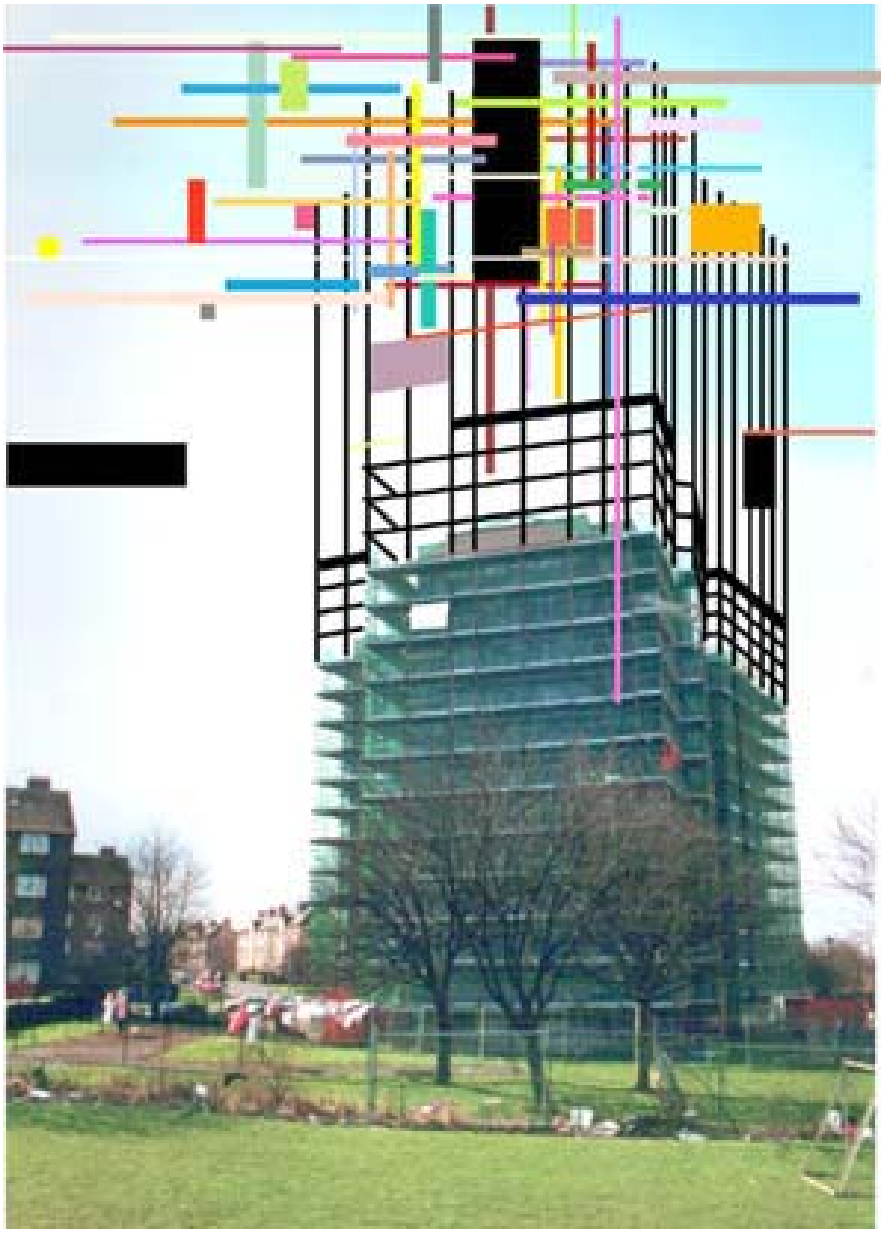
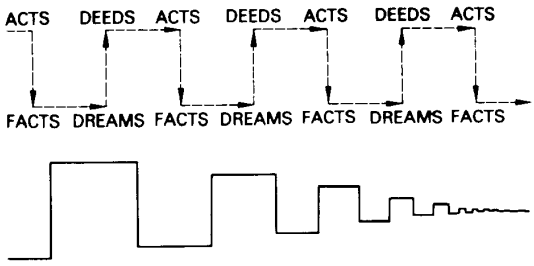
journal of generalism & civics

issue VI august 2005 www.patrickgeddes.co.uk





The theme of this issue is 'civics as sociology' (plus a bit of Ossian & Tagore). Alex Law's intervention is aimed 'to get Sociologists to engage with Geddes who has been criminally neglected in the discipline'. Norman Shaw takes us from the sociological to the sonorous, looking at the painter John Duncan and 'Fiona Macleod' through the Celtic Twilight. This article is an extract from the forthcoming ***Patrick Geddes: By Leaves We Live*** Edited by Kiyoshi Okutsu, Murdo Macdonald, Alan Johnston and Noboru Sadakata and Issued by YICA (Yamaguchi Institute of Contemporary Art) out September 05 (more details to follow).

A series of three articles follow where a variation of Neil Grieve, Deborah Peel, and Greg Lloyd (from The Geddes Institute in the School of Town and Regional Planning at the University of Dundee) examine contemporary Geddes resonances in the emergent interest in urban renaissance and regionalism, and critical learning. And, to celebrate the coming conference - ***L'Homme et la Terre: The Legacy of Elisee Reclus (1830-1905)*** in New Orleans I have re-published his testimony On Vegetarianism.

Finally we've included a piece by Gill Cockram from the recent conference on Utopian Studies in New Lanark on ***Hierarchical utopias : Ruskin's Fear of Democracy***, which bookends well with some of the issues raised by Alex Law and Grieve, Peel and Lloyd.

Reviews include cover of Alberto Magnaghi's *The Urban Village*. Maghaghi is one of a number of Italian urban theorists and architects who have been heavily influenced by Geddes. In this new text Maghaghi argues for the construction of "democratic community-level institutions profoundly more democratic than representative government; ecologically sustainable but not disconnected from global networks; and having sufficient local economic strength to fight both the colonisation and marginalisation that globalisation so often inflicts on local communities".

We are also very glad to see the publication of a new edition of the correspondence between Geddes and Rabindranath Tagore, ***A Meeting of Two Minds*** - and congratulate Wordpower Books for their new publishing venture.

After last years conference in Yamaguchi, an explosion of commemorative events in Scotland, and a recent conference on Utopian Studies, there were *too many* articles for this one issue. This is no bad thing as there's been a long delay since the last issue due to the editors disorientating launch into fatherhood.

Please visit the site for a regularly updated feature here of sharing research interests and questions and announcing upcoming events, meetings and talks. We publish letters and response to the articles published here. For future contributions/articles /essays email us at: actsfactsdreamsdeeds@hotmail.com or visit the website at: www.patrickgeddes.co.uk

The deadline for next issue is December 14th 2005.

Omne vivum ex ovo

Mike

Cover image is 'The Order of Things' by Harvey Dingwall

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The Ghost of Patrick Geddes: Civics as Applied Sociology

by Alex Law

In 1904 and 1905 Patrick Geddes (1905, 1906) read his famed, but today little-read, two-part paper, 'Civics: as Applied Sociology', to the first meetings of the British Sociological Society. Geddes is often thought of as a 'pioneer of sociology' (Mairet, 1957;Meller, 1990) and for some (egDevine, 1999: 296) as 'a seminal influence on sociology'. However, little of substance has been written to critically assess Geddes's intellectual legacy as a sociologist. His work is largely forgotten by sociologists in Britain (Abrams, 1968; Halliday, 1968; Evans, 1986). Few have been prepared to follow Geddes's ambition to bridge the chasm between nature and culture, environment and society, geography, biology and sociology. His conception of 'sociology', oriented towards social action from a standpoint explicitly informed by evolutionary theory. A re-appraisal of the contemporary relevance of Geddes's thinking on civics as applied sociology has to venture into the knotted problem of evolutionary sociology. It also requires giving some cogency to Geddes's often fragmentary and inconsistent mode of address. Although part of a post-positivist, 'larger modernism' Geddes remained mired in nineteenth century evolutionary thought and fought shy of dealing with larger issues of social class or the breakthrough work of early twentieth century sociology of Simmel, Weber and Durkheim. His apolitical notion of 'civics' limits its relevance to academic sociology today.

It is exactly a century since Patrick Geddes (1905, 1906) read his famed, but today little-read, two-part paper, ' Civics: as Concrete and Applied Sociology', to the first meeting of the British Sociological Society. Although often referred to as a 'pioneer of sociology' (Mairet, 1957;Meller, 1990) and described by one leading Scottish historian (Devine, 1999: 296) as 'a seminal influence on sociology', little of substance has been written to critically assess Geddes's intellectual legacy for sociology (but see Welter, 2002 and Meller, 1990 for rare exceptions). Much of the literature on Geddes, especially in Scotland, tends towards the hagiographic and borders on the antiquarian. While he may have inspired the founding of the British Sociological Society in 1903, his work is largely forgotten by sociologists in Britain (Abrams, 1968; Halliday, 1968; Evans, 1986). In part, this is a legacy of his mercurial determination to resist classification, except on his own terms as a social evolutionist but more often than not as an unrepentant outsider. In so doing, he 'cast himself and his ideas into the wilderness, where he remains in terms of modern scholarship' (Meller, 1990: 122). 1.2 Few were prepared to follow Geddes's ambition to bridge the chasm between nature and culture, environment and society, geography, biology and sociology. His conception of 'sociology', oriented towards social action from a standpoint explicitly informed by evolutionary theory, seemed to have little in common with the emerging academic discipline. The centenary of the 'Civics' paper provides an opportunity to revisit Geddes's relevance for sociology. This requires venturing into some of the knotted issues of evolutionary sociology and re-considering the contemporary relevance of Geddes's thinking on civics as applied sociology. It also requires giving some cogency to Geddes's often fragmentary and inconsistent mode of address.

Geddes: as Sociologist

In his own lifetime (1854-1932) Geddes was widely recognised as a polymath who covered a remarkable number of disciplines and subjects. He is perhaps best known for virtually inventing the scientific study of Town Planning. Yet that hardly begins to do justice to Geddes's range of interests or influence (Stalley, 1972; Mairet, 1957; Boardman, 1979; Meller, 1990; Welter, 2002). For instance, in his historical survey of technology and society, Technics and Civilization, Lewis Mumford (1934: 475) acknowledged Patrick Geddes as 'my master' and claimed that Geddes's published work does 'but faint justice to the magnitude and range and originality of his mind; for he was one of the outstanding thinkers of his generation, not alone in Great Britain, but in the world'. An indication of the official recognition of this breadth is that Geddes was appointed to a personal Chair in Botany at University College Dundee (1889-1914) and was later Professor of Civics and Sociology at Bombay University (1919-1923). He was awarded the International Gold Medal for his Applied Sociology exhibition at the 1913 International Exposition at Ghent. He also accepted a knighthood in the last year of his life, (though only after earlier refusing one). However, Geddes was in no way a conventional academic. He never competed a formal degree and failed to be

appointed to a number of academic positions, until the Dundee textile magnate (and benefactor to sociology), James Martin White, bankrolled the Dundee College post especially for Geddes (Abrams, 1968; Macdonald, 2000a).

For too long regarded as lone 'visionary', Geddes can be better understood as part of the pre-1914 mainstream of European Utopian thought, a 'larger modernism' represented by figures and movements like Bergson and vitalism. Within this version of intellectual modernism scientific rationality was mixed-in with aesthetics, myth and religion (Welter, 2002). Geddes was thus open to the latest cultural and intellectual developments occurring far beyond the national purview of the British Isles. He studied and worked in Paris, Montpellier, Mexico, Palestine and Bombay, as well as in Dublin, Edinburgh, London and Dundee. For Geddes, the sociologist should be a sort of flaneur: 'The productive sociologist should thus be of all investigators a wandering student par excellence; in the first place, as far as possible, a literal tourist and traveller' (1906: 126). He greatly valued the specific cultural inheritance he found in India and set himself in opposition to official British imperialism (Tyrwhitt, 1947). Back in Edinburgh he gave refuge to foreign revolutionaries and anarchists (Reynolds, 2004). State boundaries were viewed by Geddes as coercive, arbitrary and artificial and his civic commitment to a notion of 'home' meant for him simultaneous contact with nature, nation and region-city (Smout, 1991; Macdonald, 2005). State-led social citizenship too readily frames a narrow, integral nationalism (Law, 2005a). Geddes's version of civics transcended the limits of state citizenship, integrating an environmental consciousness within an internationalist ethics in what before 1914 he thought optimistically was an emerging 'new age' of a world Society 'of societies of societies' (Geddes, 1888: 16; Bell, 1998; Stephen, et al, 2005)

A major difficulty lay in Geddes's propensity for fragmentary details and a lack of focus in his quest to develop a mighty sociological synthesis. Patrick Abercrombie, the influential town planner, later called Geddes 'a most unsettling person' (Kitchen, 1975: 237). His lyrical meanderings were tamed by frequent recourse to peculiar notational diagrams, whose two-dimensional forms Geddes optimistically believed to be visually-arresting 'thinking machines' (Meller, 1990: 45-51; Mairet, 1957: 32-3; Kitchen, 1975: 323-7). As 'sociography', visual forms of classification allow not only for comparison but may also suggest relations between seemingly disparate phenomena in the manner of geometry (Geddes, 1906). What began as a response by Geddes to being blinded temporarily in Mexico was developed to convey complex ideas outside of a linear narrative mode of representation. Mumford (1948: 381) termed this Geddes's 'art of ideological cartography', although later recalled that this became a rigid, infallible and calcified graphic system (Mumford, 1996: 358). For all his emphasis on evolution Geddes's graphic charts were unable to express time in spatial representations.

Moreover, as sociology developed into narrowly specialised areas of inquiry, Geddes remained steeped in the Scottish tradition of interdisciplinary generalism (Macdonald, 2000b, 2004, 2005). This provided the basis of the so-called 'democratic intellect' in Scotland, a pedagogic standpoint that rejected rigid disciplinary boundaries between philosophy, science, history, art and social science (Davie, 1961). Into this brew, Geddes repeatedly added the analogy of cultivating a garden, of cultivating the 'buds' of future growth. Geddes has also been claimed as one of the pioneers of modern Scottish nationalism. In the absence of a political nationalist movement in Scotland, Geddes felt instinctively attracted to neo-romanticism and Celtic revivalism, as in the Symbolist art of John Duncan, since it apparently represented the deepest sources of the cultural evolution of Scottish society (Macdonald, 2000: 151-7; Fowle, 2004; Jarron, 2004). If anything, however, Geddes was a cosmopolitan nationalist for the same reason that he was a civic reformer. He developed a peculiar, non-political sense of inter-nationalism:

Deliberately rejecting a narrowly nationalist perspective, and adopting as the key to all further development, a paradoxical commitment to cosmopolitanism. The paradox was resolved in that their sense of national identity was built on a perception of place, and it was a romantic sensitivity to place which was the key to cosmopolitanism ... [D]iscussion about the 'Celtic Revival' and Scottish nationalism played a an important part in the development of his theory of civics. For Geddes it was a reaffirmation of the importance of place, but given a special meaning. (Meller, 1990: 100-1).

Hence, there is no narrow parochial reason to resurrect Geddes as a 'Great' Briton or Scot. If a case can be made to revisit Geddes it is because his themes - environment, culture, the city, space, place, nation, region, evolution, civics - remain at the forefront of contemporary sociological

concerns. Moreover, Geddes's own highly eclectic approach to these issues is a source of stimulating, if idiosyncratic and unsystematic, insight to our current concerns. However, I want to argue here that for all his stimulating leads, the fundamental problem with Geddes remains his reduction of the scope of sociology to an apolitical form of 'applied' civics.

Geddes and Nineteenth Century Sociology

Perhaps the primary reason for Geddes's relative obscurity in contemporary sociology, apart from his torturous writing style, graphic numerology and ready digression, was his commitment to an evolutionary model of social development. While studying Darwinian evolution under Thomas Huxley in the mid-1870s, Geddes attended the Positivist Church in London, where he embraced the teachings of Spencer and Comte before warming to Ruskin's social and aesthetic critique of contemporary social conditions. But his unique sociological approach took firmer shape in Paris where, under the influence of Le Play and Demoulins, he was inspired by the progressive possibilities of fusing evolutionary science with social science. Here the sociologist must work from origins, from simple beginnings, and rise through the lineage to the more complex present. Civics is no abstract study, but fundamentally a matter of concrete and descriptive sociology - perhaps the greatest field of this. Next, that such orderly study is in line with the preliminary sciences, and with the general doctrine of evolution from simple to complex; and finally with the general inquiry into the influence of geographical conditions on social development. (Geddes, 1906: 126)

What Geddes envisaged was not a linear development from biological sciences to applied sociology but an intellectual approach framed by the concrete problem at hand - the improvement of the life of the human organism in its most complex setting, the City (Welter, 2002).

