

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

The Sacred and the Sustainable

by

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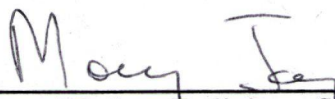


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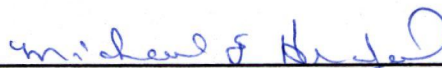
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ABSTRACT

The object of this thesis is to demonstrate how the idea of the sacred is related to the socio-ecological concept of sustainability. Chapter one begins with an examination of the way in which reason, as a mythic symbol, is practised in modern society. The result of this is compared with traditional societies and their unique, sacred interpretations of myth. This comparison will assist in clarifying the relationship between sacred symbols and the dilemmas of modernity.

In Chapter two, the consequences of a modern, secular interpretation of the sacred will be shown to exemplify a radical epistemological breakdown. Chapter three suggests how this 'breakdown' may be overcome in light of the holistic paradigms suggested by findings in some of the "new sciences". The implications of these new paradigms will then be examined. The aim in Chapter four is to identify a psychological context that encompasses a synthesis between traditional knowledge and socio-ecological health.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE UNSUSTAINABLE AND THE SACRED

How is one to make sense of a world that is increasingly distancing itself from any sane definition of reality? The seemingly daily massacres in Bosnia and Rwanda or in a growing number of African states (if they can even be called that), the rise of anti-semitism in Europe (including Russia), a steady increase in unemployment and of the working poor in the industrialized nations, and the spectre of environmental break-down are just a handful of the symptoms attesting to the fact of increasing national and international destabilization.¹

Such a situation is compounded by a consumer culture that propagates the need to consume while obstructing the kind of thoughtful debate that would enable populations to clearly understand and articulate the information needed in a properly functioning democracy - especially in a global context. With such information it may be seen that while technology has provided for many of the conveniences we associate with

civilization, the technique of rationality behind technology has been elevated to the status of a moral virtue - a religion - with disastrous consequences.

The contention here is that what we presently regard as reason and rationality, is anything but that. It is a kind of "rationality" that hides the simple kind of questions we need to ask in a participatory democracy and a just society. By examining some of the fundamental ideas from which societies are symbolically organized, a context may come into view in which we may see beyond the alienating landscapes of a such a restricted interpretation of reason. In this sense, a description of some of the contemporary and social consequences of the "rational" will be explored; a brief history of reason in its various interpretations will then follow. With a link established between past and present, we will look at how the contemporary loss of identity is related to the mythological themes that inform and animate reason. In this context, culture will be studied with reference to the idea of the sacred, and how this sustaining relationship is expressed in different societies. We may thus be able to better see the questions that need to be asked.

In the Age of Reason

The Age of Reason was to usher in an era of peace and prosperity. World War I was to be the 'war that ended all wars' - and yet it is a war that continues. We are dominated by an illusion of rationality that appears to regard itself as the summit of morality, whereas it really is little more than a facade justifying the act of 'making a killing'.

Popular management books under such titles as *The Art of War* and *Leadership Skills of Attila the Hun* (called the scourge of God) attest to an almost rabid level of aggression in contemporary society - which appears in many ways.

In 1973, for instance, there were only a handful of conflicts around the world while by 1980 there were around thirty. Today, the total is over forty.² Throughout the world there are at least one thousand soldiers killed daily - the approximate daily number of French soldiers killed during World War I.³ Add to this the five thousand civilians killed daily as a direct or indirect consequence of war.⁴ And between 1945 and 1985 "there have been twenty times as many deaths from neglect, including lack of food, unsafe water, and poor sanitation, as from wars."⁵

Perhaps the most gruesome fact of the late twentieth century is the over forty thousand infants and children that die daily from hunger-related diseases. According to one UNICEF official, many of these children could be saved at an overall cost of \$5.00 each.⁶ In 1982, the citizens of the U.K. spent \$235 million on slimming aids while just \$50 million was donated to private aid agencies like OXFAM.⁷ A domestic cat or dog in Europe or North America is likely to eat more protein than countless people in Third World nations.⁸ Up to a quarter of the food that we shop for and purchase is thrown out.⁹

And yet we have not the time to worry, let alone to do anything about these tragedies,

because our attention and sense of empowerment is held, in part, by other alleged social imperatives such as the "war on drugs". In this connection, it is striking that the developed, northern nations spend as much on tranquillizers, many of which are addictive, as do the world's 67 poorest countries on public health.¹⁰ Compare this with the popular television 'sitcom' *Seinfeld*, which prides itself, according to People magazine, on being about "nothing" - "the importance of a decent haircut, a good parking space, a great massage from your girlfriend"; and "provides the delicious escape that comes from magnifying nothing into everything."¹¹ Meanwhile, a growing proportion of Americans receive their political education from neo-conservative commentators such as Rush Limbaugh; his right-or-wrong approach to the universe has been appreciated by people like Ronald Reagan, who has proclaimed him "the number one voice of conservatism."¹²

The fact that we can live without making the connection between these facts and the way in which we live our lives, indicates something profoundly wrong in the way that we prioritize values. In a recent speech by Bruce Rawson, federal deputy minister of Fisheries and Oceans, this same defect was ascribed to the 'corporate-rational' approach to government. "It is as if the word 'management' excludes the concept of dealing with real-world problems and real-world solutions. It is the triumph of neatness over relevance."¹³ In regards to the Young Offenders Act, recent debate in the Alberta legislature reveals another aspect of the 'rational' world:

end this utter nonsense of trying to rehabilitate, psychoanalyse, and go through a sociological discussion and try and make everything better.

Deal with reality. Either you lock them up or you can bring back corporal discipline into the school systems.¹⁴

Besides the fact that there is no evidence that corporal punishment is an effective deterrent, the argument reveals the response to a complex social issue at the level of simple emotional reaction - not to mention a contempt for, in many cases, those who have been victimized in one form or another. The recent verbal attacks on the homeless in England, by Prime Minister John Major, is another example of this. The moral void at the heart of this position was again clearly demonstrated shortly thereafter at a Alberta Conservative party convention in Banff, where it was suggested by one delegate, in a discussion on post-secondary education, that psychology and philosophy courses be eliminated: "They are subjects that have no real value for today's economy."¹⁵

What this all adds up to is the predominance of a contemporary "rationality" that has little orientation to the aspects of ourselves that permit us to be fully human. This is not to say that reason has no place in the direction of human life, but that it has limits. And these limits are fatally transgressed when our apprehensions of the sacred, our creative intuitions, and our common human decencies, are consigned to the sphere of the superstitious and the irrational. But this is all too common a feature of contemporary human affairs. And not surprisingly, it is one of the classic rules of power politics to accuse another of what one's self is guilty of.

A Brief History of Reason

To varying degrees, and in various ways, the ancient Greek philosophers held reason or *logos* to be the primary human characteristic. In 1513, the new rational method was first intellectually expressed by Machiavelli in *The Prince*. And Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556) in the early sixteenth century, who organized the Jesuits and was at the centre of the Counter-Reformation, utilized a similar framework of reason that rationalized the authority of the pope. Francis Bacon (1561-1626), forefather of the scientific method, took up the torch of reason in the name of understanding nature. Nature, like a female, did not easily give up her secrets, and consequently, must be "vexed".

Compare this with the seventeenth century philosopher John Locke, who greatly influenced the American forefathers, and who believed that the value of the natural world should be decried in the name of reason. He wrote that "land that is left wholly to nature... is called, as indeed it is, waste."¹⁶ Such contempt for nature, was also reflected in the contempt for the wisdom inherent within a proper awareness of human nature. This was perhaps most vividly illustrated by Bacon, who as Attorney General under James I of England, signed numerous warrants for the execution of witches.

Cardinal Richelieu (1585-1642), chief minister to the King of France from 1624 to 1642, was one of the first to apply such a view of reason to the relatively new idea of the nation-state.

Common sense leads each one of us to understand that man, having been endowed with reason, should do nothing except that which is reasonable, since otherwise it would be acting contrary to his nature... there is nothing in nature less compatible with reason than emotion.¹⁷

Moreover, Voltaire, among others, saw reason and common sense as the partners of morality. This synthesis, however, existed in the context of authority. And as John Ralston Saul writes: "They wanted a strong but fair king. They thought reason would render authority fair."¹⁸ Saul further argues that from "its very beginning as an applied idea, reason has been as successful - if not more successful - at creating new degrees of barbarism and violence as it has been at imposing reasonable actions."¹⁹

Reason and power were beginning to be intertwined in what would become known as Realpolitik, for in a manner similar to Bacon, Richelieu understood reason as "the masculine virtue of making decisions rationally."²⁰ Indeed, from the time of Kant's philosophy, knowledge has been relegated to the rational constructs of the human mind. However, as Northrop Frye wrote, "It is dangerous to assume that only emotions can stampede the mind."²¹

The triumph of "neatness over relevance" can be seen as "reason" carried to the extreme of absurdity. The nuclear arms race was the rationalization of providing a deterrent against nuclear war; the forced modernization and militarization of Iran under the Shah in the 60's and 70's, resulting in a fundamentalist Islamic revolution (whose repercussions are still being felt), was the rationalization of securing American interests in the Middle East; the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the early 80s was the

rationalization of supporting what in reality was a puppet regime; the degradation of the environment and human dignity and life is rationalization in the name of economic efficiency and productivity, whatever that means. Meanwhile, freedom and democracy have become religious incantations which are little more than a thin disguise for the deluded psychology of unlimited economic growth upon a finite planet. This destructive attitude is encouraged, and its catastrophic effects concealed, by a rampant consumer culture. As Wendell Berry has asked: "What are people for?"²²

As Frye reminds us, the word "absurd", as commonly applied to contemporary life, "refers primarily to the disappearance of the sense of continuity in our day."²³ In the era of the remote channel selector, where attention spans are measured in seconds, a sense of what Plato called the moving image of eternity is replaced by a series of disconnected images promising a non-existent eternity. In the words of G.K. Chesterton,

Every man has forgotten who he is. One may understand the cosmos, but never the ego; the self is more distant than any star. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God; but thou shalt not know thyself. We are all under the same mental calamity; we have all forgotten what we really are. All that we call common sense and rationality and practicality and positivism only means that for certain dead levels of our life we forget that we have forgotten. All that we call spirit and art and ecstasy only means that for one awful instant we remember that we forget.²⁴

Identity and the Roots of Culture

What Charles Taylor calls the "disenchantment of the world" has been repeatedly expressed since the Romantic period (18th and early 19th century) as the theme of

reason-induced division between people, within people, and from the natural world.²⁵ This condition continues despite a growing awareness, within Western societies, of a gaping spiritual void in everyday life. Moreover, this awareness suggests that the idea of social, economic and political justice coincides with the concept of sustainability in all of its variations. It also suggests that such a relationship requires an awareness of the underlying structures and processes of culture - specifically, an awareness of the sacred.

What is meant by the sacred in this sense encompasses the trans-historical sense of being which is expressed in what Mircea Eliade called "creative hermeneutics" and the "new humanism". It is, in the words of David Cave, "a spiritual, humanistic orientation toward totality capable of modifying the quality of human existence itself."²⁶ It is an orientation that recognizes the primacy of the spiritual in the lives of individuals and societies, and addresses the relevancy of authentic symbols and myths as elements integral to the well-being of self and society. In his *Pensées*, Pascal wrote:

We know the truth not only through reason but also through the heart. It is through the latter that we know first principles, and reason, which has nothing to do with it, tries in vain to refute them.²⁷

The values that extend from such an orientation may provide for a sense of continuation and a sense of place and community in an otherwise disjointed world.

In the introduction to *The Great Code*, Frye writes:

Man lives, not directly or nakedly in nature like the animals but within a mythological universe, a body of assumptions and beliefs developed from his existential concerns. Most of this is held unconsciously, which means that our imaginations may recognize elements of it, when presented in art

or literature, without consciously understanding what it is that we recognize.²⁸

In regards to a sense of place and the ensuing sense of identity, Frye argues that Canadian identity, and perhaps cultural identity in general, is not so much characterized by the question "Who am I?" as by the riddle "Where is here?"²⁹ The paradox inherent within this question may be understood through a recognition of its underlying context. We need an awareness of our mythological conditioning, which Frye saw as one of the practical functions of criticism and the foundation of a conscious cultural identity. The lack of this awareness generates a paradox in the question of identity, what Frye called "the riddle of the unconscious in nature."³⁰

In trying to understand this riddle, it may be helpful to see it as an archetypal expression of the possibility of a unified identity - presenting itself on both a conscious and unconscious level of perception. In this regard, it is imperative to acknowledge the value of what the anthropologist Edward T. Hall calls *primary level culture*.³¹ Primary level culture, like myth, begins in rhythm and cycle. The circadian rhythms of day and night, the cycle of the moon, and the change of the seasons were instrumental in the formation of the ancient psyche. In this sense, Eliade argues that with the discovery of agriculture, the primary rhythm and mystery of life and death was first revealed: "The oneness of life and death... became so once man began to cultivate the soil."³²

Hall contends that humanity is immersed in a sea of rhythm, expressed in an expansive array of variation. Beneath the surface of everyday consciousness are the

rhythms of body language - through which a substantial proportion of communication is mediated, and of which certain features are universal. For example, Hall described a student's playground experiment where a group of children were filmed without audio recording; the visual events were later tracked with a sequence of pre-recorded music. The results was a nearly complete synchronization of the beat of the music with that of the children. The children were in effect dancing to the beat of a common underlying rhythm, spontaneously expressing themselves in a way we, as adults, only vaguely remember.

The extraordinary thing is that my student was able to identify the beat. When he showed his film to our seminar, however, even though his explanation of what he had done was perfectly lucid, the members of the seminar had difficulty understanding what had actually happened. One...spoke of the children as "dancing to the music"; another wanted to know if the children were "humming the tune."³³

"The common belief", writes Hall, is that "rhythm originates in the music, not that music is a highly specialized releaser of rhythm already in the individual."³⁴ Ananda Coomarswamy once said that the "artist was not a special kind of person", but that every person was a "special kind of artist". In this sense, there is an intimate relation between the sacred and the role of rhythm and myth. The beat of the shaman's drum, in countless cultures, is the basis of the power-song (rhythm) that bridges sacred and profane experience. The Australian Aborigine song-line is another variation on this theme. As an expression of unity between mind and nature, myth and music signifies the possibility of unity on both a psychological and cultural level. Claude Levi-Strauss wrote: "Myth and music are like conductors of an orchestra whose listeners are the silent performers."³⁵

But the performance is never entirely silent; when the composer John Cage went into an anechoic chamber, or soundproof room, two sounds were audible, one low and the other high. "When I described them to the engineer in charge, he informed me that the high one was my nervous system in operation, the low one my blood in circulation."³⁶ The nature of these and other rhythms, are being presently explored by the science of chronobiology; the evidence indicates the profound relationship between physiological and natural rhythms, the effects of which greatly impact on our mental and physical health. Moreover, a psychiatrist named Terry Kupers has coined the term "pathological arrhythmicity" to describe the tendency to "respond little or not at all" to these rhythms. This condition is especially characteristic of men caught up in the "rationality" of success.³⁷

While the efficacy of the rhythms of primary level culture are largely hidden from the rational consciousness of everyday life, they nevertheless comprise a kind of culture grammar informing the way we see the world, our values, and "the basic tempo and rhythms of life."³⁸ And it is the efficacy of this rhythmic, cultural grammar that has been eclipsed in the modern era. Whereas the religious festivals of Easter, Christmas and the New Year originally signified the basis of culture, or cultus (divine worship), they are now little more than a celebration of the god of mass consumption.

In this connection it is important to note Colin Turnbull's observation that the Mbuti Pygmies of Equatoria, where food is always abundant, ritualize a phase of scarcity.³⁹

This ritual, in one form or another, is widely practised, and is usually associated with physical and spiritual purification. Common sense even tells us that such a ritualized act of humility has practical and psychological benefits.

This "hidden dimension" of culture is also important in the sense that an understanding of the way in which it operates is crucial to clear and precise communication. It also suggests a relationship with Frye's "unconscious in nature." Could this underlying aspect of culture, made conscious, be the condition from which a sense of place, continuity and identity arises? As the psychologist Carl Jung argued:

Such a continuity can only exist if we assume a certain unconscious condition carried on by biological inheritance. By this assumption I naturally do not mean an inheritance of representations, which would be difficult if not impossible to prove. The inherited quality... must rather be something like a possibility of regenerating the same or at least similar ideas. I have called the possibility "archetype," which means a mental precondition and a characteristic of the cerebral function.⁴⁰

To Eliade, the contemporary loss of a sense of continuity, meaning and transcendence is a direct result of the rationalism of the Enlightenment and the scientific technocracy of the present century.⁴¹ Eliade views the cause of this problem as religious and so its solution is also religious.⁴²

But let no one object that these relics of religious sensibilities are of no interest to modern man, that they belong to a "superstitious past" happily liquidated by the nineteenth century... All that essential and indescribable part of man that is called imagination dwells in realms of symbolism and still lives upon archaic myths and theologies... Modern man is free to despise mythologies and theologies, but that will not prevent his continuing to feed upon decayed myths and degraded images.⁴³

While the theme of "decayed myths and degraded images" will be discussed in its place,

it may be said immediately that these point to the efficacy of primary culture as a basic rhythm informing the conscious psyche. Specifically, it is the ability to experience mystery that is the key element and rhythm of primary culture.

The Idea of the Sacred

To the ancients, philosophy begins in wonder; and to Eliade, following Rudolf Otto in *The Idea of the Holy*, it is the sense of awe and wonder, of the tremendous mystery (*mysterium tremendum*) that presents itself as something "wholly other" and reveals the divine reality "in which perfect fullness of being flowers."⁴⁴ The manifestation of the sacred, while not directly accessible to the constructs of the rational mind, nevertheless provides a sense of wholeness that Jung, among others, believed was crucial to the harmonious operation of the human psyche and a clear recognition of meaning in life.

The emergence of sacred experience is referred to by Eliade as a *hierophany* (from Greek *hiero*-, "sacred," and *phainein*, "to show").⁴⁵

The experience of sacred space makes possible the founding of the world: where the sacred manifests itself in space, the real unveils itself, the world comes into existence... it also effects a break in plane... it opens communication between the cosmic planes (between heaven and earth) and makes possible ontological passage from one mode of being to another.⁴⁶

Arguably, it is just such an "ontological passage" that is required for a psychology of the sustainable. By understanding what sacred space meant to our predecessors, and means to ourselves and others, there can be an awareness of the socio-cultural conditioning that

serves to obscure this crucial perspective - "the riddle of the unconscious in nature".

