘The *shekhinah,* the guiding spirit, has gone out from the kibbutz . . .’

b. The Effect on the Younger generation.

The success of any society is in its perpetuation by the younger generation and in this the kibbutz was found severely wanting. Certainly, no one ever anticipated that all kibbutz children would return, especially after they’d been through the army, (many of them incidentally suffering from unrecognised post traumatic stress disorder), and then travelling the world. (As an old song put it: ‘How you gonna keep ‘em down on the farm, after they’ve seen Paree . . ?‘) But how was it though that only a minority came back and many of these not for positive reasons? How was it that so few saw the kibbutz as a place to build their future? Is California - where there are probably now as many ex-kibbutz children as in the kibbutz movement - a better place to raise a family?

There is obviously a raft of external influences to this mass desertion: the world-wide drift from the country to the town, the emphasis of national pioneering tasks in lieu of communal

living, the pursuit of the illusory individualism of egoism and narcissism, etc. It is also true that in some kibbutzim, a hierarchy of functionaries were loath to give up the reins or allow new ideas from children returning from the army.
The two major influences on the young not wishing to continue the enterprise however, both stem from the effect of the large uncommitted periphery in their parents' generation. They were:

1. lack of personal conviction and example, and
2. lack of specific education to kibbutz values.

## 1. Lack of personal example.

Children readily sense hypocrisy and double standards. Even from their early years, they would have sensed the dissatisfaction of their nurses in the children's houses, arising from the general problem of the women in the kibbutz and exacerbated as outlined above. In successful religious communities, the young see their parents practising exactly what they preach. The periphery majority however did not practise their principles and at the most gave only lip service to communal ideals. Though there were many sincere and principled kibbutzniks who were role models, they were seen as the minority and known to be fighting a permanent rearguard action against the laissez-faire direction of the kibbutz as a whole.
Why then should the younger generation be expected return to carry on the struggle, when the kibbutz was already losing its way? Many children also sensed their own parents' regrets at staying in the kibbutz and had this confirmed when they wanted to leave themselves, (e.g. leavers quoted in the book *Kibbutz LA* who said their parents wanted their children 'to do better'.).

## 2. The lack of specific education to kibbutz.

In a kibbutz movement magazine article, a boy questions his teacher how come that he'd had no specific education to kibbutz. To his amazement, his teacher couldn't explain why. . .
It is said that one person's education is another's indoctrination but any society wishing to perpetuate its values and ensure its continuation, does so through educating its next generation. All education in one way or another is directed or biased. So it should have been in the kibbutz. Religious communities have no problem with a specific education towards their values. We may criticise their actual doctrines but kibbutz values and communal living is a faith too - a secular faith, different and distinct from religion – or from that of the surrounding society, and one that had to be perpetuated through educating the young. The periphery though, through having no deeper belief in kibbutz values had a fear of 'indoctrination', lacked faith in a specific kibbutz education system and hesitated in implementing a system which would ensure this.
In essentially wanting the kibbutz to be 'like all the others', the periphery were only too willing to revert to the general syllabus and abandon the holistic, project based character education, etc. system of the kibbutz. In particular there was a lack of specific education and emotional involvement in kibbutz values in a suitable and enjoyable way in kindergarten and primary education. Discussions about kibbutz at secondary level in kibbutz high schools were useful but came far too late.
This is not the place to engage in a deeper debate about the rights and wrongs of the children's houses etc., but it was the periphery that caused the stampede towards abandoning the 'children's society' and collective education system.
In secondary education, the periphery set the agenda and emptied the education system of

specific kibbutz content. In reverting to the stereotypical Jewish parents' obsession for their children to enter the professions, they insisted on the general syllabus and educating towards '*bagrut'* exams. The kibbutz movement itself was also at fault in not advancing the cause of the Open University and mature student entry as was becoming common in many countries. This would have been much more suited to kibbutz, but the periphery had no interest in this either.
Kibbutz ideals valued all work equally in that trades, crafts, manual work etc. was equal to the professions, but the periphery had no adherence to these principles. The kibbutz high school originally set aside time each day for work in the various branches of the kibbutz, an essential part of education and identification with the community. The periphery saw this as 'lost learning time' and it was abandoned.
The net result of the factors outlined above, was that the younger generation lacked emotional and ideological commitment to kibbutz ideals and thus the will to perpetuate a society which they saw as flawed and declining anyway.

The flight of the kibbutz children has led to an ever growing number of kibbutzim becoming geriatric institutions. With few idealists joining and the continued unselective acceptance of new members to somehow keep up the numbers, the periphery will continue to grow and eventually lead to the demise of the kibbutz as a communal egalitarian society.

## Conclusion

We asked at the outset, does the demise of the kibbutz matter? I believe it does. Conventional wisdom maintains that communal societies are for peripheral religious sects or a transient phase for a bunch of youngsters who will eventually 'come to their senses.' Kibbutz, having been a large scale success story of a secular communal society, demonstrated the possibility of a permanent community living by the principles of co-operation, sharing, equality and mutual responsibility, as opposed to aggressive competition, the success ethos and authoritarianism. They served as a beacon of what Oscar Wilde called: 'the Utopia towards which we have to sail'. The failure of the kibbutz therefore will unfortunately reinforce this negative accepted wisdom that 'from each according to their ability to each according to their needs' is against human nature, which is acquisitive and competitive and hierarchical.

## Lessons.

There is no scientific proof that human beings are naturally co-operative, peaceful, egalitarian or mutually supportive. It is a matter of belief that they are and communal societies embody those values. Communal living is not a sociological experiment. It is not an intellectual exercise. It is an act if faith, (which is perhaps why religious communes find it easier to be successful - they have had more practice). What has occurred in the kibbutzim demonstrates what happens when a majority that does not have that faith or a sincere belief in its values, gains control of a communal society. Neither academic studies nor organisational and procedural changes will enable a communal society to survive unless the vast majority of its members have that faith and believe in those values.
By understanding the causes of these processes, future communal societies may learn to do better. The principle lesson however, is that any communal society, surrounded as it always will be by those with different values, can only survive if the vast majority of its members are

firmly convinced and sincerely believe in its ideals and way of life, and above all practice what they preach.
From this it is follows that in order to survive and develop, an alternative communal society must have a continual severe selection process for new members, as well as a clearly directed education system that will imbue the younger generation with an emotional attachment to those ideals, leading to a wish to perpetuate that society.

*Additional notes.*

Collective Education.
Recent years have seen concerted attacks and lurid literature on 'horrors' of collective education', child abuse etc. My own kibbutz cannot be exceptional in that I cannot recall one incident of abuse or subsequent accusation. Yes, some children were disturbed – but one could see this at the time because of the parents. As a therapist in Haifa remarked to me: Collective education is a convenient peg on which to hang any complexes. My two older children passed through it and look back on it fondly, especially the early years of the children's house. (And if it was so bad, have you ever seen a starving ex-kibbutz kid?)

Town Communes
There is a trend to concentrate now on town communes as a new alternative. But will they be middle class enclaves of architects., social workers, computer specialists, etc, leaving the building, engineering, labouring and food growing to the uneducated working class and the Third World? And is there no recognition of the ennobling nature of working the soil on the commune's own land and of the auto-didact? Are Tolstoy and AD Gordon now considered irrelevant?

# Herrnhut, 1852-89: Australia's German 'Moravian' Commune[1]

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Australia has a long and rich history of utopian, communal experimentation including many religious, communist and secular examples. Radical sexual experimentation, mystical experiences, common property, bizarre dietary experiments, various forms of leadership, and all the factors found in the better known communal history of USA and Europe are also to be found in Australian communal groups. Although Australia never received as many dissenting religious communal groups from Europe as went to North America, a number of these people did come and establish utopian communes in Australia.

One of the most interesting of these was Herrnhut commune in western Victoria. Herrnhut was based on a strange blend of Moravian Christianity, personal charisma, millenarianism, mysticism and communism. Herrnhut was Australia's first, and in many ways one of our most interesting, communes. It was founded by Johann Friedrich Krumnow in 1852, and lasted until 1889. Herrnhut was mostly comprised of people who came from the areas of Silesia, Posen and Brandenburg in what is now eastern Germany and western Poland.

## Herrnhut's Eastern European Religious and Political Background

The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century resulted from and led to religious and social turmoil throughout Europe. Radical groups such as the Anabaptists emerged at that time, determined to live in close-knit communal groups because that is what they believed the Bible told them to do. These radical dissidents were persecuted in many areas and were forced to seek refuge. In 1722, a religious communal group came together on the lands of Count Zinzendorf, at Herrnhut, in Moravia. The Moravians were vehemently opposed by leaders of other religions because they 'patterned their way of life on the ways of the primitive Christians, [and] were communists'.[2]

In 1815, the Congress of Vienna redrew the boundaries of Europe, with many of those areas of greatest religious foment becoming part of the expanding and modernising state of Prussia. The Prussian ruler, Friedrich Wilhelm III, then established a State Church, amalgamating all Lutheran and Calvinist churches.[3]

Unable to follow their religious convictions in Prussia, and suffering from religious persecution and severe financial hardships, many dissenting Protestants, including Lutherans, Quakers, Pietists, Moravians and Mennonites sought to escape by emigration. Most of these religious dissidents went to North America because passages were cheap and farm land was almost free, but a minority came to Australia.[4]

One of the early Germans who came to Australia to escape religious persecution wrote back, using classic utopian prose, urging them to

> leave Germany, for there you will remain slaves. … There, you will be a witness to the death struggles of the old ideas, here you have freedom in the truest sense of the term. There, upheaval, religious hatred, partisan fury, and revolution … here there is peace, the plough, the sciences, the establishing of new cities. There, you are under State despotism, the repression of faith and thought, oriental tyranny, castes and classes, war and mania for destruction; here man is … free in faith and opinion, as rich as his hard work … makes him.[5]

One dissident who came to Australia to escape religious persecution, and to lead here what he considered to be a moral Christian life was a small, hunch-backed tailor with a serious speech impediment, Johann Friedrich Krumnow.

**Johann Friedrich Krumnow**

Johann Friedrich Krumnow was born in 1811 at Frankfurt-on-Oder in Brandenburg Province, Prussia. As a child he became committed to both radical socialism and evangelical Christianity. He moved to Berlin where, in the mid to late 1830s, he probably joined the Gossner Missions Institute, a training centre to accommodate evangelical, would-be missionaries who had been rejected elsewhere. The training at Gossner Missions Institute emphasised personal piety and practical skills more than theological studies.[6]

Friedrich Krumnow (as he was known) wanted to become a Lutheran Pastor - but one with a strongly evangelical, socialistic, millenarian bent. He was barred from this vocation, officially at least because of his physical deformity (hunch back) and his unpleasant, nasal voice. He was described as having ‘almost the shape of an ugly gnome’. It is very unlikely, given Krumnow’s messianic, communistic beliefs, that he would have been accepted as a Pastor regardless of how he looked and spoke.[7]

Friedrich Krumnow’s theology and political views were ‘a mixture between Slavic mysticism and primitive religious beliefs, based on a naive and literal understanding of certain parts of the bible’. Somehow, this was mixed with communism, producing a heady brew of religious and political fanaticism. Krumnow anticipated the second coming of Christ and the Millennium, and until that time, preached that everything

should be held in common and that people should live together as a commune, eschewing all private property. Krumnow sought to live as he believed that Christ and His early followers had lived, sharing all food and housing while devoting themselves to the realisation of an ideal world order. Anarchism also came into the equation, with Krumnow rejecting State authority, believing himself to be answerable only to God.[8]

On their four month voyage to South Australia, Krumnow held regular church services although he was not ordained. He was also school teacher, being responsible for teaching catechism, bible history and hymn singing to the children. He seems to have had in mind teaching other things as well, since his behaviour towards his female students was later said to have been 'not totally proper' by one observer, and 'indecent' by another.[9]

At about this time, Friedrich Krumnow started to publicly identify as a Moravian, although there is not a shred of evidence that he had any formal connection with that church.[10]

The obvious question arises as to why Friedrich Krumnow identified himself as Moravian when he had no formal connection to them and was, as far as is known, unknown to the Moravian authorities. There are at least three possible answers. Firstly, the Moravians were well known at that time for establishing successful Christian communes in USA and Britain, and given that this is just what Krumnow hoped to do in Australia, it might have seemed like a useful label to adopt. Krumnow would certainly have known about Emmaus, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Wachovia and Lititz, all well-known and well-respected Moravian communes in USA, Fulneck, Fairfield and Ockbrook in England, and Gracehill in Ireland.[11] These Moravian communes were 'very successful, earning a reputation for the industriousness of their members and the quality of their varied products. The Moravian schools gained particular recognition.'[12] To anyone wanting to start a commune, just calling yourself Moravian might have suggested you were half-way there!

Secondly, Moravians had an admirable reputation for being excellent immigrants, so perhaps Krumnow hoped that some of that good opinion would rub off onto him if he adopted their name. The term Moravian was taken up by numerous other migrants to advance their prospects.[13]

Thirdly, while Krumnow belonged to the Lutheran Church, and had sought to become a Lutheran Pastor and Missionary, he had been decisively rejected. Perhaps he saw the label 'Moravian' as a way to distance himself from those Lutherans who were rejecting him while cloaking his communist ideology in the mantle of Moravian success?

But, under whatever denominational label and with whatever religious and political views, Johann Friedrich Krumnow came to Australia - and his impact endures.

**Krumnow in Australia**

When Friedrich Krumnow and his fellow religious dissenters landed in South Australia in January 1839, he expected to continue, in the short term, as this group's school teacher and unofficial Pastor but he was shunned because of his ship-board behaviour. Krumnow had to work as a shepherd until he could find other people to join his utopian, communal venture.[14]

Krumnow quickly came to demonstrate his passionate, obsessive belief in his divine calling to establish a new, Godly social order, a Christian commune, in Australia. A contemporary wrote,

> The faith of Krumnow was strong within him. The times were out of joint, he felt that he was born to set them right. Yet he had no personal gifts to recommend him. He was short in stature … almost deformed. Krumnow's grating voice possessed no notes to stir the souls of men. … He was uneducated. He had no single quality of nature in his favour. But within this misshapen body there was a fiery soul. Krumnow had faith in himself, and he inspired faith in others. … Krumnow was the one who would lead mankind to better things. So he … carried on the propaganda of … the revolutionary and socialist.[15]

In 1850, Krumnow moved to Melbourne where he worked as a tailor. He found more acceptance and success for his socialist and communalist teachings within this German migrant community.

In 1852, he gathered about him a small group of zealous followers who came to share his dream of living together as a religious commune where, like the early Christians, all things were to be held in common with no private property. They chose to call their group *Gemeine Herrnhut* or simply Herrnhut commune, after Herrnhut, in Saxony, the location of the first Moravian commune. Friedrich Krumnow identified with this Moravian/Pietist tradition, and tried to strengthen the symbolic connections to his Australian commune by naming it Herrnhut.[16]

The objectives of Herrnhut commune were detailed in their Charter which was written by Friedrich Krumnow, signed by all members, men and women, then registered as their Declaration of Faith on July 14, 1852.

> We, the undersigned, agreeing and accepted in the apostolic doctrine, hereby bind ourselves to uphold, follow, guard and defend (in the case of necessity even with our blood) the pure apostolic faith founded on the holy Word of God. We mutually join and bind ourselves in the bonds of love like brothers and sisters, and by this document call our brother missionary Krumnow as our preacher and teacher, to administer to us the holy

> sacraments, baptise our children, and to marry those who wish to be married. We bind by this document our brother Krumnow to adhere to the true apostolic faith, and under no circumstances to change or alter this doctrine, and demand of him to preach and teach us the faith, and to watch over our souls.
> [We agree to form ourselves] into a religious Brotherhood or society having community of goods and for that purpose to purchase a piece of land and to use it as one undivided farm for [our] common support . …
> [Our] purposes [are] charitable … principally to secure the safety of the souls of … members … by submitting to conform to the mode of thinking and living described by the society, to provide religious training for the children, and to keep destitute people and wayfarers.[17]

A reporter claimed that for these Herrnhut communards 'withdrawing themselves from the world, they would seek the Light of the Hereafter, like the communities of Mount Lebanon and Amana, the Separatists or the Perfectionists of Oneida Creek, by "living the word" on earth'.[18]

Krumnow's followers came from trades such as cobbler, saddle-maker, baker, vinedresser and tailor, or had been soldiers, farmers or farm workers. All were ex-Lutherans and all had been affected by the establishment of a Prussian State Church and the suppression of religious freedom. None of Krumnow's followers had come to Australia to join him, although some had known him in Prussia, and they seemed to be prospering as individuals in this new land prior to his arrival in their lives. Why they then left their farms and businesses, sold and gave everything to this communal venture, and why they bound themselves to be led by Friedrich Krumnow is something we shall never know. Krumnow's oft-mentioned charisma, and his utopian promise of establishing a 'true-religion', and a Godly commune where they would speak German, be secure until death, and all work for their common good and salvation were all factors.

Krumnow's followers, having pooled all their assets, purchased 642 hectares (1584 acres) of Crown Land near Hamilton, 300 kms west of Melbourne, in 1853. Their newly purchased, communal land was registered by Johann Friedrich Krumnow in his own name, a fact unknown to his followers. The key legal problem then and for the duration of Herrnhut commune was that they had not established any legal entity to hold their property, so everything had, by default, to be done in the name of their 'pastor', Friedrich Krumnow. This legal oversight plagued Herrnhut commune throughout its long history.

**Herrnhut Commune**

Friedrich Krumnow and his communards moved onto their communal property before mid 1853. Under their rules, the commune was to provide housing, food and clothing to all members until they died. Their first shelters were of canvas and bark, but they

soon progressed, erecting simple wooden houses to live in, a timber school and other timber buildings for farm purposes. They cleared and fenced their property, cultivated the land, and planted agricultural crops as well as vegetable and fruit gardens. They bought cattle, pigs and sheep, and learned about farming in Australia. They worked very diligently because they were creating their utopia.[19]

In 1854, these communards built their first substantial building, a stone church, able to hold 100 worshipers. According to a contemporary newspaper report,

> thanks to their personal exertions, aided by their energetic parson, the Rev. J.F. Krumnow, and without any assistance from the Colonial Government, [they had] completed the erection of a very substantial stone church. The cost of the building … has been nearly £1,800. … The church is 60 feet [18.3 metres] long by 27 feet [8.2 metres] in width, and the roof is 40 feet [12.2 metres] from the floor".[20]

A descendant of these communards described this impressive Herrnhut church:

> The construction work was solid and faithfully done.
> Eight windows 9' x 2'6 [2.7m. x 0.8m.] on north and south sides gave the lighting. At the apex of the coping stone of the eastern gable a white marble cross three feet [0.9m.] in height was firmly embedded in the stone.
> Below, at the base of this gable, were heavy double entrance doors constructed of blackwood. Above these doors, set against a glass panel, was 18GH54.[21] These doors opened with a large old-fashioned iron key and at a glance revealed the simple dignity of this old chapel. …
> Half way down the Church stood the alter [*sic*] … constructed of stone. …
> Over the top of the Alter [*sic*] … stood the Communion Service[22] … with … a wooden crucifix with the figure of Christ.
> Stone steps led to the octagon shaped pulpit, with its reading desk [and near] the Alter [*sic*] stood the baptismal font, carved from one piece of stone.
> This old church had remarkable acoustic qualities - the resonance of a single voice seemed to fill the church with sound.[23]

The Herrnhut communards dug three deep wells, and lined them with carefully cut blue-stone. They also dug a large dam to provide water for their stock, and as a lure to wild ducks and other birds which they then killed and ate. They dug a complex series of ditches to reclaim some swampy ground. These well-planned ditches and the dam can still be seen, and the latter still holds water.

As new people arrived, Herrnhut grew to about 60 members who lived communally, sharing all money and property, although all power was retained by Krumnow. They had a common kitchen and dining room. August Hildebrandt was the community's main cook and baker, with other cooking being the work of several women. Coffee was their favourite beverage.[24]

Some communards left to join the nearby Lutheran church of Pastor Schürmann, while some conventional Lutherans joined Herrnhut commune. Schürmann did

everything he could to denigrate his communal neighbours, claiming that ‘some women who had earlier been at Krumnow’s and then spent a while with us, told me … that Krumnow had also gone with them into the bush and had prayed, but about indecent things’. These allegations of sexual impropriety at Herrnhut were passed along to other Pastors, and slowly became public knowledge and accepted wisdom.[25]

While this religious name-calling was going on, the Herrnhut communards were busily turning their property into a prosperous farm. They were well-fed and reasonably content. They built substantial stone houses to replace their small timber shacks, and a degree of comfort crept in, despite their hard farm work and strict religious practice.

In 1857, a local newspaper reported that at Herrnhut commune, ‘a very fair quantity of grain has been raised this season, and the people, proverbially sober and industrious, are prospering as they deserve to do. We should not be sorry to see a large increase of our Helvetian friends.’[26]

But dissension was developing amongst the communards, with several leaving, or being expelled, in the mid 1850s. Rachel Scholtze, one of the founding Herrnhut signatories, later claimed,

> I was one of the original members of … the Moravian Society. … Krumnow sent me away … He made other rules than those originally agreed to. He starved me out. … I have always adhered & do still adhere to the religious purposes of the Moravian Society.
> People live on the land until they die and are maintained - get their food and clothing without wages, and work the land for their mutual benefit.
> When I gave my £53 to the Society I did not expect to get it back again but to live on the land and be maintained out of it.
> I would have remained on the land if Krumnow had not turned me out.[27]

The split within their communal ranks forced Krumnow, in 1858, to promise ‘to execute a declaration of trust as to the land at Herrnhut in favour of a religious body to be established and of which he was the Pastor’. Herrnhut’s governance would remain theocratic, with Krumnow being their leader because he was the closest to God (and Krumnow was the authority on such issues!).[28]

In spite of his numerous faults, Krumnow was a good farm manager. Herrnhut communards supported themselves comfortably through raising sheep, growing grain, and selling milk and other farm produce to residents of Hamilton and to the miners on nearby goldfields. They had a ready market for all their produce, and could compete very well against their Lutheran neighbours.

> Sheep rearing didn't need much hard work, except for a few weeks each year when the sheep had to be shorn. There was an abundance of mutton, and having rather fertile land, there wouldn't have been a shortage of vegetables, milk, butter, etc either. By selling the wool they got money to purchase clothing and other necessities. …
> There was no need to work very hard at Herrnhut.
> It was often a colourful life in the settlement of Herrnhut, as tramps and swagmen often dropped in, being greeted with hospitality and allowed to stay as long as they liked.[29]

That they could feed themselves, as well as produce and market surplus food, is an acknowledgment of both the hard work and farming expertise of members, and of Friedrich Krumnow's organising abilities. Herrnhut communards were happy, working together and becoming competent farmers, so their property comfortably supported them and their numerous visitors.

The 1860s were the high point of Herrnhut commune. Daily life during this period of relative affluence and comfort was later recalled in glowing terms by Louisa Elmore, nee Röhr, who was a teenager there at the time, and who figures prominently in Herrnhut's latter period.

> We were very happy in those days - no pain or trouble seemed to bother us, plenty of everything, a good warm bed to sleep in. In the ploughing time we used to get up early to get the cows and bring father the horses. Then we would feed the cows. Then the men fed the horses. Then we would have breakfast, then prayers and then to work. Sunday we had always to ourselves. There was … no milking or cooking on Sunday except potatoes. They would be washed and placed in the pot Saturday night, then there would be nothing to do on Sunday after coming from Church, just run the hot water out of the fountain on to the potatoes and that was all the cooking that had to be done. The meat would be cooked on Saturday. We used to have beetroot pickles with this cold meat. … I have thought many a time since of those peaceful Sundays. I used to spend a good deal of time reading [in] the schoolroom. … We used to make a good fire in the cold weather and sit by the fire and read. They did not ask us to help in the kitchen except for meal times. We would dry up the dishes for the cook.
> All the cleaning was done on Saturday. The window cleaning … and cleaning candlesticks and forks was my work of a Saturday and I used to like it.
> Each of us used to do our part of work and we never once thought of jibing [baulking]. They used to use candles in those days in the schoolroom and I used to be quite glad of Saturday night when the brass candlesticks used to look nice and bright. Mary [her sister] used to help Father to clean the books on Saturday afternoon.[30]

Because of their commitment to pacifism and doing 'good works', Herrnhut commune became a Mecca of security and peace within the, at times, violent Australian countryside. Over 300 Aborigines sought protection at Herrnhut, while up to 30 homeless white men were said to have been at Herrnhut at one time. A Travellers' Hut was built and maintained for their comfort.[31]

Friedrich Krumnow was said by his critics to be ‘hospitable to a fault. No person ever left Herrn Hut [*sic*] without a meal or a bed at night … he liked to be kind to the poor people, some of whom, particularly the woman kind, used to impose on the old man to the extent of getting money from him.’[32] One of Krumnow’s critics obviously disapproved of such hospitality by salaciously (and incorrectly) suggesting, ‘Anyone could find meat and drink at Herrnhut. After a time they could be received into the community, with the privileges of hard work, coarse food, and the possible share of a wife.’[33]

Herrnhut communards did not believe in doctors or medicine. When one member died, an inquest was convened at which Friedrich Krumnow testified,

> I am the Moravian Minister of this place, the deceased was a member of the Society here. He was taken ill on Tuesday last, we did not send for a doctor as our religious principles do not authorise the calling in of medical aid for any internal complaints, we would do so for a broken limb, or an external wound; if we had sent for a doctor in the present case, we would have been breaking the laws of our Church and the Rules of the Society - I was with the deceased on Thursday evening and gave him drink. I did not think he was about to die, he could always eat his food, only the last three days - I would not have sent for a doctor even if I had thought he was in a dying state, we administer no medicine for any internal complaint.
> If a brother was ill with an inward complaint, I do not believe that a doctor or medicine would prolong life or relieve him; it cannot be proved.[34]

In March 1867, Friedrich Krumnow sought to improve the welfare of local Aborigines when he appeared with several of them before the Shire Council, arguing for land to be reserved for these original inhabitants. This was obviously not acceptable behaviour for a white man! But, perhaps because of Krumnow’s fair treatment of local Aborigines, Herrnhut did not experience the racial problems faced by some of their neighbours.[35]

It was proving to be very expensive to finance this commune and support all members and their numerous visitors and seekers-of-refuge, so Herrnhut’s collective debts increased throughout this period.

As is often found in religiously-based communes, members’ and visitors’ time was highly organised. A large bell was rung at 6 am for the prayers which started the workday. ‘Anyone who would not join in these devotions could not work on the property. Krumnow read several chapters from Scripture and prayer was offered’. Breakfast was at 7 and lunch at 12. Members would then work till dark when a simple evening meal ended the day. Prayers were held in their church before each meal, and all members and visitors had to attend. William Shannon, a Quaker, would often read the lessons in English for the benefit of visitors. Meals were eaten together,

although Krumnow generally ate separately. Krumnow's 'faithful followers were devoted to him, and accepted his preaching and teaching as God's word'.[36]

In 1870, 56 year old Samuel Marsden Knight, a free-lance journalist who used the pen-name of Frederick Elmore, came to visit Herrnhut. He was a relatively well-educated and well-connected English migrant, the nephew of the famous Reverend Samuel Marsden of New South Wales and New Zealand. Knight's wife had recently died, and he was wandering the countryside, healing his grief. Samuel Marsden Knight's arrival had a profound, long-term impact on Herrnhut and its communards.

Fred Elmore, as the communards knew him, became Herrnhut's school teacher. Herrnhut commune, he later claimed, 'was inhabited by very simple-minded religious people … labouring under many great delusions'. Krumnow was, in his opinion, a truly evil man.[37]

In spite of his negative impressions, Fred Elmore did not leave Herrnhut because he fell in love with one of his students, 19 year old Louisa Röhr who had come with her parents to Herrnhut in 1853. Louisa Röhr soon became pregnant to Fred Elmore so, in the middle of an early August night in 1872 they eloped to start a new life. They would later return to Herrnhut where Louisa would succeed Krumnow as leader.

Meanwhile, Herrnhut was plagued with more prosaic problems than the romantic elopement of one of its young members with her school teacher. Relations between Herrnhut and their more conventional neighbours was problematic and occasionally violent, they had lost several members, and the communal farm was no longer so prosperous, while their debts were increasing. Herrnhut commune generally received a bad press, one fanciful, almost hysterical, account describing them as 'a queer community', while claiming that 'community of wives or at least "complex marriages" were allowed as in … Oneida. Women and young girls toiled in the fields early and late, some clothed only with an old sack - toiled as hard as any Negro slave. Body and soul they were under the control of Krumnow'.[38] One local resident salaciously claimed that 'at times he [Krumnow] used to chain up the women … when they had done wrong'.[39] Following this salacious line, another local resident claimed,

> Krumnow did not dwell all the time on a spiritual plane, but also had strong fleshly appetites. As head of the colony, he demanded that any of the women, including the wives of other members, should be honoured to share his bed, and … many of the Herrnhut children bore a marked physical resemblance to him.[40]

Another critic commented, 'One is surprised not to see more children, until you remember that matrimony is always discouraged by the German communistic societies, and that here the practice of the Perfectionists of Oneida Creek was instituted by Krumnow.' The 'practice' referred to was birth control.[41]

There is no conclusive evidence about the sexual practices at Herrnhut although rumours of Krumnow's sexual appetite and proclivities, ranging from paedophilia to demanding sexual access to all the women, endured and plagued the group, and are still part of the accepted folk wisdom of many local people.

Things were clearly deteriorating at Herrnhut in the mid 1870s when the communards again demanded to see the legal title to the land which they believed to now be in their collective names, only to discover that Krumnow still held title in his own name rather than as a trustee for the community. No doubt, Krumnow saw himself as holding this property in trust for the use of his communards. This might not have been such a big issue during the commune's early, more enthusiastic phase, but as members aged, it became a very contentious point. Several members left Herrnhut over this incident but the commune struggled on. Krumnow was losing his grip on his followers, and the commune was beginning to break up.

Krumnow desperately sought new members to fill Herrnhut's empty houses and help work their communal land, but few people were interested in joining. Herrnhut's members were ageing, and there were not enough younger members to take over the farm work.

In 1876, in the eyes of Friedrich Krumnow, a 'God-sent' miracle happened when he took over Hill Plain, another commune in the district, and moved about 30 new members to Herrnhut.

Hill Plain commune had been created in 1875 by Maria Heller, a German mystic, and her followers. Maria Heller had frequent 'fits' during which God spoke to and through her. One of the many prophecies which she received was that she would 'give birth to the two witnesses of the Lord mentioned in Revelations of John (XI, 3) and thereafter it would be her destination to rule on this earth'.[42]

One of Heller's earliest and most devoted followers explained,

> I have known her [Heller] about five years. … She has nearly always had these fits. … When she is in a trance she has conversations with heavenly spirits. I believe that is as true as that there is a God in heaven. I am convinced the spirit of our Saviour converses with her in the same manner as is mentioned in the Bible. That spirit of God speaks through her mouth when she is in one of those fits.[43]

While in a trance in Germany in 1874, God had told Heller that there would soon be a 'dreadful holocaust that would devastate all Europe' and, to avoid this calamity, she must take her followers to Australia, 'the only safe place in the world'. In Australia they were to establish a religious commune, a utopia, with herself as leader. Heller told her followers about Australia and what God had planned for their future.

> There, God orders, shall I lead you. There, God prepares houses and land, already waiting for you on our arrival. There, we will dwell for ten years under our fig trees and vine, in abundance and peace, and prepare ourselves totally for His kingdom. Then, once we are purified, I will lead you to the New Jerusalem which the Lord has rebuilt in the meantime, and later we will return to Germany, totally purified, as His one and only True Flock.[44]

Hill Plain commune failed dismally in Australia, with eight deaths from starvation and scurvy within the first few months. When Krumnow invited them to join Herrnhut, Heller saw this as the next step in God's plan for her group to create a New Jerusalem because, at Herrnhut, there were 'houses and land, already waiting for you on our arrival' just as God had earlier prophesied. In Krumnow's eyes, however, they were just more recruits for Herrnhut.

The arrival of Heller and about 30 of her followers in 1876 doubled the population of Herrnhut , and strained all resources. These two groups of communards were very different types of people, and the two leaders were even more different. While Krumnow's ageing followers were competent farmers, Heller's were younger, more likely to have a trade, and more artistically inclined. While Krumnow saw himself as a learned man, a rational and efficient manager, and used the title of Pastor, Heller was a non-rational mystic who received direct communications from God, and believed herself destined to be the mother of the new Christ.

The newly arrived Hill Plain communards altered the social and cultural life in the previously flagging Herrnhut. 'The music at … Herrnhut was very superior last Sunday. Some of the [Hill Plain] newcomers having formed a vocal and instrumental choir, which, without the aid of a harmonium or organ, sang sacred music true to note, such as … was never heard in Western Victoria before. Some of the performers have silver instruments.'[45]

Charismatic leaders, particularly those claiming direct communication with God, and to be 'True Believers', are rarely able to brook challenges to their supreme position. Two charismatic leaders in the one commune can be incendiary! Krumnow and Heller both saw themselves as divinely inspired leaders, although in quite different ways so, not surprisingly, they did not get along in the same commune although their relationship had previously been amicable and supportive.

Relations between Krumnow's and Heller's followers also soured. Prior to their arrival, there had been plenty of housing at Herrnhut but now they were over-crowded, underfed and facing financial ruin. The improved church music was much appreciated but did not overcome all the other problems.

They ended up in court with Krumnow's followers accusing Heller of being 'a dangerous lunatic', and of her followers 'the men lazy, and the women whores'.[46]

One of Heller's followers then claimed that Krumnow was a despot 'whose cunning and audacity has already ensnared many simple people'.[47] There may well have been something in all these accusations.

The provision of food placed impossible demands on Herrnhut's resources. Because of feuds between the two charismatic leaders, arguments and petty bickering between their followers, and the relative poverty at Herrnhut when compared to the prosperity around them, Heller and most of the ex-Hill Plain communards soon left Herrnhut, in bitter acrimony.

Herrnhut had incurred further debts through this disastrous episode, and the commune was now in a parlous financial state, as well as riddled with dissension. As his health deteriorated through age and drink, Krumnow desperately tried to raise additional capital and find new recruits, but to no avail. Herrnhut was down to about ten adults, all were ageing and in declining health - and all were thoroughly disillusioned with Krumnow.

Johann Friedrich Krumnow died on October 3, 1880, aged 69, and was buried next to their stone church. He had led Herrnhut commune since its inception twenty-eight years earlier. According to a descendant of these communards, when Krumnow was buried there was so much antipathy toward him that his erstwhile followers 'wanted him buried face downwards so that he could not scratch his way out again'.[48]

The leadership of Herrnhut commune was taken on by Louisa Elmore who had grown up on Herrnhut (as Louisa Röhr) and then eloped with her teacher, Fred Elmore. Upon Krumnow's death, they returned to Herrnhut. The commune was burdened by debt. Herrnhut had ten adult members but, because all were either old or otherwise incapable of hard farm work, they had to rely on hired labour.

Louisa and Fred Elmore tried to trade the commune out of debt, and did a good job because, in 1882, Herrnhut's lawyer optimistically stated that the commune 'was now recovering its losses and with a good season or two might be paying its way'. This optimistic assessment, however, was not to eventuate. They soon realised that the only way was to sell out and distribute the remaining assets between members. The problem with this was that the land was still in the name of Johann Friedrich Krumnow, and he had left no will. It took several years of court battles and considerable legal expense to clear this land-title, while holding creditors at bay. During that time, Herrnhut members followed communal principles as their debts increased, members aged, and the farm declined.[49]

On October 7, 1889, Herrnhut was finally sold, but their debts and legal costs soaked up all the funds, with nothing left for the ex-communards. On that day Herrnhut commune, established back in 1852, formally ceased to exist as a collective social

and economic enterprise, and one of the strangest chapters in Australian social history was closed.[50]

Almost a century later, a Victorian newspaper would refer to Herrnhut as ‘Australia’s most colourful trial in communal living’ - a very accurate description.[51]

Today, one can walk through the ruins of Herrnhut’s stone houses and church, follow the paths of the early drains and roads, and watch birds on the still-existing dam. There is an eerie, lonely feel to the cemetery and the rest of the site where Australia’s first utopian commune was created, thrived, then collapsed.

## Endnotes

1 This paper is based on the book *Herrnhut, Australia's First Utopian Commune*, by W. Metcalf and B. Huf, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, to be released in early 2002.
My appreciation is extended to Betty Huf and Melbourne University Press for permission to reproduce some material from that book.
*Herrnhut, Australia's First Utopian Commune* has far more details about this commune, plus many photographs.

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19 L. Huf, op. cit., p. 6; and interview with Miss Christina Albert by Mr Len Huf, 1956, held by the Hamilton History Centre.

20 *Belfast Gazette*, as quoted in *Argus*, 29 April 1857, p. 5.

21 GH referred to *Gemeinde Herrnhut*, or Herrnhut Commune, and the numbers 1854 denoted the year of its erection.

22 This communion service still exists and has been located as part of the author's research.

23 Letter from Theophilus Elmore to James MacDonald, Director of Victorian National Gallery, 24 November 1936, in possession of author.

24 L. Huf, op. cit., p. 5; and Interview on 26 June 1956, with Mr Albert, aged 94, held by Hamilton History Centre.

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29 Lodewyckx, op. cit., p. 141.

30 Letter from Louisa Elmore (nee Röhr) to Lydia Elmore, 21 April 1912, in possession of author.

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45 *Hamilton Spectator*, 1 April 1876, p. 2.

46 *Der Australischer Christenbote*, August 1876, p. 117, as translated by Isabell Blömer; and *Hamilton Spectator*, 19 August 1876, p. 6.

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## 1.4 New roles for community

# Urbanization: The Catalyst Speeding Changes in the Kibbutz Family and in the Status of Kibbutz Women

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**Introduction**

In this paper I argue that the urbanization perspective is a good way to investigate the changes the kibbutz is undergoing. This perspective is rarely used in analysis of the change process in the kibbutz, which has experienced a transition from an agricultural society to an industrial and post – industrial society. I suggest that we look at the changes as examples of unavoidable self-correction that removed obstacles preventing further developments.

Since the late 60s the kibbutz ceaselessly transformed its structure. Urbanization is the appropriate concept to describe this process, which developed out of the educational and industrial revolution the kibbutz underwent in those years. Although agriculture was still advancing successfully, industry, services, crafts and administration began to offer a greater variety of jobs.

## Urbanization

"Urbanization" is a process described by three main spheres of community transformation.
1. In the economic sphere there is a reduction in the share of income from agriculture, while at the same time the variety of occupations providing other sources of income, keeps growing. More people find their living out side the community, increasing the number of commuters. The resulting differences in ownership of property, and in social, cultural and human capital turn the community into a more stratified one.

2. In interpersonal relations there is a transition from a community-centered life to a home centered life. Instead of face-to-face interaction and friendship there is a shift to formal relations and alienation. Mutual commitment and help gives way to more egocentric behavior. (A transition from "gemeinshaft to gesellschaft".)

3. As cultivated fields become real estate and new buildings are constructed densely, style of life changes. More cars and roads fill the landscape and the consumption of urban goods and social-cultural events increases.

**Removing the Obstacles that Prevent Continuation of the Urbanization Process in the Kibbutz**

**Main changes in the economic sphere**

During the 70s and 80s the productive branches changed from being agriculturally to industrially centered. From the 90s on, the amount of income produced by economic enterprises of the kibbutz declined, as a growing share of income derived from the salaries of members working outside the kibbutz. Small businesses on the kibbutz are emerging in growing numbers. Orchan, Hailbrun and Getz (1999) listed 836 small businesses and new initiatives in arts & crafts, alternative health care and medicine, tourist attractions etc.

Conceptual changes brought about formal collective decisions. As a result of the economic crisis, 71% of the kibbutzim (Getz 1997) decided to encourage members to find jobs outside the kibbutz and deposit their salaries in the empty treasury.

Past restrictions on employment of non-kibbutz members were removed. Formerly A kibbutz paid a fine to the Kibbutz Artzi Federation for every non-kibbutz worker employed. In some kibbutzim the economic coordinator had to receive permission from the General Assembly to take on a new employee, a requirement no longer in existence.

Most of the workers with routine jobs and "on the floor" jobs in kibbutz factories are non-kibbutz employees who comprise 62% of the work force in kibbutz industry (Favin, 2001), or are elderly kibbutz members. Younger kibbutz members working in kibbutz industry, fill administrative and managerial posts.

**Table 1. Men and Women in their Branch of Work (prc.)**

| | **1978** | | **1986** | | **1994** | | **2001** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Women** | **Men** | **Women** | **Men** | **Women** | **Men** | **Women** | **Men** |
| Agriculture | 1.0 | 31.0 | 3.0 | 22.0 | 5.0 | 23.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 |
| Industry, crafts and tourism | 8.0 | 30.0 | 6.0 | 38.0 | 21.0 | 34.0 | 20.0 | 42.0 |
| Public services | 37.0 | 10.0 | 30.0 | 6.0 | 26.0 | 16.0 | 27.0 | 11.0 |
| Education | 39.0 | 5.0 | 38.0 | 4.0 | 26.0 | 5.0 | 28.0 | 5.0 |
| Administration | 8.0 | 8.0 | 12.0 | 14.0 | 12.0 | 15.5 | 13.0 | 19.0 |
| Other | 7.0 | 16.0 | 11.0 | 16.0 | 10.0 | 6.5 | 10.0 | 9.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: Adar 1998, and Palgi & Sharir 2001

Table 1 outlines the division of labor between the genders over a long period. It also casts light upon the change in the occupational structure for both genders: For men the decrease of agriculture in favor of industrialization, small businesses and administrative jobs. Women entered those branches in smaller numbers as they moved out of education and semi-home services.

With the obstacles to commuting removed, middle-aged people with higher education and occupational training, work outside the kibbutz in growing numbers, reaching as high as 33%-40% (Palgi & Sharir 2001).

The pressure upon kibbutz women to work as a “Metapelet” (children’s nurse), gave way to fuller occupational freedom, thereby legitimizing employment outside the kibbutz. This enlarged their occupational repertoire. The percentage of males and females employed outside the kibbutz is quite similar; although the type of branch they work in jobs they perform are different. In small kibbutz enterprises women make up the majority of staff, increasing their earning capacity as they enter into the paid-work sector in growing numbers.

The decision of 18% of the kibbutzim (Getz 2001) to adopt personal differential wages has had a powerful impact on all spheres of life giving a major thrust to the urbanization process.

Stratification of the communal community

Kibbutz researchers raised the issue of stratification as soon as the industrialization process began (Zamir, 1973).

Adar, (1982) pointed out that kibbutz members perceive a kibbutz occupational prestige scale, that coincides with unequal rewards at kibbutz jobs. Ben-Rafael (1984) argued that although kibbutz stratification does not meet Marxian definition of classes, the complexity of kibbutz society proves it to be a stratified society. Rosolio (2001) describes the new kibbutz as having at least four different strata: kibbutz members, hired employees, temporary residents and permanent residents who rent apartments on the kibbutz.

The deepening of stratification is no longer in question, its indicators are:

1. Differential salaries
2. Individual consumption replacing the communal treasury.
3. Plans for distributing kibbutz collective estates between its members. Homes and apartments would become private.
4. Building of new neighborhoods whose dwellings will be sold to individuals from outside the kibbutz.

This route to demographic increase, is aimed at bringing about an economic and social renaissance and since 1992 was taken by many moshavim. Hoping to renew their fading communities, kibbutzim decided to follow in the path of moshavim.

Kibbutzim willing to give up their prior character as a small rural and communal community they could then grow into big neighborhoods serving as dormitories for their inhabitants. The new neighborhoods will accelerate the urbanization process and demographically and geographically change the kibbutz from a village settlement into a suburb.

## Changes in life style

Most kibbutzniks begin their work-day later in the morning – not with sunrise, as was common in the past. People now dress well for work, and fewer wear blue-collar outfits. Meals are considered a private activity, as is cultural consumption. Entertainment patterns are conditioned by age: popular music appeals to the younger generation’s subculture, the older generation preferring folk songs and lectures. Clubs and Discos exist on most kibbutzim, but concerts, cinema, theater and weddings are held outside the kibbutz. Jewish festivals and holiday celebrations are fading out. Large homes and private parking spaces for cars owned by kibbutz members have become status symbols .

## The ideological/conceptual shift

Self-fulfillment, Individualism, and economic neo-liberal attitudes replaced the former values of equality and cooperation. Ravid (1999, p143) states: “In the sphere of consumption, the community and its members are no longer responsible for the individual any more. More over, these normative changes express the unwillingness of the individual to give up his needs for the special needs of some-one else.”

Gluck at al (1998) discovered that the anti-collective and pro-individual values widely held by Israel’s urban population was paralleled among kibbutzniks leaving their communities. In a sample of the reasons given for departing I quote: “I don’t want others to interfere in my private life” (60%); “I don’t want to be dependent on other people (61%). Other reasons advanced reflected the race after economic rewards and occupational advancement. 47% of the kibbutz born persons who answered the questionnaire claimed that although every thing was fine they just did not want to live in the kibbutz.

**Table 2. Reasons for Leaving the Kibbutz**

Percentage of answers “Important and very important reason for me to leave the kibbutz”

| | |
|---|---|
| Interference of others in my private problems | 60.0 |
| The disparity between my contribution and my personal satisfaction was too big | 45.9 |
| The Kibbutz way of life is no longer relevant to our times | 38.3 |
| There was no possibility to develop innovations and incentives | 37.3 |
| The occupational standards that I strove to achieve were absent (44% of the women gave this answer) | 36.0 |
| To prove that I can cope with life out side the kibbutz | 32.4 |
| I felt that my capabilities could not be realized | 32.2 |
| My chances to work in a job that I wanted were limited | 27.2 |

Source: Gluck: 1998.

<u>The Family unit</u>

Structural changes in the kibbutz family occurred through the 90s.

High marriage and birth rates characterized agrarian kibbutz society, as did low age of marriage and low divorce rate. Throughout the 80’s members demonstrated positive attitudes toward familism, a sense of pride in their enlarging community and confidence that the promise of social security for the elderly would be kept.

The frequency of children per family was 4. The mean number was 3.6 in the year 1972 (Orchan, 1990). In a society where the extended family is the main element in its structure, high birth rates guarantee its future. Before the present crisis the number of extended families was growing and the familistic discourse was central. This strong sense of commitment to the family was shared primarily among women, who preferred it above other options for self-actualization. Familism had an oppressive impact on women’s lives, playing an important role in hindering occupational careers for women.

The main building stones of kibbutz society were the extended families of three or four generations: Parents and their children and their children’s children, married siblings and relatives by marriage living in the same community.

The “Hamula” (the extended family) was studied as a source of power for its members (Am-Ad 1980) and as the source of status for kibbutz women in Ben-Rafael & Weiteman (1984).

The picture is very different now. Kibbutz families are shrinking. As happens with urbanization, one of the main consequences is the departure of the young and unmarried. They emigrate from home and, sometimes from the country. (The urge for new experience, the ease of traveling,
etc. makes it popular, while higher education made it possible to live out side the kibbutz). Because of the kibbutz economic crisis, families aged 35-50 with children left the kibbutz. 61% moved to cities and 60% live at least 50 km away from their kibbutz of origin. Examining the structure of kibbutz society today one might imagine that it is built mostly around small families. The majority of families consist of one couple and dependent singles who are their siblings or old parents of the nuclear family.

The data show that the proportion between married people and singles was changed in favor of the singles, and that the number of multi-generations families is declining. (Adar, 2001).

**Table 3. Couples and Singles, 1983 and 2000 in comparison**

| | | **1983** | **2000** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Couples** | | 2213 | 1870 |
| | (2X) | 74% | 62% |
| | | | |
| **Singles** | | 1591 | 2308 |
| | | 26% | 38% |
| | | | |
| **Big families (2 or more couples) as prc. of all families** | | 17% | 15% |

## Consequences for Women

The economic crisis pushed many kibbutz members into finding jobs out side the kibbutz. Professional women were the first to get into the labor market. Nurses, teachers and highly professional secretaries were integrated into the regional labor market more easily compared to other occupations (Adar 1997).
It can be claimed that women may at least choose diverse occupations despite the division of the labor market according to gender . Once the objection to women working out side the kibbutz was removed and more women earned good salaries, their proportion in the regional labour market became equal to men’s.

**Table 4. Sector of Job by Gender (Prc.)**

| Sector | Women | Men |
|---|---|---|
| In my kibbutz | 63.0 | 67.0 |
| Kibbutzim, Partnerships & the Federations | 16.0 | 10.0 |
| Public Sector | 9.0 | 3.0 |
| Privet Sector | 10.0 | 4.0 |
| Other | 10.0 | 8.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: Palgi & Sharir _2001

Table 4 differentiates between members working inside the kibbutz (The answer: “In my kibbutz” was given by 63% of the women) and out side it (37%).
If in the past women were pushed into child nursing, kitchen work, laundry etc, these days they have more legitimization to choose the kind of occupation they would like. Now women working out side the kibbutz face new burdens like the need for a car to commute, or long hours of children’s day care.

Privatization is restricting the supply of the services given to the family and individual by the community. Therefore the “second job”, (women’s family duties) consumes much more time (Palgi, 1997). Putting family first, has an impact on earning ability and on chances for promotion. Hence, kibbutz discourse is less familistic and more career oriented.

In the past the kibbutz treated single mothers and single women and every child as equals. Now their situation is less secure. Although privatization has an impact on the social security of all segments of the kibbutz, the urbanization phenomena, loosens the security belt for the weaker part of society. Urbanization reduces face-to-face interactions and the support networks that had been institutionalized in the past. The high divorce rate, low re-marriage rate and inferior status on the labor market, result in insecurity.
In the future the poverty of single women and elderly women on the kibbutz will become comparable to outside society.

## Conclusions

In examining the structural changes in the kibbutzim through the urbanization prism, they

emerge as unavoidable, and the whole process, seems today, as nonreversible.
To some extent the changes fit the self-perception of kibbutz members as being a modern community within Israeli society.

The process is still in motion. Through the absorption of new residents who are not kibbutz members, the stopgap measures that delayed the change process, will disappear.

For those trying to preserve the main elements of the kibbutz partnership and for young people living in the new communal modes of Israel, confrontation with basic dilemmas is inevitable. Here are two open questions: Is there a way to combine personal freedom with collective missions? Can a multigenerational, individualistic society, retain its solidarity?

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# BETWEEN OPPORTUNITY AND DUTY:
# A NEW ROLE FOR ALTERNATIVE IDEOLOGIES

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## Abstract

The 20th century has been, in Western industrialized countries, the battleground for the struggle between three ideologies: democracy, fascism, and communism. By the end of the century, after having defeated the fascist forces, and following the collapse of Soviet communism, the United States, assertive leader of the democratic camp, emerged as uncontested victor, and universal symbol for democracy. Exploiting capitalism under its most liberal form as a weapon, it has combined its political clout, its military superiority, its technological leadership, its dynamic enterprises, and its benchmark currency, to extend its influence and values practically the world over. Its overwhelming success on all fronts has led many to proclaim the birth of a 'new era', in which continuous improvements in technology and productivity, and global financial efficiency, point towards an ever prosperous world. However, the benefits of this new global order have not spread throughout society, but have instead been awarded to a very exclusive few. With its obsession for competition, and its winner-takes-it-all mentality, the present free market model has left an increasing number of people behind. Their ranks have been fed by a middle class that has constantly lost ground throughout the last two decades, destabilized by economic inequality, mounting job uncertainty, and social insecurity.

Aggravating the social malaise, market forces have gradually stripped state institutions of their economic powers, narrowing thus the possibility to distinguish one political platform from the other. As a consequence, weakened governments have gradually lost credibility in the eyes of their electorate, which has translated by record low turnouts at recent national or supranational elections. Looking for solutions outside mainstream political parties, a widening audience has turned to more radical ideals: fascism has been the major beneficiary of this trend.

Feeding on widespread disillusionment, uninspired political leadership, and growing chaotic economic conditions, the fascist ideology has re-emerged to become, in many industrialized countries, the favourite alternative. Its development proceeds on two levels: as a democratically-dressed political manifestation, and as a draw for the younger generation, using violence as its main expressive support.

By stimulating hatred and segregation as a way-out to the problems of social exclusion and insecurity, fascism poses, as it has done before, a major threat to the democratic standards that industrialized nations have slowly and painfully developed. With communism totally discredited, the pendulum movement towards the right of the political spectrum is far from being completed. The vulnerability of our democratic institutions gives fascism further opportunities to conquer a predominant position in our societies in the coming decades. Although we cannot pretend to stop it, to slow its advance might prevent us from being carried too far off-balance.

Throughout the 20th century, kibbutzim have developed around an ideological alternative advancing equality as its fundamental principle. This non-doctrinaire movement has clearly established that equalitarian values can be successfully integrated in a democratic environment.

As a system of communities, each built on its own particular configuration, it has created a dynamic society with a pluralistic structure.
In addition, it has provided new grounds for the development of the individual, not only by untying work from salary, but by offering also effective solutions to the alienating process reigning in many aspect of our societies.
Such equalitarian values could provide democracy with a much-needed ideological impetus. The multiple cracks that have appeared in the social and moral fabric of our societies show how indispensable is a viable alternative that would reinforce norms and values such as freedom, equality, and justice, and keep in this way the foundations of democracy alive.

**INTRODUCTION - The New Era**

"*Few things can happen more disastrous*
*than the decay and death of a regulative system no longer fit,*
*before another and fitter regulative system has grown up to replace it*."
[Herbert Spencer; in Gross 1985, 8]

Three ideologies have dominated the political, economical and social landscape of most Western industrialized nations in the 20th century:
- Democracy, promoting political and legal rights, with the respect of private property as fundamental rule;
- Fascism, calling for a strong national identity under authoritarian rule, with the respect of private property as fundamental rule as well;
- Communism, a dogma abolishing private property to defend the social and economical rights of each individual.

All three have been very active until the Second World War which saw the democratic camp and the communist one, brought together under the same flag, fight and defeat the fascist forces that had broken the fundamental rule. The scale of the conflict and the atrocities that were committed by the fascist camp left their ideology completely discredited for several decades afterwards.

## The world in black-and-white

After the defeat of the fascist coalition, the two remaining camps, represented by the Soviet Union and the United States, which emerged from WW2 as the major victor, resumed their ideological struggle, centred on their conflicting point of view towards private property. This Cold War created a gigantic propaganda machine that produced a simplistic black-and-white vision of the world, in which each side claimed that the other was pure evil, and had for sole purpose to dominate the world. With each camp confined to areas clearly delimited by geographical boundaries, the ideological divide thus created incited many intellectuals to fight for the opposite side, especially in Western and Central Europe, main theatres of the Cold War.
However, by the end of the 1960s and through the 1970s, a series of events permanently stained this idealistic black-and-white image of the world. On the one side, some of them, like the Soviet military intervention in Prague, the publication of Solzhenitsyn's The Gulag Archipelago, the criticism of human rights activist and Nobel Prize winner Andrei Sakharov, and the genocide in Cambodia succeeded in derailing Soviet communism propaganda machine.

Furthermore, because of the prolonged decline in economic growth , standards of living in the Soviet Union deteriorated, and daily life was grim. The system was cracking from all sides. In the West, the appeal for its cause rapidly dwindled, leaving many intellectuals and politicians alike feeling betrayed.
On the other side, the hegemony of the United States suffered severe setbacks: economically, with the breakdown of the Bretton Woods monetary system, and the recession brought by the oil shocks of the 1970s; militarily and politically, with the Vietnam War fiasco, the Watergate scandal, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the Iranian Revolution . These events disrupted the balance of power in the world, and led to a growing malaise in the American society.
By the end of the 1970s, the two 'ideological' dreams were but a distant memory. Communism, as implemented in the Soviet Union, had not created the worker's paradise it had promised, and the American dream had fallen apart. In the space of a decade, the black-and-white coating of the Cold War had disappeared: it had concealed a very complex and insecure world.

## The birth of the new order

Corresponding to the weakening of communism, a new liberal trend emerged in the democratic camp when Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain and Ronald Reagan in the US came to power. It developed primarily as a reaction to the economic recessions and social unrest that plagued the 1970s.
Under the motto of economic modernization, Thatcher's government successfully reduced the power of trade unions, and accelerated the privatisation process . These policies allowed the deregulation of labour markets, essential constituent to the development of a free market economy.
In the US, Reagan's policies will have a major impact on the prevalence of capital against income. First, through a sharp reduction in taxes applicable to non-salary income, the top rich decile began paying a lower rate of taxes than the working middle class. Second, to finance projects like the SDI , the Reagan administration reduced social security budget, and had still to borrow massively. These policies initiated "a huge transfer of wealth" [Rohatyn 1995], favouring people in possession of capital to the detriment of the wage-earning class.

The new liberal trend was soon endorsed by several governments in Continental Europe, most of them, ironically, of socialist credo. These will give birth to the new centre-left political movement that still dominates Europe's political landscape.
In Spain, the PSOE (Spain's Socialist Party) accessed power in 1982. Under the direction of its secretary-general Felipe Gonzáles, the party had already in 1979 abandoned its socialist economic principles. As Prime Minister, Felipe Gonzáles implemented free market policies to modernize the Spanish economy.
In France, socialist President François Mitterand elected in 1981, abruptly changed direction in 1983, switching from pure socialist economic policies to free-market liberalism. This shift was forced upon the French government by financial markets. The policies of nationalisation, of raising the minimum wage, of increasing social benefits, and of implementing a special tax on large fortunes, brought about declining exports, raising unemployment, and, with capital fleeing the country, a decline in the value of the French Franc. With punitively high interests rates imposed by international financial markets, it became increasingly difficult for the government to finance its policies. It finally gave in, and adopted the new general trend of

‘economic modernization’ by cutting spending, and implementing a privatisation program.

## Democracy and capitalism go global …

For capitalist democracy, the years 1989 to 1991 will prove to be decisive, initiating the re-establishment of America’s hegemony.

First, politically. With the collapse of the Soviet system, the Cold War finally came to an end, symbolically marked by the dismantlement of the Berlin Wall. The United States, with its unrelenting anti-communist convictions, emerged as the undisputed winner of that forty-five yearlong conflict.

Second, militarily. Under the leadership of the US, the allied forces won the Gulf War waged against Iraq. Not only did it confirm the United States as the world’s first military power, but it also put a definitive end to the trauma left by the Vietnam War in American psyche.

Finally, on the economic front, the crash of the Japanese stock market will prove to be of great psychological importance as well. Throughout the 1980s, Japanese enterprises have had the economic upper hand, with their innovative new products and their efficient way to produce them. American enterprises, beaten on what they considered a field of their own, were devastated by pessimism. Moreover, Japan had become a financial powerhouse, and the major lender of the planet, while the US government turned out to be its biggest borrower. However, as a consequence to the economic boom, financial excesses had build up in the Japanese economy. These, eventually, led to the collapse of the Nikkei. Cheap credit and liquidity evaporated almost instantaneously, sending deflationary shockwaves all over the world, and this once almighty economy contracted in a long and painful recession that has not yet run its full course.

The breakdown of the Japanese economy, combined to the information technology (IT) revolution, will allow American enterprises, rejuvenated by years spent in reorganizing and re-inventing themselves, to regain their technological and economical dominance.

The last major obstacle holding back the lift-off of America’s economic supremacy will disappear when President Bill Clinton, democrat elected in 1992, will turn away from deficit spending, and bring the federal budget back into balance. Added to the deflationary pressures, it will pave the way for US Federal Reserve policies of low interest rates and cheap money.

The combination of all these events will prove to be explosive. Politically, militarily and economically, the hegemony of the United States will be absolute. Supported by its winner-takes-it-all mentality, it will restore, once again, the conviction in the universality of the ‘American dream’. The teamwork by US enterprises and government on one side, and by transnational organization like the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO on the other, all under absolute US domination, will converge to spread around the globe the American definition of democratic capitalism, which relies on the principle that social harmony will be reached if every individual is free to pursue his or her self-interest, be it economical or political, within a framework regulated by market forces.

## … and totalitarian

The fall of the Berlin Wall left no major frontier capable to stop multinational enterprises spreading throughout the world. Among them, a handful of new companies, mostly American, took the technological lead by riding the IT revolution, and acquired an almost exclusive domination of all its developments worldwide. The frantic pace of technological innovations combined to a much heralded productivity growth will give birth to the ‘New Economy’. With information available almost instantaneously everywhere, new communication

technologies will allow capital to move faster, almost as fast as information itself. Markets will therefore be able to reward or penalize governments' and companies' policies very rapidly, by either flooding them with money or by withdrawing billions of dollars at a glimpse.
In the first half of the 1990s, huge amounts of money flowed into developing countries, creating an extraordinary financial boom that spread from Korea to Chile. However, in 1996, a panic reaction to Thailand's devaluation of its currency led to the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. It spread throughout Asia, bringing most Asian 'Tigers' to their knees, and ultimately all over third world economies.
With the once very successful Confucian way of capitalism now in a full-blown depression, the dominance of Anglo-Saxon capitalism was so absolute that it had totalitarian connotations attached to it: it was to use its supremacy to impose free-market policies that chiefly benefited its own companies to countries that were unable to protect themselves against the hectic movement of capital and that required its help.
As evidence of the exaltation created by the belief in the 'new economy' mantra, the last years of the century will witness an unprecedented rise in the valuation of some US stock indices, which will spread to several European bourses as well.
As for democracy, the global trend was overwhelming as well: between 1974 and 1999, 113 countries that were governed under authoritarian rule adopted a multiparty system [Gresh 2000]: "The proportion of blatantly authoritarian ("not free") states declined to a historic low of … just over 20 percent in 1992. By contrast, in 1972 almost half the independent states in the world were rated 'not free'." [Diamond 1996]
Using Schumpeter's minimalist definition of electoral democracy , or French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine's cynical "instant democracy" [Gresh 2000], governments and transnational institutions further promoted democracy, "America's trademark product" [Cohen 2000], by linking it as underpinning value to their free market policies. The leaders of 34 nations, who gathered in April 2001 for the Summit of the Americas in Quebec, "vowed to uphold democratic principles or risk losing economic and political support". Furthermore, at the same gathering, "the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank committed more than $20 billion to strengthen democratic foundations in the Americas and prepare for free trade." [De Palma 2001]

## The new era

At the turn of the century, the United States will be considered as the spearhead and universal symbol of democracy and of capitalism, under its most liberal form, the free market. Establishing its hegemony with a vengeance after the collapse of Soviet communism, it will combine its political clout, its military superiority, its technological leadership, its dynamic enterprises, and its benchmark currency, to dominate the world, which was the argument of the Cold War in the first place.
Its overwhelming success on all fronts will lead many to lose touch with reality, and proclaim the birth of a 'new era', in which continuous improvements in technology and productivity, global financial efficiency, and inflation once and for all under control, point towards an ever prosperous world.