Geddes counterposed his conception and method of applied sociology to the social abstentionism he found in the 'abstract constructions' of Comte and Spencer. They were too ready to advance unsupported generalisations: 'The simplest of naturalists must feel that Comte or Spencer, despite the frequently able use of the generalisations of biology, themselves somewhat lacked the first-hand observation of the city and the community around them' (1906: 124-5). Geddes reversed Comte's metaphysical emphasis on grand system-building for the logically prior empirical study through a 'return to nature'.

It is the observant naturalist, the travelled zoologist and botanist, who later becomes the productive writer on evolution. It is the historian who may best venture on into the philosophy of history; - to think the reverse is to remain in the pre-scientific order altogether: hence the construction of systems of abstract and deductive economics, politics or morals, has really been the last surviving effort of scholasticism. (Geddes 1905: 83)

However, Geddes retained Comte's penchant for abstract typologies, such as his three-stages of history and his four social types of 'people', 'chiefs', 'intellectuals' and emotionals'. Each individual was served a moral injunction by Geddes to balance these inner personality types harmoniously with their surrounding topographical and cultural environments.

Geddes's analytical approach drew more deeply from the French sociologist Frederic Le Play's triad of Lieu, Travaill, et Famille. In his monumental (and largely neglected) six-volume Les Ouvriers Europeens (The European Working Classes), first published in 1855, Le Play carried out comparative studies of the working class family in Europe, taking family income as his critical variable in one of the first sociological studies claiming 'scientific' status in terms of its method and inferential reasoning. Geddes (1906) was especially attracted to the rural basis of Le Play's approach for his own view of the three-stage development of the city: out of 'nature' comes 'rustics' and out of 'rustics' develops urban civics. But instead of Le Play's conservative focus on the family as the primary social group Geddes, ever ready to adopt systems rooted in the number three, revised Le Play's triad into 'Place, Work and Folk', with 'Family' displaced for being too narrow a basis for cultural evolution. 'Folk' was an attempt by Geddes to situate the individual in culture and community. But as a concept it was a much less precise unit of analysis than Le Play's 'Family'.

'Place', for Geddes, was therefore not merely a topographic site but also a 'Work-Place' of productive activity and a 'Folk-Place' of residences.

Work, conditioned as it primarily is by natural advantages, is thus really first of all place-work. Arises the field or garden, the port, the mine, the workshop, in fact the work-place, as we may simply generalise it; while, further, beside this arise the dwellings, the folk-place. (Geddes, 1906: 72).

This had methodological disadvantages for establishing the distinctiveness of 'Folk' as individuals-in-community, which Geddes attempted to resolve by building ever more elaborate conceptual versions of his graphic 'thinking machines'. While Geddes was vehement in his rejection of all abstract and metaphysical systems, his own evolutionary sociology tended towards explanatory closure, particularly his excessive reliance on the Le Playist triad of Folk, Work and Place and the tottering edifices he built upon them for grasping geographical, historical, anthropological, scientific and technological change. All this simply became part of the demiurge of Geddes's evolutionary threesome, an approach inherited from nineteenth century biology's triumvirate of Organism, Function and Environment.

Still, Geddes's disdain for formal politics meant that he was left unimpressed by political labels and, on this basis, preferred the approach of the conservative sociologist Le Play to that of the nominally more radical sociology of Comte.

August Comte is popularly supposed to be a radical, a democratic man of modern science. But he makes his contributions to sociology from the standpoint of a hierarchy of feeling and genius, of the aristocracy of action and thought. Conversely, it is Frederic Le Play ... who is popularly supposed even in is own country to make his appeal to capitalist and conservative, to aristocrat and priest, who has really established for us the vital doctrine of democracy ... (Geddes, 1896, in Macdonald, 2004: 89)

Geddes saw an anti-democratic spirit at work in Comte, who cast women and the proletariat in the role of 'servants' to the 'Great Men', while Le Play's focus on the working-class family unit corresponded to Geddes's more egalitarian notion of the greatest and more complex arising from the more basic and simplest unit. He further argued that, 'worker and woman unite to form the elementary human family, and from them, not only by bodily descent, but social descent, from their everyday life and labour, there develops the whole fabric of institutions and ideas, temporal and spiritual' (ibid).

Civics: as Evolutionary Sociology

Civic action and social service would, for Geddes, remedy social deprivation by the Lamarckian adaptation of 'people' to the conditions of their environment. In turn, this environment would be improved qualitatively, Geddesian-style, by practical artist-intellectuals. However poor or prosperous, everyday life would be improved by evolving to a higher, healthier cultural affinity with an aesthetically enhanced environment. Opulence merely produced degraded material luxuries for the few amidst the physical deterioration of the many: 'our too largely Paleotechnic working-towns with their ominous contrasts of inferior conditions for the labouring majority, with comfort and luxury too uninspiring at best for the few' (Geddes, 1915: 389). Biological reasoning supported the view that organisms in repose were still subject to degeneration since evolution demands adaptive activity. Against the utilitarian view that progressive human action was governed by the pursuit of pleasure, Geddes further argued that physical degeneration and parasitism can itself be experienced as pleasurable. As Helen Meller (1990: 60) puts it: 'therefore the key objective of biological principles of economics was not food and shelter but culture and education'. Education, like cities, is structured by unconscious survivals from past epochs:

"The inordinate specialisation upon arithmetic, the exaggeration of the three R's, is plainly the survival of the demand for cheap yet efficient clerks, characteristic of the recent and contemporary financial period. The ritual of examinations with its correlation of memorising and muscular drill is similarly a development of the Imperial order, historically borrowed from the Napoleonic one; the

chaotic 'general knowledge' is similarly a survival of the encyclopaedic period; that is, the French Revolution and the Liberal Movement generally." (Geddes: 1905: 84)

Geddes goes on to list the historical traces of grammar, spelling, the essay, and so on, through to the humble child's apple and ball as the raw fruit and the ready missile of primeval society. Here the teleological aspect of evolutionary sociology was propounded by Geddes, where the earlier development, an originary ur-type, causally determines the form of the later one under changed social conditions.

Unfortunately, as part of his idea of a 'return to nature', Geddes invoked the inventor of biometrics and eugenics, Francis Galton. Galton also gave a paper on eugenics at the first Sociological Society conference, which had a much wider popularity than Geddes's paper on 'Civics' was ever to manage. However, Geddes wished to differentiate his neo-Lamarckian vision of eugenics as environmental and cultural nurturing from heredity racist, social Darwinist versions (though see the concessions to Darwinian eugenics in Geddes 1904). Geddes called this 'eugenics proper, free from those elements of fatalism, of crude Darwinism, if not reactionary sophistry' (1915: 388). Such radically different approaches led to a split in the Sociological Society between the 'civic sociologists' around Geddes, the more statistically-inclined 'racial sociologists' of the eugenicists, who left in 1907 to form the Eugenics Education Society, and the 'social work sociologists' of the ethical philosopher, LT Hobhouse (Halliday, 1968). For Geddes it was not the 'degenerate' individual that was the source of social pathologies but the appalling material conditions of slum-culture in Paleotechnic cities. Civics would work with the grain of 'incipient', morally regenerative evolutionary processes.

Healthy life is completeness of relation of organism, function and environment and all at their best. Stated, then, in social and civic terms, our life and progress involve the interaction and uplift of people with work and place, as well as place and work with people. (Geddes, 1915: 392).

Geddesian biologism also included sweeping assumptions about gender. In their bold study The Evolution of Sex Geddes and Thompson (1889) argued in line with the contemporary commonplace that gender was biologically-determined but that women's nurturing role was of the utmost importance for shaping the whole environment for civilised cultural evolution. And while they were prepared to run the risk of explicitly detailing birth control methods they refused to admit any political role to women. Geddes was generally contemptuous of politics anyway and felt that women were 'naturally' better suited to non-political civics. Geddes and Thompson (1889: 267) notoriously argued that 'What was decided among prehistoric protozoa cannot be annulled by acts of parliament'. Women were biologically best placed to lead society into civilised life. Geddes contended that 'cultural evolution' would be nurtured along by women as the ultimate goal of 'progress' as something that transcended the political contest between capitalism and socialism.

From microbiology Geddes felt that the observational scientific method could be applied productively to society in its most concentrated formation, the city (Welter, 2002). He applied the German biologist Ernest Haeckel's distinction between ecology, ontogeny and phylogeny to the city. Ecology has passed into common usage to refer to the study of 'the environment' but for Haeckel (and Geddes) it meant the study of the relationship between environment and organism. Ontogeny refers to the study of embryological development while phylogeny concerns the study of evolutionary descent. For the study of the city, Geddes took ontogeny to recapitulate phylogeny, with any specific city containing within it in embryo all the evolutionary developments of the city in general. Geddes insisted that social traditions were collectively transmitted by being inscribed into concrete spatial relations. But he uses the terms inheritance, heritage and tradition in special ways. Following biology, Geddes limited 'inheritance' to the transmission of organic capacities, 'bodily and mental', and stripped it of its common sense meaning of economic capacities of material wealth, which he called 'heritage', while for 'tradition' he reserved immaterial, social capacities: 'The younger generation, then, not only inherits an organic and psychic diathesis; not only has transmitted to it the accumulations, instruments and land of its predecessors, but grows up in their tradition also' (Geddes, 1906: 74).

In the city cultural evolution thus fused the temporal moment and the spatial form. Civics is centred on the city since it alone represents nature's drive to balance free individuals with the propagation of the species. Geddes called this human evolution towards a cultured relationship with nature 'geo-technics' in contrast to the rationalisation of emerging disciplines such as geography or town

planning. From his grounding in evolutionary science Geddes understood that urban development depended on a grasp of environmental context and historical and cultural tradition. Unlike Haussmann's mid-nineteenth century boulevardisation of Paris, or the later full-scale, slash and burn approaches of twentieth century town planning, for Geddes the built environment should be carefully altered by a process he called 'conservative surgery' (Tyrwhitt, 1947; Mairet, 1957). In this way the cultural traces of the past could be preserved while adding a further layer of architectural material to the city without an artificial geometric order being forcibly imposed on urban space. By improving the built environment in this way Geddes hoped that new generations could be trained in 'civics' and 'applied sociology', the two terms were interchangeable in his mind, to value the accumulated historical and cultural legacy and to progressively improve upon it.

Sociology: as Civic Activism

Geddes did not merely theorise about urban planning. He was actively involved in the physical renovation of Edinburgh and laid out plans for Pittencrief Park in the historic Scottish town of Dunfermline (Geddes, 1904). This latter scheme left such a deep impression on Lewis Mumford that he later tried to adapt Geddesian principles to US conditions. Geddes's method followed the scientific observational model of survey, diagnosis and plan. Before undertaking any demolition work, a detailed survey of past, present and future alternatives was necessary to meticulously log the condition of the buildings and to set them contextually within their historical significance and cultural meaning within local traditions and customs. In India, Geddes looked to preserve the historic traces of the thirty or so towns he surveyed even as rapid urbanisation began to take hold (Tyrwhitt, 1947). He did not share in the Eurocentric contempt for the temple cities of South India but saw them romantically as the most complete integration of culture, history and urban form (Meller, 1990: 217). Geddes's reverence towards indigenous culture informed his plans for civic reconstruction of urban India. For instance, by retaining ancient city walls the traditional heart of the temple city could be preserved and the growing volume of traffic banished from it.

Practically-oriented civic activism seems a far cry from the contemporary concerns of academic sociology. Tracing Geddes's thought to Plato's notion of the good life, Welter (2002: 49) argues that 'Civics is Geddes's contribution to the contemporary late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century debate about citizenship'. In his Sociological Society paper on Civics, Geddes attempted to clarify both the intellectual and practical aspects of his idea of sociology applied to the city for a sympathetic audience of social reformers. The British Sociological Society was founded with money from Geddes's admirer Victor Branford (Mumford, 1948) precisely to promote Gedessian ideas of civic reformism, after the failure to establish a Scottish Institute of Sociology in Edinburgh. Abrams (1968: 102) described the type of sociologists attempting to institutionalise sociology in the Edwardian period as either 'wealthy amateurs with careers elsewhere, academic deviants or very old men'. Geddes was neither wealthy nor 'very' old but might be considered an archetype of the gifted deviant-amateur that supposedly populated the upper echelons of Edwardian British institutions.

Initially, the Sociological Society was the centre of public debate about social issues (Halliday, 1968). This was in the political context of Chamberlain's Social Imperialism and the emergence of a more active labour movement determined to resist the consequences of the 1901 Taff Vale judgement. Geddes (1905: 86) aimed to steer a middle course between philanthropic or punitive reformist interventions and the disengaged spectators, who, he argued, stood 'outside of the actual civic field, whether as philistine or aesthete, utopist or cynic, party politician or "mug-wump"'. He argued for what might be called a public sociology where 'the inquirer into sociology and civics may most courageously of all take part in the propaganda of these studies' (Geddes, 1915: 316). Only by communicating sociological arguments to others might some 'progress' be made.

Though not merely on the basis of the better idea or more rational case. This wasn't to be a scholastic version of positivism. Like his acquaintance Bergson, Geddes maintained that some allowance always needed to be made for the role of intuitive understanding and was insistent that the most significant issue for sociology was its relationship to practical life.

We learn by living ... let us be at home in the characteristic life and activity, the social and cultural movements, of the city which is our home ... Our activity may in some sense interrupt our observing and philosophising: indeed must often do so ... Indeed with all sciences, as with most ideal quests, the same principle holds good: we must live the life if we would know the doctrine. Scientific detachment is but one mood, though an often needed one; our quest cannot be attained without participation in the active life of citizenship. (Geddes, 1915: 317-8)

Not scientific detachment but praxis, for Geddes, brought theory and practice into an ongoing, unfinished dialogue, 'thinking things out as one lives them, and living things out as one thinks them': 'action can never wait till theory is complete - nay, theory only clears itself as action progresses' (Geddes, 1888: 22, 13). This meant becoming immediately entangled in practical cooperation for the tasks that are nearest to hand. Given Geddes's uncertain academic status he was always ready to laud the autodidact and the craft knowledge of practical work, which even highly codified and specialised academic disciplines retained:

For we cannot understand, say Pasteur, save primarily as a thinking peasant; or Lister and his antiseptic surgery better than as a shepherd, with his tar-box by his side; or Kelvin or any other electrician, as the thinking smith, and so on. The old story of geometry, as 'ars metrike', and of its origin from land-surveying, for which the Eygptian hieroglyph is said to be that of rope-stretching, in fact applies more fully than we realise ... In short, the self-taught man, who is ever the most fertile discoverer, is made in the true and fundamental school - that of experience. (Geddes, 1906: 79).

To get beyond over-generalised conceptions of social life and the separation of 'the educated classes' from the 'life and labour of the people', Geddes extended the need for active sociological dialogue necessary for civics. Civic sociologists ought to learn by living and working alongside the working class: 'to have shared the environment and conditions of the people, as far as may be their labour also; to have sympathised with their difficulties and their pleasures, and not merely with those of the cultured or governing classes' (Geddes, 1915: 319). When Geddes moved into a run-down tenement block in Edinburgh it was with the goal of imparting by the proximity of his example his own, rather eccentric, cultural values to his plebeian neighbours.

Civics: as Applied Sociology

This background seemed to give Geddes the ideal credentials for the public role that the fledgling Sociological Society wanted to play. He was therefore invited to read his paper 'Civics: as Applied Sociology' at its first two conferences in 1904 and 1905. But, disappointingly for Geddes, while his papers on civics led to the setting-up of a Civics Committee of the Sociological Society, the general reception of his argument was decidedly cool. Geddes spent the best part of the second paper answering his critics by attempting to clarify the multi-faceted nature of his vision. Instead, his argument became more complex and confusing as he built further layers of analysis upon the foundations he set down in the first part. He tried to stimulate interest in civic sociology by advocating the value of Civic Exhibitions as instructive tools for educating and encouraging reflective civic action among the citizenry. But he provided neither postivistic quasi-scientific certainties nor magical quick-fix panaceas for the appalling social conditions of urban Britain. Instead, he offered a full-blown regional survey as a prelude to social action based on a philosophical commitment to inductive reasoning and a scientific commitment to evolutionary thought. His abiding objective was to combine the seemingly incompatibles of, on the one hand, to socialise individuals into a common civic activity based on a universal method of social survey, diagnosis and practical action, and, on the other, to stimulate regions into developing according to their own deeply-embedded, internal cultural tradition so that communities would become more individualised and differentiated from each other.

While he agreed that the social survey method of Booth and Rowntree had proved invaluable for shedding light on the scale of the problem they had invited the view that large-scale public intervention was the only remedy. For Geddes, this was anathema. First, any social survey of the city needed to set it in its regional, historical and cultural context and to build modestly by small-scale, localised efforts out of the bodily and psychic inheritance, built heritage and cultural tradition that social evolution had bequeathed. Only careful study, sensitive to local conditions,

would reveal which 'buds' could be self-consciously developed for a future in keeping with the environmental distinctiveness of city-regions. In trying to capture the minute methodical stages necessary to realise Geddes's vision of applied sociology he pragmatically built-up a confusing picture for his audience, which was not helped by his capacity for making unexpected connections, digressing from the main point and relying on highly particularised examples, such as Geddes first-hand knowledge of the renovation and conservation of Old Edinburgh or his survey and plans for a park in Dunfermline.