In regards to this riddle, what Paul Ricoeur calls "reading the text of experience" addresses Frye's "unconscious in nature" as a paradox arising from the emergence of the sacred within profane space. This points to an intermediate level of reality; it is only through a proper balance between awareness of the sacred and activity within the secular world, that we can appreciate what Aristotle called the "golden mean" and the Buddhist's call the "middle way". This aspect of being serves to mediate experience and the constructed categories expressing the experience. It is the ontological passage between what we see and what we know, between fact and value - what the philosopher Edmund Husserl called the level of "meaningful being"⁴⁷. And to Eliade, it is the dialectical nature of the sacred and the profane that animates the sense of wonder and mystery necessary for the appearance of a hierophany and the sense of place inherent within it.⁴⁸

With the manifestation of the sacred, "we are crossing", writes Ricoeur,

the threshold of an experience that does not allow itself to be completely inscribed within the categories or *logos* or proclamation and its transmission or interpretation⁴⁹... the logic of meaning, therefore, follows from the very structure of the sacred universe. Its law is the law of correspondence between creation in *illo tempore* [mythical time] and the present order of natural appearances and human activities.⁵⁰

Eliade reminds us that the sacred reveals itself and its transcendent nature through symbols, and as a consequence, anything can become a hierophany. In fact, practically everything from gestures, dances, songs, children's games and their toys were originally objects of religious veneration. The same applies to any important plant or animal species

- and, in the same way, "every trade, art, industry and technical skill either began as something holy, or over the years, has been invested with something holy."⁵¹

Another important source of hierophany is the earth itself. In countless cultures the local soil is regarded as a sacred presence. An ancient and widespread phenomenon in the South American Andes is the worship of Pachamama, mother goddess of the earth, who is much the same as Terra in Roman myth and Gaia in Greek myth as recorded by Hesiod.⁵² As a hierophany of a sacred being, the earth frequently appears as the creative partner of a heavenly being in "the mythologies of Oceania, Micronesia, Africa, and the Americas."⁵³ Also, the idea of the earth as a manifestation of an Angel is ancient. Zoroastrian texts tell of a liturgy "in honour of the Earth which is an Angel."⁵⁴ And up until the Middle Ages, the sinking of a European mine-shaft was attended to by a Christian liturgy atoning for the wounding of the Earth. In the words of Erazim Kohák,

What is crucial is that humans, whether they do so or not, are capable of encountering a moment not simply as a transition between a before and after but as the miracle of eternity ingressing into time. That, rather than the ability to fashion tools, stands out as the distinctive human calling.⁵⁵

The ingressing of eternity into time, which "makes being meaningful and meaning actual",⁵⁶ is a concept that rationality, as it is presently defined, has a difficult time accepting - in large part because the eternal does not, and cannot, be made to fit into the quantifying parameters of the "rational". But it nevertheless exists as a real and unifying experience in everyday life. In this connection, Jacob Needleman's description of the launch of Apollo 17 is worth quoting in full.

it was a night launch, and there were hundreds of reporters all over the lawn, drinking beer and waiting... We were all sitting around joking and wisecracking and listening to the voice of Walter Cronkite... The first thing you see is this extraordinary orange light. Then darkness... Then you hear [it]... It enters right into you. Suddenly, among all these cynical people, myself included, you could practically hear their jaws dropping. The sense of wonder fills everyone in the whole place... The second stage ignites this beautiful blue flame. It became like a star, but you realize there are human beings on it. And then there's total silence.⁵⁷

Needleman continues to discuss how this previously "wisecracking" group departed, helping each other up, opening doors, and speaking "quietly and interestedly". "These were suddenly moral people because wonder, the sense of wonder, the experience of wonder, had made them moral."⁵⁸ The experience, however, was short-lived; by the time they got to the hotel, it was gone.⁵⁹

Needleman calls this experience "conscious time", an act of heightened awareness that recognized, beyond the ego, the existence and intrinsic connectedness of the wholly other. The sheer beauty of the event, and the temporary moral elevation of those who witnessed it, point toward the existence of hierophanies beyond those of the man-made. Such experiences as watching a beautiful sunset, or being transfixed by the sight (and sound, to some) of the Northern Lights, can easily induce, if only temporarily, the conscious and moral sense of what it means to be alive. In a predominantly urban culture, however, the night, like Jung's night journey of the soul, is eclipsed by an artificial illumination that, like the myth of Narcissus, reflects the self while being blind to the other - a place where we see, to cite Kohák, neither embers nor stars.

The inherent morality of "conscious time" can also be seen during and after events of possible or actual destruction. The recent Los Angeles earthquake revealed a renewed sense of community, where neighbours met, spoke and looked after each other, for the first time. Psychologists predicted, unfortunately, that with the inevitable return of the "real" world, the reality of community would once again become displaced.

On Seeing

The special, yet common, moral elevation just referred to seems also to grow out of the comradeship between soldiers in combat. What, then, can be what William James called the "moral equivalent of war"? As Konrad Lorenz in *On Aggression* reminds us, humanity would have destroyed itself by its original inventions if it were not for the fact that inventions and responsibility are both the result of asking questions.⁶⁰ So do we, like Dostoevsky's prisoner in *The Idiot*, need a death sentence to see clearly, to see the relevant questions?

"When humans give up the arrogance of trying to be the measure of all things", writes Kohák, "they begin to perceive in a world of a different order."⁶¹ To the Greeks - including both Plato and Aristotle - as well as the great medieval thinkers, the *logos*, in various degrees, was accompanied by spiritual and intellectual sensitivities that included elements of pure receptiveness - as Heraclitus put it, "of listening to the essence of things."⁶² In classical Hinduism, *darshana* literally means to see with insight and a

system of thought that overcomes ignorance (*avidya*) that leads toward the goal of liberation (*moksha*).⁶³ These concepts are also central to Buddhism. And Dante, in the last book of *The Divine Comedy*, is admonished by Beatrice on their ascent to heaven:

You dull your own perceptions
with false imaginings and do not grasp
what would be clear but for your preconceptions.⁶⁴

"If the doors of perception were cleansed", wrote William Blake, "everything would appear to man as it is, infinite."

Along with this awareness is the sense that nature, to cite Kohák again, is inherently meaningful. Nature, by virtue of this, may be

... guide in the task of cultivation. That is *cultus* - and, in that sense, culture is not the contradiction of nature but rather the task of humans within it.⁶⁵

This includes a recognition of a vertical dimension of value eternally ingressing in time. As Kohák argues, humans can encounter this perspective through a recognition of the limits of rational constructs in conveying the experience of the sacred.

In *Voltaire's Bastards*, John Ralston Saul asks what the differences are between a contemporary Westerner watching television and an inhabitant of palaeolithic Lascaux in the Dordogne looking at his cave drawings. He answers by suggesting that the former is equipped with a remote control device in a darkened room, whereas the latter holds some kind of primitive torch. But, he argues, this is more a difference in social organization and technology than it is in the way the images are perceived. "If anything,

the Lascaux viewers had a clearer, more conscious and more consciously integrated concept of what they were seeing than we do today."⁶⁶

Such an integrated awareness contours the landscapes of nature with the mythological and symbolic narratives that transform an environment into a living culture. Genuine insight and creativity suggests that there is a continuity between a landscape and its perception (a sense of sacred place) - and how this perception is fluid in a way that reflects its environmental and cultural conditioning. Take for instance, Barry Lopez's description of Inuit hunting culture:

To hunt means to have the land around you like clothing... It means to release yourself from the rational images of what something "means" and to be concerned only that it "is." And then to recognize that things exist only insofar as they can be related to other things. These relationships - fresh drops of moisture at a river crossing and a raven's distant voice - become patterns, the patterns are always in motion.⁶⁷

It is as though the land were "like a kind of knowledge travelling in time through them."⁶⁸ For all that the twentieth century Zeitgeist seems utterly hostile to it; such an attitude may in the long run be necessary for our psychic health - even for our very survival. The synthesis between landscape and memory has the added quality, in Lopez's understanding, of enhancing two different qualities of life. Landscape provides us with food, both literally and metaphorically - while memory shields us from "lies and tyranny."⁶⁹

One may speak of the "native eye" in the same way Goethe spoke of the "eye which

itself is the light"⁷⁰. In his *Doctrine of Colours*, this "spiritual eye" was a method of visionary perception.⁷¹ Lopez points out that the loss of this perception in modern society has been addressed by writers such as Vladimir Arseniev and Laurens van der Post, writing respectively, about the Manchurian native Dersu Uzala and the Kalahari Desert people.⁷²

What a Lakota woman named Elaine Jahner termed a "spiritual landscape", to Lopez, is a sensitivity inherently related to the physical landscape in a way that both reflects and reveals the efficacy of sacred space.⁷³ Moreover, the apparent paradox of a spiritual landscape existing within a physical environment may also be found in Australian Aboriginal culture, where the Aborigine "moves not in a landscape, but in a humanised realm saturated with significations."⁷⁴

The Aboriginal *kurunba* or 'life essence' (like the Sioux *wakan*, Iroquois *orenda* and Christian *grace*) denotes a complementary metaphysical landscape within the physical environment that is itself the medium of mythological contact with the time of the Dreaming.⁷⁵ The power associated with sacred space, or *miwi*, is attained through an act of contemplation, similar to Cicero's *cognito contemplatioque naturae*.⁷⁶

Humans, Kohák observes, "must suspend lived experience to produce the scientific world view of [classical] physics."⁷⁷ While vision originally envisaged the gift of sight as both metaphor and fact, the rational mechanistic cosmos conceives it merely as neuro-

physiological process. Moreover, the spiritual efficacy of vision has now been reduced to a series of pseudo-insights - referred to by certain political leaders as the "vision thing" - whereby the emotions of the electorate-consumer are manipulated. Brian Mulroney stands out in this regard, as did the neo-conservative governments in Britain and the United States. This reduces vision to a marketable commodity, to be bought and sold like religious indulgences in the sixteenth century; in other words, a parody and prison of meaning.

In contrast, it is the existence of sacred space in Aboriginal society, writes James Cowan, that is the reminder of the "responsibility to nurture mutuality between themselves and their environment. It is only when these conditions are observed that any genuine *hierophany* can take place."⁷⁸ "The paradox", writes Eliade,

of this event-being-also-*hierophany*, this historic-time-being-also-mythical time is a paradox in appearance only; we have merely to try and place ourselves in the conditions of mind which produce it.⁷⁹

Contemplation and the Night

When contemplation becomes the virtual equivalent of a technique to rid nature of its value in conveying a sense of wonder and place (for modernity flees from existential mystery), "sustained intelligence" is a rare phenomena. Like Kohák's idea of the land "beyond the powerline", the message of nature becomes radically undervalued and perceived as somehow uncivilized, primitive and anthropomorphic - non-conducive to

economic "reality". Where technique becomes thought of as the source of value and not as just one possible way of achieving value, meaning becomes confused with technology. So, Kohák asks, do we use the technology of light to illuminate a task or to banish the contemplative unity of the night?

In this sense, the time between the individuation of the day and the unity of the night is a "time not of the clock."⁸⁰ It is the intermediate time of Husserl's "meaningful being", in which one confronts the constructed categories of thought that produce the paradox of the "unconscious in nature"; it is the time of a dissolution of the void between fact and value, mind and nature. Here, the ontological passage from the profane to the sacred addresses the suffering arising from what Needleman calls a "painful existence in two worlds."⁸¹ Dusk, recast in mythological terms, is the rite-of-passage between two realms, one of the everyday experience of being, and the other of the human encounter with the ground of being - the *mysterium tremendum*.

What Kohák calls the "gift of the night" is also the "gift of solitude".⁸² While darkness helps us to understand light, we need solitude to understand the other.⁸³ In the humility of solitude, the relationship between landscape and memory is focused, creating an internal grammar that reads the "text of experience" without having to be verbalized. In the language of a radical *techné*, however, solitude is reduced to mere loneliness; "the loss of solitude is the price we pay"⁸⁴ for our obsession with technology.

Another "gift of the night", to follow Kohák, is the reality of pain. While both the night and solitude are feared, being confused with loneliness, the confrontation with our own suffering is also feared, as is the suffering of others. Suffering, the first of the Buddha's Four Noble Truths, opens to the possibility of the alleviation of pain that is at once a demon to be encountered and a pathway to a unified sense of our identity and place within the scheme of things. In a unique interpretation of the *Book of Job*, Kohák argues:

God is not avoiding the issue. He is teaching Job the wisdom of bearing the pain that can neither be avoided nor abolished but can be shared when there is a whole living creation to absorb it. That healing power then is no longer the *vis medicatrix naturae*. It is the *vis medicatrix Dei*.⁸⁵

Unable to recognize the healing rhythm and moral efficacy of nature, we seek meaning in the history of progress.⁸⁶ The "prima philosophia," in Kohák's view, must then seek to see clearly through a bracketing of the world of artifacts, and the "rational" constructs which give a distorted sense of value to them. Like Coleridge with his "outward beholding"⁸⁷, which refers to the way in which we preconceive and thus intuit what we perceive, literally and metaphorically, Kohák's aim is to make us aware of the significance of this process in evoking a sense of wonder - "to recall what we have forgotten."⁸⁸

The inability to 'see' the intrinsic morality of nature increases the hardships encountered in the contemporary quest for identity. Radical relativism, which Kohák rightly claims to be absolutely absurd, is expressed in the belief that care for the earth

and each other is relative to a pattern of unsustainable consumption. This condition is a classic example of what is referred to, in the study of symbols, as semiotic inversion - where, in Orwellian fashion, evil is good and light is darkness.

The prostitution of symbolic culture, as any worthy advertising executive knows only too well, has resulted in a confusion between reality and appearance, where words, such as "democracy", for example, have become devoid of any significant meaning. As Hilary Putnam writes:

If any problem has emerged as *the* problem for analytic philosophy in the twentieth century, it is the problem of how words "hook onto" the world. The difficulty with A.J. Ayer, who has tried, in his recent book, to sum up Philosophy in the Twentieth Century is that there is no acknowledgement of the difficulty of this problem.⁸⁹

The philosopher H.-G. Gadamer, among others, has written on the increasing confusion over what experience actually means. "It [experience]... is among the least clarified concepts which we have."⁹⁰ And thus, with the cohesive and meaning-laden experiences associated with the sacred safely swept under the carpet of the "rational", knowledge and experience are constructed according to the blueprint of "progress".

"The possessed world", writes Kohák, "becomes a dead world in our hands, lifeless and meaningless"⁹¹... The glory of being human is the ability to recognize the pattern of rightness and to honour it as a moral law. The horror of being human is the ability to violate that rightness."⁹² Within this possessed world we are both the unconscious perpetrators and victims of senseless acts of destruction on a vast

psychological, social, and environmental scale - subject as such to the "spell of the demon".

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. In relation to the environment, Paul Harrison writes that the "United Nations Environment Programme reports that there is no pure clean water left anywhere in the world, even in the remotest area. Sewage and fertilizers washed from farmland pollute lakes and coastal waters, which become starved of oxygen (eutrophic). A quarter of China's lakes are classified as eutrophic. In eleven Latin America countries 56 percent of lakes and reservoirs are affected. The global incidence is thought to be around 30 to 40 percent." See Paul Harrison, Inside the Third World, rev. ed. (Toronto: Penguin, 1993), 471.

2. John Ralston Saul, Voltaire's Bastards (Toronto: Penguin, 1993), 180.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Gaia: An Atlas of Planet Management, ed. Dr. Norman Meyers, (New York: Anchor Books, 1984), 185.

6. Ibid., 48.

7. Ibid.

8. Harrison, Third World, 277.

9. Saul, Voltaire's Bastards, 49.

10. Gaia, 184.

11. People Weekly, (December 27/1993 - January 3/1994), 86.

12. Ibid.

13. From a speech by Bruce Rawson, federal deputy minister of Fisheries and Oceans, on being honoured by the Public Policy Forum in Toronto on April 14, 1994. The Globe and Mail (April 19/1994), A21.

14. Don Martin, "Tories feed the hysteria", The Calgary Herald (April 22/1994), A3. Compare this with comments made by U.S. Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, during the beginning of the Cold war: "... if you stopped to analyse what you were doing... all you did was to weaken and confuse your will and not get anywhere." In regards to U.S. foreign policy towards the Soviet Union in the late forties and early fifties, the perceived Soviet threat extended from the fact that the Soviets were spending an equal proportion of GNP on the military as were the Americans. This argument persisted despite the fact that the American economy was four times as large as the Soviet economy. Consequently, the "evil empire" was given birth via the Truman administration's "Campaign of Truth", officially known as National Security Memorandum #68. This 'truth' was conveyed "... with all the resources of science... [we will] preach this doctrine throughout the world." And to sell it at home, Acheson sought, in his own words, "to so bludgeon the public mind" - a remark worthy of Stalin himself.

'NSC-68' thus contained three basic themes: moral abhorrence of the Soviet Union,

threat of potential Soviet military might, and political and economic vulnerability of the West. Ironically, if one replaces the words "Soviet" and "military" with, say, "environmental regulations", or "responsible government", or anything non-conducive to political economy, the modern legacy of this "campaign" may be better appreciated. The first two quotations are from John Gaddis, Strategies of Containment (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1982), 125, 63. The last quotation is from Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1969), 375.

15. Catherine Ford, "Tories taking us down a dark road", The Calgary Herald (April 22/1994), A6.

16. John Locke, "Second Treatise", Two Treatises of Government, ed. Peter Laslett, (Cambridge University Press, 1967), 315.

17. Quoted in Saul, Voltaire's Bastards, 50.

18. Ibid., 31.

19. Ibid., 32.

20. Ibid., 34.

21. Ibid., 136.

22. In a series of remarkable essays, Berry thoughtfully elucidates the relation between religion, the land and culture. See Wendell Berry, What Are People For? (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1990).

23. Northrop Frye, Spiritus Mundi: Essays on Literature, Myth, and Society (Richmond Hill, Ont.: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1991), 33.

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79. Eliade, Patterns, 396.
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CHAPTER TWO

THE PROFANE IN THE MODERN WORLD

What Erazim Kohák calls the "spell of the demon" is intimately linked with the occurrence of "decayed myths and degraded images". So what exactly does the "spell of the demon" mean in the context of the predominant ideas and symbols informing contemporary society? Again, we will begin with a survey of some of the more dysfunctional and destructive tendencies of modernity. These tendencies will then be traced and compared to their origin in the quest myth, and it will be shown how they are both expressions and consequences of the negative and destructive aspect of the sacred. In understanding the fundamental elements of contemporary culture in relation to the sacred, and in particular, to the mythological quest for identity and meaning, we may throw further light on the problem of living a sustainable life on earth.

On Violence

In the words of Jose Antonio Lutzenberger, former Brazilian Minister for the Environment:

Modern industrial society is a fanatical religion. We are demolishing, poisoning, destroying all life-systems on the planet. We are signing IOUs our children will never be able to pay... We are acting as if we were the last generation on the planet.¹

John Locke believed that nature untouched by man was a waste; yet perhaps it is not so much that humanity finds nature a waste, but that it makes it so. And likewise, in regards to the well-being of humanity, Brazilian labor leader Luis Ignacio Silva argued, at the Havana Debt Conference nearly ten years ago, that

Without being radical or overly bold, I will tell you that the Third World War has already started - a silent war, not for that reason any less sinister. This war is tearing down Brazil, Latin America and practically all the Third World. Instead of soldiers dying there are children, instead of millions of wounded there are millions of unemployed; instead of destruction of bridges there is the tearing down of factories, schools, hospitals and entire economies.... It is a war over the foreign debt...²

Here lies another variation on the theme of genocide in the twentieth century. The political economy of "reason", in forgetting what it is and where it is going, not only destroys people as a war would do, but, in contradiction to Locke's belief, lays waste nature itself. Such a destructive perspective can also be seen in what has been called Low Intensity Conflict (LIC).³ Directed primarily against developing nations, and increasingly applied within our own, LIC is a corporate paradigm of rationality that extends from the colonial mentality of imperialism, beginning with the voyages of discovery in the late

fifteenth century and continuing to this day.