**PART ONE - Social Apartheid**

*"Capitalism, while economically stable, and even gaining in stability, creates, by rationalizing*

*the human mind, a mentality and a style of life incompatible with its own fundamental conditions, motives and social institutions."*
[Schumpeter 1928, 368]

The economic modernization initiated two decades ago has become universal and unavoidable. However, in this new global order, which represents "a veritable faith in man's secular salvation through a self-regulating market" [Polanyi 1957, 135], the benefits of increased productivity and technological innovation have not spread throughout society, but have been awarded to a very exclusive few. This 'slash-and-burn' form of capitalism has, at the same time, reversed a main feature of the post-war period, the expansion of the middle class. [Gray 1998, 191]
Furthermore, the constant application of economic standards as major reference has gradually weakened the norms and values on which social relations have been built: "instead of [the] economy being embedded in social relations, social relations are embedded in the economic system." This has had "overwhelming consequences to the whole organization of society". [Polanyi 1957]

## Labour, capital …

Labour flexibility has been of paramount importance to achieve continuous growth in productivity. Deregulated markets need supple labour conditions in order to function smoothly, and have therefore systematically promoted the commoditisation of labour, which means to let market forces define labour's worth.
To push labour deregulation, a basic set of economic 'reforms' was asked from governments: first of all, to scrap welfare support to the poor and the unemployed so that more people are available on the job market. Second, to let supply and demand determine wages, in order to obtain the required magic formula: more workers on the market, and consequently lower wages.
At the same time, such labour policies would help governments balance their budgets, attract capital, and lower their unemployment rates, by making their country more appealing to national and multinational corporations.
To proceed with these labour reforms, trade unions had to be weakened and even disposed of, so that workers would loose their bargaining power, and their contracts be individualized. This strategy is illustrated by the drop in trade union membership in most industrialized nations, and the parallel surge in contingent work – which includes temporary and part-time work, contract-work, and non-standard work. In France, the unionised portion of the workforce has dropped from 35 percent in the late 1950s to less than 9 percent in 1998. Although less dramatic in Germany, the union share of employment has declined from 35 percent in 1985 to 26 percent today. In the US, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported "that just 13.5 percent of the workforce belonged to unions, the smallest percentage in six decades and down from a peak of 35 percent in 1953." [Greenhouse 2001a; see also Greenhouse 2001b and White 2001] As William Pfaff explains: "When it became not only technologically possible but economically advantageous to manufacture goods for rich-countries consumers in poor and unregulated Asian, Latin American or African labour markets, labour in advanced countries lost its bargaining power." [Pfaff 1996]
On the other hand, in Euroland, "flexible jobs (part-time plus temporary staffing) has increased by fully 50 percent over the past decade to reach about 30 percent of total employment in 2000" [Roach 2000], while in the US, 28.7 percent of American workers

worked in non-standard jobs in 1997 [BLS 1997]. In Italy, flexible jobs contributed 70 percent of the positions created over the past three years. [Guzzo 2001] In Spain, 31.6 percent of the working population are employed under these types of contracts. [Short 2001] In 1998 in Germany, 31.7 percent of the workforce had contingent jobs while only 58.3 percent had a full-time, secure contract. [Henning 2001]

The constant features of all non-standard jobs are insecurity and low wages: "temporary workers offer companies significant flexibility. Many still do not get benefits. They are easier to lay off than are full-time employees. And many … are moonlighting -- they have more than one job, so that if they lose one job, they are still employed." [Berner 2001]

## … and inequalities

The liberalisation of trade and tariffs of the last decades has further accelerated the process of labour commoditisation by bringing worldwide competition into play. This has dramatically influenced employment conditions in industrialized countries, by dividing the workforce into unskilled workers, whose wages are exposed to competitive forces in the global market place, and skilled workers, with little or no competition from developing countries, whose wages remain unrestricted.

This labour division configures automatically income and wealth distribution. A paper published last year by the OECD states, "During the more recent period, income inequality has increased in about half of the OECD countries studied, while none of the remaining countries recorded an unambiguous decrease in inequality." [Förster 2000]

According to an Economic Institute Policy paper, after more than three decades of steady increase , real wages in the US stopped rising in 1973. They stagnated for about six years, and after 1979 began to drop. In 1999, "after six years of very strong economic expansion" and near-record low unemployment, "the wages of the typical worker in real terms are 10 percent below where they were in 1979." [Faux 1998]

In Great Britain during the 1960s, roughly 10 percent of the population had incomes below half the contemporary average , falling to 6 percent in 1977. The proportion reached over 20 percent in 1991 [Hills 1998], and, according to new data from the Department of Social Security (DSS), in 1999, two years after the election of Prime Minister Blair, poverty had increased to over 24 percent of all households.

In Anglo-Saxon countries that have deregulated labour markets like Great Britain, the US or New Zealand, inequalities have translated into a wealth gap, and a sharp increase in poverty. These have also increased in most countries of Continental Europe, although higher minimum wages have put a safety net under poverty. Examining poverty dynamics in Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States, an OECD report shows that between 12 and 40 percent of the population across the four countries were affected by poverty over the six-year period of the study. A comparison was also made before and after social benefit payments, showing relatively no difference in the US where benefit payments are minimal, and a difference of more than three times in poverty figures in Continental Europe, establishing that "the tax and transfer system sharply reduces poverty rates, particularly as regards longer-term poverty". [Antolín et. al. 1999]

However, the divisive effect of labour deregulation in Continental Europe has had for main consequence another type of inequality, one in work distribution, exacerbating the economical and social gap between those having access to work, and those unemployed and left behind. Whereas unemployment rates in March 2001 stood at 5.2 percent in the UK and 4.3 percent in the US, the EU average stood at 8.4 percent, with the median rate of the four major

European economies standing at around 10 percent. Moreover, during the 1990s, unemployment rates have shrunk in the US and the UK while they have increased in many EU countries.
Governments faced with high level of structural unemployment are compelling "the unemployed to accept all kinds of work at the lowest rates of pay," which will further serve "to undercut negotiated wage rates and to enforce a severe reduction of wage levels in general." [Niethammer & Rippert 2001] The French government has reduced the number of unemployed by 1 million in the last three years. However, the almost totality of the jobs that have been created do not pay more than the minimum wage. [Le Monde, 29 mars 2001] In Spain, the problem of ending high unemployment, which stood at 22.7 percent in 1995, was resolved by creating thousands of temporary and casual jobs both in the public and private sectors. [Short 2001] In Italy, "the main force at the base of the ongoing job miracle is the flexibilisation of the labor market through an increasing share of part-time and temporary positions." [Guzzo 2001]
The OECD paper on income inequalities states, "Joblessness is the main cause of poverty." However, in a number of countries like Canada, Denmark, Greece, Sweden, the UK, the US, "households with one earner also have above-average poverty rates, indicating the existence of a working-poor phenomenon." [Förster 2000]
Inequalities have not only taken place among different classes of workers, but within each class as well. Due to weakened trade unions' influence, companies have been able to individualize labour contracts, and differentiate workers within the same professional group. [Fitoussi 2001] This has, effectively, crushed any bargaining power left, and, by breaking the common sense of equity so fundamental to our societies, it has developed a deep feeling of individual isolation.

These profound social imbalances find place in a favourable economic environment, especially in Anglo-Saxon countries. Unemployment in the US and the UK has fallen to levels not seen since the late 1960s, when the last great economic boom was in full bloom. However, one major difference between those two periods stands out. The post-WW2 expansion that ended with the recessions of the 1970s generated a widespread rise in the standards of living, in the US as well as in Europe. "During the 'Golden Age' of American capitalism (1947 to 1973) wages kept pace with productivity: U.S. labor productivity grew by 2.4 percent per year and inflation-adjusted wages by 2.6 percent per year." [Wolff 2001] It has not been the case during the last two decades. On the contrary, the "new era of technology-led productivity enhancement" [Roach 2001] has failed to lift all boats, and despite their contribution to productivity growth, many middle-class workers have experienced wage growth that has seriously lagged behind the overall economy. [Bernstein et. al. 1999]

## State, democracy …

Pressing for economic modernization further have been the strict accounting rules imposed by markets on governments, seriously limiting their use of "counter-cyclical policies that lifted their economies out of recession in the post-war period". [Gray 1998, 79] As the case of France between 1981 and 1983 clearly illustrates, the most powerful tool that markets used to oblige governments in their market-friendly and clean balance sheet policies has been their control of the currency markets. Since the last shoe of the fixed-exchange mechanisms of the Bretton Woods monetary system, based on a strong American dollar tied to gold, fell in 1971, paper money, with no reference to fix its worth, has been exchanged freely, its value

determined by the markets. This controlling power over exchange rates influenced, in turn, interest rates that bond markets asked from governments trying to raise funds internationally: risks of currency weakness would immediately translate into higher borrowing costs through higher interest rates. In this way, markets have constrained governments' monetary capacities and economic influence.

Additionally weakening governments' position, multinational companies, local or foreign, have lobbied for a favourable tax environment, and for relaxed labour market conditions, before allocating or displacing production centres, influencing in this way national economic policies. In some cases, governments have generously 'subsidized' companies with taxpayers' money, in order to prevent them from moving their production abroad, and leave behind thousands of angry citizens unemployed.

However, backed by transnational organizations, companies have had no difficulties in convincing politicians of the soundness and necessity of their goals, and most governments have eagerly supported this trend. The collapse of the Soviet Empire and the IT revolution have transformed the movement towards globalisation into a rush, and opened a new El Dorado of potential profits beyond most shareholders' and CEO's dreams. Sharing this vision, government officials travelling abroad will from now on fill their jets with executives and brilliant projects of business 'cooperation'.

The combined pressure of financial markets on one side, and multi-national companies on the other have considerably weakened democratically-elected governments, which have quickly lost credibility in the eyes of their electorate, unaware of the forces at play. In most countries, this has turned into open distrust when a textbook combination of weak authority and powerful capital buying its way around engendered innumerable cases of corruption and financial scandals.

## … and political anomy

In most industrialized countries, distrust in the political class has translated by record low turnouts at recent national or supranational elections.

In the 1996 US presidential election, less than half the electorate participated (49.1 percent), and only slightly more in the last one (51.2 percent). [Sandel 2001]

In Germany's State elections of 2001, only 62 percent of voters went to the polls. [Schwarz 2001] In the 1999 German elections for European Parliament, less than half the electorate went to the polls, the lowest turnout since the first direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979. [Rodenberg 1999] Overall turnout for this election fell below 50 percent for the first time since 1979. [The Economist, Feb 22, 2001]

In 2001 in Austria, voters' participation was 66.5 percent, a very low figure for Austria, and 2 percent below the total for 1996. In the period following the Second World War, elections in Vienna often drew 90 percent of the voters. [Rippert 2001]

In the General Election of February 2001 in Israel, turnout was the lowest in the country's history.

To cast their vote in order to elect individuals that will be responsible to represent their interests in the administration of public affairs is the only act by which citizens participate in the democratic process. To abstain from exercising this right constitutes a warning to the political class. [Subileau & Toinet 1993, 145]

Economical limitations imposed on politicians by the markets have certainly influenced the lack of political enthusiasm by most electorates, mainly because it has narrowed the possibility to differentiate one political platform from the other.

Further accentuating uniformity and banality in mainstream political discourses has been the widespread use of political consultants. A chiefly American industry, it has spread a few of its ‘star’ advisers all over the world, to counsel heads of states like Bill Clinton and Tony Blair, but also Eduardo Duhalde, Boris Eltsine, Jacques Chirac, Ehud Barak and Ariel Sharon. [See Halimi 1999; Nagourney 2001]

These strategists sell a political campaign to their clients: just like in the world of advertisement, the more successful a campaign, the more likely the same campaign will be repeated, with minor adaptations to local conditions and customs. Consultants are thus transforming political programmes and discourses into products that can be commercialised, with citizens as end consumers. They do not use political content as main distinctive factor, but focus instead on individualities, developing most campaigns around personal elements that rapidly give way to a low tit-for-tat controversy.

With all clearly defined, strong political substance being removed from most electoral platforms, political motivations disappear and levels of participation decline. Besides, by depreciating the political discourse into a series of personal calumnies, it estranges political campaigning from political reality, leaving as meaningless the notion of political mandate.

On one hand, as Boy and Mayer have shown, political participation increases with educational levels and professional integration. [Boy & Mayer 1997, 50] By degrading political contest to the lowest common denominator, its debate becomes less appealing to the motivated segment of the population.

On the other hand, according to Bréchon, social exclusion, due to low professional skills, unemployment and/or poverty that have isolated part of the electorate, has increased political abstention: "The less socially integrated an individual is, the greater the chance he will abstain from voting." [Bréchon 1998, 35]

With the decrease in electorate participation, and the gradual hollowing-out of political content, democracy is experiencing a dangerous decay in its norms and its substance. This phenomenon has motivated the trend towards political and religious fundamentalisation as reactive expression.

## Social apartheid

The primary reality of the economic growth of the 1980s and 1990s in industrialized nations has been that the wealth it has created has been dispensed to a very specific and limited class of the population: "as the returns to work have atrophied, returns to capital have climbed, shifting ever more power to the rich and contributing to the rising inequality of income." [Wolff 2001] With its obsession for competition and its winner-takes-it-all mentality, the present free market model has rejected an increasing number of people. Their ranks have been fed by a middle class that has constantly lost ground throughout the two decades.

Destabilized by economic inequality, mounting job uncertainty , and social insecurity, they are trapped between a wealthy and more than ever out-of-reach upperclass, and a fast growing underclass from which they see themselves less and less differentiated. Economic achievement focusing all aspirations, the population has been very simply divided into two classes, creating a social ‘apartheid’ between the ones who have, who are inclined, as a group, to isolate themselves so as to protect their possessions and status , and the rest.

Aggravating the social malaise, free market forces, commanding no restraints, have gradually stripped state institutions of their economic powers, and severely curtailed their scope for action. This has translated into an increased feeling of anomy and powerlessness among voters, and has led many to look for solutions outside mainstream political parties. To fight

the impression of impending chaos, a widening audience has turned to more radical ideals: fascist ideology has been the main beneficiary of this trend, manifest in the renaissance of political parties bringing forward extreme-right manifestos, and of groups of mostly young people displaying shamelessly their neo-nazi beliefs.

**PART TWO - The Fascist Alternative, An Opportunity**

## Institutionalisation of the movement

As the decline of Soviet communism got underway, fascist ideology, after three decades of banishment, sensed an opportunity. With WW2 traumas vanishing, new (or renewed) extreme-right political parties emerged in several industrialized countries during the 1970s and the 1980s, like in Norway the Progress Party (PP) founded in the 1970s, or in Belgium the Vlaams Blok (VB) created in 1978.

The shift from left to right can be particularly observed in France, which had, between the Second World War and the 1970s, the most important communist party (PCF) outside Russia and China. During three decades, it gathered on average 23 percent of the French electorate. It broke the trend in 1981, scoring 16.2 percent, and fell to 9.8 percent in the 1986 general election. Almost symmetrically, the National Front (FN), France's main extreme-right political party, scored 0.2 percent in 1981, jumped to 9.9 percent in 1986, and reached a high of 14.9 percent in 1997.

The same trend appears in Austria. Between 1956 and 1983, the extreme-right Freedom Party (FPÖ) attracted an average of 6 percent of the votes. It broke this trend in 1986, just like the French National Front did, to reach a high of 28.3 percent in 1995.

All far-right parties share two intertwined basic features: an extreme repulsion to anything foreign or different, and the absolute prevalence of the nation, with citizens' total submission to state's authority. These principles deny two fundamental democratic values: equality between individuals, and personal liberty.

Nevertheless, these parties, pragmatic, institutionalised, have grown through democratic means by putting on a proper, politically correct image to fit in the political system. The great majority of them conquer voters' hearts with populist and xenophobic slogans. For their electorate, often referred to as a 'protest vote' against the political establishment and its policies, the lack of practical social and economical program does not carry much significance. A study of French FN voters shows that approximately half of them define themselves as non-political or as disenchanted leftists. [Mayer 1999, 223] A survey conducted after the 1991 elections in Belgium revealed that about one third of the right-wing voters expressed feelings of protest or disillusion with 'traditional' political parties and the government. More importantly, the survey underlined that the social categories that tend to bring their vote to the VB are manual workers, young people between 18 and 25 years of age , or come from the less educated layers of the population. [Billiet & De Witte 1995]

As for new far-right parties such as those found in New Zealand, Australia or Turkey, having come to political life very recently, and for some of them in a spectacular way, they lack the traditional electoral base that constitutes at least half the voters of older extreme-right parties. To a great extent, they have developed on the dissatisfactions of a population that has been excluded from the economical booms and the technological revolution of the 1980s and 1990s, that lives in suburbs with a high concentration of inhabitants with a foreign origin , and that has lost faith in the political establishment, accused of being totally disconnected from its

reality. Politically, economically and socially, they form the fast growing underclass, victims of the divisive forces that have come with ultra-liberal economic policies. Low-skilled, unemployed or part-time workers, with a low level of education, many of them are young, living in neighbourhoods where average wages are low, where domestic and public violence is rife, and where the major economical and social trends point towards an unrelenting increase in poverty. All these elements conform to the above-mentioned description of potential far-right voters. This underclass has fed the meteoric growth of new extreme-right parties, and rejuvenated older ones. It has modelled the 'politics of fear and anger' [Suter 2001] of their leaders, from France's Jean-Marie Le Pen to Austria's Jörg Haider or New Zealand's Winston Peters, who play their racist demagogy to acquire power : as Feliks Gross reminds us, "Totalitarist strategy and tactics were effective in defeating democratic movements and conquering societies which at one time cherished ideas of political freedom and respect for an individual. The strength of those strategies was at least in part a consequence of a clear sense of direction as well as the will to move toward the once established goals. Hence the sense of direction and clarity of goals contributed to their successes and victory." [Gross 1985, Introduction]

## Appealing to the younger generation

Another manifestation of the renaissance of the fascist movement is idealistic and communal, mostly represented by young people who will regroup under neo-nazi emblems, and use coercion and violence to 'free' streets and neighbourhoods from 'unwanted foreigners'.

At the beginning of the 1980s, for a new generation of youth, ideological alternatives that would shape their revolt directed against the materialistic platform of the dominant trend were few: communism was dying, and, excluding the environmental cause which attracted many disappointed leftists, fascism was the only development in sight that could provide them with stimulating motives and appealing ideals to follow.

Sensing these changes ahead of time, the 'punk' movement was a precursory indication of what was to come. The trademark of that generation was one of destruction, and increasing use of 'meaningless' violence. Often coming from suburbs wrecked by unemployment, with an important if not dominant foreign community, these young people represented the perfect ground for fascist ideology. The message it conveyed was easy to absorb: foreigners take your jobs away, and destroy the fabrics of your society. Simple enough to bring home the logical conclusion, this call against foreigners ringed like a holy war, and perfectly fit their longing for destructive action. Combining its magnetic "worship of strength and violence" [Gross 1985, 254-255] to its racist content, fascism has assembled these young people into its soldierly organisation around a manifest and specific expression of their life fulfilment, and structured their confrontation with the social and political establishment.

In Europe, it has developed into what has become a plague of arsons and attacks by neo-nazi and other fascist groups on foreign individuals, on places sheltering immigrants, and on other symbols through which a discriminatory content can be expressed, such as the profanation of Jewish graveyards. Although characteristic to these groups, violence is by no mean reserved to them. Urban violence, and more recently school violence, in the United States and in Europe, has mostly been generated by individuals and not by groups, and its victims have not been targeted as a specific class of citizens. However, what specifically belongs to neo-fascist violence is its systematic racist orientation. Crimes on coloured individuals in Great Britain or in Norway , attacks on foreigners and refugee centres in Germany , aggressions on Jews in France , all point to an alarming increase in unrestricted manifestations of racist feelings since

the beginning of the 1990s.
Moreover, looming beyond the racist actions undertaken by these fanatic groups is the increasing challenge to the sacrosanct monopolistic use of violence by the state. Burkhard Schröder, analysing the far-right movement in Germany, noted: "Neo-Nazis in the East consider themselves to be a factor dealing with order in direct competition to the police. They attempt to give the impression that they are more in a position to protect the population from the possibly damaging consequences of 'mass' immigration and the controversy between diverse cultural traditions than the political leadership." [Schröder 1997, 19] In Sweden, Philippe Sonde reported: "The actions of neo-Nazis … have for some time been taking more violent forms. What is new is that the neo-Nazi violence is now openly directed against representatives of the state, the legal system and the press. Death threats against judges, state attorneys and journalists are increasing. Witnesses in criminal proceedings against neo-Nazis are being intimidated, so that they do not make any statements or withdraw those already made." [Sonde 2000]
At first look, this use of violence links the present fight of extreme-right groups to the violence used by extreme-left movements in the 1960s and 1970s. However, by being directed against foreigners and minorities, the consequences of today's fascist violence cannot be dismissed as the blood trail that extreme-left terrorist action left some thirty years ago: the latter attacked society through murdering its representatives, high functionaries or businessmen. For the silent majority, this line of action has never been considered as representing a viable alternative, and has thus been easy for ruling authorities to condemn, which they always forcefully did. Today's much bloodier extreme-right actions, by attacking an enemy who, by definition, remains outside the citizenry, are of a much greater appeal to the population, and therefore, politically much more difficult to condemn.

## Xenophobia as alternative

By stimulating hatred and segregation as a way-out to the problems of social exclusion and insecurity, extreme-right parties pose, as they have done before, a major threat to the democratic standards that industrialized nations have slowly and painfully developed. They have already scored several victories, notably by imposing immigration and security as core themes in most mainstream political agendas.
Economically, without any specific platform other than what benefits their political goals, they will likely implement protectionist policies in order to gain support from the working classes. However, they do not contest private property, they do not propose a redistribution of wealth, they do not challenge the viability of capitalism. All the contrary, they pretend to be the fierce supporters of its principles through their program, in which society, ruled by "law and order", must recover its 'core' national values. Easily accepted by all class of population, such a program will certainly appeal to a wide range of middle class citizens who fear the rampant insecurity in their neighbourhoods and inner cities , and to the workers who have lost or are afraid to loose their jobs because of increased competitive 'globalisation'. The "protective function of states is likely to expand, as citizens demand shelter from the anarchy of global capitalism." [Gray 1998, 77]
The ruling class has first witnessed the renaissance of fascist ideology with alarm, but has progressively come to accept the far-right political movement. Traditional parties, whose distinctive ideological elements have disappeared, have buried themselves in an increasingly competitive system, using marketing mechanisms in which each vote gained is viewed as an increase in market-share, and which have resulted so far in an undifferentiated and

directionless political amalgam. With their markedly different political discourse appealing to a growing number of voters, extreme-right parties have therefore raised mainstream political parties' interest. Furthermore, the vision of a strong state and of a strong nation put forward by these parties appeals to most politicians' civic sense, whatever the colour of their banner. This has softened the reaction of the political class towards other less attractive aspects of extreme-right activism, albeit not publicly: condemning fascism loudly in their speeches, the uproar of governing institutions remains at best unconvincing, so weak are the actions undertaken.

These actions tend chiefly to criminalize the xenophobic characteristics of these movements. Many countries have elaborated or updated laws forbidding racist and discriminatory contents in speeches and other means of expression. These measures, however, have had but little impact, and a growing number of officials, intellectuals and citizens have asked for a strengthening of state's repressive capacities. Nowhere have these tendencies been more discussed than in Germany where extreme-right violence has provoked a national debate. By banning extreme-right parties, by limiting individuals' fundamental rights like the right to freedom of opinion and expression or the right to assemble, and by giving more power to police forces, partisans of a tough stance against fascism not only undermine the democratic values they supposedly try to protect, but they might also put in place a repressive structure that could be, at a later date, conveniently used by a 'democratically' elected far-right government.

Widespread disillusionment, uninspired political leadership, and growing chaotic economic conditions are the main elements that will assure fascism's advance, just like they did in the first half of the 20th century in Italy and Germany. Then as well, it came as a reaction to an unprecedented wave of international 'laissez-faire' defined by non-interference of governments in economic matters. Eventually, this trend capsized with WW1, and sunk during the Great Depression of the 1930s, leaving in its wake the economical and political chaos that gave birth to modern fascism. Communism was, at that time, the black sheep in all fascist mantras, giving its struggle the manipulative power of ideological respectability. Today, the ideological varnish is gone. Only the xenophobic substance remains.

## PART THREE - The Equalitarian Alternative, A Duty

*"With us the individual is neither ground small between the millstones of capitalism, nor beheaded by the levelling-down-process of socialism. We know the value of the development of the individual, just as we respect and protect its economic foundation, private property."*
[Theodor Herzl; in Heinze-Greenberg 1995, 82]

Since the beginning of the 20th century, an ideological alternative based on equality as its fundamental principle has been at work in the kibbutzim. All along its almost hundred year-old history, this movement has developed a pluralistic society built on shared equalitarianism while respecting individual freedom, and has integrated it to its surrounding democratic and capitalist environment.

It has also provided new grounds for the social development of the individual on several fronts, by creating and maintaining "a balance between the realisation of values of individualism and of collectivism" [Leviathan et. al. 1998, 159], by untying work from salary,

and by offering effective solutions to the alienating pattern reigning in many aspects of our society, notably through the implementation of direct democracy in the decision-making process.
The kibbutz we will discuss here is what Getz called the ‘normative’ kibbutz [Getz 1998, 21], or what Ben-Rafael refers to as the ‘classical’ kibbutz [Ben-Rafael 1997, 15].

## A pluralistic system within the system

The ideological movement that gave birth to the creation of kvutzot, starting point of the kibbutz movement, was born among young people in the Jewish diaspora. Motivated by revolutionary ideals against the dominance of ‘laissez faire’ capitalism in pre-WW1 Europe, and as a reaction to the traditional Jewish society in which they lived, they responded to the appeal of founding a Jewish state in Palestine. [Cohen 1983, 80] They brought with them the socialist ideals that were brewing in Europe, particularly in Tsarist Russia. After suffering centuries of ostracism and racial segregation, these ideals suited perfectly their longing for a free society based on equality. As Cohen writes, "The kibbutz was conceived at one and the same time as an end in itself, as well as a means towards broader societal ends; it was an ideological creation, but unlike other utopian movements it was also expected to fulfil national tasks and, hence, had to adapt itself effectively to changing conditions." [Cohen 1983, 80-81]
Some forty years later, the Jewish state was established. Having played a strategic role in its formation, the kibbutz movement had become an integral part of the landscape of the new country. Its assimilation into the capitalist structure of the nation, although not without problems, acknowledged the creation of a system within the system: a structure of communities based on equality, integrated in a state ruled by democratic principles, with a capitalist economic configuration. Today, more than 50 years on, this double system is still in place, and exemplifies how a democratic environment can further improve.
Although chiefly developed around Zionist and socialist ideals, the kibbutz movement has proved open and flexible enough to allow the growth of various, and sometimes opposite aspects. From the hard-line Marxist community to the orthodox religious one, kibbutzim come in all size and shape. Some have a major ethnic component (French at Hanita, for example); others are based on political or religious values (the anarchist Samar, the Jewish Lavy, the protestant Nezanim); others still gather their members around a common interest (artistic development, meditation). These multiple sources of motivation have created a pluralistic society, allowing a rainbow of communities to cohabit within the same boundaries, under the same skies.
A similar diversity can be observed in their economic realisation: established as agricultural settlements, most kibbutzim are nowadays industrialized, and many are developing service-oriented branches. From ostrich research facilities to biological pesticides, from Epilady to educational training, the kibbutzim have been often compared to as many enterprises, depending on their economic viability and their adaptableness to assure the survival of their community. They will act as any other enterprise, trying to expand their market share and maintain a competitive edge through innovation.
As integral and important part of their country’s economy, their economic development has closely followed that of the Israeli society, and has been deeply affected by international economic trends: "constantly confronted with the institutions and opportunities of the surrounding societies", the kibbutzim had to struggle all the way to "retain their cultural, economic, and ideological identity." [Barkin & Bennet 1983, 344-345] Their social dynamism and economic fertility have prevented the movement’s calcification and decay.

## Equality as a means

The kibbutz grants sovereignty to each person within an equalitarian community. [Ben-Rafael et. al. 1983, 3] It aims at enabling each to enrich his individual existence while realizing the best social conditions for everyone.

While developing a social system integrating its members around the principle of shared equality, it respects "the differences between humans, born from inequalities in their natural gifts, and from inequalities in their achievements, in their work as humans endowed with their liberty." Indeed, equality does not contradict liberty, equality does not oppose liberty, equality does not penalize liberty. Equality allows liberty to develop its means: it is the moral order on which liberty grows.

Equality, like liberty, is not an end in itself but a means, and, just like each individual determines what defines liberty, accordingly each determines what defines equality. When liberty represents the constantly moving and continuously adjusted balance of relations between individuals, equality then serves as continuous frame, and as constant guideline to structure the parameters that define one's liberty.

Equality does not generate similarity. 'Natural' inequalities give human nature its richness. That inequalities are unavoidable is not only true but also desirable. [Marx 1970, I, 3] However, inequalities must not be created by the surrounding society. Each individual comes with his specific qualities that make him distinct from everyone else. These qualities enable him to find his place in the history of his time. To develop his personal qualities, to realise his individual potential, he will use the resources and opportunities provided by his social environment. These have to be equally accessible to everyone in the society.

For these reasons, "Sharing equality is implemented, in the kibbutz, as a central value applying to all major sphere of life." [Ben-Rafael 1997, 15] It has been the basic element that has motivated, and still motivates individuals in living on a kibbutz.

## Work as an end

One major building block on which kibbutzim have set up their equalitarian structure has been the untying of work from salary, departing thus significantly from the consensual structure based on equity that has developed in modern western societies.

"Historically, the kibbutz movement has always promoted dignity of work as one of its main ideal… the settlers did not regard their work as a means to an end but as an end in itself." [Ben-David 1983, 39-40] Work is the initial capital, the fundamental asset of each human being. It is the most important tool given to us, to help us satisfy our multiple needs. [Hegel 1966] In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "Everyone has the right to work" ; it also stands in France's Constitution: "Everyone has the duty to work and the right to obtain work."

However, the exercise of this right, and of this duty, is not equally available to everyone. Access to work, and hierarchical structures relating individuals to work are the major source of inequalities in our societies. These are not 'natural' inequalities, intrinsic to human nature, but social ones, purely dictated by economical and political considerations. They represent one of the least noble realisations of our democratic societies.

Access to the social body is determined by work. It is an essential reference, used and shared by everyone to position oneself, and to relate with others. Not only does it provide the means to survive and satisfy the needs of individuals and families, but it also plays a decisive role in social relationships; it also allows one's life fulfilment and potential achievements, and it also gives access to private property. Most importantly, it confers one's social and personal

dignity, and it remains the unique means of progress for any civilisation.
To deprive anyone of work prevents him from securing his fundamental needs, and amounts to deny him a place in society and a vital part of his human dignity. Adversity and destitution affecting people with no access to work are the results of a major social injustice: work must be for everyone a right, for everyone a duty.
Kibbutzim have implemented this principle: by releasing work from its financial reward, they have established the premises of a classless society in which "everyone, regardless of his work, is viewed as a worker, with the same privileges and responsibilities as anyone else." [Spiro 1956, 23-24]
Severing work from remuneration has had far-reaching consequences, first and foremost in altering the way individuals relate to work. The monetary valuation of work having disappeared, other references have surfaced, enabling each individual to determine what work suits him best. Because no financial sanction rewards, or penalises one's choice, a much more personal approach has emerged, with intrinsic desires and capacities as primary motivating factors. This has begun to exert a profound and beneficial influence on individual self-fulfilment.
Finally, the alienating aspects of modern work have partially receded, due to the fact that members who are working in the kibbutz' industrial or agricultural plants are at the same time employed by and owners of the means of production. The estrangement effect of work fragmentation is therefore minimised. Even though most do not participate in the management, they know that ultimately no one else but them, as individuals and as a community, profit from their work. They neither sell their work, nor their energy, nor their time: they use these for their own purpose, for their own benefit.

## Horizontal approach

Another major aspect of the kibbutz paradigm is its 'horizontal' approach in the decision-making procedure: it engages the individual in a system of direct democracy, and partially suppresses the social and political alienation by inciting every member to participate. "Static or behaviour limiting" hierarchies [Gross 1985, Foreword] are few, and a rotation system has prevented "accumulation of power and influence." [Getz 1998, 21-22] The kibbutzim "provide the psychological integration at the small-group level through direct democracy and maximum involvement of their people." [Katz & Golomb 1983, 72-73] Kibbutz-democracy is therefore seen as "an instrument towards a growing identification of the members with the community." [Rosner & Cohen 1983, 212-214]
The limited size of the community mirrors the classical antique city in which direct democracy was developed into becoming an important activity of the citizen. Representative democracy, which succeeded that 'archaic' form of political exercise, allowed expanded communities to participate in the political system. However, by organising the whole structure around the timely vote of each citizen by secret ballot, the actual exercise of democratic rights has entirely excluded all consensual relations, among individuals as well as between groups of citizens and ruling authorities. Public debate, other than through the filtering mechanisms of today's media, has practically disappeared, isolating in its democratic activity each citizen from his community. By spacing participation across time, this form of democracy has also increased individuals' passivity, and weakened their political strength as against that of constantly active lobbies and special interest groups. Finally, the growing bureaucracy on one hand, and specialisation of political management with its elitist aura on the other has further estranged the decision-making process from democratic activity.

Kibbutzim, in their quest for equality, have reacted against hierarchical restrictions and individual disengagement by re-introducing consensual debate, and active participation in many, if not all administrative decisions. These give the community the ability to "solve common problems" and "act together practically without a mechanism of law enforcement and punishment". [Gross 1985, 261-263] They further engage the community to address individual conflicts not by referring to a set of "rights and duties", which are inexistent in the first place, but by considering "a particular case in a particular context" [Kamenka & Tay 1971], and the member involved as a "whole man, bringing with him his status, his occupation and his environment, all of his history and social relationships" [Kamenka & Tay 1975]. This individualistic approach also reduces the alienating process by making systematically reference "to specific individuals and not to anonymous units." [Rosner & Cohen 1983, 212-214]

With their use of direct democracy, the kibbutzim have developed a regulating system of unwritten laws agreed upon by all members, with the aim, on one hand, to realize "a community which is grounded in sharing egalitarianism", and, on the other hand, to relate "to this community principle in terms of no less fundamental individualistic aspirations." [Ben-Rafael 1997, 14-15]

## The kibbutz as paradigm

This "unique small-scale system dominated by the values of fraternity and equality" [Vallier 1983, 334] has realized a "living version" [Barkin & Bennet 1983, 347] of various Western utopian beliefs without having recourse to revolutionary despotism. It has demonstrated the viability of a "non-doctrinaire" [Buber 1983, 31] pluralistic structure, with its own sets of values and norms, developed within a broader democratic system, and tied to this system by political, economical, cultural, social and historical mechanisms. Its horizontal approach, "reducing vertical social differentiation" [Vallier 1983, 334], has succeeded in implementing "an axis-principle which ... is the principle of satisfying the legitimate needs of its members by recognizing the differences of individual needs" [Rosner 1993]. In the words of Martin Buber, "Nowhere ... were men so deeply involved in the process of differentiation and yet so intent on preserving the principle of integration." [Buber 1983, 31]

## CONCLUSION

**"Between the moral code of enmity and moral code of amity"**
[Spencer 1879]

During the last twenty years, post-modern capitalism has instituted the "control of the economic system by the market", which "means no less than the running of society as an adjunct to the market". [Polanyi 1957] Economic and labour deregulations combined with the globalisation of production and finance have left most industrialized nations plagued with grave social imbalances. Besides, the omnipotent rule of free market, by drastically curtailing the power of governments, has also undermined democratic values.

Democracy participates in the progress towards globalisation that has gathered speed with the scientific and technological revolutions of the last centuries. One most positive aspect of the entire globalisation phenomenon has been to promote the expansion of what Herbert Spencer has defined as the ‘in-group’, in which production and cooperation are dominant rules, and in which "love and aid your fellow man is the command". [Spencer 1879] Automatically, the

extension of the ‘in-group’ leads to a consequent contraction of the ‘out-group’, towards which policies of aggression and defence are dictated, and for which "hate and destroy your fellow man is … the command". [Spencer 1879] As the in-group grows to include an ever greater number of people and communities, it reduces at the same time the out-group to an always more specific cluster.
That is what globalisation should be all about: to strengthen ties among people in order to bring under control and minimize the possibilities of war, and of human or natural destruction. Fascism, time and again, reverses this historical process. Promoting racial and national superiority, fascism builds its power on the conflict lying "between the moral code of enmity and moral code of amity". [Spencer 1879] It emphasises the ‘dual ethics’ of the in- and out-groups, while repressing mankind’s desire to create a peace-oriented world by overcoming its internal differences.
To make certain history won’t repeat itself even though it is already stuttering, we should ponder the words of Michael Sandel, "Civic values and political commitment have always depended and fed on the feeling of belonging to a community or to a specific tradition… In a world ruled by international structures … particular forms of identity and community will not be of lesser, but of greater relevance." [Sandel 2001]
The kibbutz movement has developed a model that allows each individual to build his or her own "project of life" [Delsol 1997], that links the individual to his community "through symbols reflecting a common way of life, a common history, and a common fate" [Katz & Golomb 1983, 55], and that assembles and preserves through its modular structure the rich diversity of human aspirations. It has clearly established that equalitarian values can be integrated in a democratic society, and will provide it with a renewed ideological impetus.

The pendulum movement towards the right of the political spectrum that started in the 1970s is far from being completed. Although we cannot pretend to stop it, and even less reverse it, it is our duty to slow its movement, and prevent its swing to carry us too far away off-balance. Its destructive force could be decelerated by re-igniting the fundamental principles that have sustained democratic ideology, not by leaning on a nostalgic reminiscence of their past, but by shaping the image of their future realities. By unveiling the possibilities that they still carry in their core, by realizing how profoundly they still could form and transform our enlightened civilisation, we could act on those forces that profit from chaotic circumstances.
The many structural problems that confront our societies, and the recent anti-globalisation protests show how much another alternative is needed. A return to post-WWII stability that associated managed capitalism, with its steady and widespread improvement in the general standards of living, and the counterbalancing act of black-and-white passions is very unlikely. A new equilibrium has to emerge, in which individuals and communities determine the values and goals that are so necessary for our accomplishment as human beings, and in which the economy’s function is restored to its proper role, which is to serve this accomplishment. Our democratic values and systems, despite progress realized these last fifty years in relation with human rights and social equality, especially regarding women and minorities, are not as strong and as universal as we suppose they are. To keep democracy alive, we have to give it the necessary resources so that it can confront the new looming challenges, and, as a result achieve its greater potentials.

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## 1.5 Relationships

# Community Sustainability: The challenge of inter-generational change.


## Peter H Cock.

## Monash University and Moora Moora Community Australia


Surviving beyond the establishment phase.

Building intergenerational connections- experiences and strategies

- Intergenerational change in a world of diminished community and ecology
- Welcoming all generations and providing for the whole of ones life cycle?
- Structures and policies for intergenerational change
- Working with what generations bring to community dialectics

## Introduction

*'Far more difficult than the transfer of wealth from one country to another is the transfer of wisdom between generations'* (Hardin: 1998).

There once was a community near where I live. Its land is now a collection of rented or empty houses. What happened to the energy and idealism? It died out. Kantor (1972) said that for a community to be considered successful it needs to survive for a generation. Others have argued that success is in the eye of the beholder. However, success through longevity is important for the merging of social with ecological sustainability.

This paper addresses the issue of sustainable community development from the perspective of communities seeking to live beyond one generation. The basic proposition of this paper is in line with Max Weber's view that communities that survive through time evolve from charisma to an intentional organisational phase, and then towards an embedded culture. This assumed culture is then challenged as part of community regeneration. My community, Moora Moora, started in an ideological ferment. We went through endless struggle to develop a set of policies and ways of doing things. Once the structure was set, meetings became shorter, less tense, and less important in the life of the community. We had become a village. More recently, new, younger people joined, and once more meetings are tense, stormy -- and often productive. While such a process is necessary it is often painful and manifest through intergenerational as well as interpersonal conflicts.

For social as well as ecological sustainability, there needs to be both change and continuity. The challenge is how to engage in these processes in a way that honours the past while being open to the future. Can the structures and processes of intentional community ensure that each member (young and old) connects with both dimensions of this need? One woman

refuses to come to meetings. She has disempowered herself, rather than face the rehash after rehash of old battles.

The cause of sustainability is not furthered if the old or the new opt out of this dialectic. It is vital that we ensure old learning's are honored and new possibilities explored. To survive and live fully, a community needs to work directly with the social inevitability, even necessity, of conflict while recognizing that it has to be used creatively to generate new possibilities.

I address these issues through the example of Moora Moora Community, one of a number of surviving 1970's communities in Australia (Cock: 1979). We established ourselves in 1974, on 245 hectares of a mountain top on the urban-rural fringe of Melbourne, Australia. We are 26 households in 6 clusters of up to 5 houses, with a community/education centre located in the centre of the community. The land, of forest and farm, is held in common, while the houses are privately owned. As part of my research for this paper I interviewed formally and informally a range of members and invited responses to a draft of this paper. This material has been used for illustrative examples and comparative reference for my own views.

The down turn in interest in intentional communities in the 1980's has been followed by an upsurge since the mid 1990's, with a new generation of potential community members (see Dearling: 2000). The challenge is to find a bridge across the generational divide created by the ups and downs of demand for communities? How can we convert this interest into new members in existing communities? Can we sustain and renew our social capital?

It is a constant struggle to keep change and stability in each member's mind and a constructive part of community living. As this is new territory for me, l be asking questions, sharing stories and perspectives. I don't pretend to be able to predict the outcomes. I am inevitably partisan, for I am part of the original generation struggling to remain present and open to the future while working to honour our community heritage.

## Surviving beyond the establishment phase.

Many intentional communities struggle to survive beyond the establishment phase. With good reason, as most don't survive and the few who do often wonder how they managed to.

This can happen for all sorts of reasons. For example, in the beginning Moora Moora was resisted by local authorities that initially refused to approve our plans. We bought the land without secure finance; we were split down the middle over the kind of culture we were seeking to build, we were involved in a battle with authorities to stop the provision of coal fired grid power to our mountain, we have been threaten by wild fires. Sub communities or clusters have risen and fallen, as have relationships of varying kinds. We could as easily have collapsed, been crushed or exploded as others have. How much was luck, a close call or good management I don't know.

What I have learnt out of the experience so far is that collective strength comes from clarity of shared purpose, sustained through an organisational structure that is explicit while having supportive mechanisms to ensure its sustainability. That is, it is backed up by social pressure

for individuals to participate and to carry out their agreed tasks, with clear lines of responsibility and areas of authority. People may choose to join, or to leave, but within that there needs to be real community boundaries that limit the scope of diversity in order to ensure community cohesion.

Core social structures are needed through which a community can provide a social environment to foster a system of values common to the members of the community. A cohesive community is unlikely to emerge if its members do not subscribe to a system of common values. While values must be shared, the community structure should recognise the need for diversity, for example of ages and genders. Diversification of skills and the development of social competence to share and care for oneself and each other are necessary adjuncts to community purpose.

The security of the organisation is a requisite for the evolution of constructive informal community dynamics. The naive vision of the simple life and self-sufficiency has been suppressive of the capacity to develop and affirm the complex interdependencies that retribalisation involves. Community identity and sustainability needs cultural features such as customs, rituals and symbols, which are taken for granted. Many alternative seekers reject corporate bureaucracy. Nevertheless, the development of clarity of form and function is a necessary first step towards the development of these cultural features. It takes a long time to rediscover and to evolve appropriate shared realms of the sacred that nourish the community and sustain it during crisis.

Even with careful planning it is inevitable that the establishment phase of any social group, especially for those that are innovative, is characterised by a period of high tension, uncertainty and psycho/social trauma, with a high membership turnover and community death rate.

Getting established is hard enough. Then when communities fall apart or explode, often this is attributed to inter-personal conflict. Vital is developing appropriate community mechanisms to distinguish symptom from cause, person from issue. What is needed is the shared will and knowledge to make decisions about when and how to facilitate the creative use of conflict.

We have been socialised to live essentially private lives within impersonal worlds. We are largely devoid of the experience of intimate sharing beyond family whether it is of our feelings, friends, flesh or possessions. The power of this socialization is often denied by those seeking community. A paradox is that contrary to common views, the kibbutz breeds powerful persons! Attempts to overcome it are restricted by an understandable desire to hang on to what we know and the security it brings. Retribalisation from our present cultural base will involve struggle, pain, letting go and reaching out. In our culture we don't know what 21st century tribalisation means and we therefore have so much to learn from other cultures that have a long experience of tribal, village living.

Much can also be learnt from the longevity of religious communities. Whether their extremes of collective accountability and communal organisation are necessary for other communities is another matter. A transcendental community commitment of a spiritual, environmental and/or

political nature is necessary for sustainability (Kantor: 1972). There is a need for a number of dynamic balances between the community's inner and outer life, consensus and dissent, self-sufficiency and community interdependence, personal desires and community interests.

To survive and live fully, a community needs to believe in the social necessity of conflict while recognising that it has to be used creatively to generate new possibilities. If the community is so organised that it lacks room for change or the stimulus of uncertainty then boredom is the inevitable result. Moora Moora survives in part because it isn't perfect, cannot be managed by an individual, is unpredictable, and at times disorganized. Its elements of chaos are a threat to the organizing mind and they may at least sometimes be part of our sustainability.

Participation in a community requires some sacrifice of individual autonomy to achieve the benefits of connectedness. This involves bonds, obligations and mutual interdependence that are fundamentally incompatible with complete individualism. Australian society has opted for the `freedom' of individualism and, as a result, has denied itself community. In contrast, authoritarian regimes whether of the State and of some religious orders opt for the extreme of collective power. Finding a dynamic balance between personal autonomy and community commitment is essential to an understanding of the present struggle within intentional communities and also within our culture.

Achieving the above highlights a paradox. Generating an intentional community culture so successful that it is taken for granted presents a barrier to the innovation needed to sustain community lifeblood.

## Building intergenerational connections - some experiences

## Intergenerational change in a world of diminished community and ecology

The materially rich and technologically powerful urban masses are increasingly deprived of experience of community as part of their everyday life. Skills for community living have radically declined in the last generation. Trends established in the 1970s have escalated with children being socialized within one or two adult and sibling families.

In a generation there has been a change within the developed world from optimism to pessimism, from material comfort and certainty to social and psychic disturbance. In the International year of volunteers there has been a shift from a generation committed to service to one that takes service for granted. As one disgruntled older community member said 'they don't want to volunteer, they want to be paid'. The 1970's were a period of optimism for changing society, even shifting a paradigm. Instead there has been an intensification of the ills identified in the 1970s and the rise of a virtual and an engineering world in biology and technology that challenges not only our sustainability but also threatens to transform what we are and how we interact. We are now in an era not only of a smaller family but one with lost stability and increased speed. We are in an era of social and psychic deprivation. This is connected to the spiritual crisis of meaning that comes from being part of a culture that the contemporary generation knows is undermining the very web of life ( see Sheldrake&

Fox:1997).

Listening to Moora Moora members, it seems that basic motivations have not changed but the stakes are higher, and the issues more sharply drawn. On the surface differences are perceived, maybe because cultural modes of their expression have the mask of generational identification. The ecological is higher on the agenda and more strident in its expression. I have a sense that the utopian dream has diminished and motivations now seem more driven by social and ecological necessity rather than choice and more by fear than hope. This is not surprising as the state of the world, ecologically, socially and spiritually has declined (Southwick: 1996).

*Welcoming all generations and providing for the whole of ones life cycle?*
Only about one community in Australia is established from the ten who try. Many disintegrate soon after. Many of the intentional communities that now exist in Australia and New Zealand were established during the 1970's (Cock; 1979). Intergenerational issues are not often addressed when a group is struggling to begin and move beyond the risky establishment phase. This was as far as most could see. A generation later those that remain risk dying out unless the passage of intergenerational change is charted. The ageing of communities is partly due to delayed family formation, and higher mobility that inhibits willingness to settle in one place. Most communities now have an ageing population and some are beginning to struggle with old age and lack the energy to do what needs to be done.

Alchera community I consulted for had a median age of 60 years plus. While a cohesive and small community of six households they had little structure for enabling a new generation to join. The new members they attracted were of the same age. I felt I could contribute little as they were locked into a one-generation structure. Nor were they too concerned if the community folded with their demise. Another, larger community of Riverside in New Zealand is having difficulty attracting a younger generation. One young family I interviewed, were attracted by the ideals and the infrastructure of the place, but were put off by the lack of other young families.

Moora Moora Cooperative Community began with a clean slate. We didn't have the support of being part of a community with a history. It was intentional, it all had to be designed, decided and gradually evolved. Now 27 years into our co-operative community experience, life is settling down, and stable patterns have been established - members can relax, breathe and enjoy the present. The time for deferred gratification is over. We are who we are and we have usually done the best we could. We are not perfect but we have made it through over a generation, while most haven't. As one original member said 'we have created an organic culture that has a life of its own". But then one fine morning we wake up to find that we are in our fifties, our community is aging, often tired and worn.

We are now embarking on the journey to build intergenerational bridges. This requires a view of the present in the context of looking forward and backward with equal intention. The trouble is society has socialized us to not only believe in the power and autonomy of the individual, but to interact increasingly only with peers. We know little about the challenge of intergenerational change. Thirty years on, we are working to bring into the community a younger generation. If we are not able to attract the next wave then we are doomed to a slow

dying out with the first generation.

Now that the community is established the next generation can draw on this supportive context. The further down the track of the evolution from charisma to culture, however the harder it is for new members to enter, for this culture provides constraint as well as security. Once community culture and polices are established, they can easily be seen as oppressive of initiative and freedom, the very responses that helped to provoke the west's original flight from the bonds of community.

## Structures and policies for intergenerational change

We have so far made some effective steps to attract representatives of the preceding generation – those in their thirties and forties verses the initial generation who are now in their fifties and sixties. However teenagers, those in their twenties or seventy years plus are rare. Young adults are manifest within the community through volunteers who come and stay. Older age groups visit as parents and grandparents of members.

Our urban- rural fringe location, physical size and structures have been attractive to thirty to forty year olds. In particular, the community has a loan scheme to help finance share and house purchases, and guarantees that after 2 years of waiting to leave members will be bought out by the community. Such steps make joining and leaving easier but not too easy.

The community has put the interests of the joining ahead of the leaving in order to sustain itself. We are still to address the equity of exchange between leaving and joining. Joining the community is very cheap relative to the value of the assets the community owns. It is expensive if you are leaving, as what you receive back isn't commensurate with what it costs to move elsewhere.

What is still in the shadows is providing for an all-of-life membership opportunity. We are still to address an explicit vision that defines community responsibilities that match members varying and changing capacities. This is something the kibbutz movement has addressed well through provision of work tailored to suit stages in one's life cycle. This means addressing the whole life cycle, from being born, to teenage years, to being an 80-year-old or chronically ill to inclusion of the processes of dying and burial. As one older and now leaving member said 'the community needs to address the role of older people so they don't feel they have to leave". The cooperative has recently financially supported two older members to move to the nearby town and the idea has been suggested by a number of members to have cooperatively owned units for elderly members in this town. This however, would mean that members would not be encouraged to live out their lives within the physical and social place of the community.

### Working with what generations bring to community dialectics

Intergenerational conflicts are real. Conflict between generations is inevitable given our current cultural milieu. The tendency is for a newer, younger generation to wish to do things or at least to be seen to do things differently. Each has a tendency to view the other generation as not being capable of meeting the needs of the present. The younger generation sees the older as having had too much experience that is locked into the past. The older generation sees the younger as lacking sufficient experience in matters of significance.

Intergenerational divides are often latent in conflicts over established processes and honoring of decisions. New, often-younger members perceive a cooperative establishment run by older, longer serving members. An undercurrent to generational issues is the need to balance and sustain community diversity with sufficient cohesion and change. However, change and conflict is uncomfortable, exciting and often draining for older members repeatedly dragged through persistent issues. It can be difficult to distinguish when change is a constructive or a regressive move, for example, to shift from consensus's decision making to majority rule, or to have less or more bureaucracy. When is the change just a matter of a different way of achieving the same ends, or something that threatens those ends? Are old members to embrace the new or should they stand up early and say what is and isn't negotiable, – to map limits to tolerance and set boundaries?
When members participate in a revisioning process or a simple sharing circle we often rediscover shared values and to a lesser extent our interests. That which is shared provides the common ground on which to work with differences. I don't wish to mask or make difference when there isn't any or to attach conflicts to intergenerational explanations when other variables are more at work. Such variables include personality conflicts, societal pressures, baggage from family, and the inequality of access to resources, energy or positional power. Further differences derive from class, gender and position in the life cycle. They all play a role.

Members of the cooperative differed in their perceptions of the significance of intergenerational issues as a shaper of current conflicts. Usually targeted, as a cause are lack of effective communication, an inability to talk directly with the person they are in conflict with, and an 'an unwillingness to see the others point of view'. However, conflicts between generations also derive from different positions in the life cycle as well as their position in the history of society and the community. Some examples are, that comfort needs and pragmatism tend to increase with age, whereas the younger members seem more prepared to live with disorder, uncertainty and often seek to flex their energy. The energy of youth and the experience of age are complementary but often at loggerheads.

Differences exist in the relative focus on and perspectives of the past, present and the future. Older, newer members have difficulty adapting their past to the opportunities of the present whereas younger, newer members challenge is adapting their visions of the future to the realities of the present. An illustration of different focus around time is an older semi retired couple, who have applied to join are struggling with selling a house they have lived in for forty years. Whereas one young new couple are busy struggling with every aspect of the existing structures and processes of the co-operative. One other new and young member expressed the view as "you can't live off past efforts. You are only as good as today's performance'. From my perspective as an original participant this has generated resentment that the past achievements and lessons are ignored and not treated with respect'. One other long standing members written reply to this paper expressed that "we don't take into account the 'special nature' of Moora Moora and therefore we don't consider what are the most appropriate ways to participate in this special community... The journey constitutes our real experience rather than the ideal represented by our destination... The journey and the destination are inseparable. Living in deep community is a pilgrimage, not a holiday. This

means that the way we pursue or resist change is as important to the sustainability of Moora Moora, as the nature of the changes we try to implement. ..I fear that as our way of selecting members has become broader, easier and focused on how easy they are to live with, we are opening our membership to people who have no interest in the challenges and pleasures of life in an intentional community, rather than in a shallow community."

History seems to begin only at the point of arrival in the community. Maybe older new members have a greater attunement to history even if it isn't theirs. Then however, older members resist reviewing and adapting to changing priorities and ways of seeing things by its new membership. These differences more easily lead to misunderstanding when physical separation of generations is structured into community life, such as when housing groups are age stratified.

Conflict can be a tremendous energy for creativity and innovation or alternatively risks division and smouldering and finally, often explosive "war". As one member said "diversity provides the resources for a melting pot that generates positive growth in the community". If issues and grievances are not effectively resolved they can easily be picked up and played out by the next generation. For those with a young listening ear, it is easy to 'piss in poison from history'.

Moora Moora employed an outside facilitator to work with conflict resolution. His approach was to have a 'go around the cooperative in a circle' to see how members and groups saw present conflicts. The experience of Moora Moora has been that even when a mediator is engaged, it is difficult to resolve conflict once it has exploded. This is especially so if others have stoked the fires by supporting one side or the other, rather than helping to deal directly with an issue by being supportive of both and the need to resolve it. Here lies the shared interest. When small groups of like-minded generations meet informally, their commonality of viewpoints is almost inevitably reinforced. In order for that not to result in the creation of a divide, communication across the differences is as important as between mutual supporters. What happens when a significant conflict is unresolved, members eventually leave and the community has to rebuild. The community is robust, but rebuilding is a process that takes a lot of time and energy, and friends become casualties. We can only rebuild so many times.

All generations tend to get attached to positions and lose site of common interests, and values. It is a struggle to keep change and stability in each member's mind as a constructive part of community living. One member in his late 30s commented that "an impasse is created when the old generation won't let go until it is shown that any changes are an improvement and the next says we won't do anything until you let go".
He continued, "some new members need to stop trying to rewrite the spokes of the wheel and work on how we can advance the wheel- one generation gets to a certain point and then it is the task of the next to bring the community forward to the next stage. Such as, some goals we are all working for, some teeth for unacceptable behaviour".
Another young person expressed concern for "the need to walk the talk. My generation wants vision to be real, especially in terms of environmental sustainability and self responsibility in the group".

I remember a passionate conversation with one of our new members that was deeply critical of the cooperative owning beef cattle. I said “that the challenge we face, if we are to be in partnership, is for you to listen to the past and for me to be open to the future”. The new, young members struggle to be open to older ones and their wisdom from the past. The older I become the more difficult I find it to remain open to change and to trust that there are other ways of doing things, that while different can still be in the community interest. After so long it is a challenge to open space for each to make their own contribution rather than be defensive of past achievements or taken for granted community cultural practices.

Meeting the challenge of intergenerational sustainability is also about processes and what attitude members bring to decision making. Ideally members allow for continual reinventing the wheel and creative spaces for moving it forward, let go of attachment to being right others wrong, start with self- responsibility as well as consider the big picture. Members ideally ask themselves how to be inclusive before defining limits, accepting decisions, choose issues that count and can distinguish conflict over different paths to shared ends. For example, members focusing on keeping the land productive and cared for rather than which particular crops or animals are farmed.

A middle aged member view is that if ‘my generation fails to be able to transfer some lessons of living in community then it is a wasted generation and yet we have to assume that what is carried forward is but a small incremental addition to human history’. An old member reflecting on being interviewed by one of the communities teenagers for a school project regretted now that he didn’t bother to find out about his grand mothers life which began a century and a half ago at the time of the Irish potato famine.

## Conclusion

We live in an increasingly age layered society where intergenerational connections are largely limited to parent and child. This begins in school and continues. When children are not present it is more difficult to establish adult to adult connections that cross generations, which makes more difficult the task of intergenerational transfer of wisdom. We have largely lost our heritage of eldership which is difficult to rebuild in ways that work within a democratic culture. Metcalf ‘s (1995) book attempts to do this by giving voice to members from communities that have existed for at least 10 years. Intergenerational connections are often limited to those generations on either side of ones own-we tend to remember where we have recently been and are watchful of where we are going. Countries, such as Australia, with a high migrant population have trouble knowing the contribution of those who are a mere generation away, let alone being able to honor their ancestors and the spirit of all who have gone before them.

Many communities established in the 1970s are now facing intergenerational change. They seek a next generation before the gap between them is too great, before every one is in their old age. It is too late at death’s door to advertise for your replacement. Communities need to be watchful of their age structure and keep it as varied as possible. It is probably inevitable that there will be peaks and troughs of interest. The likelihood of intergenerational community sustainability is shaped by the existence of structures and processes that enable entry and exit of different generations. This begins with initial decisions such as, about community size and

mission. If established with a diversity of ages it is easier to sustain it, as diversity tends to attract itself.

Some communities and some members of Moora Moora have not yet addressed the issue of intergenerational sustainability. Those in Australia who have addressed the issue used a variety of legal, financial, social and cultural strategies. Some communities have restructured land ownership towards more private ownership to allow easier sale or borrowing from outside moneylenders. Others have just clarified and documented land ownership and its transfer in a more equitable manner between leaving and joining members. Some are importing paid labor to do more of the work or have become dependent on volunteers. Some members simply feel they have to leave, as the community hasn't planned for their old age inclusion. Some communities have restructured and made their taken for granted culture explicit, so that it is accessible to potential members, in particular the rights and obligations of members. To attract a new generation both parties need to work at seeing issues from a range of perspectives. If pathways towards intergenerational sustainability are to be found it isn't so much the responses that matter but asking the questions and facing the challenges involved.

Rebuilding intergenerational connections involves seeing beyond a simple lineal sense of life's progress through different, stimulating and often conflicting stages. It involves becoming attuned to what is common to life in community irrespective of our particular life stage. We need to have a place, be recognized, valued, understood, and loved. Experiencing community is the stuff of life. Regenerating experiences of multi generation communities is one of the key challenges if we are to relearn how to live with each other across generations and within the bounty of the earth.

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# Response to “The Family: A Free-Love Christian Commune” by Geraldo (Barney) Lourenco

**Abi Freeman**

Is “free love” a contradiction in terms? Free denotes without cost or limitation, but love has many costs, many responsibilities. To love is to give. To love is to help. To love is to put yourself in the place of another and think about what they need. To love is not to harm. More than that, love is to go out of your way to prevent harm. Love is to bring joy where there is sadness; comfort where there is loneliness; hope where there is despair. Love is to provide companionship. Love is to help provide the needs of another, whatever those needs may be.

When “free love” is used in connection with sexual relationships, then we go even further away from the term “free”. Love has responsibilities. If you enter into a sexual relationship with someone, we believe that you have a responsibility for your partner(s), both physically and emotionally. Every relationship, no matter how short or how long, has an impact on our lives.

We are Christians. We base our lives on the commandments that Jesus gave, “Love God, love your neighbour as yourself.” We do believe that sexual relations between consenting adults are permissible, however, these relations are only permissible within our communities if they are carried out in accordance with the principle of “love your neighbour”. If a relationship would harm either of the parties, or anyone else directly involved such as their regular partner, husband or wife, then such a relationship is not “according to love” and we do not approve of it. “Consenting” means willing consent: pressure or coercion to enter into a sexual relationship is not permitted.

Young people growing up in the movement, living in our full-time communities, are aware of our beliefs but are also aware of the strict guidelines in our governing Charter that forbid any type of sexual abuse, of children or others, or of any manner of coercion. Strict age limits regarding sexual activity prevent older adults taking advantage of younger, more impressionable women.

We consider young people of 16 and over to be old enough to start having sexual relationships amongst their peers, if they choose, although if they are under 18 their parents are expected to help advise them in making mature decisions. One of the main things we try to teach our youth regarding sexual activity is a sense of responsibility. Should pregnancy result, the partners are expected to marry or at least take what we call “minimum responsibility” to stay together. This is meant to ensure the care of the mother and baby for the first year of his or her life. Realising that this could be the result of their sexual liaisons, most young people are unwilling to risk a premature marriage or relationship with someone they are not that attached to, and protect themselves from pregnancy by refraining from intercourse or using some sort of birth control. This is permitted. (Abortion is not.)

Parents of teenagers and young people who choose to leave the Family are expected to help them make the transition into mainstream society and to maintain a loving relationship.

They are our children whom we love and care about, no matter what decisions they make in life. We recognise that our communal missionary lifestyle is not for all, and we estimate that around two-thirds of those born and raised in our communities eventually leave.

Overall spiritual leadership of The Family rests with Maria, the wife of our deceased founder David Berg, and her husband Peter. Each community is self-governing. There are no gender differences in our communities as far as leadership, spiritual or otherwise, or decision-making. Gender simply does not enter into that equation. Family members from around the world participate in discussions about policies that affect the Family worldwide.