In his more careful formulations, Geddes pre-figured the components of what today is called uneven development, where the surviving layers of past historical moments shape and re-combine with the contemporary layering to create unique but historically patterned places. More usually, however, Geddes (1905: 87) argued that since modern developments often lacked historical consciousness they became the unconsciousness prisoner of the past: 'for since we have ceased consciously to cite and utilise the high examples of history we have been more faithfully, because sub-consciously and automatically, continuing and extending later and lower developments'. Geddes placed too much stress on unconscious embryonic forces working behind the backs of even the most radical modern disciplines. Even Hausmann's clearance and reconstruction of post-1848 Paris was viewed as expressing the deep cultural and historical traditions of the long, straight riding paths through the forest used by mediaeval hunters. Hence one critic, Israel Langwill (in Geddes, 1905: 121), was led to despair: 'That Haussmann in reconstructing Paris was merely an unconscious hunter and woodlander, building as automatically as a bee, is a fantastic hypothesis; since cities, if they are to be built on a plan at all, cannot avoid some unifying geometrical pattern'.

From Geo-technics to Neo-technics

Influenced by his own semi-rural childhood and the regional perspective of the French geographer Elisee Reclus, Geddes (1905a) thus came to favour 'regionalism' as a way to extend the heterogeneity of cities to a broader, more diverse and self-regulating unit. Reclus had been active in the Paris Commune of 1871. In exile, he adopted a Proudhonist form of anarchism and helped found social geography as an academic specialism. Reclus refused to validate academic geography where it failed to address the three core anarchist issues of 'class struggle, the quest for equilibrium, and the sovereign struggle of the individual' (Reclus, in Ross, 1988: 101). From evolutionary theory, Reclus drew not on the idea of an eternal struggle for the survival of the fittest but on that of spontaneous social solidarity. Geddes (1888: 9) adopted this approach to critique Malthusian neo-Darwinism: 'Since, then, it is not hunger and struggle for existence, but love and association in existence, that mainly move and mould the living world, we have a new scientific basis for economics'.

Analytically, Geddes was attracted to Reclus's idea of the 'regional valley section' as a coherent unit for research-informed action. In the image of a river flowing through a valley, the region represented for Geddes an ideal unit of analysis and practice for studying the 'geotechnics' of environment and culture. It also allowed Geddes to read the city derivatively as only the latest stage of earlier rural processes. Unlike the bounded city, the city-region encompassed the broadest range of elemental activities in different natural environments. A regional division of labour, centred around a regional city, would also provide a pacific alternative to the competitive militarism enshrined in the national politics of capital cities, a wholly different conception of region from that of Mackinder's Imperial geography. In Scottish towns, for example, Geddes (1905: 80) discerned the inner connections of regional geography, history and social psychology in how 'the long isolated peninsula of Fife' towns like Kirkcady and Largo produced prototypes of self-help individualism in denizens like Adam Smith and Alexander Selkirk (of Robinson Cruse fame).

His privileged example of a geotechnic city in Part II of 'Civics' is Glasgow. In the 1880s William Morris explained to Geddes the pre-eminence of Glasgow as the leading city not only in Scotland but in the UK as a whole. This was rooted in the craft knowledge that went into shipbuilding, which, Morris argued, surpassed even that of the mediaeval cathedral-builders. For Geddes (1906: 106-08), the incipient 'buds' of the future geo-technic society based on the city-region model were already emerging in Glasgow since its river, the Clyde, combined the various facets of advanced industrial and social organisation which other cities like London dispersed onto geographically specialised

quarters of the city. Glasgow was also pre-eminent intellectually in the applied sciences and political economy.

Geddes situated his example of Glasgow within a historical schema adapted from the Scottish Enlightenment theory of social evolution and his anarchist friend Peter Kropotkin. From John Millar's 1771 The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks Geddes, who possessed a first edition, could build on the Scottish Historical School's 'four stages theory of society' (Meek, 1967). In Millar's early modernist social theory, economic development passes through the stages of hunting, pasturage, agriculture and commerce. All of the basic elements are present for the 'natural occupations' in Geddes's valley section - miner, woodsman, hunter, shepherd, peasant and fisher - culminating in the city whose occupations are later derivatives of these rustic 'natural occupations'. Paralleling his neglect of social class in favour of archetypal 'occupations', Geddes simply ignores modern urban occupations like office work that fail to fit his schema (Welter, 2002: 63-5).

Kropotkin saw the twelfth century rise of free, self-governing units like guilds and parishes ended only by the rise of the authoritarian absolutist state in the sixteenth century (Reynolds, 2004; Hall, 1996). This system, in turn, would decline as modern technological sources of energy like electric power presaged a new decentralisation of economy, government and society. Geddes called the earlier centralisation of industry and government the 'Paleotechnic age' and the modern evolution he discerned towards decentralisation he termed the 'Neotechnic age'. In its blind drive toward industrialisation and accumulation for its own sake, the Paleotechnic age wasted natural resources, material and energy on a huge scale only to create mass levels of misery and impoverishment and a catastrophic relationship to the environment (Glendinning, 2000). Geddes (1915: 74) called this situation a 'Kakotopia', in contrast to the emerging 'Eutopia'.

As paleotects we make it our prime endeavour to dig up coals, to run machinery, to produce cheap cotton, to clothe cheap people, to get up more coals, to run machinery, and so on; and all this essentially towards 'extending markets' ... But all this has been with no adequate development of real wealth, as primarily houses and gardens, still less of cities and towns worth speaking of: our industry but maintains and multiplies our poor and dull existence. Our paleotechnic life-work is soon physically dissipated: before long it is represented by dust and ashes, whatever our money-wages may have been.

This Paleotechnic city is recognisable in the urban landscape today (Law and Mooney, 2005a).

The transition to the ennobled Eutopian city made possible by electric energy was thus likened by Geddes to a sharp break in the historical path of industrial, social, civic evolution. Geddes positioned his image of the Eutopian city at a point 'like the mathematician's zero', somewhere between the grim reality of the industrial city as Dante's 'Inferno' and the wholly abstract conception of the Utopian city. The potential of the Eutopian city was rooted in actual social, technological and natural conditions but its realisation was dependent on social and civic action. Just as a flower can only express itself in the process of its own flowering (Hall, 1996: 146), so the Eutopian city can only be expressed by the many-sided flourishing of an environmentally-sensitised civics.

To better express the development of vast city-regions devouring small towns and boroughs, spreading analogously like a huge amoeba swallowing up microscopic plants, Geddes (1915: 34) minted another new concept, 'conurbation', to join his other neologisms, such as megalopolis, paleotechnic-neotechnic and Kakotopia-Eutopia (Mumford, 1948). Such conurbations were dispersing populations across a uniform expanse of roads and buildings, cumulatively adding without rest 'street upon street, and suburb upon suburb'. Geddes solution, to bring green spaces into the city and to halt the expansion of the metropolis into the countryside, however, was opposed the neat orderliness of anti-urban Town Planners. Geddes urged an active, reciprocal interaction with the natural and built environment. Even city parks, which Geddes (1915: 97) considered among the best achievement of municipal civics, betrayed the ideological standpoint of the city fathers, (and something of his own social Darwinian gender biases):

Like the mansion house parks they often were, with their own ring fence, jealously keeping it apart from a vulgar world. Their lay-out has as yet too much continued the tradition of the mansion-house drives, to which the people are admitted on holidays, and by courtesy; and where little girls may sit on the grass. But the boys? They are at most granted a cricket-pitch, or lent a space between football goals, but otherwise are jealously watched, as potential savages, who on the least symptom of their natural activities of wigwam-building, cave-digging, stream-damming, and so on - must instantly be chevied away, and are lucky if not handed over to the police.

Geddes also shared his anarchist friends contempt for social reform through state intervention, preferring instead practical works in the local here and now, and was greatly impressed by the 'five per cent philanthropy' of housing reformers like Octavia Hill. While the most influential middle class reformers of their age, Fabian socialists like George Bernard Shaw and H.G. Wells, had a mild respect for Geddes, they preferred to ignore him, objecting to his repeated stressing of the need for social theory and method. Geddes, in turn, regarded Wells as an 'intellectual Cockney', trapped by metropolitan prejudices produced by 'the false self-sufficiency of the city-dweller' (in Stalley, 1972: 46).

Geddes: as Conservative Radical

In the idea of autonomous, self-sufficient city-regions Geddes was drawing on the nineteenth century French traditions not only in social science but also anarchism. For this reason Geddes remains an inspiration to some latter-day anarchists and community activists (Ward, 1976). In France, Geddes was exposed to the Proudhonist case against large-scale industrial concentrations and centralised state power. Instead, Proudhon advocated the cooperative 'mutualism' of decentralised and free exchange between small producers (Hyams, 1979). Marx (1975) pilloried Proudhon as caught-up in the Charybdis and Scylla-like moral and intellectual dilemmas common to his class position as a petit bourgeois situated between the proletariat, on the one hand, and the bourgeoisie, on the other. Marx makes a similarly harsh judgement of post-Proudhonist figures, among whom Geddes might be counted:

"He is a living contradiction. If, like Proudhon, he is in addition an ingenious man, he will soon learn to play with his own contradictions and develop them in circumstances into striking, ostentatious, now scandalous, now brilliant paradoxes. Charlatanism in science and accommodation in politics are inseparable from such a point of view."
(Marx, 1975: 187)

Evolutionary theory could be made to correspond to Proudhonist forms of mutualism. It was Geddes's exposure to the Proudonist tradition in France that helps explain his receptiveness towards Le Play's sociology, less so Comte's, and not at all Marx's. However, there were important differences between Proudhon and Le Play. As the conservative sociologist Robert Nisbet (1970: 70) commented:

Between Proudhon and Le Play there is an affinity that does not exist between either and Marx, and it is an affinity that extends over the structure of the family. Here indeed, Proudhon appears more traditionalist than Le Play, for it is the patriarchal family that Proudhon espouses.

For the even more unconventional Geddes, the family is of considerably less relevance than individuals operating cooperatively in the community. Filtered by the Communard geographer Elisee Reclus and the anarchist Prince Peter Kropotkin, Geddes (1905a) imbibed the libertarian philosophy that history is a voluntarist struggle for individual liberty and cooperation. Cooperation among individuals on a localised scale was counter-posed by Geddes to large-scale state intervention to alleviate desperate social conditions.

For Reclus, however, widely-based class solidarity and cooperation made the working class morally equipped to lead society to a higher stage of development while an internally competitive, degenerate and atomised bourgeoisie led the world only to violence and destruction on an unprecedented scale (Fleming, 1979; Steele, 2003). Geddes shared the view that laissez-faire

capitalism had by the late nineteenth-century run its evolutionary course. In terms of economic development, Geddes (1888) believed that in beginning from consumption he could retrace the 'natural history' of economic evolution contained in the final product. By proposing that consumption determines production Geddes gave an evolutionary twist to what would later become known as consumer sovereignty. Here again he deploys ontogenetic and phylogenetic analysis to arrive backwards at economic origins.

But for all his distress about the direction that capitalist modernity was taking, Geddes balked at embracing Reclus's moral imperative of working class solidarity. Indeed, he claimed that 'the extremes of capitalism and anarchism have far more in common than they seem' (Geddes, 1888: 20). Geddes stayed aloof from class-based commitments, preferring the vague humanitarian notion of love, not struggle, as the basis for social solidarity. For a reformer so determined to scientifically and practically detect the future promised in the immanence of society's 'buds', Geddes's utopianism often fell prey to wishful thinking. Even from a prescient analysis of the decline of laissez-faire capitalism he could read-in an emerging harmony among well-meaning individuals where 'the essential aims of the philanthropist and reformer of yesterday, the co-operator and socialist of today, the citizen and humanist of tomorrow, despite all errors and wanderings, are beginning fairly to converge and even combine' (Geddes, 1888: 17). With artist-intellectuals in charge of the cooperative movement, capitalism and socialism could be fused into a higher cooperative unity:

> **Our modern tragic antagonism - of capitalism, with its sadly unideal practice, and socialism, with its sadly unpractical ideals - must alike steadily rise and merge into a truly practical - yet nobly idealised - everyday life of true, that is, full and developed, Co-operation.** (Geddes, 1888: 24)

Geddes thus shared anarchism's radical conservativism, only without the class politics of Proudhonist anarchist socialism. He advocated social change at the micro-level of daily activity and eschewed large-scale political programmes of social reform or revolution as expressed by socialism. Politics were largely irrelevant, if not counter-productive, to the more practical business of adapting people and environment as the civic solution to the higher spiritual needs of cultural evolution. Geddes's objections to socialism lay in its refusal to undertake practical cooperative work 'until everything and everybody is ready for the millennium' (in Kitchen,1975: 95). He also rejected 'the central dogma and panacea' of socialism that Marx had resolved all questions and compared this to religious fanaticism:

> **"If you indicate doubt of either the final completeness or the initial practicality of these, you might as well be a bourgeois at once, and a speedy alternative between the sword or 'Das Kapital' is the best that can be promised for your soul's health."** (Geddes, 1888: 18)

While that may be an apt description of small Marxist groups like the Social Democratic Federation, Geddes, despite his wide-ranging studies, which included economics as well as history, philosophy and sociology, showed little grasp or interest in Marx's own work, just as he preferred the largely forgotten work of Le Play to the pioneering work of his own contemporaries Simmel, Weber or even Durkheim, with whom he was personally acquainted. Geddes also paid scant attention to the class structure of society or the titanic struggles to unionise unskilled labourers in the 1880s or the Great Labour Unrest of 1910-1914. Instead, he adopted the humanist rhetoric of an undifferentiated 'people' who could be made to cooperate in the daily activities under the civic example of middle class activists like himself. As Welter (2002: 44) argues in his stimulating study of the city, biopolis, Geddes:

"Rejected a Marxist notion of class in favour of an idea of cooperation influenced by the thought of Peter Kropotkin. But with his rejection of the idea of class, Geddes robbed himself of the opportunity to explain the shaping of a City - understood as a synonym for a human society - as rooted in the diverging and competing interests of the various classes ... Rather than following a line of inquiry similar to Weber's, Geddes focussed on the individual's interaction with the environment, arguing that the consonance between an individual's action and that of a larger social group would cut across social classes, even going beyond them."

Here Geddes's brand of evolutionary sociology depended on mysterious forces to cement the individual in society and was quite uninterested in the systemic structuring of societies into social classes with clashing interests and unequal access to material necessities. While the 'concrete and practical' cooperative movement dealt with 'real wages' in making what workers purchase go further, the 'slow progress' of the trade union movement is put down to their bargaining over money wages, a 'strictly nominal object':

"So long as the workman who strikes readily for a rise or against a fall of wages submits patiently to the increasing wholesomeness of his material surroundings or resents all outlay on their amelioration, it cannot be said that the realities of wealth have as yet been really discerned behind their symbols by either capitalist or labourer." (Geddes, 1888: 12)

Class conflict is explained away as the neo-Lamarckian 'misadaptation' to the environment of individuals coalescing in occupational groupings. Civics would supplant politics by better adapting organism and environment.

Conclusion

Sociology for Geddes, then, represented the pre-eminent synthesis of knowledge as the basis for civics. Intellectuals, though more broadly-based, would still form an elite of community-based leaders. Only an elect few of Geddesian acolytes could be trained as 'bud hunters' guiding the rest of humanity. For an ambitious social reform programme, let alone a curriculum of advanced study, Geddes needed to recruit aesthetically sensitive, intelligent individuals that shared his evolutionary standpoint as the most advanced knowledge of its day. This proved an impossible task. His brand of civics was soon eclipsed within sociology by eugenics and social administration.

If Geddes's sociology was influenced by French anarchist socialism its feint echo was passed on in a much-diluted form through Lewis Mumford to the radical Regional Planning Association of America. Starting with Geddes, then Mumford and the RPAA, through to the commonplaces of modern Town Planning, the more diffuse anarchist planning became the less it retained its radical edge. As Hall (1996: 137) put it, 'the truly radical quality of the message got muffled and more than half lost; nowhere on the ground today do we see the true and remarkable vision of the Planning Association of America, distilled via Geddes from Proudhon, Bakunin, Reclus and Kropotkin'. Thus, Geddes, the pragmatic radical, is seen, mistakenly, by many as anticipating and endorsing more recent developments in Town Planning and even the Scottish Executive's (2003) 'Partnership Agreement' between New Labour and the Liberal Democrats (Grieve, et al, 2004)! But, if Geddes had gone so far to distance himself from the class-based 'socialist' half of 'anarchist socialism' as Proudhon, Kropotkin and Reclus understood it, then what was left of its radical message in the first place and how useful is it now?