The conquering of new lands in the Western hemisphere, Africa, and the Far East, like the Crusades, brought the saving religion of Christ to "pagan" lands together with policies that would enrich the various European empires (followed by the new American state) at the expense of foreign economies, cultures and lives. Colonialism also sought to create foreign markets for the ever increasing production of goods that the Industrial Revolution was making available. Gandhi's famous 'salt march' - and indeed, his entire programme for Indian independence or *Hind Swaraj* - was aimed directly against such policies. And the carving up of China at the turn of this century by the world's leading powers, which eventually led to a Communist revolution and the tragedies of the ensuing and ongoing cultural revolution, was the result of similar policies.

The modern variations of this rationality can clearly be seen in events that began in the 1960s, and they are worth describing at some length. In order to provide a base for American interests in the Middle East, oil-rich Iran was forcibly modernized and militarized under the Shah; a rise in oil prices was required to pay for the capital-intensive programmes involved. Saudi Arabia and other oil-rich Arab nations also figured in this scenario. While these nations invested their new profits in western banks, since they were the most secure, the banks in turn lent this money to the newly independent nations (former colonies) as "development" loans.

Of course, these loans came with "expert" advice on how to "develop".⁴ Not surprisingly, subsequent development projects were modelled on the "rational", industrial structures of the West. Certainly the technocratic elites of the developing nations were largely trained in the West, as were their counterparts under Colonial regimes. Development thus tended to consist of capital-intensive mega-projects that ended up benefiting a few at the expense of the many. For example, funds extended to Brazil in the 70s and 80s, as "power sector" loans, were used to build dams in the Amazon for the energy requirements of multi-national firms involved in resource extraction.⁵ Consider this in light of the wide-spread practice of what is called "capital flight". Capital flight is the common practice of returning varying percentages of international loan money to the same bank from which it was borrowed in the form of personal accounts.⁶ And someone has to repay the debts which have been incurred.

United Nations and World Bank figures reveal that between 1980 and 1982, around \$96 billion U.S. flowed from the industrialized north to the undeveloped south, while around \$115 billion U.S. flowed north between 1983 and 1988.⁷ Interest payments on Third World debt in 1988 amounted to three times the value of the original loans.⁸ Compare this with the fact that the stock market crash in October of 1987, or Black Monday, totalled losses worth the entire African debt, yet the domestic economy hardly wavered. This is as indicative of how simple it would be to write these loans off as it is of the West's obsession with speculative, 'paper' profits - the very opposite of capitalism,

which is fundamentally about the production of goods. This is also contradicted by what is perceived to be a future economy based on the "service industry." But in service to whom?

Nations unable to meet repayment schedules are subjected to International Monetary Fund (IMF) 'structural adjustment' or 'austerity' programmes. Simply put, the programmes amount to the diversion of resources used for humane social programmes to paying interest on loans that will never be repaid. According to an official of the aid agency CUSO,

The developed countries, including Canada, are forcing poor countries to do things Canada could never accept for its own people - for example, closing large numbers of hospitals and schools or ending agricultural subsidies.⁹

Moreover, a UNICEF report published in 1988, revealed that at least 650,000 children in the Third World died needlessly in 1987, "partly as a result of the international debt crises."¹⁰ Compare this with the fact that of all aid to the Third World by industrialized countries, only three percent goes to primary health systems, primary education and family planning."¹¹

In another example of the effects of an IMF "austerity" programme, riots in Peru in 1990 erupted after a 3,100 percent rise in the price of gasoline, a 25-fold increase in cooking fuel, and a tripling in the cost of bread.¹² Consider such a scenario in light the World Bank's study on poverty, World Development Report 1990. What the study

suggests is that national economic failures in the present are a result of what is called the "socialist-megaproject model". Again we see the reduction of a complex socio-economic problem to the level of ideology, at whatever the cost.

Chile, Brazil, and Peru, among other nations, have allegedly walked this perilous economic path. Of course such a report would fail to mention the United Fruit/CIA sponsored revolution in Chile in the early 70s, thus enslaving the nation to the brutalities of General Pinochet and "good" economic performance. And the report also says that such "socialist-megaprojects" can only lead to "increases in inflation, a decline in real wages, and burgeoning foreign debt."¹³ Certainly, aspects of World Bank and IMF policies may be relevant in certain well-defined circumstances, but as a blanket, abstract approach, it makes no sense whatsoever in light of what is actually happening. In this sense World Development 1990 is less a mirror of truth than a reflection of its own narcissism. As John Saul puts it:

The Third World Debt Crisis is a prime example of economic common sense in conflict with structural morality.¹⁴

And then we wonder why there is increasing violence in Peru (exemplified by the activities of the rebel Shining Path) as well as elsewhere. Compare this with the fact that less than a two-thousandths of the world's harvests (0.002 per cent) could save the fifteen million children that die from hunger every year.¹⁵ Given the resulting social unrest, whether it be in the form of unjust social policies that lead to poverty and hunger, or in flagrant human rights violations, Marshall McLuhan's observation that violence occurs

in two forms is extremely relevant:

first, [there is] the kind that comes from the unimportance of everybody; and second, the kind that comes from the impulse to restore's one's private meaning by acts of violence.¹⁶

Just as terrorism is war by limited means, John Saul argues that violence "has always been a sign of frustration over public impotence."¹⁷

The question may then be: do we possess the kind of information that would contour and give perspective to these kinds of complex issues? Does violence of the kind we have described permeate the fabric of culture and society in a way that is not immediately obvious? Moreover, would we be surprised, for instance, to learn that modern pesticides were developed from surplus chemical warfare agents from World War II, or that these chemicals are, in the medium to long-term, largely ineffective, while killing the soil's organic matter - its life? What does this say about the way in which we are conditioned to live and to think? "The obligation to endure," wrote Jean Rostand, "gives us the right to know."¹⁸ We have both the right and the responsibility to know; and in order to know, we have to ask some very awkward and fundamental questions. And as George Trow reminds us,

In America, it's the era of fake. "Miami Vice" is a fake. Rambo is a fake, and even President Reagan is a fake. When we idolize what is not real, it frees us from responsibility.¹⁹

Noam Chomsky, in *Necessary Illusions* among other writings, has addressed fundamental biases in the way in which the news media delivers information. It is

certainly no secret that the five second sound byte has become the symbol of the degraded image and its inherent non-meaning. But it is against such a background of media images - directing our attention to the banal and the trivial - that issues crucial to a vibrant and healthy culture are obscured. For example, the Indonesian invasion of East Timor in the 70s - hardly mentioned in the news media and delayed because of visiting President Ford - has resulted in a situation which resembles that which may obtain in Bosnia a few years from now. Under an undeclared policy of genocide, 'ethnic cleansing', Indonesian style, has seen up to a third of the population exterminated.

Yet, Canada willingly sells arms to Indonesia and seeks ever greater economic ties. Meanwhile the situation in East Timor is effectively taboo in public debate, not because of some evil conspiracy to hide this information, but because its dissemination simply is not in the interests of those who benefit from the status quo. The Senators are good men, goes an old Roman saying, but the Senate is a beast. And likewise, political economy has become a corporate, quasi-sovereign entity unto itself - an unelected power structure responsible to no one. It is a reality that exists on the fringe of conscious perception - and classical economic theory - and like the topics of politics and religion at the dinner table, is not brought up in polite company. Not Surprisingly, as Murray Edelman points out,

The collectivity of psychotherapeutic experience suggests that the areas of politics and religion are for the most of us more deeply immune to rational processes than are any other portion of our conscious beliefs and value systems.²⁰

Such a condition may also be seen in the way social and political systems resist change. While the voices of reform in many countries, including Canada, speak loudly, the original values of genuine reform are usually in time displaced, if they are not to begin with, by the co-opting values of the "system". What then, is the nature of the this "system"? In order to shed light on this question, it will be necessary first to enlarge upon the mythological environment in which the 'system' has its life.

The Mythic Quest

The deepest element of human happiness, as is evident both to psychologists and to people of common sense, consists in the perception of movement towards a goal; this is why we have a "craving for knowledge of the right direction - or orientation."²¹ This need for direction in life is a central aspect of the human psyche and is usually expressed, in dream as well as in myth, as both a quest for identity and a rite of initiation. With this in mind, John Fraser describes one of the several startling experiences he has had as a Sunday school teacher. A young girl named Rebecca asks why "everyone is always on a trip in the Bible... no one seems to stay home."

I don't think they know what they're looking for... Well, my dad said if you know what you're looking for you don't go running all over the place. You sit down and try to figure out where you left it.²²

Nevertheless, as the cultural geographer David Sopher argues, "to live, one has to take risks in alien places... 'Home' has no meaning apart from the journey that takes one

outside home."²³ The purpose of the seasonal circuit or "progress" of the medieval pilgrim was atonement with God. "He who does not travel", goes an old Moorish proverb, "does not know the value of men". In Tibetan, a human being is defined as "a-Gro-ba", a "go-er", "one who migrates."²⁴ The Arabic "Il-rah" denotes "the Way", later to mean "the Way of God",²⁵ similar to the Chinese 'Tao.' And the central Australian Aboriginal "tjurna djugurba" means both "the footprints of the Ancestor" and "the Way of the Law."²⁶

In all of these examples the association between "journey" and "law" exemplifies not only an intimate relation between movement in a landscape and the essence of being, but also the human need to exist within sacred space. Moreover, this need, which Eliade calls the "nostalgia for eternity", derives from the archaic impulse for an orientation that reveals a fixed point or centre that transcends profane time. This impulse to "kill time" is expressed as

... a revolt against historical time, an attempt to restore this historical time, freighted as it is with human experience, to a place in time that is cosmic, cyclical, and infinite... and in the last analysis, for the abolition of time.²⁷

This predisposition to live in sacred time and space, is in turn ritualized as a repetition of the original creation of the world in *illò tempore*, a re-creation that is the model or archetype from which history is regulated. As Eliade argues

An unknown, foreign, and unoccupied territory (which often means, "unoccupied by our people") still shares in the fluid and larval modality of chaos. By occupying it and, above all, by settling in it, man

symbolically transforms it into a cosmos through a ritual repetition of the cosmogony. What is to become "our world" must first be "created," and every creation has a paradigmatic model - the creation of the universe by the gods.²⁸

Indeed, as Eliade continues, all the noteworthy geographical discoveries, from those of the Phoenicians to those of the Portuguese, were the result of the quest for the land of Eden - satisfying the desire for "mythical geography."²⁹ In this sense, newly-discovered land exists in the state of chaos preceding creation and is consecrated through a ritual repetition of the original creation in *illo tempore*. Eliade reminds us that the Scandinavians who colonized Iceland regarded their work as a sacred and paradigmatic act of creation.³⁰

The human propensity to project the mythological imagination onto the physical landscape is intimately linked to fear of the unknown, the emptiness which lies beyond the landscapes of "home." To travel is to travail, to experience the terror of unknown territory. The "terra incognita" of numerous medieval maps is the psychological equivalent of the state of reality preceding creation. The Greek conception of the "barbarian", and the Roman conception of the "alien" are just a couple of the more debased projections of the mythic quest onto the physical landscape. "Everything outside of it (cosmos) is no longer a cosmos but a sort of 'otherworld', a foreign, chaotic space, peopled by ghosts, demons, foreigners."³¹

The Negative Aspect of the Sacred

When myth is thought of as historical and physical fact, as opposed to metaphor and allegory the gift of the mythical night journey towards a unified human identity, as exemplified by modernity, is nullified. The psychic contents of the mythic images are exteriorized as something alien, and thus become objects to be reacted to, rather than symbols to be integrated within the human psyche. In this sense, by refusing Kohak's 'gift of the night', we open ourselves to what Eliade calls *kratophany*, the negative aspect of the sacred. "It is dangerous," he writes, "to come near any defiled or consecrated object in a profane state - without, that is, the proper ritual preparation."³² As Eliade has argued:

But repetition emptied of its religious content necessarily leads to a pessimistic vision of existence... [and] cyclical time becomes terrifying.³³

Moreover, insofar as the earth itself is sacred, contact with it through a *kratophany* can only be made in a destructive manner. Furthermore, the ambivalent nature of the sacred, as Eliade reminds us, has been extensively illustrated in history, including that of Egypt and the early Semitic world. This ambivalence also finds its way into medieval mythology by way of the Grail legend:

... stepping up to the door of the room containing the Holy Grail, a voice said to Lancelot: Step back, Lancelot! On no account must thou enter here, it is forbidden thee. And if thou fly in the face of this proscription, thou shalt repent it.³⁴

Lancelot disobeys the voice and is afflicted with a coma for "four and twenty days."

Awakening, he recalls a spiritual vision.

... but for my grievous sins and my most evil plight I should have seen more, had I not lost the sight of my eyes and all power over my body, on account of the infamy that God has seen in me.³⁵

Likewise, the spiritual healing ritual of the !Kung, popularly known as the Kalahari Bushmen, demands a total concentration in the healing dance; or otherwise the sacred, healing heat, or 'nu/um', can kill the shaman. Moreover, Northwest coast natives hold a similar belief, as do the prairie Sioux, as is shown by their annual healing and initiation ritual, or Sun Dance; they hold that one must have a clear and positive consciousness for the emergence of the sacred to be effective - and positive.

We may now ask ourselves if and how the phenomenon of kratophany is characteristic of the modern era. Just as hierophany can exist through a multiple array of symbols and contexts, so may the kratophany. And not surprisingly, it is in the context of the journey and the quest that the negative aspect of the sacred is the most obvious.

One such expression can be found in British attempts to reach the riches (Eden) of the East via the Arctic. In this regard, from medieval times to the era of the Elizabethan mariners, like the archetypal themes of the mythic quest, "the Arctic represented both threat and salvation."³⁶ The North was a landscape inhabited by the fierce Amazons and the dog-headed Cynocephali; and the "Northern Ocean itself was a place of whirlpools (*Chaos* and *Maelstrom*) and rip tides."³⁷

But beyond this surreal underworld lay the land of the Hyperboreans, a race of beings living in a peaceable and abundant realm that finds its equivalent in other powerful images of the Western psyche, such as the Elysian Fields, Avalon, and El Dorado, to name a few. Moreover, such images were "inseparably a part of early Arctic exploration."³⁸

Figure 1: sixteenth century depiction of the North Atlantic



Sebastian Münster, Sea Monsters Inhabiting the North Atlantic, from Cosmographia, 1550

The power of such images, however, when combined with perceived primacy of deductive logic in relating meaning to landscape, opens a kind of psychic rift that creates

a distortion in the relation between sacred and profane space, which is such that the ritual repetition of paradigmatic gestures is forgotten and myth is treated as actual fact rather than metaphor or parable. It is as if the evolution of the rational psyche, as an orientating centre of identity, has resulted in the loss of the ability to appreciate the efficacy of metaphor. Here then lies the progression of a perceptual pathology, where fantasy is confused with reality, the map with the territory.

The Sublime and The Picturesque

What T.S. Eliot called a "dissociation of sensibility", beginning in the seventeenth century, may be found in the two primary aesthetic principles that played a prominent role in British expeditions to the Arctic and the search for the Northwest Passage. The first aesthetic is that of the sublime, generated from the awe-inspiring mountainous regions of the European continent. The other is that of the picturesque, developed from viewing landscape as if it were a framed painting, and finding its most elegant expression in the English garden and rural Lake District. The picturesque then, was the landscape of "home" - and, wrote Stendhal, "one of the essential aspects of early nineteenth-century England."⁴⁰

Unfortunately, a romanticized obsession with the sublime, and the picturesque (like the present distortion of the word "idealism"), would put the very lives of British explorers at risk - as it did during the first Franklin expedition in 1821. Wintering inland

that winter, Franklin set up his camp, Fort Enterprise, in partial accord with these two aesthetic principles.⁴¹ Such a location, however, was the worst possible given the harsh realities of an Arctic winter. Ironically, they were saved by the "heathen" Indians - this time. In a final twist of irony, Franklin and his crew were last seen in 1845, embarking on what was to be their last Arctic expedition, on the *Erebus* (darkness), named after the son of Chaos. Moreover, as Don Gifford notes:

The Victorian faith in the immediate possibility of moral and spiritual progress, bolstered by the evidence of technological progress in the material world, had the effect of relegating time to an elsewhere in the future and of postponing any searching examination of time-present.⁴²

Despite the merciless realities of the Arctic, the aesthetic of the sublime and the picturesque was co-opted by the belief that discursive reason was an entirely adequate framework for understanding. This state of affairs reached its tragic epitome through the belief that the indigenous Eskimo had nothing to offer the British explorer, in spite of an extensive wisdom concerning survival in an Arctic environment. One can, unfortunately, easily visualize the wholly inadequate clothing of early British explorers and such absurd scenes as the hauling of entire libraries, complete with desks, hundreds of miles across snow and ice in search of winter camp. Such were the absurd and tragic results of a distorted sense of quest working on an alienated psyche. The "riddle of the unconscious in nature" had proven to be a nightmare of surreal proportions.

Manifest Destiny

Another kind of *kratophany* can be seen in the American doctrine of Manifest Destiny. In the early nineteenth century, Manifest Destiny rationalized continual territorial expansion of the United States. This included the annexation of Northwest and Southwest territories as well as islands in the Pacific and the Caribbean. Moreover, the "disappearance of the frontier", in the late nineteenth century, was noted by the American historian Frederick Jackson Turner in his famous "frontier thesis". While the disappearance of the frontier signified the goal of Manifest Destiny, it would soon be revived as a justification for U.S. expansionism, physical and otherwise.

In the eighteen-nineties, the Reverend Josiah Strong, author of the popular tract *Our Country*, rhetorically asked,

Does it not look as if God were not only preparing in our Anglo-Saxon civilization the die with which to stamp the peoples of the earth, but as if he were massing behind that die the mighty power with which to press it?⁴³

And on the eve of the Spanish War (1898), The Washington *Post* stated:

We are face to face with a strange destiny. The taste of Empire is in the mouth of the people even as the taste of blood in the jungle. It means an Imperial policy, the Republic, re nascent, taking her place with the armed nations.⁴⁴

Here, the sacred and the profane continue their inexorable decline into confusion and tragedy. What William Blake called "Newton's sleep", the mechanization of time and space and the reduction of experience to the "laws" of nature, can be seen here as the

reduction of experience to the "laws" of social Darwinism and Realpolitik.