We are happy to provide more information on our movement and even arrange visits, where possible, although most of our 1400 communities worldwide are quite small, ranging from 6 to 26 members.

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## 1.6 Communal Education

# Young Adults on their Way to the Future: Kibbutz, Studies and Profession

Arza Avrahami

Changes in the employment structure within the kibbutz and looking for sources of income outside the kibbutz framework has made people realize the importance of higher education. Over the last few years young people tend to maintain contact with their kibbutz communities without committing themselves to the kibbutz while putting off future decisions. An important stage in this period of most of them is a post-secondary school study period. These changes took place at the same time that the Israeli higher education system was itself in a process of offering a larger variety of learning possibilities.

I shell present the pattern of study preferences of the kibbutz-born in comparison to their non-kibbutz counterparts, and ask what part the kibbutz plays in the personal decisions and the effect of the social environment on the study preference.

342 kibbutz students and 1700 other students (represent higher education institutions in Israel) took part in the research.

Most kibbutz children turn to higher education, and many of them, more than the general population, work towards a degree. They differ from the non-students in the proportion of them who matriculate, in higher matriculation grades and they are older. It appears that some of those not studying when the research was carried out, especially the younger ones, may do so in the next few years. However, there is a small group that for personal reasons, or other difficulties, will not go on to study even though the kibbutz makes it possible.

The education years, a life stage for kibbutz youngsters, and their choice of a course of study, is influenced both by personal background and the general environment. The youth stage the kibbutzim have created makes it possible to postpone the decision whether to stay in the kibbutz or leave it. In their 20s, most of its youngsters retain their ties with the kibbutz, and many live there. With that, staying there at this period or even defining themselves as members, does not indicate a commitment to the kibbutz, and certainly not an intention to remain there. The real, important factors that influence young people focus around the needs and wishes of the individual, not a sense of commitment or ideology (Kadosh, 1998). The desire to remain in the kibbutz appears to grow stronger when its youngsters feel they can realize their personal expectations there (Lieberman & Avrahami, 1991; Avrahami, 1993). Their studies, and especially professional fulfillment are important in planning the future in the kibbutz or outside it. Though choosing a course of study is an individual decision and considerations are in the main personal, the influence of the social environment in which decisions are taken is not to be ignored.

Postponement of the decision to stay or to leave involves both practical considerations and a sense of belonging (Avrahami, 1997; Kadosh, 1998). Many young people keep the options open and declare a sense of obligation, one that has its elements of identification and solidarity with kibbutz social values, but does not assure that the individual concerned will remain there. At the same time, ongoing contact with the kibbutz seems to allow for a dialogue, whether open or hidden, with its youngsters, one that affects their considerations in choosing a course of study and a profession, and in the general planning of their personal future. In these

circumstances, the kibbutz is one of several options. The better the kibbutz communicates with its youngsters, introducing varied employment and social opportunities, with an agreed system of values, into the area of where choices are made, the more attractive the kibbutz will be (Avrahami, 1998; Kadosh, 1998).

Postponed studies: the contribution to crystallization of professional identity

Financial pressures, "lowered walls" between the kibbutz and its surroundings, and the resemblance of kibbutz children to their peers outside it, have contributed to changes in developing a professional direction. Earlier studies (Gutman & Levi, 1974; Seginer, 1988; Meisels, Gal & Fishoff, 1989; Shlesinger, 1992) disclosed that kibbutz children are less clear that their peers outside as to planing their future, though in the 1990s that gap narrowed. The present study indicates that kibbutz children plan their future in much the same way as the others do. True, in the first stages, in school, in the army and even two years after discharge, they are less clear about professional direction. However, having decided on a course of study, the clarity of their decision resembles that of the outside group, and by the time studies actually begin, the kibbutz group is even clearer in this regard.

Although during their studies more kibbutz children mentioned their choice of profession, 19% were still not specific about it, and 12% made a choice unconnected with their field of study. Theories regarding occupational choice contain the assumption that developing a professional identity is linked to and concurrent with choosing a course of study, continuing over a period of time. Occupational choice is a long process that occurs while one is studying, and continues afterwards (Ginzburg, 1972; Super, 1980). Students have non-occupational motives too, which may be explorative, social or a desire to realize inclinations (Avrahami, 1997).

Kibbutz children begin their studies three years later, on an average, than do their non-kibbutz peers. But they have more work experience and more encounters with other societies and cultures through their travels abroad, to which some add also voluntary communal activities. While all these postpone the decision to study, they may help develop an academic and occupational direction that contributes to stability during time of studying (Avrahami, 1997), while processing events from the past.

Preferred courses, the scope of choice

Most kibbutz children opt for academic studies, but the percentage of university students is lower than among the general population. The proportion in the academic colleges, however, is higher (Table 1).

In choosing fields of study, differences were found between kibbutz children and their non-kibbutz peers, and between those who defined themselves as kibbutz members and those with other affiliations to the kibbutz. Kibbutz children and members in particular tend to choose more applied professions, the life sciences and social service occupations, and less the exact sciences and the humanities (Table 2). Among women the tendency is particularly marked. The range of academic and occupational choices is somewhat narrower than in the general population. Several explanations may be offered for these patterns:

A. First and foremost is the educational and social background of the kibbutz. The non selective kibbutz school allows more students to matriculate and to turn to further education, including academic education. Although scholastic achievement has been stressed in recent years, the schools still esteem, some more, some less, the social and values education that was the focus of the traditional beit hinuch (school home) (Avrahami & Getz, 1994). Because of

the school atmosphere that does not emphasize high grades, some students matriculate with rather low ones, and relatively fewer than in the general sample followed the expanded curriculum in science subjects. The educational environment and kibbutz school structure in the mid 1980s did not prepare students for the competition in certain fields in higher education, and insufficient preparation in science at school limited their chances of acceptance in these fields and in some other prestigious university departments.[52] Although the average in psychometric tests is the same as in the general sample, the average of the combined score as determined by the university is decisive for acceptance in some areas, and this is lower for kibbutz children (P=.001). Hence about half the kibbutz children apply to academic and technical colleges, where entrance requirements are less stringent. Those applying to the university have higher matriculation grades, and parents with a higher level of education. While those in the academic technical colleges have similar psychometric scores, they differ in these two variables. The fact that most kibbutzim are in outlying areas, and many students want to live there, increases the proportion of kibbutz students in the colleges.

B. The unclear economic and social situation in the kibbutzim with its social instability, reinforces short-term considerations when making decisions. Most kibbutzim are not sufficiently aware of, nor have they internalized adequately, the behavior that the changed occupational structure requires, and there is no long-term investment in human resources. The system itself, and to an extent parents too, stress the acquisition of a practical profession without lengthy training, so as to earn a high a salary as possible, as soon as possible. 82% of the kibbutzim pay their youngsters university tuition, but only for three to four years (Naaman & Levenbach, 2000). The kibbutz transition to differential salary sends the message of the need to earn a high salary. The vocational and the academic college, perceived as prestigious and stressing practical studies, meet this need. Courses that require further years of study, or fields where the first degree is inadequate for entry level employment, create a dilemma for young people when they choose courses and decide whether to remain in the kibbutz. In choosing a profession as well, college students tend to opt for professions that do not require university or continuing study. While many express the desire to go on studying, they lack the assurance that they will be able to continue directly from the first to the second university degree. Data indicates that a greater proportion of science students at the university wish to continue, while more vocational college students are undecided about further studies.

It appears that young people who are unsure whether they can manage prolonged studies, whether because of the kibbutz economic situation or because they are thinking of leaving, go in for vocational education that combine a bachelor's degree with professional qualification. This choice is like that of students of low socioeconomic status who have great learning ability, who generally elect prestigious practical studies for the sake of speedy social mobility. By contrast, youngsters of society's higher strata can choose more theoretical fields, postponing the choice of a profession, or they may enter the labor market with the help of their families' social capital (Davies & Guppy, 1997). In the past, kibbutz children tended to follow their inclinations in choosing their studies, assured of the future of the kibbutz and their own ability to acquire a profession later on, using kibbutz social capital. The erosion of kibbutz social status and changes in Israel's employment structure, now influence their choice, making it similar to that of competent students of low socioeconomic status.

[52] The subjects in this research completed their schooling from 7 to 12 years ago. Possibly changes in the kibbutz school over the years, and shortening the moratorium period will alter the situation.

C. Bourdieu & Passeron (1977) maintain that the components of social capital are in the main transmitted through the family, not through the formal education system. The ability of family and community to transmit academic expectations and social motivation to their children is a diffuse and hidden process, but nonetheless highly influential. Although the kibbutz students at the time we made this study had been exposed to the broader society, in the course of their schooling (completed in the 1980s) they acquired from their families and community unclear social values, and a vague attitude to the kibbutz. Kibbutz norms had weakened, and those of the larger society were not acquired. The social and cultural capital the kibbutz gave its young people in the past has diminished, and their background does not facilitate admittance to prestigious and scientific fields despite their scholastic ability.

D. Exposure of young people to information about the work world is most important in planning a profession (Flom, 1995). Seeking out such information may also influence academic and professional choices (Hurtado et al., 1997). In an ever changing work world, the work force is more and more engaged in service occupations, in computers, the information industry and information management. In 1990, 70% of the American work force was employed in service occupations (Meshulam, 1997). Despite the changes in the kibbutz occupational structure, and its increasing openness to work outside the kibbutz, a large proportion of the members still work at traditional occupations, the minority in agriculture and more of them in industry that is still of the traditional type (plastics, metals, food processing).[53] Kibbutz children who are now students were not exposed in adolescence to a wide range of service, scientific and free professions. There is a link between social capital acquired, parents' professions, and communal norms and attitudes on one hand, and study choices on the other. The kibbutz environment limited the encounter of its young people with varied professional possibilities for the future. Although fields of study are broader than they were (Zamir, 1997), their patterns of choice, influenced by their environment, are still different from those of their peers. As one of them said:

"The most serious impression I got is that there's hardly any need for people with a degree... They might be pleased if there was a dentist or a lawyer, but one with experience, not one who just finished studying… an engineering technician or a mechanical engineer, that's not my field either... Maybe if someone with a first degree in computers turned up, it would be what everyone says we need, but we really don't, because there's no use for a degree like that... It's the kind of contradiction [there is] in the kibbutz message system. Everybody knows farming today is not a profession, and on the other hand I don't think there's any work place that requires any education beyond something basic..." (Avrahami, 1997)

Finally, there may be a small bias in the data, from the high proportion of kibbutz children who go into higher education compared with the general population. If we take the population that is comparable with the kibbutz, the gap narrows. The bias may reduce difference slightly, but is not responsible for them, because comparisons in choosing courses of study were made within the population in post secondary education, not with the general population.

It seems that the long moratorium period and social experience outside the kibbutz help to develop clearer decision and leading to greater congruence between studies and professional

[53] In 1998, 40% of the kibbutz population worked in farming and industry (quarrying and manufacturing) as against 21% in the general population, with 15% in transportation, communication, insurance, business service and public administration, by contrast with 27% in the general population. Kibbutz occupations are similar, but there is still a small gap. In 1997 9% of the kibbutz population were in academic and scientific occupations, by contrast with 15% in the general population. (Fovin, 2000). A comparison of the kibbutz with equivalent population sectors reveals an even larger gap.

choice. But choosing a course of study and a profession is influenced by personal resources and by the young person's social culture (Brennan, 1993; Bourdieu, 1977). Despite changes in the kibbutz, the "lowered walls and closer contacts with its surroundings, the kibbutz still has a different attitude to higher education and the occupational structure than the accepted one in society as a whole. That attitude prevails in the kibbutz's institution and among some members. Most kibbutzim limit the years of study approved for their youngsters. Possibly some leave the kibbutz earlier, knowing of this limitation, so they can work to finance further studies. Those young people who have left the kibbutz are not included in the research sample.

The trend in choosing courses of study may interfere with professional and personal development. In their research on the link between higher education and employment, Brennan et al. (1993) state that university students enjoy marked preference when they enter the labor market. They obtain work more easily, their pay is higher, and over the years they advance more rapidly into management positions. Attending prestigious institutions affects scholastic achievement and leads to encounters with young people in new social networks (Davies & Guppy, 1997). In a rapidly changing labor market, one needs professional mobility or mobility within the profession. This requires a broad education that develops skills more advantageous than those derived from specific vocational training. One interviewee, who maintained that he spoke only for himself and did not voice the view of his friends, affirmed this to some extent:

"When I thought of starting to study, I didn't know exactly where, why and what ... My purpose is to obtain a higher education - after that, all options are open. ... I know from my friends who are starting to study now, that it's very important for them that what they are going to study is what they'll work at in the future. And when they come and ask me, I try to show them like another side and tell them: Listen, what you said is really important and it's all very well, and good and right, but how do I know what's going to happen in another ten years, what will interest me and what I'll want. Or if what you studied will interest you at all or if it won't interest you, what are you going to do then? So you have to be more open, more able to change." (Avrahami, 1997).

Further on he explains that he is studying to acquire tools and skills for scientific thinking, along with an education that is broad and less specific. This young man argues with his friends in favor of general studies that make it possible to choose a specific profession at a later stage. To concentrate on acquiring a profession so as to start working at once cannot be right for everyone. Training in broader, additional fields, even if it requires additional investment, is important for individual development and no less so, for balanced development in the economic and social structure of the kibbutz. This kind of change requires new thinking about the school's role as a guide and a counselor in vocational planning, and about a change in the occupational structure among kibbutz members, who must internalize the importance of investment in human capital.

Table 1: Distribution of kibbutz children by educational institutions and gender, compared with the general population (in percents)

| | Kibbutz children | | | General Sample | | | Population (CBS) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | Men | Women | Total | Men | Women | |
| University | 45.5 | 51.7 | 41.5 | 50.5 | 48.6 | 51.2 | 49.1 |
| Teacher training college | 14.3 | 5. 8 | 18.7 | 12.6 | 3.9 | 19.7 | 12.1 |
| General academic college | 12.3 | 12.5 | 12.2 | 12.7 | 14.4 | ll.4 | 15.8 [2] |
| Academic vocational college | 16.5 | 21.7 | 13.3 | 9.0 | 12.5 | 6.1 | |
| Non academic vocational college | 11.4 | 8.3 | 13.3 | 15.2 | 20.6 | 10.8 | 23.0 |
| N | 308 | 120 | 188 | 737 | 895 | 1632 | |

1. CBS data for 1998
2. CBS data do not distinguish between academic and non academic vocational colleges.

Table 2: Students by fields of study and gender, in the kibbutz and the general sample, as compared with CBS data

| Field of study | | | Men | | Women | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CBS | Kibbutz | Kibbutz | General | Kibbutz | General |
| Liberal arts | 6.3 | 3.4 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 3.1 | 5.9 |
| Languages and regional studies | 3.9 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 1.5 | 1.9 |
| The arts | 6.1 | 11.8 | 7.7 | 4.3 | 14.4 | 6.0 |
| Education | 18.9 | 12.8 | 4.2 | 3.4 | 18.0 | 19.4 |
| Social sciences | 15.5 | 11.2 | 6.7 | 7.3 | 14.4 | 19.4 |
| Commerce, management | 5.5 | 13.1 | 13.4 | 7.8 | 12.9 | 8.9 |
| Law | 5.0 | 1.6 | 2.5 | 5.4 | 1.0 | 4.3 |
| Maths, computers * | 4.6 | 8.1 | 17.6 | 18.9 | 2.6 | 10.7 |
| Biological sciences | 2.2 | 7.5 | 5.9 | 2.4 | 7.7 | 2.5 |
| Engineering, architecture | 7.0 | 13.1 | 23.5 | 14.3 | 6.7 | 6.5 |
| Engineering technology | 15.7 | 6.9 | 10.1 | 12.3 | 4.7 | 2.8 |
| Communication | .8 | 1.2 | .8 | 3.9 | 1.5 | 2.5 |
| Medicine | .9 | .3 | | 3.6 | .5 | 2.9 |
| Auxiliary medical professions | 3.8 | 6.5 | 1.7 | 1.9 | 9.8 | 3.2 |
| Physics, chemistry | 1.2 | .6 | | 3.4 | 1.0 | 2.1 |
| Non academic administ-ration & clerical work | 2.6 | | | 5.0 | | 3.3 |

* Mathematics and computers includes students of computer technology.

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## 1.7 The Future of the Kibbutz

# New Boundaries – New Identity
# The Influence of Structural Changes on Communal Societies – The Case of the Kibbutz

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**A. Introduction and Background**

Until recently kibbutz members and kibbutz society had a defined, recognized and unique identity, based on a comprehensive set of values and established institutions. These defined the boundaries of kibbutz and its collective identity as a social unit, and as a settlement with a clear geographic position, and the identity of each member. Each kibbutz was a comprehensive system, a total way of life. Each member was enfolded, as it were, by the system comprised of the kibbutz and its institutions, which took full responsibility for the individual and all his or her needs.

The crisis of the 1980s was both structural and related to values, its consequences discernible in all structures and spheres. It has been described, studied and analyzed in the last decade in a long series of research projects, some comprehensive and some concerning one aspect of kibbutz life[54]. The main points are already common knowledge for all whom the subject interests. Briefly and in general, the changes, still in progress, are essentially a transition from a collectivist, cohesive society with a high level of social and ideological commitment -- an intentional community -- to an individualistic one in which the bond between members and their mutual responsibility is growing steadily weaker. Communal principles are being abandoned, and replaced by norms once considered deviant but now are legitimized. Social agreements and balances, so very important for solidarity according to Habermas (1991), were damaged, and the mode of action changed from communicative to strategic, as Habermas (1982 ) defines it.

As interpersonal relationships became formalized and social engagement lessened, the community as a whole, and each of its members, lost their social capital, as defined by Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1995). The boundaries and identity of each kibbutz are not clear any more: certainly they are difficult to recognize and define. Members are unsure about their social identity, a situation typical of eras of change and uncertainty (Giddens, 1991).

B. Identity and boundaries

Social identity and boundaries are interdependent, defining one another. As S. N. Eisenstadt puts it, “The structuring of collective identity is the social structuring of boundaries, trust and solidarity” (1998).

B.1. Identity

Individual identity is defined to a considerable extent by the society / group to which s/he

54 A. Avrahami, E. Avrahami, E. Ben Raphael, M. Topel, U. Levitan et al., A. Pavin, D. Rosoglio, S. Ravid, M. Rosner and S. Getz, to name only a few.

belongs, and is also the result of personal characteristics -- psychological, biological and economic -- social position and other variables.

> "Psychology and sociology are the two disciplines most often associated with the study of identity. Psychologists tend to think in terms of individuals and inner processes. For them identity seems to be something that exists within the individual's personality through various cognitive processes. - - - In contrast, sociologists tend to think of individuals in terms of society and its institutions, conceptualising identity as a set of definitions and roles.- - -
>
> For social-psychologists, an adequate view of identity runs along a continuum from the personal to the social. Definitions that involve the entity of the *self* seem to be most useful. Without a concept of self, individual behaviour is either simply role-determined or shaped by some resolution of forces between a given social role and the inheritances of biology. Self is the concept that eludes mechanistic determinism and is the vehicle for conceptualising a balance between structural determinacy and individual creativity - - - The self connotes two essential parts, the member's *identity*, i.e., awareness of membership, the sense of belonging to a group, while *ideology* refers to the member's world view about the group's position in society. - - - *the self and the social seem to be linked through centrality of group identity in the self-concept; perceived similarities in the personal characteristics of group members; and an awareness of a common fate in the way in which group members are treated in society.* [ Italics mine - E.A.].- - - Individuals may simultaneously identify as consumers, citizens, feminists, workers, and human-rights activists, differing markedly from the previous construct that conceived of the individual whether as a worker, a black, or a woman." (Cherny, 2001).

"Individuals, of course, have multiple identities, and usually these are not inconsistent: I am a Jew, an American, a left-winger, born a German, a professor, a planner, a husband and father, the son of a philosopher, a gardener. I do not need to choose among these; they are all part of my identity, even though *some may occasionally be in tension with others."* (Italics mine) (Marcuse, 2000).

"Modern societies do not simply become increasingly differentiated, but change from pre-modern topological differentiations (i.e. sectors and social strata) to functional differentiations (with sub-systems like politics, law, economics, science, education, health care, etc.). In the course of this process, the individual is no longer assigned to a single place, segment or stratum of society, but rather functionally included within it. This means that the individual partially belongs to all sub-systems, while being excluded as an integrated individual. Functionally fragmented, the simultaneous participation of the individual in various sub-systems is required and enforced throughout his or her life." (Fischer-Rosenthal,1996) .

B. 2. Boundaries

The territorial boundaries of a settlement are in general clearly defined, and constitute a recognized municipal unit. However, in one settlement several communities may exist side by side or even intermingled, their "boundaries" usually defined by norms and values, the interests and the common aims of the members, as well as the social network to which they belong. At least until recently, the kibbutz was a community whose physical and community boundaries were one and the same. The kibbutz is perceived as a settlement and community with several subsystems: economic, social, political and the like. Each kibbutz was a comprehensive sheltering "roof", in which the various entities and subsystems were not

necessarily in complete congruence, as Israel Shepher points out:
"To be a member of a kibbutz means, then, to be a member of an organization (in principle by voluntary choice). This organization requires the individual to commit himself to an all-embracing, if not total, way of life: to be a member of a clearly defined group; to be a partner in a collective economic unit; to belong to a corporate group (in the social anthropological meaning of the notion - -); to reside permanently, in principle, in a certain territorial unit; to belong to a community" (Shepher, 1980).
The kibbutz member, then, belongs simultaneously to a number of subsystems in his kibbutz, that situation defining the individual's identity or multiple identities, most if not all of them linked to a defined territory. Such was the situation at least before the wave of change.
C. Implications of the changes
What the changes implied for kibbutz members, particularly for the member as an individual, was examined by means of in-depth interviews with 50 members of 10 different kibbutzim, selected by criteria of size, social and economic status and the extent of changes undergone. Interviewees were chosen randomly from the rank and file of the membership, with one central office holder in each kibbutz included in the group. The semi structured interview was carried out by means of free conversation, the interviewer posing questions only to bring up a subject that the interviewee on his own initiative had not raised. Members knew the purpose of the interview, they spoke freely and openly, and only three persons refused to participate. All interviews were recorded and transcribed for the purpose of qualitative text analysis.
Topel (1996) discerned three categories of changes - privatization, different management style and intertwining, the last term known as "lowering the walls"[55] in the kibbutz vernacular. Each category of changes affects the identity and boundaries of the kibbutz as a settlement, and the identity of the members, and contains an economic-monetary element. Perhaps the most significant change is the primary and central role of money in the consideration of every kibbutz community, institution and individual. The rational economic-pragmatic approach has taken hold in the evolving kibbutz. It changes the kibbutz from an intentional community, carrying out tasks for the common good with economic considerations in last place, to one that as a rule takes on tasks to the extent that they are economically profitable. In the interviews this emerged in statements expressing unwillingness for the kibbutz to be a *freier* (the vernacular for a sucker), as it was in the past when it took on assignments for the common good. Some point out that precisely because it has lost this orientation to national needs, the kibbutz has lost its relevance for Israeli society. Many interviewees noted the fact, but few regretted it. The change however adversely affected the pioneer quality that was a central element in the identity of the kibbutz as a whole, and of individual members, as noted by several of those interviewed.
Blurring the pioneer element in their identity, then, deprived the kibbutz itself, and each member, of at least part of their social capital. This has implications for the general public's regard for the kibbutz (Smith, 1996).
The new order of priorities affects not only relations with the society outside the kibbutz, but among its own members. Following Habermas's terminology, society functioned in the past through "communicative action", which today has given way to the "strategic action". Communicative actions are done for mutual benefit, free of money and power constraints,

[55] The term is somewhat misleading: the kibbutz never isolated itself behind an impenetrable wall. Ziegfried Landshut, the first sociologist to study kibbutz, noted in the 1940s the osmosis between the kibbutz and its surroundings.

without egocentric considerations of personal success. By contrast, strategic activities are carried out of rational and efficiency considerations, to obtain material results (Habermas, 1989).

Undermined mutual trust and the weakening of engagement damaged social capital because "Trust and engagement are two facets of the same underlying factor -- social capital" (Putnam, 1995).

We now proceed to examine briefly each category of change, as perceived by kibbutz members.

C. 1. Intertwining

Because of the social and political tasks the kibbutz undertook on behalf of society as a whole, it was not separated from that society. On the other hand, it adopted a policy of exclusion to the point where outside authorities, national or other, were rarely called on to intervene in what went on inside kibbutz "walls", while the kibbutz itself waived rights to services to which every citizen was entitled. In the past exclusion also functioned as a mechanism defining the identity of kibbutz.

Intertwining has many facets. Employment structure changed as members went to work outside the kibbutz and many outsiders were hired to work inside it. The kibbutz education system opened to outside children. Apartments were rented to non-members, and tourism and other services were offered to the general public. Kibbutz members, on their part, purchase services such as entertainment in communities in their region, their considerations economic as a rule. To this one must add the establishment of regional schools attended by kibbutz children as well as children of the region. All this led to broader social contacts with non-kibbutz members on a greater scale than in the past, whether at work, in recreation, in parents' groups or elsewhere. To this, add family ties that always crossed community / kibbutz boundaries. The new social networks help blur the boundaries between the kibbutz and the outside community. The ultimate is the construction of neighborhoods within the municipal jurisdiction of the kibbutz for outsiders who are neither kibbutz members nor part of the cooperative community. Thus congruence between the community and the settlement, a key component of the kibbutz identity, gradually disappears.

In the interviews, some kibbutz members expressed a sense of estrangement within their own kibbutz because of all the new faces. They were concerned about negative elements entering the kibbutz grounds, which many still consider as part of their home. Others, by contrast, noted the positive aspects of increased income from services sold to outsiders, of increasing the local population, particularly the younger population after so many young people left during the crisis. They also noted the benefits to the educational institutions, which had shrunk due to an exodus from the kibbutz and the falling birth rate (the demographic crisis).

The increasing number of kibbutz members working outside the autonomous kibbutz economy means that for a growing number of members the local community has become less important, while their work place with its different values has become more so. The process, familiar in modern social systems (Kanter & Pittinsky, 1995-1996) has now reached the kibbutz.

There is also a changing perception of "home," once thought of as the entire kibbutz, and which now tends to relate only to one's private apartment. Some members stated explicitly that they regarded only that as home, not the kibbutz as a whole. Indeed, lowering the walls between the kibbutz and its environs has gone together with raising walls within the kibbutz: each family for itself.

Intertwining has led to a new situation vis-à-vis the Other -- the society outside -- in relation to which collective and individual identity develops. With the Other no longer so distinct and separate, the unique kibbutz identity has become blurred. (Calhoun (1994) and Cherny (2000) are among the researchers who note the importance of the Other in development of an individual or group identity).

C. 2. Management

Management changes such as boards of directors, “profit centers” and hierarchy within groups of workers has led to a sense of estrangement. Some interviewees said they felt the kibbutz was no longer theirs, that they were like hired hands in their own kibbutz they had built up, and that the new managers did not listen to ordinary workers (see also Topel on the Technocrats, 2000). Even more sharply, it was said that these same ordinary workers were “the vassals of the managers”. Others, mainly among the central office holders, stressed the positive aspects of a system that made the kibbutz member responsible for earning his own living, the efficiency of the new administrative methods and the reduction of the “free rider” phenomenon.

Separating the economy from the community reinforced subsystems like production branches and plants, with new boundaries around such independent “territories”. These develop outside connections, in competition with their relationships to subsystems within the kibbutz and sometimes above them. Borders that once overlapped within the comprehensive kibbutz system are now breached by the new “territories”. Because of these subsystems, members of the same community develop different identities. Multiple identities lead to tension (Castells, 1997) and create dilemmas where conflicting identities may confront a member with conflicting loyalties, or at least oblige him / her to grade those identities within a hierarchy. Within the management category lie all the changes that have replaced direct participatory democracy with democracy in a representative form, establishing boards or councils in place of the general assembly. In many kibbutzim the weekly assembly has long ceased to meet, and while it remains the supreme authority, its scope is limited by procedures that make it very difficult for the individual member to initiate discussions. Although privatization has largely freed the individual as a consumer from dependence on institutional functionaries, the new type of management often leaves him helpless in the face of social and economic-industrial managers, as s/he is no longer able to appeal to the community as a whole. Some interviewees expressed a sense of incapacity and helplessness in the new situation.

C. 3. Privatization

The feeling of estrangement and even of alienation so often expressed relates to privatization too -- which has meant giving members responsibility for most funds for their own maintenance, culture and amenities. Interviewees stress that in doing so the kibbutz divested itself of commitment to individual well-being, and indeed had reduced mutual obligation to a minimum. Others, however, point to positive aspects of broadening individual responsibility for budgets and activities, freeing members from being dependant on kibbutz institutions. The individual member is the master of his fate or at least controls most areas of his consumption and expense budget due to privatization. Differential rewards too, at different levels, for extra work or demanding tasks contributes to the sense of controlling one’s life. Individuals thus determine not only their expenses but also their income, to the extent of their willingness to work more, or harder.

The system of differential rewards, in effect doing away with mutual responsibility, harms weaker populations for the most part, including senior members. Hence many kibbutzim have developed a system of mutual help for those who lack the strength to cope with the new reality. In effect it is not mutual but one-sided, very like charity that assures a minimum living standard. The kibbutz vernacular terms it “safety net”. Such systems exist in society as a whole, financed by the state or by charitable organizations, and have blurred the once distinctive collective trait in the kibbutz member’s identity and in that of the kibbutz as a whole. Thus both come to resemble the non-collective society, the kibbutz itself approaches the model of the “community settlement”, without precisely defining its characteristics. The view that research subjects expressed about the “safety net” ranged from an expression of social solidarity, through a moral duty to founders and seniors, to a feeling of discomfort in some of those in need of it. The statement that “The safety net is like welfare arrangements made for the needy by the state and by charities”, elicited interesting responses. Some interviewees were insulted by the comparison, asserting that “In the kibbutz it’s different,” since the kibbutz member contributes part of his income of his own free will to the safety net fund.

## D. Additional implications

### D. 1. Localism

The interviews disclosed strong expressions of localism, an affinity for the geographical location, though not to the kibbutz that is more than a domicile. There were powerful expressions of belonging to a place and a scene, with commitments to continue to live there, despite any changes in social, organizational or other frameworks. Expressions of local attachment sometimes went beyond the specific settlement to include a broad geographical region. Contrary to expectations, however, the interviews presented no proofs of regionalism -- a conscious, significant regional identity, or at least none that would replace the now blurred identity of the kibbutz. Possibly this stems from the past, when the kibbutz member’s relevant “region” was sectorial and not geographical: the entire movement and not the physical region. Thus one may anticipate that as the status and importance of the movement for the kibbutz member diminishes, the region will become more relevant, both for individual members and for their kibbutz institutions, as attested by some office holders, though not by the ordinary kibbutz members.

Strong expressions of attachment to place contrast sharply with distancing from commitment to the kibbutz as a way of life and an ideology, to the point of negation and alienation. Attachment to place, along with the desire to shake off what is perceived as “bonds the kibbutz uses to tie up its members” may possibly be explained by the statement made by Tuan Yi-fu: “Place is security, space is freedom” (1997). Attachment to place of residence brings security, and cutting the link to the kibbutz idea with its restrictive way of life means moving out into the open, which is freedom.

### D. 2. Alienation

Expressions of helplessness and a sense of meaninglessness that give voice to alienation in a society that within itself was to have done away with alienation, necessarily raise questions. The answer, emerging from interview responses, enables us to divide the alienated, or those at

least discontented, into three groups as to the source of their discontent:

1. Involved, active members who care about their community though not necessarily about the kibbutz, and actively work for changes. However, when these are opposed and not accepted by the kibbutz, the same members express discontent and even alienation;
2. Members who oppose changes, whether out of considerations of personal advantage or because of a conservative kibbutz attitude, express discontent and alienation when far-reaching changes are introduced;
3. Adherents to the kibbutz idea who hope that changes and adaptations will assure the future of their community as a kibbutz, even a different, "up-dated" one, and despair of this in either when changes have led to dismantling basic kibbutz principles, or when initiatives for change and adaptation are thwarted by opposition that freezes the current situation. The fate if the kibbutz is then sealed, according to this group, who become indifferent and uninvolved.

Members of the frustrated groups are the source of "internal departures", people who shut themselves up in their own space and give up on community involvement. A community in which a significant number of individuals act this way, in their indifference and even alienation, acquires the characteristics of modern communities in the era of globalization (Kanter & Pittinsky, ibid.) and thus loses its original unique qualities -- in our case those of the kibbutz.

D. 3. Anxieties

Kibbutz members now evidence two new kinds of anxiety: one about property rights and the other about employment security.

The first relates to the trend to allocate the communal properties to each member. The difficult economic situation and fear lest creditors (the banks) might seek to attach the property of debtor kibbutzim, led these to seek legal means to register members' apartments in their own names. Moreover, some are considering the possibility of replacing the system of common ownership (including that of economically productive property) by dividing it among individual members. Those against dissolution of common ownership fear they will lose their share in their life's work. By contrast, those for it have no fears that they will be left destitute, and are concerned only that the property will not be privatized because of technical and legal obstacles. It is hardly necessary to state that the change in the nature of property ownership would remove a basic characteristic of the kibbutz identity.

The second fear, insecurity as to employment, accompanies globalization everywhere in the world, according to Kanter and Pittinsky (ibid.). In the kibbutz, such fear arises from privatization, which makes the member responsible for earning his/her own living. In the past there was certainty that work would always be found in the kibbutz, and that it was a kibbutz responsibility. Those days are gone, hence the fear.

Another kind of employment anxiety arises from what the two researchers define as employability security. It is most sharply expressed by all interviewees when they speak of their first and foremost desire regarding their children -- to make sure that they have a profession.

These anxieties are additional elements in the sense of uncertainty and fear of the future so common in the kibbutz. The effect of the situation on individual identity requires further

research study, particularly in psychology.

Conclusion:

The social identity of the kibbutz and that of the individual within it are being redefined, with indications that the new identity will lose much that was unique about the kibbutz and the individual kibbutznik. There are signs that it will be much like that of "ordinary" communities in Israel, and that many members will adopt a professional identity, especially where this brings prestige. Different personal identities – within the individual - that must be placed within a hierarchy makes it difficult to establish individual status and so leads to tension, though it is doubtful that this situation is unique to the kibbutz member. The differing identities of individuals will make it difficult to develop a new collective identity for kibbutz, or for other communities that will then develop on the site where once there was a kibbutz.

It is most doubtful whether the physical boundaries of such a community, to be defined in legal and municipal terms, will correspond as they once did with the social boundaries of the communities in the same geographical area. The old identities and boundaries are crumbling -- and there are still no new identities, no new boundaries.

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## 1.8 The Future of Community

# Changing Our Vision of Nature
# On the Threshold of a New Millennium
# Nathan Batalion

The main insights for this paper, while enhanced by research, first grew out of moving personal life experiences. They altered how I see the world and thus created an on-going interest in how our collective society sees the world at large or evolves its vision of nature. Since I had these experiences, it has taken me over three decades to digest their meaning. What I learned of highest value is that our contemporary world, despite its plethora of genius, sees nature through the filter of a mechanistic *mathematical perspective* that does not encompass the deeper nature of nature. As a result we self-create many of the environmental crises we face.

Now what affects nature also impacts human nature. This paper therefore focuses more on the human and social rather than ecological, scientific or philosophical aspects of this issue. We will explore how social or community life can transform in tandem with a change in the root vision of nature.

A possible hint of this kind of a potential link is given when political ideologies mold outer community structures. We see an example of this with communist collectives as a by-product of Marxist philosophies behind the Iron Curtain. One can argue that capitalism fosters its specific structures and more in line with a competitive economic orientation. The latter includes, in the transition from an agrarian to a capitalist framework, the dramatic disappearance of extended families, tribes, and older community structures in the West. One reason is that larger families are not as mobile and adaptable in capitalism's highly competitive economic milieu. But a deeper reason involves again our root vision of nature.

***The first thesis*** *of this paper is thus that a root vision of nature does form a "**context of relevance**" to a culture's social structures.*

At first, this is not at all apparent. The dominant view of nature is supposed to be a view of nature *not society*. But I believe it seeps universally into the consciousness of the general public and into daily life affairs like a faint color tint that spreads throughout. It is therefore less noticeable in parts. Or we see it best by looking at the whole of our culture compared to the whole of another culture that lacks this tint. Secondly, a dominant view of nature tends to be seen as unchangeable. It is considered to be like the fixed setting of a stage for life. Now if the modern vision of nature is not so fixed for all time, then there is a rationale for this paper's "***context of relevance***."

***A second thesis then claims that this "context of relevance" not only exists but is potentially powerful*** *- so that by changing our root worldview, we might revolutionize society.*

Or stated negatively, by not revolutionizing our core understanding, alternative communities may remain indefinitely on the fringes of mainstream society.

***A third thesis is that every culture's root vision has a simple essence and only if we change that essence, do we deeply transform society as a whole.***

In modern times that essence, I believe, is the mathematical perspective. Now we might believe that we are *radically* changing things by switching from Newton's vision to Einstein's; or from Einstein's to the newest ideas of quantum mechanics. But these approaches never once disturb the root perspective. The impact of such vision changes is thus more superficial - making it seem that issues of physics have no real bearing or ***context of relevance*** to daily life. Changing the root view, however, is an entirely different matter. For example, let's take the influence of maintaining our quantitative view on any of the recent international economic summit meetings, those that promote western-style globalization. There math-based statistics like GDP, interest rates, and monetary trade balances try to define humanity's overall goals. These statistics, centered on financial relationships, are ultimately steered toward the interests of corporate shareholders maximizing their corporate wealth or profit. The latter monetary rewards may be calculated as "net present value of future streams of cash flows discounted at a prevailing or targeted rate and further adjusted for perceived risk variances." This kind of strange business lingo is mechanistically impersonal, entirely math-defined, and mirrors our underlying worldview's way of approaching life. As Nick Herbert writes in *Quantum Reality*:

"The search for a picture of "the way the world really is" is an enterprise that transcends the narrow interests of theoretical physicists. For better or for worse, humans have tended to pattern their domestic, social, and political arrangements according to the dominant vision of physical reality. Inevitably the cosmic view trickles down to the most mundane details of everyday life."

**Background**

My credentials for taking on this topic are somewhat "normative." I am presently a Ph.D. candidate at Binghamton University in Philosophy, Interpretation and Culture (PIC). But the original interest in philosophy stems from my being born into a Holocaust-surviving family - trying to make sense of a senseless world. The interest in mathematics dates back to the age of 13 when after a summer's study, I passed a calculus final at Fairleigh Dickenson University. After entering high school, there was no specially geared program so I was forced to retake Algebra I - what caused me, out of natural boredom, to ponder the philosophical implications of primary math symbolisms. At 17, however, I had a high fever that left me "aphasic" or unable to connect any symbols fluidly or even to speak in whole sentences. This meant I was left-hemisphere impaired and had to rely on the right hemisphere to guide me. Involuntarily this threw me out of the math-tied or western worldview - and for that matter, out of any conceptual context. It left me experiencing the world from the non-verbal or "silent" side of the brain - the intuitive.

To amplify this, I lived in an intentional community. There I did manual work and followed spiritual practices. The latter involved creating an imaginary and distant, unattached observer

of my inner experience to gain new insights. Recovering after a few years, I retrained my ability to speak coherently and reconnect my sense of reality. With the conventional sense of life exploded, however, I had to rebuild my inner universe otherwise - and, for me, on a more whole-brain foundation virtually opposite to what is conventional.

Returning from a monastic existence, I dove back into the world of modernity, working on Wall Street (as a CPA and president of two security firms) and latter in academia (as assistant professor of accounting and finance). There I observed some of the practical ways of executing modernity's quantifications - especially the broad monetarization or commercialization of life.

**Context of relevance**

In different cultures, the larger vision of nature usually can be classified into three general groups - ***secular*** (sensory-tied), ***religious*** (transcendent) and ***hybrid*** (semi-sensory/semi-transcendent). In each of these groups we can see examples of how the core vision - the central focus of the collective inner life - is not necessarily an objective way of seeing. It can again artificially structure the whole of perceptions, which then alters substantially the social and environmental conditions of life.

**In indigenous hunter-oriented cultures**, the hybrid form for the larger vision of nature is often seen. Nature spirits perceived as present in their travels may predominate - and these are often based on animals that most sustained their lives. A famous example is that of the collective spirituality of the Plains Indians in the US. The buffalo was for them a vital source of physical sustenance - providing meat and hides for food, clothing and shelter. The Buffalo spirit understandably became their innermost spiritual focus. The Indians moved with and lived in packs mimicking the Buffalo's ways and roamings. When the "iron horse" arrived - or the railroads of the 19th century - these Indians faced not just the advance of European culture but also the eradication of their revered buffalo herds. The white intruder, of course, did not live in the same spiritual universe. With the external decimation, the Indians became inwardly disoriented, dispirited, and ultimately saw the demise of their society in tandem with the loss of their spiritual inner focus.

**In parts of the orient,** where Hinduism and Buddhism have been the dominant religions for centuries, a very different conjunction evolved for their collective inner life. Here we often see a hierarchical view of nature, especially of inner stratified realms as the central perspective. In other words, there was the claim of ever higher levels of inner consciousness to be attained - such as nirvana or complete detachment, Buddha consciousness and so on. Many of the respective societies, those upholding the previously stated views thus naturally tended to externalize their inner perspective - that is, to be also class-stratified or hierarchical. A notable example is Tibetan society, with the Dalai Lama at the very highest position, and a further subordinate social hierarchy of lamas underneath.

**Moving further on to medieval Western Europe**, here the chosen or psycho-culturally latched on to vision is transcendently religious and *externally* hierarchical. The earth was presumed to sit at the very center of the universe, and as if surrounded by a womb of

hierarchical, concentric and ever more divine spheres. The biblical God presided over this cozy cosmic womb and thus served as a subconscious model for social stratification naturally ruled over by ever more divinely inspired political hierarchies. Amid this constellation of beliefs, the Roman Catholic order administered (or ministered) divine will on earth, delegating the same to medieval and feudal monarchs - and prior thereto to the Holy Roman Empire.

Again society reflected the dominant image of the cosmos.

**With the post-medieval or modern vision** there came forth the familiar quantitative and atomistic views. This intrinsically changed the primary soil of inner consciousness. It inevitably fostered vast revolutionary changes that toppled the older rooted hierarchies. It overthrew feudal, monarchical, and dynastic orders - not only in Europe, but eventually all over the planet. The rule of impartial law rather than divine edict was to govern everyone - mimicking the way the cosmos was governed by Newtonian laws. Writes physicist Fritjof Capra, "modern economics…was founded in the seventeenth century…[with] Petty's *Political Arithmetik*…replacing words…with numbers…Locke's atomistic theory of society…fit perfectly." Saint Simone's Council of Newton tried to educate the public on how the new laws of stars applied to society - advocating the same math-tied view. The Cosmic Machine was extended to "logical, psychological… and sociological limits.

**This brings us to our post-modern world**. With the generation born after the explosion of atomic weapons, plus ongoing wars, growing social alienation, and intensifying environmental abuse and devastation - there have been cultural geysers in revolt, especially during the 1960's. During that time many communes and intentional communities were formed, and I contend not accidentally within the context of a post-modern vision revolt. Hippies and others sought a new firmament in non-western philosophies, in existentialist and phenomenological challenges, and even using drug-altering experiences for an escape. In the 1960's there was talk of a vast "cultural revolution." But it did not quite come to pass *as yet.* No fundamentally different cosmic vision took root and so predictably the essence of society remained the same. In the vacuum, Wall Street continued its path. It drew in ever more capital and expanded its model of security markets globally. It engaged in larger mergers, acquisitions, and forms of international globalization - or the like concentration of power, some of which continued to ravage the earth. All this time more than a few hippies capitulated and became yuppies. Kibbutzes, the greatest of early intentional community movements, felt the pressure of capitalism growing all around them. Many saw the practical need to relinquish earlier ideals. Environmental movements, earnest and courageous, supported major initiatives but again, did not stem the overall tide of avalanching ecological destruction.

Looking at the above examples of social conditions, structures and their correlated inner visions of the world, it becomes apparent that social changes generally do have an inner component of correlating depth.

**Bringing this context of relevance to post-modern communities**

Many intentional communities today follow "common themes" that may or may not be explicitly stated. Vision statements often span social, religious, or political orientations - but

rarely if ever deal with a physicist or chemist's mechanistic view of nature. Some early Woodstock, N.Y. communes did make an issue of their revolt against the "mechanistic vision" of the Industrial Revolution as have a few other commune movements. But usually the larger philosophical issues are left to physicists and philosophers to argue about and settle. They seem too far removed from daily affairs or seem lacking of any "***context of relevance***."

This is similar to how, when a shopper buys an item labeled "natural and organic" or "without artificial ingredients," there is an unspoken and indirect or subliminal challenge.

*Are some chemicals really unnatural? Are most chemicals unnatural*?
*If so, is the order underlying chemistry, unnatural - the quantitative*?

When a person is "shopping" for a type of alternative community something akin happens. It too is unspoken. One way of bringing this issue to light is to say that many intentional communities offer more "***dominantly connective relationships.*** What I mean by "***connective relationships***" is more cooperative, non-violent, gentle, spiritual, qualitative, loving, intimate, and sharing. By "***dominantly***" I mean something subtler. There are a host of "separative relationships" that have their place. A person may want to close the door to a room to keep others out. He or she simply needs space to pull themselves together or to sleep in peace. Then they can again reconnect with others more effectively later. Such separation ultimately serves a connective purpose or is defined as "***dominantly connective.***"

If we isolate ourselves out of some deepening fear, hate, or resentment - we then veer toward what we can call a "dominantly separative" posture. If we work in a fiercely competitive environment, *against* rather than cooperatively *with* others - again the posture is considered "dominantly separative." Thus different intentional communities form unique balancing acts between individual space and community life, between commercialism and its elimination. Overall there is often the common intention to do more than conventional society - to form more qualitative ties. This is not to say all communities succeed, but there are attempts. There have been communes that have replaced money with barter between members. Some communities give equal salaries to all members, obviating certain potential conflicts. Others eliminate private ownership. A few restrict outside labor to strengthen internal social ties. We might say there is no one right or wrong way of doing things but that each community experiments to find its balancing point. How does all of this relate to our root vision of nature? Where is the exact ***context of relevance***?

It is my contention that mathematical symbols are our very highest abstractions for separating all elements of consciousness - for guiding ***dominantly separative relationships***. This then causes them to so orient our view of not only physical phenomena in the laboratory but our view of human nature and social relationships. I consequently see the countercultural reactions of the 1960's - from the protest against nuclear weapons to the promotion of organics and communal living - as all part of the same subliminal revolt against the underlying core understanding.

But in order to fully make the case for this ***context of relevance*** vis-a-vis post-modern communities, that root vision somehow must be convincingly changeable. At first sight it

doesn't seem that way at all. Our main vision of nature hasn't changed for the last 400 years and the countercultural efforts of the 1960's seemed to have left only minor changing imprints.

**Delayed reaction**

Back in the 17th century, when the first enthusiastic proponents of the then "new philosophy of nature" banded together into supportive societies, these earlier members were severely ridiculed and socially suppressed. Bruno was burned at the stake. Galileo was put under house arrest, and Descartes fled to the countryside. Nevertheless, their philosophical revolution prevailed, *though it took nearly a hundred years before there was a deep breakthrough.* In the 1960's, students were arrested or shot down in protests against "the system." Four decades later, student arrests continue in the protests against globalization. History, however, I believe will repeat itself with a nearly identical delayed reaction and resurgence. It takes time to "till the cultural soil," to overturn enormously deep root perspectives. It also takes time to digest the many preliminary approaches and a learning curve.

**Approaches**

In the 1960's, two decades after the first explosion of the atomic bomb and in reaction to the newly cynical view of science's "road to progress," Thomas Kuhn introduced the concept of a "paradigm." He readapted this Greek word to mean a normative pattern of thinking that dominates scientific circles for a while and then is displaced or replaced - and in a non-linear (non-progressive) fashion. Here we consider the dynamics of larger and deeper controlling patterns - the "***central paradigms***" that build a whole worldviews.

One preliminary step is to see the possibility of such paradigms existing to begin with - and then to envision the possibility of their changing. Arne Naess, the originator of the philosophy of deep ecology referred to such perspectives as the "total view" or the root conception of our world. Ortega y Gasset called them the organic tendencies of each age for integrating all of thought. Joseph Campbell saw them as unifying mythologies in most cultures.

Beginning with this perspective, a further step is to then explore why and how such central paradigm visions arise.

My view is that our inner life is "organic." By this I mean that our inner life tends to pull itself to some unity in each person (especially amid sleep and deep meditation) and collectively in a society. I attribute this to what I call the "rainbowesque" nature of inner consciousness. What this means is a bit poetic and metaphorical. With the rainbow we can see a display of seven colors coming out of and dissolving back into white light. The seven colors, in radiant light, can combine to form an infinite variety of colors. This means there is a link between infinite colors and a single white light into which they dissolve. Using this metaphor, we might see inner consciousness as having a similar base - where infinite experiences of daily life can lose their hard, separate edges - much like dream images can dissolve. Might this express the deeper firmament of inner consciousness? As Jacob Needleman writes in *A Sense*

*of the Cosmos,* "organic life is a part…of nature…[and] reaches into the consciousness of man." We are a part of the universe we are trying to fathom.

If this perspective is true, then these grand visions of nature and their central paradigms have a vital role - to extract, express and apply the wisdom of this intuitively-known oneness. Physically we feel healthy when we are whole and ill when we are not. Spiritually we feel whole when we see in a whole, non-contradictory, and doubtless way. Therefore these central paradigms offer to impart to us this sense of wholeness, surety, meaning and purposefulness in our daily lives.

**Identifying the "soul"**

If we now take the above steps to see the possibility of central paradigms existing in most all cultures due to the intrinsic nature of consciousness - a natural follow through would be to identify this in our own modern times. This process is not at all difficult because these visions tend to exclusively bring consciousness to a single unity. The exclusive singularity is their giveaway.

In the 17th century Prince Cesi, founder of the Academy of Lynxes, the first scientific society (of which Galileo was a member) went to Rome to defend the Copernican proposition that the earth circles the sun. This was contrary to the then dominant vision of the cosmos as earth-centered. Cesi's ultimate defenses were not based on what he and astronomers saw through the telescope. They rather involved newer interpretations of The Book of Job of the Bible. The latter described the sky as "molten looking glass" - thus composed of realities more fluid and flexible. Those who defended the established earth-centered Ptolemaic cosmology could counter by citing Genesis ("the stars were created to shine upon the earth"). Or they might refer to writings attributed to Solomon ("The sun circles through the meridian" or " the sun rises and sets and returns to its place"), and to Ecclesiastics ("alone I circled the vault of the sky" - referring to the sun).

***The point is that revelation through the Bible - and via interpretations leading to the Word of God - was <u>the singular and exclusive passageway to truth</u>.***

Can we find this same kind of monopoly claim in modern times? For this purpose we may turn to a quote from Galileo, taken from his *The Assayer* published in 1623. Here he presents what became the philosophical foundations for the later emerging modern vision of nature:

"Philosophy is written in that grand book, the universe which stands continually open to our gaze. But the book cannot be understood unless one first learns to comprehend the language…. It is written in the language of mathematics… without a knowledge of them, it is humanly impossible to understand even a single word of it**.** "

Again according to Galileo, not "*a single word*" of nature can be understood without the help of mathematics. This kind of stance identifies a view as a central paradigm. The other significant point is that such visions must be put to practice - to assume the role of a central paradigm, namely to tie together an all-directional or universal perspective. Paraphrasing

Stuart Hampshire in his *Age of Reason*, all the great philosophers of the 17th century then began to introduce math-like reasoning into all of human knowledge, including social, economic, and political concepts and philosophy itself. The same is echoed by Morris Kline:

"The intellectual leaders of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries realized … they now had the tenants…[for] a totally new outlook on the universe…which justified the reconstruction of all of mankind's systems of thought, institutions, and way of life…a mathematical-mechanical explanation was available [that]…could rebuild philosophy, religion, literature, art, political thought, and economic life…a sweeping reorganization of all knowledge and institutions…the reconstruction of an entire civilization."

Next, there is a second and corroborating approach to finding the central paradigm or what we might call the "soul" of a particular culture's worldview. It looks to the *exterior* rather than interior - or seeing what physical structures dominate. For example, we might find a totem pole pitched on the most sacred tribal hill - indicating what is most worshiped within. Similarly, we might find a Buddhist monastery at the very center of a city along with a towering Buddha. Or as Joseph Campbell describes Salt Lake City, we may see that the tallest building in town is a church. For Salt Lake City this was followed by a municipal building towering over the older church. The next succession saw bank, insurance and other finance buildings dominating the landscape. This displays, as Campbell indicated, a brief synopsis of the history of western civilization.

We see something akin in New York City. Trinity Church at the head of Wall Street displays majestic gothic steeples pointing to God. It was once the tallest building in all of New York City. It represented the inner dominance of the Anglican Church, and thus of the medieval world's spirituality over the new continent. George Washington knelt there praying to God to help in his revolution. He wanted to be set free from the older religious and political repressions. Now Trinity Church is dwarfed by financial buildings made of cement, steel, plastic and glass put together with redundant linearity - all reflecting an entirely different and newly dominating inner vision.

**Piercing the "soul"**

After identifying this presumed "soul," we can then spotlight its essential nature *in the context of its role as a central paradigm.* Does it really achieve its goal - to optimally connect our vision to a resolving, doubtless, universally unifying oneness of understanding? Or are we left unmoored, with a growing disorientation, alienation, confusion and chaos?

Much like in the 17th century when theology was in turmoil (because it could not come to grips with Copernicus' and later Galileo's observations) the general public is not aware that there is a similar crisis brewing in modern physics. "One of the best kept secrets," writes Nick Herbert in *Quantum Reality*, " is that physicists have lost their grip... What shuts out the public is...the language barrier...mathematics." Or James Gleick writes in his *Chaos,* that the frontiers of physics have become a "battleship with bulkheads sealed against leaks.". Donald Strombeck adds that no one has ever "observed quarks…few believe they will ever be seen…quarks arose from…using mathematics as a means to an end…it has become an

investigation of a purely mathematical structure of the world."

Not every physicist will admit this, but many are extremely honest. Then question then arises, can we get out of this dilemma with new and sharper forms of mathematics or do we abandon ship and look elsewhere? In medieval times, the abandonment of the core view was entirely too dangerous. The Inquisitors were ready to imprison or burn the infidels. In modern times, there are no such dire consequences except for ridicule, derision, dismissal, and disorientation. When Jacques Benveniste devised his famous homeopathic experiments, which seemed to *disprove* the atomic/molecular or conventional model, he was threatened with the loss of his academic position, and eventually did lose his funding and laboratory. As Science Frontiers Online writes in this regard, "heretics beware, the Inquisition lives." But this fell far short of the papal edicts against Galileo.

So let's imagine we dare to become such new "heretics" and to challenge the modern math-tied perspective. There are at least a dozen major ways to critique this math-centered view - both from laboratory and commercial perspectives. They are too many to touch on in this short paper but we can get a sense of the process.

Mathematics, with its high abstractions, begins with counting, with the number "1" - the universal concept of a "separate whole." Geometry likewise begins with a point, the same concept expressed or displayed spatially. Now we can count three potatoes provided they are not blended together. Separativity is the dominant direction towards which most math symbols point or bias our conscious attention.

To approach this more metaphorically and in relationship to daily life, a couple may decide to marry. But six months later they find out how *different* they really are. The husband can't stand how the wife uses her toothpaste without putting the top back on. The wife can't stand how the husband goes to sleep too late and snores. Gradually they see *ever more differences* and begin to fight. After a while, they burn out from the stress of their conflicts, divorce and live separate lives - either distances apart or behind separate house walls. What mathematics does is to point to such separative relationships but on a much higher level of abstraction. For example, we might abstract exact *differences* between 98.6, 98.67, 98.667 degrees Fahrenheit and to infinitely finer degrees of heat; or between salaries of $11,500, $11,501, and $11,501.50. Math symbols are a useful tool for countless such purposes, including numbering pages - delineating precise *differences* to point to or to isolate a given page. However, when the same symbolism is misused as a "central paradigm" it sets this dominantly separative tone for the overall perceptions of nature. This viewpoint is great for designing machines made of separate parts (what actually never occur naturally in "pristine nature," or nature untouched by the human mind). But I believe it wreaks systemic havoc with biological systems whose holistic consciousness is disturbed. We then, and as a consequence, see an ever larger list of extinctions and threatened extinctions on our planet.

That is why these symbols, in my opinion, cannot and ***should not*** be the root basis for our dominant means to connect a worldview. The key issues the 1960's revolted against (and the environmental movement since) - such as our having the most ecologically destructive society ever - I believe stem from this deeply erroneous vision of nature.

Back in the middle ages the average person wouldn't dare challenge a Vatican theologian's view of the Bible - what took literally a lifetime to master, including the study of every possible passage and major interpretation of the Bible. Today it takes as much effort, though of a different kind, to master the twists and turns of mathematical formulas in modern physics. It also takes several years of intense work to earn a physics Ph.D. degree - and there is as much attachment and admiration. This learning experience becomes quite intimidating to the average person who cannot begin to understand the ABC's of this language of physics or who stumbles through its basics secondhand, using popularizing texts. It then seems natural to only abdicate our judgements to others better trained. We understandably follow authorities, and on faith, because they are more knowledgeable in this specialized territory of consciousness. And we believe this is *the* territory wherein to wrestle nature's secrets since everyone else seems to agree with this. We thus on faith give up control to others as to choosing the master key directions of human consciousness.

It is my view, however, ***that nature is and even cannot be essentially mathematical*** - and that this 17th century-born vision of modern physics is substantively wrong, poorly thought through and over the long haul non-sustainable. Focusing on non-sustainability, if I am right on this thesis, then time will eventually tell. Ultimately, I think the essence of modernity will and must change to accommodate an ever more overwhelming avalanche of contradictions and conflicts with nature - the arising of ecological crises. This naturally creates the ***context of relevance*** for re-looking at the whole of what is by now an archaic view of nature (inherited from the 17th century) - and what holistically applies to the essence of each of our personal lives and to the entirety of any future evolution of society.

**Toward a further evolution**

When an infant child is born into a certain culture and long before it learns that culture's symbols for connecting a worldview, it can look out at the universe "naked" of acquired ideas from parents and teachers. It can see with what only nature has provided a child as senses in the raw. The retinas of our eyes, for example, look outward using fibers that radiate like a sunflower or equally in every direction. This kind of full radiance puts joy into the eyes. Or when inner light is freed - not molded by cultural mores and free to see in a physically relaxed way - it can gaze more naturally (impartially) in all directions at once. It can see whole. The very fact that the same light, in every direction, touches all things means there is some oneness - what we intuit even if the mind obstructs this understanding.

From this oneness, which in my experience is "rainbowesque," there evolves an equally primordial "duality." By this I mean we innately become conscious of what leaves and returns *to that underlying oneness. To point to this I use the concepts of universal patterns of separation and connection.* This creates, again in my experience, what psychologists define as "right and left brain awareness." But these terms are essential misnomers. The biological situs can switch to the opposite sides of the brain. This also makes sense when this consciousness split or duality arises out of the pre-biological nature of consciousness itself.

Why do I bring all this up? It is partly a) to start to outline a different vision of nature, one

that begins with integral oneness (not "separate, quantifiable/mathematical oneness" and no longer points to the atomic model of physics as central) and b) to express my view that our modern use of mathematics, while still in error, represents a *major* evolutionary step. This may seem to contradict the three theses of this paper. But this occurs, I believe, because the mathematical view gives us a pinnacle left-hemispherical understanding or of separative consciousness. That alone remains a precarious and danger-filled inner anchor or central focus. Through the failures of that vision, even if it takes 500 years to experience, we can then move to a still higher integration - a right brain instead of left brain dominant view - or one that is ***dominantly connective***.

This evolutionary process has already gathered steam, especially after the 1940's. This was subsequent to the frightening explosion of atomic weapons. Internally there was a recognition, even among the scientific community, that the upward straight line of "modern progress" might not be so straight. Then came the onslaught of further searchings through new environmental philosophies, Kuhn's paradigm concept, existentialism's and phenomenology's thrusts, and so on. Most of the focal images of the 1960's were entirely right brain dominant - love and peace signs, the yinyang emblem, the experiments with communal living, rainbowesque clothes, "flower children" (with flowers displaying nature's organicity), and the soulful music of the era. With this changing perspective, allowing right brain wisdom to come to the foreground, I believe we are still profoundly progressing. This evolutionary process is displayed in the attached chart as a kind of "one picture that says it all" overview. Looking at the whole intrinsically is a right brain perspective.

In summary, Copernicus seemed to have begun the spirit of the modernity by undoing a vast cosmic illusion - changing the perceived *outer* center of the universe. We can go a quantum step further by doing what Willis Harman once described as a "second Copernican revolution" - namely to change the far more important *inner* cosmic center of and for understanding our world. What follows from this is a more profound and yet deeper transformation of all of society and civilization.

**Postscript - practical steps**

The scholar of communal studies may want to observe, from a distance, how larger frameworks of understanding can alter community life. Communards might emphasize practical steps for supporting ever deepening social and spiritual relationships between each other in intentional communities - to escape the modern rat race - plus to embrace organic, de-commercialized relationships toward all living things.

# Ecovillages: the intentional communities of the future


## Lucilla Borio
## GEN-Europe


Many of the topics I will touch have already been addressed in the previous days. Nevertheless, I will try to contribute to the debate with the ecovillage perspective and shed some light on the logic which supports it, without focusing too deeply on the strictly communal aspects which have already received attention.

The creation of micro-societies based on internal rules and dynamics has proven to be a viable alternative and a melting pot for ideas and proposals that can subsequently make their way into the world, and sometimes dramatically change cultures on a larger scale. This is precisely why I believe in ecovillages as positive models for the future.

My present position as the European Secretary of the Global Ecovillage Network, a consulting member of the United Nations ECOSOC Commission, gives me the honour to serve this amazing multi-faceted movement spread over five continents, which promotes and highlights a variety of human experiences taking place both in our western post-industrial societies and in the so-called developing countries. To be honest it must be said that to date we have not reached the ultimate perfection, the "ideal ecovillage" as such, even though in 1998 three GEN members (Findhorn in Scotland, Lebensgarten in Germany and Crystal Waters in Australia) were granted the UNCHS award as "Best practises for improving the living environment". There are a multitude of experiments at different levels of development, a mixture of high ideals and hard reality, balancing between dreams and action.

Ecovillages can be found in different climates and cultures: in Europe, North America and Oceania they are normally created on purpose by groups of people who move away from big cities and return to a quieter, more rewarding lifestyle in less crowded areas. In Asia and Africa, they develop from traditional villages where the social structure is somehow still preserved and an ecological awareness arises as a positive reaction to adverse living conditions.