Civics meant something quite different for Geddes to the kind of patriotic citizenship education that often goes under the name 'civics' today. It has come to represent a kind of democratic minimum, from neighbourhood watch schemes to anti-discriminatory social inclusion programmes. In this version, civics chimes well with classless Third Way sociology. Civics in the form of 'social capital' is something that elites need to engineer to catalyse democratic participation, which is supposedly being degraded by the influence of the mass media (Putnam, 2000; Law and Mooney, 2005). In the face of today's intensely mediatised environments, Geddesian civics may have a rather quaint and anachronistic feel about it. Yet, even here, calls for a 'media civics' are being made, which perhaps Geddes would recognise:

Media civics, crucial to citizenship in the twenty-first century, requires the development of a morality of responsibility and participation grounded in a critical engagement with mediation as a central component of the management both of state and global politics and that of everyday life: both of the system and the lifeworld. (Silverstone, 2004: 448)

The creation of a civic morality, where elites manipulate the many, is found in Malcolm Gladwell's (2002) pop-epidemiological argument, The Tipping Point. Gladwell makes the neo-Geddesian assumption that small-scale local actions based on entrepreneurial intuitions can reconstitute the environment in more positive ways.

Like Geddes, current boosterist calls for civics in the form of 'social capital' are de-classed attempts by elites to remoralise the poor (Das, 2004; Law, 2005). Unlike Geddes, few advocates of civicism are steeped in applied sociology, let alone the advanced evolutionary sociology to be found, for instance, in W.G. Runciman's (1989) magisterial theorising of social power, Treatise of Social Theory: Volume II.

While sociologists have no monopoly on radical democratic participation, Weinstein (2003) traces an elected affinity between applied sociology and democratic civics, from the Scottish moral philosophers to the 1960s radical Students for a Democratic Society. To these might be added the sociologist Commandante Marcos, leader of the Zapatista movement, the broad anti-capitalism movement (Callinicos, 2003), and the call by Habermas and Derrida (2003) for a new counter-hegemonic European civics to emerge from the millions of anti-war protestors on 23 February 2003. However, misguided his own approach may have proved, Geddes would have at least expected sociologists not to abstain like 'mug-wumps' but to muster a radical intervention in such matters as the environment, the city, war, and poverty.

University of Abertay Dundee (originally published in Sociological Research Online, Volume 10, Issue 2)

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Ossian, Sonority and the Celtic Twilight in Geddes' Circle

by Norman Shaw

Macpherson's Ossian

James Macpherson's The Works of Ossian was originally published in 1765, and then republished in 1896 by Geddes, on the centenary of Macpherson's death. Macpherson's Ossian claimed to be a retelling of mythical events from Scotland's pre-Christian, prehistoric past as told by the blind bard Ossian; featuring Fingal, Cuchullain, Oscar and other mythical figures from celtic prehistory. The tales, Macpherson claimed, were gleaned from journeys to Ireland and the north-west Highlands of Scotland. The Ossianic tales were hailed by Europeans as a Celtic equivalent of the Homeric myths and thus became extremely popular in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries - read by Napoleon and depicted by painters such as Girodet, Runge and Ingres. Ossian was also enthusiastically appropriated by Blake for the epic style of his great mythic cycles, as well as his representation of the idea of 'the north' as a place of 'un-nam'd forms' and spiritual purity. At the time of its publication, the mythical landscape of Ossian was projected on to a Scottish Highland landscape that was still suffering the aftershocks of the Clearances, which had happened only two decades previously; a depopulated landscape that craved a new mythopoeic identity. Disregarding debates about its authenticity, Macpherson's Ossian owes its popularity to a fusion of the new aesthetic of the sublime with contemporaneous notions of myth and geography.

The Sonorous

Ossian is crucially placed in a sonic world; many of the descriptions in the text rely on sonic dynamics and metaphors:

'Beside a stream of roaring foam his cave is in a rock. One tree bends above it; and the rushing winds echo against its sides'

Macpherson strives to reproduce what I will call a sonorous landscape which runs parallel to the narrative; maintaining a vagueness that permeates the text. The sonorous, I suggest, is a device that references the sonic, yet which strives to realize what is beyond the audible or visible.

Ossian is written in a repetitive, chant-like manner; constructing a convoluted 'wall of words' like the mountainous landscape it strives to depict; designed to be read aloud in keeping with the ancient oral tradition from which it is derived. It is a relentless torrent of repetitious sub-plots and micro-narratives; its protagonists are trans-historical emanations from the corporeal landscape; underground interdimensional heroes. In this way, the structure of Ossian can be read as rhizomatic in the Deleuzian sense (a rhizome is an organism that thrives underground as a root system; like bulbs or mushrooms, appearing at arbitrary points on the surface). Deleuze favoured 'the rhizome in opposition to the tree, a rhizome-thought instead of an arboreal thought.' If we take the tree to be a symbol of Enlightenment thought-forms; then the rhizome is a fitting analogue for Ossian's post-Enlightenment/proto-Romantic structure. Macpherson uncovers new connections; linking for instance the underground systems of an ancient oral tradition with contemporary notions of the sublime landscape above the ground.
Rhizomatics also relate strongly to my concept of the sonorous as a disruptive force; confounding linearity. Deleuze and Guattari apply their concept to music; claiming that 'musical form, right down to its ruptures and proliferations, is comparable to a weed, a rhizome.'

Gaston Bachelard understands this appeal to landscape mnemonics and mythopoeia through the sonorous; and not necessarily in the strictly 'sonic' meaning of the word. This employment of the sonorous, as we shall see later, also echoes Geddes' idea of synergy as an harmonious whole. Bachelard invokes Minkowski, who writes:

"For my part, I believe that this is precisely where we should see the world come alive and, independent of any instrument, of any physical properties, fill up with penetrating deep waves which, although not sonorous in the sensory meaning of the word, are not, for this reason, less harmonious, resonant, melodic and capable of determining the whole tonality of life…"

As a 'presentation of the unpresentable', the sonorous also relies on a kind of obscurity, an echo of absence; an emphasis on the spectral and the ghostly. Often criticized by modernists for this twilit vagueness, the Ossianic Highlands actually benefit from this obscurity. In his key eighteenth-century work on the sublime, Edmund Burke classed 'obscurity' as an important aid to evoking the sublime and the infinite; together with vacuity, darkness, solitude and silence.
Crucially for Macpherson, obscurity and the emphasis on darkness awakens Burke to prehistory and paganism; unknown origins, and as Burke states: 'some sort of approach towards infinity which nothing can do whilst we are able to perceive its bounds' .

Alexander Runciman's drawing of Ossian Singing from 1770 depicts the bard sitting under a windswept tree. The belief that Ossian was blind; reciting his poetry against the music from his clarsach; or celtic harp; highlights this foregrounding of sound elements over the other senses. The image demonstrates the importance of sonic phenomena as an integrating force; seeing humanity and nature contained within the same whirling mass. The oral nature of the Gaelic Ossianic tradition means that every re-telling re-appropriates the sonic template; thus being both trans-temporal and spatial.

The Scottish Highlands were now regarded as a visualization of the sublime, thanks to Macpherson's Ossian. Human mythopoeic narrative was implicated in the shapes of mountains and forests; in elemental experience. Ossian also set up discords within the Highland landscape by allowing narrative to dissolve into a sonorous space; revealing new borders between the 'real' (ie: named) and 'imagined' landscape. Runciman's Fingal and Conban-Cargla from 1772 consequently shows the figures continuous with the trees, rocks and clouds.

Sonic phenomena can function as metaphysical apparatus, as a means of realizing absence. In an essay entitled Acoustic Space; Humphrey Carpenter and Marshall MacLuhan stress the 'magical' importance of acoustic phenomena, appealing to the prehistoric oral culture to which Ossian belongs, and which Macpherson's Ossian evokes; highlighting its 'magical' power to 'make present the absent thing':

'Poets have long used the word as incantation, evoking the visual image by magical acoustic stress. Preliterate man was conscious of this power of the auditory to make present the absent thing. Writing annulled this magic because it was a rival magical means of making present the absent sound.'

The sonorous aspects of Ossian, although written, serve to materialize an entropic, absent, and necessarily vague landscape through dissonant droning and vague reverberations.

John Duncan and William Sharp

Geddes had formed the Patrick Geddes Colleagues and Company in 1895, commencing with the publication of The Evergreen periodical. He used the painter John Duncan as the chief illustrative artist, and the writer William Sharp as managing director and a major contributor to the text - it was this group who republished Macpherson's Ossian; reintroducing it to a new audience within a new synergistic framework. However, Sharp left the company after two years due to the international success of works by his alter-ego 'Fiona Macleod'.

Sharp wrote that this 'new Scoto-Celtic movement was 'fundamentally the outcome of Ossian' - he wrote the introduction to Geddes' new edition. In his concern with origins, Geddes drew on the Ossianic aesthetic; hijacking vital yet misappropriated ideas and re-applying them, claiming that 'These things are not ancient and dead, but modern and increasing.' That the Ossianic aesthetic has also been appropriated by J.R.R. Tolkein, C.S. Lewis and numerous other 'fantasy' authors, not to mention current trends in Celtic shamanism and 'folk' movements reinforces this view of these things being 'modern and increasing'.

As we shall see; both William Sharp (as Fiona Macleod) and John Duncan continued to exploit the Ossianic as a source for their material. They explore the same post-Ossianic world in parallel, and can be usefully examined together.

Bride

John Duncan's St Bride from 1913 illustrates the inter-dimensional nature of these artists' vision; where the landscape is impregnated with 'decorative' celtic motifs whose flatness literally induces a new plane in the painting. This harmonious synthesis of heterogenous modes of representation through a kind of collaging can be seen as a visualisation of Geddes' idea of synergy as a parallelism of different disciplines.
Duncan applies this 'collage' aesthetic to a 'native' tradition which is becoming fragmented and multi-layered as antiquarianism and archaeology gain ground.

Bride, or Briget - as both pagan goddess and Christian saint - personifies the mingling or continuance of Celtic pre-Christian ideas with Christian belief. Fiona Macleod's St. Briget of the Shores was published in the 1896 edition of The Hills of Dream, providing a textual background for the interplay of styles and symbolism evident in Duncan's painting of 1913. Macleod also told one version of the Bride story in the Autumn edition of The Evergreen. St Bride is the supposed foster mother of Christ, transported by angels to Bethlehem on the eve of his birth. But the legend of St Bride, Macleod claims;

"goes further back than the days of the monkish chroniclers who first attempted to put the disguise of verbal Christian raiment on the most widely-loved and revered beings of the ancient Gaelic pantheon. Long before the maiden Brigida… made her fame as a 'daughter of God'… the Gaels worshipped a Brighde or Bride, goddess of women, of fire, of poetry… one whom the Druids held in honour as a torch bearer of the eternal light, a Daughter of the Morning"

Robert Graves connects Bride with the Triple Goddess; the earth-goddess herself ; while Sir James Frazer called St. Bridgit 'an old heathen goddess of fertility, disguised in a threadbare Christian cloak'

The pan-cultural vision of John Duncan, then; finds grounding in the emerging global mysticism realized by Fiona Macleod through delicate distinctions between history and myth.
Geddes also happily flits between history and myth as mutually informative narratives. In the murals for Ramsay Gardens in Edinburgh that Geddes commissioned to John Duncan, Geddes stresses a parallelism between Scotland's scientific tradition and its mythic tradition by having Duncan represent The Awakening of Cuchullin or The Taking of Excalibur within the same narrative as, for instance The Calling of St Mungo or Michael Scot; medieval "translator of Aristotle and enquirer into scientific matters." Duncan frequently paints in tempera - including in large scale work like The Riders of the Sidhe (1911) and St Bride (1913). The flatness of this media allows Duncan a more 'decorative' aesthetic where spatial representation is necessarily ambiguous. In a similar way to Ossian his figures become landscape elements; pre-Christian and Christian personifications of the mythopoeic landscape.
The central female figure in Duncan's Anima Celtica image published in The Evergreen in 1895 has been tentatively identified by Murdo Macdonald as Bride also; this time surrounded by Ossianic figures such as Cuchullain, Finn, and Ossian himself. The flatness and quasi-collaged nature of many of Duncan's designs, together with their trans-historical subject-matter indicate the layered; non-linear worlds they represent; where the Geddesian In-world collides with the Out-world.

The Fairies

John Duncan's The Riders of the Sidhe from 1911 depicts the Sidhe, or the Celtic Fairies, a divine race who inhabit the Otherworld of the dead; perceived only in visionary states of mind and usually at liminal places such as stone circles, sacred groves, wells and 'fairy hills' or 'fairy glens'.
In the introduction to her drama The Immortal Hour; Fiona Macleod emphasises that the Sidhe, or 'Hidden People… were great and potent, not small and insignificant beings'; as Duncan's portrayal of them reinforces. Macleod's re-telling of the ancient poem The March of the Faërie Host which she includes in her anthology of celtic poetry Lyra Celtica almost reads as a description of Duncan's painting:

'…Sons of kings and queens are one and all.
On all their heads are
Beautiful golden-yellow manes:

With smooth, comely bodies,
With bright blue-starred eyes,
With pure crystal teeth,
With thin red lips…'

The Sidhe are 'setting out on the eve of Beltane… bearing symbols as follows: the tree of life and of knowledge, the cup of the heart of abundance and healing, the sword of the will on the active side, and the crystal of the will on its passive side;' symbols which Lindsay Errington perceives as 'betraying in their type of symbolism the still lingering influence of Patrick Geddes.'
Experiences of the Sidhe are usually accompanied by sonorous phenomena; Duncan claimed to have heard 'fairy music' whilst painting; and seems naturally inclined towards trance-like states; as John Kemplay writes in his book on Duncan:
'he saw with the "inner eye" of his imagination forms more beautiful than any he had ever seen with the "outer eye". But these were not forms alone; they were "living people with quick eyes and strange solemn gestures who move as if in some ritual."

This absorption into the 'In-world', however, would be interrupted by the responsibilities of the 'Out-world'; as Duncan writes from the Hebridean Isle of Barra:

'I have two young people with me who won't let me lapse into the long trance that otherwise would completely absorb me… Perhaps it is best so, this celtic'glamour' and 'twilight' is a dangerous dope.'

Fiona Macleod typically refers to the sonorous aspect of this state of altered consciousness:

'I have heard… I have dreamed… I, too, have heard,
Have sung… that song: O lordly ones that dwell
In secret places in the hollow hills…'

WY Evans-Wentz's The Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries was first published the same year as Duncan painted The Riders of the Sidhe. This classic study of the reality of fairy sightings reflects an interest in the mythopoeic landscape; an aspect of the living folk tradition from which Ossian was drawn. The majority of its numerous accounts of encounters with fairies feature particular sounds or music in their description. Evans-Wentz's book is also comparable to Macpherson's Ossian in that its contents were drawn from actual accounts taken on trips to the Celtic north-western shores of Europe, and finds mythical creatures implicit in the corporeal landscape. Geddes' In-world manifest in the Out-world…

Bride II

A later painting of Bride by Duncan; The Coming of Bride from c.1918 portrays her in her guise as pagan goddess of the earth.
Macleod also links Bride with sonic phenomena:

"They refer to one whom the bards and singers revered as mistress of their craft, she whose breath was a flame, and that flame song… whom every poet, from the humblest wandering singer to Oisin of the Songs, from Oisin of the Songs to Angus Òg on the rainbow or to Midir of the Under-world, blessed, because of the flame she put in the heart of poets as well as the red life she put in the flame that springs from wood and peat."

Bride is thus mistress of the sonorous. Macleod links aural experience with the metaphysical through its personification in Bride.

The importance of sound and music within Geddes' revivalist program is demonstrated by him commissioning Duncan to paint a series of murals of the history of pipe music - and the presence of Pan in the design betrays its links to the pagan past. Macleod's By the Yellow Moonrock employs a 'fëy' piper in its evocation of megalithic mnemonics. Interestingly, the piper appears on 'the Day of Bride.'

Geddes uses sonic metaphors such as harmony and discord to describe his idea of revival through Synergy:

'The sorely needed knowldege, both of the natural and the social order, is approaching maturity; the long delayed renaissance of art has begun, and the prolonged discord of these is changing into harmony; so with these for guidance men shall no longer grind on in slavery to a false image of their lower selves, miscalled self-interest, but at length as freemen, live in Sympathy and labour in the Synergy of the Race."

In Pharais, Macleod demonstrates the folk song's sonic evocation of primeval Highland landscape and collective pre-literate memory, summoning the infant Ossian as a gauge:

"The song was old: older than the oldest things, save the summits of the mountains, the granite isles, and the brooding pain of the sea. Long ago it had been sung by wild Celtic voices, before ever spoken word was writ in letters - before that again, mayhap, and caught perhaps from a wailing Pictish mother - so ancient was the moving old-world strain, so antique the words of the lullaby that was dim with age when it soothed to sleep the child Ossian, son of Fingal."