Moreover, this perspective was revived following World War II, where Allied victory over the Axis powers was perceived as the victory of American ideals. The "American experience", wrote *Life Magazine* editor Henry Luce, "is the key to the future."⁴⁵ And one of the fundamental expressions of this "key to the future" was the post-war restructuring of the global economy, a topic addressed at the Bretton Woods conference in 1944. Set in the New England mountains, the conference was attended by forty-four industrial and non-industrial nations, including Russia and China, and, naturally, excluded the Axis powers. Moreover, the policies created by Bretton Woods would prove to be contemporary expressions of Manifest Destiny in the sense that they gave birth to both the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) and the IMF.

The general outcome of the conference was an American- sponsored agreement that envisioned an enlarged market economy, liberalized trade, and convertibility of currencies based on the stability of the U.S. dollar. In a tone of rejoicing, the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, Hans Morgenthau, proclaimed that this agreement pointed "down a highway broad enough for all men to walk in step... If they will set out together, there is nothing on earth that can stop them."⁴⁶ However idealistic this may sound, Morgenthau's belief was based on the classical economic philosophy of Adam Smith's "invisible hand", which would ensure equitable distribution in a market

economy.

Unfortunately, like the "trickle down" theory of Reaganomics in the 80s - exemplified by the deregulation of American financial markets and which was directly responsible for Savings and Loans fiasco - the 'invisible hand', that was to build the 'broad highway' to the Mecca of wealth and happiness, has turned out to be little more than the creation of false expectations, junk bonds, and unrealistic calculation of profit.

As for the social responsibility element of Bretton Woods, Russian objections that the social policy imperatives implied by the agreement would breach essential aspects of their sovereignty led to their eventual withdrawal. Also, India argued for explicit recognition of the agreement's responsibility to the socio-economic realities of the non-industrialized nations: "... international organizations have tended to approach all problems from the point of view... of the West."⁴⁷ This concern was rejected outright because, among other things, it did not meet the "test of American self-interest."⁴⁸

What this self-interest amounted to, argues Michael Hogan in *The Marshall Plan*, was "an outgrowth of American corporations."⁴⁹ And according to Robert Hull of the British Treasury, "the Americans wanted an integrated Europe looking like the United States of America - God's own country."⁵⁰ As U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull put it, "... enemies in the market place... could not be friends at the council table."⁵¹ Highlighted by Calvin Coolidge's quip that the "chief business of the United States is business"⁵²,

these events effectively elevated the cultivation of the "free" market to the status of a moral virtue, an idealized expression of democracy whose legitimacy was held to be sacred. President Reagan could then claim in his farewell address that countries "across the globe are turning to free markets and free speech",⁵³ while George Bush could state, in all seriousness, in his inaugural address that "We know how to secure a more just and prosperous life, for man on earth: through free markets, free speech, free elections."⁵⁴

Manifest Destiny, then, like the sublime and the picturesque, may be considered as the secular equivalent of a centre from which the sacred reveals itself, in all of its aspects - psychological and otherwise. Moreover, as can be seen in the Bretton Woods conference and elsewhere, it was deemed vital that the world's nations be seen to agree on a plan for global order - which turned out to be suspiciously harmonized with American self-interest. This, despite the warnings of American economic advisors that a key currency exchange agreement would, in the long term, create major trading blocks that "would do more to threaten world economic peace than even chaos in the currencies."⁵⁵

In such a desacralized realm, Eliade explains, perception "necessarily leads to a pessimistic vision of existence."

The periodical sanctification of cosmic time then proves useless and without meaning. The gods are no longer accessible through cosmic rhythms. The religious meaning of the repetition of paradigmatic gestures is forgotten.⁵⁶

Interpreted through a sterile rationality that does not recognize the efficacy of anything

beyond its own narcissism, the meaning of the mythic quest becomes ossified and degraded. Like Eliade's kratophany, where "cyclical time becomes terrifying", the impulse for sacred time and space becomes exemplified by such tragedies as a distorted aesthetic sense, the business cycles of Manifest Destiny, and Pol Pot's attempt to reset Cambodian culture to "time zero" - where the Elysian Fields became the "killing fields." "Ethnic cleansing" provides another variation on this theme. "The periodical sanctification of cosmic time" is thus emptied of its religious content. And as Jung argues:

... if he [the human being] declares the "tremendum" to be dead, then he should find out at once where this considerable energy... has disappeared to....It might be called "Wotan" or "State" or something ending with -ism... If it does not appear under the disguise of a new name, then it will most certainly return in the mentality of the one from whom the death declaration has issued. Since it is a matter of a tremendous energy, the result will be an equally important psychological disturbance in the form of a dissociation of personality.⁵⁷

With respect to "forgotten paradigms" and "a dissociation of personality", the question arises, given the destructive tendencies of modernity, what the human impulse for the "abolition of time" has become. In a fundamental sense, reflecting the violence implied by the mechanistic paradigm of dominating nature, the "psychological disturbance" that Jung speaks about seems to issue in the kind of behavior usually associated with warfare. Perhaps Gwynne Dyer summed it up best in his 1983 documentary series entitled *War*, where combat is defined as an "environment where the normal rules of behaviour do not apply... To operate in this environment, people need a special mental framework and a unique form of organization."⁵⁸ Arguably, just such a specific form of "organization" underlies the realities of the present. Whether it be through the entrenchment of the

military-industrial complex or through the behavior of radical aggression, one result of the "rational", argues John Saul, "has been the institutionalization of a permanent state of war."⁵⁹

This "psychological disturbance" and "dissociation of personality", when transposed onto the mythic quest, results in a situation where human aesthetic and ideological preconceptions are believed to be an inherent quality of the landscape - spiritual and otherwise. Thus the desire to "abolish time", in fulfilling the realization of sacred space, results in a radical distortion of our attitude to ourselves and the world. We are victims of a kind of pseudo-perception whereby the individual perceives as "natural" a constructed reality. This is highlighted by Philip Caputo's description of combat experience in Vietnam: "We are starring in our very own war movie," playing the part of "John Wayne," or having the recurring sensation "of watching myself in a movie."⁶⁰ If adults are affected in this way, what about children?

The End of History?

In 1989, two publications clearly underlined the despondency and negativity of the Western psyche in relation to an underlying archetype of the quest. An essay by Francis Fukuyama entitled "The End of History" appeared in the neo-conservative journal, *The National Interest*. In it, Fukuyama laments the loss of a sense of history due to the global predominance of American values. It is written in a manner of resignation to what is

perceived as inevitable - divining the future through the fog of self-pity.

The end of history will be a very sad time... the worldwide ideological struggle that called forth daring, courage, imagination, and idealism, will be replaced by economic calculation, the endless solving of technical problems, environmental concerns, and the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands. In the post-historical period there will be neither art nor philosophy, just the perpetual caretaking of the museum of human history.⁶¹

Also in 1989, Bill McKibbin's *The End of Nature* appeared. McKibbin, like Fukuyama, can imagine no viable alternative to a drab and fundamentally pointless future.

The end of nature probably also makes us reluctant to attach ourselves to its remnants, for the same reason that we usually don't choose new friends from among the terminally ill... There is no future in loving nature.⁶²

While McKibbin fails to mention the fact that the bio-diversity of nature will ensure its survival despite what we do to it, both this and Fukuyama's essay (which was later published as a book) may be better read as internal reflections of a fragmented psyche, rather than as prediction of the future. The inability to envisage viable alternatives is perhaps yet another aspect of the pervasiveness of an exaggerated mechanistic paradigm. Once again, there seems to be a confusion between the mythological map to be followed and the psychic territory to be traversed.

Similar misapprehensions can also be found in the early stages of the Cold War, where "American leaders consistently perceived themselves as responding to rather than initiating challenges to the existing natural order."⁶³ In other words, they were reacting

to events that were, in large part, of their own making, without being consciously aware of it. And it is by now notorious that a feeling of helplessness, of lack of power to effect change, rather than merely reacting to events as they occur, is widespread among the populations of the West as a whole. In other words, the act of living is overwhelmed by the sense of "being lived." As Murray Edelman has written in *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*:

It is central to its (politics) potency as a symbol that it is remote, set apart, omnipresent as the ultimate threat or means of succour, yet not susceptible to effective influence through any act we as individuals can perform⁶⁴... A dramatic symbolic life among abstractions thereby becomes a substitute gratification for the pleasure of remoulding the concrete environment.⁶⁵

The Modern Quest

The nature of this "substitute gratification" may be seen in the modern, social variation of what essentially is Eliade's "nostalgia for eternity". Caputo's description of a confusion between fantasy and reality comprises one essential aspect of substitute gratification, exemplified by the repetitious themes of modern television. Saul argues that the repetitive nature and thematic similarity of television programs are indicative of how the freedom of the visual imagination has been co-opted by what he calls the "official school of ritual."⁶⁶ Indeed, the high velocity images of many advertisements are the visual equivalent of a verbal technique that religious cults use to brainwash their membership. While the comic book and the cartoon may be the last bastion of the imagery long associated with sacredness, the electronic image promises the secular

equivalent of sacred geography, while revolving, as man made images always have, "around the forces of fear, magic, and ritual."⁶⁷

The electronic image is man as God and the ritual involved leads us not to a mysterious Holy Trinity but back to ourselves...In the absence of a clear understanding that we are now the only source [God], these images cannot help but return to the expression of magic and fear proper to idolatrous societies.⁶⁸

One cannot help but make a connection between the ritualized banalities of visual, electronic entertainment, and the fact that many television viewers can watch up to eight programs at one time while not missing anything essential to each program. Would *Dallas* have ever been the same if we did not know what was to happen? Every now and then, to legitimate the ritual, a kind of pseudo-mystery is presented to further seduce the unwary viewer. "Who shot J.R.?" was one of the most watched television programs in history, while the controversy it generated was given media attention in newspapers as well as in newscasts all over the world.

Also, one may consider the cultural impact of this in light of the fact that many syndicated American programs, such as *Kojak* and *Dynasty*, that are no longer produced, are sold at discount rates to many Third World nations - undercutting what little traditional culture there may be left in these countries while raising unrealistic material expectations. Like the post World War II cargo cults of Melanesia, whose members constructed decoy airports and shipping wharves to attract cargo, the modern incantations to attract the attention of the gods of wealth and happiness show how deeply the notion

of "progress" has been entwined with ritual and the sacred. For instance, modernity can be seen as a ritual whereby the induced desire to consume is the secular equivalent of the sacred. And even if we have a "gut-awareness" that we are being manipulated, can we, asks Mavor Moore, "resist the implied flattery?"⁶⁹

The dream of wealth and happiness, as defined by Manifest Destiny, with all of its social and political implications, obscures the depth and import of these implications by its propensity to distort the relation between dream and reality. As Northrop Frye argues, contemporary expressions of the sacred are informed by a nostalgic romanticism that "increases the feeling of separation between subject and object by withdrawing the subject into a fantasy world."⁷⁰ This fundamental dilemma has also been addressed by the cultural geographer Yi-Fu Tuan when he wrote:

When we think of an ideal place in the abstract, the temptation to oversimplify and dream is well nigh irresistible. Dire consequences ensue when that dream is set prematurely in concrete. Landscape allows and even encourages us to dream. It does function as a point of departure. Yet it can anchor our attention because it has components that we can see and touch.⁷¹

Unfortunately, this condition of the imagination, in which we are encouraged to "oversimplify and dream" is becoming increasingly prevalent in modern society. The ensuing and dire consequences of this are obvious in the growing propensity of people to risk the "chance" of winning "happiness" through legalized gambling. In other words, this amounts to an accelerated form of instant gratification, which, like the decline of the Roman empire, distorts the basis of culture and obscures an awareness of the spiritual

and social efficacy of cultural identity.

Perhaps the most insidious aspect of this form of anti- culture, apart from its inherent sense of dis-empowerment and alienation, is the growing popularity in Canada of video lottery terminals that are beginning to appear everywhere from bus depots to hotel lobbies. The consequence, however, is that this form of gambling is as addictive for governments as it is to individuals, who are usually the working poor and the poor who are out of work - the groups most vulnerable to this kind of seduction. Moreover, in a study of legalized gambling in the United States, Robert Goodman speaks of gambling as a "cannibalization" of the economy, where funds available for economic development are diverted into a activity that has no real value.⁷² This substitute for "remoulding the concrete environment" also creates its own entrenched bureaucracy, where governments become "hooked" on the new revenue generated by gambling.⁷³

A Barren Landscape

"When the people lack a proper sense of awe," wrote the Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu, "then some awful visitation will descend upon them."⁷⁴ Reinhold Niebuhr has also written on the loss of the distinction between the creative and the destructive when the sense of tragedy, like the sense of wonder, becomes lost. And in late twentieth century mythology, the sense of quest that informs and shapes a cultural landscape becomes a technique for "success" - at whatever the cost. This condition is exacerbated by a logic

that reifies the sacred - reducing it to mechanism and subservience to the profane.

To follow Kohak, this loss of meaning is a direct result of the system of self-deception we have created in order to "justify what we know to be unjustifiable."⁷⁵ The "gift of the night" may then very well be the sound of gunfire between rival gangs in Los Angeles or between their equivalent in a growing number of African states. The night need not be alien, Kohak reminds us, but in a world that cannot heal, pain and guilt are hidden, fuelling the fires of discontent and the autonomy of the demon.

Like the night, what Jung calls "the shadow" (repressed and largely unconscious experiences) seeks to be integrated with the conscious psyche in a movement towards the goal of wholeness and meaning. But it is the context in which this quest is understood that determines its value as either a medium of understanding or the projection of an alienated psyche. While genuine rationality is crucial to understanding our deeper sensitivities and their expressions in culture, the overemphasis of an instrumental rationality has dominated and trivialized culture to an extent that is lethal. As Martin Buber argues, "a world that is ordered is not the world order."⁷⁶ What, then, can be the symbol, beyond the confusion of the "new world order", that clearly reflects what Martin Luther King called the *Promised Land*?

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. Quoted in Sogyal Rinpoche, The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying (New York: Harper-Collins, 1992), 8.
2. Quoted in Susan George, A Fate Worse Than Debt, rev. ed. (Markham, Ont.: Penguin, 1989), 238.
3. Ibid., 229-43. In regards to the the consequences of LIC, a top ranking African official, anonymous because of fear of death, comments that "We did not manage ourselves well after the British departed. But what we have now is something worse - the revenge of the poor, of the social failures, of the people least able to bring up children in a modern society." A portrait of this dilemma is drawn by Robert Kaplan in relation to, among other West African nations, Sierra Leone. "Sierra Leone is a microcosm of what is occurring in West Africa and much of the underdeveloped world: The withering away of central governments, the rise of tribal and regional domains, the unchecked spread of disease, and the growing pervasiveness of war. West Africa is reverting to the Africa of the Victorian atlas... becoming, as Graham Greene once observed, 'blank' and

'unexplored.' See "Coming Anarchy," The Atlantic Monthly (February/1994), 44-76.

4. George, Fate, 14-19.

5. Another example of the consequences of Western models of development, which has taken little account of the economic and cultural values of agriculture, the basis of industry, can be seen in Bangladesh. Bangladesh, contrary to public perception, could actually be self-sufficient in food production. However, in fact food grains are exported in exchange for capital to pay down loans used for Western-sponsored development projects that have largely benefited the elites. Moreover, a part of this capital is used to import food. This is not an isolated example. See Susan George, Ill Fares The Land, rev. ed. (Markham Ont.: Penguin, 1990).

6. See George, Fate, 19-21, 149, 258-9.

7. Vic Parsons, "Wealthy countries reduce assistance to many nations that are in dire need", The Brandon Sun (July 1/1990), 4.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid. In regards to the international debt crises, former UN ambassador Stephen Lewis, responding to a 1988 UNICEF report, had this to say:

How in God's name are they (developing countries) supposed to achieve security for their populations if every penny they make goes to servicing that debt or a portion of that debt?... Must we starve our children to pay our debts?

Quoted from Canadian Press, "Lewis says world debt deprives children", The Brandon Sun (July 18/1989), 2.

10. Ibid.

11. Quoted in Jonathan Power, "Remarkable journey has just begun", The Calgary

Herald (Oct.4/1992), 4.

12. Reuter, "Price hikes cause chaos in Peru", The Calgary Herald (August 10/90), 3.

13. Editorial, "Available remedies to relieve world poverty", The Globe and Mail (July 21/1990), D6.

14. Saul, Voltaire's Bastards, 406.

15. George, Ill fares, 223.

16. Quoted in Saul, Voltaire's Bastards, 490.

17. Ibid.

18. Quoted in Rachel Carson, Silent Spring (New York: Fawcett World Library, 1970), 23.

19. Quoted in Don Gifford, The Farther Shore (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 179.

20. Murray Edelman, The Symbolic Uses of Politics (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 19.

21. William H. Sheldon, "Psychology and the Promethean Will", The Choice is Always Ours, eds. Dorothy Berkley Phillips, et. al. (New York: Harper-Collins, 1989), 33.

22. John Fraser, "Don't Have a Cow, Lord", Saturday Night (Dec.1993/Jan.1994), 14.

23. David Sopher, "The Landscapes of Home", The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 133.

24. Bruce Chatwin, The Songlines (Markham, Ont.: Penguin, 1988), 197.

25. Ibid., 184.
26. Ibid., 201.
27. Eliade, Eternal Return, 153.
28. Eliade, The Sacred, 31.
29. Eliade, Patterns, 433.
30. Eliade, The Sacred, 31.
31. Ibid., 29.
32. Eliade, Patterns, 15.
33. Ibid., 107.
34. The Quest of the Holy Grail, trans. P.M. Matarasso (Markham, Ont.: Penguin, 1986), 262.
35. Ibid., 264.
36. Lopez, Dreams, 281.
37. Ibid., 282.
38. Lopez, Dreams, 282.
39. Copied from Hans Christian von Baeyer, "Creatures of the Deep", The Sciences (March, April/1989), 2.
40. Quoted in I.S. Maclaren, "The Aesthetic Map of the North; 1845-1859", Interpreting Canada's North eds. Kenneth S. Coates and William R. Morrison (Mississauga, Ont.: Copp Clark and Pitman, 1982), 20.
41. Ibid.
42. Gifford, Farther Shore, 86.
43. Quoted in A Concise History of the American Republic (second ed.), eds. Samuel Eliot Morrison et. al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 482.

44. Ibid.

45. Quoted in Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers (London: Fontana Press, 1988), 464.

46. Quoted in Alfred E. Eckes Jr, A Search for Solvency (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1975), 164.

47. Ibid., 148.

48. Ibid., 118.

49. Michael Hogan, The Marshall Plan (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), xii. Also, in regards to post-war global economic reconstruction, a Congressional mandate set 1952 as the cut-off date for foreign economic aid. While the "dollar gap", or the difference between aid expenditures and revenues, showed no signs of closing in the near future, Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, who admired nineteenth century British imperialism, replaced "international Keynesian stimulation of the world economy with international military Keynesian stimulation of the world economy." This was not regulated by the mandate and was rationalized by exploiting deteriorating American-Russian relations. Moreover, from the perspective of the Truman administration in 1947, restoration of cash flow to the global economy meant the reactivation of imperialism. As William Borden argues, "The industrial interests viewed colonial trade patterns as the 'natural' form of international economic relations." See William S. Borden, The Pacific Alliance (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), 12,11.