For clarity's sake I would like to start from the very definition of the term "ecovillage". The two roots of the term stand out at first glance, and a quick philological analysis clearly identifies it as an ecological settlement or dwelling. In GEN, we have further defined it as an intentional, sustainable community located in a rural, urban or sub-urban area. The "eco" root focuses on our inspiring principle, the concept of sustainability: a vision of the world that strives for a high quality of life without taking more from the Earth than it gives back, and which can therefore be continued into the indefinite future without depleting, and possibly increasing, the resources available for future generations.

The term sustainability has enjoyed quite a bit of celebrity since the birth of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21, at the Rio Conference in 1992;

it is often mentioned in public speeches and political programs, in environmental reports and newspapers, but not always with the original definition and intention. This much debated concept has for the ecovillage movement the clear meaning of treating the Earth and all creatures (including humans) with deep respect and with a long-term view on the consequences of our actions.

The concept of "Ecology" refers to the use of alternative technologies (like energy saving, renewable sources, water treatment and conservation, natural materials for building and restoring, organic farming methods). But not only: it also applies to a dynamic system of human relations, planning principles, ethical values, spiritual motivations, economic strategies and social interactions which make the ecovillage a highly complex structure in constant evolution.

In this integrated holistic approach to human existence lies the beauty of ecovillage living.
The village root of the term refers to a structured settlement that can greatly vary in size but normally ranges anywhere between 20 and 500 residents. It has some aspects of an intentional community, such as a shared purpose, a membership status, at least one decision-making body and a clearly defined procedure. It also has some features of a normal village, such as a planning process, a few small-scale local enterprises, production of foods and goods for internal use and for sale, at least one shop or similar food outlet and a village centre.
The ideal ecovillage is a rich and diverse settlement where the needs of daily life can be locally fulfilled with mutual benefit for the individual and the community. Residents can do their food shopping from organic or bio-dynamic farmers and shops, organise and attend cultural events of various sorts, practise their creed or faith in freedom, exchange competencies and services with their neighbours, and of course reduce consumption and recycle their waste.
Diversity is a key concept and a catalyst for a healthy ecovillage, and it implies the responsibility of each participant to contribute as appropriate to the duties and pleasures of communal living.
One of the great challenges in ecovillage development has to do with the difficulty to revise the concept of urbanisation to correct a  chronic short-sight on issues like energy consumption, creation of green spaces, social security, local transportation, food and water supply, meaningful employment. In short, I am talking about quality of life for all citizens, a key concept which deserves all our dedication and pursuit.
The remarkable lack of it in many western cities and towns makes the official data on the growth of Gross National Product and development rate look somewhat suspicious or at least inadequate in telling us how our fellow countrymen really feel. It encourages us to consider other less brilliant results, it opens our eyes to the fact that higher production and profit are not sufficient to cure the malaise of nations which show signs of despair. Just to name a few, in more than one European country the rate of suicides for people below twenty is on the increase, a large share of the population alternatively indulges in tranquillisers and stimulants and crime rate has reached unbelievable levels. At the same time our rampant industrial production is pervading the four corners of the world.
Why is that? Of course there is no simple answer to this question, and much less does anyone have a magic wand to solve the problems. A possible key the dilemma is the consideration that we live in a quantity-oriented society, which tends to overlook the importance of being in favour of having, and pretends to compensate our inner desire for love and security with the

offer to sell us a sexy perfume or a fast car. As opposite, Ecovillages aim at creating small scale, quality-oriented societies, where human needs are not deceived in the name of economic profit, where people can comfortably live with less and be content with what they have.
On a more technical note, ecovillage development is often based on the principles of Permaculture, a land-planning and design method created by the Australians Bill Mollison and David Holmgren more than 20 years ago and now taught in dozens of countries world-wide. The core ethics of permaculture are care of the earth, care of the people, sharing of surplus. Around these apparently simple principles a systematic discipline has developed which applies to all climates, cultures and social contexts with the greatest respect and flexibility. It not only aims at protecting the environment while supporting the birth of appropriate, sustainable human settlements, but it also gives us the tools to restore damage done to Nature, to increase soil fertility while growing an abundance of food, to harvest and recycle rain water, to protect wilderness and make it available again for plants and animals.
It inspires us to learn from Nature, and simple as it may sound, this really is an invaluably wise, forgotten message.
As said, ecovillages are complex systems. A key to understand their intrinsic nature is their aspiration to find a harmonious balance between three fundamental aspects of life, namely the social, ecological and spiritual/cultural components. We believe that all three factors are necessary for a healthy development not only of the physical structure, but also of the soul of its community. Each factor has a varying degree of importance in each ecovillage, according to the inclination of its residents and to the local cultural context.
The social aspects have to do with personal relations within the community, their decision-making methods, the creation of meaningful jobs and roles. The importance of this aspect cannot be underestimated. Inner conflicts, often resulting in tensions, when not properly and timely dealt with have shown evidence of becoming terminators of apparently strong groups with the risk of crippling or destroying them, especially in their early, crucial phases. Many ecovillages have developed appropriate tools to deal with this unavoidable difficulty, and we all know the ZEGG Forum as one of the most creative and effective methods presently available. Mediation schools like the one created in Lebensgarten are well-established institutions appreciated not only by communities but also by other components of mainstream society.
As a support to our members, GEN-Europe is organising a brief course with Bea Briggs from Ecovillage Huehuecoyotl in Mexico on consensus, an efficient and dynamic decision-making method. It will be held right before the yearly gathering taking place in Poland in mid-July.

The creation of meaningful jobs, where people do what they like and like what they do, is becoming a more and more relevant urge in the panorama of shrinking job markets world-wide. Quoting Jeremy Rifkin, automation and technological change is having a hard impact on the global labour force in all sectors, agriculture, industry and services. The ecovillage perspective can offer a possible alternative to many women and men made redundant and stranded by this trend, offering them a possibility to feel useful and respected and to experience the sense of belonging again.
Reverting to the ecological aspects, I would like to add a few words about the important concept of inner ecology. It means attuning with our inclinations and allowing our souls to unfold according to their own peculiar nature, manifesting their uniqueness and beauty in freedom and confidence. To do so, we need to feel immersed in a safe, supportive

environment, surrounded by friends who accept us for what we are, without judgement or criticism. Ecovillages can provide fertile grounds for this realm of research, which is closely related to the spiritual and cultural aspects of living.

As said, Ecovillages embody a sense of unity with the natural world, foster recognition that human life and the Earth itself merit our deepest respect. The theoretical basis of this attitude is to be found in the Gaia Principle.

This theory of the "Anima Mundi" was a significant step away from the mechanistic paradigm coined by Descartes in support of objective science, which laid the philosophical basis for the industrial revolution and the development of modern industrial society. The concept of Earth as a living organism has deep implications on our relations with all its elements, which become precious gifts and not simple raw materials at our disposal. The very role of humanity shifts from being the "master of the planet" to being its guardian, with responsibility for its protection as a beloved sacred entity.

Furthermore, a significant share of ecovillages have a spiritual focus related to specific creeds and beliefs, sometimes linked with official religions (like the Buddhist Sarvodaya movement which groups 11.000 rural villages in Sri Lanka), to spiritual guides (like Auroville in India, Damanhur in Italy, Findhorn in Scotland), or to a mixture of faiths and spiritual practises freely professed by the inhabitants in communal meditation spaces.

Creativity, arts, dances and music are other cultural elements which emerge freely and express the identity of the community in all its richness.

One of the great cultural resources of Ecovillages is their educational potential, especially for the young. A full immersion in an Ecovillage in direct contact with its creators can be a life-changing experience for many visitors, a unique opportunity to learn by doing while enjoying oneself and broadening one’s horizons. Practical skills and theoretical notions are part of the curriculum, and are passed on in a frame of co-operation and mutual enjoyment, far from the formalities of academic institutions and in tune with the rhythm of life. Many ecovillages are open to travellers, students and volunteers and I invite all the cultural creatives to visit them to get a first -hand experience.
In conclusion: why do I believe that ecovillages are the intentional communities of the future. Today’s political and social struggles are no longer fought only between the traditional parties but have to take into account a third, powerful factor that requests our undivided attention and forces us to take the necessary steps: a factor called climate changes. An increasingly large share of the world's population is severely affected by unprecedented and extreme weather conditions, not to mention other disasters like constant loss of endangered species, ozone layer depletion, soil and water contamination.

No responsible individual, community or nation can afford to ignore the situation. Following the permaculture principle 'fight in favour of things, not against them', ecovillages accept the challenge and experiment with alternative solutions, using the resources locally available. Some of them are built from scratch following the most updated energy-saving technologies, others originate from the desire to revive old abandoned villages, some are strongly spiritually

focuses, others have more secular or non-religious positions. What makes the ecovillage movement unique is the diversity of its members, all joined by the common dream to heal this planet on its physical, energetic and spiritual levels.

The goal of the ecovillage movement is to create a network of attractive examples for a future society organised in self-reliant interactive modules which sustainably fulfil their requirements for all basic needs of life, material and non-material. Each communal centre shall be empowered to make decisions about their future and take full responsibility for the consequences.

Harmonious, equitable and solidarian relationships shall be the essence of this human-scale, decentralised society where everybody lives respectfully and mindfully with one another and with the Earth. Ecovillages are not only pleasant and recommendable habitats for us and our children today but are a necessary stimulus to trigger the advocated cultural shift and create a much more attractive future tomorrow.

They offer a win-win solution to the needs of the individual, of the community and of the planet. GEN brings this message to mainstream society, and we welcome your contribution to make a viable future visible today.

# Virtual Communities


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**Abstract**

In this paper, it is proposed that the new communication technologies, such as those that work over the Internet, are providing opportunities for new ways of experiencing a sense of community, particularly to people who previously may not have had such an opportunity. It is also proposed that this sense of community is not substantially different to the sense of community experienced by those groups characterised by physical proximity. Finally, it is suggested that, while virtual communities will not replace communities of place, they probably already provide an experience of community for many more people than are involved in intentional communities and those numbers are increasing.


**Introduction**

**The Internet**

The Internet is a network of computers, routers, cables and protocols. The World Wide Web (web) runs on the Internet and consists of the inter-linked pages of words, images, movies and sound files. As well as the web, the Internet also supports e-mail, Internet Relay Chat (IRC), instant messaging (such as ICQ), Internet to telephone telecommunications and Usenet discussion groups, amongst others. At the time of writing, it is estimated that there are about 40,000 Usenet discussion groups.

Current estimates are that 55 percent of the adult population of the USA have access to the Internet. Access wide enough to be labeled 'universal' is envisaged for that population by 2005.

The Internet is changing the way we interact with computers and with each other. Relationships are made, sustained and dropped via instant messaging, e-mail, IRC chatrooms and Usenet.

The Internet is also changing social development and dynamics. The rise of the 'teenage guru' and of 'computer addiction' are changing family dynamics. Just as television led to the concept of the passive 'couch potato', so interactive virtual friendships on the Internet have been mirrored by shrinking face-to-face (f2f) social circles.

**Virtual Communities**

It is interesting to see what can be found on the web itself about virtual community. A search using that phrase, with one of the popular search engines, found 109,318 documents. Many

of these documents refer to any on-line group as a virtual community. However, the search also included an electronic copy of a book by one of the first commentators on virtual community, Howard Rheingold. Since Rheingold published The Virtual Community in 1993, much has been written about communities on the Internet. His idea was that, before the Internet, communities consisted of people who lived or worked close to each other. If you were lucky, he said, you might find yourself in a community of like-minded people, although he thought it was unlikely that you would get a very compatible group in the same place. For Rheingold, the global Internet transformed this - for those who have access to it - because it enabled like-minded people to form communities regardless of where they were located in the physical world.

Rheingold (1993) defined virtual community as follows:

*A virtual community is a group of people who communicate with each other, to some degree know each other, to some degree share knowledge and information, and to some degree care about each other as human beings, who meet and for the most part communicate through computer networks. Now, that's a bare bones description. You have to be very careful about the word "community" there, and I add people who care about each other to distinguish it from just a network. Now, you can have a community of interests who are people who have a shared interest, who communicate with each other on a regular basis, who don't particularly have a human connection. A group of engineers for a particular company, for example, might fit that description. There is really no need for them to particularly care about each other.*

By his definition, the Internet-based group known as The Well, which consisted mainly of people living in and around San Francisco and which began in 1992, fulfilled his definition of a virtual community.

So, regardless of where they are in the world, people with similar interests, backgrounds, or attitudes, can join communities of like-minded people, and share views, exchange information, build relationships, have fun, have fights, provide support and do all the other things that people in communities of place do.

There is already evidence that many people form long-standing friendships on the Internet. Parks and Floyd (1996) surveyed people who posted to a cross-section of Usenet groups. Nearly two thirds of those who replied reported that they had formed a personal relationship with someone that they met in a Usenet group. Opposite-sex relationships were more common than same-sex, but only 7.9% were characterised as romantic. Those who formed personal relationships were generally those who had been participating in the groups for a longer time and who posted more messages. This is consistent with the view that the relative lack of cues about a person means that relationships take longer to develop on the Internet. The nature of these relationships varied widely. Some were intense and lasting, others were weak and short. More than half the respondents said that their relationships covered more territory than just the Usenet group subject. Most agreed with the statement, "We would go out of the way to help each other if it were needed." Most also reported that their circle of Internet friends did not overlap with their circle of f2f friends. This is one of the factors that suggests the need for studies such as this, which look at communities that exist purely on the

Internet and nowhere else.

**Who joins virtual communities?**

Since the early days of the Internet there have been bulletin boards and 'chat' spaces where users can interact online, and today, many web sites include chat or discussion rooms where visitors can interact in real time.

Since participants cannot see each other, and are not obliged to reveal their real name or physical location, there is considerable scope for people to reveal secrets, discuss problems, or even enact whole 'identities' which they would never do in the f2f world.

A famous cartoon by Steiner has the caption, 'On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog.' This feature of the Internet, the assumption of radically different identities to those in the f2f world, is even a requirement of that part of the Internet occupied by interactive, role-playing games. It is a feature of the Internet that allows people to explore aspects of themselves that they are uncomfortable with sharing in f2f settings and that allows people to interact with others without having to reveal aspects of themselves that may be apparent visually, but that they do not want to reveal, such as age, membership of ethnic group, gender etc. For example, a person may join an Internet group for gay people and explore the possibilities of such interactions, while maintaining a heterosexual persona in the f2f world.

The main aim of this study is to demonstrate that there are groups on the Internet that evoke a powerful sense of community and that they are an important part of participants' lives. A guide on where to look was provided by the personal story of a member the Findhorn Bay Community. That person's spouse had a terminal illness and, despite being a member of a close-knit community of place, chose to participate in an on-line group that provided support, help and encouragement through the whole process of their spouse's illness and death.

Similarly, a psychologist called John Grohol found a Usenet group called alt.support.depression while he was depressed about a friend's suicide. That is a group where people are prepared to listen and provide help at all hours of the day and night. Grohol found it so helpful that he became involved with several Internet support groups and contributes to a regular resource, 'Emotional support on the Internet,' (Harris, ongoing).

Davison et al (2000) investigated the support provided to and by participants in Usenet and AOL Bulletin Boards devoted to diagnostic health categories. They report:

*In view of the high rate of use by multiple sclerosis sufferers as well, the on-line domain may be particularly useful in bringing together those who suffer from rare and debilitating conditions, in which getting together physically would present a number of practical barriers. Virtual support can be very attractive to those whose disability impairs mobility, and, more striking, the on-line community allows for anonymity. Potent social factors like physical attractiveness, vocal characteristics, ethnicity and social skills are neutralized.*

**Challenges to the concept of Virtual Community**

One of the main challenges has come from those who see the ease of joining and leaving virtual groups as an indication that people lack the degree of commitment that would characterise communities of place. Most long-term participants in Internet groups will have observed many people join and leave groups too rapidly to have any significant engagement with the group or to leave any lasting impression. It is also possible to observe groups that form, go through an intense life cycle and then decline and become unused, within a matter of weeks or months.

Another criticism is that most Internet connections are through the written word on a computer monitor. The argument is that the experience is therefore so impoverished that it can never match the richness of the f2f experience.

The impressions that we form of other people are different f2f than over the Internet, in ways that may make community building more difficult. Fuller (1996) compared impressions formed about someone by people who either knew them f2f only, or only over the Internet. Those who knew people f2f saw people in a very similar way to that in which they saw themselves. However, those who knew someone only over the Internet saw them as more logical, more thoughtful and less feeling or people-oriented than they or the f2f evaluators did.

As the Internet experience becomes richer, with voice and moving images being added to the written word, so it moves closer to the f2f experience. However, it is perhaps worth noting that that will reduce the possibilities for exploring alternate identities or sub-personalities that the current Internet allows.

Related to this is the reduction in inhibitions many experience when relating through a keyboard. Rheingold and others have observed both an increase in the extent to which people disclose aspects of their life that they do not disclose through other media and also the increased tendency to write things that others find offensive. This is the basis for the now widely known phenomenon of flame wars, for which some Usenet groups and mail lists are renowned. We might expect the former to increase the speed at which both intimacy and communities can form on the Internet. The latter would be more likely to increase the risk of conflict and thus the possible rate of dissolution of virtual communities. A study by Siegel et al (1983) demonstrated that anonymity in computer-mediated group work, contributed to a six-fold increase in the number of hostile remarks made by groups. Also, most seasoned participants in Usenet groups will have observed newcomers posting messages, apparently unaware of how many thousands of people will read their words and that those words will be stored and available to all Internet users for many years to come. The cues for this are not in the medium, as they are when presenting papers to conferences, for example. People are sitting in the quiet intimacy of their own home perhaps, simply not realising, until they later get some feedback, who their audience is. In other words, some people may stumble into a community without even realising it and may have broken several of its rules before knowing where they are.

Thus the aim of this study was to locate groups on the Internet which had the potential to

create a sense of community among at least some of their participants. Among the groups looked at in this study, for reasons given above, were groups oriented to health. Another obvious place to look was Internet groups connected with, or devoted to, long-standing communities of place. Another potential location was Usenet groups in which the author has participated for several years and experienced a sense of community. Would this be true for other group participants? Finding a sense of community in such a group would also have the merit of being counter-intuitive - Usenet is more often associated with spam and flame wars than with a sense of community. Finally, the work of Richard Bartle (see Bartle 1996, for example), game developer and MUD administrator, suggests some community-like aspects of Internet game groups and so this study looked at one such group.

Having located possible groups, the next step would be to invite members of those groups to complete a questionnaire that asked about the sense of community that the group engendered, if any and the importance to the respondents of participating in the group.

**Method**

As the aim of the study was simply to locate people for whom Internet groups provide a sense of community, pragmatism rather than theory drove the group selection process.

The document entitled, 'Emotional Support on the Internet' was scanned for groups which, for reasons given above, were most likely to engender a sense of community. Three groups were selected: Mail Lists for sufferers from autism, cancer and chronic pain, and for their families. Mail Lists for ex-members of the Findhorn Bay intentional community and for those with an interest in intentional communities were also selected. An Internet game group, Air Warrior, was selected, as a member of that group saw the questionnaire invitation in another list and offered to post the invitation to complete the questionnaire to members of the group. Finally, two Usenet groups devoted to the same subject, one moderated and the other unmoderated, were also chosen: soc.culture.hawaii and alt.culture.hawaii respectively. The presumption here was that moderation may well influence the quality of the community experience.

Where it was possible to locate a List owner or moderator, permission was sought to post an invitation to complete the questionnaire. Each gave permission, so the next step was to post an explanation of this study to the group and invite members or participants who wished, to send for and complete the questionnaire given in Appendix 1.

The questionnaire was constructed to address the aims of this study. The questions are based on the assumption that, if asked, people will understand the concept 'sense of community' and will be able to rate their experience of it on a five point scale which extends from 'very weak' to 'very strong.' A copy of the questionnaire was sent to each person who requested it.

**Results**

Several groups, the pain list, the intentional communities list, the Air Warrior game group and

the alt.culture.hawaii Usenet group, produced only one or two replies and were not looked at further.

Summary data, for questions that could be summarised, are given in Appendix 2. The first thing to note is the relatively low response rates, particularly for the health groups and probably for the Usenet group soc.culture.hawaii. The latter cannot be determined with any accuracy as the number of participants in most Usenet groups cannot be determined. It can only be inferred from the rate of posting to the group. No inferences can therefore be made about the representativeness of the respondents.

90% of the respondents were female, in contrast to the Internet as a whole, where 35% of users are female. Their average age was 48, compared to the Internet average of 33. They averaged 16 years of full-time education, had been accessing the Internet for 6 years and spent an average of 19 hours a week on-line.

Sense of Community was rated on a five-point rating scale. For the four groups looked at in more detail, respondents from all groups rated this at the higher end of the scale, mainly using ‘Strong’ or ‘Very Strong’ to describe their experience. Most respondents also used the higher end of the frequency of participation scale, with over half connecting to the group either once, or more than once, daily. All respondents used either the middle or the highest of the three points that described how well they knew other people in the group. Most also used the higher two of the five points that described the openness of communications within the group.

Most identified the presence of occasional conflict within the group. It is not possible at this stage to say whether those who identified no conflict within their groups were newcomers to the group or were using the concept of conflict in a different way to the other members. Those who identified conflict occurring in the group generally felt that it was handled either well or very well.

That the experience of community within these groups was not superficial can be inferred from the observation that most respondents identified participating in the group as either important or very important to them, from the five-point scale. Significantly, the great majority of respondents did not feel that the experience would be diminished if they did not meet others in the group, either f2f, or by some other means. However, a little over half responded that there were one or two people in the group that they would like to meet.

About half the respondents felt that they had changed in the way they related to people as a result of participating in the group. Most respondents felt that they had also changed in some other ways as a result of their participation.

All felt that their groups would last for several years, rather than for weeks or months.

It is the quotations from individuals that tell us most about the quality of their experiences. Quotations were selected that pertained to the aims of this study and they are given in Appendix 3.

Respondent 2 from the autism list writes of the sense of acceptance she has gained from the group and how that has influenced her self-acceptance. Respondent 3 in that group contrasts the community feel of the group as a whole with the family feel she gets from a smaller subset of the group. Respondent 5 indicates that participating in the group has benefited her in dealing with people f2f. Respondent 6 makes a powerful statement about how group participation helped lift her from feeling depressed.

From the cancer list, respondent 2 writes about the freedom to talk about intimate details of her disorder, which she feels cannot be spoken of elsewhere. Respondent 3 writes about the closeness and the rich quality of the community feeling within the group, and its analogy to communities of place. She also talks about the information that can be exchanged within groups on the Internet, which would have been difficult without that medium. She also writes about support being available when she or others need it, 24 hours a day. Also included is a sample of a post to the whole list, not from one of the respondents, which illustrates the quality of the group experience for that participant, with the emphasis on the feeling quality of the experience.

From the list for former members of the Findhorn Bay community, respondent 1 writes about both the quality of the group experience and how it helped her feel less lonely after moving to another country. Respondent 2 makes a general point about the benefit of sharing over the Internet, with people who are not physically present. Respondent 3 writes about Internet community as a substitute for f2f community. For this respondent, Internet community is a lesser substitute for a more wanted f2f community.

Respondent 1 from the Usenet group soc.culture.hawaii draws an analogy between participating in that group and a conversation between strangers, thus indicating a sense of community that may be less strong than other forms of virtual community. This respondent also identifies his experience of Usenet as providing interest and companionship, without his necessarily looking for that within one particular group. Respondent 2 met her current partner through the group, which indicates some of the potential for meeting and making close connections afforded by some groups. Respondent 3 describes one of the hazards of Internet communities, which are perhaps more commonly experienced on the more anonymous Usenet than in Mail Lists. Although a member of the cancer list informed me by e-mail about a previous group member who had been discovered to have made up life-threatening cancer symptoms to gain sympathy. She spoke about the diminished sense of trust within that group for a while after the episode. It is not known whether the group has wholly recovered from that experience. This happens too within f2f communities.

Respondent 4 writes about a major change of life that participating in the group facilitated and also about the depth of the experience for her. Respondent 5 echoes respondent 3 from the ex-Findhorn members' list in seeing the Internet experience as less than a f2f community.

**Discussion**

The combination of the high Sense of Community rating and the individual statements

describing the experience, support the idea that, for most of these respondents at least, some Internet groups provide a strong sense of community that is important to them. Although, for at least two of the respondents, the experience was lesser than for a community of place, there is no indication of this for the remaining respondents. Indeed, for some respondents, Internet groups may be providing the strongest sense of community currently available to them. This seems to be particularly true for those with disorders or those with interests that are rare, that restrict mobility or which carry social stigma.

Another point that is worth looking at is that of conflict within the group. Some Internet groups have become so known for the intensity and duration of conflicts within them that the term, 'flame war' was devised to describe the phenomenon. However, in this study, most respondents experienced conflict within the group and yet this did not prevent them from also experiencing mutual support, care and positive interest from and towards others in the group. This suggests that it may not be the presence of conflict within a group that influences its sense of community, but how well that conflict is handled. These respondents felt that such conflict as there was, was handled well by the group.

It is also noteworthy that a sense of community could be sustained with group contact that varied from once a month to more than once a day.

Part of the context for this paper is that of colleagues presenting papers, in the same conference session, on Co-housing and on Eco-villages as the future of community. This paper should not be seen as conflicting with those possibilities. Rather it should be seen as supporting the idea that some people are looking for, and finding, a sense of community on the Internet. At this stage, we have no reason for doubting that, for some people, their Internet group provides, not just a deep and meaningful sense of community that is important to them, but which also constitutes a primary source of support and contact with other people. Some of these groups have already existed for several years and the respondents expect them to continue for several years more. We can thus expect to find other similarities between them and communities of place, including the developmental phases proposed by such community observers and commentators as Shaffer and Anundsen (1993).

Davison et al (2000) asked whether the type of support available on the Internet is shallower than would be available f2f. This study suggests that, at least for some people, it is not.

**Future research**

Having established that, for some people, meaningful community experiences are available on the Internet, a useful next step would be to look more closely at that experience and compare it with the experience participants have of other, more researched, communities. Using a popular tool such as the Sense of Community Index of David Chavis, which is included as an appendix in Perkins et al (1990), would facilitate such a comparison.

This study is also consistent with those that show personality differences between diagnostic categories in terms of support seeking. For example, the cancer-prone personality is more likely to seek support than heart disease patients (Davison et al, 2000). Are there personality

differences between those who find satisfying community experiences on the Internet compared to those who do not?

The latter study also predicted that health-oriented groups with an authority figure present, such as a doctor, would be less cohesive than those without such a figure. Do authority figures inhibit community formation in Internet groups? The answer to this may depend in part on the way in which authority figures, or putative authority figures, communicate with the group. It was disappointing to have so few replies from the Usenet group alt.culture.hawaii, as well as the other groups. It is an unmoderated group, in contrast with the moderated group, soc.culture.hawaii. The author has been a long time participant in both groups. Moderation is a form of leadership and experience of these groups leads to the possibility that unobtrusive leadership, performed in the background, combined with posts to the group which do not carry direct indicators of leadership, do not inhibit the sense of community. Moderators in the latter group are elected by the group and have always been long-standing participants in the group. They are people who tend to be liked and respected by the other long-standing participants in the group. These are points that may also be investigated in further studies.

Finally, in the USA and Western Europe, most people move house several times in their lives. These changes may mean people lose touch with their communities of place several times over a lifetime. There is now a substantial body of work that demonstrates that this is not good for our health - that we are more prone to illness and do not live as long, when we are deprived of our social networks (see, for example, Berkman and Syme, 1979; Seeman and Syme, 1987; and Wolf, 1992). It is worth investigating whether participating in a virtual community can provide continuity of communal experiences through physical moves and thus help to mitigate the deleterious effects of such moves. Virtual towns have already been created on the Internet. Will these grow and extend the experience of community beyond those that currently exist online?

**Conclusion**

Hopefully, one of the things this study makes clear is that virtual communities are not going to replace physical communities – that they can and do exist in parallel with other communities in which we participate. And for some people, virtual community is just not what they are looking for. However, for some people, in some situations, virtual communities do not just provide an adequate experience of community, they provide a very deep, real and profound sense of community.

To end, here is a quote from a member of the Cancer list:

*Online groups such as this can be visited at any time of day or night and it doesn't matter. Posts are there tying people together. A question is put out to the group and within minutes the answers start pouring in. Someone is depressed and there is always another to listen, encourage, and support. Threads begin to form from one computer to another, and pretty soon there are enough to keep people coming back and a community forms. I see it happen everyday with new members joining and feeling such happiness in finding exactly what they*

*need.*

This is the sense in which virtual communities will be a significant part of the future of the communal experience for years to come.

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## Appendix 1 – Questionnaire on virtual community experiences

In June 2001, I will be presenting a paper entitled 'Virtual Communities: the Future of Communal Living?' at a conference of the International Communal Studies Association.

I am gathering data from people who participate in different types of groups on the internet, to see if they get the kind of the experiences that previously people got from membership of communal groups located in the same physical place. These would include such things as villages, church groups, clubs, self-help groups and so on.

Below are some questions that will help me find out about that. I would be grateful if you could answer these questions and send the results back to me at the address at the bottom of the page. All results will be treated in confidence. No identities will be revealed. I will be presenting summary statistics and selected, anonymous, quotes only, to the conference participants and possibly in the proceedings of the conference.

### Background Information

Are you male or female:
How old are you:
How many years of full-time education have you had since starting in Primary School / Kindergarten:
For how many years have you had Internet access:
How many hours do you spend on the Internet each week (including e-mail, Usenet, ICQ, chat groups, web browsing etc):
Do you spend more, less or about the same amount of time on the Internet as you did one year ago (please go on to the next question if you have had internet access for less than one year):
What is your occupation:
In which Internet group did you see the invitation to complete this questionnaire:

### Internet Participation

In which of the following do you participate:

Internet Relay Chat: Yes / No
If 'Yes', which rooms or groups do you participate in most frequently (please name up to 3)?

Internet Mail Lists via e-mail: Yes / No
If 'Yes', which lists do you participate in most frequently (please name up to 3)?

Interactive Games: Yes / No
If 'Yes', which games do you participate in most frequently (please name up to 3)?

Usenet groups: Yes / No

If ‘Yes’, which groups do you participate in most frequently (please name up to 3)?

Web-based chat groups: Yes / No
If ‘Yes’, which groups do you participate in most frequently (please name up to 3)?

Any other interactive, internet-based group (your own e-mail based group, for example): Yes / No
If ‘Yes’, which?

Which of the above groups feels most like a community to you?

Please would you keep that group in mind as you answer the following questions.

**Aspects of community**

Could you define your idea of a successful community (of any kind) in one or two sentences:

When you think about the Internet group that you identified above as feeling the most communal, would you describe the sense of community that you get from it as:
Very strong / Strong / Neither strong nor weak / Weak / Very weak

Does this group have a central core, aim or activity that brings participants together: Yes / No
If ‘Yes’, what is it?

How did you join the group?

What kind of group is it:
Moderated / Unmoderated / Not relevant / Don’t know

Are there any restrictions on who may join or participate in this group: Yes / No
If ‘Yes’, what are they?

How frequently do you participate in the group:
More than once a day
About once a day
About once every three days
About once a week
About once every two weeks
Once a month or less

Has a group in which you were a member ever ended: Yes / No
If ‘Yes’, how did you feel at the time?

Here are some words that could describe your experience of this group. Please check all those that apply to the group and add any others that apply, to the bottom of the list:

Enjoyable
Satisfying
Useful
Meaningful
Stressful
Spiritual
Political
Secular
Exclusive
Hierarchical
Collective
Aggressive
Friendly
Humorous
Diverse
Sexual
Sharing
Informative
Competitive
Supportive
Materialist
Welcoming
Cynical
Geeky
Technical
Interesting
Intimate
Warm
Equal
Relaxed
Moderated
Individual
Serious
Philosophical
Intellectually stimulating
Creative

Your own words:

How much do you know about the other people in the group:
A lot / Neither a lot nor a little / A little

How would you describe the quality of the communication within the group:
Very open / Open / Neither open nor closed / Closed / Very closed

Is there ever conflict between participants within the group: Yes / No

If ‘Yes’, how is the conflict handled:
Very badly / Badly / Neither badly nor well / Well / Very well

How important to you is your participation in this group:
Very important / Important / Neither important nor unimportant / Unimportant / Very unimportant

Will your experience of this group feel incomplete or unsatisfying if you cannot meet the other participants face to face: Yes / No

Will your experience of this group feel incomplete or unsatisfying if you cannot contact the participants through some other means, such as the telephone: Yes / No
If ‘Yes’, which means would make it more complete or satisfying?

Are there just one or two people from the group that you would like to meet face to face: Yes / No
If ‘Yes’, why would you like to meet them?

Do you think that your participation in this group changes the way you relate to people through other means (such as face to face, over the phone etc): Yes / No
If ‘Yes’, in what way?

Have you changed in any other way as a result of having participated in this group: Yes / No
If ‘Yes’, in what way?

How long do you think the group might last:
Days / Weeks / Months / Years

Is there anything else that you would like to say about your experience of participating in groups on the Internet, that is not covered in the questions above:

Thank you very much for participating in this study. Please could you send your completed questionnaire to me at one of the following addresses (e-mail preferred):

Dr Peter M Forster
School of Humanities
University of the South Pacific
Suva
Fiji

Fax: (679) 305053

E-mail: **peter.forster@usp.ac.fj**

## Appendix 2

| Group: | Autism-L | Cancer-L | Ex-Findhorn-L | soc.culture.hawaii |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| N / Total | 6 / 1,678 | 5 / 375 | 3 / ~40 | 6 / ? |
| Gender | 6F 0M | 5F 0M | 3F 0M | 4F 2M |
| Age | 41 | 51 | 48 | 53 |
| Education | 16 | 17 | 15 | 16 |
| Internet Access (yrs) | 6 | 4 | 5 | 7 |
| Internet weekly (hrs) | 18 | 19 | 19 | 19 |
| SoC (1 - 5) | 3.9 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4 |
| Gatekeeping | Moderated | No | Yes | Moderated |
| Frequency | 1W 2D 3>D | 3D 2>D | 1B 1D | 1M 1B 4>D |
| Know others (1 - 3) | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.7 | 2 |
| Communications (1 - 5) | 4.5 | 4.8 | 5 | 4.3 |
| Conflict | 6Y 0N | 2Y 3N | 2Y 1N | 5Y 1N |
| Conflict handling (1 - 5) | 4 | 4 | 5 | 3.8 |
| Importance | 4.3 | 4.8 | 4 | 4 |
| Meet - f2f | 0Y 6N | 1Y 4N | 0Y 1N | 0Y 6N |
| Meet - other | 0Y 6N | 1Y 4N | 0Y 1N | 0Y 6N |
| Meet - some | 4Y 2N | 4Y 1N | 1Y 1N | 3Y 3N |
| Change - relating | 4Y 2N | 3Y 2N | 1Y 2N | 3Y 3N |
| Change - other | 5Y 1N | 4Y 1N | 2Y 1N | 6Y 0N |
| Lasting group? | 6 Years | 5 Years | 3 Years | 6 Years |

Table 1. Demographic, Internet group and quality of community information for four Internet groups.

## Appendix 3 – Selected quotations from group participants

NB Words or phrases that might identify the respondent have been removed and replaced with […].

### Autism List:

Respondent 2:

[Participating in the Autism list is] Vexatious - sometimes dealing with [autistic] people can be troublesome and exhausting because it takes them so long to learn how to act in a socially acceptable way. But we don't dump them as long as (1) they are not acting awful intentionally, and (2) they do not keep the room from functioning as we want it to.

I am more accepting of myself (don't need to be perfect at all times!) and I am less afraid of making mistakes in public because I KNOW I have an accepting peer group at home in the computer. I also have no sense of loneliness, even if I do not see people for a week at a time.

Respondent 3:

The St Johns autism list feels like a community but my own private list feels like a safe little group...more like family.

I don't know what people did before these groups. It must have been an isolating experience for parents of autistic children before the Internet.

Respondent 4:

I'm not so stressed out from not being able to talk to others about my son's autism and our treatment of it. I have very few "real" friends that understand all that, the way the people on the lists do, and I used to feel very different from my "real" friends because of this.

Respondent 5:

Feel more hope for the future. Group has helped me to laugh at things that used to make me feel heartbroken.

I actually preferred the semi-anonymity of groups than being in a face-to-face group. It helped me to pull myself together emotionally before facing a face-to-face group.

Respondent 6:

This sounds very dramatic, but I think participating in groups on the Net, in a way saved my life. When my son was diagnosed, there was a list that helped me to understand what autism is, what kind of help I could expect and also lots of venting helped. I was so glad with that list for nobody in the ordinary life, understood this - my worries and my troubles and what autism is.
It was a listmate who posted me I should get myself checked for my way of thinking was so much as him. This helped me to get on the right track and with my psych we found out my autism as well.
When this wouldn't have happened, I think I still would be down and depressed and who knows what would have happened for I felt failing life more and more.
Lots of people do very denigrating about lists on the Net, but they don't know how great it is you can talk to fellows in the same situation, and you don't even have to get out of the house, and don't have to be dressed up, and/or look at the time for doing it. For me it works great!!

**Cancer List:**

Respondent 2:

It is best we don't meet. I think we need the anonymity to remain free to express our most intimate problems. Where would one talk about an abscess by their anus? Certainly not lunch talk!

Respondent 3:

Question: Could you define your idea of a successful community (of any kind) in one or two sentences.
Answer: Same group of people who regularly share their lives with each other, discuss issues they are facing, give each other support and caring, and openly give and take information, affection, and caring.

I feel particularly close to some and feel we have enough in common to be friends. Others I feel very close to as well, but we would probably never be close friends. More like members of any community. Some would be closer than others. Kind of like members of a church or club. You care about everyone, but can only really be actively involved with a few. The sense of having a common thread is important, however, and brings a diverse group of people together for a common purpose. We are from all walks of life and this makes the community rich, diverse, enlightening, and growthful.

I find I can care deeply for people who are very different from me and this has been growthful for me. I come from a very educated family and an intellectual group of friends. I find in a group like this that I can be emotionally close to and involved with people I would probably never have known previously as our paths would not have crossed. This has made me much more aware of how much we humans have in common and how well we can support each other.

Finding a specific type of support group is very difficult for people in smaller communities. The Internet provides access to others in similar circumstances. In the case of cancer, for instance, the amount of knowledge and experience shared in this group is phenomenal. People find others who have been through what they are going through and it is extremely helpful to have this information and support. Online groups such as this can be visited at any time of day or night and it doesn't matter. Posts are there tying people together. A question is put out to the group and within minutes the answers start pouring in. Someone is depressed and there is always another to listen, encourage, and support. Threads begin to form from one computer to another, and pretty soon there are enough to keep people coming back and a community forms. I see it happen everyday with new members joining and feeling such happiness in finding exactly what they need.

As a therapist I never would have thought that a group such as this could work never meeting face to face, but it does. Perhaps it is easier for some because it is not face to face and they can "lurk" until they feel comfortable enough to jump in. Others jump right in from Day One. Some may never share, but just "lurk". Perhaps that is all they can do at this point for whatever reason. At least they can get information, hear other points of view, and see how others are dealing with each other. This community is probably very helpful even to those who never participate actively but only on the sidelines. (This would be another interesting study, I would imagine. Kind of like parallel play before co-operative play.)

**Ex-Findhorn Bay Community members list:**

Respondent 1:

I'd never have expected such satisfaction from the written word. […] As for the group and how it functions, it is a faithful continuation of the goodwill as well as tough reflection of groups-in-the-flesh at Findhorn. I don't find it only lovey-dovey. I do like being able to introduce any theme and get creative feedback from someone, somewhere around the globe within 24 hours. We seem to be mature both in age and experience of groups, so support is quickly available from empathy as much as sympathy, and 'no bullshit' responses are carefully and considerately worded.

My situation may be unique (whose isn't?!) in that I live in a culture to which I moved aged [...], so have no very long-standing friends. I also feel different from […] and know that I am, which has caused me to feel lonely. Now I have daily contact through the circle with like-minded people around the world my needs for feelings of contact are well satisfied, which means I'm not so needy of my immediate physical and social environment. I feel freer, fuller in the heart and enjoy being able to follow themes of interest both in the group and through private out-of-the-circle mails.

Respondent 2:

I think a major feature of intimate, loving internet groups is that they force us to "tune in" to feel what someone means by their words instead of taking clues from tone and inflection of voice and body language. Also, after 5 years of running an intimate, sharing group […], I feel that there are times where it is helpful to folks that sharing is somewhat "distant" (i.e. - not in each other's physical presence) and other times (and personalities) where it is not.

Respondent 3:

'Community' is a modern substitute for the old fashioned communities like villages, streets, families, where in their diversity people, care for each other's well being. I believe that something essential is lost and people crave and desire for more closeness and caring. Nowadays it is easier to start a community where there is a common ground. Although I really like Internet 'Communities' part of me hardly believes you can call it a community as face to face contact is missing. However, in the internet community I am part of, I do experience a sense of community and again, that might be desperation as my street is as uncommunity-like as it can get!

**soc.culture.hawaii Usenet group:**

Respondent 1:

Much like the conversation which might arise around a campground bonfire on a summer evening, between strangers met that evening with a common interest in camping and travel - curious and willing to share, but likely not to meet again.

There are not many other venues in which it's as easy to fly to a topic of interest and relate to others world-wide, as with the Usenet. Because: Usenet groups are indexed and searchable, unlike chat groups or radio or telephones, they are unencumbered by world-wide time zones

which leave your counterpart asleep while you're awake. If a usenet group is uninteresting or uncompanionable, it's easy to move on. Their membership is the world at large, and growing. If your interest is broad, why spend your life in the small town where you were born? Why limit your turns of phrase to only those common to a local dialect? N'est pas? Nicht wahr? Or more to the point: "He lawai'a no ke kai papa'u, he pokole ke aho; he lawai'a no ke kai hohonu he loa ke aho." (A fisherman of the shallow sea uses a short line; a fisherman of the deep sea uses a long line.)

Respondent 2:

Question: Have you changed in any other way as a result of having participated in this group:
Answer: Yes
Question: If 'Yes', in what way?
Answer: I met my live-in boyfriend through the group.

I was on Midway Island for several years, and on Tern, Wake and Laysan islands for shorter periods. I felt very isolated and lonely until I got involved in the USENET community.

Respondent 3:

Mostly it's been a positive experience. However there truly are kooks in the world who love to prey on people. I've unsubscribed from [Usenet] newsgroups where I find this happening.

Respondent 4:

Question: Have you changed in any other way as a result of having participated in this group?
Answer: Yes.
Question: If 'Yes', in what way?
Answer: I am moving to Maui!! I am learning Hawaiian. I want to learn enough and be enough to share too.

I pop in and out of other groups as I need specific information. None have been as welcoming and helpful as sch. I read sch for my soul.. And learn so much while there.

Respondent 5:

I "used" to think meeting the participants would make the experience feel more complete. But, I met some participants that ended up using the experience to create cliques instead. I'd rather not get involved in that, and I'd rather just want to stay out of appearing to be cliquish. It's an alternate community, but we have to always remember it's not entirely real. I don't take it overly seriously, and I wish others wouldn't, too.

# Cohousing: Bringing Communalism to … the World?

## Graham Meltzer

### *Abstract*

Cohousing is a new type of intentional community that has developed in response to perceived social problems of the late twentieth century – personal and household isolation and the breakdown of community, in particular. Cohousing communities integrate autonomous private dwellings with shared utilities and recreational facilities such as kitchens, dining halls, workshops and children's play facilities. Residents utilise their shared facilities to establish a rich community life of social, recreational, cultural and work activities. They act *collaboratively* to address the practical and social needs of individuals and families, recognising the importance of social relationships and shared ties as antidotes to alienation, disempowerment and stress.

Although many of its underlying principles are derived from social experimentation of the 1960s and '70s, cohousing is not a marginal or fringe phenomenon. In Denmark where there are now some hundreds of cohousing projects, *bofælleskaber* as they are known, offer a genuine housing option. Furthermore, cohousing principals and strategies are being integrated into many other social housing projects. In North America, about fifty communities have been established in the last decade. Although this comprises a minuscule proportion of the population, cohousing has recently attracted wide-spread public interest. Because it is a *mainstream* housing type, cohousing has the potential to attract or influence a critical mass of people, and so make a quantum difference to long-term social and environmental sustainability. This paper will discuss the spread and influence of cohousing, not just in the West, but in Asia and the developing world, as well.

## Introduction

Three years ago, at ICSA '98, there was occasional though somewhat heated debate, about the legitimacy of cohousing as a topic of the conference. Some delegates claimed it had not yet established sufficient credibility, whilst others argued that it was not sufficiently opposed to mainstream Western values. I hope and expect that perceptions and attitudes have changed since then, and that cohousing is now recognized as a legitimate, indeed a significant, new communal phenomenon. It is legitimate because it displays the attributes and parallels the characterisations of other communal types. Cohousing involves groups of people with shared values and resources, living together voluntarily, in order to establish and build social cohesion. It is significant because of its phenomenal success, its remarkable rapid spread and the widespread interest in communal living that it has generated. Some hundreds of cohousing communities have been built in the last thirty years, in many different countries and cultures. The early ones have generally enjoyed stability and harmony and the model has demonstrated considerable robustness, having been successfully adapted to meet diverse local needs and constraints. Importantly, its influence has been profound, far beyond the projects themselves. Cohousing theory and practice has informed the thinking of municipal governments and housing providers, planners and architects, cultural analysts and social planners, health and aged care workers, and dare I say, a significant proportion of the general population. It has done so, because it has both an urban and a mainstream focus. As I see it,

cohousing presents a model and prompts a vision of a sane and sustainable future for urban society, not just in the West, but in developing regions, as well. In this paper, I will briefly present an analysis of the historical development of cohousing, leading to a discussion of current trends and some speculation about future directions and scenarios.

## *The European origins of cohousing*

Cohousing is popularly believed to have originated in Denmark due mainly to the influence of the book, *Cohousing: A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves*. The first (1988) edition focused almost entirely on the Danish phenomenon. The authors, Californian architects Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett coined the term 'CoHousing', which they argued was a "Danish solution" to the social problems of late 20th Century post-industrial society . It should be acknowledged however, that throughout Northern Europe, organised collective living has a rich tradition stretching back at least two hundred years . Furthermore, during the 1970s when cohousing, as such, was first established in Denmark (known there, as *bofælleskaber*) very similar collective housing projects with comparable origins were being realised in the Netherlands (*centraal wonen*) and Sweden (*kollektivhuser*) ; . Because all three countries enjoy socially responsive and politically progressive cultures, the advantages of communal living was widely recognised and quickly appropriated. In each country, cohousing developed as a *mainstream* housing option, despite being underpinned by many of the principles and practices of its predecessor communes . Importantly however, cohousing projects also varied significantly from their antecedents, the nature of these distinctions being different from country to country.

### Denmark

Danish communes of the 1960s and '70s were unremarkable by comparison with their American counterparts. Few were sectarian or charismatic and the proportion advocating radical lifestyles (eg. drug use, complex marriage and bohemian or hippie alternatives) was relatively small . Most members or their households had their own private quarters. The accommodation was generally comfortable and material living standards were often improved through the sharing of resources. They were not ideologically or politically extreme but were generally proactive in supporting the disadvantaged, particularly the homeless, single parents and students on low income. They provided, according to , "a large measure of stability, warmth, genuine affection and a feeling that the individual member is indeed useful and wanted." Most communards were well-educated middle-class citizens with conventional employment and recreational pursuits. They saw communal experimentation as a logical extension of a civil and tolerant Danish society and were generally well supported by neighbours and the authorities . Nonetheless, the first cohousing-like proposal, designed in 1964, met with considerable hostility from particular neighbours and was never built . Ultimately, the political climate and radical social literature of the late sixties inspired two Danish cohousing groups to purchase properties in Hillerød (North of Copenhagen) and in Copenhagen, itself. Financial and practical difficulties delayed occupation of these projects until 1972 and 1973 respectively.

### Sweden

The differences between Danish and Swedish cohousing lie principally, in their physical form and their socio-economic underpinning. Danish cohousing predominantly comprises low-rise

(ie. one or two storey) medium-density attached dwellings with a separate, detached common house. Commonly, the architecture takes a neo-vernacular character, its layout, form and materials being derived from rural building traditions. The common house is usually located centrally or at the entrance to a site, assuming a symbolic and functional importance. Swedish cohousing, on the other hand, is mostly found in medium to high rise apartment blocks which appear little different from conventional mass housing types. Common faculties are buried within the building, though their presence may be indicated by larger than expected windows or volumes.

Further significant differences are found in the social and economic imperatives which drive Danish and Swedish cohousing. Danish *bofælleskaber* originated, (and continue to be built) in order to build better social relationships and a deeper sense of community. Swedish *kollektivhuser* originally had a more pragmatic *raison d'être.* Instigators sought to reduce the burden of housework, particularly for women entering the workforce, and improve the lot of children with working (often, single) parents. In a manner that never existed in Danish self-managed cohousing, services were established to provide meals and undertake housework and childcare. This, essentially feminist intent, met with significant resistance from male-dominated Swedish housing institutions and political organizations .

**The Netherlands**

Dutch cohousing differs significantly from Swedish types, in form, scale and social intent. Whereas Swedish *kollektivhuser* comprise substantial buildings with centralised common facilities and services, their Dutch counterparts occupy low-rise buildings, similar in scale to Danish cohousing, but with a more urban form and character. Because the Netherlands is significantly more densely populated, the degree to which cohousing projects blend with, and are integrated into, their neighbourhood is more carefully considered . Unlike both Danish and Swedish cohousing, *centraal wonen* usually have decentralised common facilities, with clusters of six or eight households sharing a kitchen and dinning room with more domestic qualities. In part, this is due to a humanistic Dutch architectural tradition which, according to , has a "fascination for the manipulation of space and form in order to achieve intimacy." In Dutch cohousing common dining tends to occur in small groups, not with the whole community, so is less noisy and more intimate. Theoretically, residents can join a cluster of households with similar aspirations (such as, desired frequency of common meals per week) and move between clusters if necessary.

Cohousing in the Netherlands originated in much the same way as Danish cohousing, through the radical social literature of the late sixties. Yet, its social intent and consequently the demographics of Dutch cohousing has always been different from the Danish and closer to the Swedish experience. It tends to be more focussed on practical advantages of communal living, and so attract a greater proportion of singles, single parents and the elderly. Dutch cohousing has generally been readily accepted by neighbours as well as government and housing providers alike. Currently in the Netherlands, to a lesser extent in Denmark, and less again in Sweden, little housing *of any kind* is built without reference to cohousing theory and practice.

## *The Second Wave: North American cohousing*

In the mid 1980s, Katie McCamant and Chuck Durrett returned to California from a study

tour of Danish cohousing and, in 1988, published their findings in *Cohousing: A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves*. It sold 3,000 copies in the first month . Over the next two or three years, McCamant and Durrett vigorously promoted cohousing in numerous public workshops and slide presentations. One held in Davis, California in late 1988 sparked the first American project, Muir Commons, completed in 1991.[56] Within a few years, pockets of cohousing had been established in Northern California, Washington State, Massachusetts and Colorado. Although American projects incorporated most of the physical attributes of Danish cohousing (such as low-rise attached dwellings, centralised common facilities and peripheral parking), they also developed significant new variations. The changes included:

1. new development and procurement processes;
2. an effort to reduce material consumption; and
3. the emergence of a cohousing 'movement'.

**New development processes**

In Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands, most cohousing is developed as social housing by non-profit organizations. This is rare in America. One project, Winslow Cohousing, was developed by an equity cooperative of residents, and another, by a non-profit organization seeking to build cohousing for a low-income black community. Predominantly however, American projects are privately developed, although most groups use consultants and developers to expedite the design and procurement process. About 80% of groups employ outside consultants while the remainder design and develop their own projects, usually with input from resident professionals. About 30% work with property developers, who typically undertake financing and project management roles . One development company in particular, Wonderland Hill, has largely been responsible for a wave of cohousing development in Colorado. American groups often employ a 'lot development model' whereby a site is carved up into house lots which are sold separately (together with a share of the commons) and developed individually. This results in cohousing projects with considerable diversity of architectural form, scale and character, the likes of which is not often found in European cohousing.

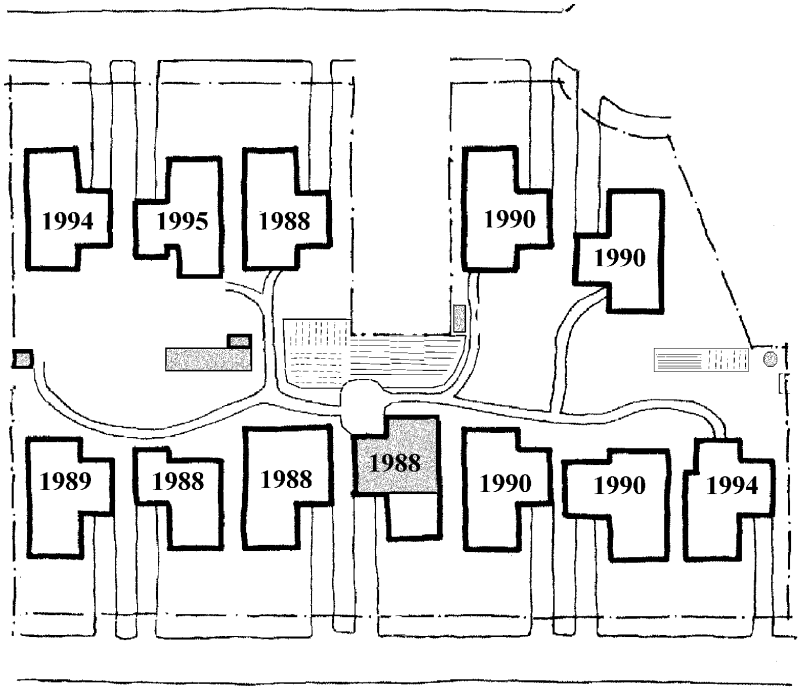
Another cohousing model, different to new-built projects, is known as *in-situ* or retrofit cohousing. Whilst uncommon in Europe,[57] this approach has been effectively used in the US and Canada to recycle disused industrial and commercial buildings. In the process, such projects become a catalyst for broader social change. Blighted inner-city suburbs have been injected with fresh life by cohousing groups that have seen their potential and purposefully integrated with and politicised the neighbourhood. In suburban locations, longstanding neighbours have created 'expanding' cohousing without relocating or building anew, opting instead to knock down the fences between existing dwellings, share backyards, and establish common faculties. N-Street Cohousing, for example, in Davis, California, started when two neighbours decided to remove the fence between them and garden their backyards together. Over time, more and more neighbours who saw the value of greater sharing and collaboration joined the group simply by removing perimeter fences and making a commitment to

56 The matter of which was first is disputed. At least two communities were established before this time but not known as cohousing until later.

57 McCamant and Durrett (1988) reported two in-situ projects..

contribute to community life (). Each household provides a resource that they share such as a workshop, laundry, sauna etc. The ground floor of one building has become a dedicated common house.

**Figure 1: N-Street site plan with date of each household's admission**




**Reducing consumption**

The principal social intent of American cohousing is similar to that of the Danish, namely, improved relationships with neighbours and a greater sense of community. In addition to that, widespread concern about profligate consumerism in the US, has introduced there, a strong anti-consumerism. This has led (when coupled with American entrepreneurial flare and social innovation) to cohousing with extensive sharing and high levels of practical support. Cohousing residents live in more compact building types (town houses and apartments) than they did previously, contrary to an overwhelming national preference for large detached dwellings. Indeed, about 85% of cohousing residents reside in attached dwelling types while, prior to moving into cohousing, 70% of the same households lived in detached family homes. Cohousing dwellings are small by American standards, the average floor area (125 $m^2$) being about half the national average. Perhaps more importantly, Americans living in cohousing have reconceptualized their domestic space needs, enjoying habitable spaces for their qualities, not their material content and associated status symbolism. This is perhaps best exemplified by the Pine Street project in Amherst, MA (). Living rooms are small and simply but elegantly furnished. The spatial and functional requirements have been assessed only in terms of basic human needs: comfortable seating, the opportunity for face-to-face interaction, the provision of strong natural light and good views to the exterior. In another instance, the provision of a mezzanine play space has enabled the footprint of a child's bedroom to be reduced to a minimum.

**Figure 2: Pine Street: Efficient use of space allows minimal room size (top). A compact living room combines simplicity with high amenity (bottom)**

About 50% of American groups have a written mission statement that makes explicit reference to living in a caring, pro-active relationship with the environment - a codification of values which is very rare in Danish cohousing. The majority of those American communities without a mission statement, still have a strong but unwritten ethos that challenges what many in cohousing believe to be a fetishism of material acquisition that is endemic in wider society. The support for such practices as recycling, composting, car pooling and reduced consumption enables cohousing residents to adopt lower-impact lifestyles in ways they would not contemplate in more conventional circumstances . Cohousing residents, for example, have reduced by one quarter, the number of freezers, washing machines and dryers that they own and by three quarters, the number of privately owned lawn-mowers. There is ready sharing of smaller household items in every cohousing community although only one, Commons on the Alameda in Santa Fe, has formalised the process by circulating a list of equipment that each household owns and is willing to share ().

## Figure 3: Lending List of household items available for use by others

| Category | Item | Lender Unit # | Category | Item | Lender Unit # |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gardening | Hand trowel | A5,A6,B1,B4 | Outings | Backpack | A6,A7,B1,C7,D3 |
| | Lawn mower | A6 | | Bicycle tools | A7,B1,C7,D3 |
| | Leaf rake | A2,A5,A6,B1,B3 | | Car bike rack | A5,A6,B1,C5,C7 |
| | Pick | A2,B3,C4 | | Bikes | A2,A5,B1,C5,C7 |
| | Pitch fork | B1,B3 | | Canoe | A2 |
| | Shovel | A1,A5,C4,C5,C7 | | Climbing helmet | A2,D3 |
| | Sledge hammer | C4 | | Compass | A2,A5,B2,C7,D3 |
| | Tree loper | B1 | | Ice axe | A2,D3 |
| | Weed eater | B2,D2 | | Life preservers | B1,C5,D3 |
| | Weed scythe | C4 | | Maps | A6,B1,B4,C7,D4 |
| | Wheelbarrow | A2,A4,A6,B1,C4 | | Snowshoes | D3 |
| | | | | Tents | A7,B1,B4,D2,D3 |
| Building & | Back belt | A6,B1,B3 | | | |
| maintenance | Bucket | CH,B1,B3 | Cooking | Coffee pot | A6,D5 |
| | Carpentry | C4,C7 | | Cookbooks | A4,A5,B1,C4,D4 |
| | Dolly | A4,B1,D3 | | Corn popper | C4,D5 |
| | Drill | A6,B1,B4,C6,D5 | | Crock pot | A5,B4,C5 |
| | Elec. screwdriver | A6 | | Cuisinart | CH,A5,A6,D4 |
| | Foot pump | B1,C7 | | Juicer | A6,B1,C7 |
| | Hammer | A2,B1,B4,C7,D3 | | Mixer | B1 |
| | Jigsaw | A6 | | Oversize mixer | CH,D4 |
| | Jumper cables | A4,B1,C4,C5,C7 | | Pasta maker | B1 |
| | Mitre box | B1 | | Pressure cooker | CH,A2,A5,A6,B1 |
| | Sewing mach. | A6,B3,B4,C7,D3 | | Wok | A6,B1,B4,D4 |
| | Staple gun | A6,B1,C7 | | | |
| | Toilet plunger | A5,B1 | Other | Blow up bed | C4,D5 |
| | Toilet snake | B1 | | Single futon | D5 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Folding tables | B1,D3,C6,C7 |
| Cleaning | Mini vacuum | A7,C4 | |
| | Rug cleaner | B1 | *To add your valuables to the list, call Ken.* |

**The movement: networking, publicity and the Internet**

Another distinctive characteristic of American cohousing is a propensity for communication and networking. Word of mouth and ever increasing publicity have been very effective in spreading awareness and interest in cohousing. Many communities are now wired for internal (or intranet) electronic communication and the World Wide Web is utilised intelligently to promote and provide support for groups and communities. National and regional conferences are held regularly to exchange skills and knowledge. It is, perhaps, these attributes above all else, which gives the cohousing phenomenon in North America, the feel and momentum of a genuine social movement.

## *The Third Wave: Cohousing on the Pacific Rim*

It seems reasonable to suggest, that the growth of cohousing in Northern Europe in the 1970s and '80s constituted the 'first wave' of cohousing development and that its subsequent spread throughout North America in the '80s and '90s constituted a 'second wave'. I would like to propose that a, previously unheralded, 'third wave' is currently underway. It commenced, with the arrival of cohousing in Australia in the early '90s and has slowly developed since in dispersed locations, namely, New Zealand, Japan, Korea and western parts of North America – in short, around the Pacific Rim. I believe it constitutes the next wave of cohousing activity, not simply due to its chronology or location, but because it represents a new direction in cohousing development with distinctive characteristics, both practical and philosophical. Both the built and proposed projects deliberately and successfully confront challenges largely unmet by the second wave of cohousing projects. They are the issues of:

- accessibility and affordability;
- 'green' architecture and ecological habitation; and
- adaptability and responsiveness to suit regional and cultural difference.

I will discuss these developments in the three following sections, but first wish to comment on the unheralded beginning and continued slow pace of the third wave, which is interesting when compared with the way cohousing burst onto the scene in America. By contrast, cohousing arrived without fanfare and has developed slowly in Australia. The first project, Cascade Cohousing, was started in Hobart, Tasmania in 1991. Since then, only two more projects have been constructed, one in Fremantle, Western Australia (1997) and the other, again in Hobart (1999). Cohousing has been slow to establish in Australia for culturally specific reasons. Communal living, despite a long and rich history in Australia, has remained outside the mainstream range of lifestyle choices . Communal groups have mostly lived in remote locations (as are Hobart and Fremantle) and been marginalised or discounted by a vast majority of the public. In good part, this is due to what Denis Altman[58] has labelled, a

58 Altman is a noted Australian political scientist and social activist.

uniquely ‘Australian conservatism’. Altman suggests that an exaggerated emphasis on prosperity and home ownership[59] has established ‘two pillars’ of Australian culture, the accumulation of property and an emphasis on privacy and family life . The easy availability of land in Australia led to an early proliferation of low-density suburbs that reinforced this highly privatised social culture (. Furthermore, post-war Australian attitudes and aspirations, in so far as there has been a consensus, have been predominantly based on middle-class, bourgeois values (hard work, prosperity, respectability and family life) and the essential assumptions of liberal capitalism (individuality, competition, consumerism and domesticity). The ubiquity of these cultural traits is one reason for cohousing being slow to establish in Australia, but there are others. argues that the “smallness of the Australian dream” has become a value in itself, creating suspicion of both intellectual and visionary thinking. Yet, the two do not necessarily coexist. In the US, there is a similar anti-intellectualism but a much stronger tradition of utopian thought and a historically derived vision of Americans as pioneers that has long fed entrepreneurial drive and innovation in that country. Their idealism and risk taking, which seem not be part of the Australian psyche, have no doubt contributed to the more rapid development of cohousing in the US.