An early poem by Macleod indicates the centrality of sonorous themes to her work, where landscape sonics parallel the sonics of the soul. This echoes Geddes' synergistic application of harmony and discord as environmental and social registers, and anticipates the work of acoustic ecologists like L Murray Schafer, who claims that every place has a 'keynote sound' that reflects the 'sonic health' of that place. Fiona Macleod writes:

There is in everything an undertone…
Those clear in soul are also clear in sight,
And recognise in a white cascade's flash,
The roar of mountain torrents, and the wail
Of multitudinous waves on barren sands…
A something deeper than mere audible
And visible sensations…
We all are wind-harps casemented on Earth,
And every breath of God that falls may fetch
Some dimmest echo of a faint refrain
From even the worst strung of all of us."

Yeats described his acquaintance William Sharp, as one 'through whom the fluidic world seemed to flow, disturbing all.' Sharp; through his pseudonym Fiona Macleod, appropriates the sonorous aspects of Macpherson's Ossian in his fictional works such as Pharais, The Mountain Lovers; The Dominion of Dreams and Where the Forest Murmurs to create a kind of hallucinatory neo-Celtic dreamworld set in the North-west Highlands.

Typically, Macleod uses sonics to represent spaces of loss and an absent absolute, and in many ways, Macleod's sonorous aesthetic has strong resonances with Lyotard's notion of 'negative presentation':

"The absolute is never there, never given in a presentation, but it is always 'present' as a call to think beyond the 'there.' Ungraspable, but unforgettable. Never restored, never abandoned. This mode of 'presence' of the absolute is the grounds for the 'negative presentation'…"

This further echoes Carpenter and McLuhan's idea of 'making present the absent thing'. Sharp's biographer Flavia Alaya reinforces this idea, referring to his use of chant-like repetition:

'The use of 'chant' is itself intimately connected with the pervasive tendency of the Celts, as Sharp often described them, to see 'the thing beyond the thing,' to view surface phenomena as signs and symbols, a tendency which was quite legitimately extended to language.'

Geddes refers to this world beyond appearances which 'has never been seen with bodily eye' as the In-world in his essay The World Without and the World Within from 1905. A concluding quote from this essay by Geddes not only anticipates quantum theory by suggesting that mind and matter are

one, but also implicitly invokes our blind bard Ossian who saw without his bodily eye into the fragmentary, sonorous world of the imagination for which John Duncan and Fiona Macleod's Ossianic Otherworld is at least an analogue:

'Next the In-world. This has never been seen with bodily eye, yet is no imaginary world for all that. In a very true and thorough sense it is more familiar, more real than the other; for all we know, or can ever know of the Out-world, or of each other, is in our minds. " I think, therefore I am," said a great philosopher long ago; while another is famous for having puzzled people by seeming to deny that there was any matter at all. But when you think a little, you see something of what he meant---that all we know of matter is in mind.'

Intellectual activism and modern land use planning

By Neil Grieve, Deborah Peel, and Greg Lloyd

Patrick Geddes is often cited as one of the founders of modern town and regional planning. Helen Meller, a biographer of Geddes, suggested that he was someone who 'pioneered a sociological approach to the study of urbanisation; discovered that the city should be studied in the context of the region; predicted that the process of urbanisation could be analysed and understood; [and] believed that the application of such knowledge could shape future developments towards life enhancement for all citizens'.1 She highlighted the point that central to his approach was the intimate relationship between social processes and spatial form.

Such thinking resonates with contemporary debates, not least in his native Scotland. This is particularly so in terms of the current interest in (a Geddesian idea of) the city-region, the focus on modernising planning practice, and the web of links between all those promoting, in today's parlance, 'joined-up' governance. Intriguingly, Geddes was already identifying the connections between society and spatiality, method and outlook, as being at the heart of integrated public policy understanding and implementation. Yet his interest in modernity and collectivism went hand in hand with a strong concern for individuality.2

Re-reading Patrick Geddes' writings today, together with the learned commentaries on his life and work, provides a powerful reminder of how meaningful his thinking remains, and how compatible his lexicon, language, and discourse is with contemporary public policy agendas.

There is little doubt that Geddes was a formidable intellectual and polymath, someone who attracts various epithets, from 'pioneer of sociology', to 'maker of the future', or 'savant'.2 He not only drew on a wide and diverse set of intellectual influences, but he made important practical connections between them in interpreting his notion of a 'human ecology'. Geddes united ideas from, and between, botany and the natural sciences, sociology, regionalism, urban design, economics, history, art, politics, literature, gardening, philosophy, education, printing, mathematics, public health, housing, music, and poetry. He correlated the humanities and sciences with their corresponding practical applications in the arts and technologies; a blend of art and science that continues to underpin town planning.

Significantly, Lewis Mumford described Geddes as both an active thinker and a practical doer.3 For Mumford, Geddes' main legacy was his ability to engender 'a sense of the wonder of life'.4 Further, Geddes' interdisciplinary interests shaped what we recognise as a generalist vision for the study of cities and culture. Mumford thus acknowledged: 'Patrick Geddes' philosophy helped save me from becoming a monocular specialist… [I]t gave me the confidence to become a generalist – one who sought to bring together in a more intelligible pattern the knowledge that the specialist had, by over-strenuous concentration, sealed into separate compartments'.5

Tellingly, then, Geddes has been described as an 'intellectual activist' who sought to put his ideas into action, and confronted many of the practical issues associated with the implementation of ideas on ensuring the sustainability of the urban fabric.
His legacy includes a tried and tested method – that of a regional report, or survey – which was intended to gain an overall perspective of an area's social ecology. This approach identified and assessed the physical and social factors that may be considered to contribute to human health – such as housing, employment, air quality, water supply, the availability of gardens or natural areas, and the nature of the cultural identity. Geddes stressed the need to identify the links between the different factors, and, where deficiencies existed, he would search for appropriate solutions. These would often require political, social, and physical intervention. The current emphasis on evidence-based policy appears to reflect this strategic, inter-disciplinary, and integrative approach to planning.

Geddes' early approach to town and regional planning was based on an holistic and dynamic appreciation of the whole environment, and particularly the connections between work, place, folk. Here, Geddes may be compared with others, such as Ebenezer Howard, who advocated a 'clean slate' approach. Moreover, Geddes is credited with the term 'conurbation', which he used to suggest the relationship of a city with the communities and countryside around it. His approach was

one that sought to better respect the 'organic unity' of cities, and both to take into account the historic past and to identify the future potential.

What is particularly exciting about the early work of Geddes is that his interests encapsulated both the theoretical and practical aspects of land use and development. He encouraged involvement by local people, for example, in his attempts to improve housing conditions in the Old Town of Edinburgh. In terms of delivery he appreciated the need to link ideas relating to design and layout to their effective execution, particularly in his development efforts.

Geddes was involved in, and drew on, a wide range of international comparative experiences. His work in such places as Ireland, India, Palestine, and France, as well as Scotland, reveals an intellect constantly seeking to self-improve and understand. His global profile reflects a variety of identities, as captured by Boardman,6 who suggests that in Britain Geddes may have been variously perceived as a 'visionary and impractical mystic', while in India he may have been hailed as an achiever and an urban planner. In America he was considered a sociologist, while in France he was 'un anglais un peu fou'.2 Such diversity of interpretation reflects, in many ways, Geddes' eclecticism.

Certainly, many of his ideas influenced subsequent land use planning and development practice. His interests in regionalism, for example, examining the wider spaces in which society is organised and linked to natural resource development, was important in the later design of specific regional economic development initiatives, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority. Moreover, along with other influential thinkers of the time (such as John Muir and Frank Fraser Darling), Geddes contributed to our modern understanding of sustainable development, natural resource development, and environmental management.

Above all else, Geddes searched for solutions to problems, be they economic, physical, social, or environmental. To do this, he drew on ideas from a range of other influential thinkers, including Darwin, Comte, and Le Play. His principal contribution, however, was to integrate such powerful ideas and then to apply them to practice. In this sense he was a pragmatic visionary, anticipating the challenges and issues associated with planning and the environment. Arguably, this focus on implementation finds its modern expression in the emphasis on policy execution and service delivery. Yet, for Geddes, theory and practice went hand in hand.

Geddes' interventions ensured the survival of a great deal of historic urban fabric and, furthermore, put it to productive use. But his practical achievements somehow seem to have been persistently under-recognised. Volker Welter, one of the most acclaimed students of Geddes, admitted in a recent interview that Geddes' work in Edinburgh remains under-researched, and even that the full impact of Geddes' insights might not yet have found their full force. He noted that Geddes himself once observed that **'the social and political reformer has always to state and re-state his ideas, long before he forms that resolute minority, which by restating these ideas more widely still persuades a sufficient majority to [adopt] them'**.7 But perhaps, through acts of re-statement, those ideas are ultimately finding their way into a wider social consciousness.

In Dundee, for example, the restoration of Gardyne's Land by the Tayside Building Preservation Trust involves an approach which draws on Geddes' philosophies. Gardyne's Land is a generic name for three buildings which group around a courtyard in the centre of the city. Two of the buildings face onto the high street – one is a tenement dating from c.1640, the other a Victorian retail outlet from c.1865. To the rear is a merchant's house dating from c.1560, whose first recorded owner was John Gardyne, after whom the complex is named.

Following a major feasibility study in 1996 the Trust began to negotiate to purchase the buildings. Eventually, in late 1999, it acquired them for £1 from the Prudential Assurance Company (the Prudential retained ownership of a ground-floor shop which was the only commercial return on the property). The Trust has now raised almost £4million (assembled through grants from the Lottery Fund, the European Union, Historic Scotland, Scottish Enterprise, and numerous charitable trusts, businesses, and private donations) and will shortly let a 20-month building contract which will restore and convert the whole complex of five buildings into a 90-bed youth hostel, a facility which Dundee currently lacks.

Following his own experiences, such as the Lawnmarket project, Geddes might well have empathised with the challenges and emotions associated with the Tayside Building Preservation Trust's Gardyne's Land work. For example, the demands of having to raise large sums of money, to cope sensitively with the inherent complexity of the historic fabric, and to find suitable and sustainable end uses to comply with the requirements of contemporary policy and legislation can be found in both cases. In Geddes' work, there are certainly hints at the aesthetic control of modern land use planning regulations. Moreover, he was also ahead of his time in the way he worked in partnership with the council to achieve spectacular results at places such as Wardrop's Court and the Lawnmarket frontage to Riddle's Court.

His interventions reveal considerable respect for the older urban fabric, enacted by putting into effect the vernacular tradition, while saving old structures by re-using them. His emphasis turned on the interaction between people and place – in the context of time. He anticipated modern conservation practice, which places an emphasis on the understanding of what is significant about an asset. Indeed, for Mumford, it was Geddes' interest in 'potentiality and purpose' that was among his most important contributions.8

What would Geddes have made of Scotland's turn to understanding cities, their roots, their life, their cumulative history, and their potentialities? With his pragmatism and eclecticism, Geddes, as a generalist, would no doubt have endorsed much of the contemporary search for inter-professional and inter-disciplinary working, which is evident for example in the recent review of skills in the built environment. His was not a fragmented vision. Indeed, Mumford noted, for example, the importance of Geddes' 'organic methods of thought and action… [which synthesised]… aspects of life hitherto severed, amputated, discrete'.8

No doubt Geddes would have connected with the analysis of contemporary political commentators who assert the centrality of ecological problems in prevailing political debates and thinking. Moreover, he would also have put all his energies behind the values which underpin practical endeavours such as Gardyne's Land, a project which seeks a realistic solution to sustain the future of a historical legacy for all our benefit. Such 'conservative surgery' surely represents the means whereby cities can be kept alive while retaining their original character. We can still productively learn from the past. n

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Towards a Civic Renascence?

By Neil Grieve, Deborah Peel, and Greg Lloyd

Public policy increasingly turns on a perceived need for a 'civic renascence' in modern society. This aspiration is not confined simply to the economic, social, and physical renaissance of towns and cities and the regeneration of communities, but embraces ideas of lifelong learning and the re-thinking of ideas around the nature and cultures of places and spaces.

Such concepts are contested. City-regions, for example, are being advocated as a means of managing the needs, growth, and development potential of urban areas while ensuring that there are appropriate and functional labour and housing market links with their hinterland. Yet, as Peter Hall demonstrates, there is a need to keep an eye on the bigger picture of shifts in technology, economic structures, ideas, and governance arrangements.1 These perspectives and ideas remain elusive, and there is a danger of becoming overly instrumental in policy design and delivery. Can Geddes' work provide theoretical insights into the contemporary culture of civic renascence? Do his ideas of surgical intervention – promulgated over 100 years ago – offer a way forward today?

Modernisation?

As a first step in answering these questions, it is important to assert the immediate context. There are a number of very important changes taking place in the planning and development world.

First, reflecting contemporary political ideas and priorities, together with an overriding emphasis on delivery, an active programme of devolution, decentralisation, and modernisation is under way. In the land use planning context, the modernisation process is principally a response to the perceived weaknesses of the existing system – articulated in terms of delay, congestion, and overlap. This perspective is presented as an opportunity to make planning 'fit for purpose' in the modern world. It is about devising a planning system that can meet the developmental, cohesiveness, and social justice needs of a nascent modern state.

Second, and as part of the modernisation overhaul, planning practice is being increasingly exposed to new ideas, such as demonstrating a greater sensitivity to 'spatiality', and to the need to ensure delivery and implementation. This involves configuring planning practice to the specificities of local circumstances, meshing with the emerging arrangements for community planning, and adapting to the changing interpretations of public service priorities and delivery mechanisms.

This new found energy and enthusiasm for land use and development planning in terms of strategic guidance and place-making is clearly not developing in an intellectual vacuum. At a general level, for example, there remain the ever-present liberal market critiques, with their attendant advocacy of solutions to resolving land use conflicts and development agendas based on private property rights.2 These different viewpoints suggest that there remains much to be gleaned in terms of understanding the spirit and purpose of contemporary planning practice in a modern world.

Although thinking in a much earlier period, under different prevailing social and power relations, Patrick Geddes addressed many of these issues. Importantly, however, he deployed a different mind-set to explain and interpret arguments involved in such debates, and he used a different language to engage with the then prevailing relationships between social processes and spatial form. The beginning of the 20th century was generally dominated by neo-liberal market economic thinking, and Geddes was seeking to justify planning intervention in this particular context. He was also attempting to articulate that intervention in a practical way in appropriate community settings. Moreover, his ideas about how to 'treat the patient' differed radically from those, say, of Howard, whose approach embraced large-scale clearance and rebuild.

Resonances

As is widely acknowledged, Geddes engaged with an expansive range of intellectual ideas and reflections, and contributed to a number of very practical outcomes, relating to the full gamut of planning's social and community agendas. He was concerned particularly with urban design matters, and the associated relationships of physical change and improvement as these related to the promotion of social and environmental justice. He noted, for example, that in promoting change,

and in advocating the need for regulation over change, with appropriate civic engagement, society had to be alert to the broader societal considerations involved: 'Here, as in all true progress, we must not only comprehend and transform the environment without but develop our life within.' 3, p.215

This quotation suggests an individual who was sensitive to wider social change, and alert to the fact that change itself requires robust management. There is a salutary lesson here, as debates too often become quickly polarised into an 'us and them' stand-off, or a 'people versus property' choice. And reinforcing his 'joined-up' thinking and 'hands-on' approach, Geddes embodied an active environmentalism. The contemporary relevance of Geddes' work has been highlighted, for example, by the John Muir Trust, as Graham Purves has asserted.4

Purves pointed out that Geddes applied his basic principles of natural science, and particularly that of Darwinian evolutionary theory, to the study of society: 'The objective was to gain sufficient understanding to enable the raw evolutionary forces which were shaping society to be harnessed and guided in positive directions towards the greater fulfilment of Mankind. His aims, aspirations and values were spiritual rather than material. What he sought was the restoration of a 'harmony' or 'balance' to human life and social relationships which he believed to have been lost during the trauma of the industrial revolution; in short, the recreation of physical and social environments in which human beings could enjoy greater personal fulfilment and creative expression.4

Purves argues that Geddes' commitment to community empowerment and the active involvement of local people in the restoration and improvement of their own physical and cultural environments provides particularly important insights and valuable inspiration to the management and sustainable development of rural communities, at a time when the thinking around city-regions seems to lead principally with the urban driver. What of the associated inter-relationships between town and country?

Drawing on a policy issue of considerable contemporary importance in Scotland, for example, Andy Wightman noted that the ownership and use of land is one of the most fundamental issues in any society and yet is a subject which in Scotland still remains poorly understood: 'Not only does ownership convey significant and far reaching privileges to those in possession of land but the system and pattern of landownership has extensive economic, political, cultural and environmental impacts on the economy and the development of the country.'5 There is a real need to reflect critically on these underlying relationships in modern society – something Geddes certainly appeared to do. His holistic perspective allowed him to actively consider the tangible and intangible aspects of social and economic change.