Also, John Saul, in Voltaire's Bastard's, outlines the evolution and consequences of the military approach to the world economy, especially in the corporate-rational context

of the military-industrial complex in the early 60s. This process was facilitated by the 'management' approach to arms manufacturing as defined by Robert McNamara, a former president of the Ford Motor Company and John Kennedy's Secretary of Defence (pages 80-91).

50. Ibid., 247.

51. Ibid., 26.

52. Quoted in Stephen Randall, United States Foreign Oil Policy: 1919-1948 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1985), 259.

53. Quoted in Saul, Voltaire's Bastards, 277.

54. Ibid., 237.

55. Quoted in Eckes, Solvency, 118.

56. Eliade, The Sacred, 107.

57. Jung, Psychology, 104.

58. Gwynne Dyer, "The Profession of Arms", transcripts from the CBC documentary War (part 3), (Montreal: National Film Board of Canada, 1983), 1.

59. Saul, Voltaire's Bastards, 178.

60. Quoted in Gifford, The Farther Shore, 40.

61. Quoted in Lewis H. Lapham, "Endgames", Harper's (Nov./1989), 10-11.

62. Ibid., 11.

63. John Gaddis, Strategies of Containment (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), viii.

64. Edelman, Symbolic Uses of Politics, 5.

65. Ibid., 9.

66. Saul, Voltaire's Bastards, 465.

67. Ibid.
68. Ibid., 460.
69. Mavor Moore, "Switching of the bright lights and plugging into enlightenment", The Globe and Mail (April 4/1987), C2.
70. Frye, Bush Garden, 242.
71. Yi-Fu Tuan, "Thought and Landscape", The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 101.
72. Dale Eisler, "Governments addicted to gambling", The Calgary Herald (May 11/1994), A4.
73. Ibid.
74. Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching, trans. D.C. Lau (Toronto: Penguin, 1985), 134.
75. Kohak, Embers, 157.
76. Martin Buber, I and Thou, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1987), 31.

CHAPTER THREE

IMAGES, SYMBOLS AND INTERPRETATION

There seems to be little doubt that the images and symbols of modernity have become degraded to the point that they no longer act as expressions of genuine unity and purpose. It may be remembered, in Eliade's formulation, that the original content of images and symbols can never be entirely "uprooted", only "degraded". Recently asked what news events were most important to them in 1993, the majority of Americans responding identified the Michael Jackson scandal and other tabloid headers as being the most important. When information crucial to enlightened dialogue in a functioning democracy becomes a virtual *Circus Maximus*, there results what Bernard Lonergan calls a "general bias". This is a "flight from insight" whereby common sense in practical affairs tends to avoid "the exercise and implementation of sustained intelligence and reasonableness."¹

The psychic infection of general bias is by no means limited to the United States. In Canada, which is becoming more of a deluded state of mind than a geographical reality,

a majority of Canadians firmly believe that national unity, given the threat of Quebec separation, is a top priority. However, the fact that we wish to discuss this, and other important issues, does not dismiss the feeling that we are not sure how to go about it. It is almost as if the conceptual framework and the meaningful context for informed debate is missing. There may be a good reason for this. As Andrew Coyne points out, the threat of geographical fragmentation over the last thirty years has made Canada a "nation of victim groups", a nation where moral relativism has become enshrined in such endeavours as reformulating a constitution; the Charlottetown accord was a text, "to be deconstructed like any other."

The result of this prolonged episode of vandalism has been to loot the idea of Canada of any meaning... Whatever was noble or true or even coherent about Canada as an idea was beaten out of it years ago.²

Given these examples of social deconstruction and moral relativism, a reflection of the current vogue in philosophy and other social sciences, a contrasting background is urgently needed for reclaiming the unifying symbols that may provide the basis for sustainability and socio-economic justice. In this connection, we will explore some of the relationships between symbols and their interpretation. The aim is to identify a set of symbols that may act as a paradigm mediating a sense of continuity and place - and in the last analysis, a sense of the sacred.

Images and Symbols

To Ananda Coomaraswamy, a true symbol reveals its meaning by being *lived into*. Its magical effect in re-enchanting the human condition - like Eliade's hierophany - is achieved "by seeing in things material and sensible a formal likeness to spiritual prototypes of which the senses give no direct report."³ A tree, for instance, may be seen as just a tree, as in Freud's "sometimes a cigar is just a cigar", but it can also be seen as a complex and cyclically balanced relationship between the elements responsible for life itself. In this sense, the tree is a symbol of the mystery informing and animating our deeper sensitivities. The religio-cultural efficacy of symbols as studied by Eliade, Jung, and others, appears to bear this observation out. "The richest knowledge of the tree," writes Mary Catherine Bateson, "includes both myth and botany."⁴

Eliade argues that a symbol is always open; "the interpretation is never over."⁵ Likewise, William James' "unfinished universe" reflects a fundamental tenet in Christian theology where it has always been held that the act of creation is an ongoing process between creator and creature.⁶ The task, then, as Eliade sees it, is to decipher "*the camouflage adopted by the sacred in a desacralized world*."⁷

The symbolic power of images is the power of the religious imagination. And it is on the sensitive or aesthetic level of being, in Bernard Lonergan's understanding, that the imagination correlates its existential concerns with images conveying emotional affect.

Myth and mystery extend from this primary field of "affect-laden images and names". The aesthetic level on which the images operate is in turn subject to rational processes that act as a "higher control" of their expression in both thought and action. Like the hierophany and kratophany, the "indeterminate dynamism" of the dialectic between image and reason can be either positive or negative in its effect on human understanding and action.⁸

On the proper relation between images and their "higher control" in reason, Lonergan writes:

The image has to be able to carry the anticipation of intelligence and rationality; it has to carry the dim, imperfect development of the intelligence and rationality that are proper to man. In itself, the image, the symbol, is a sensitive function. But in the integration of man, insofar as the image carries the significance and the ideals proper to intellect and reason and will, we have mystery.⁹

As for contemporary images and symbols, "anticipation of intelligence" is reduced to material expectation and instant gratification. The only mystery in such a realm is its illusory quality in producing, if only temporarily, a secular sense of the sacred. Nevertheless, Lonergan argues that as genuine symbols, images are capable of carrying and evoking higher meaning, a "criterion of the real" from which humankind "can develop as a unity."¹⁰

Within the predominant philosophical environment of radical relativism and deconstructionism, the dialectic between imagination and reason - and the insights which are its progeny - has reached a serious epistemological impasse. No longer able to realize

that meaning is intrinsic to being, we seek that meaning in the myth of "progress" in history. Seeking "to possess eternity", writes Kohak, we have become "prisoners of time".

Emergence of a Holistic Paradigm

Keeping in mind that the image is, in Lonergan's language, a "principle of continuity", one is left to question if there are any contemporary expressions of continuity or of a genuine sense of the sacred. The ascent of holistic and ecological thinking in Western societies, while still in its infancy, suggests that the latent, symbolic power of this paradigm has yet to be fully explored. How, then, might a holistic paradigm be understood in relation to insight, meaning, and understanding?

With the rise of quantum mechanics in the early part of this century, it has come to light that the chasm between the observer and the observed is much narrower than was previously supposed. Heisenberg's "uncertainty principle" suggests that the state of mind of the observer can have a real effect on that which is observed. Ironically, this condition is the opposite of the determinism proposed by Newtonian science, where calculation is considered the key to understanding nature.

Likewise, what has come to be called "constructivism" - which grew out of cybernetics (the science of messages, which was developed in the 1940s) - is a

profoundly holistic or ecological epistemology in its suggestion that the observed world is not strictly an "objective" reality, but a process of co-creation between a living being and its environment.¹¹ In this sense, the images of mystery that act as a unifying principle in human understanding exist, in Lonergan's understanding, in a "world meditated by meaning and motivated by value, [where] objectivity is simply the consequence of authentic subjectivity."¹²

Constructivism is not an entirely new idea; William Wordsworth observed that the act of perception itself was, in part, the act of creation:

all the mighty world
of eye, and ear - both what they half create,
And what perceive¹³

And what Coleridge called "the Primary IMAGINATION" was

the living Power and the prime Agent of all human Perception, and... a repetition in the finite [human] mind of the aternal act of Creation, in the infinite I AM.¹⁴

For Coleridge, the sacred act of creation, outside of time, is tantamount to the "act of contemplating the thing created."¹⁵ Likewise, the human act of perceiving, within time, is the same as the "act of creating the thing perceived."¹⁶ Perceiving and creating thus synchronize in such a way that is at once "active-creative and passive-contemplative."¹⁷ Such a relationship, characterized as a trinity between creator, creature and created, may very well be at the heart of Lonergan's "authentic subjectivity".

Moreover, constructivism is a variation of what is known in theological discourse as

Analogia Fidei - literally, "the analogy of faith". This is the principle stating that one cannot talk about any one proposition of faith without implying all others. There is never an understanding of a part, one doctrine or one teaching, isolated from the whole. The meaning is in the whole, it's not in a syllogism or a declarative sentence or whatever.¹⁸

The Buddhist concept of *pratitya-samutpada*, or "inter-dependent origination" is another expression of this co-evolving process, and is indicative of how deeply embedded this idea is in the human psyche.

The idea of co-evolution is also explicitly recognized in the emergent phenomena of self-organization. Seen as a principle characteristic of both biological and non-biological processes, spontaneous self-organization has been explored in a wide variety of contexts. The biologists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela have studied this phenomenon at the level of the cell; the Milan school of family therapy at the level of the family; and Niklas Luhmann at the level of society.¹⁹ Also, Elias Canetti, in *Crowds and Power*, studies the behaviour of crowds in this light, and finds that it in many ways resembles biological processes.

Indeed, the implications of these studies, characterized as they are by the coevolving nature of structure and process, offer a basis for a revised epistemology. For instance, Maturana and Varela argue in *The Tree of Knowledge* that, despite a Western bias against a metalevel of knowing, or understanding what it means to understand, human cognition is a "dance of congruity" between the observer and the observed; it is "an ongoing bringing forth of the world through the process of living itself."²⁰

The constructivist conception of self-organization also finds expression in the new sciences of complexity and chaos. Specifically, chaos theory - which has been referred to as the third great revolution in twentieth century science, following relativity and quantum mechanics - is a way of understanding the patterned organization in which a system, biological and otherwise, behaves. What may appear to be random at one level of observation, may in fact be orderly at another. Chaos has been applied as a way of understanding the patterned processes inherent in everything from galaxy and cloud formation to the physiological processes of the human body. Chaos also has practical mechanical functions, such as understanding the way in which air and fuel mix together in a jet engine.

Within the study of chaotic dynamics, it has been discovered that the apparent disorder of simple systems may act as a creative process. That is, the variables within a system generate a complexity from which the system can realize a more organized level of expression.²¹ Complexity, in the words of Heinz Pagels,

is a quantitative measure that can be assigned to a physical system or a computation that lies midway between the measure of simple order and complete chaos.²²

In this sense, Ilya Prigogine has argued that since most systems are open, in that they exchange matter and energy with their environment (information), their variables are in a constant state of flux. These fluctuations may periodically become powerful enough to reach a point of "bifurcation", where a system either collapses or jumps to a higher level of organization. What has become called "the edge of chaos" is the region of complexity

where "unpredictability coexists with creative and coherent adaptation."²³

The American biophysicist Stuart Kaufmann, in his recent book *The Origin of Order*, has revised orthodox views on Darwinian evolution by arguing that self-organization coexists with natural selection in the processes of evolution. This view, which hints at a teleological perspective that is effectively taboo in mainstream interpretations of evolution, supersedes, without negating, Darwin's understanding of natural selection. Kaufmann argues that natural selection operates within the parameters of a pre-existing biological order, where the spontaneous generation of order provides the variables on which selection can act. "Much of the order we see in organisms may be the direct result not of natural selection but of the natural order selection was privileged to act upon."²⁴

As natural order and selection intermesh, says Paul Davies, "selection tends to drive the system towards the edge of chaos where change and adaptation are most efficient."²⁵ Likewise, what Kaufmann calls a "poised state" is a condition within "the edge of chaos" that optimizes the complex operations within a system that enable it to evolve.²⁶ As an example of emergent phenomena, the spontaneous generation of order speaks to our deeper, religious sensitivities. As Paul Abraham puts it, chaos theory gives us an experience and feeling "as to the appropriateness of a question that might live in the historical realm."²⁷ Certainly Kaufmann's "poised state" at the "edge of chaos" appears to give important clues to the understanding of biological evolution. There may be parallels to be found between the processes of nature and those of culture, which are

expressed through the archetypal themes that inform and animate culture. In this connection, the work of Gregory Bateson becomes relevant.

The Pattern Which Connects

Bateson, who made significant contributions to the fields of anthropology, psychiatry, and cybernetics, argues that the schism between mind and nature, extending from the Cartesian paradigm of a mind/body dualism, can be bridged by postulating that the system we call mind is immanent in both the body and the external world.

The individual mind is immanent but not only in the body. It is immanent also in the pathways and messages outside the body; and there is a larger mind of which the individual mind is only a subsystem. This larger mind is comparable to God, and is perhaps what some people mean by God...²⁸

While Bateson rules out the possibility of a transcendent being, identifying it with one side of a radical dualism whose other side is a purely mechanistic view of the world, he nevertheless strove for a kind of monism that included both scientific accuracy and "love, wisdom, and mind".²⁹ Moreover, the most important elements of his approach to knowledge is compatible with a more orthodox kind of theism than he himself will allow.

The crux of Bateson's theory, as presented in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, *Mind and Nature*, and *Angels Fear*, focuses on the idea that mental and cultural processes follow the same so-called laws as biological evolution. "The pattern which connects" or

"metapattern" is a metaphor ("insight through analogy") signifying the relational process through which mental phenomena are linked to biological processes - that is, via a stochastic³⁰ system of organization. Here lies an interesting parallel to Kaufmann's "edge of chaos", where the "poised state" is best able to optimize variables towards evolution. As Bateson argues:

The parallelism between biological evolution and mind is created not by postulating a Designer or Artificer hiding in the machinery of evolutionary process but, conversely, by postulating that thought is stochastic... I would emphasize that *creative* thought must always contain a random component. The exploratory process - the endless *trial and error* of mental progress - can achieve the new only by embarking upon pathways randomly presented, some of which when tried are somehow selected for something like survival.³¹

Bateson's concept of mind, it should be noted, is not reducible to the biological, but is rather a highly organized expression of circular trains of causation, as observed in cybernetics. The stochastic nature of mind is thus immanent in "learning", while that of nature is immanent "in heredity and in [biological] populations".³² Bateson's understanding of the interaction between mind and nature (body) signifies, like Kaufmann's co-evolution between biosystems and the environment, the correction needed in Darwin's understanding of survival. Defined as a holistic system, survival discloses a "strange and surprising identity... the unit [organizational process] of evolutionary survival turns out to be identical with the unit of the mind."³³

Moreover, discursive logic alone is an inadequate framework with which to understand this process, for a linear logic (where time is perceived as an arrow rather

than a field) can only generate paradox when confronted with nonlinear and recursive processes. Indeed, Bateson believed that the stochastic nature of both evolution and learning (ontogeny following phylogeny) could best be understood through the metaphors of what he called the sacred. "It is time to reverse the trend which since Copernicus has been in the direction of debunking mythology, to begin to pick up the many epistemological components of religion that have been brushed aside."³⁴

To Bateson, it was necessary to acknowledge the efficacy of what Saint Augustine called "eternal verities" and what Jung called archetypes. As Dante has Beatrice saying in *The Paradiso*,

... all things... whatever their mode,
observe an inner order. It is this form
that makes the universe resemble God.³⁵

The processes of perception, as Bateson sees it, are largely unconscious; only its products are visible. And the products of perception are intelligible only insofar as they can be related to the archetypal and integrative dimension of experience associated with myth and the sacred. This perspective clarifies the "systemic complexity" needed to affirm the dialectical relation between self and other. The "common network" between mind and the "elements of the necessarily mysterious" becomes an "affirmation of the sacred".³⁶

Bateson also affirms the importance of a conceptual system that compels us to see the "message" as "*both* itself internally patterned *and* itself a part of a larger patterned

universe..."³⁷ Insofar as this "patterned universe" can be understood in relation to similar patterns of mind, the sacred is experienced. The quest for *grace*, which Bateson uses in the New Testament sense (reconciliation or at-one-ment between God and humankind), is a primary question for humanity. He argued, like Jung, that the problem of experiencing grace was fundamentally a problem of integrating the diverse elements of the mind.³⁸ What is lacking is a childlike freshness of perception that provides a "much needed humility." Following Aldous Huxley's argument, Bateson sees the simplicity in the behaviour of animals as an expression of humility, like the "native eye", that humankind has lost.³⁹

On the topic of integration, Bateson utilizes a set of paradoxical images (*pleroma* and *creatura*) that Jung borrowed from Gnosticism and used in his *Seven Sermons of the Dead*. Pleroma is the "crudely physical domain governed only by forces and impacts, and creatura, the domain governed by distinctions and differences."⁴⁰ These two images, like the relation between mind and nature - which to one writer, is similar to Kant's distinction between phenomena and noumena⁴¹ - act as map and territory in the quest for a unified identity. Creatura, being able to distinguish differences (information), is able to read the map of identity (myths) and experientially relate to the territory of pleroma. For this purpose, "we need a creatural science" that enables the other to be "seen in the context of his communication and relationships..."⁴²

Seen in light of the quest for grace, a balanced perception of creatura and pleroma is

the balance between conscious rational purpose and wisdom (i.e., a sense wholeness and overall direction). Wisdom, by the way, is personified in the Hebrew Scriptures' as a feminine figure, and is co-creator with God in the original act of creation. Also, the word *Spirit*, in Hebrew, is feminine, and one may remember that it was the Spirit that was showered upon the disciples at Pentecost. It may be recalled as well that in the Book of Judges, one of the temporary spiritual leaders who led the twelve tribes in periods of crisis was a woman, Deborah. And Chaos in Greek myth as told by Hesiod (which does not mean disorder) is also a feminine principle.

Moreover, an overemphasis on "rational purpose" can elicit a "monstrous distortion"⁴³ indicative of a lack of grace and integration. Unaided consciousness, writes Bateson,

must always tend toward hate; not only because it is good common sense to exterminate the other fellow, but for the more profound reason that, seeing only arcs of circuits, the individual is continually surprised and necessarily angered when his hardheaded policies return to plague the inventor.⁴⁴

One example of this can be seen in what Bateson calls a "double bind", which he finds an important factor in the aetiology of schizophrenia. Here the self-correcting aspect of grace is distorted when a person is confronted by contradictory messages. The double bind requires a number of "ingredients":

- Two or more persons.
- Repeated experience.
- A primary negative injunction [i.e., Refrain from that or I will punish you.]
- A secondary injunction conflicting with the first at a more abstract level, and like the first enforced by punishment or signals which threaten survival. [could take the form of body language, tone of voice, etc.]