**Affordable cohousing**

Despite the cultural impediments or perhaps because of them, in 1991, an individual visionary[60] and a small but determined group inspired by McCamant and Durrett’s book bought a degraded block of land and commenced building Australia’s first cohousing … *themselves*. Home sites were progressively sold off according to the ‘lot development model’, by then, well established in the US. Aware of the pitfalls of this approach, the group together with an architect, established binding guidelines that mandated low energy, passive solar architecture and ensured architectural coherence to the project as a whole. This group’s greatest achievement, however, was in demonstrating the possibilities of sweat equity, or self-build, as a means to greater affordability. Residents built compact homes (105 $m^2$ on average), mostly without carports, guest rooms or laundries. Over a period of years, the group designed and built themselves extensive site works, landscape gardens and a 250 $m^2$ common house (). Its excellent kitchen, dining and lounge rooms are used by most residents as their primary social space. The laundry, guest room and TV room are also well used.

59 At about 70%, Australia has the highest rate of home ownership in the world.

60 Ian Higginbottom, having read McCamant and Durretts’s book undertook a study tour of Danish cohousing in 1989, then returned to Hobart to establish a cohousing group.

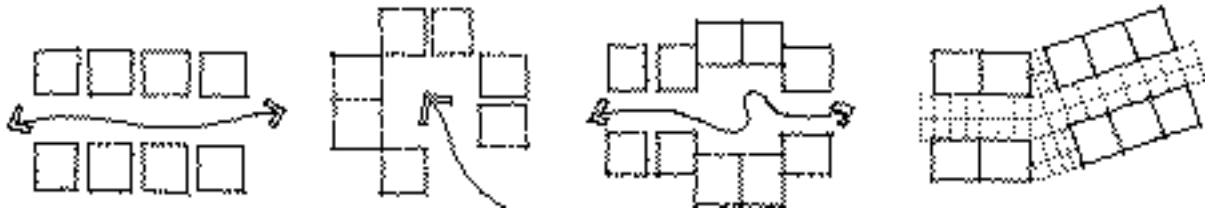
**Figure 4: Cascade Cohousing: Self-built houses and landscaping under construction (left) and sharing a meal outside their self-built common house (right)**

By different means entirely, the second cohousing project in Hobart has achieved an enviable level of affordability for its residents. Cohousing Cooperative, as it is constituted, received a million dollar government grant to provide housing for eleven low-income households. Members of the cooperative, pay 25% of their income in rent, and have security of tenure. They are a diverse mix of singles, single parent households and nuclear families. As they didn't need capital to join, the adult population has the youngest profile found anywhere in cohousing, ranging in age from 25 to 40. The third Australian cohousing community, Pinakarri Cohousing in Western Australia, has been particularly innovative in terms of its approach to affordability. It comprises a hybrid mix of publicly and privately funded dwellings, eight rental houses for low-income members and four that are privately owned. The group is constituted as an equity/non-equity cooperative. Clearly, Australian cohousing, in each instance, has addressed the issue of affordability in a determined and creative manner.

## Green cohousing

Almost all cohousing communities of the second wave had either explicitly written (in their mission statement) or implicitly held intentions to build 'lightly on the earth'. However, recent evaluation of North American cohousing suggests that in only a few cases have groups realised their aspiration for a genuinely low-impact architecture . Many groups reported being restricted by the requirements of regulatory and financial bodies. Resistant contractors and the cost premium they applied to non-standard products and processes frustrated others. Most groups found that research of the environmental impact of materials and methods required too much time, given the already very demanding nature of the development process. Fortunately, we can now see a genuinely 'green' cohousing architecture emerging in recent projects of the 'third wave'. This has come about through the eschewing of one of the primary underpinnings of previous cohousing in Europe and North America, namely, the generic site planning strategies identified by McCamant and Durrett ().

**Figure 5: Four generic cohousing site plans (after McCamant & Durrett 1994:175)**



One of the fundamentals of low-impact architecture is its orientation. In cold climates at least, buildings must face the winter sun if they are to achieve even a modicum of energy efficiency. This is near impossible to achieve whilst designers accord with conventional cohousing thinking and locate buildings around a courtyard or along both sides of a pedestrian street with their living spaces facing inward. Most American projects conform to one or other of these four generic layouts due to the influence of McCamant and Durrett on the evolution of American cohousing, both through the success of their book and their consulting as architectural practitioners. In contrast to this approach, the residents of Cascade Cohousing, having first sought a suitable block, eschewed the potential social advantages of conventional cohousing site planning by stringing out the houses in a line facing northward. They built predominantly in lightweight concrete block for its insulation properties and advantages for self-builders. The houses incorporate considerable thermal mass and large north facing windows. A detailed energy audit revealed that the average energy consumption of the dwellings is about half that of similar sized houses in Hobart . Furthermore, this community appears to be as socially cohesive as any other irrespective of their having little enclosed open space.

Across the Tasman in a similar climatic zone New Zealand's first cohousing is currently under construction. Earthsong Eco-neighbourhood have encapsulate in their name, the intention to build a project with low environmental impact. In using the word eco-*neighbourhood* rather than eco-*village* they are making the point that theirs is an integrated urban project, not an autonomous rural one. Their vision statement explicitly states their intention to design and construct layout, buildings and services that "demonstrate the highest practical standards of sustainable human settlement." Furthermore, they seek to "assist in the education and public awareness of sustainability by demonstrating and promoting innovative community design and environmentally responsible construction" . They are hoping to do so by incorporating, amongst other measures:

- Buildings that are oriented North and designed for energy efficiency and natural climate control using passive solar design.
- Building materials and components chosen with regard to their energy content, low toxicity, low environmental impact, durability and suitability for recycling.
- Rainwater collection in a 30,000 litre tank for household and garden use.
- Solar water heaters to provide the bulk of hot water needs.
- Comprehensive site design based on permaculture principles and organic, edible landscape gardens .

This is a comprehensive package, of the like not found elsewhere in cohousing. Along with Cascade's achievements and those of recent projects on the North American West Coast this represents a positive new trend of cohousing's third wave.

**Responsive cohousing**

I have described the spread of cohousing as a sequence of three distinct but overlapping waves of development and transformation. I would further argue that the evolution of the cohousing model has been continuous in at least one respect. As it has evolved, from its Northern European roots to current iterations on the Pacific Rim, cohousing has become more and more diverse. To an increasing extent, it has been adapted to local and regional climatic, cultural, political and economic conditions. It has become more responsive.

Perhaps as an artefact of a homogeneous agrarian culture, Danish cohousing has a sameness from project to project. With some exceptions, the architecture is similarly neo-vernacular. Building form and layout is derived from traditional farm buildings of one or two stories with black gable roofs and masonry walls painted ochre or white. Socially and demographically, their homogeneity is simply a product of the culture generally, one of ethnic uniformity, widely held humanistic values and limited extremes of rich and poor. North American cohousing initially took a distinctly Danish form, but as it has spread, regional differences in climate, culture and tradition generated an architecture of much greater diversity than exists in Denmark ().

**Figure 6: Regional cohousing: Pacific North West (top left), New England (top right), West Coast neo-Victorian (bottom left) and the Santa Fe 'style' of the South West (bottom right)**

Admittedly, these projects are also neo-vernacular, being derived from traditional building forms within regions. However there is evidence to suggest that North American architects and designers are moving away from references to the past toward a more contemporary architecture. This trend is most obvious on the West Coast where there is, perhaps, greater confidence, innovation and freedom from regulation. Windsong Cohousing, for example, a project near Vancouver, has a form that must be unique amongst Canadian housing projects. The Swan's Market project in Oakland, California is an inspiring contemporary conversion of a disused industrial building into a vital mixed use project incorporating cohousing, commercial tenancies, a museum of children's art, another art gallery, at least three restaurants and a number of shops ().

**Figure 7: Windsong Cohousing (top) and Swan's Market (bottom).**

Both within each community and across the movement, North American cohousing is more demographically diverse than its Danish antecedent, mostly because of the greater heterogeneity of the general population. For example, there are extremes of income within US cohousing, that have caused a resident of Southside Park in Sacramento to write,

> Our community faces a special challenge when it comes to decisions about money, due to our success in achieving considerable diversity of income level among members. The more well-off among us need to temper some desires while learning to contribute, at times, more than their proportional amount to meet a community need

Despite the fact that groups lament their lack of ethnic diversity, variability has been achieved in members' backgrounds, attitudes, priorities, preferences, and aspirations. Indeed, their diversity has been broad enough to confront individuals' values and challenge group cohesion .

The third wave is already demonstrating an even greater adaptability and responsiveness to cultural difference. I have observed of Australian cohousing, for example, that it has taken a very informal approach to many of the systems that Americans seem to take very seriously. Might this be a reflection of the, admittedly stereotypical, 'laid back' Aussie demeanour? Take common meals, for example. One thing that keeps people from community meals, observes, is pressure to be involved in cooking. He notes that, "if you have a setup where you have to cook in order to be a participant, those who can't or don't want to will drop out." This was exactly the scenario being played out at Nyland Cohousing during my visit in 1996. A member lamented, "I am very concerned about the ongoing disaffection at Nyland over the policy that requires each community member to cook every cooking rotation. The conflict over this agreement is beginning to cause serious rifts in our community" .

Australians, however, have taken a very relaxed approach to common meals procedure. At Cascade, for example, cooking is "appreciated but not expected". The sign-up sheet 'invites' members to cook between one and four times per cycle, depending on approximately how often they eat and how much they like cooking. Yet, frequency of participation is not recorded or monitored, nor does any money change hands. Unlike cohousing everywhere else where the cost of the meal is recovered from participants, the cooks at Cascade do the shopping and cover the cost in the expectation that "what goes around, comes around" (Australian aphorism). There is no budget, so the total cost varies according to the personal predilections of the cook, for freshness, organics etc. There is not even a rigorous sign-up procedure for participating at common meals. Cooks can never be sure how many will show up, so they cater for 20 and if the number varies, they improvise.

Paradoxically, this extraordinarily loose approach is very deliberate. Cascade's members believe that good social relations will more likely develop in an atmosphere of relaxed informality, rather than one of monitoring and accounting for participation and expenditure. Admittedly, this is expedited by the small size of the community, just 28 members (including children), which is about half the average for North American groups. Perhaps because of the cultural impediments outlined above, this is another difference that might characterise Australian cohousing. The others are also small, comprising 30 members (Coop Cohousing)

and 31 (Pinakarri). A forth, ‘mini-cohousing’ project now exists in Brisbane. It comprises just seven residents (including three renters) and ultimately will only accommodate five or six households at its small, inner-city site.

**Cohousing arrives in Asia**

A unique adaptation of cohousing principals to suit local circumstances has occurred in Japan. In Tokyo, there are two collective housing projects directly inspired by Danish and Swedish exemplars, one funded privately and the other, publicly. Both have taken unconventional approaches to common meals to suit the stressful lifestyle and late working hours of Japanese employees. The former utilises a barbecue set within its shared rooftop garden, the other commissions serviced meals twice a day, 6 days a week ().

**Figure 8: Shared dining facilities of the privately and publicly funded project in Tokyo.**

In Kobe, when new dwellings were required quickly and in vast numbers following the earthquake, the authorities built what are known as *Fureai* houses (meaning "places of friendship"). There are about 300 units in ten projects of between six and 71 units each. They are occupied predominantly by low income singles and couples, mostly elderly. In recognizing the value of collaboration and mutual support as a means of overcoming hardship and material need, the *Fureai* houses were equipped with common spaces and facilities for residents to share. Admittedly, these are not cohousing projects in a conventional sense. Many would argue that without a participatory design process, no amount of common facilities, material sharing and social interaction can *create* cohousing. "Build it and they will come" … perhaps … but it's likely that they, the residents, will never cohere as a community, in the way that cohousing groups become bonded through the usual cohousing design and development process. Nor will they develop the decision making and dispute resolution skills that operate so effectively in most cohousing communities. This is borne out in the case of the *Fureai* houses where the common spaces are not well utilised and, indeed, resented by some residents as an extra expense and maintenance burden. According to Dr Namiko Minai, a researcher at the National Institute of Public Health, "residents struggle amongst themselves, as they were not really organized or trained before they started their life in those flats" (Personal communication).

In both Japan and Korea there is growing awareness of the theory and practice of established cohousing, at least amongst academics if not the general public. In Korea, a professor of sociology has recently published a book about cohousing, incorporating examples from Europe, America and Australia.[61] Another Korean professor recently spent a sabbatical in Australia to study cohousing with me and has since published in the journal of the Korean

61 Dwelling Research Group (2000) Cohousing in the World: Dwelling with Neighbours. Seoul, Kyomunsa.

Housing Association.[62] His students, the next generation of Korean architects, have been designing cohousing projects. Yet, knowledge of cohousing in Asia remains mostly theoretical; to my knowledge, only the Tokyo project has been designed and built by participatory process. Yet, there is sufficient interest and motivation to suggest that many may follow. This flies in the face of much cohousing rhetoric. Cohousing is often touted as a Western phenomenon, with little relevance to non-Western societies, which are presumed to be based on extended families and high ambient levels of social support. In truth, Asia has suffered devastating social disruption over recent decades through rapid and ill-considered Westernisation that has brought a breakdown of family and community structures as well as loss of cultural values. There is a appreciation now of the role that cohousing has played in reversing these trends in the West and a readiness to apply cohousing principals to address similar needs. Dr Minai writes,

> Japan has quite different way of thinking about housing and community development from the United States and other 'Western Countries'. On the other hand, we do have common problem of small scale families and other related problems of community destruction. Children find it difficult to play outside, and they do not face to [ie. encounter] different attitudes of adults, and many children do not have chance to discuss their thinking with their neighbours. Cohousing may solve some of these problems, and that is why I am interested in this research (Personal communication).

Dr Minai and her team are now attempting to improve the social dynamics of the *Fureai* Houses by implementing measures drawn directly from the cohousing literature.

**Cohousing in developing countries?**

As unlikely as cohousing activity in Asia may seem, that something similar might occur in Africa is, perhaps, even more surprising. Yet, cohousing theory and practice is now informing the thinking of South African authorities responsible for providing housing to low-income families in and around Durban. A cross-cultural research initiative involving architects from South Africa, Denmark and Australia has proposed that the cohousing model be adapted to help provide care for the vast numbers of HIV/AIDS affected children, orphans and families in South Africa.[63] There is a deep-rooted tradition of extended family dwelling patterns in South Africa,[64] a tradition that is not supported by current housing provision of small

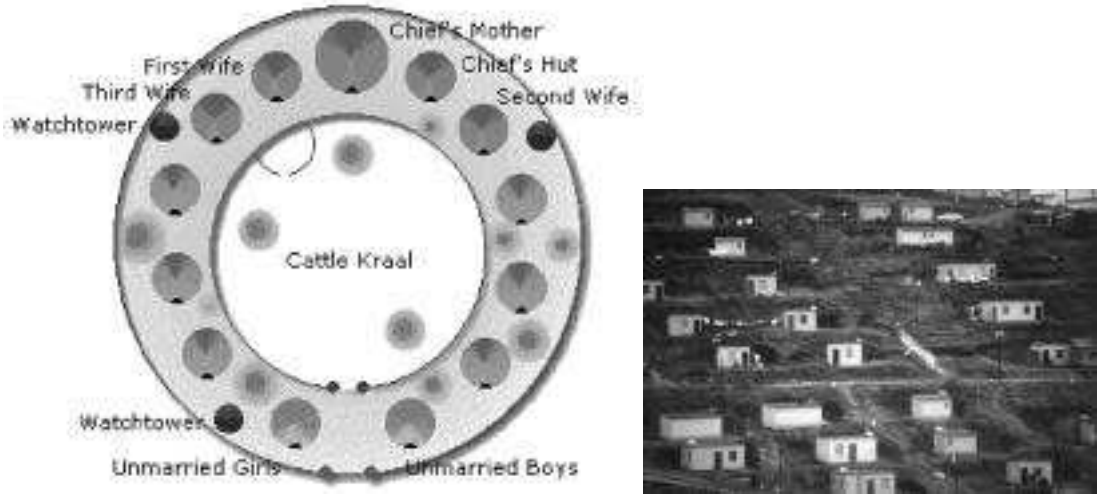
62 Shin, Yong-Jae (2001) "A Study on the Harmony of Privacy and Community in Cohousing." Housing Research Journal, Korean Housing Association, V12/1, pp45-56

63 In 1998 the South African Department of Health estimated that by 2005 there would be nearly one million children under the age of 15 who had lost their mother to AIDS (Whiteside 1999).

64 Zulus, the predominant ethnic group in Kwa-Zulu Natal, traditionally lived in extended family groups. Relationships between various family members and others of the clan and the tribe, as well as the distribution of labour were clearly established. The structure of the extended family, led by the male head, his wives, children and relatives, was reflected and reinforced in the placing of the various huts within the 'kraal', the traditional village form which is still predominant in rural areas.

isolated dwelling units on individually owned plots of land ().[65] The idealised nuclear family upon which this model is based, is now the exception in Kwa-Zulu Natal, a situation exacerbated by the HIV/AIDS epidemic ravaging the population.[66] Lacking social welfare, individuals and families fall back onto adapted forms of extended family support where these are available. To this end, the application of cohousing theory has been suggested as a means of rethinking new housing provision and reinforcing traditional social support mechanisms .

**Figure 9: Traditional extended family village (left) and government provided housing (right)**




## *Conclusion*

In this paper, I have traced the evolution of the cohousing model from its origins amongst social progressives in Northern Europe, through a 'second wave' of adaptation to North American conditions, to current developments on the Pacific Rim, which I have represented as the 'third wave' of adaptation and change. I have also reported recent developments of a theoretical nature in Asia and Africa, which suggest the possibility of cohousing being adopted there to address general social dysfunction, as well as, instances of catastrophe and need. These latest developments have not been foreseen by cohousing experts, who have

65 In a headlong rush to fulfil the ANC's promise to provide a million houses in five years, authorities have built thousands of identical 4m x 4m 'houses' that mimic Western suburban dwelling patterns and the free-standing 'villas' of the affluent in South Africa. The open space between them is useless for social purposes or child play.

66 A large proportion of children are born to single mothers and exist in 'matrifocal' households where conjugal instability is replaced by a wider bond between siblings and relatives.

previously considered cohousing, a uniquely Western phenomenon. However, the extended family tradition is common to almost all cultures, in one form or another. Furthermore, societies everywhere, in almost all countries, are suffering the breakdown of traditional social support networks. Cohousing has been able to adapt so spectacularly because its principles are so simple and robust. The *singular* basis of cohousing is an intent to develop more supportive, sharing and caring relationships between neighbours. Cohousing carries no other ideology, credo or baggage. For this reason, it will increasingly become, through the twenty first century, an important means of addressing social dysfunction and inducing positive social change.

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## *Biography*

Dr Graham Meltzer is a lecturer in architecture at the Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia. His teaching and research focus upon social and environmental aspects of architecture. He has published papers about cohousing in architectural journals and in *Communal Societies*. Graham has lived many years in intentional communities including two years on kibbutz and eight years on Australia’s largest commune. He has, more recently, lived in Danish and American cohousing.

# 1.9 Utopia

## Experiments in living Arrangements as Human Development Strategies.


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**Prologue to a Narrative Explicating the Premises of the Theory**

As a prologue to the narrative itself we would like to point out a parallel between some of the notions being set forth by postmodern theorists and certain writers on cultural creativity, specifically cultural writers such as Daniel Quinn, Thom Hartmann and Jean Liedloff. Many postmodernists are articulating a model which holds that there is not one universal culturally grounded truth. That is, they assert the relativity of all culturally grounded linguistic narratives. (We want to make it clear that we are not asserting there is no underlying facticity relative to the Universe itself however).

Rather, we are asserting that humans transform the direct experience of this facticity into a culturally grounded narrative which is fundamentally linked to the speaker as the narrative agency and to the contingencies which shape the perspective of the speaker. Cultural critics such as Quinn and Hartmann are arguing from a similar point of view with regard to the normative manifestations of culture as well. They assert there is no one right way to live. That is, they are arguing, based on their understanding of earlier cultures, that there is no universally proper culture or social system which is best for all humans. This paper will draw upon the insights of both of these perspectives in articulating the legitimating narrative underpinning the theoretical proposal expressed herein.

*Since we are supporting this thesis based on some of the assertions of post modernism we feel it appropriate to note that this particular narrative does not proclaim an absolute truth vested in this story but simply avers that the description is based on evidence which is considered consensually valid by members of a growing group of scholars examining the human-environment relationship.

**A Supportive Narrative Underpinning the Axiomatic model**

One of the fundamental premises of this thesis is that many individuals in the contemporary world are exhibiting negative, even pathological outcomes related to the psycho-physical context of their lives. Researchers in the area of evolutionary psychology, as well as many cultural critics, have begun to suggest that the conditions of modern consumer society are deleterious to various aspects of the human condition (Coon, 1997; Hughes, 2000). Nesse and Berridge suggest that "the mismatch between our bodies and our modern

environments is a major cause of behavioral and medical problems (Science, Oct. 3. 1997, p. 64). Humans are an organic outcome of a long and varied natural organic event and we are now creating conditions which our bio-psychological makeup is poorly suited for. "(O)ur present set of institutionaized life practices act quite the opposite to creating wellbeing; this system and it's respective normative matrix acts to dull and alienate the individual..." (coon, 1997, p.1) This feeling of ennui appears to be directly related to our way of life. Humans evolved in small closely knit groups. In fact, Quinn (1999) asserts that the "natural" condition of the human is the tribe. He suggests that the tribe is to the human as the pod is to the whale. We concur with this estimation and hence, believe that many of the negative manifestations of the modern world can be amieliorated by returning to some form of institutionalized and intentional small group cohabitation.

Bellah and his colleagues, in their book "The Good Society" (1991) state that humans live their lives through institutions. What they mean by this is that humans, due to the fact that they do not have a well articulated set of instincts, have their behavior shaped and directed by the normative, value matrix expressed in their culture. The form and content of these institutions gives expression to certain manners of acting and thinking which accord with the core system properties of the culture they are in. A significant aspect of this is that in many respects, contemporary institutionalized normative structures are more suited to serving the properties of the economic system than they are to serving the needs of humans. Here is where the mismatch takes place or as the saying goes, this is where the rubber hits the road.

The discipline of sociology suggests that much of human life is shaped by forces outside of the individual. Hence, if we are to remediate this situation of mismatch in the lives of many of the people who are exhibiting these pathological outcomes, we will need to reconfigure the institutional context of human life for many of us. Many believe that one of the models we can use to help us understand what some more optimal behavior patterns might be is to examine primal societies to see if we can determine which aspects of these evolutionarily primary groups are pertinent to human well being. Institutions can be understood as one aspect of human psycho-physical programming. These routinized behavioral trajectories create habituated behavior patterns which express themselves both in the form of overt behavioral activity and in the form of physiological patterns.

For instance, it appears that the social environment can have an important impact on something as significant as how the brain is wired. Studies indicate that the human brain is more plastic than we had originally thought and that our physiology is actually fairly responsive to the external environment. Thus, it is becoming apparent that adults, as well as children, are powerfully effected by the interactive patterns they find themselves in.

By speaking of institutions as psycho-physical programming patterns we begin to articulate a social narrative which highlights the self creative agency humans can express in their own lives. If we begin to see (signify) the world as a complex array of psycho-physical programming patterns we are more able to cultivate a cultural narrative which places humans at the heart of consciously directed cultural evolution. This sort of conceptual model fits quite well with the general evolutionary theoretical narrative. Certainly the idea that natural conditions play a significant role in shaping the expression of the natural world is not a

new insight. The important element added in this more self directed cultural evolutionary model is the intentionality of the human agency.

We are suggesting that humans can overtly play a role in creating life contexts which are intentionally formulated so as to nurture the expression of certain types of psycho-behavioral complexes. There is obviously a strong correlation between this model and that of Skinnarian operant conditioning (see for ex. "Waldon Two"). A significant difference, however, is that we propose that the model to be used to guide the actual fabrication of these social pathways be grounded in primary indigenous cultures and insights drawn from ecology. In both of these cases the models are grounded in nature.

Also, we are not saying that we can change peoples behavioral patterns simply by placing them in a different social context, although this is probably true to some extent. What we are saying is that for people who are predisposed to wanting to change, by consciously configuring living environments which help support and direct such change, these individuals will reap positive psycho physical benefits and that children born into such environments will find them to be as "natural" as do children born into any unintentional culture today. The difference being, children of communities of choice will experience a much different set of molding patterns which give shape to their lives.

We are not asserting that merely through the process of conscious choice humans can control the environment so much that they will be able to completely determine the outcome of the human condition. What we are suggesting is that the human condition is shaped by various external stimuli and that with conscious intent humans can participate in the self directive molding of at least some portion of their expression. Again, this is not necessarily new. Many cultures in the past have created institutionalized behavior patterns which sought to mold individuals in certain ways. For example, many Native American tribes had young men carry out practices which would help prepare them for the difficulty of life on the North American plains.

Various socialization practices have been used by all cultures to intentionally shape the consciousness of the members of the society. This takes place in modern society every minute of every day. Advertising is a good example of just such an overt practice. The only real difference is that most people don't think of this as an institutionalized socialization practice. Some form of social learning model, many times in the form of overt operant conditioning, is used in socializing children in all societies as well. People simply tend not to narrate the practices they use with the same rhetoric as does the academic behavior model.

Some insights which seem to be emerging are from the examination of such groups are first, the size of the group appears to make a difference with regard to feelings of intimacy and connection and second, that security is more associated with the group itself than it is with any sort of monetary or material system.

**A Simple Theoretical Model Supporting Psycho-Physical Programming**

This paper sought to examine some variables which may be of import relative to what

seems to be an increasing state of ennui in many members of our society. Recent research in evolutionary psychology suggests a mismatch between present social conditions and human psycho-physical well being. The general matrix of contemporary social life (especially as regards the cultural matrix associated with capitalistic market economy ) appears to be problematic for the optimal expression of psychological and physical well being for numerous individuals. One of the dilemmas this information presents is that changing institutions at the macro level is extremely difficult. However, individuals can begin to thoughtfully articulate micro level lifestyle changes so as to see if certain patterns of living are more fulfilling for them personally. A prolegomenon to a theory and certain parameters useful in experimentation with this theory are listed below.

Primary Premise: Humans are evolutionarily oriented to living in small primary groups. (Based on the work of Daniel Quinn [esp. his latest work, Beyond Civilization: Humanity's Next Great Adventure , and insights drawn from the discipline of sociology.)

Premise Two: Life in mass society is psycho-physiologically problematic for a large segment of the human population. (As a derivative of the primary premise and the Mismatch hypothesis [eg., see Science, Oct. 3. 1997; Garrette Hughs, "Mismatch and Pathology in Contemporary Life." presented at the Minnesota and Wisconsin sociological Association conference, Oct, 2000].)

Premise Three: Institutions (conventions or patterns for living) play a very significant role in creating feelings of personal fulfillment or ennui. (Grounded in the work of Robert Bellah et. al. [regarding the notion that humans live their lives through institutions] and sociology in general.)

Premise four: Institutions are human creations, not direct derivatives of instinctive or innate behavioral patterns and hence, can be changed to suit human needs.

Theorem 1: Institutions of mass society are causally related to psychophysiological problems such as ennui and these problems can be modified by reconfiguring institutions to reflect the evolutionary parameters humans were conditioned/shaped by.

Theorem 2: By reconfiguring our present living arrangements and familial institutions to more closely reflect our tribal (small primary groups) heritage, humans will function better psycho-physiologically.

**Experimental factors**

What factors should be dealt with in setting up experimental fictive kin group models?

Factor One: Size. For primary groups, social research seems to suggest that groups larger than ten present problems. Hence, ten or fewer adults would appear to be appropriate as Affinity Groups. What size is too small and can larger groups function as well?

Factor Two: Institutional form. How should these small groups organize themselves? Are

diads significant aspects of human well being? In other words, is monogamy a primal/natural characteristic of human relationships or is it more an artifact of larger institutional arrangements such as capitalism, as Frederick Engels, (The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State) and others have suggested?

Factor Two A: What role does economic arrangement play in these small fictive kin groups? (Edward Goldsmith asserts that "economic development causes our social as well as our physical environment to diverge from the optimum." [The Way , iii, 1998])

Factor Three: Physical form. The old adage that form follows function has been challenged recently. As with many associations, writers are now suggesting that this is a two way street. What impact does form have on human function. That is, what role does the design of the physical world (in this case housing) have on the psycho-physical well being of humans? What role can Bau-Biologie (Communities, #99, 1998) and Feng Shui play in creating more satisfying human relationships?

Factor Four: Ideology. How important is it for members of such small fictive kin groups to share values and perspectives? Is similarity or diversity better? How can we measure this?

We believe these to be experimental questions which can be examined by actually creating such groups and seeing if they work to ameliorate problems in living for those participating in them. A confounding factor might be that people making such a transition may suffer a form of culture shock for some time and thus the positive advantages might be obscured by the problems of readjustment.

**Other aspects relative to experimenting with living arrangements:**

Although size of the group is an important variable, how people relate to and align with each other is also important. The goal or reason for coming together is also probably important. The communality vs personal property conventions of the members may also be significant.

One way of conceptualizing a fictive kin group (FKG) would be to create a group that worked to optimize each members human potential. One might think of this as a human development group. The Bhuddist Sangha might also represent a goal for a FKG. This would be a group of people who supported each other in some process -- eg., following the Pagan path.

Commitment is an important aspect of any FKG and significantly, commitment would be to the FKG not to any person in particular in the group. Also, any progeny would be identified through the mother and her line.

The above represents some guidelines or questions proposed to help people think about taking control of their lives and constructing a more human oriented life.

**A Deeper Interogation of Some of the Components of the Theory and Narrative**

As was pointed out earlier, this statement is not intended to signify there is no facticity. We do believe that there is an order of being more fundamental than the human cultural world. For ex., we do hold to the facticity of the biological realm. The statement attributed to Descartes regarding the mind/matter relationship (I think therefore I am) holds in the cognitive/human realm but does not negate the facticity of the even more primary Universe as the ground of being. The prepotent process of physical evolution, which plays it self out in the context of the Universe, does have a facticity itself -- evolution is, even without the human mind to attend to it.

What this means is that there are bio-physical facts which are "real" and do need to be attended to . Human existence is a multiplex expression of various types of energy, each having properties of its own. Thus, there seems to be both a fundamental ground of being which is related to the unfolding physical universe and a process of being which is related to a psycho-cognitive social realm. When interogating human existence we need to look at both levels; the physically factual and the conceptually actual.

Another interesting point to raise is that if one pierces the hegemony of culture and begins to perceive the particular fundamental code which gives shape to the psycho-social realm as part of a deep cultural critique, the absolute nature of cultural depictions begins to fade. If an individual reaches a state of rejecting the core meaning properties of a socio-cultural system the manifest social expressions of that system will also be called into question. That is, if an individual (or individuals) identifies with the postmodern position of the relative nature of cultural knowledge and behavioral conventions, the potential for those expressions to dominate his/her narrative lose much of their power. If, further, these core expressions of meaning are seen as problematic for the human and more than human project, the active cultural critic may feel the rejection of said meaning patterns is necessary. A natural extrapolation of such a rejection of meaning patterns is the rejections of the conventions of the socio-cultural system itself as the artifacts of that meaning pattern.

The point of this monograph is to argue that after rejecting a particular cultural meaning system one is not, at that point, completely with mooring. If we are to create positive behavioral patterns for human systems we can look to the deep informing patterns of natural systems as well as many indigenous cultures. As was pointed out above, we believe there is a fundamental facticity to the bio-physical universe and examining/interogating the underlying patterns of the natural world and the human cultural patterns of primary peoples we can begin the process of formulating patterns of human expression which serve to create and maintain health and well being for all life systems.

Again, asserting the notion that there are multiple ways of living which will create positive outcomes, we believe that there is ample evidence to suggest that the core meaning system of contemporary societies which are founded upon the conventions of market economies is less than optimal regarding creating a system of life which nurtures health and well being in the human and more than human world.

Further, based on the belief that we can find ways which are in harmony with nature, we feel

that groups of people who set out to practice this process of "reading the scriptures" of Earth and learning from indigenous cultures can become important cultural pioneers. One of the teachings of nature is that diversity is a positive strategy in forming viable systems. Hence, we believe that there will be a variety of living arrangements which will work to serve humans and be less destructive of the natural order. As in nature, we will have to learn to be tolerant of the various ways humans devise to meet their needs.

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# The Kibbutz: Awakening from Utopia
**Daniel Gavron**

**Abstract**
The Israeli kibbutz movement has changed and adapted throughout the 90 years of its existence, but the past decade has seen much more radical changes. Following an economic breakdown affecting a majority of the kibbutzim, the values of cooperation and equality are being largely abandoned. Because there are significant differences in the responses of individual kibbutzim to the crisis, it was resolved to examine ten kibbutzim, illustrative of the different approaches being implemented.

Degania, the first kibbutz, is moving cautiously to change many features of its way of life. Givat Brenner, a large kibbutz is in the process of implementing a number of radical changes. Hasollelim has made a drastic break with egalitarianism, introducing a "normal" wage structure. Neve Yam, is currently administered by an appointed committee, after experiencing economic collapse. Hatzerim, a successful traditional kibbutz, has not made any basic changes, but the equally successful Maagan Michael has implemented a "virtual" revolution. Kfar Ruppin has adopted a capitalist structure, while retaining (for the time being) a relatively egalitarian life style. Ein Tzurim, a religious kibbutz, is not immune to the changes sweeping the kibbutz movement. Tamuz, an urban commune, and Samar in the far south, are two attempts, mainly by kibbutz-raised children, to improve the traditional kibbutz structure.
The conclusion is that, for the most part, today's kibbutz members no longer accept the egalitarian and communal ideals of the founding generation. While some communal forms will continue to exist, as they do in most modern societies, a strong, influential Kibbutz Movement will no longer be a central feature of Israeli society. That society developed as a uniquely cooperative enterprise, with a powerful communal movement at its core. In recent years, reflecting world trends, it has become less idealistic and more individualistic.
The kibbutz was the creation of a certain time and set of circumstances; it has not been able to survive the march of time and the concomitant changing conditions of its environment.
The story is told of two shoe salesmen who went to Africa at the beginning of the 20th century. The first, from England, arrived, looked around him, and sent a wire back to his English company that read:
"No one wearing shoes here. No prospects for business. Returning on the next boat."
Two weeks later, an American salesman arrived at the same location and drew his own conclusions.
"No one wearing shoes here," he cabled back. "Unlimited opportunities for business. Send out another dozen salesmen and get those machines running!"
I must confess that I felt a little like the English salesman, when I resolved to write a book about the changes in the kibbutzim over the past decade or so. Although it was a kibbutz member who originally suggested it, almost all my kibbutz friends told me I was mad to undertake such a project. The changes, they intimated, were too comprehensive, wide-ranging, various, and rapid.
"Which kibbutz will you write about?" they demanded to know. "And when? Yesterday, tomorrow, next week, next year? It's all changing all the time. Your book will be out of date before it is written—let alone published!"
One person, however, encouraged me unreservedly: ICSA's Executive Director, Professor

Yaacov Oved. Only Yaacov Oved behaved with the dynamism of the American salesman. He said:
"It's true that everything is changing rapidly: now is the time to write about it, while it's all happening. Go for it!"
I must pay tribute to Yaacov Oved, who gave me wonderful support and encouragement from the start. He deserves credit for whatever virtues my book has, but must not be blamed for its mistakes, nor does he bear any responsibility whatever for my conclusions—either those in the book, or for anything I say here today.
At the same time I want to thank the many kibbutz members, scholars and consultants, who (like him) gave me of their time, experience and knowledge. There may have been skepticism about the feasibility of my project, but, once I started, nobody held back. There has been no trace of academic or occupational jealousy, no sense whatever of "What are *you* doing in *our* territory?" Simply a strong motivation—I would almost say compulsion—to cooperate.
I must apologize if I go beyond my book here—and indeed beyond my abstract. I feel I want to carry matters forward a little bit. This is what journalists traditionally do.
Of course, this conference is for people living in communal societies, or for scholars of communal life, and I am neither. In a way, I'm here under false pretences, so I intend to make a virtue out of necessity and be presumptuous. In our country, we call it *hutzpah.*
I am saying that the kibbutz saga is over, and I'm going to argue that the kibbutz members - the kibbutzniks - were sometimes wrong in their methods of running their societies, and sometimes they were right. They had their successes and they also had their failures.
The Israeli kibbutz movement has suffered a brutal awakening, and most of the country's kibbutzim have been forced to cope with the hard reality of a free market capitalist society. The routes they are choosing are many and varied.
There are kibbutzim that have collapsed. In my sample, Neve Yam on the Mediterranean coast became insolvent. The bank to which they owed money and the kibbutz movement nominated a committee to run it. Neve Yam is no longer a kibbutz because it no longer runs itself. It is turning into an ordinary village. The members may still be partners in the relatively successful recreation branch, but I do not think there will be much trace of the original communal idea in a few more years.
There are those which have abandoned egalitarianism to a greater or lesser degree. My example is Hasollelim in Lower Galilee. Following a two-year-long process of intensive discussions, they totally restructured their social framework. Today the members receive wages, just as in every other sector of Israeli society. Some kibbutzim have introduced marginal wage differentials. Hasollelim went the whole hog, but there is still a fair amount of mutual assistance and social responsibility, with the children being looked after by the community through their army service and beyond.
There are kibbutzim which have taken out insurance policies, laying out what should happen, if the kibbutz breaks up. Maagan Michael, on the coast below Neve Yam has created a cooperative. Perhaps I should explain here that the kibbutz traditionally was *not* a cooperative. It was based totally on trust. A new member could join, and after a year's trial be accepted as an equal with the veterans in every way. This is now changed. At Maagan Michael, veterans — those with a minimum of thirty years' membership — have a hundred percent share in the kibbutz. Newcomers acquire their share at the rate of three and a third percent per annum. So far this is only on paper, leading some to dub Maagan Michael's enterprise as "a virtual cooperative." A member who played a leading part in working out the

new framework prefers the term, "divorce settlement." If there is a divorce — if the kibbutz decides to break up — the division of the spoils will be according to the percentage of shares of each member.

And then there is Kfar Ruppin, a veteran kibbutz of pioneers from Germany and Czechoslovakia in the Jordan valley. Kfar Ruppin has reconstituted itself (like Amana in the United States in the 1930s) as a capitalist enterprise in almost every sense of the word. The members own unequal numbers of shares, depending on their seniority, family size, and the amount of money they may have paid in from their wartime compensation money. These shares will, in five years from now, be tradable — although there are upper and lower limits on how many shares a member may own. When I visited Kfar Ruppin, I was reminded of the old anarchist joke about capitalism being the exploitation of man by man, and socialism being exactly the opposite. This was because, at that time, actual daily life of Kfar Ruppin and the social reality were almost unchanged. This is no longer so. Since my book was published, considerable wage differentials have been introduced there. Today it is difficult to call Kfar Ruppin a kibbutz.

There are a number of kibbutzim that remain traditional in every sense of the word. Hatzerim in the Negev desert is my example. Hatzerim, with its Netafim drip irrigatione industry that has a turn-over of a quarter of a billion dollars a year, is a success story. The cynics say that Hatzerim "can afford" socialism. There are also some smaller, idealistic communes of the sort that exist in most advanced countries.

If you want more details of the different paths being chosen by various kibbutzim, may I refer you to my book. However, since my book was published, I have spoken to a number of kibbutz audiences and to individual kibbutzniks. I have had some further thoughts, some of which I would like to share with you today.

1] The Kibbutz is finished — at least for now. In my view, the kibbutz was unique among communal societies in history in being a central pillar of a national society. Kibbutzniks were a small minority of the population of the Jewish community of Palestine up to 1948 and of the State of Israel thereafter, but they exercised an influence totally disproportionate to their number. They led the society, set its norms, personified its better self. Even when they became less central, they still exerted an enormous influence on the national psyche.

The existence of the few communal societies that will undoubtedly remain in Israel does not mean that the powerful, successful kibbutz movement, which was a central part of Israeli society, still exists.

2] The kibbutz’s greatest success was its adaptability. The fact that there was — in Martin Buber’s phrase — "no blueprint." This enabled it to adapt to changing conditions and survive as an egalitarian, communal, cooperative society for almost a century.

In the final instance, it was not *sufficiently* adaptable, which is why it is on the road to disappearing. I won’t say that the kibbutz "failed." A revolutionary experiment that succeeded for nearly a hundred years cannot be called a failure!

3] The kibbutz has — yet again — adapted, but this time it has adapted into something else. A kibbutz with unequal incomes, or shares that can be traded, is not a kibbutz.

4] In general terms, I think it may be said that the kibbutz is disappearing because of the influence exerted by the surrounding society. Developments in Israel, and the world at large, simply left it behind. As I write in my book, its centrality in society was its strength, but it also contained the seeds of its own destruction. If influenced society, but was — in its turn — influenced by it.

5] Despite this, one can still speculate where things went wrong, one can point to failures, which sometimes overwhelmed the successes. The outstanding failure was the failure to give the woman member anything like true fulfillment. The outstanding success was to convert what were basically youth camps at the outset into successful multigenerational societies. Kibbutz education has a mixed record, with notable success in a general way, but failure in its aspiration to pass on the values to the younger generations.

Here I will not attempt a list of all the successes and the failures, but my basic conclusion — my bottom line — is that the kibbutz tried for too much. The attempt to achieve absolute equality — from each according to his ability, to each according to his need — was doomed from the start.

Not only was it always impossible. It became increasingly impossible as time went on. As needs expanded, they became impossible to quantify or identify — let alone meet.

Moshe Berechman, a veteran member of Kibbutz Maagan Michael has suggested an alternative more fitting to the modern age: "From each according to his ability to each according to his *preferences*." With due appreciation to Moshe's intelligence, which to my mind is formidable, I think that even this is impossible to achieve.

In the 1930s, Enzo Sereni, one of the founders of Givat Brenner, another of "my" kibbutzim, suggested that the members be given equal sums of money and be free to do as they wished. This horrified the kibbutz purists, who felt that it was a betrayal of the ideal of equality according to *need.* Indeed it was. It was also common sense.

Around that time, a member was treated (free-of-charge) for toothache by a relative in town who was a dentist. A general meeting of Givat Brenner denounced this "inequality." Sereni, the pragmatist, demurred. "We do not need equality of toothache!" he declared at the meeting.

The kibbutzniks, in my view, should have taken this lesson to heart. They did not need equality of toothache — nor did they need pure equality at all. The principle of equality of need, which is very fine and very just, means that you have to decide how to determine need. In a small, family-sized commune, a consensus might be reached on this. In a larger community it necessitates a plethora of committees.

Henry Near has written that, even in its early years, Givat Brenner had twenty different committees! A quarter of the members served on one or more committees. There were committees for everything, from education and housing, to culture and smoking. In due course, this was the pattern in almost every kibbutz, with mostly negative results.

Over the years, the kibbutzim lost some of their most dynamic, talented, hard-working, and ambitious members. Some, no doubt, were simply unsuited to the life for various personal reasons, others were incapable of subordinating their talents to any communal society. But, in my view, quite a number felt suffocated — even strangled — by the huge number of committees with which they had to deal, if they wanted to get anything done.

This is very clear in Naama Sabar's study, "Kibbutz LA." Kibbutz children, living in Los Angeles—and doing very well there — described to her how they ran their army units effectively and efficiently, only to return to the kibbutz, and to find they needed to "elicit the approval of half a dozen committees if they wanted to sneeze."

I am not suggesting that a kibbutz — or any communal society — should be run like an army unit. God forbid! But these respondents also told Sabar how they ran their Los Angeles businesses with a freedom and efficiency unthinkable on a kibbutz. A little less interference in the individual's work might well have kept many more of these positive members in place, remaining in their kibbutzim.

What I am saying to members of communal societies is: "Lower your expectations, limit your ambitions, don't aspire to perfection, don't aim at the stars, but shoot for the moon first. A measure of equality, and a degree of cooperation is plenty to be getting on with."

I would like to end, if I may, on a personal note. More years ago than I care to admit, I was setting out from England, with my wife and young child, to live on a kibbutz in Israel. Among those taking leave of us, was my cousin Michel Treisman, then a young teacher of psychology at Oxford, today a leading scholar in the field of perception.

We explained to Dr Treisman, our fears of communal child rearing, our doubts as to whether we would be able to render up two-year-old Etan to the babies' house of the kibbutz.

"Why should you, then?" he inquired.

"What do you mean?" we asked him.

"Keep Etan at home."

"We can't do that!" we protested.

"Why not?" he demanded.

We shook our heads pityingly. Michel Treisman might be a brilliant psychologist, but he had no understanding of communal life!

In point of fact, we arrived at Kibbutz Amiad, and faced the anticipated crisis. The psychologist from the neighboring kibbutz advised us to keep the child at home for the time being. Our kibbutz comrades were tolerant and understanding to an impressive degree. They did not pressure us, and they allowed us to keep the child at home, without setting a time-limit.

But the system was the system. In the final analysis, either Etan had to live in the babies' house, or we had to leave. We left.

Today, looking back, I am convinced that my cousin was right. I have no quarrel with my comrades in Amiad, whose children, themselves raised in babies' houses, voted in due course to abolish them and bring the kids home to sleep with their parents.

I am not making the point that the baby house was a mistake — although I believe it was, and for at least a decade every kibbutz baby has slept at home. What I want to stress here is the concept of *flexibility*, the principle that, as far as possible, each member of a communal society should be free to determine his or her own lifestyle, where it doesn't clash with the basic values of equality and cooperation — and maybe even sometimes when it *does.*

That is the reason why I looked forward so eagerly to Dr Meltzer's address in the plenary this morning on the subject of cohousing. Possibly, a less ambitious, less demanding, more flexible attempt at living together, will leave more scope for the individual and make communal life more bearable.

I hope so, because, although I am convinced that the *kibbutz* search for utopia is over, the quest is not finished. I refuse to believe that cooperative living is "against human nature." If cooperation was really against human nature, as so many people triumphantly tell us today, humankind would never have survived the mammoth. In today's world, as in the stone age, I believe that cooperation is not merely an option. I am convinced that it is an imperative.

All communal experiments have taught us valuable lessons. The kibbutz has certainly been a marvelous laboratory for teaching human behavior. Now it is the turn of other forms of communal living to take up the torch relinquished by the kibbutz. The search for utopia will continue and it should continue. Possibly, though, the time has come to move more modestly and more cautiously.

# The Battle for Influence Between Communes and 'Gated' Communities: An Australian Perspective

## David Sprigg

### Introduction

Contemporary social construction of how we live in Australia is about adapting to a perplexing physical world of global forces. Diversity of 'citizenship' exists out of various emerging concepts of 'community' through the interaction of individuals to locate a functional lifestyle freedom relative to perceptions of ideals and values, together with resources associated with their respective social circumstance. Recently the geographer David Harvey determined: "Any project to revitalise utopianism needs to consider how and with what consequences it has worked as both a constructive and destructive force for change in our historical geography" (Harvey, 2000:159). This is a paper about conflicting influence to community development and spirit within the city of Melbourne, where one form of utopianism is at distinct odds with another. It is a battle of influence between utopias of neo-liberalism and communalism.

Melbourne inner and outer suburban development of housing estates continues at a very high rate to accommodate a growing population base, forcing renewed scrutiny over the issue of private and public 'space'. An extreme aspect of development under the guise of 'new urbanism' is the stealth-like increase in what has been termed "gated" or "fortress" communities (these terms will be explained in detail shortly). A further re-emerging in popularity among some young people is the collective arrangement of living with others in urban communal settings. These two forms of housing offer a stark contrast to each other in lifestyle approaches within the fluid social conditions of Victoria's capital city. They provide some insight as to the future social consequences of what is unravelling before our eyes in Melbourne.

The purpose here is to explore the social issues at stake by these opposing trends in urban lifestyle. This paper will begin briefly by charting the terrain of the 'battle-front' between communes and gated communities. This will be followed by an account of some gated communities as they exist in Melbourne, then in turn a reflection of metropolitan communes will be provided including a thumbnail sketch of two youth urban commune case study examples. The final section will demonstrate that the urban commune is a fringe alternative to mainstream community with a civic consciousness that new urbanism development in particular has much to learn from. The argument presented here is that the gated/fortress community by nature has far-reaching social implications, and is worthy of protest and pressure for change to re-set the Australian civil society model.

### Poles of influence over space

As individuals, personalised location in relation to the society around us is an important concept of self-identity. This became evident to some ‘Melburnians’ early in adult life during the counter-culture events of the 1960s-1970s that included those involved in communal life experimentations. The term ‘space’ became a popular term to express identity and physical location of the ‘self’ in relation to the world about. (It is more than likely that many of us who flirted with the hippie lifestyle of that period may have been considered by the more ‘straight’ or conservative elements of this particular generation as being "lost in space"). It is interesting that such a term re-emerges in a more formal account of sociological reflections over recent years. The term ‘space’ – alongside such terms as ‘spatiality’, ‘time’ and ‘temporal’ – are frequently used expressions for the new sociological considerations of deciphering ‘modernity’ by significant writers such as Anthony Giddens (1991, 1998), David Harvey (2000), Manuel Castells (1997), and Alberto Melucci (1996). Time and space reorganisation is escalating by new global dimensions of consumerism and capital accumulation aided by advances in communication technology. Globalisation, reminds Giddens, "concerns the intersection of presence and absence, the interlacing of social events and social relations ‘at distance’ with local contextualities" (1991:21). The local context point of space for the individual in a maze of dominant cultural aspirations for capital accumulation and consumerism exudes lifestyle variations according to social characteristics and circumstance. What then becomes a point of interest is the identity of the ‘self’ for individuals and their social networks in this space condition who, for whatever reasons, are not engaging the full potential of the dominant culture.

Communes and gated communities fall outside the housing forms generally found within dominant culture settings as a conscious lifestyle choice by the respective inhabitants. Each of these micro-communities is in a relationship with space that deviates from that of their broader neighbourhood. The contrast between the two forms of lifestyle settings sharpens the focus on what is a social identity demarcation within the current Australian community.

Of course, communes in Australia are not new. There has been a rich tradition of communal experimentation during most of its post-white settlement history, and some excellent accounts of this can be found in the works produced by writers such as Bill Metcalf (1995), Peter Cock (1974, 1979, 1995) and Margaret Munro-Clarke (1986). Talking with Melbourne people associated with contemporary urban communes, it appears that currently there is resurgence in urban-based communal living, particularly among young people. More than just shared accommodation arrangements with a group of young people, this ‘new wave’ of communal living comes with ‘intention’ through a range of pooled resources and lifestyle structures under the same roof, similar in many ways to that of the 1970s.

‘Gated’ or ‘fortress’ communities, on the other hand, are a relatively new concept in Australia, and just as there are various forms of communes, likewise there are similar variations in aspects of this ‘new urbanism’ phenomenon. For the purpose of this paper the term ‘gated’ is preferred as a more appropriate term overall, rather than ‘fortress’, to describe a range of these new urbanite intentional communities. As the term implies, gates form a feature of these new communities in the perimeter structures enclosing space containing exclusive urban development. In the United States there are in some cases urban community estates with added security measures of ribbon wire to produce a ‘fortress’ appearance. It is

understood no such measures exist at this point in time in Australia.

**The Australian gated community phenomenon**

Gated communities as such have coincided with the exuberance of the bubble economy since the 1980s. Modelled on developments elsewhere, particularly in the United States, these new communities cater for those concerned with security protection and separatism from the surrounding environment – a form of exclusiveness for those with a penchant for such lifestyle that requires higher than average economic wealth ratios to sustain. Appearing in the late 1980s first on the Gold Coast of Queensland (the 'Florida/California' region of Australia) reportedly through a development known as Sanctuary Cove, similar ventures in Melbourne began to take shape in the late 1990s (Gibson, 2000).

The housing clusters, or enclaves, with their compound-like fences and gateways filter access to their inner-sanctified neighbourhoods. Some extremes of gated communities can take the form of resort-style estates consisting of streets and waterways with an array of security devices and guard personnel for 'protection' purposes. Some have exclusive facilities such as 'designer' 18-link golf courses, tennis clubs, gymnasiums and the like. Smaller scale versions take the form of estate developments akin to town houses but with added shielded private street-scaped areas designed to keep the unwanted out of a privatised public space. Some of the smaller scaled versions can appear almost camouflaged against the surrounds by their appearance, such as one of several recently investigated for the purpose of this paper in a Melbourne inner-city suburb which features an underground car park for some 70 vehicles. Whatever the scale, they are designed to provide private space beyond those to be found in a block of flats and town houses; they are estates with restricted access.

Gated community developments have attracted some concern and criticism for what they represent in urban development. From American standpoints of condemnation they have caught the eye of urban commentators such as Mike Davis (1990), Edward Blakely and Mary Gail Snyder (1995), and David Harvey (2000). Indeed, Harvey refers to the formation of the urban gated communities and suburban "privatopias" as where the "rich form ghettos of affluence (their 'bourgeois utopias') and undermine concepts of citizenship, social belonging, and mutual support" (2000:148-150). However, it appears in Australia there is little on offer in scrutinised commentary apart from certain newspaper articles and isolated voices of dissent towards the gated phenomenon. At least two federal politicians, the Australian Labor Party's Duncan Kerr and Graham West, have raised concern about the relatively unchecked nature of these developments. Also, certain criminologists have publicly raised concerns for the gated community models on the grounds of potential negative social consequences. One such criminologist based in Canberra, Professor David Biles (who also has a Masters degree in sociology) was reported in a television program as believing that "these fortress estates are havens for neurotics". When I spoke to Biles earlier this year he said the term 'neurotics' was perhaps a bit stronger than he had intended to convey, nevertheless, he did feel that the over-emphasis on security and separation from mainstream community could impact significantly upon public resources for policing and other community services. Similarly, questions are being asked about broader social ramifications in academia. An RMIT University urban planning specialist, associate professor Michael Buxton, was recently reported to have argued

that: "cities will only become safer if houses face the street and people interact with the street, all these sorts of developments do is privatise public space" (Szego, 2000). Gated communities are seen by some to demonstrate wealth orientated anti-social tendencies towards mainstream community.

Of course, gated communities are indeed ‘communities’ composed of residents involved in modes of cooperation for mutual support and entertainment. The people who share the lifestyles offered by these estates have social extension possibilities between themselves, not unlike one would find in a range of specific dwelling types such as student housing clusters, military accommodation areas, elderly retirement villages, the usual suburban and country town areas, and so forth. Apart from recreational facilities that provide communal engagement between the gated-community inhabitants, accessible committees and forums deal with maintenance and other day-to-day upkeep issues. In their own way they may provide a positive sense of community to their residents.

The main objection with gated communities is the separation they represent as an elite community sector, and the consequences this may have overall on society. The level of congeniality and tolerance to be found within the notion of ‘community spirit’ is considered to be at risk by the exclusivity of gated communities. One recent *Sydney Morning Herald* newspaper report rightly noted the gated community to be about estates of specific lifestyle and not about social diversity (Allenby, 2001). From a traditional Australian feeling towards egalitarianism about itself, it would be reasonable to assume that this situation would grate with some sectors of the population. Such a cherished value – regardless of whether the egalitarian notion may be a myth or not – appears to be under threat by an ostentatious social form of elitism. With the ever increasing wealth gap developing between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’, the gated community amplifies a growing social divide of inequality and reinforces the notion of power disparity.

**The commune revisitation and case studies**

There has been a resurgence of youth communes in the Melbourne area over recent years, and their popularity appears to be increasing. Such intentional communities were of course popular in the early 1970s, where noted Australian ‘elder’ of communes Peter Cock observed that there were "about 30 of these" in and around Melbourne (1974:635). By all accounts from those involved in the local commune movement approached for this investigation, this figure could possibly be matched currently after what appears to have been a popularity decline in youth communes throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

The two case studies chosen for this paper, although both loosely falling under the umbrella of ‘youth communes’ are indeed very different forms in comparison with each other. The first of these I shall refer to as the ‘Bowling-Green Group’, as it is a collective of young people who have taken occupancy of a former lawn bowls club. The second case study shall be referred to as the ‘Warehouse Group’, as the young people in this commune have converted a former warehouse-come arts-studio into a shared living space. While both the Bowling-Green group and the Warehouse group have many similarities, the main differences lie in the day-to-day activities, structure and sense of purpose within them.

The Bowling-Green group is generally anarchistic in outlook and has approximately 10 young people as a core group, with a further ‘floating’ population of at times up to 30 others who regularly come and go daily. There are no children directly involved in this commune. There is a celebration of freedom in self-expression to be found within the group, and among their numbers are student dropouts, budding performing and visual artists, and others living on supplementary welfare support. (Very much like many hippie communes of the of the seventies, except earrings and studs have replaced flowers and beads as accessories.) By their unconventional and somewhat sporadic lifestyle, these young people are sometimes referred to as ‘feral’ in relation to mainstream community by ‘outsiders’, although they themselves do not necessarily share this description as being appropriate because of the relative settled nature of their lifestyle in a fixed accommodation setting compared with more nomadic young people.

Established in early 2000, a small core group happened to locate the abandoned bowling-green property available for rental through a real estate agent. At the time this former community facility had been sold to private hands for commercial development. The new owner was happy to rent the property to a group of young people on a temporary measure until a more developed proposal for commercial development took shape. The young tenants then modelled aspects of their shared living space on an operation that began approximately 5 years earlier also alternatively utilising a former lawn bowls facility in another Melbourne suburb. Unlike their ‘older sibling’ model, a shorter life for this operation of a former lawn bowls facility is anticipated by the tenants as the lease on the property will probably not be renewed come this November to enable the owners to begin their commercial development program. Nevertheless, the extensive land area that once featured manicured lawns set at ‘billiard table level’ in flatness for several bowling rinks has been transferred partly into organic garden beds and composting sites. The large clubhouse building once featuring change rooms, a bar and extensive dining room area has been transformed into a cohabitation complex of personal and common living quarters.

In the relatively short life span of this commune, a major shift has occurred in the focus of the group. When first established, the group of young people were reasonably entrepreneurial in setting up a business venture on site. The bar was re-opened with a liquor licence, and the huge dining area with its polished timber floors devoid of tables and chairs was transformed into a youth culture music venue. A stronger political awareness eventually supplanted the original lackadaisical lifestyle approach of the group, and the entrepreneurial side of operations shifted accordingly. The ‘freeloading’ actions of associates and other visitors became tolerated less than previously. They now regard themselves as having a political and creative focus with, as one of the commune folk referred to, "strong ethics environmentally and socially". The bar licence has not been renewed since it last lapsed. Performing and visual art activities are still conducted as money raising ventures, but the core difference now through the transformation of membership has been away from solely personal income generation by these activities towards fund raising for a range of benefits, including environmental projects and protest movements.

The lifestyle aspirations of the group are simply to live on a shared basis with limited rules so

that they may "be self-motivated and to be really respectful to each other without setting limitations on each other". It was only earlier this year that a roster system for general kitchen and maintenance chores was introduced, but in the main ‘good-will’ and mutual respect is seen to be the over-arching principle that binds the group.

The group members are pro-active on a number of levels individually and collectively in regard to the social extensions of their existence. Non-passive associations with activist organizations such as Friends of the Earth (FOE), and Autonomous Web of Liberation (AWOL) are a focus. (The latter organization assisting protest mobilisation under banners such as S11 and M1 in Melbourne during the past 12 months to bring attention to perceptions of world trade implications on the environment and disparity in standards of living.)

The group consciously engages with the broader community through a number of activities. Apart from the various performances and market days open to the general public, they also use their composting activities as a medium to interact more closely with the immediate surrounding community. Regular visits are made to local shopkeepers – particularly those running restaurants, cafes, hairdressers and pubs – to collect food scraps and other composting materials for their garden. Through this cash free service the Bowling-Green group have not only built a mutual service rapport with local traders, but also have generated interest from the local community generally into their activities. Notices attached to the former lawn bowls building and perimeter fence, together with leaflet drops throughout the local neighbourhood are also mediums used by the group to promote their activities. Conscious that the surrounding community population base is largely an older generation by comparison to themselves, the Bowling-Green members attempt to reassure the community that they are not a group of "rat-bags" posing potential risk of harm or disturbance to the broader community.

It was in March 1999 that the Warehouse Group was established, and their sense of purpose is well defined. Four young adults formed the group with the claimed purpose "to take a few more steps away from the ‘system’, but in a sustainable way". It is now a group of 7 people including one child under 2 years old, sharing a specific set of guiding principles. Unlike the Bowling-Green group, these beliefs have been documented and are referenced accordingly at weekly meetings. Initially they had a 13-page document that spelt out a general code of operation, which has since been refined to 3 pages. They have regular contact with a commune mentor figure in Glen Ochre of Commonground fame to aid them with aspects of visionary evolution of their group. To this end, the Warehouse people are indeed very intentional in their outlook, and proclaim themselves through leaflets and other means as being "an inner-city, high-density, permaculture-based intentional community practising non-violence and consensus".

The Warehouse people consciously promote sharing, while engaging as individuals in economic support activities ranging from professional occupations to supplementary parenting allowance from the state. Between the members they have a combined motor vehicle pool of 2 cars available on loan to others outside their commune, as an endeavour to both minimise fuel orientated personal costs and impact on the environment. Parenting is an issue

for the one child permanently in their midst, and another 6-year old with half-shared arrangements for parent access, has the parents as prime care providers with the other adult members of the commune providing supplementary parenting functions. They are particularly discerning about which foods they eat and which household products they use for sanitary and cleaning purposes in accord with environmental considerations. One mealtime each week is accompanied by the group meeting as the main medium for members to maintain a fluid contact with each other. These meetings can cover a range of issues from basic housekeeping affairs to attention on formulating specific projects by their membership base.

Like the Bowling-Green commune, the Warehouse group also actively embrace promotion of their commune and lifestyle to the broader community. Indeed, one of their members has the role of being specifically responsible for their public relations. Apart from dealing with newspaper and journal coverage, the members also avail themselves to conduct workshops on a ‘fee according to capacity to pay’ service in conflict resolution and mediation to the broader community. They combine with other like-minded households in their neighbourhood for shared arrangements in obtaining food produce (either purchased or self-grown), and other collective purchasing power activities. Fences have been removed that once separated the warehouse property from bordering properties on a consensual basis with their neighbours to consolidate common access; an indication of the influence and acceptance that has evolved by their presence.