Another contemporary resonance concerns 'regionalism'. Today, particularly in Scotland, the city-region is promoted as a foundation to the management of the modern spatial economy. Geddes viewed the modern region as the product of continuous interaction between the human species and its environment; each of its communities adapted to its particular geographical setting and responding to changing circumstances by a process of cultural evolution. He therefore rejected any standardised solutions to environmental and social problems, believing that proposals should be individually tailored to local conditions, with due regard to existing customs and systems of social organisation. Here, there is a real challenge to the 'one size fits all' mentality, and to the idea that a particular approach may be indiscriminately transferred between locales.

Practical work – Dunfermline 1904

There is a graphic illustration of Geddes' approach in his work 100 years ago in Dunfermline (where recently, and to mark this long association, the RTPI in Scotland held its annual conference).

In 1904, Andrew Carnegie gifted the Pittencrieff Estate in the centre of the town to the people of Dunfermline, his birthplace. The Dunfermline Carnegie Trust Trustees invited Geddes and others to submit proposals as to how the park and estate could be developed to benefit the people. In the event, two competition entries were submitted – by Patrick Geddes and Thomas Mawson in 1903-04.

Mawson, an established and acknowledged landscape designer, had developed the 'composite style of formal and informal, and marked architectural tendencies'.6 This contrasted very much with the

work of Geddes, who held the view that the park and garden was a potent factor in the regeneration of the city.6, p.221 Indeed, in comparing both reports, Chadwick asserted that 'one is marked by technical competence, elegant perspectives, yet lacks a compelling motive, whilst the other, ugly, ill-presented in comparison, has the vitality of new ideas'.6, p.227 Neither scheme was adopted but both influenced the subsequent layout of the park.

Chadwick noted that the Dunfermline report submitted by Geddes was 'a general statement of ideas rather than a precise set of proposals to be carried out within a definite, limited time'.6, p.225 Furthermore, 'the value of his scheme, and his book, lies not in the crude details of the photographs and sketches and in dissecting his layout in detail. It lies in many original contributions: to the part that the park can play in town life, linked to other urban spaces and buildings of sympathetic function; to the idea of the open air folk museum, the character and history of town and region expressed in living exhibits… to the realisation that recreation is active both physically and mentally.6, p.227

These ideas laid the foundations for his subsequent thinking articulated in Cities in Evolution. Geddes asserted that the Dunfermline report 'is of practical purpose' and 'a plan and plea for conserving and developing the amenities of a small provincial city, and its constructive proposals are based upon a photographic survey of its present, a re-reading of its past.3, p.2

In considering Dunfermline as a town and a city, Geddes suggested his approach was concerned with a 'civic renascence', and 'the larger possibilities of civic life'.3, p.215 The following quotation captures this line of reasoning. All the ingredients of contemporary urban agendas are represented here, together with an apparent clarity of understanding of what planning intervention can seek to achieve: 'What is the vital element which must complement our provincialism? In a single word, it is regionalism – an idea and movement which is already producing in other countries great and valuable effects. It begins by recognising that while centralisation to the great capitals was inevitable, and in some measure permanent, this is no longer so completely necessary as when they practically alone possessed a monopoly of the resources of justice and of administration, a practical monopoly also of the resources of culture in almost all its higher forms.3, p.216

When Geddes was articulating his ideas about 'living breathing' cities which drew on their intrinsic urban and rural cultures, he highlighted the essential sustainability of resource management. Nonetheless, he never appeared to lose sight of the individual and the importance of any historical context to change. His personal humanist inclinations framed his approach to urban development in time and space – looking to the past and to the future in creative symbiotic tension. These were not the utilitarian and instrumental fixations of the planning debates that we associate with the substantive-procedural epoch of the 1970s; these were visions driven by intended outcomes on the ground.

One of the insights Geddes left us was that we should focus on the potentialities of transformation – not just of the physical, but also of the cultural identities involved. Critically, Geddes asserted the importance of the individual. In our attempts to articulate a contemporary resonance for the processes associated with modern land use planning, we can do worse than heed the insights of Geddes' 'civic renascence', which asserts the importance of culture and individuals' relationship with land, place, and space.

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The ‘Ah-ness’ of Learning

By Deborah Peel

The current interest in inter-professional working, inter-disciplinary education, and experiential learning present something of a challenge to contemporary educators in terms of curriculum content and delivery.1 The demands of the knowledge society, developments in information and communication technologies, and the social reconstruction of professionalism are but some of the trends impacting on higher education.2 This changing context touches teachers and students, and learning and teaching, in a range of ways.

For example, the evolving ‘blended learning’ environment, bringing together e-learning with relatively more traditional teaching methods, is indicative of the perception that students are increasingly seeking appropriate on-line materials to support and enhance their access to information, and presumably their learning – 24/7.

It also reflects, for many, the reality of part-time work to support the living expenses incurred by students.

In the classroom, gaming and simulation using new technologies appear to offer innovative solutions to contemporary challenges for hands-on skills development in the classroom. Increasingly, students are required to maintain ‘personal development plans’ which shift greater responsibility onto the individual for identifying and filling gaps in skills and knowledge. This seeks also to ingrain a habit of lifelong learning and continuing professional development. In such ways, approaches to learning, and continuously developing ‘appropriate’ knowledge, skills, and values are evolving to provide students with relevant learning environments and a nourishing diet of study.

What then is the role of the ‘educator’ in this context? This article reflects on Patrick Geddes’ role as a ‘professor of all things general’3 and asks what lessons we might draw today from his thinking and practice.

Geddes – ‘the student’

Born at Ballater, Aberdeenshire in 1854, Geddes spent his childhood in Perth from 1857, where he was educated at The Academy. Yet, according to his biographer Helen Meller, Geddes’ father, who taught him how to tend a garden, was his first and best teacher. Indeed, Geddes asserted that it was the ‘skills, discipline and understanding’ involved in the caring for a garden that were critical to being able to manage the wider environment.4

Referring to his rural childhood, Geddes later wrote of the ‘fundamental vividness of rustic life’.5,p.14 Such sentiments echo the wisdom of Voltaire’s Candide that in order to attain happiness in the best of possible worlds, il faut cultiver notre jardin. Indeed, Cumming observes that growing up in rural Perthshire provided Geddes with a ‘geographical and spiritual sense of place’ that ‘sharply contrasted with the tedious mechanical copying of state education’5,p.14 – although this did not, however, deter Geddes from a degree of didacticism in his academic career.

His first experience of studying botany and the natural sciences at the University of Edinburgh in 1874 left him disappointed after only a week. Rather than his preference for studying living nature in evolution, his studies required him to cut up and classify dead specimens. Context is everything – the theory of evolution was coming of age (indeed, Geddes met Darwin). Managing student expectations is clearly critical. Are there lessons here for how we seek to enthuse our students about creating liveable cities, and for the ways in which we attempt to regenerate and revitalise our communities?

To find a more suitable course, Geddes moved to London. During the period 1874-1878, he studied biology under Thomas Huxley at the Royal School of Mines. According to his slightly younger contemporary, H.G. Wells, what fascinated Geddes most was ‘the potential brought by modern knowledge to transform society’ and the challenge facing contemporary and future generations to manage their relationship with the environment – be that at a local or global level.4,p.3 Clearly, Geddes was already encapsulating ideas of sustainable development.

In 1876, he worked as Huxley's demonstrator, an experience, which, according to Cumming, 'illuminated for him the power of creative education using models to communicate and link ideas great and small'.5,p.15 Responding to the processes of urbanisation (what he then termed city development) and the technological advances of the late 19th century, Geddes identified the importance of motivating people to make the right choice. This was a matter that he determined as a moral issue and a concern of cultural conditioning. This hints at contemporary discourses of justice and equity.

Indeed, later in one of his lectures, Geddes noted that he wanted to transform the 'individual Race for Wealth into a Social Crusade of Culture'.6 Significantly, his particular perspective was informed by his training as a natural scientist, his understanding of cell structure, and his use of a microscope. He inevitably turned his attention to the social world around him.
France – convalescence and discovery

To help Geddes convalesce from a serious illness in 1878, Huxley arranged for him to work at the Sorbonne marine station at Roscoff in Brittany. This Celtic experience proved to be a pivotal one. First, it provided him with an introduction to marine biology – and his study of protozoa was critical for Geddes' understanding of evolution. Second, the working conditions of this educational institution proved influential – particularly its blend of science, community, and life: outdoor practical study and indoor laboratory examination of specimens, followed by social evenings of discussion and activities.

These experiences informed the style of the subsequent annual Summer Meetings of Art and Science in Edinburgh, which were held from 1887 onwards.4 Importantly, these meetings provided an international arena for debate crossing traditional academic disciplinary boundaries. This active inter-disciplinary exchange of ideas is central to many of today's debates, but perhaps we do not create the social, face-to-face contexts in which ideas might be fruitfully and continuously exchanged and nurtured.

Certainly, this experience of French culture opened Geddes' eyes to a different way of doing things (and Geddes was a fluent French speaker – another lesson?).

Geddes and Community Learning

One of Geddes' most well-known physical contributions is his so-called 'sociological laboratory', the Outlook Tower in Edinburgh, which he acquired in 1882. His intention was to create an observatory, as well as an 'Index Museum to the World' to act both as a local memory storage and a link to the wider world7 – thus classifying and inegrating local, regional, national, European, and global aspects of life. Critically important to the philosophy of the Tower is its focus on the art of seeing. Its objective is to create new points of view. At the top of the Tower a camera obscura enables the looker to hold the life of the city in the palm of the hand.

Writing in 1910, one commentator noted: 'We say that that we look, and we truly believe that we see, whereas in reality our vision is, for the most part, limited by traditional and undernourished horizons. No, we do not know how to see. … The field of our vision is limited by our habits: we see what we have always seen. … Professor Geddes does not hesitate to declare that books are largely responsible. He believes that we are mesmerised by books, and that we only see what it is that they want to show us.'8 Rather than the art of listening, the Outlook Tower stresses the eye as the principal organ of education and source of reflection.

A primary objective of the Outlook Tower was to encourage people to watch, to see, to examine, and to reflect – processes which, according to Geddes, first required the unlearning of what one already (thought one) knew. This represented an educational reform in terms of providing a new outlook on life, requiring that individuals not only 'see' the world around them, but also see the world within themselves. In particular, this required the education of the eye, in both its scientific and its artistic vision. Thus, for Geddes, the Tower represented an important visual synthesis of education.

A number of questions arise. Do we sufficiently stress to our students the importance and power of observation? Do we show? Do we teach them to look? Can we train the eye? Are we replacing books with DVDs? Do we provide our students with appropriate outlook posts with which to examine, question, and observe in order to better see the world and themselves? Do we know what to look for?

Geddes was active in a wide variety of social projects, and his thinking about education and self-directed learning also informed the work of the Edinburgh Social Union, established in early 1885. In reality, his approach to education reflected his personal childhood experiences in Perth and his belief that 'the child's desire of seeing, touching, handling, smelling, tasting and hearing are all true and healthy hungers, and these should be cultivated'.9 Indeed, his advice to teachers was not to 'manufacture a ready-made synthesis, but to make their pupils realise that every man is his own philosopher, synthesiser, moralist, art critic, and even artist and educationalist and so on up to priest and king'.10 Such child-centred learning and emphasis on people and place finds echoes in the thinking of educators such as Colin Ward11 and reminds us how we learn through all our senses.

Geddes – 'The Professor'

While Geddes is acknowledged as one of the founding fathers of British planning, he first made a name for himself as a scientist. For a while, he worked at the University of Edinburgh's Medical School as a demonstrator in zoology and natural history. He was offered a professorship at the University of Dundee in 1888; a post he held until 1919.

Of his lecturing ability, Geddes once observed that 'I'm quite clear that I'm not a popular lecturer, having neither the voice nor the reputation necessary, much less both, nor the 'popular gifts' either'.12 But he appears to have been held in high regard by his students, as this comment in the December 1888 edition of Dundee's The College magazine illustrates: 'It is with ever fresh delight one listens to his bright conversational lectures – as remote as possible from the regulation dry-as-dust hour's note scribbling – sparkling with new ideas, new turns of thought and most happily chosen similies.' Can educators today aspire to that?

Yet, while his habit of 'wandering from the subject' may have proved entertaining for some, it was clear that some students had an instrumental eye to exams.13 Thus, in 1904, the Students' Representative Council petitioned the University College: 'to take under consideration the question of the teaching of Botany in University College, so as to ensure, as far as possible, that in future the lectures delivered on that subject, shall be more in accordance with the requirements for the Degree examinations than has hitherto been the case.'14 Clearly, it was not matters of assessment that were able to rein in the extrovert Geddes. Indeed, he had himself 'refused on principle to take examinations or stand for a degree … to be entangled in [the] formalities, legalisms, stale traditions, and tepid conversations' of academic life.15 What challenges there!

Teacher and Students

Perhaps one of Geddes' best known 'students' was Lewis Mumford, although this was most certainly a case of distance-learning by correspondence (they typically wrote several letters a day). They met on only two occasions – in 1923 and 1925. It was not always a happy relationship. Initially, the young Mumford saw Geddes as his mentor and most important teacher, someone who prompted an intellectual awakening, while also offering an important intimacy. The impact of the older man's work on Mumford was significant, and he noted how Cities in Evolution had 'profoundly altered' his 'habits and ways of living'.3,p.5

Their much-discussed 'collaboration', however, was abortive, partly owing to their incompatible learning styles, temperaments, and habits. Novak, for example, contrasts Mumford's cautious, careful, and meticulous approach with Geddes' rapid impetuosity, whose copious 'morning mediations' produced 'disorderly accumulations'.3,p.10 But the relationship tended to the master-pupil rather than the truly collaborative. The 27-year-old Mumford described a strained relationship in 'The disciple's rebellion', where he noted his frustration and humiliation at being asked to set out on a blackboard all the graphs and charts of Geddes' that he had learned.16 Such rote and dogma seem at variance with the stimulation and excitement Geddes clearly also provided his

students. Yet Mumford's experience was not unique, and 'this 'prodigious' thinker had not been able to enlist and retain capable disciples'.3,p.17

Despite the frustration felt by Mumford, he nonetheless articulates a deep affection and respect for Geddes, the Socratic teacher who conveyed more through his spoken than his written words.3,p.33 In particular, it was his talent for penetrating observation and incisive comment, his personal example and impromptus that attracted the younger man.3,p.33 For Mumford, 'Geddes the teacher takes precedence over Geddes the systematic thinker.'17 As we engage with redesigning curricula and learning and teaching methods, it is salutary to remember that personality and face-to-face exchanges count.

A poem published anonymously in The College entitled 'The New Education or Botany, 1905' captures perhaps a little of the Geddesian passion to which all educators might aspire. The following extracted couplets18 merit no concluding comment – but just a little reflection:

> Forget your empty parrot-talk, your meaningless verbosity,
> And let the 'ah-ness' sense of things arouse your curiosity.
> Forget the silly notion that I'm here to teach you Botany –
> And never come to me for facts, because I haven't got any.
> 'The more you know, the less you know' in figurative speech,
> And the converse is the principle of everything I teach.
> Away with dull scholastics and their round of rote and rules,
> Better fifty days of Geddes than a cycle of the schools! n

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On Vegetarianism

By Elisée Reclus (1830-1905)
(First printed in the HUMANE REVIEW, January, 1901. Reprinted as pamphlet several times)

MEN of such high standing in hygiene and biology having made a profound study of questions relating to normal food, I shall take good care not to display my incompetence by expressing an opinion as to animal and vegetable nourishment. Let the cobbler stick to his last. As I am neither chemist nor doctor, I shall not mention either azote or albumen, nor reproduce the formulas of analysts, but shall content myself simply with giving my own personal impressions, which, at all events, coincide with those of many vegetarians. I shall move within the circle of my own experiences, stopping here and there to set down some observation suggested by the petty incidents of life.

First of all I should say that the search for truth had nothing to do with the early impressions which made me a potential vegetarian while still a small boy wearing baby-frocks. I have a distinct remembrance of horror at the sight of blood. One of the family had sent me, plate in hand, to the village butcher, with the injunction to bring back some gory fragment or other. In all innocence I set out cheerfully to do as I was bid, and entered the yard where the slaughtermen were. I still remember this gloomy yard where terrifying men went to and fro with great knives, which they wiped on blood-besprinkled smocks. Hanging from a porch an enormous carcase seemed to me to occupy an extraordinary amount of space; from its white flesh a reddish liquid was trickling into the gutters. Trembling and silent I stood in this blood-stained yard incapable of going forward and too much terrified to run away. I do not know what happened to me ; it has passed from my memory. I seem to have heard that I fainted, and that the kind-hearted butcher carried roe into his own house ; I did not weigh more than one of those lambs he slaughtered every morning.