- A tertiary negative injunction prohibiting the victim from escaping the field.[can also be positive, i.e., "promises of love"]
- Finally, the complete set of ingredients is no longer necessary when the victim has learned to perceive his universe in double-bind patterns.⁴⁵

An example of the double-bind can easily be seen in modern society. Infinite growth on a finite planet is the kind of paradoxical situation in which we are trained to consider as "natural". Whereas plant and animal populations in nature are held in check by ecological variables, human nature is balanced by the moral idea; and even then, ecology has the ultimate say. Meanwhile, we sense the damage that modernity is inflicting on everything, yet we are bombarded by advertising images proclaiming that "being" is "having." The inherent desire to optimize the variables of the psyche and the society, and the wisdom of conserving, are thus distorted, resulting in a "double-bind". This situation can be seen for what it is by comparing Bateson's "ingredients" with modern consumer culture.

First, the requirement of two or more people is fulfilled in two ways; we identify with an advertised image by identifying with the group or individual in the advertisement; and once this logic is bought into, the image may become a trend in that we identify with others on the basis of the image. Second, the "repeated experience" is simply our mass and repetitive exposure to advertising, and for that matter, a great deal of television programming. The recurrent theme of consumption creates a landscape of what Bateson calls "habitual expectation".

Third, a "primary negative injunction" is implied in that a desirable sense of identity is associated with a product or a service. The implicit recognition is that without this, one does not have an identity. Fourth, a "secondary injunction conflicting with the first" is implicit in the notion that "if you buy this, you will be someone". This is followed by the contradictory recognition that "if you do buy this, you'll just be like everyone else". The punishment for not adapting to this convoluted logic is that if one does not exhibit a certain degree of popular fashion, and the stereotyped personality that goes with it, one is not socially acceptable. Studies have shown that non-conformity in this area can actually affect an individual's chance of landing a job.

Fifth, a "tertiary negative injunction prohibiting escape from the field" is derived from the fact that advertising explicitly presents itself as a fantasy (its real power) that has no real connection with the everyday world; nevertheless it is a kind of fantasy that creates cultural demands and the expectations that "prohibit escape". In this connection, one may recall Northrop Frye's warning of how fantasy facilitates a dissociation between object and subject. In other words, what is presented as "unreal" conflicts with what is "real" in the first injunction. The result is a paradox, much like John Saul's description of a good deal of television, which in effect is a degraded ritual organized around the forces of fear and magic.

Sixth, "the complete set of ingredients is no longer needed" when the pressure to conform outweighs the need to be an individual. The individual is entrained to cultural

demands that characterize individuality as being somehow alien. Choice at this level is reduced to the selection of one brand-name over another. Ironically, what commonly passes for individuality is in fact an expression of the loss of one's identity.

Sensitive Dependence

There is also another point to be made here, and it is concerned with the way in which a double-bind is created. In chaos theory, what is known as "sensitive dependence on initial conditions" is a matter of small scale events being intermeshed with large, and reflects Henri Poincare's adage that "it is the scale that makes the phenomenon". "In science as in life, it is well known that a chain of events can have a point of crisis that could magnify small changes."⁴⁶ An example is what has been called the "butterfly effect"; the flapping of a butterfly's wings in one part of the world can set off a chain of events that, over time and space, results in a major weather disturbance.

In another sense, "sensitive dependence" can be invoked to understand the "butterfly effect" operative in certain critical ideas fundamental to modernity, such as the "double-bind" mentioned earlier. The political theorist C.B. Macpherson points out that the idea of unlimited desire is not found in Aristotle or in Saint Thomas Aquinas.

You begin to find it only with the rise of the capitalist market society in the seventeenth century, in Hobbes and in Locke, and it is carried to its logical conclusion by James Mill, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, for whom the "grand governing law of human nature" was the insatiable desire for every man for power to render the person and properties of others subservient to his pleasures.⁴⁷

What Macpherson calls the "maximization of individual utilities" was a fundamental component of the liberal theories that developed to explain and rationalize the market society.⁴⁸ What we see here, like Bateson's double-bind, is the maximization of a distorted ideology to the point that it reaches the level of a degraded mythology - and its promulgation as if it were revealed truth. And that is the point: unlimited desire has evolved into something other than a mere idea, in fact into a social reality with potentially devastating effects. As Macpherson writes:

The implacable force in the drama of liberal society was scarcity in relation to unlimited desire. It was scarcity and unlimited desire that made the drama, and while it lasted it was tragedy. But now we can see it for what it has become, melodrama.⁴⁹

In other words, the forces that were organized to overcome scarcity are responsible for sustaining it - issuing in what is in effect another perverse example of Social Darwinism. The Calvinist "doctrine of predestination", which made commercial success the idea of salvation in the afterlife, is also an important element in this melodrama.

Some Implications of the New Paradigm

The nonlinear, interdependent paradigm, as exemplified by Bateson's ideas and the notions of chaos and complexity, is as useful for understanding the life of an idea as it is for understanding an organism. It appears that these processes can be understood through the metaphors of the sacred. "It seems possible," writes Bateson,

that a mode of knowing that attributes a certain sacredness to the organization of the biological world might be, in some significant sense, more accurate and more appropriate to decision making.⁵⁰

The fact is that ideas sometimes grow into structures in a way that could best be described as pathological. Insofar as the dysfunctional idea of unlimited desire achieves the mythic status of what is actually the secular equivalent of the sacred, it becomes a pathology of maximization.

In other words, ideas, embedded in the social body, can become entities unto themselves that escape rational and intelligent control. As an expression of an idea, and an extension of the human body, a city, for example, will begin to consume energy exponentially after it surpasses an optimum size. This is reflected in corresponding crime rates and health care costs.⁵¹ The economist Leopold Kohr notes that

Social problems have the unfortunate tendency to grow at a geometric ratio with the growth of the organism of which they are a part, while the ability of man to cope with them, if it can be extended at all, grows only at an arithmetic ratio.⁵²

Also, bureaucratic structures will tend to proliferate with a life of their own, which has little regard to the good of the societies they are supposed to serve. It is evident that the growth of a society, as of an organism, at the expense of environment, may become harmful, even lethal. As Bateson makes clear:

More broadly, I regard the grooves of destiny into which our civilization has entered as a special case of evolutionary cul-de-sac. Courses which offered short-term advantage have been adopted, have become rigidly programmed, and have begun to prove disastrous over longer time. This is the paradigm for extinction by way of loss of flexibility. And this paradigm is more surely lethal when the courses of action are chosen in order to maximize single variables.⁵³

Limits of a Paradigm

Bateson's understanding of the immanent nature of mind, together with the emergent phenomena of self-organization as suggested by chaos and complexity, can be helpful in articulating the relationship between expanded possibilities and spiritual, social, and political awareness. And it is at this point that an important qualification needs to be made. Bateson's "metapattern", chaos and complexity, like David Bohm's holographic description of mind and Rupert Sheldrake's theory of morphogenetic fields, is at best, in the manner of a theological tenet, only an approximate description of that which it aspires to describe. In Alfred Korzybski's famous adage, "the map is not the territory".

The theme of order out of chaos speaks to the human desire and need for a sense of the sacred, which, in one way or another, is expressed in everyday thoughts and actions. The relation between Kaufmann's theory of evolution, and Bateson's theory of learning, reflects the intuition of a synthesis between free will and determinism, mind and body. Nevertheless, to be useful as metaphors for our deeper sensitivities, they cannot be understood in isolation from the social and physical environment. What is crucial here is the rational process in which an intuition-laden symbolism is expressed.

For Lonergan, mythic consciousness comprises the "untutored desire to know". And it is when the images that inform myth and mystery are confused with interpretation and explanation that one runs up against serious epistemological error; whereby

... all explaining is done by the insight... unless one distinguishes between the insight and the presentations, then one is open to the blunder of attributing an explanatory power to the presentations⁵⁴... knowledge that there is nature can be mistaken for knowledge of what nature is.⁵⁵

The occurrence of insight then, must be distinguished from the "heuristic anticipation of insight" which can lead to a "gap" that is promptly filled by the "speculative gnostic and the magician."⁵⁶

While the "human potential" movement, and what is generically referred to as the "new age", have many positive contributions to make in healing the existential and epistemological breach between subject and object, its overtones of romanticism fit neatly into the "gap" Lonergan describes. Take, for instance, this quote from Sam Keen: "The mind is a hologram that registers the entire symphony of cosmic events... mind knows no barriers."⁵⁷ What exactly does this mean? The point is that far from clarifying the mystery involved in the mind-body synthesis and the insights that are its progeny, the attainment of insight remains as mysterious and hidden as it previously was, and perhaps even more so.

This same phenomenon can be seen in the idea of emergent evolution, which, like Bateson's theory, sees mind as immanent in the physical without been reducible to it. This idea can be traced back to John Stuart Mill and G.H. Lewes, and was celebrated with the appearance of Lloyd Morgan's *Emergent Evolution* in 1923. As Julian Jaynes points out, as important as emergent phenomena are, their interpretations can slip into old and "comfortable ways of thinking about consciousness and behaviour", with the

license that these give to "broad and vacuous generalities."⁵⁸

Bateson was extremely wary of such a situation (which is surely "general bias" under another name), especially in regard to how the 'double-bind' had become bandied about in the language of family therapy. Moreover, Morris Berman has pointed out that a significant proportion of "new paradigm" literature, which relies heavily on systems theory or what he calls "cybernetic holism", is in fact a recapitulation of the older, classical paradigm of science which claims to be value-free.

Based on the computer rather than on the clock (the model for Cartesian mechanism), cybernetic holism is in reality the last outpost of the mechanical worldview.⁵⁹

Such a situation can be seen in the way that terms such as "cyberneticization" and "computer consciousness" are used to describe processes from an "objective" or value-free perspective. "And on the philosophical level, reality is now seen as a matter of 'mentation' or 'symbolic patterned activity'".⁶⁰

Berman describes how he and a group of students attended a lecture given by Douglas Hofstadter, author of the immensely popular *Godel, Escher, Bach*, which relies heavily on cybernetic themes. After the lecture, one of Berman's students asked Hofstadter what he thought dreams were. His response was that he thought they were "confused brain patterns".⁶¹ To Berman, this is a symptom of how widespread and deeply ingrained the dualistic paradigm of 'objective' science is in the contemporary psyche. One is left to

wonder how Hofstadter would explain Einstein's dream of riding a rocket, which inspired his understanding of relativity - a word, incidently, that has also been greatly misunderstood.

One tragic example of "confused brain patterns" can be seen in the addictive nature of video games, which has spawned an organization called "Vidanon", "dedicated to getting people unhooked from this addiction."⁶² And on a recent radio program, I listened with astonishment to a so-called child psychologist explaining that it was good to encourage young children (the younger the better) to play video games, as this was adaptive to computer culture and the "information age" they were growing into. In other words, the child should be entrained to the patterns of "computer consciousness". This would be darkly humorous, in a Kafkaesque sense, if only it were not true.

On this note, Berman relates that a friend of his, a high school teacher in northern Florida, described how her students, when given an assignment, rush home to their computers to gather a wealth of facts via various data banks and library resources. As a result, the essays were rich in fact and poor in meaning, looking like "speeches given by Ronald Ziegler when he was press secretary to Richard Nixon". One day, this teacher said to one of her students,

'Frank, stop a moment. I think its great that you've gathered all these facts about the subject, but put them aside for just a second... What do you *feel* about this issue'? Frank stared at her for a moment and finally replied, 'I dont know what you mean'.⁶³

Another variation on this theme can be seen from the proceedings of a "virtual reality" conference held in Banff in 1991. One participant was concerned that

... one day our culture may consider the simulated bird (that obeys our command) to be enough and perhaps even superior to the real entity. In doing so we will be impoverishing ourselves, trading mystery for certainty and living beings for symbols.⁶⁴

In response to this statement, another participant queried,

...why should otherness be a prerequisite of wonder? Have we no mysteries being ourselves?⁶⁵

This question, I believe, cuts to the heart of the matter. In a world defined by an "objective rationality" that places the observer in a constant state of dissociation from the observed, the isolated self becomes the only source of mystery. The resulting epistemological "gap" between self and other easily slips into the solipsism of a radical relativism. In other words, to use Martin Buber's terms, the *thou* becomes an *it*. From a unified perspective, such a question would not even arise. "Otherness" would represent a sense of Lonergan's "authentic subjectivity", and perhaps Bateson's "grace", where the mystery of the "other" would be a reflection, and a much needed one, of the mystery informing a unified sense of self.

There is then the perspective that admits, at least on the surface, that science and religion are partners in discovery of the laws of nature. Because of the complexity involved in scientific discovery, Heinz Pagels, in *The Dreams of Reason*, suggests that "nonrational and intuitive elements are necessarily part of the discovery process."⁶⁶ But then he says:

Such a connection between the concept of physics and religious notions is totally superficial and does no credit to... either the scientific ideas or the religious insights.⁶⁷

And as the book progresses, so does a certain sense of frustration and confusion:

It is my conviction that the history of the contemporary world will be seen in the future as a history of *science* and *technology* dominantly shaping the course of international events.⁶⁸

One is reminded here of Bateson's quip that science "probes not proves". Pagels' comments also reflect, like Hofstadter's understanding of dreams, a perspective that ultimately sees itself as value-free. Moreover, it is a way-of-seeing where rational constructs imposed upon experience are seen as more significant than experience itself - or even more significant than people (witness the obsession with automation at whatever social and psychological cost). With all the savagery we have seen associated with ideologies of one sort or another, common sense tells us that this kind of thinking becomes destructive when it goes beyond certain limits.

And this is the point: We do not see the limitations of one mode of knowing in relation to other, equally valid, ways of knowing. Moreover, the entrenched presuppositions of modernity obscure the consequences of maximizing one mode of perception and action over another. As extensions of the human body, science and technology are believed to be the keys to the future, the measure of all things. We have only to look back at the World Expo of 1986, in Vancouver, to appreciate the implications of a uni-dimensional, mechano-rhythmic world. In a revealing article, the sociologist John Conway makes some acute observations, and they are worth quoting at

some length.

To go to Expo 86 [was] to worship at the high altar of technology. And like all religious celebrations, it is uncritical, evocative, even mystical. It is all upbeat... But this religious celebration of technology is only one part of the spiritual experience. The other part is a celebration of human ingenuity bordering on massive arrogance... The essence of humanity, we are told... lies outside us, and not in our relationships with each other... humanity finally serves technology... The look on their faces [visitors] was not unlike that you would find at... a very serious religious revival. More disturbing was the awe and entrancement exhibited by my two sons.⁶⁹

More recently, excitement over what is called the "information highway" reiterates the theme of technology as the measure of all things, including the well-being of people. An organization of Canadian telecommunication firms calling themselves The Stentor Alliance, recently published *The Information Highway; Canada's Road to Economic and Social Renewal*. In this road map to social and democratic rebirth, under a section entitled 'The Stentor Vision', we discover that

The information highway, like a road into a new land, will liberate the potential of Canada by allowing Canadians to choose - to choose the information they want or need, to choose who provides that information, and to choose with whom to share it.⁷⁰

Of course, the freedom of choice will extend to those who can afford it, for these services will not be free. So where is the equality? Presumably it is not to be found with the labouring masses, for the "information highway" is an enterprise of "government and industry working together in a spirit of co-operation."⁷¹ And who would be against "the spirit of co-operation"?

Paradise Embodied

Technology, while useful in specified contexts, can become a disembodiment of the human condition - a pathology of dissociation from sensibility. Erazim Kohak asks, for example, if we use the technology of light to "illuminate a task" or to banish the "contemplative unity of the night?" Moreover, Bateson's theory has been criticized as been disembodied in that he considers the relation between mind and nature (body) as primarily mental. This is perhaps a reflection of his problem with the concept of transcendence. Nevertheless, Bateson established a fundamental framework for a comprehensive understanding of natural processes, while underlining key elements for an epistemology of the sacred. In this sense, he believed that the proper understanding of religion, and religious experience, provided a model for understanding "the *integration* and *complexity* of the natural world."⁷²

As a process conducive to insight and meaning - which like rhythm, are in the individual - the metaphor of the "metapattern" can be considered as an expression of the quest myth. The image of emergent phenomena, like the hero emerging from the underworld, may amount to what Bernard Lonergan called an "appropriate image" - through which insight arises.⁷³ One may see this, on an aesthetic level, in the recursive images of fractal geometry, which mathematically express the theme of emergent and infinite order. Emergence, in this sense, is "the successive realization of the possibilities of concrete situations in accord with their probabilities"⁷⁴ ... as chance variation is an

instance of probability of emergence, so natural selection is an instance of probability of survival."⁷⁵ We are already Buddha consciousness, goes a Buddhist 'saying', but we do not realize it.

Rollo May has written that Bateson's concept of "form-pattern-order" can be applied to the concept of myth as presented by Mircea Eliade and others. "If you translated Bateson's 'form' or 'pattern' into existential living terms (that is, if you made the *logos* flesh) then, I believe, you would have a myth."⁷⁶ Might such a myth structure perception in a way that sees the responsibility of stewardship in relation to the spiritual - the sense of place and livelihood, the sense of being fully alive?

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

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52. Ibid., 156.

53. Bateson, Steps, 501.

54. Lonergan, Insight, 539.

55. Ibid., 542.

56. Ibid.

57. Quoted in Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, The Evolving Self (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), 16-17.

58. Julian Jaynes, The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982), 13.

59. Morris Berman, "The Cybernetic Dream of the Twenty-first Century", Journal of Humanistic Psychology (Vol.26, Spring 1986), 26. As for science being 'objective', Evelyn Fox Keller comments: "It is not easy to make nature conform to the laws of

nature. Let me tell you as a scientist, it is very hard work... The natural phenomena have to be structured and constrained and twisted and vexed to an astonishing degree before they will obey the laws of nature." Quoted in Bill Moyers, A World of Ideas (Vol.2), ed. Andie Tucher (Toronto: Doubleday, 1990), 76.

60. Ibid., 25.

61. Ibid., 43.

62. Ibid., 34.

63. Ibid., 35.

64. Mary Anne Moser (ed.), Bioapparatus (document of the Virtual Reality conference held in Banff from Oct. 28 - Oct. 29, 1991), 16.

65. Ibid., 22.

66. Pagels, Dreams of Reason, 244.

67. Ibid., 54.

68. Ibid., 321.

69. J.F. Conway, "Expo '86: uncritical worship of technology", The Brandon Sun (September 8, 1986), 4.

70. The Information Highway. Canada's Road to Economic and Social Renewal, (Ottawa: Stentor Telecom Policy Inc., 1993), 8. This twenty-one page document was provided as part of the participants' 'kit' during the Learned Society's conference held in 1994 at the University of Calgary.

71. Ibid., 4.

72. Bateson, Angels fear, 200.

73. Lonergan, Insight, 481.

74. Ibid., 171-172.

75. Ibid., 132.

76. May, About Bateson, 98.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SACRED AND THE SUSTAINABLE

By embodying the idea of Gregory Bateson's "metapattern" within the phenomenological framework provided by Mircea Eliade, insights may be generated that shed light on the social implications of the holistic paradigm. In this connection the idea that a system is optimally adaptive 'at the edge of chaos', speaks to the possibilities inherent in Bateson's *grace* and Eliade's *coincidentia oppositorum*, or union of opposites, that leads to a hierophany. One of the ways in which these two ideas may be better understood in relation to one other, and become applied to the human condition, is through an understanding of aggression.