**The lines of battle**

Sense of community is altering in Australia as disparity in prosperity lurches further into unevenness amongst its people. It is a nation, instilled in the resounding echo of the former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s "there is no alternative" adjustment to the new power bases engaging global economic focus, rightly condemned by Harvey (2000) and others. In turn, it seems that active citizenship participation is losing the zeal of democracy, as the nation-state struggles with the socio-economic forces evolving from the technologically inclined broadening international economy. A widening gap in the share of national wealth is just one symptom of the problem generated by these developments. Ulrich Beck (19920 points to the inequality of ‘risk burden’ between the situations of individuals in a society, where for those experiencing relative poverty are greatly exposed to risk factors in lifestyle as opposed to those with wealth. Given that this is an apparent growing pressure in our society, as persistent unacceptable unemployment levels and precarious income circumstances among the unskilled testify, national civility between and within individualisation of lifestyles, if not social classes, is likely to be tested in the near future.

The gated community developments suggest somewhat symbolically the change in the nature of the Australian society today as a ‘risk’ nation in full flight. They do this by the very two prime functions the structures of gates and fences are designed to do; firstly, they provide a sense of security for those who decide to live in such settings; and secondly, they provide an expansive form of privacy arrangements with exclusive ‘public’ space. This in turn indicates two clear issues. The first being that in some quarters there is a sense of unresolved vulnerability about security within the community, resulting in stronger measures than ever taken before in matters of personal protection. The second issue is the consolidation of one

social group identity outwardly demonstrating less tolerance to others. This form of separation of 'them' and 'us' is an indication that the once celebrated egalitarianism belief by the Australian people themselves has definitely slipped into mythology.

Contemporary gated communities are not a new idea generally, as mediaeval fortresses and 'white' compounds in apartheid South Africa have demonstrated, and they are not the only forms of physical social separation of their type in Australia today. Ecologically focussed cooperatives, for example, demonstrate a clustered housing model where tendencies can lean to a secluded conditioned lifestyle. There is one ecological village in the central region of Victoria, consisting of 11 shareholdings, where one of the originators of the development has even contemplated a guardhouse construction at the entrance to this isolated rural housing collective. (At this point in time the guardhouse has not been constructed). The only difference this rural 'ecological-development' has over the urban gated-development, apart from the obvious geographical location circumstances, is the scope afforded to their idealistic isolationist utopianism. The ecological village in this instance has a self-sufficient outlook capitalising on resources within the confines of their location across a secluded 128-hectare valley blessed in natural splendour seemingly far away from a lifestyle of urban materialism. On the other hand, the 'urban gated utopias' are totems of a shaped economic existence that reflects both individualism and materialism separate from their surrounds. It remains to be seen whether or not the ecological village will succumb to the same forces influential to the ideals of their urban separatist cousins.

'Fear' is gripping the social construct of the modern society, and it is more than a fear of inevitable change that inflicts most ageing members of society attempting to come to terms with alterations to their physicality and familiarity of lifestyle habits. For an Australian national radio program Edward Blakely noted that there are three levels of fear about community aspirations to be found; the first relates to a diminishing neighbourhood relativity of lifestyle expectation, the second is related to a change in the 'neighbourhood complexion' of race, and the third is personal injury. According to Blakely, lifestyle interests embracing materialism is the critical reason behind popularity of the gated community, where the identity of 'self' is competitively relative with the aspiring neighbourhood. An orchestrated elitism coping with fear in a new era of urbanised enclaves.

The difference between the Bowling-Green and Warehouse commune examples referred to here and the gated community models offers a contrast in the coming to terms with the evolving Australian society. While the 'Bowling-Green' and the 'Warehouse' folk function in separate ways with each other, it is the distinct interacting links with their respective neighbourhoods that is the prominent common feature. This situation is at odds with the gated community model with the exclusive zoned private/public space that markedly separates their inhabitants of individual households from the surrounding neighbourhood. The commune households have their own means of countering excesses in consumerism and managing the 'small footprint' notion of their impact on the worldly environment, which visibly contrasts with the constructed opulent environment of the gated community. Living in segregation from others is not uncommon, but the elite symbolism represented by gated community structures as a product of inequality, conjures a characteristic of civil society that deserves scrutiny.

The way one is able to function and relate to others provides a measure in the status of ethical citizenship. The fluidity in personal engagement with the world demonstrated by the members of the commune examples is an active citizenship function of sharing, tolerance and goodwill. It is an act of being a ‘deep citizen’, which Paul Barry Clarke relates as a participation of consciousness where "the identity of self and the identity of others is co-related and co-creative; while also opening up the possibility of both engagement in and enchantment with the world" (1996:6). The lead taken in broader community networking by the ‘Bowling-Green’ and the ‘Warehouse’ communes does set an example of active open citizenship that is seemingly being surrendered within the perimeters of modern neighbourhood movements such as those demonstrated by gated communities.

Where and how we live are important matters of consciousness, however, the time and space afforded for certain citizenship demonstration models is not necessarily responsive for broader social betterment. Harvey considers for example, that the gated communities of Baltimore have much in common with aspects of the ecological movement in regard to space ownership (see 2000:238-9). He believes that these "privatopias" exclude the opportunity to break from a system that they attempt to remove themselves; indeed, they only serve to sustain the faults over-arching the society they belong to (2000:239). There comes a point where re-defined truths and realities occur through abstract dimensions in time and space by such separatism that fails mainstream community. Social actualisation potential is impeded by the lack of direct active citizenship engagement. Justifications for depressive aspects of civil life such as wealth inequality distortions are by-passed through such conditions. It is an example of the *reflexive* condition of modernisation alluded to by Ulrich Beck (1992:19).

There is much the nation states like Australia can learn from the models provided in communal life from the two case studies referred to here. Apart from the necessary developed levels of communication that are required between members to maintain a deep functional experience of sharing their lives with each other, they also demonstrate a collective ‘spirit of community’ of a type which is a desirable weave to the fabric of society. The practice of sharing the nurturing and survival ends of existence beyond the confines of the nuclear family has all but disappeared in the modern information technology age. The lifestyle has been promoted to the Australian government before, as Jocelyn Pixley in her important work *Citizenship and Employment* relates, where during the early 1980s the Hawke Government momentarily entertained active communal experience based on an idea seeded previously during the Whitlam Government era of the mid-1970s (1993:125-163). The emphasis then was towards confronting unusually high levels of unemployment at that time, particularly among young people. The emphasis this time worthy of contemplation by governments is the depth of active community engagement that happens between members of communes such as those referred here – a more than useful tool in fostering positive community spirit for social actualisation in a global sphere.

## Conclusion

Aspects of the commune movement have a character about them that are worth reminding governments about in urban planning matters. The openness of the youth urban commune in

the pro-active engagement with their respective neighbourhoods is a model in itself for deep citizen relations, now at risk of falling away in other areas of community. This is an important consideration in setting about to correct a goodly part of the detrimental impact inequality presents through social separatism. In the long run, social cohesion will depend on it.

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## 1.10 Communal Sustainability

# Obstacles to creating new neighbourhood communities' in the UK

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This short paper puts forward the view that opportunities for new neigh6ourhood-based communities in the UK are marginalized by the centralized structures governing community and housing strategies and the use of state finances. Professionals have increasingly monopolized resources for building and property development, either through an adherence to a market -led property philosophy or to a centralised bureaucratic one. This has resulted in housing and property schemes being biased towards Top-down' planning frameworks, with little appreciation of how to support the real dynamics of emerging communities at a neighborhood level.
Keen interest does exist for creating new `international communities; particularly where these could create a mixture of property for sale and property for rent. Many community groups are struggling, however, from a lack of the community development skills needed to organise themselves and to challenge the prevailing statutory and strategic frameworks, and from an inexperience in working collectively towards common goals. Where there has been recent development of some innovative Cohousing or ecological communities these have resulted principally from selective application of private enterprise limited to those households having sufficient private funds to join as project members. The paper suggests ways to foster a more sustainable `development dynamic' for aspiring community groups and argues that a new vision is required within which proposals for new intentional communities could be promoted, if they are to compete realistically for the resources necessary for property or community development. In this way, opportunities can be harnessed to incorporate real communal developments within modern urban 'masterplans' and other mainstream housing settlements.

### Introduction

The UK has a well-defined history of creating new communities and innovative neighborhood environments over the past 150 years. The 19"' Century saw a number of substantial housing developments by pioneering house-building co-operatives to fund and build properties for their members and families. That century also saw the founding of other socialist and 'utopian' communities with egalitarian and 'non-exploitative' lifestyles, plus the philanthropic town-planning of visionary Victorian industrialists that has left such enduring suburban designs across the many townscapes that expanded in response to industrial growth. Such urban planning was also a clear herald of the 'Garden Cities' movement of the early 20"' Century that came to influence a wide range of urban and suburban residential developments [cf. Coates (2001)]. The success of this momentum led in no small part to the later massive development of state-funded 'council housing' in towns and villages throughout the UK. It also nurtured the construction of the 'New Towns' program to provide new urban and suburban identities in which to accommodate, and at times resettle, the nation's sprawling population.

Explicit in the 'utopian' and socialist aspirations of the 19~"~ and early 20~'Centuries communities, [cf. Hardy (2001 )], and implicit in some of the modern initiatives, has been a desire to share local environments and neighborhoods, beyond merely living on the same street or in the same building. It is almost a cliché nowadays to refer to the 1960s and 1970s, and its reaction against the overt state regulation of housing resources, as a period that stands out for the substantial growth in the number of 'communes' and other egalitarian 'squatters' groups [see Neville (1974)]. Less evident is the perennial interest in all kinds of 'collective' living arrangements from a constant number of new communities and communal groups, and documented by the various directories of UK 'communal living' groups and organizations [see Alternative Communities (1980); Diggers & Dreamers (1999)]. Besides the bodies quoted in the most recent Directory, there are a host of other unlisted groups interested in forming new Cohousing communities or creating new housing co-operatives, or already in existence and just quietly carrying on with their day-to-day affairs. Indeed the Editors of 'Diggers & Dreamers' have always made clear that their knowledge of groups and their aspirations is unlikely ever to be a complete national record of all the 'communally' minded bodies in the UK.

On the one hand, therefore,. an argument could be made that there is a clear tradition of UK groups establishing various, 'intentional' communal initiatives and through which they have shaped homes and neighborhoods. Even the irony that the early building co-operatives have metamorphosed into the national and international banking concerns of the modem day 'building societies' should not detract from accepting the historical success of the 'self-help' neighborhood and its clear appeal for those looking for collective solutions to common needs. On the other hand, however, it could also be argued that the overall background context in which such individual self-help examples have achieved their local success has been one in which major house building initiatives have been increasingly dominated by an overall centralist emphasis in government planning and regulation. Indeed, the extent of the State's management of land development and house building, and the way this has been influenced by late-20'" Century 'market forces', has now turned what we innocently label as 'housing' into a pseudonym for a sprawling, multi-faceted industry with complex bureaucracies and far-reaching financial effects. The extent to which this 'industry' now services the design, development and provision of new housing at the start of the 21s'Century may seem understandable within a 'market-oriented' modern European economy - `housing' is focused in large part upon the production of the accommodation units needed to satisfy habitation needs. A significant part of the national economy is geared towards stimulating demand for such units and satisfying the consumption of them. By its centralised nature, however, this explicit focus upon the production and distribution of housing units is making the 'communal' scenario increasingly difficult to achieve. The prevailing conditions of a market geared to supply pre-formed solutions offer declining opportunities for people to shape their own local housing provisions.

It will be argued below that the nature of this extensive regulatory and market-oriented process has created significant constraints for aspiring 'intentional communities' in the UK. The relative 'monopolisation' of resources by 'mainstream' interests will be held to lack appropriate responses for `sustainable' communal lifestyles, although it does have impact on the required 'skills base' of groups seeking collective arrangements. It will be suggested that such groups need to look within mainstream approaches to urban growth and new

neighbourhoods for the opportunities to promote alternative 'community' options as a viable residential design.

**The' monopolisation'' of house building resources.**

The opportunities that in reality determine what options are open to groups seeking to establish new 'communities' are intimately entwined with the general opportunities that exist for securing the necessary resources to make any residential development a success -namely land, buildings, finances, and people. Of these it is particularly the first three that are bound up with the manner in which 'housing' has become an 'industry', dominated by professional disciplines and other `interest groups', and regulated by statutory institutions. The result is that 'housing' is now both an activity carried out by, and a commodity provided by, a wide range of public and private sector bodies on behalf of others, and almost entirely removed from notions of people providing for themselves. The extent of this 'industrial' process needs to be set out in more detail.

There is an intricate policy background in the UK, increasingly dictated by central government, that prescribes the numbers of new dwellings it is believed will be necessary to house the nation's population in a coming period. This policy framework tends to work on ten-year projections, and very formal requirements for the numbers of new units of accommodation are set for each region and sub-region of the UK. These formal requirements then become the key context for regional bodies to prepare Regional Plans (and sub-regional Plans) that must secure the allocation of sufficient land for the housing development within the Local Plans prepared by local authorities. Other formal governmental 'codes of guidance' demand that a suitably diverse range of dwellings will be provided to meet a range of local needs, and that these needs are appropriately identified via appropriate local research and formal 'assessments'. This whole prescriptive approach is then the basis used to confirm what sorts of housing development will be appropriate for different urban and rural areas - and particularly what size of settlements, or designs for house sizes, or mixture of tenures and households.

The actual permission for new house building remains in the hands of local authorities. It is however an area of modern political life that has witnessed a dramatic shift from what was once the position earlier in the previous century. Where local authorities were once significant housebuilders in their own right, they have been reduced in the current day to being part of the mechanism that regulates how other bodies provide the new properties required to satisfy the national policy. Most of this delivery and almost all of the house building is nowadays the domain of the private sector, and this has adopted basic market-led property philosophies for its assessment of any risk and profits associated with property development. Admittedly there are plenty of 'development partnerships' that emerge in order to try and make influential and binding links between the interests of the public sector with those of the private, and thereby shape as much of new development as possible to suit the needs of a local area. It could be argued, however, that the 'political economy' of the established status quo has put the private sector firmly in the key role of deciding what it is prepared to do, and what it is not prepared to do. The prevailing belief within contemporary UK society that private ownership of property is something to which all people should aspire, reinforces the

acceptance that it should be the private sector that steers the production of that commodity. It is therefore no surprise that it is the private sector that is also most informed or aware about land and property that becomes available as sites for future development. Similarly it is the private sector that seems so often best-placed to spend some resources (especially finances) in order to compete for the acquisition of more.

It should be made clear at this point that there are still some public subsidies available for house building. This will by necessity, however, involve close adherence to the national policies and guidelines of key national bodies like the Housing Corporation and other local Housing Associations that have an explicit responsibility 'to protect public investment'. This has led to the creation of a further set of national arid regional policies, with regional 'themes' and values, all applied to dictate the range and scope of subsidies towards new housing provision. Such policies are also instrumental in setting the overall tone for the determination of what housing needs may be 'outstanding', and what should be the focus of public resources in the future. In particular quite prescriptive guidelines are laid down for the amount of funds available for different sorts and sizes of accommodation, and for what sort of provision is considered appropriate for different sizes of households. For example, it is currently extremely difficult for a single-person household to be able to obtain any self-contained dwelling provided through a public house building subsidy that is bigger than a `single-bedroom' sized dwelling (i.e. by definition, a flat). Yet if intentional community' groups are to make some appeal for state-funded subsidy towards the cost of some or all of their plans, it is precisely to this detailed regulatory system that they will need to address their claim. In effect the will need to claim that the 'system' and its regulators should consider their plans above other examples or instances of local 'need'.

While such 'public' bodies have a major control over the practical policies for the use of such 'public' grant, there is actually little 'public' opportunity to steer, amend or change those policies. There is a cursory opportunity for comments on each yearly set of formal plans and proposals, which is in theory open to responses from any individual. In practice, comment is returned almost exclusively through the established channels of organisations connecting with other organisations, and steering their responses through well-established systems within and between trade and professional bodies. And the established organisations are certainly aware that loud rejection of government plans could result in subtle reduction of the opportunities to secure grant finance for further housing development - which for most housing bodies that operate in the subsidised housing sector would spell disaster! In practice, there is no real public ownership of any vision behind the policies for the use of public funds, nor of the targets of intentions to which such funds will be applied. Neither is there any genuine public ownership of a vision for how new residential areas could or should be created, nor the values new housing developments could not reflect, nor for what support could be directed to the establishment of a range of local communities. Even where there have been some innovative developments of a more 'collective' neighbourhood nature over the years - such as for new housing 'co-operatives' or 'selfbuild' organisations - the prevailing statutory frameworks have sucked their momentum into rigid and bureaucratic procedures through which subsequent applicants will be required to proceed. This now includes the requirement that the bureaucrats have a deciding influence on who is classified as 'in need' and able to join such new communal developments, and who may not.

It is no exaggeration to state that professionals and professional bodies so dominate the ways in which land and house building resources are planned and utilised that they force the pattern of future policies. Even where political strategies are being developed as a response to some of this pattern there is no certainty that the end result will be any significant change in housing for community-based interests. A recent central government policy has stated that where housing developments are to be of a size over 25 dwellings, then 30% of them should be provided as 'affordable housing' units - i.e. for sale or rent at below-market level prices. The rationale is supposed to be that this will help more 'sustainable' communities emerge from a mixture of tenures in the same neighbourhood. In practice there are constant attempts by and challenges from housing developers in the private sector to try and avoid this obligation. This is often by exploiting the pressures on local authorities to agree to new housing without such a mix of tenure by the threat from the developers of abandoning their plans for any development whatsoever. Elsewhere, other group-living schemes are being rejected because of some perceived unsuitability for the area in which they would develop -local authorities have not supported recent low-income low-impact schemes, even though they have been able to demonstrate plenty of other local support for their aspirations. This has not been any simple refusal to accept the ecological principles of such schemes - other ecological schemes in the private sector have been successfully piloted during the same period. Rather it has been an example of the 'top-down' planning frameworks rejecting spontaneous community aspirations that the statutory planners have not been able to assimilate within their own views of what they consider acceptable - i.e. sufficiently orthodox.

**Understanding community 'sustainability'**

It is therefore ironic that there has been a development of national policy within recent years to stress that the goal of national planning and housing guidance ought to be geared towards the establishment of 'sustainable communities'. It is not easy to determine on what basis any real appreciation of what constitutes a 'community' is being made - let alone a 'sustainable' one. Consultative documents from central government like the 1997 discussion paper "Planning for the Communities of the Future" highlighted ideas for people-centred strategies within local initiatives, however it failed to include a single mention of ideas for communities or neighbourhoods of an 'intentional' nature. Rather it has seemed to hope that 'new' communities will spontaneously come together and acquire a longevity and vibrancy of their own simply through people being provided with decent housing, transport, schooling, and employment opportunities in their locality. The focus of most current support for 'communities, is moreover not based upon the creation of new communities or neighbourhoods - it is towards addressing disadvantaged and deprived areas, such as the population of poorer inner city areas, or bleak housing estates on the edge of large towns and cities. That is, towards helping existing communities knit together by invigorating local democracy and creating a more durable social 'cohesion' - whatever the understanding of this 'social cohesion' might be. What does not seem present in any of this policy development is a readiness or understanding for supporting the dynamics 'of emerging communities at a neighbourhood level, especially in new areas of residential development.

In general, ideas for what constitutes 'sustainability' in a community rarely seem to look in much detail at the interpersonal dynamics between a neighborhood’s residents, or their

collective local control and self-determination. Other conclusions are usually made in terms of environmental and ecological issues, or in terms of energy uses - or even of the 'mixed housing tenures' in suburban areas. and 'high density' and `mixed-use development' for city centres. Current 'champions' of urban design even point to the blandness and uniformity of much modern housing development being due to a lack of suitable combination of their aspirations for higher urban density with other 'community-centred' designs. They seem to fail to understand that it is as likely to be the scale of built development that will become an obstruction to the development of vibrant and connected communities, as it is any poor design quality in itself. The larger the residential development, so the greater the potential anonymity of and distances between the people trying to create new identities in their new surroundings.

The usual consideration of the concept of 'community' invoked to project household composition and housing demand across the nation predominantly conceives of 'communities' at the scale of hundreds or even thousands of households together. To this one-dimensional view of 'community' ought to be add an understanding of the identity of communities at the level of actual 'neighbourhoods', one that is based upon a practical understanding of 'communities' at a more intimate, interpersonal scale. This would more properly reflect the scale of successful 'intentional communities', such as communes, or the collective Cohousing neighbourhoods of Europe and North America. In other words, smaller-scale, more intimate neighbourhood settings, with designs and characteristics that stem from a very close involvement of the households that come to live in each locality, and with local facilities that the area's residents are instrumental in creating for themselves.

**Developing the 'skills base' of communal groups**

As if the above monopolisation of resources by the established institutions was not enough in itself, groups looking to establish new communal neighbourhoods in the UK are faced with other shortcomings. These are bound up with an increasing impoverishment within general society of any real awareness or skills for 'community development'. Participation in 'public life' seems to be on a continual decrease, even where that participation has been no more than >lo vote in municipal or national elections. There is substantial lack of awareness of political decision-making structures at all levels - local, regional and national. This is compounded by a lack of experience in taking part in groups or partnerships that might wish to challenge the impact of those structures upon local life.

In order to gain the most out of what abilities a group may already have, they will need to adopt a `business-minded' approach to their 'community' goal. Easier written than done in the case of groups with no background in collective endeavors, however tasks that will help the group progress their community project need to be clearly defined, along with recognizing the value of adopting 'project management' techniques in order to attain them. Groups need also to recognize the value of pragmatism, and there will be times for taking practical decisions, even if they were not a group's most desired options, to help move their project forward. Too many UK projects use up significant energies on rudimentary issues, like debating the kind of legal identity they should adopt, and then allow their momentum to stall for lack of agreement on what identity to choose, or in which geographical direction they should seek a site they

might occupy. Paradoxically, for the level of community activists in the UK has never been huge, there is plenty of community-based experience about how to shape their own organisation and conduct is available that groups can tap into. Some of the most relevant advice does not even need to be the most recent [cf. Eno & Treanor (1982)]. It does sometimes seem, however, as if new groups with no history of collaboration with other bodies encourage themselves to feel that they must approach their problems as if no one has ever solved them before. They do not learn enough from what has gone before them. Groups will therefore need to challenge their own attitudes about their relative expertise and inexpertise, and be ready to challenge members on their commitment to the group's stated intentions, in order to secure a solid momentum for achieving the common project. Achieving and maintaining a credible momentum is all-important, both to sustain the commitment and belief of would-be members and for any formal or professional partners with whom a group may liaise. If a group's endeavors appear to be fading away it will be likely to lose existing members, and unlikely to attract new ones. The maintenance of such credibility does, however, itself represent a demand on a group to take itself seriously and to have the clear-sighted attitudes to promote its plan and its project in a thorough and efficient manner. This may come through finding professional support and engaging the formal services of suitable agents. Care must still be taken, however, that such contractual partnerships do not turn out to be dominated by the attitudes of `expertise' on the part of the professionals or professional bodies - the majority of whom may not be that experienced or sensitive in working with the communal or the unorthodox! Groups will need to recognize the danger to them of neglecting to properly manage their 'project managers'. They must therefore be assiduous in developing the skills and the attitude to do this increasingly confidently and effectively. It will be not be helpful for groups to simply assume that any formal 'partners' will do the best for them out of a sense of altruism, although this can be a common response from people unused to engaging agents to work on their projects.

And for the majority of groups that have managed to get their collective heads around such internal organizational issues, there can be perhaps the biggest decision of all - namely what kind of development is possible, and what range of issues or problems will that decision set into motion? If a group seeks to create its community just through its own resources, will those be sufficient to compete for the acquisition of land or buildings in which to build? For groups without sufficient private finances, the intention to seek some state subsidy to cover at least part of the total economics of their scheme's development will set demands in motion of a different sort of competition.

A number of current UK groups are in this last position, seeking to combine private resources with an appeal for some state funds, in order to develop cross-tenure communities with a mixture of properties that could house those first members who have already come forward. Such a collective endeavor could still include opportunities for 'ownership', even opportunities for individual investment in properties. It is just that this could also be in the context of jointly owning and managing an entire neighbourhood area and its facilities, rather than being a focus only upon each individual household, in perpetual exclusion of any consideration of what might also be in one's neighbours' interests. At least that is what they offer elsewhere. It may be an unconscious indication of the minimal experience of group - membership in the UK noted above, and a subsequent lack in group 'negotiation skills', to hear

one group's debate on whether a household putting its own money into an 'intentional neighbourhood' property ought to have more say (votes) in the running of that neighbourhood than a household than only pays a rent!

Even where some groups have had private resources to pay for a project on its final development, it has not usually been sufficient in itself to secure all the means by which a new community can be established. Three examples in recent, years of Cohousing and ecologically self-sufficient neighbourhoods have all gained from access to sources of entrepreneurial support or loan finance that will not be as available to the groups coming after them. It is no wonder that for some groups the choice is made to acquire and share a single larger building - although it may be that the overall lack of space will inevitably represent a very big restriction on people's long-term interest in living in and sharing just the one building.

**Promoting the viability of the 'community' option**

In addition to the concerns raised above, a further point needs to be made on how the mentality of the housing and planning professions' 'status quo' interferes with the possibilities for 'community-minded' groups to develop their ideas. Namely the degree of professional complacency that exists in maintaining the established procedures for identifying housing and community 'needs' and arranging house production in terms of what 'individuals' need - individual housing solutions for individual households. Even if those households occupy property in a new development alongside other households, the prevailing approach is to plan and provide for the accommodation of so many separate and distinct households. The consequence of this established view on how to plan for new housing and neighbourhood development is that ideas for significantly different neighbourhood development are seen as unorthodox - such as deliberately providing for communal groups - and are on the receiving end of enormous scepticism. Ideas for 'group living' schemes are usually met with the response from professionals that "people do not really want to be part of groups" and are not likely to be very successful at it, because modem social engagement has placed 'privacy' and 'separateness' above other interactions. Ideas for group schemes are therefore bound to fragment and fall apart - although the holders of such views are rarely aware of the real level of local interest in group ideas from local people, not least because the formal plans and policies are not obliged to investigate that interest. The extent of cynicism that groups encounter can routinely extend to accusations of self-interest and bias, that they are competing for scarce local resources (such as public subsidy or a prized site). The role of the `professional' regulators of the use of state resources has in fact become one of being 'gatekeepers' of access to those resources. It is standard to hear within professional discussions the anxiety that the arbitrators of public resources should not encourage ideas for future developments when they cannot see how those ideas can be satisfied - the stock approach is that 'we should not raise expectations'. It is no surprise that the consequence of this is actually to depress general expectations that local housing and community provision could ever be that different from the established orthodoxy of the present.

Community groups obviously need to challenge such professional pessimism with a clear promotion of the kinds of community successes that do exist, and the sound reasons for such success. Where any doubts are voiced that collective living schemes will not last, examples of

inspiring and sound 'blueprints' of community developments (such as styles of Cohousing), should be used to challenge the naivete of the orthodox view and to promote the profile of 'intentional communities' in general. There are, moreover, many modern 'buzz-points' on which such promotion could now be hung. Successful neighbourhood communities can demonstrate that they offer social stability and a sense of local permanence; mutual support between households; opportunities to mix households of more than one tenure; and all kinds of vibrant neighbourhood management.

For supporters of 'intentional community' aspirations, existing formal policy-making mechanisms need to be exploited to insert support for 'collective' principles that could generate opportunities for championing local interests, if and when those interests emerge. Ideas and support for new communities could feature within planning, design, and housing frameworks in order to raise the profile of how such communal projects might establish themselves and compete for resources or support. Suggestions have already come forward [cf. Fiekl (2001 )] in terms of how to start the insertion of such values into a range of national and local policies to encourage a greater identification of such interests. There is much that a sympathetic 'policy infrastructure' could do to encourage groups to believe they would receive support to shape future neighbourhood developments.

The above promotion of 'collective living' by groups and their supporters would be significantly assisted to foster this 'development dynamic' through the following consid~ations:

(a) There is a significant potential for a range of different kinds of neighbourhoods to be included within the large 'masterplanning' designs for new urban and suburban residential developments and new settlements being developed in many parts of the UK. For such extensive planning exercises, it would be straightforward to include other ideas for 'sustainable neighbourhoods' within their overall developments - in fact some of the design plans may already have been drawn up in the hope that a more eventual development could lead to that outcome! Proposals based upon clear principles of 'intentional' neighbourhoods could then shape the evolution of different 'shared' neighbourhoods within the larger urban/suburban development areas. This could foster a patchwork of discrete neighbourhood settings, with a range of different shared spaces and facilities shaped by the preferences of self-identified groups of households.

(b) The national policy that requires a percentage of 'affordable' dwellings to be created within new housing areas should be seized as a lever by groups keen on acquiring land for a new 'intentional community'. Groups could offer themselves as an existent source of interest in such property (i.e. as customers!), providing they would have the opportunity to help shape it into a more collective nature. This could go a long way to allaying the anxieties of private developers that the application of this policy in practice will only result in having to house households who will have no real interest or commitment in the long-term well-being of that new neighbourhood.

(c) The benefits and successes of 'intentional neighbourhoods' should be promoted as an inclusion within the UK government's "Quality of Life" standards being put forward as

research indicators for evaluating 'sustainable development'. Examples of 'collective' or 'intentional' neighbourhoods should be explicitly detailed as descriptions of what 'sustainability' can represent at the inter-personal, grassroots level of actual neighbourhoods.

**Final comments**

It will be interesting to see what measures will be used to evaluate the success or impact of the current UK government policy to create a new "Urban Renaissance". There is a real risk that the blandness of many modem housing estates or residential areas will continue to create the polarisation of affluent households from those with less resources or smaller incomes, unless more communally-minded households are encouraged to contribute to the birth of ideas for new neighbourhoods. Those already drawn to the prospect of investing their time and energy into creating a supportive and shared neighbourhood environment could thereby be directly involved in seeing that at least an element of modem residential development will be a departure from the 'community sterility' of the recent past.
Policies to weave the opportunities for such 'intentional neighbourhoods' within the development of wider residential and urban developments need not involve great difficulty or cost, and it is quite feasible to weave many of them into a coherent 'policy infrastructure' that can harness the modem 'enabling' functions of statutory authorities. It will, however, be beholden upon aspiring 'intentional community' groups to review the skills required to adopt a more business-like approach to their endeavors, and be firm in their search for the most suitable partners to help them achieve their goals. This may require a degree of compromise that was previously held to be unpalatable, however this need not be a one-way issue.
`Intentional community' groups have a great deal to offer modem urban and planning policies - namely the prospect of a very real shortcut to the creation of the 'sustainable' community those very policies are hoping could emerge from new residential developments. For that reason alone, such groups ought to take the prospect of a role in delivering the neighbourhoods of the future very seriously indeed.

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**APPENDIX A.**
UK definitions of key English terms
**Affordable Housing** :accommodation that is for sale or rent at prices deliberately lower than those at the level of the 'open' private market.
**Building Society**: a lending institution that provides funds to buy or improve property.
**Cohousing Community** : a shared neighbourhood, where each household has a self contained property, but all share other communal facilities
**Commune :** term given to a wide variety of shared living arrangements for a group of people that is usually greater than 3 in number.
**Housing Association** : an organisation regulated by central government that provides low cost and subsidised accommodation for households 'in need'

**Housing Co-operative :** an organisation regulated by central government that provides low cost and subsidised accommodation for its own members.

**Low-impact** :building development carried out on explicit ecological principles to minimise the adverse impact on the local environment.

**Local Authority :** the democratically elected body that governs a local area (town city. County) and controls public services. (Also known as 'Councils').

**Tenure :**the different legal ways people may inhabit property - for example as owners, or renters, or part-owners, or leaseholders, etc.

**APPENDIX B.**

Select chronological bibliography to `collective living' in late-20'" Century UK
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# Does Communal Living Save Energy?

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Communal living - varying from the small urban commune to the large rural community- has been put forward as an important component of sustainable development (Meltzer 1998; Metcalf 2000). The rationale behind it being that the shared use of facilities will result in a lower per capita use of energy and resources. This claim is backed up by surveys (dating from the 1970s and 1980s) that show that per capita energy use by people living communally is lower that the national average (Corr & MacLeod 1972; Trainer 1984; deGryse 1985).

However, these studies do not correct for income effects. People living in the survey communities were generally young adults and/or students with below average income. Thus it is not surprising that they had below average consumption, as it has been well demonstrated from surveys of household energy consumption that energy and resource use is closely linked to income (Noorman and Uiterkamp 1998).

This paper aims to test the hypothesis that communal living saves energy, i.e. that corrected for income people living in communal situations have lower per capita energy consumption than those living ordinarily. Or alternatively that those living communally spend a smaller % of their income on energy services. It does this using a pilot study of the energy use and income by members of the Redfield Community in England and compares the results with those of conventional UK households.

## Defining energy use

Surveys of the energy use by Dutch household (Noorman and Uiterkamp 1998) indicate that less than half of individual energy use is in the form direct energy purchases (electricity, gas, petrol), with the rest being in the energy content of goods and services purchased. It also shows that there are definite economies of scale with increasing household size, which results in lower energy and material use per capita. Thus it may be expected that, corrected for income, communal dwellings do have a lower per capita heating energy use. However this saving may be offset by the ownership of 'luxury' energy services, like swimming pools, saunas, hot tubs etc which their communal living makes economically feasible.

One area where energy use may be higher is in travel. The 1970s surveys indicate a highly mobile population with a high (%) expenditure on travel for recreation, social and 'political' causes. Also many communal establishments are situated in rural areas, with poor public transport facilities, necessitating the use of private transport, generally cars. Although car sharing should be a key feature of communal life, early indications reveal that it has not been successful, due to the difficulty in co-ordinating school, work and leisure trips in our society which requires flexible lifestyle patterns.

Thus rural communal life may require a far higher energy use for travel, due to its isolation

than conventional life in urban areas. Furthermore communal living means being part of a large social network, with ample opportunities for national and international travel.

Is the energy saving 'cultural' rather than 'physical

One hypothesis I would like to put forward is that communal living acts as a brake on individualist material aspirations, and the communal ethos makes its inhabitants voluntarily accept a lower income, which (indirectly) reduces their energy consumption. Thus communal living is an income reducing, rather than an energy reducing, arrangement. Thus I expect overall for people living communally to have a lower than average income; they are prepared to sacrifice income for social benefits. However it could be argued that they live communally because they have a below average income, and that the only way to achieve a better 'standard of living' is through shared facilities; they are prepared to sacrifice individual benefits (autonomy, privacy etc) for income.

If communal living is income reducing then it can be a means of energy conservation, that is voluntarily reducing energy consumption through foregoing income or practising 'voluntary simplicity' or 'downsizing'. As such it can then be considered as a solution to sustainable development, based on the idea of 'limits to growth'.

**Redfield Community**

The Redfield Community is set in one of the most prosperous areas of England. Although their average (per capita) income is just 20% below the UK average, by comparison their ‘standard of living’ or material consumption is far below that of their neighbours and work colleagues. Their community of about 20 people inhabits a late 19th century country house, with a floor area of about 2000 m2, set in extensive grounds.

This old and large building is difficult to heat. Gas central heating provides background heating which is supplemented by wood stoves and electric heaters in people’s rooms. This results in a much higher per capita (domestic) energy use, but only a slightly higher cost per person. This is because Redfield is able to exploit its ‘economy of scale’ to purchase electricity and gas at a much cheaper rate than most UK households. It is also able to purchase wood locally very cheaply. Table 1 below compares the energy use and cost of (domestic) energy at Redfield compared to UK people with similar incomes (Quintile 4 from the UK Family Expenditure Survey 1998-99)

**Table 1: Redfield v Average Per Capita Domestic Energy Use**

Energy Cost, £/ week

| | Redfield | Quintile 4 | Diff |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gas | £ 1.92 | £ 2.16 | -11% |
| Elect | £ 3.60 | £ 2.58 | 40% |
| Other | £ 0.12 | £ 0.33 | -62% |
| **TOTAL** | £ 5.65 | £ 5.07 | 11% |

Energy Use MJ/ week

| | Redfield | Quintile 4 | Diff |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gas | 629 | 486 | 30% |
| Elect | 201 | 129 | 56% |
| Other | 132 | 91 | 45% |
| **TOTAL** | 962 | 705 | 36% |

Source: Redfield consumption data, 1998; Family Expenditure Survey 199-99.

Inhabitants of Redfield each have about 90 square metres of floorspace, over twice the UK average, so while energy use per capita is over a third higher than average, energy use per unit of floor area is only half the UK average. Large rooms and low indoor temperatures are traded for small rooms with high temperatures.

Transport Use

Only 6 of the 15 adults at Redfield own a car. As a result there is much car sharing and use of public transport: the bus to local towns and the train or coach to nearby large cities, like London or Birmingham. Also more significantly, only 3 adults went by plane in the last year. Table 2 below compares the energy use and cost of transport at Redfield compared to UK people with similar incomes (Quintile 4 from the UK Family Expenditure Survey 1997/1999).

**Table 2: Redfield v Average Per Capita Transport Energy Use**

| Energy Cost, £/ week | | | | Energy Use MJ/ week | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Redfield | Quintile 4 | Diff | | Redfield | Quintile 4 | Diff |
| Petrol | £ 3.31 | £ 3.71 | -11% | Petrol | 164 | 184 | -11% |
| Train | £ 1.36 | £ 0.19 | 627% | Train | 22 | 3 | 654% |
| Bus | £ 0.51 | £ 0.56 | -10% | Bus | 13 | 12 | 10% |
| Air | £ 0.54 | £ 1.08 | -50% | Air | 62 | 125 | -50% |
| **Total** | £ 5.71 | £ 5.54 | 3% | **Total** | 261 | 324 | -19% |

Petrol and bus use is about average; train use much higher due to commuting and leisure trips to cities, while air use is about half the average. While total transport energy use is 20% lower than average, total cost is average due to the high cost (per kilometre) of train travel compared to air travel. People at Redfield, unlike their UK neighbours, do not take their annual holiday overseas but prefer to visit other communities, friends and relatives within Britain. Avoiding air travel leads to large energy savings.

Total Energy use

About 9% of income at Redfield is spent on energy, very typical of people with that level of income. However total use is about 20% higher, due to domestic energy use being a third higher (caused by living in a very large house). Furthermore there is the energy content of the goods and services one purchases, and this is found to be closely linked to income levels- the more you earn the more you purchase and hence the greater your energy consumption.

The calculation of the energy content of goods, like food, housing, appliances, and clothes, and of services like recreation, education and health is very difficult but has been attempted for the Netherlands. In their book '*Green Households*' Klaus Noorman and Ton Uiterkamp estimate that for the average household the energy content of goods and services purchased is slightly more than the energy use purchased directly (for gas, electricity, petrol). Also that total energy consumption of non-energy purchases is strongly correlated to income, and that the energy content per £ purchased does not vary significantly between different types of expenditure.

Assuming that UK expenditure patterns are similar to the Netherlands (and using a suitable exchange rate) it is possible to estimate the energy consumption in the purchase of goods and services in the UK. Table 3 shows estimated energy consumption per capita for Redfield, and for average UK and Netherlands households.

**Table 3: Redfield v Average UK and Dutch Household Per Capita Energy Use, GJ per Year**

| | Redfield | UK | Netherlands |
|---|---|---|---|
| Petrol | 9 | 14 | 9 |
| Heating | 40 | 30 | 25 |
| Electricity | 10 | 7 | 11 |
| Energy | 59 | 51 | 45 |
| Non-energy | 42 | 54 | 50 |
| TOTAL | 101 | 105 | 95 |

Source: Noorman, & Uiterkamp, 1998, Table 3.1 for 2.45 person per household in the Netherlands.

Thus for Redfield, their below average incomes lead to lower energy consumption for non-energy purchases than the UK average. This goes some way to compensate for their higher consumption in energy purchases. This is the reverse situation of Dutch households, where low energy purchases, due to low heating use (and perhaps small houses), is overcome by higher incomes and consequent higher non-energy purchases.

**Comparison with other Communes Studies**

The only other surveys of energy use in communes were in the USA in the 1970s by Corr & MacLeod, and in Australia in 1980s by deGryse (1985). The survey for the USA was for a group of urban communes in Minneapolis in the USA, the high values for heating indicate their severe winters while high petrol use indicates the high fuel consumption (low km per litre) of US cars at that time. The survey for Australia was for a remote rural community, where a mild climate leads to low heating use. Also most of the heating was by wood collected by 4 wheel drive vehicles – hence perhaps the high petrol use. Interestingly the values for public transport (train/bus and air) are very similar to Redfield.

**Table 4: Comparing Communes: USA, Australia, UK**

| | Energy Use GJ/capita/ year | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | USA 1970s | Australia 1980s | Redfield 1990s |
| Heating | 51 | 20 | 40 |
| Electricity | 9 | 2 | 10 |
| Petrol | 40 | 16 | 9 |
| Train/bus | | 1 | 2 |
| Air | | 2 | 3 |
| **TOTAL** | 101 | 41 | 64 |

The energy use figures for the USA and Australia communes are far lower than the average for

their country, at least a third lower. This difference has been used to point out the energy saving advantages of communal living (Metcalf 2000). However without knowing the income or other characteristics of these communities it is impossible to assert that they are any different from other households having similar incomes (like pensioners) or living in similar locations. Communal living may be of no significance.

**Environmental impact of communal living**

Communal living, through the sharing of resources, is widely believed to be a way to reduce ones environmental impact upon the Earth. This lessened impact is frequently a stated goal of communities and to be achieved through energy efficiency, recycling and use of renewable fuels. In a questionnaire I gave to members at Redfield I asked about the merits of communal living as a means to reduce environmental impact in society. The comments fell into three categories:
1. Physical: sharing facilities leads to less environmental impact and lower costs.
2. Social: there is less social competition to consume.
3. Political: doubting the feasibility of continued economic growth and reduced environmental impact.

Under the first category – what might be termed the 'economies of scale' argument- sharing reduces costs and need for individual possessions. One Redfield member said:
*It reduces material consumption because we cook together, using very little processed food and saving energy. We share one kitchen, one washing machine, films on video etc. We try to produce as much of our own food as possible. We can share tools and other equipment (lawn mower, chain saw) etc. We circulate unwanted clothing etc. We can skillshare - so we're more likely to 'fix' something than go out and buy new.*
The benefits here are clear and straightforward, but its impact on consumption is not clear-cut. Sharing does not necessarily lead to lower consumption. In fact shared facilities make possible access to expensive (and energy intensive) resources that the individual could not hope to attain such as swimming pools, saunas, hot tubs, cars, holiday homes etc.

Under the second category, the social impact of communal living, one Redfield member said:
*Communal living is more satisfying leading to a reduction in the need for 'toys' to keep up morale in a conventional 9-5 situation.*
*The 'keeping up with the Jones' needs are also reduced as 'the Jones are communards' in the same situation as me. There is an ethos of negative snobbery - the less my second hand bargain clothes cost, the more people think that I'm smart (kind of thing!). I can tailor my earnings to meet my lower costs*

This social influence not to consume, and hence be content on a lower income, does have an important environmental impact. For impact is definitely linked to income – it is almost impossible to be a rich 'green consumer'. In a materialist society it is socially difficult not to consume unless one is a hermit, but communes provides the possibility to be islands of non-consumption. As another remarked:
*There is reduced peer pressure to spend money compared to life outside Redfield. Socializing and leisure costs are greatly reduced. The general ethos at Redfield is to reduce our*

*environmental impact as much as possible and this is contagious - we also learn from each other.*

This educational or political role of communal living is explored in the third theme: the lack of awareness of most people about the link between consumption and environmental impact. As one Redfield member commented:
*. You mention material consumption = environmental impact as though most people agree with it, but of course they don't. All political parties want increased material consumption and environmental protection, and are trying to fool us into thinking we can have both.*
While another said:
*. it is an interesting discussion/question that has far reaching implications for the wider society in general. I don't think economic growth and improved or lessened environmental impact can actually co-exist- one is the cause and the other poverty subsidies wealth.*

**Economic Growth v Environmental damage**

This question of whether we can have continued economic growth without more environmental damage is at the heart of the environmental debate since the 1960s. It was first highlighted in the mid 1960s by Herman Daly (1991), and received worldwide attention in the 'limits to growth' debate in the early 1970s. Some say it has been resolved through the possibility of 'dematerialization', that is economic growth without material consumption using vastly increased resource efficiency and a shift to a service economy. These ideas have received extensive publicity and government support, through such books as 'Factor 4' and 'Natural Capitalism'.

However I have argued elsewhere that improvements in resource efficiency alone will not lead to reduced material consumption (Herring 2000). What is needed is an ethos of conservation – living with less – rather than of consuming more through higher efficiency (Sachs 1988, Herring 2001). Andy Rudin, a US energy manager and moralist argues passionately for energy conservation to be considered a noble goal and on his website (Rudin 1999) explicitly makes the moral case:
*.if we want to protect the environment, we have to emphasize conservation and restraint, not improved energy efficiency and consumption. This is a moral issue, not an economic one.... Conservation is heroic because it implies discipline, sacrifice, caring for common interests.... We should use less energy because it is the right action, not just because someone pays us to do so.*

Laurie Michaelis, currently an Oxford researcher into the ethics of consumption, believes that we should aim to develop ideals of the good life that can be achieved without excessive material consumption. He concludes this is *likely to require a cultural change..deciding collectively how the good life should look, and to modify our behaviour accordingly.*

**Conclusion**

Communal living in that it promotes a culture of conservation is an essential part of *how the good life should look.* To do this they have to be moral, not economic communities. Sharing

facilities is not enough: this is just consumption through (economic) efficiency. Although co-housing based on environmental and energy efficient design is desirable and becoming increasingly popular (Meltzer 1998), it is not sufficient. What is needed is a moral vision and a practical demonstration about a voluntarily chosen low consumption lifestyle.

This goal of 'voluntary simplicity' has been the teaching of all religious leaders, but is hard to sustain in a materialistic society. Communal living, as did monastic communities in past ages, offers a refuge from competitive consumption. As Bill Metcalf (2000) remarks.. for *any community to be sustainable it must endure as a social unit while dramatically reducing its environmental impact. Unfortunately, those communal groups on the increase are the very ones with the least potential for environmental saving.*
*That is the dilemma facing sustainable communal into the 21st century.*

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# 1.11 Arcosanti and Communal Living

# The Architecture of Communal Living: Lessons from Arcosanti in Arizona

Arcosanti: East Crescent under construction, 1999 Cosanti Foundation

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Paolo Soleri's arcology model (architecture + ecology) addresses issues of sustainability by advocating living in a balanced relationship between urban morphology and performance within dense, integrated and compact structures. Within these structures material recycling, waste reduction and the use of renewable energy sources are adopted as part of a sustainable strategy aimed at reducing the flow of resources and energy through the urban system.

Today, as governments, eager to deliver major environmental improvements, press on with as yet untried and largely untested 'centrist' policies of urban living, there is a need to research relevant models of the 'compact city' approach. Issues involved with the intensification in the use of space, higher residential densities, centralisation, compactness, the integration of land uses and aspects of self-containment need to be examined. Over the last ten years, as the criteria of sustainability have become more widely accepted and understood, the relevance of the Soleri's urban model has become clearer.

Arcosanti, begun in 1970, offers a laboratory for testing the validity of Soleri's ideas. This paper examines arcology and Arcosanti within the context of sustainability. Since the energy crisis of the mid 1970s, efforts at Arcosanti have been directed toward the definition and testing of various architectural effects on a community-wide scale that could offer a response to many of today's environmental problems.

But progress is painstakingly slow. Lacking the level of funding and resources that would enable it to be convincing, Arcosanti now represents not so much a specific prototypal solution, but an activist-engaged strategy that advocates the possibility of building our dreams and visions. In a world plagued by so many problems and so few alternatives, it nevertheless continues to offer a beacon of hope on the threshold of a new millennium.

### A new urban setting

Located around seventy miles north of Phoenix, in the central Arizona desert , *Arcosanti,* a

unique laboratory devoted to testing a new ecological alternative to the modern city, has been developing slowly over the last 30 years. Arcosanti is a working prototype for a new kind of city, one that is being designed, built, and inhabited as a three-dimensional, highly concentrated urban structure.[67] A permanent experiment in urban intensity, directed by architect and visionary Paolo Soleri, when complete it will house an environmentally benign 'learning/doing' community of five to six thousand people on only fifteen acres of land. Set on the edge of a mesa above the Agua Fria River, in the middle of an 860-acre nature preserve containing orchards, agricultural fields, canyons and high desert hills, the compact structures of Arcosanti, face towards the sun to gather its energy. When complete they'll stretch no more than quarter of a mile on any one side, but will rise to as much as thirty stories tall. Inside the structures will contain the economic, cultural, and social infrastructure normally scattered around a modern city, while providing residents up to two thousand square feet of living space per family. A series of orchards will line the north side of the structure, creating a unique fusion of urban and agricultural environments. Outside there will be expansive views of another three thousand acres leased from Arizona State, to be kept as undeveloped open space. An integral part of the design will be five to seven acres of south facing sloping greenhouses, an 'energy apron' acting as a central system for producing food and collecting energy to support the prototype town.

Since 1970 Soleri has used Arcosanti to rethink modern urban planning. Rather than accept the logic of two-dimensional cities, and what he sees as the inherent wastefulness of suburban sprawl, he has developed a laboratory to explore the idea of "urban implosion" - wherein the city infrastructure contracts and intensifies in order to become more efficient, ecological, and sustainable. Soleri believes that cities can be designed in such a way that the vitality of urban life can be increased, without destroying the surrounding environment that sustains the habitat. The *arcology* concept, from which Arcosanti derives, prohibits the motor car from the city and instead advocates the widespread use of pedestrian walkways, lifts, escalators, and moving platforms. Because of the compact nature of the urban structure, most journeys by foot would take about fifteen to twenty minutes (about the same time as it takes typically to walk from inside a shopping mall to the outskirts of the car park in cities like Phoenix and Los Angeles). The 'controlled implosion' at Arcosanti would stabilise the community at around 350 people per acre – ten times the population density of New York City.

Arcosanti, now listed on the state map of Arizona, is officially a small town. As such it is faced with the challenges of daily existence but, at the same time, its aim is fixed firmly on the future. By trying to anticipate it and moreover attempting to plan for it, Arcosanti strives to keep the road to the future open, while recognising that paradise here on earth can only ever be an imaginary condition. With each passing year Phoenix is creeping ever closer to Arcosanti. It is conceivable that, in the not-too-distant future Arcosanti will simply be another of its suburbs.

Today the vast majority of us now live in cities. And around the world, as these cities reach unprecedented sizes, their increasing social and environmental problems need to be addressed if we are to avoid catastrophe. The formless urbanity of megalopoly that sprawls out across endless landscapes of development, devouring energy and resources and

67 See Paolo Soleri, *Arcosanti: An Urban Laboratory?* (Avant Books and the Cosanti Foundation, San Diego, CA, 1983)

destroying people and land in its wake, is eroding the ideal of the traditional city. The process has, according to Bookchin (1980), already turned the notion of city planning into a myth.[68] And yet we are at a critical point in the history of human settlement. The built environment does not work. It consumes and pollutes too much. In our age of globalised economies and culture, the overlapping challenges of environmental decline, technological revolution and population explosion require that we look upon the built environment in new and different ways. Our new age demands a new urban setting.

### Models of sustainable urban development

The term *sustainable development* has been used since the Cocoyoc seminar (1974) to catalyse debate concerning the relationship between economic growth and the natural-resource base on which it depends. The widespread interest in theories, ethics, and practice concerning sustainability indicates an increasing concern about the adverse impacts that conventional models of development have had on the environment, in both the developed and undeveloped parts of the world. Today, as environmental problems have been brought more sharply into focus (particularly urban environmental problems) sustainable development is being described as a fundamental goal and the term is being used to suggest how, on both the local and global scales, the lessons of ecology can be applied to economic progress. By suggesting that environmental protection and continuing economic growth can be seen as mutually compatible, it attempts to displace the 'limits to growth' argument.[69]

Although the concept of sustainable development has been criticised as being too vague and contradictory[70] it has, in recent years begun to achieve political priority status. As more people are willing to accept that, in large part, the environmental crisis is caused by the way our cities are designed and built, governments across the globe are demanding a planned response to urban environmental problems. Such a response needs to be based on solid theoretical foundations as well as hard technical evidence. There is a general recognition that if we are to hand on a decent living environment to future generations, we need now to assemble radically different collective thought processes that are able and willing to engage in discussions about possible alternative futures within a rapidly urbanising world.

And yet there seems to be a real dearth of new ideas about the future of society. Those big ideological differences of the kind that inspired the grand urban 'metanarratives' of planners like Ebenezer Howard *(Garden Cities of Tomorrow),* Le Corbusier *(La Ville Radieuse)* and Frank Lloyd Wright *(Broadacre City)* don't seem to exist any more. The obvious question thus arises; who will create an environmentally sustainable society?

Within the academic and policy literature emerging around the notion of the 'sustainable cities', a number of different models have been developed which represent radically different

68 Bookchin, M. *Toward an Ecological Society* (Black Rose Books, Montreal & New York, 1980), p. 135

69 See Meadows, D. H. *et al*, *The Limits to Growth* (Earth Island, London, 1974) and Meadows, D. H. *et al, Beyond the Limits: Confronting Global Collapse or Envisioning a Sustainable Future* (Earthscan, London, 1992)

70 See, for example, I. Illich, "The Shadow Our Future Throws" in S. Anzouvin (ed.), *Preserving World Ecology* (H. W. Wilson & Co., New York, 1990) pp 177-185 and M. O'Connor (ed.), *Is Capitalism Sustainable? Political Economy and the Politics of Ecology* (Guilford, New York, 1994)

views of how such cities might be realised. These vary from the non-spatial free-market attempts to foster sustainable development by redefining market pricing and regulatory systems, to models based on re-designing the physical fabric of the city to improve resource efficiency and bring about a self-reliant city.[71] The *compact city* idea is now being promoted as a major component of the various strategies emerging to tackle some of these problems.[72] The rationale for its implementation lies in a set of strategic benefits that are seen as the outcome of more compact urban forms in which travel distances are reduced lessening fuel emissions, rural land is saved from development, local facilities are supported and local areas become more autonomous.

### The arcology model

Within this context Paolo Soleri's *arcology city model* or *ecological city model*, which builds upon his ecological design work dating back to the 1950s, attempts to address issues of sustainability by advocating a balanced relationship between urban morphology and performance within cities designed to conform to what Soleri describes as the *complexity - miniaturization - duration (CMD)* paradigm. The model recognises the need for the radical reorganisation of urban sprawl into dense, integrated compact urban structures in which material recycling, waste reduction and the use of renewable energy sources are part of a sustainable strategy aimed at reducing the flow of resources and products through the urban system. Soleri calls these urban structures *arcologies* (embodying the fusion of architecture with ecology) to underline their conceptual basis, both in the discipline of architecture and the science of ecology.

> *The concept is that of a structure called an arcology, or ecological architecture*...Such a structure would take the place of the natural landscape inasmuch as it would constitute the new topography to be dealt with. This man-made topography would differ from the natural topography in the following ways:
>
> 1. It would not be a one-surface configuration but a multilevel one.
> 2. It would be conceived in such a way as to be the carrier of all the elements that make the physical life of the city possible - places and inlets for people, freight, water, power, climate, telephone; places and outlets for people, freight, waste, mail, products and so forth.
> 3. It would be a large-dimensioned sheltering device, fractioning three-dimensional space in large and small subspaces, making its own weather and its own cityscape.
> 4. It would be the major vessel for massive flow of people and things within and toward the outside of the city .
> 5. It would be the organizing pattern and anchorage for private and public institutions of the city.
> 6. It would be the focal structure for the complex and ever-changing life of the city.
> 7. It would be the unmistakable expression of man the maker and the creator. It would be diverse and singular in all of its realizations. Arcology would be surrounded by uncluttered an open landscape.[73]

*The complexity-miniaturization-duration paradigm*

In line with the modern ecological view of science emphasising a holistic, systemic approach, he argues that all of nature, "from bacteria to God" conforms to an imperative involving three fundamental principles:

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71 Haughton, G. 'Searching for the Sustainable City: Competing Philosophical Rationales and Processes of 'Ideological Capture' in Adelaide, South Australia', in *Urban Studies* 36 (11), (1999)

72 Jenks, M. *et al* (eds.), *The Compact City: A Sustainable Urban Form?* (E & FN Spon, London, 1996)

73 Soleri, P. *Arcology: The City in the Image of Man* (MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1969), p. 13

1. COMPLEXITY. Many events and processes cluster wherever a living process is going on. The make-up of the process is immensely complex and ever intensifying.
2. MINIATURIZATION. The nature of complexity demands the rigorous utilization of all resources - mass-energy and space-time, for example. Therefore, whenever complexity is at work, miniaturization is mandated and a part of the process.
3. DURATION. Process implies extension of time. Temporal extension is warped by living stuff into acts of duration, i.e., the eventual "living outside of time".[74]

In nature as an organism evolves its complexity increases and it develops into a more compact and miniaturised system. In this way the process of evolution acts against the direction of entropy. For Soleri humanity stands in "the flow of (this) evolutionary process and gains meaning from its place and role in that process".[75] He argues that successful and sophisticated forms of life, such as the human city must follow the complexity/ miniaturization/ duration path in order to become a "more lively container for the social, cultural, and spiritual evolution of (humankind)". More events can occur in a more complex system. An increase in "eventfulness" brings with it the phenomenon of "liveliness".[76] According to Soleri, by following the (CMD) paradigm his arcology model stands in opposition to urban sprawl with its inherently wasteful consumption of land, energy, time and human resources.

*The ecological platform*

Arcology's ecological model derives from the elimination of the motor car, and the reclamation of all the space associated with this form of transportation in roads, car parks, showrooms, garages, petrol stations, repairs, junkyards. Typically today's cities devote up to sixty percent of their land for car functions. By eliminating the car from inside the city and reserves it for use outside an arcology would need about two percent as much land as a typical city of similar population. Walking becomes the main form of transportation inside.

The philosophical and theological scope of Soleri's thinking crosses traditional boundaries between the subjects of architecture, ecology, biology, urban design, sociology, environmental studies, and art. Developed from his doctoral research in human ecology, completed in 1946, Soleri's conception, in opposition to the fragmented nature of current cities, involves the creation of a new physical layer, what he calls a "neonature".[77] The scope of his arcology is to produce a theoretical model for this new landscape that would be designed to support biological, human, and social evolution while containing human societies along with all their material goods. Sustainability is simply part of our theological and technological evolution. The architect's sacred task of ecological design is then directed towards the attainment of the *Civitas Dei* (City of God) as the next step in the progressive transformation of human existence.[78] Soleri's model of sustainable urban development sees,

74 Soleri, P. *Arcosanti: An Urban Laboratory?* (Avant Books and the Cosanti Foundation, San Diego, CA, 1983)

75 Cobb, 'Paolo Soleri and Christian Faith', Preface to Soleri, *The Omega Seed* (1981), pp. 13-26

76 Soleri, P. *The Bridge Between matter and Spirit is Matter Becoming Spirit* (Anchor Press/Doubleday, Garden City, NY, 1973), p. 207

77 Soleri, *Arcology* (1969), p. 20

78 *Ibid*

in the contraction and greater sophistication of the city (including all its equipment, machinery, infrastructure, services, etc.), both the efficient possibility of achieving more with less and the chance of reaching new levels of human development. Such transformation involves a radical revision of the current social, cultural, political and economic structure. The function of arcology is to facilitate the breakthrough to these new levels of individuality and community.

Soleri's wide philosophical reach, ranging from speculation on the evolution of the cosmos to his eschatological hypothesis is daunting but the integration of his philosophical and theological thinking with ideas about the design of cities has given him a unique status both as a philosopher and as an urban planner. In adopting a position historically rooted in idealism he sees architecture as more of a social calling than a material activity. Because it is primarily an informational process it can help lead to an ecological revolution.

By promoting a different kind of urban model, he envisions the possibility of re-naturalising the natural environment. According to Luke (1997), by striving to achieve a different social order and, in so doing encouraging a wholesale re-evaluation of the extent of our impact on the natural environment he is contributing to radical ecology's mission of world disclosure. [79]

### Towards Two Suns

Soleri asserts that 'the most common mistake' about his work is the assumption that "years of introspection have produced a take it or leave it package". Rather he says "I am proposing a methodology and at the same time trying to illustrate it ".[80] The methodology was initially developed within the *Mesa City Project* (1958-67).[81] Then in 1969 Soleri published *Arcology: the City in the Image of Man* and followed this with an exhibition of drawings and models entitled 'The Architectural Vision of Paolo Soleri', which toured the United States and Canada to record attendance numbers. In both the book and the exhibition he sketched out giant structures that would dwarf the Empire State Building. The thirty *first generation arcologies,* designed between 1963 and their publication in 1969 consist of two groups: *Dionysian* and *Apollonian.* Dionysian arcologies are affiliated to Mesa City and are configured in a "free form" character. Like Novanoah II (a city for 2,400,000 to float on coastal waters or open sea), Arcoforte (20,000 people on a sea cliff), Veladiga (15,000 people on a dam site), Stonebow (200,000 people above a ravine or canyon), and Theology (with a population of 13,000 set within a cliff). Apollonian arcologies are characterised by the elementary geometry of the envelope and the simplicity of the form: a cube, sphere, pyramid, hexahedron, cylinder, etc. Examples of these are Arcube (a city of 400,000 people located on flatlands), Hexahedron (a city of 170,000 on any topography), and Asteromo (70,000 people living in space) and the original proposals for Arcosanti (for 1,500).

With the development of the next generation of arcologies, *The Two Suns Arcology* (1975) in responding to the growing energy crisis of the mid-70s Soleri split the architectural concept

79 T. Luke, 'Developing an Arcological Politics' in *Ecocritique: Contesting the Politics of Nature, Economy and Culture* (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1997), pp. 156-7.

80 Soleri, P. *The Omega Seed: An Eschatological Hypothesis*, (Anchor Press/Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1981), p. 206

81 Mesa City was a theoretical regional plan to house 2 million people on around 55,000 acres (about the size of Manhattan Island) on an isolated and pre-flattened desert plateau. Developed as part of Soleri's ongoing research in the field of "architecture as human ecology" Mesa City was specifically aimed at introducing the idea of "corposity into the urban morphology, a premonition of the arcological concept".

of the first generation structures in half "exposing the core to the sun". This produced some highly significant related effects; it gave greater priority to the main source of renewable energy and placed the arcology concept much more firmly into its own ecological niche. The ideas that emerged in *the second generation arcologies*, within the concept of the `energy city' also served to reinforce the relationship between architecture and ecology.