Other pictures cast their shadows over my childish years, and, like that glimpse of the slaughter-house, mark so many epochs in my life. I can see the sow belonging to some peasants, amateur butchers, and therefore all the more cruel. I remember one of them bleeding the animal slowly, so that the blood fell drop by drop; for, in order to make really good black puddings, it appears essential that the victim should have suffered proportionately. She cried without ceasing, now and then uttering groans and sounds of despair almost human; it seemed like listening to a child.

And in fact the domesticated pig *is* for a year or so a child of the house ; pampered that he may grow fat, and returning a sincere affection for all the care lavished on him, which has but one aim - so many inches of bacon. But when the affection is reciprocated by the good woman who takes care of the pig, fondling him and speaking in terms of endearment to him, is she not considered ridiculous - as if it were absurd, even degrading, to love an animal that loves us?

One of the strongest impressions of my childhood is that of having witnessed one of those rural dramas, the forcible killing of a pig by a party of villagers in revolt against a dear old woman who would not consent to the murder of her fat friend. The village crowd burst into the pigstye and dragged the beast to the slaughter place where all the apparatus for the deed stood waiting, whilst the unhappy dame sank down upon a stool weeping quiet tears. I stood beside her and saw those tears without knowing whether I should sympathise with her grief, or think with the crowd that the killing of the pig was just, legitimate, decreed by common sense as well as by destiny.

Each of us, especially those who have lived in a provincial spot, far away from vulgar ordinary towns, where everything is methodically classed and disguised - each of us has seen something of these barbarous acts committed by flesh-eaters against the beasts they eat. There is no need to go into some Porcopolis of North America, or into a *saladero* of La Plata, to contemplate the horrors of the massacres which constitute the primary condition of our daily food. But these impressions wear off in time; they yield before the baneful influence of daily education, which tends to drive the individual towards mediocrity, and takes out of him anything that goes to the making of an original personality. Parents, teachers, official or friendly, doctors, not to speak of the powerful individual whom we call "everybody," all work together to harden the character of the child with respect to this "four-footed food," which, nevertheless, loves as we do, feels as we do, and, under our influence, progresses or retrogresses as we do.

It is just one of the sorriest results of our flesh-eating habits that the animals sacrificed to man's appetite have been systematically and methodically made hideous, shapeless, and debased in intelligence and moral worth. The name even of the animal into which the boar has been transformed is used as the grossest of insults ; the mass of flesh we see wallowing in noisome pools is so loathsome to look at that we agree to avoid all similarity of name between the beast and the dishes we make out of it. What a difference there is between the moufflon's appearance and habits as he skips about upon the mountain rocks, and that of the sheep which has lost all individual initiative and becomes mere debased flesh-so timid that it dares not leave the flock, running headlong into the jaws of the dog that pursues it. A similar degradation has befallen the ox, whom now-a-days we see moving with difficulty in the pastures, transformed by stock-breeders into an enormous ambulating mass of geometrical forms, as if designed beforehand for the knife of the butcher. And it is to the production of such monstrosities we apply the term "breeding"! This is how man fulfils his mission as educator with respect to his brethren, the animals.

For the matter of that, do we not act in like manner towards all Nature? Turn loose a pack of engineers into a charming valley, in the midst of fields and trees, or on the banks of some beautiful river, and you will soon see w hat they would do. They would do everything in their power to put their own work in evidence, and to mask Nature under their heaps of broken stones and coal. All of them would be proud, at least, to see their locomotives streaking the sky with a network of dirty yellow or black smoke. Sometimes these engineers even take it upon themselves to improve Nature. Thus, when the Belgian artists protested recently to the Minister of Railroads against his desecration of the most beautiful parts of the Meuse by blowing up the picturesque rocks along its banks, the Minister hastened to assure them that henceforth they should have nothing to complain about, as he would pledge himself to build all the new workshops with Gothic turrets!

In a similar spirit the butchers display before the eyes of the public, even in the most frequented streets, disjointed carcasses, gory lumps of meat, and think to conciliate our æstheticism by boldly decorating the flesh they hang out with garlands of roses!

When reading the papers, one wonders if all the atrocities of the war in China are not a bad dream instead of a lamentable reality. How can it be that men having had the happiness of being caressed by their mother, and taught in school the words "justice" and "kindness," how can it be that these wild beasts with human faces take pleasure in tying Chinese together by their garments and their pigtails before throwing them into a river? How is it that they kill off the wounded, and make the prisoners dig their own graves before shooting them? And who are these frightful assassins? They are men like ourselves, who study and read as we do, w ha have brothers, friends, a wife or a sweetheart ; sooner or later we run the chance of meeting them, of taking them by the hand without seeing any traces of blood there.

But is there not some direct relation of cause and effect between the food of these executioners, who call themselves "agents of civilisation," and their ferocious deeds? They, too, are in the habit of praising the bleeding flesh as a generator of health, strength, and intelligence. They, too, enter without repugnance the slaughter house, where the pavement is red and slippery, and where one breathes the sickly sweet odour of blood. Is there then so much difference between the dead body of a bullock and that of a man? The dissevered limbs, the entrails mingling one with the other, are very much alike : the slaughter of the first makes easy the murder of the second, especially when a leader's order rings out, or from afar comes the word of the crowned master, "Be pitiless."

A French proverb says that "every bad case can be defended." This saying had a certain amount of truth in it so long as the soldiers of each nation committed their barbarities separately, for the atrocities attributed to them could afterwards be put down to jealousy and national hatred. But in China, now, the Russians, French, English, and Germans have not the modesty to attempt to screen each other. Eyewitnesses, and even the authors themselves, have sent us information in every language, some cynically, and others with reserve. The truth is no longer denied, but a new morality has been created to explain it. This morality says there are two laws for mankind, one applies to the yellow races and the other is the privilege of the white. To assassinate or torture the first named is, it seems, henceforth permissible, whilst it is wrong to do so to the second.

Is not our morality, as applied to animals, equally elastic? Harking on dogs to tear a fox to pieces teaches a gentleman how to make his men pursue the fugitive Chinese. The two kinds of hunt belong to one and the same "sport" ; only, when the victim is a man, the excitement and pleasure

are probably all the keener. Need we ask the opinion of him who recently invoked the name of Attila, quoting this monster as a model for his soldiers?

It is not a digression to mention the horrors of war in connection with the massacre of cattle and carnivorous banquets. The diet of individuals corresponds closely to their manners. Blood demands blood. On this point any one who searches among his recollections of the people whom he has known will find there can be no possible doubt as to the contrast which exists between vegetarians and coarse eaters of flesh, greedy drinkers of blood, in amenity of manner, gentleness of disposition and regularity of life.

It is true these are qualities not highly esteemed by those "superior persons," who, without being in any way better than other mortals, are always more arrogant, and imagine they add to their own importance by depreciating the humble and exalting the strong. According to them, mildness signifies feebleness : the sick are only in the way, and it would be a charity to get rid of them. If they are not killed, they should at least be allowed to die. But it is just these delicate people who resist disease better than the robust. Full-blooded and high-coloured men are not always those who live longest : the really strong are not necessarily those who carry their strength on the surface, in a ruddy complexion, distended muscle, or a sleek and oily stoutness. Statistics could give us positive information on this point, and would have done so already, but for the numerous interested persons who devote so much time to grouping, in battle array, figures, whether true or false, to defend their respective theories.

But, however this may be, we say simply that, for the great majority of vegetarians, the question is not whether their biceps and triceps are more solid than those of the flesh-eaters, nor whether their organism is better able to resist the risks of life and the chances of death, which is even more important : for them the important point is the recognition of the bond of affection and goodwill that links man to the so-called lower animals, and the extension to these our brothers of the sentiment which has already put a stop to cannibalism among men. The reasons which might be pleaded by anthropophagists against the disuse of human flesh in their customary diet would be as well-founded as those urged by ordinary flesh-eaters today. The arguments that were opposed to that monstrous habit are precisely those we vegetarians employ now. The horse and the cow, the rabbit and the cat, the deer and the hare, the pheasant and the lark, please us better as friends than as meat. We wish to preserve them either as respected fellow-workers, or simply as companions in the joy of life and friendship.

"But," you will say, "if you abstain from the flesh of animals, other flesh-eaters, men or beasts, will eat them instead of you, or else hunger and the elements will combine to destroy them." Without doubt the balance of the species will be maintained, as formerly, in conformity with the chances of life and the inter-struggle of appetites ; but at least in the conflict of the races the profession of destroyer shall not be ours. We will so deal with the part of the earth which belongs to us as to make it as pleasant as possible, not only for ourselves, but also for the beasts of our household. We shall take up seriously the educational *rôle* which has been claimed by man since prehistoric times. Our share of responsibility in the transformation of the existing order of things does not extend beyond ourselves and our immediate neighbourhood. If we do but little, this little will at least be our work.

One thing is certain, that if we held the chimerical idea of pushing the practice of our theory to its ultimate and logical consequences, without caring for considerations of another kind, we should fall into simple absurdity. In this respect the principle of vegetarianism does not differ from any other principle; it must be suited to the ordinary conditions of life. It is clear that we have no intention of subordinating all our practices and actions, of every hour and every minute, to a respect for the life of the infinitely little; we shall not let ourselves die of hunger and thirst, like some Buddhist, when the microscope has shown us a drop of water swarming with animalculæ. We shall not hesitate now and then to cut ourselves a stick in the forest, or to pick a flower in a garden; we shall even go so far as to take a lettuce, or cut cabbages and asparagus for our food, although we fully recognise the life in the plant as well as in animals. But it is not for us to found a new religion, and to hamper ourselves with a sectarian dogma ; it *is* a question of making our existence as beautiful as possible, and in harmony, so far as in us lies, with the æsthetic conditions of our surroundings.

Just as our ancestors, becoming disgusted with eating their fellow-creatures, one fine day left off serving them up to their tables; just as now, among flesh-eaters, there are many who refuse to eat the flesh of man's noble companion, the horse, or of our fireside pets, the dog and cat-so is it distasteful to us to drink the blood and chew the muscle of the ox, whose labour helps to grow our corn. We no longer want to hear the bleating of sheep, the bellowing of bullocks, the groans and piercing shrieks of the pigs, as they are led to the slaughter. We aspire to the time when we shall not have to walk swiftly to shorten that hideous minute of passing the haunts of butchery with their rivulets of blood and rows of sharp hooks, whereon carcasses are hung up by blood-stained men, armed with horrible knives. We want some day to live in a city where we shall no longer see butchers' shops full of dead bodies side by side with drapers' or jewellers', and facing a druggist's, or hard by a window filled with choice fruits, or with beautiful books, engravings or statuettes, and works of art. We want an environment pleasant to the eye and in harmony with beauty.

And since physiologists, or better still, since our own experience tells us that these ugly joints of meat are not a form of nutrition necessary for our existence, we put aside all these hideous foods which our ancestors found agreeable, and the majority of our contemporaries still enjoy. We hope before long that flesh-eaters will at least have the politeness to hide their food. Slaughter houses are relegated to distant suburbs; let the butchers' shops be placed there too, where, like stables, they shall be concealed in obscure corners.

It is on account of the ugliness of it that we also abhor vivisection and all dangerous experiments, except when they are practised by the man of science on his own person. It is the ugliness of the deed which fills us with disgust when we see a naturalist pinning live butterflies into his box, or destroying an ant-hill in order to count the ants. We turn with dislike from the engineer who robs Nature of her beauty by imprisoning a cascade in conduit-pipes, and from the Californian woodsman who cuts down a tree, four thousand years old and three hundred feet high, to show its rings at fairs and exhibitions. Ugliness in persons, in deeds, in life, in surrounding Nature-this is our worst foe. Let us become beautiful ourselves, and let our life be beautiful!

What then are the foods which seem to correspond better with our ideal of beauty both in their nature and in their needful methods of preparation? They are precisely those which from all time have been appreciated by men of simple life; the foods which can do best without the lying artifices of the kitchen. They are eggs, grains, fruits; that is to say, the products of animal and vegetable life which represent in their organisms both the temporary arrest of vitality and the concentration of the elements necessary to the formation of new lives. The egg of the animal, the seed of the plant, the fruits of the tree, are the end of an organism which is no more, and the beginning of an organism which does not yet exist. Man gets them for his food without killing the being that provides them, since they are formed at the point of contact between two generations. Do not our men of science who study organic chemistry tell us, too, that the egg of the animal or plant is the best storehouse of every vital element?

Omne vivum ex ovo.

Hierarchical utopias : Ruskin's Fear of Democracy

Dr Gill Cockram (University of London)

In 1878 John Ruskin founded the Guild of St George as the agency through which he hoped to bring about social change. Quoting frequently from Sir Thomas More, Ruskin set out his utopian vision as a form of agrarian communism tempered with an authoritarian power structure. I'd like to argue that despite Ruskin's anti-democratic stance, his ideal society could be accepted by utopian socialists because he was seen as reviving the communitarian tradition initiated by Robert Owen.

Ruskin set out the details of his utopian scheme in *Fors Clavigera*, a series of letters addressed to 'The Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain.' These letters, in fact, represent his efforts to gain support for his utopian society, the Guild of St George. Alarmed by the nature of the Paris Commune of 1871, Ruskin set about giving his interpretation of the 'communism of the old school' of Sir Thomas More, and in 1878, he began to formulate his own plans for an ideal community.

The society Ruskin envisaged encapsulates his political ambiguity. He made urgent demands for economic justice, but within a hierarchical social structure. As he commented in *Fors*: We will have no liberty; but instant obedience to known law, and appointed persons: no equality; but recognition of every betterness that we can find, and reprobation of every worseness.

The members of this ideal community, in return for 'spiritually rewarding' labour, would enjoy fixed rents and favourable working conditions. Ruskin hoped that the readers of *Fors* would become active supporters and participants in the establishment of the guild.

When the new liberal economist, J.A. Hobson first read Ruskin in the early 1890's, he took from him two essential, related principles, which he termed organicism and humanism. The way in which Hobson translated this organicism in political terms cannot be overemphasised as it is crucial in understanding Ruskin's influence, not only on Hobson, but on other radical reformers.

Ruskin's organicism stemmed from the Romantic tradition which predates Darwinian/Spencerian socio-biological analogy. It rested on a Romantic concept of an integrated society, which was mutually sustaining but hierarchically structured.[1] There was no question of competitive 'survival of the fittest' individualism in Ruskin's organic society. Indeed, a greater part of his seminality lies in the fact that, following the example of Owen, he was a profound influence on the later

[1] In *The Eagle's Nest* Ruskin comments: 'Had Darwinism been true, we should long ago have split our heads in two with foolish thinking, or thrust out, from above our covetous hearts, a hundred desirous arms and clutching hands.' Lecture ix, March 7 1872.

interpretation of social Darwinism which suggested that co-operation rather than competition was central to the evolutionary process.[2]

Ruskin and Utopianism

Ruskin's ideal social order was set out in *Time and Tide* and *Fors Clavigera*. It is here that the communistic elements of his thinking become apparent. He refers in *Fors* to the underlying themes of work and property, which dictate his model society. A man's property, he writes, consists of good things, honestly acquired and skilfully used. Nothing stolen or taken by force can rightfully be called 'property'.[3] In order to achieve this condition society has a duty to educate its members. A healthy society was dependant upon the provision of education and the maintenance of morality with a state prohibition on marriage between 'undesirables.' [4]

Education, Ruskin insisted, should also be state controlled and it should be be 'free, liberal and technical' in orientation.[5] It was also to include a responsibility for the physical well-being of the children. As Ruskin commented in *Time and Tide*: ' I hold it for indisputable, that the first duty of a State is to see that every child born therein shall be well housed, clothed, fed, and educated, till it attain years of discretion.'[6] Schools should be situated, when possible, in the countryside and have enough land to enable physical exercise. Alongside the basic subjects children should be taught moral conduct and principles of good behaviour and in all cases their education should eventually be career-orientated.

As always, Ruskin concentrated on the nature of work men do as providing the key to social order but his emphasis on clear lines of social and industrial demarcation led to accusations of 'New Feudalism.' Ruskin did not want a stereotyped caste system; there were always to be opportunities for those indicating a special aptitude to develop their particular skills. Indeed, he was one of the earliest advocates of 'equality of opportunity' through education despite his unshakeable conviction of innate differences of ability and class, a principle of social stratification he developed from Plato.[7]

Ruskin completely dismissed 'the thesis that all work is in itself equally worthy and ennobling,' a ploy, he thought, which was used to dignify manual labour and quell discontent. He considered some jobs were totally mindless and degrading but that there were some persons who were suitable for nothing else. It seems here that Ruskin, like Carlyle, is considering 'slavery' although his

[2] Although in this, he was of course drawing from the Bible, the example of the Middle Ages, and from Carlyle. It was a view also professed later by Peter Kropotkin in *Mutual Aid* in 1902.
[3] Ruskin, *Fors Clavigera* (1906 edn), Vol. 3, Letter 70, p. 411.
[4] Hobson, *John Ruskin* (1898) p.156.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ruskin, *Time and Tide* (1906 edn), Letter 13, p. 87.
[7] Hobson, *John Ruskin,* pp. 158-9.

essential humanity rebelled against the harshness of this contingency, and he hoped that in an improved society degrading work would be reduced to a minimum level.[8]

With his assembled ranks of craftsmen Ruskin anticipated a reciprocal arrangement whereby the workers would produce the quality of goods that an educated society of consumers would demand. Quite how this would function effectively, Ruskin does not make clear, but it is implied both in *Fors* and *Time and Tide* that voluntary cooperation of individuals should be the basis of action.[9] Trade Unions should be transformed into Labourers Unions or Guilds, each responsible under the direction of elected advisors for the quality of the goods produced and the conditions of the workforce. Membership of these guilds, Ruskin insists, should be 'entirely optional,' leaving consumers free to buy from outsiders 'at their pleasure and peril.' Guilds were also to control the retail trade, and all necessary public works were to be owned and administered by the public for the benefit of the public. No private speculation was to be allowed.