Indeed, the understanding of emergent phenomena - which was the central pivot of the last chapter, with its theme of 'constructivism' - may be enhanced, and related to the realm of value and meaning, through a greater awareness of the biological nature of aggression. The lack of such awareness is Morris Berman's primary criticism of

Maturana and Varela's *The Tree of Knowledge*.

Competition and war are dismissed as aberrations of our fundamental biological heritage of cooperation, but no attempt is made to pinpoint the source of these supposed aberrations. Are they too rooted in our biology? If they constitute deviations, how did this turn in the road biologically come about?¹

Konrad Lorenz's *On Aggression* may go some way in answering Berman's questions. In this regard, some of Lorenz's key observations - such as those relating to "militant enthusiasm" and the "social bond" - will shed further light on the problem of sustainable development. Some insights from liberation theology may also prove to be relevant.

Lester Brown, of the Worldwatch Institute, defines a sustainable society as "one that satisfies its needs without diminishing the prospects of future generations."² Similarly, liberation theology is based on the idea that the Christian message of salvation includes liberation from socio-economic injustice. Together, liberation theology and the idea of sustainable society suggest a creative paradigm for the realization of humanity within its global environment. In this context, we will look at two fundamental areas where this idea may be applicable: the food system and the family. Like Barry Lopez's description of landscape, which is food both in a literal and metaphorical sense, the food system and the family appear to be the fundamental elements in a sustainable, and sacred, landscape.

Konrad Lorenz

The human species is the only one that systematically annihilates itself. Why is that? Lorenz argues that the most vital function of "intra-specific" aggression "is the even distribution of animals of a particular species over an inhabitable area..."³ Nevertheless, Lorenz stresses that if

sexual rivalry or any other form of intra-specific competition, exerts selection pressure uninfluenced by any environmental exigencies, it may develop in a direction which is quite unadaptive to environment, and irrelevant, if not positively detrimental to survival.⁴

Lorenz presents an example of this in the fact that a stag's antlers were developed strictly for sexual rivalry; otherwise they have no use whatsoever, except for the reindeer who have learned to shovel snow with them.⁵

My teacher, Oskar Heinroth, used to say jokingly, 'Next to the wings of the argus pheasant, the hectic life of western civilized man is the most stupid product of intra-specific selection!'⁶

Indeed, Lorenz, writing in the early sixties, points to the managerial diseases of stress and high blood pressure and "torturing neuroses" of modern, urban existence.⁷ It is almost as if the modern city is the equivalent of the pre-historic hunting ground, where we go each day to make a killing.

Another, more hideous consequence of rampant intra-specific aggression, and one which to which we are "particularly exposed", lies within our mastery of a once hostile environment.⁸ We have, writes Lorenz,

exterminated the bear and the wolf and now, as the Latin proverb says, '*Homo homini lupus*'[man is a wolf to man]... in his book *The Hidden Persuaders* Vance Packard gives an impressive picture of the grotesque state of affairs to which commercial competition can lead.⁹

While human, intra-specific aggression may become distorted to the extent that it becomes pathological, it nevertheless functions in preserving the species. This is achieved not only by spreading the population over a given area, but also through a balanced selection of the strongest through rivalry, and defence of the young.¹⁰ Aggression is also a primary element in the complex drives associated with "motivation".¹¹

One of the primary reasons that organized intra-specific aggression has flourished in modernity, is that there are no "inhibitory mechanisms" in human evolution that can "prevent sudden manslaughter".¹² Hockey Night in Canada may very well comprise one aspect of such a mechanism. But nevertheless,

... quick killing [in pre-history] was impossible anyhow; the potential victim had plenty of opportunity to elicit the pity of the aggressor by submissive gestures and appeasing attitudes. No selection pressure arose... to breed inhibitory mechanisms preventing the killing of conspecifics until... the invention of artificial weapons.¹³

In regards to appeasement gestures, a wolf in a rival fight, for instance, will signal surrender by exposing the nape of its neck. Ironically, submissive and appeasing gestures in modernity are largely seen as a sign of weakness when, in fact, they may be a sign of courtesy and decency. Such a desirable trait is seen as a hindrance in the corporate environment, and as a sign of femininity.

Like Edward T. Hall's "primary culture" (the underlying cultural grammar

informing conscious culture), Lorenz argues that our innate behaviour and activities are largely phylogenetically constructed; that is, they are "calculated" by evolution. Moreover, in a rapidly changing social environment, innate behaviour needs to be counter-balanced by cultural tradition.¹⁴ A living cultural tradition may permit the degree of freedom needed to adapt to changes in the inner or outer environment.¹⁵ And like a crustacean shell that must be periodically shed in the process of growth, a cultural tradition, along with its structures, must be replaced if a more adaptive and creative way of life is to be achieved. However, this is "always followed by a period of dangerous vulnerability, as is impressively illustrated by the defenceless situation of the newly moulted soft-shelled crab."¹⁶

In human cultures, one important aspect of adaptive change can be seen in individuals around the time of puberty, where there is a loosening of allegiance to cultural norms.¹⁷ During this "sensitive" period, when old ideals should be in the process of being replaced by other, more worthy ones, there may be a "complete aimlessness" if the new ideals fail to materialize.¹⁸ As Lorenz states:

At the post-puberal age some human beings seem to be driven by an overpowering urge to espouse a cause, and, failing to find a worthy one, may become fixated on astonishingly inferior substitutes. The instinctive need to be the member of a closely knit group fighting for common ideals may become so strong that it becomes inessential what these ideals are and whether they possess any intrinsic value.¹⁹

To Lorenz, this situation is closely linked with the creation of youth gangs, which is a growing phenomenon in modernity; these gangs are probably similar to the closely knit groups of primitive human societies.²⁰

The danger in all of this is that defence of the family, and the group, is closely associated with aggression. Moreover, this aggression can be directed into the "powerful phylogenetically evolved behaviour" Lorenz calls "militant enthusiasm".²¹ Militant enthusiasm has a number of prerequisites, which include the perception of threat by an external danger and the presence of a "hateful enemy". Lorenz is careful to point out that submission to cultural norms of behaviour must not be confused with "responsible morality".²² "Emotional loyalty to an institutionalized norm does not make it a value, otherwise war, even modern technical war, would be one."²³ Lorenz also warns against the labelling of an opposing group or individual as evil, for this can only lead to the worst kind of warfare; the religious war.

While the elements of militant enthusiasm constituted adaptive behaviour in the distant past, the globalization of the world calls into question the validity and relevancy of such a programme. A recurring perception by astronauts (and cosmonauts) orbiting the Earth is one of unity in the sense that there are no arbitrary lines separating one country from the next. There is also the sense of overwhelming protectiveness for what is commonly described, in one way or another, as a blue jewel in the blackness of space. And likewise, Lorenz contends, in a manner reminiscent of James' reference to a "moral equivalent of war", that an enthusiasm (en-theos) is needed that recognizes "values of the highest order".²⁴

The one and only unquestionable value that can be appreciated independently of rational morality or education is the bond of human love and friendship from which all kindness and charity springs, and which represents the great antithesis to aggression.²⁵

Bateson and Eliade Revisted

Lorenz's hope that conflict might be deflected into channels better suited for the "social bond" of "kindness" and "charity", reminds one of the role of Eliade's hierophany and Bateson's grace in bringing a more healthy balance to human living. The degradation of aggression, to the jingoist level of a militant nationalism, reveals an important aspect of what happens when images and symbols are no longer able to convey a sense of the sacred. As Bateson sees it, a system can become pathological when specific variables are maximized at the expense of environment. From this point of view, the modern environment, physical and otherwise, may be seen as maximizing instrumental value at the expense of other and equally worthwhile values. Such values are those associated with aesthetic and intuitive awareness - the "divine imagination" in William Blake's words.

And like Bateson's "stochastic process" of learning and evolution, "adaptation at the edge of chaos" is a creative ritual between the random and the determinate, periodically synergizing to new levels of unifying order. In this sense, evolution beyond "militant enthusiasm" may be a matter of Eliade's "ontological passage from one mode of being to another". So what James Joyce called "the nightmare of history" might be succeeded by a more fruitful and harmonious form of human existence.

Joyce's "nightmare of history" may be understood as the result of "distorted symbols"

and submergence of meaning within the realm of the unconscious. Not surprisingly, the role of imagination and creativity is not fully appreciated in modern society. A better understanding of the creative process, in relationship to the everyday world, would go a long way in clarifying the relevancy of myth - and its various expressions in culture. Freud once said that myth is public dream and that dream was private myth. And to Eliade,

Myth is an autonomous act of creation by the mind: it is through the act of creation that revelation is brought about - not through the things or events it makes use of. In short, the drama of the death and resurrection of vegetation is revealed by the myth of Tammuz, rather than the other way around.²⁶

To realize the creative power of symbols, then, is to sense the way in which they inform, animate, and integrate the deeper sensitivities. Recalling Coomaraswamy's account of a symbol as having to be *lived into*, the animation of the symbol is congruent with the imagination.

Beyond the negative connotations of "imagination", Eliade reminds us that to imagine is to "imitate" a pre-existing form and pattern. It is through genuine imagination that the sacred is revealed. And for the drama of this relationship to be made meaningful, it must be repeated as a ritual that is able to convey a sense of being *lived into*; thus one may come "to be able to see the world in its totality".²⁷

In this connection, Coomaraswamy's observation on artistic imagination takes on a new meaning: "The artist is not a special kind of person; rather each person is a special

kind of artist."²⁸ In regards to pre-existing form and pattern, the stochastic nature of the creative mind in relation to that of nature is what constitutes Bateson's "metapattern". This is closely paralleled by Kaufmann's understanding of a pre-existing biological order operating as a basis for selection - or for that matter, of Hall's "primary culture".

Waking up to the World

The power of a symbol is its ability to relate and coordinate the various levels of reality that it itself reveals. In this sense a symbol of revelation, or insight, may be related to more than a purely emotional or aesthetic level of being. As mentioned previously, the romanticism inherent in the aesthetic of the early British explorer, and in the believer in Manifest Destiny, shows all too clearly the tragic shortcomings of distorted symbols.

Surely the modern version of the distorted symbol is "computer consciousness", built on facts at the expense of meaning - and for that matter, of *freedom* and *responsibility*. One may thus ask what level of insight is required for an awareness of the nature of the sustainable and meaningful being; and of the way by which it may be achieved. One way in which this question may begin to be answered is by expressing a symbol of transformation in both a psychological and socio-political context.

Liberation Theology

The theologian Gustavo Gutierrez wrote, in his *A Theology of Liberation*, that

Salvation is not something otherworldly, in regard to which the present life is merely a test. Salvation - the communion of men with God and the communion of men among themselves - is something which embraces all human reality, transforms it, and leads it to its fullness in Christ.²⁹

Indeed, as the Tibetan Buddhist Sogyal Rinpoche has written: "Spiritual truth is not something esoteric, it is in fact profound common sense."³⁰ And to Jesus, the "Kingdom of God" was the manifestation of God within human history, as it was for the oppressed populations of the day, who believed salvation to be intimately linked with political emancipation.³¹

Liberation theology is not an entirely new interpretation of the message of salvation, but a re-affirmation of a fundamental tenet in the Christian tradition. Similar concerns can be found in Pope Gregory the Great and other early Christian writers.³² It involved a shift in theology from being "salvation-centred" to "creative-centred". The question, then, is not "Are you saved?" but "How are you going to live this saved life?"³³ Liberation theology thus begins in the experience of a people who are in captivity and have contemplated the condition of their poverty and their powerlessness in the confines of institutionalized violence.³⁴ The creative act of liberation is itself seen as the spontaneous development of a contemplative spirit.

The archetypal theme for liberation is found in the story of the exodus and liberation

of the Jews from Egypt.³⁵ It is also important to remember that a great deal of the Book of Exodus was written before the Book of Genesis, which accounts for the fact that the theme of repression and liberation is a recurring theme throughout the Bible. As Gutierrez sums it up, liberation theology "is linked, almost identified with, the act which freed Israel from slavery in Egypt."³⁶ The message of Jesus is thus as much political as it is spiritual.

In its modern expression, liberation theology grew out of the repressive and violent experiences of peasants in Central and South America. Given large disparities in the distribution of wealth, including land ownership (2 percent of the Guatemalan population controls 80 percent of productive land), theologians began asking what role they had in addressing these injustices. Their solution was that rather than expound theology to the people, they would listen to what theology meant to the people in the context of their everyday lives. The books by Ernesto Cardenal, for instance, simply recount what "Nicaraguan campesinos say in response to certain Gospel passages... [it] is truly inspiring."³⁷

Of course such a grass roots movement, which challenges state authority, does not go unnoticed. The shallow and reductionist criticisms against liberation theology, as being a vehicle for espousing Marxist ideology, betray - like the bumbblings of the devil, Screwtape, in C.S. Lewis' books - just how desperate modern authority has become. As Dom Helder Camara has said, "If you help the poor, they call you a saint. But if you ask

why the poor are poor, they call you a communist."³⁸ And for challenging state authority in his own day, Jesus, of course, was put to death.

The theme of liberation theology is a liberation - much like Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj* - of the whole person, mind and body, in history. It is also the bridge between thought and action that creates a sense of empowerment and belonging. Such a theme is essentially ecological in that it strives for an optimization and sustainability of its constituent parts.

Sustainable Liberation

Beginning with the experiences of people, beyond the economist's model, a theology of liberation may also be relevant in the context of modern society. While we do not experience the same level of injustice as exists elsewhere, the violence of elsewhere is in many ways the accelerated result of trends present within our own society. The seeds of injustice have been well fertilized here as well as elsewhere; and the destruction of the environment is only one symptom of a pervasive social malaise. Writing in the foreword of *Our Common Future* (usually referred to as the Brundtland Report), Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland writes:

When the terms of our Commission were originally discussed in 1982, there were those who wanted its considerations to be limited to 'environmental issues' only. This would have been a grave mistake. The environment does not exist as a sphere separate from human actions, ambitions and needs³⁹... We became convinced that major changes were needed, both in attitudes and in the way our societies are organized.⁴⁰

Brundtland also calls into question the way in which we respond to ecological warnings. In many cases institutional structures that are not suited to deal with these issues are pressed into environmental duty. Much of this energy is spent on study, which is a good thing in itself, but when is evidence sufficient evidence? Assessed in light of its practical results, the Earth Summit held at Rio in 1992 was little more than an elaborate public relations event.

Nevertheless, the changes in attitude that the Brundtland Report calls forth, while wide ranging, and necessarily spiritual, need not be considered radical. When her committee met in Nairobi in 1986, they heard from Jan Selego of World Vision International:

A lot of youth in the Third World countries and even adults are unemployed. We want simple technologies... So again I say that development is people, it is not high technology, it is not modernization, it is not Westernization. But it should be culturally relevant.⁴¹

Moreover, the high number of unemployed in these countries has led to a rapid growth of an informal economic sector. The "informal sector" are those unemployed who sell their labour at subsistence wages. This constitutes the cheap supply of labour, goods, and services "essential to city economics, business, and consumers."⁴²

What this ultimately amounts to is well expressed in the sociological thesis known as "hinterland versus metropolis".⁴³ The primary idea of this thesis is that the economic centre will draw energy (resources in one form or another, including people) from the outer, less developed regions. For example, one recent article in the *Globe and Mail*

described how transnational companies involved in commercial fishing off Canada's east coast, with their huge factory ships, catch more fish than all the smaller companies put together. And with the collapse of the Canadian Cod fishery, Newfoundland's unemployment has reached absurd proportions, and almost half of employed people work for either the federal or the provincial government.

We may see then, how social and economic justice is related to a sustainable environment. It is imperative to note, in view of the socio-economic realities just mentioned, that there is a certain degree of acquiescence by leaders and populations in regards to the cause of such distorted realities. The idea that global competitiveness determines national economic wealth, writes Paul Krugman, an economist with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is a "hypothesis [that] is flatly wrong."⁴⁴

In regards to the U.S. economy, Krugman observes that only about 10 percent of the GNP is generated by exports; the remaining 90 percent represents the value of goods and services consumed within the country. "National living standards are overwhelmingly determined by domestic factors rather than by competition for world markets."⁴⁵ Why is there so much emphasis on international competition? Krugman lists a number of reasons:

- Competitive images are exciting.
- The idea that U.S. economic difficulties hinge critically on our failures in international competition makes those difficulties seem easier to solve.
- Many of the world's leaders have found the competitive metaphor extremely useful as a political device.⁴⁶

As for the cultural integration of these ideas, government, at all levels, is now compared to a corporate entity whose primary purpose is to make money. The accompanying vocabulary has also embedded itself within popular idiom, such as the 'bottom-line'. How then, does this mental paradigm translate into other, crucial areas of society? And more importantly, how might these areas be understood in relation to a sense of place and an awareness of the possibilities inherent in the sustainable?

Land and Food

The argument that industrialization and development must respect ecological limitations is not a new one. More than forty years have past since the appearance of William Vogt's *Road to Survival*, which argued for the harmonization of growth and environment. *The Limits to Growth*, which was published in 1972, analyzed trends in population, industrialization, food production, pollution, and so on. Its warning of the inherent danger that these trends were indicating was met with hostility, and a labelling of its authors as alarmist "doomsters".⁴⁷

More recently, it has been fashionable to regard such people as David Suzuki, a champion of the value of the environment and socio-economic sustainability, in the same light. Nevertheless the facts remain; and they are not pleasant. Apart from the issues of global warming and ozone depletion, which are not yet extensively understood, one of the legacies of the Reagan administration was to end the regulation that notified pesticide

importing countries that these chemicals were either domestically banned or severely restricted.⁴⁸ Moreover, the Canadian government recently rejected a proposal that would ban or limit the exporting of hazardous wastes to countries that were not prepared to treat them.