In 1975 six major (and simple) architectural `effects' were described, collectively under the aegis of the `urban effect'.[82] These offer a response to many of today's environmental problems":[83]

> The *greenhouse effect* is a membrane that seals off an area of ground that can be cultivated, extending the growing season to practically twelve months, and also saves a great amount of water…With the "greenhouse", one has intensive agriculture, limited use of water and extension of seasonal cycles. This is the *horticultural effect.* Then there is the *apse effect.* Some structures can take in the benign radiation of the sun in winter months, and tend to cut off the harsh radiation of the sun in the summer. By the *chimney effect,* which is connected with the greenhouse effect, one can convey, passively, energy through the movement of air; the heat from one area to another. So we have these four effects; there is also the capacity of masonary to accumulate and store energy - *the heat sink effect.* With relatively large masonary, one can store energy during the warm hours of the day, and give it out during cool or cold hors of the night. The intent is to see if these five effects can be organized around what I call the *urban effect*. The urban effect is the capacity of mineral matter, to become lively, sensitive, responsive, memorizing… If we were to co-ordinate those six effects together, then we definitely could save on resources like land, water, time, energy, materialism, and have a better ecological sanity.[84]

These effects were combined in a series of designs for second generation arcologies, including *Air Dam Arcology, India Village*, *Maryland Arcology*, and *Regina Arcology.* In these proposals the entire form of the urban structure as well as a huge area of south-facing greenhouses containing vegetable gardens, are designed to maximise the use of solar energy while reducing dependence on external energy sources. This approach offered the generative principles for the development of Arcosanti as an `energy city' during the 1980s and 90s.

Perhaps Soleri's most important contribution is in beginning to rethink human ecology and encouraging us to re-conceptualise the extent of the human impact on the natural environment. Although he vigorously denies the suggestion that his model is utopian, in re-casting of the relationship between society and nature, arcology conforms to the "classical" utopian typology and the positive utopian energies here, rather than be denied, should be acknowledged and affirmed. A special power of the utopia is its ability to present political and social ideas in an unusually imaginative way, functioning as bearer of a vision and offering inspiration for those with a desire to look forward and gain insight into a feasible imaginable future. Despite the economic, social and technological uncertainties, utopias dare to paint a futuristic picture of society and offer readers a glimpse into 'their own ' future. But perhaps their greatest attraction is that they stimulate us to think in a participatory way,

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82 P. Soleri, 'Two Suns Arcology' in *aaq* 7 (2), (1975), pp. 33-41. The urban effect is described as a universal effect involving the transformation of mineral matter into mind via the potentially unlimited power of complexification and miniaturisation. Soleri says it is 'that fundamental phenomenon in which two or more particles of physical matter begin to interact in ways other than statistical or fatal, that is, in ways which are organic or living'.

83 Luke, (1997), pp. 161-2

84 Soleri, P. *Technology and Cosmogenesis* (Paragon House, New York, 1985), p. 137-8

and so encourage reflection. The reviewer is forced to take a stand and critically reconsider his opinions about the most desirable way in which the economy, society and the state should be organised. Utopias, in this sense, act as a 'critical norm', developing criteria with which to measure current social development. They can stimulate theoretical experiments, encourage attempts to break through fixed patterns of thinking and test unorthodox combinations of ideas.

**Soleri's response to urban environmental problems**

An arcology is designed to improve the life quality of its inhabitants, and to be highly efficient in the processes of production and consumption. The model derives from a desire to come up with a workable alternatives to today's unsustainable patterns of urban development, an ambition now shared by many urban designers and planners such as Peter Calthorpe[85], Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Herbert Girardet[86], Richard Register[87], Richard Rogers[88] and the Urban Villages Group. What sets Soleri apart is his radical approach to solving these problems the sheer scale of his vision, and his determination, since 1970 to build a prototype at Arcosanti to test his ideas. After Two Suns Arcosanti (meaning architecture "before things" or "anti-materialist architecture") was re-designed to rely as much as possible on the 'soft technologies' of sun and wind power and other renewable energy so as to reduce pollution and dependence on fossil fuels. Because it needs less energy per capita the model renders recycling and the use of solar energy more feasible than in present cities. Material recycling, waste reduction, energy conservation, and the use of renewable energy sources each become part of a strategy for sustainability aimed at reducing the flow of resources and products through the habitat.

In theory at least arcology offers a response to many of today's urban environmental problems. In particular in offering a holistic prototype in Arcosanti that deals with a whole raft of issues such as *self-containment of habitat, land use, urban transportation, food and energy production and the habitat's impact on natural resources and pollution* the model confronts problems of exponential population expansion and the inefficient use of land, air and water; pollution caused by technological society; energy and natural resource depletion, distribution and consumption; food scarcity; the loss of quality of life through waste, affluence and opulence and the physical and social segregation of people, things and activities, and the increasing problems of social alienation and exclusion

*Self-containment of habitat*

Through its adherence to the complexity-miniaturization-duration paradigm arcology is dedicated to the 'old' notion of containment in opposition to the relatively recent idea of diaspora (where the car is the main protagonist). Soleri's metaphor for the city "in the image of man" emphasises this idea of self-containment. The self-containment of humans within the

85 Calthorpe, P. *The Next American Metropolis: Ecology, Community and the American Dream* (Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1993)

86 Girardet, H. *The Gaia Atlas of Cities* (Gaia Books Limited, London, 1992)

87 Register, R. *Ecocity Berkeley: Building Cities for a Healthy Future* (North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA., 1987)

88 Rogers, R. *Cities for a Small Planet* (Faber and Faber, London, 1997)

structure of our bodies allows us to communicate and interact with other humans. Having a complex system contained within a body "is the imperative for any organism capable of connecting effectively with the 'outside'".[89]

Without self-containment the city cannot act effectively with the surrounding natural environment. Soleri argues that "ecological sanity…is dependent on centres of life so intense as to retain within their boundaries (city-town) the bulk of the planetary population and its paraphernalia".[90] But he points out that the converse is also true. When the city looses sustenance from the countryside it is doomed.

> … if we were scattered to the four winds we would not be able to contain the complex arrangements of matter-energy that allows performance and we would just disappear and die. Arcologies will be contained within a "skin" that will make it possible to "perform and achieve", to communicate, so the city can be in a position to control itself.[91]

*Land use*

The arcologies presented in 1969 were located on marginal lands, far from main transportation networks, many poor in resources and generally considered difficult to "colonise". Since these may be the sort of reserves where future cultures will have to settle, (leaving fertile lands free for increasing crop cultivation), the task is to demonstrate the viability of the self-containment of a community on such inhospitable land. Many civilisations throughout history have had to deal with restrictive eco-systems. They have survived by making the best of the environment. Arcologies use the land, its geological structure and its water as the main physical resource, as well as the sun, the climate and connections with neighbouring communities in order to do more with less. Arcosanti's semi-arid location in the desert presents particular challenges to settlement.

Adopting a higher concentration of land use deriving from a mixed use development is an effective method of altering the impact of a settlement on the natural environment. Arcology is mixed use in its purest form - accommodating a variety of uses within one structure. In contrast to sprawl, an arcology acts as a large integrated, self-contained structure. Its compact design allows agricultural land and biologically diverse habitats to remain preserved beyond the city's perimeter. In an attempt to reintegrate people within their community Arcosanti is designed as a mixed-use complex, containing homes, offices, schools, parks, and a cultural centre. The belief is that a close interaction of city functions and people will induce a greater sense of community. Mel Roman, psychologist and family therapist, believes that in place like Arcosanti:

> … the integration of living, working and recreation become a very natural part of everyday lives . Its not something you have to take a child to see, to do, but rather something that is experienced in everyday life. [92]

Integration is a main goal and points to the reshaping of the entire urban landscape and, along with it, the culture that such a landscape supports. For Soleri our information age offers society an unprecedented opportunity to bring together the main components of life,

89 P. Soleri, *Selected Paolo Soleri Papers: 1981-93* Volume 1 (Cosanti Foundation, Scottsdale, 1993) p. 45

90 Soleri, *Arcosanti* (1983), p. 17

91 P. Soleri in P. Bonvicini, 'Soleri Dialogues' in *L'architettura: cronache e storia* 422, (December, 1990), p. 874

92 Mel Roman, Family Psychologist cited in Mayne, *Soleri's Cities: Architecture for the Planet Earth and Beyond* (1993)

but the habitat that we have constructed for ourselves during the last century is alien to such integration. Therefore, he argues, it needs to be reconfigured.

*Urban transportation*

In the United States traffic jams account for around $100 billion a year in lost productivity. Many European cities with good mass transit systems have been all but ruined by cars. London and Paris, for example, are among the world's great cities but their environments have been diminished by the near-constant noise and exhaust of cars on their streets. In the UK the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution warned in 1994 that in Britain "the unrelenting growth of transport has become possibly the greatest environmental threat". Our car-dominated transport system, the report said, is unsustainable.[93]

Like many critics of car dependency Soleri is not against the technology *per se* but against our complete reliance on it for transportation. While he acknowledges planning efforts that aim to produce more efficient land use patterns thereby reducing the number and frequency of car trips, and the introduction of fuel-efficient technology in car design and manufacture, Soleri contends that such improvements fail to attack the core of the problem. They are, he says, simply "a better kind of wrongness", By virtue of its compact design, Arcosanti would allow cars to be relegated to service areas on the periphery or reserved for travel between communities.

*Food and energy production*

Arcology aims at a degree of autonomy and self-reliance, rather than 'self-sufficiency '. Self-sufficient communities, which aim at total self-provision of food and energy, and the complete recycling of wastes, are according to Soleri "extravagant and devoid of sense". There is no way the Earth or anything in it, he argues, can be perfect because it is a small part of a much larger system. The arcology concept is directed instead at a more restrained and judicious use of resources via the power of complexity and miniaturisation and the discipline of frugality.

The degree of self-reliance in food production has changed as the arcology concept has evolved. In *Mesa City* the settlement was designed to be entirely dependent on the produce of the surrounding hinterland and on traditional agricultural practices. With the development of the *Two Suns* approach food and energy (radiant) were to be produced within south-facing greenhouses located within the city. These are designed to support the city's population at a minimum level. Other produce is imported from outside to supplement the goods and services provided on this self-reliant base (e.g. electricity from the main grid).

All Soleri's projects after 1958 have explored methods of generating and harvesting energy from renewable sources and have aimed at transforming the urban structure into an "energy machine". In the *Two Suns* approach the city is conceived of as a complex in which living, working and learning are integrated with food and energy production. The city becomes both consumer and producer. Apses and *exedra* (semi-circular edifices - developed from the apse form) that respond to the Sun's trajectory as energy devices and large expanses of greenhouses attached to the city, are used to generate heat and electricity as well as to grow food, help define the urban structure as an `energy city'.

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93 Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, *Eighteenth Report: Transport and Environment* (HMSO, London, 1994)

*Impact on natural resources and pollution*

Arcologies, through a blend of energy conservation and land use efficiencies, together with waste recycling systems, could maintain the ecological integrity of the region while placing fewer demands on the environment in terms of land, water, soil, fuel and other resources. By reducing the demand for petrol -based transportation systems air quality could be radically improved. Non-pollutant passive solar-active energy systems such as wind turbines, photovoltaic cells, and solar cooling and heating would further help to reduce water, air and land pollution.

James Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis sees the earth as a self-regulating system in which conditions suitable for life are maintained by feedback processes involving both living things and the non-living part of the planet. In similar vein Soleri sees both the planet, and the arcology as "a semi-autonomous organism, constantly recycling and digesting parts of itself, constantly redefining its own "constitution".[94] By combining various passive energy strategies within a single integrated urban system, arcology aims at a theoretical and architectural synthesis, in which philosophical, ecological and theological ideas are "woven into a structure of great beauty and integrity, and which, at the same time, is a structure of stunning frugality from the standpoint of energy conservation".[95]

> … all arcologies are "small" in the sense of their being miniaturization of performance. They take the place of the megastructures of breakdown and paralysis. Los Angeles is a super-megastructure, incorporating all the syndromes of waste, pollution, and segregation. The urban effect of arcology is at the opposite end of the spectrum…a complex, miniaturized, self-limiting habitat is the best site for more efficient, less costly disposal and recycling programs. Naturally frugality is the most cost effective way to confront the pollution-recycling-cost dilemma. [96]

## Unfinished business at the urban laboratory

In *Two Suns* Soleri discussed the theoretical potential of the urban scale of the *greenhouse effect*. At the urban laboratory at Arcosanti, among other experiments, volunteers have been working towards a large-scale practical demonstration of this idea. The area covered by the greenhouses is described as the *energy apron.* Locating the greenhouses lower than the habitat structures and spaces means that the naturally accumulating warm air can be passed through tunnels up into the living areas. Because of convection no additional energy is required as long as there is a chimney at the end of the tunnel. Cooling using evaporation is also being explored, whereby cool air created by misting at cooling towers at the top of the structure, forms moist air which falls back through the tunnels.

The conceptual work involving the design of a large central system for food and energy production was carried out from 1974-1976.[97] Extensive research, carried out from 1976-1978, resulted in the construction of a prototype greenhouse in 1979. This facility has been operating in a passive mode since March 1979, generating both agricultural and climactic

94 Soleri, *Arcosanti* (1983), p. 24

95 H. Skolimowski, Foreword in Soleri, *Two Suns Arcology* (1975)

96 Soleri, *Arcosanti* (1983), pp. 24-8

97 This work was made possible by a grant from Xerox Corporation, with matching funds from the Cosanti Foundation, the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration and the Environmental Research Laboratory at the University of Arizona.

data necessary for further greenhouse development, specifically aiding in the designs of the first full-scale segment of the energy apron. Soleri wrote on the greenhouse research project in 1985:

> If the greenhouse is on a flat area, quite definitely you need energy and equipment to ventilate the greenhouse in the summer, but if you slope the greenhouse, you introduce the chimney effect, and the greenhouse is self-ventilating. One can take the greenhouse and make it into a wafer, a sun collector, then you can incorporate the sun collector in the roof. This is the normal way of going about producing hot water. Or you can make the greenhouse with two effects: one as a sun collector, and the other as a food producer. Warm air can be pumped into the house and can produce some vegetables, as a form of energy, which is, let's say, the warm air, automatically through the chimney effect. If one takes the house and transforms it into a multiple kind of aggregate like a village or a town, and then one enlarges the greenhouse proportionately, one begins to see the possibilities of having a solar town.[98]

The greenhouses are designed to benefit from:

- *heat collection* - curved surface retaining walls are designed to collect maximum winter sun and create a warmer environment in the greenhouse;
- the *greenhouse shading* - deciduous plants growing from the membrane support columns will shade the greenhouse during the hot summer months. Winter leaf drop will allow maximum sun penetration;
- a *membrane system* - the greenhouses will be covered with a polythene film anchored on four sides and tensioned by jacks to eliminate tearing of the membrane by wind flutter. The film will be used instead of glass for both economic and aesthetic reasons.

In addition to the practical aspects Soleri observes that the greenhouses will be "a demonstration of ways to touch on global issues: food inequity, climate change, and how to produce food in an ecologically sane way".[99]

Most of the world's arable land is already under cultivation. Around two-thirds of the world's marginal land is located in the semi-arid desert with climatic conditions similar to Arcosanti. The remainder is deemed largely unsuitable, being too cold, wet, arid or mountainous to sustain current agricultural methods. Increasing global food production by improving the productivity of land already under cultivation is one method of obtaining higher yields. Another is to explore methods of bringing marginal lands, generally ill-suited to agriculture due to adverse climatic and topographical conditions, into production. Arcosanti's experimental work on the passive energy apron addresses both of these areas of investigation. The experimental greenhouses aim at gathering conclusive evidence of the benefits of their wider application as part of a holistic strategy.

The greenhouse allows frugal water management by using only a tenth to one thirtieth of the amount needed for open-filed irrigation. In the desert, which has a high percentage of sunny days throughout the year, this is clearly a significant factor. Because of Arcosanti's altitude cold winters are problematic to crop growth but within the greenhouses the growing season can be extended all year round, doubling the yield. During the winter, crops in the greenhouse grow much faster and without the stress of frost. A larger variety of food can also be grown which can supply the cafe and residents with salad greens which grow quickly and remain tender because of protection from temperature extremes and winds. The greenhouses also contain flowers, herbs, and tomatoes year round and keep a variety of crops planted

98 Soleri, *Technology and Cosmogenesis* (1985), pp. 138-9

99 P. Soleri, *Double Exedra: the Indian School Proposal* (Unpublished Cosanti Foundation Paper, 1991), p. 12

successively for continuous harvest.

Paolo Soleri has long advocated the need to redefine the American Dream before it spreads too far across the overpopulated developing world. His alternative within arcology attempts to reconcile individuals and community needs, and economic realities and motives; with ecological awareness and cultural achievement, and aims to bring us back from the brink of an impending and insane attack on our Earth's ability to sustain us. The project was represented at the EXPO 2000 in Hannover, Germany where the theme was `Humankind-Nature-Technology: A new world arising'. Along with Curitiba, in Brazil, Arcosanti was chosen as one of the featured 'Projects around the World'.

Through the years, Soleri has been variously described as either a madman, a practitioner of some obscure religious order, or a visionary.[100] His theoretical writing is cryptic, his style complex and philosophical. In 1991, in describing the *Edge City* Joel Garreau identifies a common problem in the interpretation of his ideas:

> Soleri is still out there in the desert in Arizona building Arcosanti…But he keeps talking about eschatology and nobody can understand…a thing he says, so he has had little practical influence in current urban planning. [101]

This is now changing. While we may not understand or agree with everything he says, more people, particularly those involved in shaping the built environment, are moving towards Soleri's way of thinking. Today governments in China, India and Japan are seeking out Soleri's advice on urban development issues. Environmentalists have recently nominated him for a Nobel Peace prize.

If our society is to be sustainable, human imagination, ingenuity, energy, and labour must be directed to the building (and reconstruction) of cities that future generations can inhabit within an improved ecological setting. Perhaps while Arcosanti lacks the level of funding and resources that would see it grow in scale as a fully operational living, working community of five to six thousand, the real value of the work going on there is not so much in defining a specific prototypical *solution* but in offering both a 'critical norm' against which we can measure existing urban environments. It also offers something that, in our all-too-cynical postmodern world, is rather unique - an activist engaged strategy that advocates the possibility of building our dreams and visions. In a world plagued by so many problems, and blessed with so few alternatives, this may prove to be the most important lesson of all. Above all, Arcosanti offers a beacon of hope for a more sustainable future.

In any case this morning at a meeting held around dawn in front of the project's main

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100 See, for example, P. Plagens, 'A Visit to Soleri's Eldorado' in *Art in America* 67 (1979), pp. 65-71; J. C. Glen, 'Prototype Communities of Tomorrow: Arcosanti' in *The Futurist* 14 (1980), pp. 35-43; J. T. McFadyen, 'The Abbot of Arcosanti' in *Horizon* 23 (1980), pp, 54-61, ; M. B. Pennington, 'Arcosanti Monastery No, 1' in *America* 144 (March 14, 1981), pp. 207-9; N. M. Bloom, 'Human Beehives: Paolo Soleri's Arcosanti' in *Science Digest* (March 1981), pp. 42-7; M. Grossworth, 'Arcosanti: A Laboratory for the Living' in *SciQuest* 54 (1981), p. 11-15; D. W. Dunlap, 'Future Metropolis' in *Omni* 7 (October 1984), pp. 116-24 P. Weingarten, 'Futuristic City: a Radical Vision Still Out of Focus' in *Chicago Tribune* (July 10, 1988); L. David, 'Paolo Soleri : Man for All Seasons' in *Ad Astra* 1 (November 1990), p. 31; 'Paolo Soleri's Arcology: Updating the Prognosis' in *Progressive Architecture* 72 (March 1991), pp. 76-8; M. Pastin, 'For Selfish Reasons, Arizonians Should Look Again to Arcosanti' in *Business Journal* (May 20, 1991)

101 Garreau, J. *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier* (Anchor, New York, 1992), p. 249

vaults a small group of people will have been discussing the daily work programme. Others can decide whether the work is experimental or utopian, a science fiction fantasy, an Orwellian nightmare, or a new evolutionary stage in the progress of the human spirit. They have some unfinished business to be getting on with and they'll be measuring their own progress by the amount of concrete they manage to pour today.

# The Trouble with Autocratic Architecture:
# A critical and cocreative look at Paolo Soleri's Arcosanti Project


## Doctress Neutopia


**dedicated to bringing "*conscientization*" to the Arcosanti community**
**Arcosanti Web Site: www.arcosanti.org**

**"In vain we build the city if we do not first build the man." Edwin Markham**

Spring 2001

I recently left Arcosanti after living there for a year and a half. I wish to share some insights about the project and some ideas on how to improve it. Living at Arcosanti allowed me to visualize what life might be like in a prototype arcology of 7,000 people because of the communal nature of an arcology.

During my stay at Arcosanti, which now has a population of around sixty people, I realized that a revolutionary design does not alone build a functioning city. An arcology (architecture fused with ecology,) is the revolutionary architectural design that Paolo Soleri advocates. Arcosanti, in its future form, wishes to prototype an arcology. I have concluded that is only part of the formula for creating an alternative development model to the urban sprawl. Also needed is a social architecture that allows for community development. Community development should be seen as contributing a value equal to the physical structure. In other words, the sociological foundation is just as important to the health of the Arcosanti project as its physical foundation. But a positive sociological foundation is not being laid.

***Social Architecture as part of the Arcology Equation***

Creating a social architecture within an arcological framework will require networking and a multidisciplinary approach to the creative process. Futurist Barbara Marx Hubbard, in her work Conscious Evolution, writes, "conscious evolution is a metadiscipline; the purpose of this metadiscipline is to learn how to be responsible for the ethical guidance of our evolution" (58).

Hubbard clearly states our problem in the following:

In the midst of our confusion, however, a new story of evolution is emerging that has the potential to inspire us to creative action. It is coming from the combined insights of many disciplines; scientific, historical, psychological, ecological, social, spiritual, and futuristic. But it has not yet found its artistic or popular expression. We discover fragments in journals, poems, books, lectures, conferences, seminars, and networks of those interested in it. We see flashes in science fiction films. But it has not yet been pieced together and told with the power required to awaken the social potential within us and to guide us in the 21st century

towards a future of infinite possibilities" (24).

The new worldview already exists in an early stage. There is a large and growing body of knowledge in almost every area—science, psychology, cosmology, art, literature, philosophy, and business — but there is not a definable field called conscious evolution to coordinate all the separate insights (63).

Arcology is the artistic and architectural expression needed to build a new story because architecture has the potential to bring together the evolutionary consciousnesses about which Barbara Hubbard writes. Building an arcology could allow us to focus our energy and coordinate all the parts into a holistic structure. Hubbard writes, "I believe that collectively, we do know how to coordinate ourselves as a whole, how to handle our waste, shift to renewable resources, and awaken to our unique, new roles in the maturation of our species. If the crisis is natural, so is the response" (68). What could be more natural to us than to build a new form of architecture in which to test our ideas? As Soleri said before he rejected the idea of a spiritual realm, "the bridge between matter and spirit is matter becoming spirit". But whatever Soleri now thinks of the concept of "spirit," arcology is matter becoming spirit. It is a concrete way for us to visualize conscious evolution in creative, labor intensive action.

In The First House R.D. Dripp's writes that the word "construct" is derived from the Latin, *construere* meaning "to heap together, to pile up or to fit together" (66). One of the roots of construct is "construe" which means, "to interpret, to put a meaning on or to explain" (66). Even though "construct" has more reference to parts, "construe" refers more to the whole, synthesizing the parts, giving the whole the "task of directing its own assembly." Dripps continues:

> Constructing must be both a synthetic and an analytic activity. In a synthetic mode, the human being is putting together a complete world in order to secure a place within it. This world becomes believable as a guide for action to the degree that it appears a unity, holding together both intellectually and physically. This is the role of paradigmatic structure, which is always directed toward unity, synthesis, and closure. The world that it reveals is a cosmos whose synthetic unity can subsume ourselves and an unmediated nature within is own order (67).

In other words, to construct requires a "mental structure through which the physical structure of the institution is realized" (73).

If this statement rings true for the Arcosanti project, the construction site exists because of the social architecture that is enabling the physical construction to take place. Arcosanti, then, could not exist without a political organization in place. For the past 30 years the political structure in place has been an autocracy. To say that Arcosanti is only a "construction site" that does not have to bother with community and cultural development or building an internal infrastructure as Paolo claims is simply a false statement. Arcology, the fusion of the hut and the city, has both an outside and an inside.

R. D. Dripps goes on to explain the profound connection between origins of speech and the

origins of architecture. Spatial reasoning allows humans to build architecture by orienting themselves in the world. He writes, "Speech, then has a political intention. It is through speech that the collective works out what it means to live the good life together. Architecture locates this collective in the world" (16). The gathering of people initiates the discourse in which architecture is derived. Thus architecture works from the inside out, from collective speech to personal action.

***Needed Dialogues***

So, then, what are the dialogues being ignored by Soleri yet needed to build a prototype arcology?

*Part of the Dialogue: Solar Energy and Sustainable Economic Development*

Economically sustainable development should be one of the main points in the dialogue. An arcology should include a new economic model, one that combines the best elements of the past economic experiments to create a new level social equity. An architecture that is based on economic and social equity will be designed differently than one that supports a plutocratic and hyperconsumerist class at the top of the social status.

In order for us to build a sustainable economy within an ecological architecture, new ways of thinking are necessary. Fritjof Capra points out in his book The Web of Life that a sustainable economy is one that imitates nature's cyclical systems, not the linear model which our industrial civilization is based on now. Industries take resources, make products with them, leave waste behind in the process, sell the products to consumers who then leave more wastes behind after the products are consumed. "Capra writes, "To achieve such cyclical patterns we need to fundamentally redesign our businesses and our economy. (299). Since everything is interconnected, then we should also redesigning our architectural patterns of development. It follows that we need to be designing both architecture and industries to use renewal energies and convert the industrial economy that emphasizes "competition, expansion, and domination" to an ecological economy that emphasizes "cooperation, conservation, and partnership." This is the essence of ecofeminist thought listed in Greta Gaard's book, Ecological Politics, Ecofeminism and the Greens (144-145).

Soleri is not concerned with designing with renewable solar energies in its various forms because he feels that such power sources are not really an essential part of proving the value of an arcology. For him, it might be that nuclear power might work best to energize an arcology. He feels that solar panels, for example, are mere "trinkets" and he does not want them as part of his grand design.

*Part of the Dialogue: The Role of Women and Children*

The roles of women and children within an arcology also are critical to the dialogue. Architects should look at political factors in the city-making process because different forms of power create different public/private spaces. For example, in cities where children's educational

needs are valued, space will be provided for nurseries and educational facilities. In such societies, childcare centers and educational facilities are not after thoughts in the design schemes. They are part of the blueprints for healthy societies that value both the needs of working women and men and for the education and care of their offspring. But in its thirty year existence, Soleri has failed to establish a school for children or even a child care center. His reason for this is that he feels mothers can take their children to work with them as they did when he was growing up in fascist Italy.

*Part of the Dialogue: Work and Self-Actualization*

This brings up the topic of work within an arcology designed for sheltering and sustaining conscious evolution. Abraham Maslow's research on self-actualization showed that the healthiest, most self-actualized people in a society are the ones who engage in chosen work by following an inward vocation or calling. One could say that these individuals are following their conscious, not only for self interest, but for the purpose of planetary evolution. Hubbard writes, "Cocreation does not mean service at the sacrifice of self; it means service through the actualization of self. Self-actualization occurs when we find our vocations and express them meaningfully in the world" (112).

The present management system at Arcosanti expects people to sacrifice their selves to serve the project. Self-actualization is not seen as important to the project and people are treated as dispensable. The only visionary who matters at Arcosanti is the architect, Paolo Soleri. Everyone else must sacrifice his or her self to him.

Take my experience, for example. After the Paradox Project (an attempt to build a team to bring together cyberspace and arcology at Arcosanti) failed, I submitted a list of jobs I felt the project needed and I had a desire to do. My suggestions included building an electronic newsletter for alumni, expanding the workshop curriculum, and networking over the Internet with other organizations who are working with similar ideas. Those ideas were rejected. I was told that if I wanted to stay at the project, then I would have to sacrifice what I felt I was called to do and take on a job in the bronze foundry casting Soleri bells to be sold in the gallery. This felt like a slavery. Holding an Ed.D. degree, I felt that working in a foundry was a waste of my education and talent for both Arcosanti and myself. It also promised to be a more physically demanding occupation than it is wise to begin at my age.

That did not mean that I was unwilling to do my share and more of the various maintenance and menial tasks that are needed in the community. Since I am an educator/artist, however, I did not want those jobs to be my main employment on site. They are not the kinds of jobs that could lead to my own self-actualization. I felt that they wanted me to fit into a bell mold rather than to bring more personal diversity and, therefore, more complexity into the project.

Mary Hoadley, the Site Coordinator said to me on several occasions that she had to make major sacrifices in her life to be part of the project. She made them because she felt that the sacrifice is needed to create something bigger than herself. But my question is: how can we ever reach the stage of conscious evolution if we fail to develop ourselves in the service of the other? Perhaps Mary Hoadley's kind of thinking is necessary for autocratic, patriarchal forms

of government, but how can it work in a democracy where each individual has a stake in the decision making process? Without self-knowledge and actualization of the self, democracy cannot properly exist! But in a self-sacrificing system, autocracy can thrive!

So the managers determined that the creative gifts and skills I had to offer the project were unacceptable, except for menial labor. Only by sacrificing my life to the project and doing work that I did not want to do could I remain on the Arcosanti site. I was also told by one of the managers that the Arcosanti project could not financially afford to pay me for the work I wanted to do for the project or even could afford to have me stay on as a volunteer because the room I occupied at Arcosanti was needed for someone who could make money for them in their for-profit million dollar bell factory. Apparently, the non-profit part of the organization, the Cosanti Foundation, had no desire to put money into education or networking.

Alas, I had to find out the hard way that even with Soleri's rhetoric of the "lean society" concept, the bottom line at Arcosanti, like elsewhere in Corporate America, is the dollar. Making money was more important to them than hiring educators. After becoming part of the Paradox team, I realized that I was not the kind of person Soleri was hoping to attract to the Paradox Program. He wasn't hoping to attract idealistic cyberians of high character who were interested in working toward building a network of arcologies in cyberspace and real life. Oh no! As the director of the program said to me on numerous occasions, Soleri's real reason for starting the Paradox Project was to attract the "1% of the 1%" who might be willing to give some of the millions of dollars he or she had made on a dot.com company to the Foundation. With that money, Soleri could build more of his project. Soleri's motivation for the Paradox Project was to attract money, not people with character. It seemed that no one but me felt that this was a corrupt mission for the Paradox Project.

Albert Camus wrote, "Ends do not justify means, but rather means justify means, and means have a way of becoming ends, so it is well to be scrupulous and uncompromising as to means." When one focuses on process rather than outcome, then one sees that "means embody the ends." Why does Soleri need to contemplate the means to his end? Only then will he see that he could not have created the 2% of the Arcosanti project alone. He needed the help of 3,000 or so workshoppers. The trouble is he doesn't want to acknowledge them as stakeholders in his vision and his property because he fears democratic decision-making might corrupt his design plans. In Neil Leach's book, The Anaesthetics of Architecture, he asks,

The most disturbing question, therefore, is not how architecture might be appropriated and exploited by various fascistic regimes, but how architectural culture might itself register a certain fascistic impulse. Here fascism must be understood not in its specific historical sense, but in the generic sense of the excessive use or abuse of any form of power, whether by the left or the right. Certainly, there are remarkable parallels to be drawn between images of dictators, such as Ceausescu or Hitler, inspecting architectural models, and those of architects themselves in similar situations (26-27).

Leach concludes that in every architect there is a potential fascist. Those who have had personal dealings with Soleri know this statement seems to be true.

Arcosanti would be a radically different place if Soleri chose to focus his attention on how to create social justice, democracy and a synergic culture within the Arcosanti organization rather than focusing his attention on his Omega Seed hypothesis. That hypothesis focuses on the End of Time, billions of years from now, while in his next breath Soleri preaches that the future does not exist. This is a way he can escape dealing with issues of the here and now such as the rights of workers at Arcosanti.

*Part of the Dialogue: Architecture for Art's Sake or for the People's Sake?*

Another escape tactic Soleri uses to avoid dialogues involving ethics at Arcosanti is to say that he is only creating a container, "form for forms sake". Or is it "art for art's sake"? In either case, architecture becomes abstracted from its political and social content as if architecture was an art object and not a space for lived experience. Leach writes, "with aestheticization a social and political displacement occurs whereby ethical concerns are replaced by aesthetic ones. A political agenda is judged, therefore, not according to its intrinsic ethical status but according to the appeal of its outward appearance" (19). He writes that whenever politics becomes aestheticized, then the society is at risk of fascism.

Even though Soleri says that he is trying to evolutionize civilization by erecting a radical architecture, by aestheticizing Arcosanti he is in fact playing the power game for post-modern architects who have no intention of looking at the underlying political foundations of their architecture. Leach continues, "As a consequence, "good design" is often thought to have a significant social and political impact. By extension, what is considered "radical" within the domain of architecture is likewise thought to be "radical" from a socio-political perspective (68). Leach warns us of the danger of thinking that a radical aesthetics parallels with a radical politics since in Soleri's case, a radical architecture is a mask for reactionary politics. He writes, "Architectural culture will always be susceptible to a reactionary politics, not despite its façade of radicalism but precisely because of it, a façade that is no more than a façade of aesthetic radicalism" (69). To look at the foundations of architecture, Soleri would have to look at workers relationship to the property and figure out an equitable solution to the ownership problem.

Had Soleri concerned himself more with social justice, the culture at Arcosanti would be a more healthy, creative atmosphere. Instead, it is an atmosphere cursed with all the problems inherent in a drug and alcohol culture, the kind of culture that has plagued the Arcosanti project for decades. One thing the Arcosanti project proves, as in the mainstream American society that he says he is trying to overcome, an oppressed people turn to abusing drugs and alcohol to escape feelings of disempowerment, lack of meaning in their lives, and exploitation. Arcosanti is not about working for the future of humanity. It is about working for the vision of one man who is on top of the social pyramid just like the other cities of intoxication around the globe whose cities are ruled by a power elite. Workers quite naturally become hedonistic and prone to apathy when they are not in control of their own destiny, mere pawns to the king/landlord.

*Part of the Dialogue: Public decision making*

Another example of why it is imperative for a future dialogue to question social and political factors when designing architecture is that in a totalitarian society there is little space provided for general assemblies and public gatherings since in autocratic societies such open spaces are not required for rulership. On the other hand, in democratic societies space is provided for general assemblies such as "town squares." Political forms are reflections of psychological states of mind that seek expression through architecture. Cities that value individual freedom and social intercourse will be reflected in the architectural foundations.

Even though at Arcosanti space is given to the performing arts and there are open spaces such as the Vaults where public assemblies are conducted, the important decisions that affect the future of the project are made behind closed doors where the workers/residents do not have access. This certainly proves that architecture, the container, is not responsible for political freedom. Even within an arcology designed to bring people together, what Soleri calls "the urban effect," if the government is fascist and secretive, democratic spaces will not be used for open decision-making processes. The Arcosanti project proves architecture does not shape people, power relationships between humans do. In an interview "Space, Knowledge, Power," Michael Foucault looks at Bentham's panopticon, a building designed to be the perfect prison, to comment on the link between architecture and a politics of use. Leach writes, "All that architectural form can hope to achieve is to hinder or prevent a certain politics of use. Architectural form in itself cannot be liberating, although it can produce "positive effects" when the "liberating intentions of the architect" coincide with "the real practices of people in the exercise of their freedom" (32). The best architecture can do is to offer a space that invites a certain politics of use.

*Part of the Dialogue: Transportation needs*

And finally another example of why it is important not to divide the social sphere, or what Teilhard de Chardin called the noosphere (the place where language and culture are created), from the physical sphere in the dialogue on how to create an arcology can be seen through our transportation needs. Cities that are designed for pedestrians are going to be compact, designed for mass transportation needs, not the needs of individuals using private transportation such as the automobile to travel miles and miles to get from here to there in urban sprawl. A society focused on supporting the use of the private automobile at the expense of developing mass transportation obviously values private wealth and classism rather than equal opportunity for all citizens including the young and the old to meet their transportation needs without causing stress to the global ecology. Taking care of the transportation needs of everyone instead of the privileged class who can afford and have the skills needed to drive cars is a different psychological state of mind than only thinking about the needs of the few.

Even though the official word at Arcosanti is that they are trying to create the world's first car-free city, private cars are very much a necessity for residents of Arcosanti. Those with cars are a privileged class at Arcosanti and those without cars feel trapped on site. Since there is no community car that residents can share, people without cars are at the mercy of those with cars to give them rides off site. This is not the way to create a lean society model when some people on site have one, two and even seven cars and other people have no access to

automobiles. Those who are living the leanest lifestyle of not owning a car are at a disadvantage to those who have the power of private automobile transportation.

Soleri, of course, is one of the car owners. He does not concern himself with the lives those without cars who have difficulty finding rides off site to visit the doctor for example. He will say that they are a poor community. Other managers have told me that in the past they have had communal cars, but the people who used them did not know how to take care of them and so their need for a communal car was suspended. Soleri needs a private car to commute back and forth to his single family house in Phoenix where he lives alone at his Consanti Foundation compound. At Arcosanti no resources are provided to train people to learn to value communal property. So it is understandable why communal property is not taken care of when workshoppers come to the project from mainstream society.

Soleri has chosen not to take a serious look at the psychological space within an arcology. After the arcology is built, he says, it will be up to the people who live there to decide on their governance and economic structure. What he fails to acknowledge is that certain political, cultural, and economic forces are responsible for building the arcology in the first place and it is those powers that will determine the social architecture within the container of an arcology. Onsite coordinator Tomiaki Tamura said to me that Soleri's "lean society" concept is pure music (the social architecture). So, who is Soleri trying to fool by telling us he is only building the instrument (the architecture)?

***Politics of Arcology***

Even though Soleri says that arcology cannot exist without "the lean society model" he also has stated that any sort of governance and economic structure could work within an arcology—totalitarianism, fascism, capitalism, socialism, communism, democracy or autocracy. In his worldview, political and economic frameworks are secondary to building the architectural foundation. As the master architect of Arcosanti, he feels it is not his place to discriminate or make ethical judgements about political structures. For him the container is apolitical. One influential architects on thinking, Le Corbusier, felt the same way and would have worked for the Nazis if they had given him the chance to build his "Radiant City." Jonathan Barnett writes in The Elusive City: Five Centuries of Design, Ambition and Miscalculation,

Le Corbusier himself made no secret of his belief that city design required an autocratic government that would put someone like himself in charge of all new building. He even made a little sketch of a government decree that he believed should put the implementation of the Voisin Plan in motion. For Le Corbusier, power was more important than ideology. He was a member of the proto-fascist Redressement Francais during the 1920s, sought to work for the Soviets, visited Italy and wrote favorably of Mussolini, and then spent eighteen months after the German occupation in 1941 trying to persuade the Nazi-sponsored Vichy government of France to implement his plan for Algiers. (115)

In the '70s Soleri went to visit the Shah of Iran in hopes of building an arcology for him. He did not get to talk with the Shah directly, but with a female relative. The final outcome of the

meeting was they were not interested in the arcology idea because people living so close together in an arcology could lead to more open communication. My purpose here is to point out that perhaps if given the chance to build an arcology, Soleri would not care if his client is a notorious human rights abuser the world over.

Clearly there are ethics intrinsic to architecture that determine if the culture is one based on individual liberties and social creativity or one that it based on social conformity and mental slavery. It is ironic that Soleri invented the word, "esthe-quity" to describe the need to combine the word aesthetics and equity as a founding principle of arcology. In order to create a society based on "esthe-quity," then do we have to think in terms of equity and how to redistribute power and wealth fairly in order to create a beautifully ordered arcology? These are major themes running through 2,000 years of experiments in communal living. Soleri rejects such thinking. He treats communal studies as irreverent to the Arcosanti project! But for him, people don't count. Pouring concrete *is* what counts.

Since Soleri is only concerned with building a container, he doesn't think about the people part of the Arcosanti design. People friendly "frills" such as sound proofing, heat insulation, sustainable energy sources, handicap access, being able to grow enough food for the community, child safe spaces, or the various housing needs of people are ignored. I do not think he worries about the café being infested with roaches or that the vegetables he ships into the café are conventionally grown with pesticides from California. Since he does not live at Arcosanti full time it does not bother him that his architecture is too cold in the winter and too hot in the summer or that the "cubes" provided for the workers are substandard housing. He has a good view from his apartment window of "Camp." Camp is the workshopper shanty town. Meanwhile Soleri preaches to the workers at his "School of Thought" sessions about his ideas of equity that will happen at the time of the Big Crunch billions of years from now. Although he does not want his arcology theory or Arcosanti to be viewed as a utopian experiment he is guilty of building such a structure. Leach explains, "Utopian architectural visions came to be seen as abstract aesthetic experiments of an architectural elite out of touch not only with the taste but also, more importantly, with the practical needs of the populace" (11). Soleri does not care about the needs of the populace at Arcosanti.

By ignoring the function of community and cocreative public space within his pedestrian city model, Soleri fails to address the role community and public space plays in the design process. This leads to a distorted view of reality as if the autocratic father architect can know all and be all to the people, never asking the people what they need. Arcosanti becomes part of what cultural critics call "architecture of spectacle" because what it is designed for is to create an image, are not for people. Leach writes,

The sensory stimulation induced by these images may have a narcotic effect that diminishes social and political awareness, leaving architects cosseted within their aesthetic cocoons, remote from the actual concerns of everyday life. In the intoxicating world of the image, it is argued, that aesthetics of architecture threaten to become the anaesthetics of architecture. The intoxication of the aesthetic leads to an aesthetics of intoxication, and a consequent lowering of critical awareness (viii).

Arcosanti, then, becomes as unreal a living space for the general populace as living at Disneyland would be. Tourists can see no way to participate in the project other than through virtual participation of donating money. The best they can do is to take a one hour tour and during that time realize that Arcosanti is really not a viable alternative to the urban sprawl since it too is trapped in the hyperreality of the ideal image. Arcosanti becomes part of the make-believe world of the culture of consumption, as fake as a Hollywood stage set rather than a ***real*** alternative. Arcosanti provides no way for tourists to think in terms of selling their houses to move into an "ecological architecture" that supports a green lifestyle. Why? Because Arcosanti is not a sustainable community. Fritjof Capra writes "This, in a nutshell, is the great challenge of our time: to create sustainable communities--that is to say, social and cultural environments in which we can satisfy our needs and aspirations without diminishing the chances of the next generation" (6).

Unfortunately for Arcosanti and for the world, the spectacle architecture of Arcosanti is built upon the same one-sided top-down dysfunctional hierarchy as in the old civilization that doesn't allow for individual grass-roots democratic "decentralization" of power that is supportive and encourages the cocreative process outlined by Hubbard's Conscious Evolution. It makes arcology an objective model that has no subjective core.

Even though Soleri writes about the "internalization of arcology," in practice he ignores the subjective core of the project leaving the project without a balance between the external and the internal, the physical and the psychological, the individual and the universal, the spiritual and the material, mind and matter. This division between the mind and matter, etc., is a false duality that only causes us to not be able to think in holistic terms vital to being able to build an evolutionary arcology. An evolutionary architecture needs an evolutionary social theory—conscious evolution-- to inspire people to want to participate in cocreating a radically new lifestyle. Hubbard writes, "It is a vision of the birth of a universal species, a quantum jump from Homo sapiens to Homo 'universalis,' from the self-conscious human to the cosmic conscious, cocreative human" (54). This quantum transformation in consciousness requires a new form to house ourselves in, aligning ourselves in a more wholesome relationship with nature. Hence, among the "cultural creatives" there is a psychological necessary for constructing an arcology to accommodate a conscious evolution.

### *The Oppression of Synergic Power at Arcosanti*

I do not completely fault Soleri for his lack of subjective understanding. To create both a social architecture and a physical architecture for a new paradigm is too much to ask of one human being. That is why a collective sense of reality is needed for a project on the level of building an arcology. So perhaps what is needed to evolve our physical structures is not autocratic domination but *synergic power.*

Synergic power is the "power to use with people, not over or against them." In their book Synergic Power beyond Domination and Permissiveness, James H. and Marge Craig write, "By synergic power we mean: the capacity of an individual or group to increase the satisfactions of all participants by intentionally generating increased energy and creativity, all

of which is used to co-create a more rewarding present and future" (62). They say that synergy occurs when unlike elements work together to create "desirable results unobtainable from any combination of independent efforts" (62). This does not mean that we would not have leaders, only that leaders "shares both his [sic] vision and his [sic] knowledge, when he [sic] encourages a free and open sharing among his [sic] fellows of their knowledge and desires, and guides a synthesis of all these toward creating and carrying out jointly-devised programs" (62).

Hubbard has a similar idea, "For in the process of coming together to solve problems, we ourselves are changed, our genius codes join, and something greater than ourselves emerges from our union with other kindred souls" (153). Examples of synergic power are rare in human history. But so is creating a new archetype in architecture!

Throughout history we see the use of what the authors call *directive power.* Directive power is used to increase the satisfaction of the individual by intentionally shaping and using the behavior of others to advance his interests. Directive power uses coercion and manipulates people to act against their better judgement acting against their own interests and the interests of others. It dehumanizes people by making them oblivious to the fact that they are responsible for their own actions. In such a system, one places accountability for one's actions on external forces, not within themselves. In directive power, one might say, "I was only following orders," to justify acts of oppression, genocide and exploitation of workers around the world for the wealth and power of the few. Directive power is used to plan and enact wars. In Soleri's case directive power is used to build an unsustainable city.

To create and maintain peace requires synergy through "sharing power, exchanging ideas, expressing concern for each other's need, and jointly devising solutions that answer to the needs of all." (62) The authors ask this extremely important question, "Does the human species have the capacity to build communities and societies that promote the actualization of all their members' human potential? After all, if people are inherently incapable of effectively working together without strong directive leadership there's little point in looking toward synergic power to humanize society, and we should probably direct our efforts toward transferring the control of society and the world from exploitive oligarchies to the most benevolent despots we can find or can develop" (91). The authors admit that for synergic enlightenment to be demonstrable we have to "design and build a caring community or society fit for fully evolved humans" (84). Isn't this really what Arcosanti is out to be about?

By not allowing the arcology idea to join with ideas resonating the same quality and ability to move humanity in a life affirming direction, that is, hauling the phenomena of synergic power-- Soleri has built a moat around Arcosanti. It becomes a gated community where he attempts to control thought. Words such as "spirit," "mind," "utopia," "future," are seen as being part of an animistic world view and are scorned by the founder and his followers as being delusional. For Soleri, life is nothing but science, chemistry in our brains making constantly changing geometric patterns.

Seeing life in terms of material science fits right into the current "metaparadigm" that states as Peter Russell, author of the Global Brain Awakes writes in his Internet slideshow, "Science,

Consciousness and God," "the real world is the material world. Space, time and matter are primary." Metaparadigms are the paradigms behind the paradigms. In Russell's way of thinking the new metaparadigm states that "consciousness is as real and fundamental as space, time and matter." Everything we know is "in the mind." Or, as it was written in the Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation, "Matter is derived from mind, not mind from matter." Or as my mentor Dame Phyllis Rodin says, "We are not the body. We are in a body."

But for Soleri there is no mind or spirit. There is only brain. Soleri fails to comprehend the words of Capra when he writes, "Ultimately, deep ecological awareness is spiritual or religious awareness. When the concept of the human spirit is understood as the mode of consciousness in which the individual feels a sense of belonging, of connectedness to the cosmos as a whole, it becomes clear than ecological awareness is spiritual in its deepest essence" (7). Because of this intellectual *invisible* gate that Soleri has mentally constructed by saying that there is no spiritual dimension to "ecological architecture," Arcosanti becomes a Paolo cult. The almost impossibility of new ideas joining with his own is the antithesis of growth. Arcosanti has changed little in twenty years, crumbling apart before it is well begun, let alone completed. It has become more on the lines of a Paolo mansion, rather than the collective effort a city-making project demands.

What I fault Soleri for is not being able to listen to people who have other insights into the theory of arcology. It is as if he is the sole owner of the idea, his intellectual property. Perhaps it is a problem with ego. He is stuck in the 20th Century model of the isolated genius working to save the human species alone in an alienated world. What hubris to think that since he coined the word of arcology he is in sole possession of it, especially since the ideas of high density population surrounded by recreational or agricultural land--the essence of the arcology concept-- can be witnessed in the Native American ruins at such places as Tuzigoot and Montezuma's Castle; just down the highway from Arcosanti. When someone offers constructive criticism necessary for improving the place for the people who live there, Soleri's typical response to her or him is, "If you don't like what I'm are going at Arcosanti, then get off my mesa!" Constructive criticism is not welcome.

***Collective Unconsciouness***

It is much more likely that arcology, even though the ideas were crystallize through Soleri, is part of what Carl Jung calls the collective unconsciousness, that is, archetypes we all share and collectively need to be conscious of in order for the sustainable city-making process to emerge. Hubbard asks, "We now know that a plan of action or program is encoded in the genes of every living organism that guides it from conception through gestation, birth, maturation, and death. Planet Earth is a living system. Is it not possible, then, that there is a prepatterned (but not a predetermined) pattern or tendency, an encoded design for planetary evolution just as there is for biological evolution? (18) What I am suggesting is that arcology is such a prepattern. We all have a stake in arcology, every person, plant and animal in the world. The economic and social structures at Arcosanti should reflect our stake. But they do not.

Even in science, the model of one individual genius making a revolutionary break through

doesn’t work in a world where a combination of knowledge is required in order to understand the way the universe works. Micho Kaku writes in his book Visions, "of course, no one person can invent the future. There is simply too much accumulated knowledge, there are too many possibilities and too many specializations. In fact, most predictions of the future have floundered because they have reflected the eccentric, often narrow viewpoints of a single individual" (ix). In order to comprehend universal patterns central to constructing an evolutionary architecture, it requires us to recognize relationships with our intellectual peers who are working in different disciplines within a similar value system. We begin to not focus on "basic building blocks, but on basic principles of organization" (Capra 1996, 30), recognizing that reality consists of relationships rather than concrete building blocks. Capra writes,

Ultimately — as quantum physics showed so dramatically — there are no parts at all. What we call a part is merely a pattern in an inseparable web of relationships. Therefore the shift from parts to the whole can also be seen as a shift from objects to relationships. In a sense, this is a figure/ground shift. In the mechanistic view, of the world is a collection of objects. These, or course, interact with one another, and hence there are relationships among them. But the relationships are secondary…In the systems view, we realize that the objects themselves are networks of relationships embedded in larger networks. For the system thinker the relationships are primary (37).

In the new scientific paradigm, ecology, is perceived as networks of relationships within networks of relationships. If ecology is networks, then it would seem logical to think that ecological architecture is not based on building blocks, but networks of relationships, not hierarchies where one order is master over another, but a system where no part is more fundamental than another since they make up the web of life. It also means being able to bond with like-minded people out of the love for the beauty of recombination. As they say, "the whole is greater than the sum of the parts." An integrated whole arises because of the relationship between the parts.

If this is true then no man or woman has the power to pull the whole together alone. That is the basic idea behind my "two as one world philosophy" concept that attempts to unite arcology and erotic love into an evolved awareness, what Hubbard calls "suprasex." Hubbard explains, "The next stage of sexuality, suprasex, occurs when our genius is aroused and we desire to join our genius to cocreate. Suprasexual passion increases in the convergence zone. We are vocationally aroused at the level of our genius. Instead of joining our genes to have a child, we join our genius to give birth to our full potential selves and to work that expresses our combined love…. Brilliant ideas are triggered by the presence of others who reinforce our own potential" (156). She goes on to use another new word, "telerotics". This word is a synthesis of *telos*, the study of the end and eros, passionate love. She concludes, "In conscious evolution we become "telerotic" in love with the fulfillment of the potential of the whole" (93).

Since we are embodied consciousnesses this means that forming community with like minded visionary thinkers, a task that Soleri has difficulty doing even though he has created the physical space in order to do so, is paramount to our survival. But, of course, Soleri would

need to learn how to share power and collaborate on strategies for our cultural renewal with individuals who are also working on the development of the arcology theory and practice, something, in my opinion, he has yet to do. In the autocratic model that Soleri has embedded himself in for over 30 years, it seems like an impossible task for him to love and honor the gifts others bring to the arcology project. But Hubbard's writing gives us hope. She prophecies,

When we understand our evolutionary potential, however, and awaken to our emerging social, spiritual, and scientific capacities to fulfil an evolutionary agenda, new political leadership will cocreate and consciously choose the meme needed to empower it. Society will be activated with excitement and hope as creative possibilities call forth the potential of millions.

Could this meme be arcology? It will take millions of enlightened people to move us to build a network of arcologies on Earth and in Outer Space, all energized by a world energy grid of renewable power. So what is stopping the genius in Soleri from being able to bond with people who can help him manifest the dream of arcology? Why is the great man Soleri having such difficultly engaging in conscious evolution?

***Memes and the Poetics of Love***

After trying to personally engage with Soleri on an idea level for the past year and a half and having studied his architecture and philosophy, I feel the problem is sexual discrimination at the meme level. The poetics of Soleri's thinking is that we are moving towards what he calls the Omega Seed at the end of time. But when I said to him that if there is an Omega Seed at the end of time, then there has got to be an Alpha Ovum at the new beginning, he harshly rejected that idea insulting me by saying that all I thought about was sex. He told me that I had no future with the project which led to my termination.

What I had to conclude from this rejection is that what Soleri fears most is the power of women to give birth. Even though in suprasexual relationships, the goal is to join memes through cocreation and not necessarily the physical procreation of other human beings, cultural evolution deals with the birth of ideas that are then made visible through the noosphere. To engage in metaphysical birth process that conscious evolution requires means that Soleri could not keep his position as the autocrat over the arcology project. Conception takes more than one. Women's role in the cultural birth process could not be ignored. In essence, he would have to acknowledge the need for suprasex and the partnerships that arise through the joining together of memes and genes for the greater good of the project. But in order to do this, he would have to surrender his male superiority and embrace the invisible powers of *teleros,* the bond that might be the grand unifying theory of arcology. This is difficult for Soleri to do since he junks the feminist movement elevating women to be engaged with society on equal positions with men. He likes the word "femininity," but not feminism. After all, in his authoritarian way of thinking, what woman could possibly be equal to, or even rise above, his creative genius? Soleri would benefit by contemplating the following quote by Walter and Lao Russell from their book, The World Crisis: Its Explanation and Solution,

Strangely enough, the world has not yet discovered that the motivating lever of Creation is the universal interchange between father and mother halves of one whole. Whatever is created, whether mineral, vegetable or animal, is given its existence by the power extended to it by equal interchange between the equal male and female halves of Creation. Because of the failure of science to recognize this vital, basic principle of existence, so obvious in Nature everywhere, and so dynamically manifested in the electric current, the world has had to pay a dreadful price. The chemist can plainly see this male and female interplay in the perfect cube which results from the balanced matter of sodium and chlorine and in the imperfect cube distortions which are the result of unbalanced matings, such as sodium with bromine, iodine or fluorine.

Perhaps the male egoism would not allow the male to promulgate this idea of equality. It had to await the inner vision of a woman whose life was dedicated to the correction of this tragic unbalance, which is now causing the collapse of man-made civilization" (106).

During one of the weekly "School of Thought" sessions, I asked Soleri if he had a creative partnership with his now deceased wife Colly. His answer was that she was not interested in his architectural ideas, did not help him in formulating his notions of arcology and his philosophy of the Omega Seed. She did support him by being his helpmate, providing money from her inheritance to build his project, and she raised his children along with doing his house and bookkeeping. He said that what she wanted was to be a traditional wife. Apparently he did not have the transformative, cocreative type marriage that the Russells were talking about when they wrote,

Masculinity cannot become completely exalted without balancing it with femininity. Nature's law demands the union of equal and opposite mates in all things—spiritual, mental and physical — in order to consummate her ideas of Creation…. Until this world-home is equally motivated by man and woman it will be unbalanced in the measure of that inequality. Also, as long as the motive of money comes before the welfare of man [sic], our civilization will be increasingly decadent until all that is good and lovely will again go out of it, as it did in the third to twelfth centuries" (138).

Even though Soleri was able to procreate with his wife, he seems to have been unable to cocreate with her or with his other lovers in order to form the social architecture of sexual equality necessary for providing wise and balanced guidance to make Arcosanti all that it could be as a model of an alternative way of life.

***Lessons Learned***

The most important lesson I learned while living at Arcosanti is that the physical structure can only go so far in making a better environment. The way people think and their attitudes toward each other are the essential factors in creating a healthy and peaceful environment. An environment where people are encouraged to work on ideas that they love and that contribute to our understanding of the whole. Architecture is created for people's happiness and survival — a way to bring the whole together-- not the other way around. I also realized that without a new political power base that a partnership society provides, an evolutionary architecture is

not going to generate the massive labor and resources required to produce major building projects such as building an arcology demands.

My goal here is to reinforce in readers the idea that sexual politics and architecture are integrally connected. In order to address our pressing social and environmental problems caused by human habitat and its artificial "separation" from the ecology, I want to address it coming from an ecofeminist, neutopian perspective because pulling together the physical and the psychological space is a neutopian project involving a number of different disciplines to work in unison. Lets call it, education in action or "actucation," the embodiment of changing thought patterns in an arcological form. Every cell within the individual's body comes aware of itself on the microcosmic and macrocosmic scales, understanding its place within the ever-changing whole of an arcology.

Even though I feel that addressing the problem of developing an alternative economic model based on workers cooperatives is critical to its success, it is not where my expertise lies. Creating an arconomics (arcology and economics) is someone else's cosmic job, even though I feel the knowledge that I bring forth in the dialogue — the importance of building sustainable loving relationships, the essence of community development--is essential to build an environmental sound sustainable economy.

***Sexual Architecture within an Arcology***

My task, then, is to focus on a fundamental problem, sexual division and the need to create a partnership society (the two as one world philosophy) as the foundation of the arcology model. Looking at how love and family relationships are changing changing in the 21st Century, we must ask: what kind of architectural structure is needed to support loving relationships of all kinds? To answer this question we must visualize and enact a society of sexual balance within an arcological blueprint. We must establish a society that honors equality and difference as core principles. Some are terming this core value of building a partnership society as "the politics of meaning" (Michael Lerner) or "holistic politics" (Marianne Williamson), or a "spiritual democracy" (Frederick Kettner), or "ecolibrium democracy" (Wulf Zendik). It is what I called the democracy/meritocracy form of governance/education. Ken Wilber likes to use the term holocracy to describe the order of things and Barbara Marx Hubbard calls the transfiguration of democracy, a synocracy.

The way that I understand these new terms is that the basic trouble with our civilization is the inequality of women and men in decision-making positions and world-affairs. Soleri's case believes he can create an arcology without the equal contribution of women in the creative idea process. This is an impossibility in nature because it violates the principle of cocreation. As long as City in the Image of Man goes unchallenged and the autocrat is the sole master of Arcosanti, it will be a city of unhappiness, void of the balance of love, a society at war with itself. Walter and Lao Russell write,

When men and women learn that secret of power which lies in balanced interchange in all things between the male and female power-force of the universe, they will find that this equal interchange is the love-principle upon which the universe is founded. They will also find that

their power multiplies in the measure in which they have discovered it. In this discovery also lies the secret of happiness, for happiness cannot be acquired like a commodity, purchased or otherwise. Happiness, peace and love are eternally existent and can be acquired by mankind [sic] in one way only, and that one way is by balanced matings in every transaction of life" (111).

Building a civilization on networks of love and sexual equality moves us beyond the American Dream house of the patriarchal family into the realization of one-whole-world family living in the communalism of arcology. As civilization begins the miniaturization process and mutates into arcology, the conquest and domination model of development no longer is relevant. Intraspection and developing the capacities of the character and soul are needed in the new world of arcologies. We move from a civilization into what Kettner calls a "soulization," a world in which wo/man's highest potentials are liberated as the collective soul becomes aware of itself. Such a world is based on what Wulf Zendik calls, "The Genius Principle."

Wulf Zendik explains the principle as, "when a person is made aware of or brought together with this particular task, craft or art, she or he has then found a work which may be performed more efficiently than any other — a work at which they can take great joy and pride and of which that person is potentially a genius, a natural genius…a society consisting of such people, people who are geniuses in their individual contributions, such grow into a more efficient and powerful, a Creative Society---an instructive and inspiring example to the world — a genius society. This is our objective at Zendik Farm."

At Arcosanti, Soleri has not found the key to freeing the creativity of people. At his place, there is only room for one genius, himself. Arol Zendik writes, "The function of a healthy society is to find out what people love to do. We give people the opportunity to find and pursue their interests and when they do, these geniuses appear that were there all the time, but hidden." At Arcosanti, no effort is put into finding out what residents love to do, what their past education and training is, or what skills and knowledge they bring to the project. Most of the workshoppers who come to Arcosanti have a deep interest in working on a prototype city that has the potential to live in a more harmonious way with nature. What they find out is that the management team does not want to listen to them. The management team does not want to know how they feel they can best contribute to the movement towards building a world of arcologies.

The move from the external power of civilization towards the inner or the authentic power of a soulization can be seen in Gary Zukav's book, The Seat of the Soul. He says that we are evolving from a five-sensory personality to a multi-sensory personality. Five-sensory personality believes the Judeo-Christian worldview that we have only one lifetime to participate in the process of evolution and that the only type of power that exists is material, external or directive power. In this worldview, it is believed that the self cannot exist outside one's lifetime. This worldview leads to the "survival of the fittest" mentality that defines the most evolved organism as the one who is on top of the food chain, who can "ensure its own survival" and be able to "serve its self-preservation" (21). Zukav calls for us to comprehend a deeper understanding of evolution. The truly evolved organism understands that we are networks of interrelationships of organisms, symbiotically living in self-organizing ways. This

deeper understanding of our self and the environment leads to not living for only our physical survival but for our planetary survival, that is, for the survival of others.

The multi-sensory personality realizes that the soul can exist outside of time. This idea compliments the idea of the Buddhist Bodhisattvas (awakening warriors) who out of love and compassion "has attained a realization of Bodhicitta, a mental state characterized by the spontaneous and genuine aspiration to attain full enlightenment in order to be of benefit to all beings." They are reborn into the human species until there is planetary salvation, for since we are organic creatures, without the all, that is, the biosphere, the one cannot be saved since human beings a mere part of the web of life. Joanna Macy writes in The World as Self, the World as Lover,

The awakening to our true self is the awakening to that entirely, breaking out of the prison-self of separated ego. The one who perceives this is the bodhisattva—and we all bodhisattvas because we are all capable of experiencing that — it is our true nature. We are profoundly interconnected and therefore we are able to recognize and act upon our deep, intricate, and intimate inter-existence with each other and all beings. That true nature of ours is already present in our pain for the world. When we turn our eyes away from that homeless figure, are we indifferent or is the pain of seeing him or her too great? Do not be easily duped about the apparent indifference of those around you (191).

Multi-sensory individuals realize both the inner and outer discoveries of science, that there is both physical and nonphysical dynamics at work in the Multiverse. But the five-sensory person can only see external power, as in Soleri's case, even though the idea of arcology using the formula of what David Suzuki in his book The Sacred Balance calls the four "R's"-- reduce, reuse, recycle and redesign-- is a multi-sensory concept because designing a new architectural foundation requires looking towards building a network for generations of come. One could call acts of long-term cocreation living for the future in the here and now.

As multi-sensory personalities, Zukav writes that we are moving into an age of spiritual partnerships. He defines spiritual partnerships as people coming together with the purpose of helping equals achieve spiritual growth. He says that we are moving away from the archetype of traditional marriage where coupling is based on assisting each other on the physical survival level to obtain shelter, food and water, energy, reproduction and protection— from marriages that "reflects the perception of power as external"-- to a world where the archetypes of marriage reflect an inner necessary to combine memes in acts of cocreation. Obtaining material wealth does not become the glue of marriages, and spiritual growth toward conscious evolution becomes the genuine bond between lovers.

The sad fact is Soleri rejects the very knowledge that could have the authentic power to move us into a world of arcologies. Zukav writes, "Communities, nations and cultures — all of our collective creations — are built upon the values and perceptions of the five-sensory personality, the values they are reflected by the archetype of marriage" (162). Until Soleri is reborn into a multi-sensory perspective in order to find union with his creative soulmate, I don't think he will have the knowledge to complete the Arcosanti project with integrity, sexual love and personal freedom as its core. Lao Russell writes,

If women alone controlled all the institutions of civilization, as man now controls them the resultant effeminate world would be as chaotic in sentimental impracticability as it now is in the boomerang effects caused by masculine ego.

I do not mean that every institution or business should be staffed equally with men and women, but I do mean that the feminine influence should not only be equal in effect but equal in authority. The wife of the President of the United States should have the same authority vested in her as is vested in her husband, instead of being limited to influencing him in an advisory capacity without authority. If husband and wife authority is not feasible, then there should be two presidents, man and woman, of equal authority who must agree as one, as they do in their own homes (134).

Presently, the Consanti Foundation has one president, Paolo Soleri. No one is equal to his word. When his wife was alive, her position in the organization was vice-president.
Being the only woman involved with the Paradox Project for more than a year, I watched the demise of the program run by males who I felt never really listened to my ideas. I experienced them excusing me from important meetings and dialogues, not returning my e-mails, and finally pushing me out of a Paradox Project of which I was the onsite coordinator. I have witnessed the male hierarchy at Arcosanti and how it attempted to crush all the goodness and evolutionary ideas I brought to the project.

Whatever one calls this new bond of union that is needed to heal the Arcosanti project, it is clear that new terms are necessary to describe the revolutionary social structures on our evolutionary cultural horizon. But to succeed in making this quantum transformation in human relationships, arcology is indispensable. The struggle to free eros from five centuries of authoritarian architecture is indeed a grand goal that must be accomplished if we want to create a sustainable, synergic lifestyle. But I dare say that this goal cannot be accomplished without the fusion of a social and physical architecture — the yin and yang of life-- a holistic approach to cultural evolution that could finally make Arcosanti a good place to live. Is there any other way to end fascist architecture than through the power of true love?

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# Part 2
# Communities

## Camphill Ecovillages
## Jan Martin Bang

**Abstract**

The Camphill Villages were started in Scotland in the 1940's by refugees from Nazi Austria inspired by the Anthroposophical ideas developed by Rudolf Steiner in the early years of this century. Their main activity was to educate handicapped children, and this was extended to adults in the mid-1950s with the founding of Botton Village in Yorkshire, England. Today there are about 100 villages world-wide, in twenty countries, mainly in Europe, but also in North America, South Africa, Russia and Eastern Europe.

Most villages comprise a biodynamic farm, and various workshops including bakeries, weaveries, and other handicraft workshops. There is generally a high degree of self-sufficiency and a good deal of environmental awareness. The spiritual and cultural life of the communities is based on Anthroposophical ideas such as the threefold social organism. The aim is to create a society where handicapped people, and others damaged by mainstream society, can fit in, contribute usefully and feel themselves to be valued members with a respect for each individual soul spirit.

New villages are created every year, especially in Eastern Europe and Russia, and links are being forged with similar initiatives in countries such as India and Israel. Environmental developments have created wide use of the Flow Form and Root Zone sewage treatment, and experiments in ecological building techniques.

The presentation will finish with an introduction to the Bridge Building School, a new educational initiative at Solborg Camphill Village in Norway. We see ourselves as a training centre for ecological techniques for use in Camphill and Ecovillages world-wide, with an emphasis on building using environmentally sound materials and developing projects in Eastern Europe. We are working closely with the Scandinavian Straw and Mud Building Association and the local Permaculture Group.

During the 1930s a group of intellectuals began meeting regularly in Vienna. They were inspired by Anthroposophy, the teachings of Rudolf Steiner, and how these could be put into practice in the fields of health and education. Because these people were to create one of the largest communal living organisations in the modern world, it would be appropriate to record the names of some of these founders: Karl and Tilla Konig, Alice and Peter Roth, Anke and Thomas Weihs, Trude Amann, Barbara Lipsker, Marie Korach, Carlo Pietzner, and Alex Baum.

As the political situation in Europe became more threatening, they decided they had to move. France, Cyprus and Ireland were all considered in their turn, but the Anschluss in 1938, when

Nazi Germany invaded Austria, forced their hand. Intellectuals and Jews could no longer stay in Vienna and for a while they were dispersed throughout Europe. Karl Konig went to London, and stayed in contact with the rest of the group while he looked for a place where they could gather once more. This remarkable group of people came together again near Aberdeen, to continue with their work.

They moved to Kirkton House in the Dee Valley in the beginning of 1939 and began taking in handicapped children. When the Second World War started some months later, the group was registered as enemy aliens and all the men were interned on the Isle of Man. The women carried on and a larger house was found and they moved there to Camphill House on June 1st 1940. A few months later the men returned, and the community then comprised of some 30 people of which just less than half were handicapped children. It was then understood to be the first private institution for such children in the country. The founders saw themselves as political refugees working with social refugees.

During the 1940s, the community grew by acquiring additional houses and properties in the Dee Valley: Heathcote House, and Newton Dee Estate with 170 acres. By 1949 there were 180 children living in 5 houses, and a Camphill Seminar Course was begun for young people who wanted to learn about Curative Education.

The 1950s saw the Camphill Movement grow and develop, reaching out to England, Ireland, Germany, Holland, South Africa and the United States. For the first decade and a half the work of the Camphill Houses was centered round educating and caring for handicapped children. In the early 1950s, Konig began to think about more extended communities, based on work in farms, gardens, and workshops, where handicapped adults would live together with co workers in extended family situations. This was first put into practice at the Botton Estate in 1954, a property given to the Camphill Movement by the Macmillan family, and the first Camphill Village as we know it today was established. Botton Village created a model which has been the basis for Camphill for nearly half a century. Today, Botton contains well over 300 residents in four clusters spread throughout the valley leading up to the North York Moors.

The 1960s saw this change from schools for children to villages for adults happening throughout the Camphill Schools, and a consolidation and reorganisation of the Camphill Movement. It was divided into 6 regions, and Camphill House in Scotland was no longer the headquarters, but of course remained a focal point. During this decade villages were established in Norway and in Germany.

During the decade of the 1970s new villages were founded in Finland, France, Brazil and Botswana. Eurythmy schools were established in England and the education of co-workers was strengthened through the publication of books and periodicals, and an increasing acceptance of Curative Education and Social Therapy as a serious profession. Social Therapy can be seen as a way of creating situations where handicapped people and others (so called normal!) can exercise their educational potential in society. Karl Konig died in 1966 and did not live to see the establishment of the Austrian Camphill Village Liebenfehls in 1976, which marked a return to the country which the original founders had left in 1938.

By the end of the 1980s the Camphill Movement consisted of over 70 communities in a dozen or more countries. During this decade most of the founders had passed away, and the movement had come of age, being run by 2nd or even 3rd generation co-workers. New developments were taking place in care for the elderly and the setting up of the first urban communities. Government regulations, outside consultancy and the question of professional staff qualifications became increasingly relevant, and brought the movement closer to the 'establishment'. During this time, care for the mentally handicapped by state institutions became more enlightened, and the pioneering work done by the Camphill Communities began to make itself felt, at least in those western European countries where the movement was well developed. The 'establishment' also came closer to Camphill,

With the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the collapse of the Eastern European and Soviet Communist regimes, a vigourous expansion eastwards took place. These were to a large extent the result of contacts and initiatives from the Norwegian Camphill Movement. In Norway the first village was established in 1966 at Vidarasen and by the beginning of the 90s the community had grown to about 150 persons, with five other villages spread throughout the south of the country, each one with between 30 and 60 inhabitants. They had established broad cultural and social contacts, and a solid economic base. When the possibility of establishing eastern villages arose there were many that were in a strong position to take up the challenge. During the 90s villages were established at Pachla in Estonia, Woitowcka in Poland, Svetlana in Russia and Rozkalni in Latvia. Another village is now being established in Czechia and there is talk about possibilities in Siberia and Kazan. Altogether a total of nearly 100 people are living in these places.

During the 1970s and 80s, after a great deal of media attention in the 60s, large numbers of alternative communities were formed in the countries in which Camphill was operating. The relationship between these and the Camphill Communities would form an extremely interesting field of study, but falls somewhat outside the scope of this presentation. I have a strong feeling that many of the features that attracted people to alternative communities can be found in the Camphill Network, and will come back to this when I come to sum up.

Throughout the world today there are about 100 Camphill Communities in over 20 countries. They are organised into seven regions and a number of magazines and newsletters keep information flowing between them. Regular meetings are held within the regions, and there is a great deal of internal movement of co-workers and residents from one community to another. There is a strong element of internationalism, and even in my own small community of about forty people we counted thirteen different nations represented at a recent cultural gathering. In addition to the communities that are formal members of Camphill, there is a good deal of contact with similar communities, especially those that are also inspired by Anthroposophy and working with handicapped people.

The group that established themselves at Camphill House in 1939 were attempting to put the ideals of Anthroposophy into practice. This is a Spiritual Science based on the books and lectures given by Rudolf Steiner from about 1900 until his death in 1925. Anthroposophy proposes the physical world as a development and outgrowth of the spiritual world, and

presents a scientific method of analyzing this spiritual world. Anthroposophy was in turn inspired by Theosophy, eastern mysticism and the traditions of Gnosticism, the Rosicrucians, the Alchemists and the world view expressed by Goethe.

Steiner`s lectures and books had encouraged people in many professions to develop their fields according to the Anthroposophical world view. The most well known today are probably the Waldorf Steiner schools in the educational field, and Bio Dynamic agriculture. These concern themselves with the soul development of the child, and the spiritual aspects of soil and plant growth respectively. In addition, a great deal of work has been done in the fields of architecture, art, music, dance, health, nutrition and such technical developments as waste water treatment and food quality analysis.

The social aspects of Anthroposophy are most developed within the Camphill Villages, where the threefold division of society is regarded as a basic tool for modeling the life and structure of the community. This threefold division was presented by Steiner in lectures during the last part of the First World War and the years that followed. He based his thoughts on his study of the development of European society over the preceding centuries. In England, he saw the industrial revolution as the modernisation of economic life, leading to demands for fraternity, the development of trade unionism and labor party politics. In France under the French Revolution he saw a change in the legal life leading to demands for equality, and in Middle Europe (later unified to become Germany) changes in the spiritual life leading to demands for liberty.

Steiner traced how these three great ideals, of Fraternity, Equality and Liberty, had been corrupted by the rise of nationalism and the development of the centralised nation state. Konig further traced how this led to the insanity of Nazism, fascism and state communism after Steiner’s death. This threefold division was presented by Steiner as a way of rebuilding Europe after the disaster of the First World War, but his ideas did not gain credence, and the ideas were largely dormant until taken up by Konig in building up the Camphill communities in the 1940s and 50s. Konig took as his starting point the Anthroposophical idea of the spiritual basis of life on earth:

"A state, a people, a community, a village or a town is not merely the sum total of all the people living there but... is a higher organism. It does not consist of flesh and blood, however, but is created and formed by soul and spiritual powers."
Karl Konig, lecture at Fohrenbuhl, 29th of March 1964.

It is the analysis of this spiritual organism that concerns me here, and I would like to present it from a number of angles:

| Spiritual | Legal | Economic |
|---|---|---|
| Creed | Judiciary | Goods |
| Education | Police | Production |
| Art | Laws | Distribution |
| Research | | Trading |
| Capital | | |

The slogans of the French Revolution

| Liberty | Equality | Fraternity |
|---|---|---|

The three legged stool (Findhorn Conference 1995)

| Individual | Social | Ecological |
|---|---|---|

The three pillars of Camphill

| Comenius | Zinzendorf | Owen |
|---|---|---|

As a mirror of the plant world

| Root | Leaf | Flower |
|---|---|---|

The development of the human being (first three years)

| Thinking | Speaking | Walking |
|---|---|---|
| Feeling process | Metabolic limb system | Will process |

Rosicrucians, Alchemists, Paracelsus & processes of nature

| Salt process | Mercury process | Sulphur process |
|---|---|---|

These three spheres are always with us, they are not determinants of how we should or might behave, but an attempt to make sense of our every day lives and how we come together as human beings. One of the insights of this ‘Social Anthroposophy’ is that we are at heart social creatures, indeed, it would be impossible to think of ourselves as cut off from the rest of humanity. The few examples we have had of individuals reared in the wild by animals and having had no contact with other human beings show us that though they might physically be human, they have very few of the features which we use to differentiate between animals and human beings.

We worship and philosophise, educate, create music and art in the spiritual sphere. Here we need our freedom to develop ourselves.

We decide amongst ourselves, who is right and who is wrong in the sphere of laws and rights, and need to regard ourselves as equals, with equal rights.

We work, produce, buy and sell in the economic sphere, and need the fellowship (brotherhood and sisterhood) of looking after each other, not necessarily as equals, for clearly, some have more capacity and some have greater needs.

We have seen how the three slogans of the French Revolution fit into this threefold aspect, each one being the appropriate condition for a specific sphere. At the conference which launched the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN) at Findhorn in 1995, it was suggested that a healthy Ecovillage rested upon three legs, and that it was the balance between the three which gave the community its stability and sustainability. These three ‘legs’, the individual, the social and the ecological also represent a path of development, from the individual outwards, to our fellow individuals, and ultimately to the world surrounding us. As can be seen from the table above, they also fit in with the threefold aspect.

Konig was very inspired by three figures from history, and has often referred to them as the ‘Three Pillars of Camphill’. Johann Comenius (1592 - 1670) was convinced that peace and understanding between people would be the result of a greater wisdom that individuals could strive for, and that this be based on a regard for the spiritual nature of others. Ludwig Zinzendorf (1700 - 1760) was instrumental in forming the Moravian Brotherhood, and was convinced that community was vital in ones search for Christianity and a deeper spiritual life. This connection with the Moravian Brotherhood gives Camphill a link with today's Bruderhof and Hutterites. Robert Owen (1771 - 1858) is perhaps better known to those who have studied the growth of labour ideologies and social reform over the last two hundred years. He founded a series of communities in which members received no wages, and which have had a great deal of importance in inspiring other social innovations. These three personalities illustrate in a human way the three spheres of society, and often form the objects of study in order to deepen our understanding.

Finding patterns in the natural world, and using these to illustrate, explain and design our own needs is a process well known to those of us who use Permaculture as a design technique. Applying the same exercise to the structure and development of the human being can lead to greater insights into the social sphere. Karl Konig developed this in some depths in his lectures in 1964, and this has formed the basis for a great deal of study work within the Camphill world. It is quite usual for the villages to have extended study sessions, and work through texts in order to arrive at a greater understanding. This has the effect of raising consciousness on social issues, and ensuring that as the social dynamics create a continuous series of changes, these take place within a certain framework. For those who want to immerse themselves deeper into these speculations, Konig gives a good starting point with the alchemical processes of salt, mercury and sulphur. There is no doubt that further discussions and meditations will inspire yet deeper insights.

In the sphere of economics it is interesting to see how Anthroposophy and Marxism come close to each other, bearing in mind Marx's vision of a future society where each would produce according to his or her capability, and be rewarded according to his or her needs. This is a principle which has been taken up by the Kibbutz Movement, and has for most of its history and for most of its communities been one of the central pillars of its ideology. Anthroposophy has always distanced itself from the socialist tradition, emphasizing a more spiritual world view, and eschewing dialectical materialism. However, in the economic sphere there is no doubt that we can see a strong convergence between these two streams as ideology and philosophy are put into practice. To quote:

"In a community of people working together, the well being of the community is greater the less the individual worker claims for himself the proceeds of the work he has done and the more he makes these over to his fellow workers. Similarly he allows his own needs to be met out of the work done by others." Rudolf Steiner. The Fundamental Social Law.

How do these ideals work out in practice, in the everyday life of a Camphill Village? Within the Camphill Communities most of us live in large extended families, co-workers (both long term people with their families, and young temporary volunteers) and villagers (mentally handicapped or otherwise in need of help), sharing our lives, our meals, our living rooms and bathrooms. There may be as many as fifteen people or more gathered round the dining table three times a day. Each house has its own budget, and is run more or less autonomously by a couple of responsible co-workers, the house father and house mother. In the morning and the afternoon everyone goes to work, in a variety of workplaces. In my community at Solborg Camphill Village in Norway we have a bio-dynamic farm, extensive vegetable gardens, a bakery, a weavery, a large forest for timber and firewood, herb growing and drying, and have just begun a cheese making workshop. Other villages have workshops which produce pottery, candles, dolls or wooden toys. I have eaten meals where the table came from the carpentry shop, the table cloth from the weavery, the plates and cups from the pottery, the candles (which are lit at every meal) from the candle shop, and virtually all the food is produced by the village: bread, milk products, jams, vegetables, herb teas, honey, meat and meat products. This self sufficiency is not an end in itself, but rather a way of saving money, and ensuring that each person is employed doing something that is useful to the village, seen and felt to be doing so. In many cases in mainstream society, mentally handicapped people are peripheralised and 'looked after' and so denied an active and useful role. In the world of Camphill, every person has something to contribute, and feels self-worth even when fetching the milk or laying the table.

In addition to the work branches, there are the houses to be run, washing, cooking and cleaning. This is considered work, just as important as production and the occupation of 'housewife' or 'house mother' is as vital to the well being of the community as any other profession. Everyone has a workplace, and each contributes something useful to the running of the village, according to his or her capability. Within this sphere no money changes hands, and work is seen to be something that is freely given within the fellowship, recognising that some people have higher capabilities than others.

The farms and gardens in Camphill Villages are always bio dynamic, producing food of the highest quality while nurturing both soil and wildlife. Generally the organic waste from the kitchens is composted, usually by a village compost set up. Horse transport is quite common, being very efficient and low cost at a village scale. Villages in England have pioneered waste water treatment using ponds, reed beds and 'Flow Form' water cascades. These are now standard in the Norwegian villages, and throughout Camphill worldwide. Buildings, both communal halls and chapels, and the usually large residential houses, are largely constructed out of natural materials, and avoid the use of poisons and plastics as much as possible. However, there is still much to be done in the raising of consciousness, and in building, transport, recycling and energy use.

It is for this reason that the Bridge Building School was started at Solborg Camphill in Norway. The idea of the bridge was fundamental. On the deepest level, we want to create a bridge between the heart and the hand, between the world of spirit, where ideas arise and creativity is stimulated, and the world of materials, where our hands fashion our surroundings with a variety of tools and materials. We also strive to create a bridge between east and west, between young Norwegian people and their counterparts in eastern Europe, Latvia and Russia. Recognising that Camphill Villages are ecovillages, we want to create a link between the rising ecological consciousness and life as lived in Camphill by teaching Permaculture and creating strong links with the Norwegian Ecovillage Association, 'Kilden'. Our main educational program is a five month course in ecological building, focusing on straw bale construction. This program was first offered in the year 2000, and twelve students spent two months in Rozkalni Village in Latvia, building a straw bale house, and incorporating many other ecological features such as a 'kakel' heat retaining wood stove, passive solar heating, mud and log walls and earthen floors. The program is being offered again this year, and the focus will now be on a small straw bale family house needed at the Waldorf School connected to Svetlana Village in Russia. In 2002 the course will be expanded to a full ten months, and in cooperation with the Norwegian Clay and Straw Building Association there will be a great deal of emphasis upon practical ecological building training.

In addition to this, short courses for co-workers and villagers are breaking new ground, providing a serious educational element to village life. During the first months of this year about a hundred people have attended courses at the Bridge Building School, in Introduction Courses for young coworkers, Story Telling for Villagers, Permaculture, and professional training for Curative Education and Social Therapy. This part of the School will be developed and expanded in the future, to include biodynamic farming, nutrition and other subjects. As the Camphill Movement matures into the new century, internal changes are taking place, partly as a response to changes in the outside society, and partly as a result of internal dynamics. The Bridge Building School sees itself as a bridge between the past and the future also, and offers a place where change can be looked at and discussed by co-workers and other interested parties. Some of these changes will be concerned with the world of ideas, and these will in turn be translated into physical changes in house building or workshop construction.

I have called this presentation Camphill Ecovillages with a good reason. Within the Global Ecovillage Network, Camphill Villages have taken a very low profile, and also here, within the ICSA, this is the first time that I know of that there has been a presentation of the Camphill

Network. This network is an attempt to build an alternative to mainstream society, based upon deep thinking and a serious analysis of society's faults and how they might be repaired.

I would suggest that Camphill Villages are communes or intentional communities in the classic sense, attempts to deliberately create an alternative to mainstream society, and influence that society positively by these attempts. I would also suggest that these communities are true Ecovillages, and would score higher on the GEN profile, both socially and ecologically, than many Ecovillages within the GEN network. Many of the characteristics that attract people to alternative communities and to Ecovillages feature in the Camphill communities. There is a great deal of self sufficiency, we eat home grown, organic food, to a great extent we recycle, compost and treat our own waste, and we attempt to integrate a spiritual world view into our everyday lives. We strive to create fellowship in our economic life, and a flexible equality into our social sphere. In short, we offer an alternative way of life. As we respond to changes in our surrounding society, we question the way we do things, are willing to experiment with new ideas, and are in need of new people. I would like to close this presentation by opening a discussion on how there can be more integration between established Ecovillages, alternative communities and the Camphill network.

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Jan Martin Bang grew up in England where he was active in the Cooperative and Trade Union Movements in the 70's. He moved to Israel in 1984 and was a kibbutz member for 16 years. Since 1993 he worked on environmental projects within the Kibbutz Movement. This took him on extensive travels within the region, teaching Permaculture courses and visiting ecovillages in Egypt, Turkey, Cyprus and the Palestinian areas. He has now moved to Solborg Camphill Village with his family, and is part of the teaching team at the Bridge Building School.

# NOYANA
# Dorothee Bornath

**What is Noyana?**

At the present moment, Noyana is not a physical community that you can visit, but a growing group of friends, living all over Germany. In and around Cologne (western Germany) you'll find about half of the 40 Noyanas. Noyana consist of a mixed group of strong, young people from many walks of life. It is not a fixed or static group. Noyana is constantly developing through the contribution of the members and new people joining.

Noyana is about love of life, about having many deep relationships and wonderful friendships.

We are all interested in community and free Love. We are open for the manifold possibilities in love and relationship. There are many longterm relationships and close friendships within Noyana. What keeps us together is a kind of spirit which is formulated as "the Noyana culture idea" and strongly felt when we come together. Part of this idea or vision is a village.

We use the forum technique, from the ZEGG. Some members come from an Osho Bhagwan sannyas background who have brought us certain meditation techniques. Others contributed a method called "Open Space" It is a highly effective and efficient meeting method. Further, some are inspired by European forms of shamanism and witchcraftery. Massage and tantra.

We cooperate with other communities such as ZEGG, the tribe "Stamm Fassen" and Tamera in Portugal.

Right now, Noyana consists of forty adults, between 25 and 38 years old, and six very young children and two of school age. There is no charismatic leader, no one religious belief or a certain political goal.

Our values are transparency and communication, growth, spirituality, healing, erotic and sensuality, and joy in life.

We called ourselves "Noyana" because we often sang the song "Noyana nitini pezulu" which means "We are all together on the way to paradise". We understood that was a good theme for us.

So far as I know, the evolution of Noyana is unique.

The beginning was a youth group at the ZEGG in 1994. After some dispute with ZEGG we became independent.

The next step in our development was some kind of a "meeting culture" Although we are spread all over Germany we meet four to five times a year since 1996 to spend some days together. The meetings are organized by alternating members and take place somewhere in

Germany and they where all very intense and very different.

Since 1996 we have an internal newsletter and since 1999 we use a mailing list to communicate in between the meetings.

Over the years some new people have joined, and some others left. We found out, that people who fit will stay and the others will go.

We have created Structures to support our evolution and the spirit of Noyana. The first and most important rule is that, structures can be changed every time when there is enough energy. And individual decisions are possible at every time, even if they are "against the rules".
Concerning organizational decisions it is always the competence of the one who is active.

Since 1998 some kind of crystallization took place near Cologne. Right now, the Noyana community consists of two houses, near Cologne, where 17 adults and seven children live together. Some People who life in Cologne city and the others live elsewhere in Germany, like before.

Than there was a baby-boom. The pregnancies were mostly not planed, but very welcome. In the year 2000 six children were born, boys only.

Right now, the "Noyana Community Fläming" is coming into life. There are 19 adults with 5 very young children who are looking for a place where they can live together here in the region not far from the ZEGG-Community. This is because we believe, that it may grow like a Silicon Valley for Communities.

How does that work?

I asked myself again what makes this evolution possible?
How does it work?
Why does Noyana still exist?
And how come that Noyana is still such a powerful and strong thing?

I know that community and togetherness are deep, deep longings of everyone. We are in Community with every on and every thing on this planet. Community is anyhow.

So the interesting question is, how can we bring out the consciousness of our togetherness. What can we do to support and maintain this liberation. Or what do we have to let go for this?

I think that there are some basics. A kind of "underlying structure" which makes the process possible. I found the following factors which supported the evolution and the growth of Noyana.

We have done some things the right way, although we are not very conscious about that.

I believe that these aspects are important and interesting for everyone who is in a community building process.

1. -> That there is sympathy, friendship and love.
2. -> That there are a lot of strong individuals.
3. -> That there is the willingness for personal development and change.
4. -> That people had to be self-responsible.
5. -> That there is a complementary diversity of the members.
6. -> That we take a long time fore the organic growth.
7. -> Time, which gives space to the development of trust and the stabilization of the relationships and friendships and to becoming familiar.
8. -> That we have had a lot of intense experience and experiments together.
9. -> That there is openness for change.
10.-> And very basic, that there is this mystery, this kind of clue which is in truth a spiritual background.

When we had our first open space conference in 1999 I realised, that the principles of this Method are the way Noyana worked from the beginning.

The four principles are:
* Whoever comes it will be the right people.
* Whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened.
* Whenever it starts is the right time.
* When it's over it's over.

And than there is the law of the two feet:
* It is the law of personal choice. It enables people to participate in the ways which are the most meaningful for them.

After all, I realize, that all these ingredients support as well the development from the separated, single, individuals to human beings who are aware and free to share life and to live together in their own and right way. And I am sure that Communities in all their rich and manifold ways is the most intelligent way of living.

Our homepage is: www.noyana.de and it has pictures.
There is also a brochure from the "Noyana Community Fläming" available.

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# Tamera – A Biotope for the Healing of both Humans and Nature
## Janni Hentrich

Healing Biotopes act as "Greenhouses for Trust" and follow the original image of a universal solidarity amongst all beings.

The shape of the site is reminiscent of an eagle landing; this has been chosen as the symbol for *Healing Biotope 1 Tamera*. The Tamera site comprises 134 hectares of land in Alentejo, southern Portugal. It has two springs that provide drinking water, several ponds, two fruit groves and woodlands with cork oaks and eucalyptus. Alentejo is one of the most rural and sparsely populated areas of Europe. The people here have already lived through a lot: bitter poverty and serfdom well into the 20th century; revolution and socialism; the exodus of the youth to the towns; and now the excesses of the European Union's huge agricultural and environmental projects. In spite of all this, the friendly, open nature of the Portuguese people can be felt throughout the region. Many people are open-minded and interested in the development of the Healing Biotope. There is a beautiful neighbourly contact within the direct environs and there are good relations with the regional authorities responsible for building and environment.

The land was once well known throughout the area for its beauty and wealth of blossoming fruit trees. However, at the time of the purchase this was not really visible anymore: the woods had been felled, the meadows overgrazed, a whole hill leveled, and a large part of the site was overgrown with brushwood. Gaia-Earth's wounds were clear to see. It needed and still needs the eye of an artist and the hand of an ecologist to bring the land's magic to light again: at the Oracle Spring, the Sanctuary Pond, the Mountain of Visions and in many other places.

The geomantic lines and power points were decoded during the visits and work of specialist geomancers. The landscape healer Marko Pogacnic confirmed the supposition that key leylines and energy lines ran through the site. He also confirmed the geomantic connection to the stone circle at Evora. One of Tamera's power points, the *Great Place of Ying*, the place for the female energy, is a geomantic point for the whole of Portugal. In every respect the Tamera site revealed itself to be a good place to start working on the intentions of the Healing Biotope.

### A Lifestyle for the Future

The establishment of functioning communities is probably the most exciting and rewarding research project that can be undertaken in this day and age. Modern humans have unlearnt how to live together; now they need to learn it once again. The tasks and questions that arise in today's world are too complex to be completely seen or understood, let alone answered, by isolated people. It is not just the challenges we are facing which need communication and community, but the health of our souls as well, this demands human interconnectedness and solidarity.

How does this fit with the need for individuality and intimacy? "Individuality is a community

undertaking," say the chaos theoreticians. A person doesn't need separation or demarcation. Quite the opposite is true: he or she needs communication, contact and trust in order to develop and reveal his or her authentic individuality.

Just as a woodland is more than the sum of its trees, a community is more than simply the sum of its collected talents and skills. Community knowledge is the knowledge of how to create this 'more than'. Community arises to the extent that a group of people are capable of creating a common relationship to something objective: to a common aim, to an objective task, to a spiritual basis or to the sacred. In this sense, community means replacing the isolated ways of being with a way of being that is participatory, compassionate and universal. Acting in this way, the community members will learn how to communicate about delicate subjects, create a home and orientation for children, see and treasure a larger and more beautiful image of love and see through power structures. They will then be able to dismantle these structures by sharing responsibilities among a larger number of people. The degree of stability of a community depends upon how much truth it is prepared to integrate.

In Tamera, this community knowledge is a central sphere of research which has already, during the social experiment's years, yielded valuable insights about living together and communitarian forms of communication. The new knowledge is full of vitality and can be widely applied.

**Co-operating with all Living Beings**

By working together with animals, plants and the soil, healing work can be performed upon the organism Earth and its organs. Gaia, the Earth, must once again be covered with a protective layer of plants, humus and soil-organisms in order that it can be healthy. Humans working alone cannot achieve this: it needs the co-operation of all living beings.

Under the leadership of Jürgen Paulick, a 'Peace Garden' and a 'Permaculture Woodland Garden' are being established in Tamera. Both of these are parts of an emergent overall concept for agriculture that completely avoids exploiting animals or plants. Tamera's ecological re-cultivation also includes cautiously making contact with free-living animals, reforestation, geomantic healing with artificial-technological information carriers, the renaturalisation of the existing creeks and springs, and tending the special geomantic power points. The peace gardeners' training includes all of these subjects.

**The Peace Garden: "Friends, not Foes"**

The opinion that small animals are enemies who should be destroyed even dominates the practices of organic agriculture, with its non-toxic but nonetheless diverse combat methods. However, this destruction and control is no longer necessary: there are clear, positive results from the experiences of co-operating and communicating with so-called pests. These experiences will hopefully be deepened and utilized in the Peace Garden; the first trial area covers some 1000 m2.

The Peace Garden's gardeners face the challenge of abandoning fear and thoughts of

insufficient yields and replacing these with a loving relationship to their fellow beings in the garden. The work that has already begun includes research into communications with plants and animals as well as research into the resonance of energetic processes and vibrations, e.g. music and thoughts. The Peace Garden will reflect the overall information of the Healing Biotope in a concentrated form: contact, co-operation and trust. It is anticipated that the garden will yield food especially rich in both physiological and ethereal nutrition.

**The Agroforestry Test-Site**

The Tamera agroforestry programme combines two interests: the reforestation that is such an ecologically high priority for the whole of southern Europe and a high-diversity foodstuff production. Agroforestry as understood within the framework of Permaculture is one of the most sustainable and natural methods of cultivation that there is. It doesn't suppress nature's efforts to create woodland – to the contrary, it supports this. It utilizes nature's ability to gradually transform an impoverished soil back into fertile ground through a succession of different plant communities. It makes the most of the diversity and the synergetic effect of the woodland and the many edge-zones, which arise naturally and are especially fertile. Even in difficult places it can achieve high yields of tree and bush fruits, herbs, woodland cereals and other plants. Agroforestry can provide a solution to the burning ecological questions of water shortages, firewood deficiencies, deforestation, desertification and the loss of biodiversity. In Tamera, the agroforestry is starting out on small test sites in order to learn how to adapt the methods to the local soil and climate conditions; then it will spread out onto the rest of the site.

**Food at Tamera: Diet is a Political Issue**

What we eat has a deciding influence on our bodily, mental and spiritual constitution. Foodstuff whose production involves the death and suffering of animals or the exploitation of humans or the environment is not foodstuff that is suitable for the information 'non-violence'. The participants of *Healing Biotope 1 Tamera* have therefore agreed upon a vegetarian, to a large extent vegan, nutrition. In addition, cosmetics and hygiene products whose production involves animal testing are no longer bought or used. This is an underlying principle of Tamera: to cut out all acts of complicity.

From here it is a natural step to the necessity of regional self-sufficiency. Foodstuffs – and other needed resources – should be produced within the Healing Biotope itself or in co-operation with the farmers in the neighbourhood.

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# Hellerau, Monte Verita and the Making of Modern Dance

## Dr Sydney Norton PhD

By the turn of the twentieth century, numerous cooperative communities flourished in rural areas of Europe and the United States with the goal of incorporating nature into everyday life and thereby re-instilling a long shunned connection between the human being and his/her natural surroundings. Two such communities are the subject of today's presentation: Hellerau (1909-1920), a garden city and rhythmic gymnastics school located just outside of Dresden, and Monte Verita (1900-1920), an international artists' colony near Ascona, Switzerland, that also served as a sanctuary for conscientious objectors during World War I. Both of these cooperative institutions, while differing significantly in their social and political orientations, became centers of creativity for a younger generation of painters, writers and dancers.

This presentation introduces you to Hellerau and Monte Verita within a framework of modern dance. Through the lens of the German modern dance movement you will become acquainted with the ideological tropes that informed the missions of these establishments and that simultaneously gave rise to some of the artistic and intellectual developments of the early twentieth century. I demonstrate that the common ideals of these utopian societies - particularly their focus on movement or dance as a means of accessing creative potential for all other endeavors in life—played a significant role in the making of *Ausdruckstanz* or Dance of Expression, an avant-garde dance form that flourished in Western and central Europe during the twenties and thirties. My discussion is limited to works by and influences on Mary Wigman and Rudolf von Laban, two pioneers of the *Ausdruckstanz* movement, whose choreographic ideals developed out of the creative ferment of these alternative communities. Both Hellerau and Monte Verita were communal centers that were founded on the principles of*Lebensphilosophie,* a philosophy of life that was at odds with both the theoretical values of the Enlightenment and the capitalistic motivations of industrial modernity. Proponents of *Lebensphilosophie* were convinced that industrial progress and the relentless favoring of scientific endeavor over sense perception were the ultimate causes of the decline of the quality of life in Europe. They believed that if the individual's disconnection from his/her physical body were not halted, a complete degeneration of Western civilization could occur (Higgins 66-67). Seeking an antidote to this grim future, these critics of modernity rejected the dimensions of their culture that were guided by principles of brutal repression of the senses. Life itself became their fundamental aspiration. Philosophy was significant only in its relation to life. The sensuous body, which Enlightenment philosophers had stripped of its dignity in favor of the abstracting mind, was now to be celebrated as the ultimate expression of truth.

Hellerau was a cooperative institution created in 1909 under the initiative of an organization of artisans residing in Dresden, Germany. Modeled after the English "garden city," it was designed as a progressive establishment for craftspeople. The goal was to incorporate the beauty of art, nature, and socialist ideals into the everyday life of the modern worker. The initial edifices at Hellerau included a cluster of spacious workshops that were surrounded by

the workers' residences. The Hellerau design allowed every worker his or her own house and garden. The artisans were the foundation of Hellerau's economic self-sufficiency: they created aesthetically pleasing and functional household objects, and through simple machine reproduction, made them affordable for any middle class citizen.

The same year that Hellerau became a functional and independent community for workers, its directors Drs. Wolf and Harald Dohrn invited the Viennese musician and harmony teacher Emile Jaques-Dalcroze to direct the arts dimension of the establishment. After hearing him speak on the health- and spiritual benefits of rhythmic gymnastics and witnessing a student demonstration at a music conservatory in Berlin, the two life-reformists became convinced that Dalcrozean methods of movement would enrich the lives of the Hellerau inhabitants. Dalcroze, impressed by the philosophical goals and communal nature of the Hellerau community, resigned from his post at the Geneva conservatory and moved to Dresden with forty nine of his best students (Müller and Stöckemann 11).

The original goal of Dalcroze's rhythmic gymnastics was to improve the rhythmic sensibilities of his music students though movement, and his methodology was based on the translation of sounds into physical gestures (Sorell 324). Inspired by a pre-Hellenic notion of educating the human being by acknowledging the body, mind and spirit as equal and connected parts of a unified whole, and by attempting to develop all three of these realms equally in his students, Dalcroze introduced methods of movement which laid a groundwork for a coming generation of choreographers who were interested in removing dance from its assumed connection with a romantic narrative or erotic spectacle.

In order to develop the rhythmic sensibilities of his students, he took the metronomic values of notes and created a specific movement for each value. The desired result was the transference of rhythmic associations into the students' unconscious, a process that Dalcroze believed would add interpretive depth to their musical performance. The connection between music and movement became a form of music visualization similar to that of Isadora Duncan, wherein the music itself inspired interpretive dances. Dalcroze's music-based rhythmic exercises resulted in interpretive works of unusually high artistic caliber, in which dancers' movements became extensions of specific instruments or groups of instruments, giving way to an orchestra of visual imagery. Dalcroze's center for rhythmic gymnastics became a mecca for dancers of international renown (Pavlova, Nijinsky, Duncan, Laban), all of whom were seeking to broaden their movement vocabularies. It also served as a center of inspiration for influential painters and innovators of the theater, most notably the Expressionist painter Emil Nolde, stage designer Adolphe Appia, and Max Reinhardt, the great innovator of the classical theater.

Not surprisingly, the creative projects that materialized at Hellerau were closely connected with the general physical structure of the garden city. Architect Heinrich Tessenow, who had previously worked to create cheerful and liveable dwellings for the working-class, was called upon to design the Hellerau school and festival halls. Favoring neoclassical architecture, Tessenow designed symmetrical buildings with high and bright spaces that absorbed natural sun light (Müller 25). Tessenow also designed the theatrical arena, an immense, bright hall that would house the grand festival student performances. These monumental, wide-

windowed chambers overlooked natural vistas, encouraging a seamless interchangeability between and architecture, leisure and work. The movement classes were, when possible, conducted in the fresh air and the participants enjoyed the luxury of dancing in uncustomarily comfortable shorts and sleeveless tops. Clothing reform, the call for comfortable and healthful clothing for women, was an integral component of the Hellerau way of life. While it was still customary for Dresden women to wear the Victorian corset, Hellerau women would take their walks in "reform clothes," long loose fitting comfortable dresses. At the turn of the century women's reform clothes took on political connotations that were linked with feminism and liberation. They also became one of the hallmarks of the new dance movement, encouraging Western women to embrace a range of corporeal freedoms never before imagined.

It was 1910, the first year of enrolment at Dalcroze's school in Hellerau, that Mary Wigman, the 24 year-old daughter of a middle class Hannoverian merchant, signed up for rhythmic gymnastics courses. She shared one of the small one-family artisan homes with three other young women. While immersed in movement and improvisation, ear training and music theory classes during the day, Wigman spent evenings and weekends becoming acquainted with some of the most influential personalities and talents of the early 20th century. Dr. Hans Prinzhorn, a neurologist and psychiatrist, who later published a book called "Sketches of the Mentally Ill," described to her in colorful terms the conditions his insane patients. The descriptors he used--"expression," "impulse," and "spontaneity"-- were dynamic and positive terms that also surfaced in the vocabularies of early Expressionist painters Nolde and Kokoshka. Whether artist or doctor, the artificiality of turgid academic discourses had fallen away and the internal essence of the individual or object was what remained important.

Most significant for Wigman's artistic development was her close relationship with Emil Nolde, a young Expressionist painter who was inspired by the stark emotional immediacy of the "primitive" that would a few years later characterize Wigman's performance art. The paintings that he completed during the Hellerau years (1910-1913) reflect most dramatically the energy of the primitive ecstatic, the desire to return to the roots of pre-civilization. It doesn't matter whether Nolde's subject matter was a radiant landscape, a pagan rite, or a still life, the viewer becomes aware of the interconnectedness between human and nature, one that even within the stillness of the canvas reflects movement and primeval energy.

Capturing the dynamism and spontaneity of movement was, indeed, why Nolde sojourned for longer periods of time at Hellerau. The dynamic movements of the young dancers, particularly the improvisational performances of Wigman in the open air, inspired Nolde to create a series of dance paintings that fused the passion and color of aboriginal dances with the movement and gestures of this new generation of Europeans. An adherent of *Lebensphilosophie* , Nolde was convinced of the certainty of a mythical origin, one which he could best represent in the natural free-spiritedness of the native female dancer, an energy that would also enrich the dancing of Westerners. In notes for his introduction to his book *Artistic Expressions of Primitive Peoples* (*Kunstäusserungen der Naturvölker*), Nolde articulates the reason for the intense fascination that modern Europeans possessed for non-European cultures: "The absolute originality, the intense, often grotesque expression of force and life in the very simplest form--that may well be what gives us intense pleasure in these aboriginal works" (Dube 84). It was the fundamental life force of pre-civilization, the most elemental

expression of human emotion, that Nolde attempted to capture in his painting and what Mary Wigman would a few years later communicate to her audiences through*Ausdruckstanz*.

As much as Wigman benefited from her experiences at Hellerau, she emphasized in her memoirs that she was forced to reject the Dalcrozean methods, in order to allow herself the creative autonomy she needed to choreograph. Her training at Hellerau served her well as a vehicle for performing movement studies, yet Dalcroze's music-based approach to movement was a stifling experience, one which increasingly hindered her own creativity. "It wasn't necessary for me to learn rhythm with Dalcroze," she wrote in her diary, "because I had an unusually strong personal sense of rhythm which naturally flowed into musicality. Cultivating rhythm was completely unnecessary in my case." Another entry further underscores her resistance to Dalcroze's methods: "Everything that had to do with musicality and music-rhythmic training from Dalcroze didn't interest me at all. What fascinated me was the fact that we were told: 'now express what you'd like to say with your body"(ctd. from Müller 30).

Wigman's distaste for a dance-form that was subjugated to music, was in fact, a symptom of an ideological thrust that informed members of the younger generation of artists in Germany. The expression of emotional immediacy, which in Germany was first articulated in paintings by the early Expressionists had begun to seep into the media of theater and film. The dancer of Expression or*Ausdruckstänzer(in)* became enchanted by the notion of expressing herself or himself in "absolute" and authentic terms. One's inner rhythm was now considered to be far more significant for the dancer than the exterior accompaniments to the dance such as music, formal narrative, or costume.

In 1913 Wigman completed her movement studies at Hellerau and relocated to Monte Verita in Ascona, having heard that Rudolf von Laban, the artistic director of the community sought to liberate dance from its virtual enslavement to movement. Two life reformists, Ida Hofman and Henri Oedenkoven, had established this independent rural community as a sanctuary for pacifist artists and writers who could hone their skills in a creative environment, apart from the destructive influences of capitalism and hectic city life. Monte Verita did not aspire to reform the lives of middle class workers as did Hellerau, nor did it contain the monumental structures of order and harmony that characterized the Hellerau world-view. But it attracted a colorful mix of European personalities who enriched their personal lives through a daily regimen that included art classes, vegetarianism, homeopathic cures, communion with nature, and dance. Inhabitants of the Mountain of Truth included psychoanalysts, doctors, alternative doctors interested in holistic methods of healing. Artists who at one time or another resided there included Michael Bakunin, Erich Mühsam, Paul Klee, Rainer Maria Rilke, Else Lasker Schüler, James Joyce, Hugo Ball, Jacques Dalcroze, and Isadora Duncan. All of the inhabitants took pride in the colony's independent economy based on communal farming and collective labor.

Like Hellerau, the point about which all of the activities were oriented at Monte Verita, was movement. While Ida Hofman and Oedenkoven carried out the day to day management of the establishment, Rudolf von Laban directed the school of arts. The term he used to describe his school of art was*Tanz-Ton-Wort* , abbreviations for the classes he offered in the art of dance,

music, and acting. Reflecting the anthroposophic nature of the colony, the school was designed to educate the artist equally in all areas, as opposed to allowing him or her specialize in the chosen discipline at the expense of all others. While Laban taught the core classes, his wife Maja Leder and the two founders of the colony offered courses in the practical skill necessary for functioning in everyday life: cooking, weaving, gardening, shoemaking and architecture. (Perrottet 109)

Although Laban championed artistic eclecticism at Monte Verita, he was still convinced of the importance of "movement for the sake of pure movement" and all of his classes foregrounded inspirational dance as the nexus of all forms of creativity. This notion, a radical one in that dance was judged as an autonomous art-form as opposed to one that was subjugated to music, attracted numerous aspiring dancers to Ascona, several of whom would use Laban's methods as a springboard for developing their own pedagogical principles. Wigman, who immediately excelled in Laban's courses, became his assistant, taught many of his classes, and performed leading roles in his festival dances. She would later break with Laban and develop her own school and distinctive choreographic style.

Laban's improvisational work in Ascona gave way to a series of early dance dramas, but the work that best illustrates the festival dimension that would later characterize Laban's movement choirs was his twenty-four hour dance extravaganza *Song to the Sun.* Choreographed and performed in 1917, the work was a three part *Reigen* or round dance set to the poetry of Otto Borngraeber. Possessing the characteristics of a cultic celebration, the work was divided into three parts: "Setting Sun," "Demons of the Night" and "Sun's Victory," all of which were performed in the open air and in various locations of Monte Verita, to which all of the spectators/participants would arrive by foot. Embellished by pantomime, torch light parades, and choric dances, Laban's *Song to the Sun* represented an ideal society by unifying participant and allowing the participants to experience collectively the wonders of nature (Müller and Stöckemann 17). The distance between spectator and performer preserved in classical theater was eradicated, as the spectators actively took part in the torch ceremonies, and travelled with the dancers from one location to the next. The cultic dance festival provided a community that temporarily eradicated class distinctions, a social phenomenon that Laban attributed to the misguided principles in modern Western society. Laban continued using the festival format throughout the thirties in his movement choirs, many of which provided an arena of artistic and political expression for the working class. Monumental versions of Laban's festival format were employed for propaganda purposes during the Third Reich, a circumstance that cannot be addressed in this presentation due to time constraints.

Hellerau and Monte Verita are closely related in their attempts to humanize the inhumane dimensions of industrial modernity and to make just the discrepancies of the bourgeois social order. While substantial differences in world-view and social orientation are discernible-- Hellerau continued to embrace the bourgeois moral codes and traditions, while the Mountain of Truth did not-- both groups were dedicated to transforming everyday life into a more healthful and joyous process in which body, intellect and nature could be cultivated in harmony. The outbreak of World War I prevented both of these communal centers from physically surviving beyond 1917, but numerous valuable ideals can be gleaned from these

communal innovators, and their priorities reverberate ever more powerfully in our fast-paced, technologically driven, consumer oriented 21st century world.

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Dr. Sydney Norton carries a Ph.D. in German literature from the University of Minnesota at Minneapolis. She has studied and conducted research at the Free University of Berlin and Berlin's Academy of the Arts. The first chapter of her doctoral dissertation, Modernity in Motion: The Performance Art of Mary Wigman and Valeska Gert in the Weimar Republic" discusses the intentional communities of Hellerau and Monte Verita, and their lasting influences on German artistic movements in the 1920s. This work is currently being revised for publication. Dr. Norton currently resides in St. Louis and teaches at McKendree College.

# The Meaning of Herrnhaag

# An 18th century Moravian Community And The Hermitage, Its 21st Century Successor


## Bros. Christian and Johannes Zinzendorf
## The Hermitage

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**Part I**

Hello, I'm Bro. Johannes Zinzendorf and this is Bro. Christian Zinzendorf. We're here today to tell you about the Hermitage, a community in central Pennsylvania that has been established for nearly thirteen years. To date, we are the first and still only permanent residents of the community.

I'm going to talk about the history and purpose of the community. Then Bro. Christian will present a slide show about the community. Finally, there will be time for questions and answers.

First, the Hermitage is a retreat center, a working 63-acre farm, a collection of historical buildings and a place where queer academicians, students and can come to contemplate the meaning of their existence.

The story of the Hermitage really cannot be separated from the story of Christian and myself. We met as college students in Salt Lake City, Utah. We moved in together and lived a typical life of urban gay men: the tastefully decorated apartment, professional careers - I as an educational psychologist, he as a teacher - upward mobility. But it wasn't enough. Something was lacking.

We were drawn to the land. We were also drawn to the communalism of the early Mormons. But their theocracy was not our theocracy. We yearned for something different. We moved east to Pennsylvania and settled in Bethlehem, a town settled in the 1740s by Moravians, or Herrnhutters as they are often called in Europe.

We were looking for something. It involved self-sufficiency; it involved a family of choice, of gay men living and loving together. We looked for historical examples, a format, a blueprint, guidance. We thought about a gay Scottish clan. We even had our own tartan. We joined the Radical Faerie movement for a while. That was important because it gave a feeling that spirituality and sexuality can be combined. It also emphasized the importance of the feminine in spirituality, particularly as a Mother Goddess, as Mother Earth.

But the faeries were anarchists, by definition formless, and many of them just seemed like urban fags looking for exciting weekends in the country. We needed structure. We needed form. And we found it in the early Moravians who built Bethlehem. Indeed, it was the buildings that attracted us first: magnificent two and three story stone structures with a Old

World beauty we'd never seen before; true Germanic Renaissance architecture. In 18th century Pennsylvania.

We started studying the people who made these structures. Bethlehem was a commune; with people living together according to gender and age in large dormitories. They were self-sufficient in many ways, with a large farming operation, for example. But they were also cultured. They had resident painters, composers, musicians. Chamber music was played in the 1750s in the middle of the vast Pennsylvania wilderness.

All of this appealed to us, especially the guys living together in their own Single Brethren's house.

They had their own leader, Christian Renatus Zinzendorf, the only son of Moravian leader Count Nicholas Zinzendorf to reach maturity. It was obvious the men idolized Christian. But the more I tried to find out about him, the more puzzled I became. There was little about him in English and what there was always critical: he was a momma's boy; spoiled; petulant; spent too much time among women; didn't get out enough with the guys; had his own band of secret admirers, his Little Sweethearts as they were called; and he had a particular favorite. Was this guy gay or what?

The more questions I asked, the more stymied I was by the lack of information about this particular period of Moravian history, the 1740s to early 1750s. Something happened then that no one wanted to talk about directly. There were only rumors, innuendo. Something happened that official church history would prefer to ignore and hope it would go away. I was a reporter. I smelled a good story. What happened in Europe and American Moravian communities that so frightened, shamed and/or embarrassed the church authorities that they tried to suppress it? There was a two and a half century spin operation going on here which I was dying to open up.

Practically all the documents from that time were in German manuscripts and I had made an enemy of the Bethlehem Moravian Archivist who was as determined to keep me from discovering the truth as I was about finding it.

What I am about to tell you is not considered factual by official Moravian historians. They consider it fantasy, projection and/or outright fabrication and distortion of history.

This story is my interpretation of what happened, based upon the few facts I've been able to gather, based upon reading between the lines of Moravian apologists, and based upon a great deal of contemplation and thought.

I put great emphasis upon the name Christian Renatus, Christ Returns in Latin. All Moravian historians I know put no significance upon it. To them, the name is nothing more than Jack or Tom. It's just a name and nothing more. But to me it indicates Christian was indeed looked upon, beginning with his parents, as the returned Christ, as a divinity, a god.

This actually was not that unusual for the times and certainly not within the frame of Pietism. Both Christian's father and mother were Pietists. To me, the most important aspect of Pietism is its emphasis on the indwelling of the divine, of the spirit speaking and acting through each individual, especially those who actively listen for it and cultivate it. Quaker leader George Fox certainly believed in this aspect of Pietism. So did Shaker founder Mother Ann Lee who said she was the returned feminine of Christ.

What this says is that those who walk in the footsteps of Christ become Christ, just as those who walk in the footsteps of Buddha become the Buddha. In the Old Testament, God is a father who dwells in up in Heaven. In the New Testament, he achieves consummation with the Virgin Mary and becomes his own son, Jesus, half-god and half-man.

But now, in the early 18th century, we have a man and wife, Count Nicholas Zinzendorf and Countess Erdmuthe, who say they have given birth to the returned Christ and recognize him as such by his name. Two human beings giving birth to a fully human yet divine god. One can trace the line from being pure spirit, to half spirit-half flesh, to being completely flesh. Either the divine is becoming human or humans are becoming God. This is evolution in a spiritual sense.

Nicholas even commanded a city be built based on the New Jerusalem described in Revelations. He called the place Herrnhaag, God's Grove. Here, finally, the returned and restored Christ would live and walk among his people as the Bible predicted and as Christians had been waiting for millennia.

The promise of scripture was fulfilled in this fully-human god walking around in Germany. A young man, a beautiful young man, who was probably everything his critics said: he was vain, self-centered, egotistical, spoiled, a momma's boy and, in modern terms, a faggot.

Yet if he says he's the divine Bridegroom and you are his Bride, if he is going to cover you with kisses and enter you and fill you, that takes on a new meaning when we're dealing with a real person and not just a concept or a non-corporeal being. Kiss me on the lips, Christian Renatus, fill me with your love.

I think Christian Renatus took this literally. To him it was not metaphor at all. There was no need for metaphor when you've got the real thing. Come unto me, he said. Come in me.

So here we have a hot young man/god with guys literally collapsing around him from love for him. The passion and energy were that great. Spirituality and sexuality blending into the same thing, a true unity.

But wait, there's more! With all of this going on, which alone was enough to change the course of history, Christian and his followers began recognizing the Holy Spirit as a mother, indeed, his own mother, Erdmuthe. For the first time in Christianity, the feminine enters the godhead, not just observing it from the side. There are great festivals held in her name in Moravian communities on both sides of the Atlantic. But who could this mother be if not Countess Erdmuthe? Is she not truly the Mother of God? And if she is the mother, then Count Nicholas must be God the Father. And what about their daughter Benigna? I see her as Sophia, the Pietists' goddess of wisdom.

Here for the first time in Christian history, we see nothing less than the incarnation of the nuclear family: father, mother, son, daughter. Perhaps we've been doing that all along and just never recognized it seeing how religions just get it in bits and pieces.

This is a truly remarkable moment not just in Moravian history, not just in Christian history, but in world history as well.

Yet, socially and politically the Moravians were in a difficult situation in Germany. They were exiles living on land owned by Zinzendorf in Saxony. Being outsiders from what is now the Czech Republic, they were greeted with suspicion. Germany had undergone a centuries-long psychic split between Catholicism and Lutheranism. Now here is yet another religion in a different language whose founder, Jan Huss, predates Luther by a hundred years.

While they had the full support of Zinzendorf, the politics of the time left the final say in the hands of the princes who controlled the bits and pieces of modern Germany. Your life was at the beck and call of someone who could turn against you at any moment. The Moravian leaders around Zinzendorf knew this. They knew any scandal could drive them into further exile, losing all they had built.

They were concerned, even desperate, to avoid scandal and even the hint of scandal. They countered every rumor and tract published against them and Christian Renatus having ritual sex with his sweethearts was definitely not making things easier. Sucking on the sacred Side Wound of Christ as a little maggot is easier to take when it's a metaphor rather than a blow job.

Even within the Brethren, as they were called then, there was the eternal struggle between dogmatic authoritarianism and individual inspiration. Those trying to keep the community safe became increasingly desperate to convince Nicholas that what his son and wife were doing could eventually destroy the church. They sought political and religious accommodation with the surrounding communities and the government.

In addition, Christian and his followers were spending large sums of money on their festivals and other events, money that could be spent on missionary and other efforts. In the end, Christian was costing both money and credibility. And, I think, Nicholas was jealous and envious of the adulation, the worship, of his son. He said the Father would be known through the Son, but people weren't coming to him with praise; they were enthralled by Christian Renatus. Nicholas was human, as was his son. His fatal flaw was not being able to surrender control to his son. He wanted what his son had, so he destroyed him when he couldn't have it. He didn't realize a stern, judgmental father can never be viewed the same way as a loving and forgiving son. Respected, yes, but not loved.

So Nicholas was easy prey for those who wanted Christian out of the way. In his anger and rage, Nicholas stripped Christian of his position as leader of the Single Brothers and forced him to leave Herrnhaag and come live with him in London.

The result of this was the breaking of Christian's spirit. Nicholas certainly destroyed his son spiritually and perhaps physically as well.

Christian did not survive long in London. He was dead by twenty-five. His mother followed him within a few years. Herrnhaag was closed and its brothers were sent to Pennsylvania and settled at a farming community already named for Christian, Christiansbrunn, the Spring of Christian.

Initially Christian was to follow his brothers to the community in Pennsylvania where he would led them in the New World. His death marked the end to an era in the Moravian Church when the concept of god could be manifested in man.

What survived among the brothers was the belief that Christian's spirit remained in the community's sacred spring and that by drinking it one took in Christian's life's blood. Divine on earth in life, his brothers considered him to be divine in death in Heaven.

When the Moravian Archives were established in the 1760s, church leaders made sure almost all of the incriminating manuscripts from the earlier period were burned. They purified the church from what had happened, from the madness that had infected it. Almost nothing was left that anyone could use against the church or to find out what really happened. The community of Christiansbrunn didn't survive the 18th century before it was disbanded. All sank into forgetfulness and a few vague footnotes, until there was us.

**Part II**

What finally developed from the blueprint of old Christiansbrunn was the creation of a place which allows the brothers the freedom to step aside from the outside world and live in

the freedom of our own conscience, a place where we have control over our lives. That control has shifted from society's norms to an internal searching and contemplation of the meaning of our lives and how we can act upon that significance and live in harmony with it.

This journey has taken us beyond the traditional Judeo-Christian beliefs of our blood families; in fact, it's taken us beyond the nuclear family into a family of choice. It's also taken us to viewing the earth not as a place to conquer and master but as a planet to serve and care for.

As a family of choice, we live equally with plants and animals and in stewardship for its own sake, not for any promised or hoped-for reward or punishment in some mythical life after this one. This is the life as lived in the peaceable garden that is the Hermitage, a life not fitted for the many but for the few.

Maintaining such freedom requires self-sufficiency, contemplation and independence. Everything around us, the buildings, furniture, gardens, reflects choice and hand work.

Initially we thought to duplicate the life style of our early brothers: farming with oxen, lighting with tallow candles and even making cloth from flax. People came to visit, some came to stay, but all left. Each disappointment in attracting people goaded us to try something different. That didn't work? Well, try this! And this.

Every year our brochures and flyers were out of date almost as soon as we wrote them. Our spirituality, a belief in life for its own sake, was alive and growing and changing in us, just as we continued adding new buildings and waiting for the moment we knew would come when, after building the Hermitage, a family of choice would come and live here.

But they didn't. And through this we discovered some truths about the public at large and about our own lives: most people would rather live in the most destitute of conditions as long as they are still part of the mainstream. They also need leaders to follow, either here on earth or in their Heaven. They also don't tend to be introspective about society itself or even their own lives. Finally, we learned that despite our hard work, it takes more than two people to keep a community going.

Still, we continue. Our own conscience has dictated the lives of freedom we live, to adapt what sustains us and to discard what crushes our spirits.

The pursuit of liberty and freedom as set down in the Declaration of Independence is not a thing once sought and done. It is an endless process that has no end. If such questioning and contemplation is not encouraged by society at large, then it merely becomes an institution of laws and regulations removed from the needs of our daily lives. As a Quaker Pietist once said, "The letter of the law killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." (Balby Advises, 1656).

Our traditional spirituality fell away in the face of loneliness, pain and suffering. Though the law allows for our existence and beliefs, though we can be financially free to pursue an alternate lifestyle, we've failed at getting people to make a prolonged emotional investment in the Hermitage. They just don't want to come.

As artists create because they must, we have create a life based on the freedoms William Penn offered when he established Pennsylvania as a place for the freedom of conscience and a haven for those oppressed for their beliefs.

Yet what about our Moravian roots? Well, they have brought us where we are today. Are we Moravians? No. Not if you consider Moravians to hold a specific set of Christian beliefs and dogmas. In that sense, we're not spiritual people at all. But we have remained true to that one branch of Moravianism, the one led by Christian, which said listen to your inner voice, follow your inner path, that is the way. So, in that sense, we are very much Moravians.

Of course, it doesn't take a Moravian to say "To thine own self be true." It doesn't take religion at all. It can simply take common sense.

Nonetheless, I've wanted to share with you how we have come to be where we are today. It is a purely personal journey. Each of us has our own. It is certainly not a blueprint or flight path. Any of us could have started out in the same spot and reached an entirely different place from where we are. Obviously official Moravian history did just that. And I'm not saying it's wrong and we're right. They interpret that period differently than we do. They see it as an aberration, a lapse in understanding the nature of Christ and the role of the spirit in everyday life. We see it as the fulfillment of scripture, but one that takes us far from where we thought we would be. For, to us, Christian's life says that each of us is divine. That, yes, we will die and, like him, there will be no resurrection. He did not return except in the hearts of his brothers who did not forget him. The Moravian Church killed the Returned Christ who came back and who was even recognized as such, but even that was not enough to save him from envy, jealousy and fear.

Christian's message is simple: life is precious, it's meant to be worshipped for we all die and beyond this place there is nothing. Christian can be redeemed only by recognizing his pure humanity. Nicholas can be redeemed only by recognizing his. In forgiving him for being human, we forgive ourselves as well.

Now, speaking for myself, I am saying that growth taken me to many different places and through many lands I never dreamed existed as a youth. If, at any place along the way, I had stopped and said, "Here it is. I've found truth," indeed, if I'd been successful at any place along the path, I would have stopped in more ways than one. I would have turned to stone.

But I have kept following the dictates of my inner voice, my daemon as Socrates called it, to the place where I am now, without roots, without dogma, following Heraclitus' ever-changing stream, yet reasonably confident and secure within that flowing. Now I simply want a chance to grow with others as they flow down their own streams. And that, to me, is the meaning of the Hermitage. And the meaning of Herrnhaag as well.