In their book *The Circle of Poison*, David Weir and Mark Shapiro document how pesticides, and other chemicals, banned or restricted in the United States, are used on produce that ends up on domestic markets, and in our bodies. Consider also that 10 - 20 percent of all insecticide use is for cosmetic purposes⁴⁹ - that is, to make produce look good. Moreover, in what amounts to another variation of Low Intensity Conflict, DDT, which has been banned in Canada and the U.S. for years, is widely used in countries where, among other things, the populations are poor, and poorly organized. For instance, cow's milk in Guatemala contains average DDT levels 90 times as high as what is permitted in the U.S.⁵⁰ Also:

According to a report by the Central American Institute of Investigation and Industrial Technology, 'some of the large cotton producers maintain their own health clinics (partly) to hinder public health officials from detecting the seriousness of human insecticide poisonings'.⁵¹

The way in which we talk about farming, and the food system as a whole, serves to obscure the consequences of the above and other related practices. Growing food - the basis of culture - has entered the vocabulary of corporate idiom; agriculture is now an "agri-business" engaged in the manufacture of a "product". Within such a scenario, multiple pesticide usage is an unquestioned norm, despite the fact that virtually nothing

is known about the combined effects of these chemicals (incidentally this problem, in relation to multiple medication usage by seniors, has just recently surfaced as an issue in the Canadian medical establishment). In regards to pesticides, there is also the question of the effect on the organic matter in soils, which many chemicals simply kill off. The economist and theologian Brewster Kneen paints a disturbing picture of Canadian agricultural practices:

There are many stories of potato farmers refusing to eat the potatoes that they grow for processing, and eating instead potatoes grown by their neighbours with minimal chemicals on healthier land.⁵²

Another practice that decreases the nutritive value of food is the elaborate structures set up to extract profit from every aspect of food production. For instance, distancing in the food system "means a decline in the real nutritive value of food as well as an increase in its cost."⁵³ Such a perceptual framework, one which treats the land as if it were a factory, and as a "free" resource to be exploited at whatever the cost, can be counteracted only by a responsible community - another crucial precondition of sustainability.

The Land and Community

The land itself, in its metaphorical sense, is a part of family. The communal ownership of land, beginning in Western Europe in the twelfth century, and spreading eastward until the sixteenth, was not only an effective means of cultivation, but also gave

rise to a healthy sense in people of their place in the world. Russian peasants referred to their community as *Mir*, the word for both "world" and "peace".⁵⁴ The European villagers, Jerome Blum reminds us,

had a name for this shared existence. They called it, in their respective tongues, 'neighbourhood' or 'neighbourliness'. Each household in the village depended upon every other household for mutual assistance... In fact, a system of reciprocity developed, with claims and counter-claims between individual households who could call in these claims when needed.⁵⁵

With such a system of mutuality in place, the rise of the enlightenment fostered the sentiment (a word much maligned) of contemplation and the practice of simple virtues. Indeed this was the microcosm of a larger, societal process by which "civilization was being made more human and humane."⁵⁶ A primary sign of this open-mindedness was seen with the decline of religious fanaticism in the eighteenth century, as witnessed in an enlarged tolerance for the Huguenots in France. And in Prussia, Frederick William I made the country a haven for refugees of religious persecution. This was continued by his more famous son, Frederick the Great, who stated that "in his country every man must go to heaven his own way."⁵⁷ Ironically, these examples of an enlarged tolerance coincided with a narrowing of mind as exemplified earlier in our discussion of the "rational".

In regards to the land, this more human and humane attitude can be seen in such legal precedents as the English Strict Laws of the nineteenth century. Like the earlier communal ownership of land, the Strict Laws point to a very different concept of land

ownership than that which we presently endure. These laws consider the ownership of land "as a trust, requiring stewardship, not exploitation."

It was the practice of the English landed classes after the English civil war deliberately to tie their lands to their families through the legal instrument known as a strict settlement. The arrangement made the living recipient of rents into a mere tenant of his heir. Being, in effect, only stewards for the next generation, the English landlord class prevented itself from taking the short-term view on land-use. Land has always to be passed to the heir in a condition at least as good as before.⁵⁸

The Family

In the context of "practising simple virtues" and stewardship, the lives of children also benefited from this new openness of mind. At the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in England, life for children was indeed short, nasty, and brutish. Images of Blake's "dark satanic mills", as expressed by Dickens, only begin to express the experiences of children who were thought of as little more than a cheap supply of labour, strapped to their factory looms for up to sixteen hours a day. To this day, in India, among other places, children, especially young girls, are a fertile source of cheap and readily available labour.⁵⁹

Up until the eighteenth century in France, children of the upper classes were thought of and treated (even dressed) as adults. A young girl, for example, was typically weaned by a wet nurse and then taught manners by a governess. She would be put in a convent at five, and at fifteen, be given away in a pre-planned marriage. Parents also maintained

distance from their boys. "The most useful of arts, that of making men, is forgotten," Rousseau wrote.⁶⁰

In his *Emile*, Rousseau espoused the view that the young be permitted the freedom to develop as themselves. The immense popularity of this book says a great deal for "simple virtue" of a society that was ready to accept such views. Many fashionable mothers supported Rousseau's argument, and a change in cultural norms was set about. Others have also argued that this aspect of feminine rebellion helped to set in motion protest against the whole society, which eventually led to the French Revolution.⁶¹

Have we again forgotten the "most useful of arts"? Peter Silverman observes, in *Who Speaks For the Children*, that the Ten Commandments say to honour the mother and the father, but is silent on parents' obligation to their children.⁶² This is exemplified by Alberta's refusal to ratify the United Nations' Convention on the Right of the Child. The convention, which confirms the child's basic right to education and health care, was signed by Canada on May 28, 1990. But Alberta has refused to sign on the basis that it could "interfere with parental authority."⁶³ What that means is anyone's guess. It may signify, though, that state authority is so removed from the reality of child abuse, among other issues, that it is consigned to the catch-all abstractions of ideology and party politics.

Beyond ideology and party politics, there exists the most obvious sign that something

insidious has infected the social body. "The status of the family unit," writes Robert Rieber, "is one of the most sensitive barometers of the success or failure of any given culture's response to changing circumstances."⁶⁴ Such circumstances include the family's struggle to make ends meet, finding quality time for children when both parents are working, or a single mother is doing so, and finding and paying for suitable day care. An Alberta advisory committee recently released two reports that highlight the precarious position of Alberta families. The government is studying the problem.⁶⁵

This problem certainly extends beyond the borders of Alberta. For instance, the experiences at Regina's Early Learning Centre, a preschool program for children aged three to four, highlights the tragic plight of many modern families. Most of the children attending the program are from poor parents, usually single mothers - a growing trend in Canada. Anne Luke, director of the centre, describes how "when they [the children] play house, the parents always fight... And then someone always calls the cops."⁶⁶

A lot of these kids come from homes where there's little control over their lives... That's what poverty does, it takes away all control.⁶⁷

When these children grow older they usually end up under the care of a social aid agency that places them in a group home - for a while. A recent study by Dr. Kathleen Kufeldt reveals that

about 53 percent of an estimated 60 kids who run to Calgary's streets each month leave child welfare facilities or placements... Teenagers under 18 aren't generally eligible for adult welfare programs, so once child welfare closes their file, they have no access to housing or income support.⁶⁸

Life on the street is the breeding ground for the young offender, who becomes the adult offender, and then the social costs are finally made visible. As Peter Silverman writes - and I can confirm this through my own experience working in a group home -

Too many children leave care with low educational skills and are unprepared or ill equipped to get employment. Many children go from child welfare services to training schools to prison. Some of them die.⁶⁹

It should also be noted that not all of these children are from low income families; many are from the middle classes. The Committee on Sexual Offenses against Children and Youth discovered that most of the prostitutes working in major Canadian cities "came from middle class homes with a formal religious atmosphere, and that 20 percent had been subjected to a serious sexual assault as children."⁷⁰ What then, does this all say about the way in which society is heading? What is to be done?

An important reminder here is Colin Turnbull's study of the Ik tribe of Uganda in 1972. Under the stress of enforced dislocation, the entire spectrum of social institutions collapsed within one generation. "The lack of any sense of moral responsibility toward each other, the lack of any sense of teaming up, needing or wanting each other, showed up daily."⁷¹ Commenting on Turnbull's study, the naturalist Lewis Thomas likened the Ik to "separate nations rather than as members of a shared society".⁷²

But not all societies react to extreme stress in the same manner as the Ik. Louis Jolyon West, for example, discovered a parallel case with the Tarahumara tribe of Mexico. Forced from fertile land into the mountains, they managed to keep their

humanity: they still spoke in their native tongue, kept the cultural traditions alive and maintained the bonds between them.⁷³ In other words, their flexibility in the face of adversity kept the social system in balance and in health.⁷⁴ How can we achieve such a flexibility within our own society?

The child psychologist James Garbarino stresses the relationship between a functional family unit and a sustainable society. In this sense, "real business is the business of raising human organisms into human beings".

The challenge is to equally balance power in families that now oppress women and children, and to enhance the power of family relationships to teach empathy, sympathy, and ecology. Thus we may create ethical and psychological foundations for social welfare systems in a sustainable society.⁷⁵

Towards the Sacred and the Sustainable

How may Garbarino's "psychological foundations" be realized? Recalling that adaptive change in a chaotic system is optimized at "the edge of chaos", it is important to note that alienation itself is an integral element in the mythic quest. The numinous experience of the sacred is, writes Eliade, "like nothing human or cosmic; confronted with it, man senses his profound nothingness."⁷⁶ The biblical "fall into history", and Nietzsche's slogan that "God is dead", are each expressions of our consciousness of living in an alien environment, and can be understood as the descent into the underworld of the imagination and experience. Just as Jung's "night journey of the soul" is the

possibility towards wholeness, Kohák's "gift of the night" is reconciling and healing - if, we choose not to banish it with the "omni-light of technology". As Pascal put it:

Reason's last step is the recognition that there are an infinite number of things which are beyond it. It is merely feeble if it does not go as far as to realize that. If natural things are beyond it, what are we to say about supernatural things?⁷⁷

Samuel Beckett saw that "something must die before something is born", and so we find ourselves "between a death and a difficult birth". But what exactly does this mean? Earlier on, we heard from Rebecca, the little girl in Sunday school who wondered why everyone in the Bible was always on a trip. What were they looking for? From Hasidic (Jewish) mysticism, there is the story of the rabbi's grandson who was playing hide and seek. The little boy comes crying to his grandfather and says, "I hid myself so well and no one was looking for me." The rabbi is stunned, and with a tear in his eye, says, "Oh, now I know what God is saying to me: 'I've hidden myself so well that no one is looking for me'".⁷⁸

Moreover, the Greek word for truth is *aletheia*, which means "unhiddenness".⁷⁹ That is, the truth reveals itself by deliberately "unhiding" itself. In common idiom, for instance, we will say that "something speaks to us", and on an intuitive level, we know that "something" to contain truth. What then, is that "something"? George Trow makes the observation that, like a spectrum of light representing the realm of expanded possibilities, everyday perception can only see the light at the centre. The infrared and ultraviolet part of the spectrum are possibilities that are seen in some other way. How

then, are expanded possibilities to be recognized?

What Trow calls the "third parent" is not a parent in the conventional sense, but itself the recognition of the expanded possibility. In this sense, the third parent is alluded to in "Jesus' claim to have been parented by God". As an "evolving idea" the third parent should be fluid enough to adapt to changing circumstances and to coordinate the integration of new information. As Trow explains it:

The third parent should be powerful, capable of blooming out into the mind and nearly obliterating everything there for a time, should that be necessary. We should be able to withstand this process, with confidence that we will return to ourselves stronger... What has happened is that these high fevers have not been allowed to occur... there are materials and phenomena that have been allowed to drift out of range of our ability to understand.⁸⁰

The third parent remains hidden in a way that is familiar to the machinations of totalitarian power. Vaclav Havel, for instance, observes that the typical totalitarian technique, of dominating large groups of people by a smaller powerful group, has evolved to the point where such a technique is no longer required. Rather, we have learned to suppress certain aspects of ourselves by means of other aspects of ourselves. Thus, the "regime within" is difficult "to locate precisely within a particular institution or social group. Everyone supports it and helps create it - by mutely acquiescing in its version of reality..."⁸¹

The third parent is also hidden in another way. There is a newly developed three

dimensional art, that demands the use of a contemplative, visual technique to see an image in an otherwise random display of dots and lines⁸²; the third parent may be visualized in a similar manner. For example, the mesmerizing effect of the movie Schindler's List is largely due to the fact that it portrays a sense, no matter how small, of order amidst a brutalizing Nazi chaos. To many of the Jews saved by the German industrialist Oskar Schindler, the man was God himself. Schindler, and others of his kind throughout history, reveal a different order and pattern apart from the status quo of what passes for the "real" world. Accepting an award for this movie, director Steven Spielberg suggested that what "we need is more Oskar Schindlers".

While, in Lord Keynes' phrase, the gods of avarice and usury may be with us for the time being, the responsibility of democratizing the "regime" remains. Like the spontaneous generation of order in chaos theory, and the spontaneous act of cultivating the spirit of contemplation in liberation theology, the spontaneous truth of the "third parent" points toward the practice of what is referred to in Buddhist terminology as *bhavana*. This translates as "mindfulness" and "bringing into being".

We may thus ask how the healing experience of the "third parent" may be brought into being. How might such an initiation coincide with the experience of continuity and orientation, or what Joseph Campbell called a sense of "being fully alive? Malidoma Somé, a medicine man from the West African nation of Burkina Faso, argues the importance of the initiation ritual in the growth from youth to adulthood; "In my village,

a person who is not initiated is considered a child, no matter how old that person is. Without initiation we cannot recall our purpose."⁸³

Like a microcosm of the processes of growth of a culture, the initiated youth is able to realize a sense of value in relation to the community, responding to its needs with the gifts of a unique personality, which in effect ensures the health and vibrancy of the culture in responding to the needs of the individual. The energies of youth become directed, not back on to the instant self-gratifications of the ego, but to a social structure that is an embodiment of the individual and something more and other than the individual. This implies an act of transcendence, which we may refer to as spirit, which grounds identity in the moral intersection between the temporal and the eternal.

While we may never be entirely free of the symbols and myths that inform the processes of growth - and the dualistic world that they portray - they may nevertheless serve as signposts conveying a sense of expanded possibilities. Such possibilities may convey the need to ask the questions that provide a context for an awareness of our mythological conditioning - thereby preventing its misuse by those with questionable motives - and a perspective from which to place such an awareness in the realm of individual liberation and social-ecological justice. On this note, on September 2, 1945, at the Japanese surrender ceremony aboard the battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay, General Douglas MacArthur had this to say:

...we have had our last chance. If we do not now devise some greater and more equitable system, Armageddon will be at our door. The problem

basically is theological and involves a spiritual recrudescence and improvement of human character that will synchronize with our almost matchless advances in science, art, literature and all material and cultural development of the past two thousand years. It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh.⁸⁴

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Morris Berman, "Maturana and Varela's *The Tree of Knowledge*", Journal of Humanistic Psychology 2 (1989), 281.
2. Quoted in Fritjof Capra and David Steindl-Rast, Belonging to the Universe (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 166.
3. Konrad Lorenz, On Aggression, trans. Marjorie Latske (London: Methuen & Co., 1979), 30.
4. Ibid., 31.
5. Ibid., 31-32.
6. Ibid., 33.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., 34.
11. Ibid., 35.

12. Ibid., 207.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., 228.
15. Ibid., 229.
16. Ibid., 230.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., 231.
22. Ibid., 236.
23. Ibid., 245.
24. Ibid., 244.
25. Ibid., 246.
26. Mircea Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion, trans. Rosemary Sheed (Scarborough: New American Library, 1974), 426.
27. Mircea Eliade, Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism, trans. Philip Mairet (Princeton University Press, 1991), 20.
28. Quoted in Morris Berman, Coming To Our Senses (Toronto: Bantam, 1989), 337.
29. Gustavo Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, trans. and ed. Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973), 151.
30. Sogyal Rinpoche, The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying, ed. Patrick Gaffney and Andrew Harvey (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 53.

31. Capra, Belonging, 57.
32. Ibid., 182.
33. Ibid., 175.
34. Ibid., 181.
35. Gutierrez, Theology, 153.
36. Ibid., 154.
37. Capra, Belonging, 187.
38. Ibid., 187.
39. The World Commission on Environment and Development, Our Common Future (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), xi.
40. Ibid., xiii.
41. Ibid., 248.
42. Ibid., 248-9.
43. See Arthur K. Davis, "Canadian Society and History as Hinterland Versus Metropolis", in Canadian Society: Pluralism, Change, and Conflict, ed. Richard J. Ossenberg (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 6-32.
44. Paul Krugman, "The Myth of Competitiveness", Harpers (June 1994), 24.
45. Ibid., 27.
46. Ibid., 27.
47. Ralph Rookwood, "Making it Happen", Town and Country Planning (May 1993), 103.
48. David Weir and Mark Shapiro, Circle of Poison (San Francisco: Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1981), 15.
49. Ibid.

50. Ibid., 13.
51. Ibid., 12.
52. Brewster Kneen, From Land to Mouth: Understanding the Food System (Toronto: NC Press Ltd., 1989), 39.
53. Ibid., 38.
54. Jerome Blum, "The Village and the Family", in Our Forgotten Past, ed. Jerome Blum (London: Thames and Hudson, 1982), 10.
55. Ibid., 12.
56. Peter Gay and editors of Time-Life Books, Age of Enlightenment (New York: Time Inc., 1966), 77.
57. Ibid., 78.
58. Kneen, Land to Mouth, 160-61.
59. See John Stackhouse, "The girls of Tamil Nadu", The Globe and Mail (November 20, 1993), D1.
60. Gay, Age of Enlightenment, 50.
61. Ibid., 50.
62. Peter Silverman, Who Speaks for the Children? (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co., 1989), 17.
63. Daryl Slade, "UNICEF official berates Alberta", The Calgary Herald (June 24 1994), B9.
64. Robert W. Rieber and Maurice Green, "The psychopathy of everyday life: antisocial behavior and social distress", The individual, communication, and society. Essays in memory of Gregory Bateson, ed. Robert W. Rieber (New York: Cambridge

University Press, 1989), 78.

65. Ashley Geddes, "Family unit under fire, from within and without", Calgary Herald (June 21 1994), A3.

66. Canadian Press, "Poor kids' education suffers", The Brandon Sun (January 15 1990), 11.

67. Ibid.

68. Allyson Jeffs, "Child welfare services failing youths in need", Calagry Herald (June 22 1994), A1.

In Latin America street children face the threat of being killed, and are killed, by mercenaries hired by local businessmen. Another grotesque fact that has recently emerged is the abduction and murder of these children for their body parts, which sell for substantial prices on the international black market. See John Haslett Cuff, "Horrific tales of depredation and deprivation", The Globe and Mail (November 20 1993), C2.

69. Silverman, Who Speaks, 68.

70. Ibid., 12.

71. Rieber, communication and society, 79.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid.

75. James Garbarino, The Future: As if it Really Mattered (Longmont Colorado: Bookmakers Guild, Inc., 1988), 58.

76. Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Jovanovich, 1959), 10.

77. Blaise Pascal, The Pensees, trans. A.J. Krailsheimer (Markham: Penguin, 1988), 85.
78. Capra, Belonging, 139.
79. Ibid., 29.
80. George Trow, "The Third Parent", Harper's (July 1987), 35.
81. Vaclav Havel, "The Regime Within", Harper's (June 1987), 26.
82. See John O. Merritt and Scott S. Fisher, "Stereoscopic Displays and Applications", Proceedings of The International Society for Optical Engineering (Santa Clara, CA.: February 14-19/1990).
83. Malidoma Somé, "Rights of Passage", Utnes Reader (July/August 1994), 68.
84. Quoted from an excerpt of William Manchester, "American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur, 1880-1964", in Writers on World War II: An Anthology, ed. Mordecai Richler (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 712.

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