In the organisation of agriculture Ruskin was eminently a practical reformer and his insistence upon fixity of rent and security of tenants' improvements as the most urgent needs, indicates a firm grasp of the existing agricultural situation. He was very familiar with continental agricultural processes and *Fors* in particular is full of 'shrewd criticism and suggestion.' [10]

Ruskin's greater plan for agriculture within his ideal state does, however, further indicate his political ambiguity. He tempered feudalism with security of tenure and freedom to cultivate for a 'peasant class.' He observes in *Fors* letter xiv:

> The right action of a State respecting its land is, indeed, to secure it in various portions to those of its citizens who deserve to be trusted with it, according to their respective desires and proved capacities.[11]

Ruskin writes that 'great old families' should be maintained by the State and not live off the rent of tenants. There is no indication of the true status or occupation of this feudal aristocracy, living in the midst of virtually independent peasant farmers paying rent to the State, nor are we told how they would justify the State incomes they receive. That is, as Hobson comments drily, 'apart from living beautifully.

Ruskin's reforms for agriculture differ vitally from those for commerce and manufacture. The quasi-feudalistic system he advises in agriculture is not consistent with the growth of a voluntary state within a state he advises for industry. This in itself is a remote possibility, but the changes he advocates for the land system would require State coercion, and a practical nationalisation of the land subject to state control. This, as Hobson observes, is evidence of the way in which Ruskin tends

[8] Ibid, pp 160-1. See also Hobson, *The Social Problem*, p. 198.
[9] Hobson, *John Ruskin*, p. 163.
[10] Hobson, *Ruskin*, p. 165.

to 'oscillate between voluntary co-operation and State action.' But this, to a certain extent, is due to a natural development in Ruskin's thinking. The preface to *Unto This Last* shows the government in control of functions, which later in *Time and Tide* and *Fors,* Ruskin assigns to voluntary guilds. However, it becomes obvious through an examination of Ruskin's idea of the governing role of the 'upper classes,' Hobson writes, that he never definitely abandoned the idea of limited State Socialism for a thoroughly thought-out scheme of voluntary co-operation.[12]

Ruskin seemingly accepted the 'upper classes,' and sought to moralise and elevate them into a condition which will justify their social and industrial supremacy. There is an inconsistency in Ruskin's advocacy of fixed pay for fixed appointments and his later insistence in *Fors* that the professions formally ascribed to his upper classes should be paid anything but a pittance as they are peripheral to the real business of sustaining life.[13]

Ruskin's reference to feudalistic hierarchies can be partially explained through an understanding of his interpretation of anarchism. In Ruskin's terms, an anarchic society, in direct contrast to a feudal one, was an individualistic state where people took no responsibility for anyone but themselves and their immediate family. This was a very dubious form of liberty for the underprivileged and no one called for state intervention more loudly than Ruskin.

Ruskin obscured the importance of this message, as he so often did, with his colourful rhetoric which exposed him to the ridicule of many who, according to Hobson, had neither 'the humour or the sense' to follow his 'dialectics of reform.'[14] His proposals, Hobson claimed, though not always 'clear and consistent' in outline have yet a 'powerful coherence and a genuinely practical value.' This can be observed in the way in which society had begun to move toward an adoption of his schemes. Any inconsistencies in his thinking can largely be explained by the course of events between his earlier and later writings, for by the time Ruskin published *Fors Clavigera* he had become very disillusioned and convinced that no-one was listening to him, hence the note of despair. As a form of catharsis he concentrated on small practical schemes while never losing sight of his greater vision of 'an enduring and united Commonwealth.'[15] This, with his profound awareness of human nature, he never realistically expected to materialise, but was still determined to establish in Hegelian fashion, as a higher ethical ideal and a lasting injunction to mutual responsibility.

Ruskin and the Political Arena

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[12] Ibid., pp. 167-8
[13] Ibid., p. 170.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid., p.174.

Any assessment of Ruskin's influence has to include an analysis of his political persuasion, for despite his denial of any form of categorisation the orientation of some of his most prominent disciples is a significant indicator to the contrary.

Apart from an originality of artistic analogy, Ruskin was not breaking any new ground in exposing the injurious effects of competition, nor in proposing an organic society as a corrective. But while Ruskin's main intellectual commitment was to an ideal of Gothic freedom of expression, like Carlyle he feared the outcome of total democracy and chose to ignore the possible ambiguity of rejecting *laissez faire* competition while favouring the unrestricted vital forms of nature. In fact, there is no real ambiguity. Like many of his fellow Romantics, Ruskin recognised the requirement of a degree of order in the realisation of any ideal society, especially within the context of nineteenth century industrialisation.

Raymond Williams argued that both Ruskin and Carlyle could only find their organic metaphor by looking back. This is almost certainly true in Carlyle's case, but less so with Ruskin. His organic imagery came initially from his theory of art and nature, but it was almost certainly Carlyle who reinforced his Platonic rejection of democracy.
Ruskin's fiercest opposition to radicalism was reserved for J. S. Mill, yet the Mill of later years was very close to Ruskin's views in both political and economic reform. Indeed, Ruskin himself did not seem to realise how far he was removed from Carlyle in both historic and economic criticism. Carlyle, despite some awareness of corruption among the governing classes, did not even begin to analyse the intricate connection between politics and industry as Ruskin did.

In his attention to detail, Hobson compared Ruskin with Mazzini who, he says, was the only other person who had exposed economic injustice as the root cause of moral and social disorder. Their main difference Hobson writes, lay in their plan of reform. Mazzini suggested that the people should basically be responsible for both economic and political government, but Ruskin, even though he could see the results of economic injustice more clearly than Mazzini, could never accept popular government. This rather surprises Hobson who comments on how close Ruskin came at times to admitting the inevitability and even the rightness of democracy. He certainly was not, like Carlyle, wedded to the idea of benevolent despots. Instead, he continued to pin his hopes on 'the voluntary self-reformation of the governing classes' and the encouragement of individual effort among the 'lower orders.' Democracy was never really on the agenda in Ruskin's form of socialism. As Hobson comments:

> In a word, the Socialism, to which Mr Ruskin looks, is to be imposed by an hereditary aristocracy, whose effective co-operation for the common good is to be derived from the voluntary action of individual land-owners and employers. There must be no movement of the masses to claim economic justice; no use of Parliament to 'nationalise' land or capital, or to attack any private interest.[16]

[16] Hobson, *Ruskin*, pp. 193-4.

The governing classes, who Ruskin considered to be living idly on the fruits of economic exploitation, were therefore to be invited to become aware of their moral and social obligation. In this, Ruskin shares a doctrine with the Comtist Movement who also wished to impose an educated aristocracy on their ideal society. Frederic Harrison is representative of a small body of dissident intellectuals who followed Ruskin in wishing to bring much needed moral reflection into the arena of social reform. Although Harrison was neither a Christian nor a socialist, his aspirations for society had many points in common with those who claimed to be both and his authoritarianism was, like Ruskin's, intended ultimately to generate greater social harmony, albeit at the expense of individual liberty. Hobson, however, was much more aware of the fragile political balance between liberty and welfare.

In trusting reform to an appeal to the social conscience of an enlightened aristocracy Hobson identifies two fatal errors in Ruskin's thinking. The first is the difficulty of persuading 'captains of industry' that their present conduct is dishonest. The great majority of them will, writes Hobson, remain 'intellectually incapable' of following the economic analysis of Ruskin or any other reformer, and those who are capable will 'refuse to do so.' There is, he writes, a great deal of difference in seeing what is right and doing it, especially if it involves the abandonment of a customary and agreeable line of conduct.[17] Ruskin's aspirations are commendable but he is being over optimistic if he considers he can reverse the whole spirit of industry. Moreover, comments Hobson, a moral injunction to individuals will not overcome the ills of society – 'Social evils require social remedies.'[18] The general will must be the engine of reform even if the appeal in the first instance is to the higher principles of the individual. Ruskin's invocation to the social conscience of 'captains of industry' will not solve the problem of economic injustice; they will simply respond that they cannot raise wages without raising prices, nor improve the quality of their goods for the same reason. Manufacturers are too closely caught up in the processes of competitive trade and risk losing their position in the business world if they do not conform.

Ruskin's fear of democracy and his insistence on a ruling elite is, says Hobson, 'a radical defect in his social thinking.' Order cannot be achieved by a form of moral injunction to individuals, but only as the product of the 'enlightened, rational, freewill of the people.' This is true socialism:

> A so-called Socialism from above, embodying the patronage of an emperor or of a small enlightened bureaucracy, is not Socialism in any moral sense at all; the forms of government must be animated by the social spirit, must be the expression of the common organic genius of the people, if it is to have true vitality and meaning.[19]

[17] Ibid., p. 198.
[18] Ibid., p. 199.
[19] Ibid., p. 204.

Ruskin, claims Hobson, is deluded about the true nature of democracy. He interprets it as meaning absolute equality with no room for 'reverence.' His peculiar predilection for total servility obscures his moral judgement and leads him to believe that any respect for superior qualities in others is incompatible with democratic government. In fact, says Hobson, rational democracy is dependant for its successful functioning on a recognition of these qualities therefore Ruskin's fears are unfounded. Absolute equality is not essential to democracy- the role of government leaders is to express the general will of the people. Ruskin's own formula of a hierarchically structured organism, in his words: The true strength of every human soul is to be dependent on as many nobler as it can discern, and to be depended upon, by as many inferior as it can reach,[20] is in fact little different to Mazzini's democratic principle: The progress of all through all, under the leadership of the best and the wisest.[21]

The Guild of St George was largely financed by Ruskin and was the umbrella organisation for a number of other projects, which enjoyed varying degrees of success. Although his agrarian schemes never really came to fruition for a variety of reasons, the Guild satisfied Ruskin's goal of founding communes and his initiatives inspired others to follow his example to some effect. His continued contempt for the democracy of collective decision-making was seen as no more than a quirk and he was influential on many members of the newly emergent labour party in the early 20th century. These labour MP's considered Ruskin's emphasis on giving workers a stronger sense of community and greater control over production made him 'the companion spirit' of Robert Owen. Although in no sense can Ruskin's practical attempts to establish agrarian communes be considered successful, the Guild of St George still exists as a charitable trust and its communitarian legacy persists today

[1] In *The Eagle's Nest* Ruskin comments: 'Had Darwinism been true, we should long ago have split our heads in two with foolish thinking, or thrust out, from above our covetous hearts, a hundred desirous arms and clutching hands.' Lecture ix, March 7 1872.
[2] Although in this, he was of course drawing from the Bible, the example of the Middle Ages, and from Carlyle. It was a view also professed later by Peter Kropotkin in *Mutual Aid* in 1902.
[3] Ruskin, *Fors Clavigera* (1906 edn), Vol. 3, Letter 70, p. 411.
[4] Hobson, *John Ruskin* (1898) p.156.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ruskin, *Time and Tide* (1906 edn), Letter 13, p. 87.
[7] Hobson, *John Ruskin,* pp. 158-9.
[8] Ibid, pp 160-1. See also Hobson, *The Social Problem*, p. 198.
[9] Hobson, *John Ruskin*, p. 163.
[10] Hobson, *Ruskin*, p. 165.
[11] Ibid., pp. 167-8
[12] Ibid., p. 170.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid., p.174.
[15] Ibid., p.174.
[16] Hobson, *Ruskin*, pp. 193-4.
[17] Ibid., p. 198.
[18] Ibid., p. 199.
[19] Ibid., p. 204.

[21] Hobson, *Ruskin*, p. 209.

[20] Ruskin, *The Eagle's Nest* (1904 edn), p. 90.
[21] Hobson, *Ruskin*, p. 209.

The Urban Village

A Charter for Democracy and Sustainable Development in the City,
by Alberto Magnaghi - reviewed by Edward Goldsmith

The thesis of this important little book is a very radical one. Alberto Magnaghi, a highly respected town planner, is in effect calling for the reversal of present trends towards a totally globalized economy in which huge multinationals replace small family enterprises, in which rural people leave their villages and move to ever more monstrous cities, in which direct participatory democracy is systematically replaced by distant bureaucracies.

Unfortunately these trends have never proceeded faster. World population is expected to expand from the present six billion to something like 8 billion in the next 25 years, 90 percent of that increase occurring in the urban areas of the Third World. At that rate within the next few years at least twenty-three cities are expected to have more than 10 million inhabitants and several, including Mumbai, Lagos, Sao Paolo and Karachi, may be on the way to catching up with Tokyo with its 26 million inhabitants.

According to Herbert Girardet [1] within the next two decades over twelve million migrants from rural areas are likely to move to urban centres every year, which would require the building of another 400 new cities with populations averaging six hundred thousand people. Such migrants would mainly be small farmers, of which there are still four to five hundred million in India and nine hundred million in China, few of whom can afford to produce food cheap enough to compete with the highly subsidized mass-produced foods from Europe and America.

We must realize that already at least 50 percent of India's urban population lives in such slums. Mumbai, with its population of 14 million people, as Manjeet Kripalani notes [2], has already become "an overwhelming conglomeration of dismal slums, congested roads, crowded public transportation, overtaxed businesses, and decaying residential and commercial buildings."

It is important to realize that on current trends this can only get worse, for there is no way in which the Indian government can ever be able to afford the infrastructure required to accommodate its mass of new residents in anything like liveable conditions. Where, for instance, will the money come from to build the sewage and waste disposal systems in order to avert serious outbreaks of communicable disease? How can it provide work for the masses of immigrants from rural areas, most of whom totally lack the skills required in a modern urban economy? How can the natural world, which is already being degraded at an unprecedented rate, absorb the increased impact, especially as these same trends are now occurring throughout the world?

One must realize too that from the ecological point of view a modern conurbation is but a huge tumour which absorbs vast quantities of resources from the surrounding countryside, turning out in their stead vast quantities of increasingly more toxic waste products. As Abel Wolman points out:

"A city is like some vast beast with a very specific metabolism. Every day it must take in some nine thousand tons of fossil fuels, two thousand tons of food, six and twenty-five thousand tons of water, thirty-one thousand five hundred tons of oxygen, plus unknown quantities of various minerals. It must also emit in the same period something like twenty-eight thousand five hundred tons of CO_2, twelve thousand tons of H_2O, one hundred and fifty tons of particles, five hundred thousand tons of sewage, together with vast quantities of refuse, sulphur, and nitrogen oxides, and various other heterogeneous materials." [3]

Cities also seriously contribute to global warming. Satellite studies have shown that mega-cities create large zones of heat that encourage smog and give rise to thunderstorms. Worse still, according to a report from John Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA, they produce about 80 percent of the carbon dioxide emissions that are largely responsible for global warming, and in addition take up more and more of the land, that, as population increases, is urgently required for producing food.

Indeed, Lester Brown [4] points out that the three countries that have most 'developed' and hence urbanized the fastest in South-East Asia, Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, have lost between 45 and 55 percent of their cereal-growing land, another trend that has clearly got to be reversed, as Alberto Magnaghi makes clear. His thesis is that society together with its economy must be decentralised. Ideally he sees a society made up of a network of villages, each with its own local traditions - co-operating as much as possible with each other.

These villages would form cohesive communities, which means above all that their members would be bound to each other by a set of reciprocal obligations, as was always the case in traditional societies. They cannot be made up of people who only seek their personal interests, as is the case in the atomised society in which most of us live in today. Magnaghi also sees democracy as participatory democracy.

Participatory government is only possible at the level of the community in which everybody can have a say, and in which decisions are taken by those who will be directly affected by them. Participatory democracy is a far cry from representative democracy as we know it today. According to Greider [5] business lobbies today view voters as little more than "a passive assembly of consumers - a mass audience of potential buyers". The most sophisticated and expensive market research companies are employed to manipulate the voters in the most outrageous manner in order to satisfy the interests of multinational corporations."

Under such conditions, democracy is a mere charade, people constantly vote against their own interests without knowing it. Persuading the American public for instance to accept the NAFTA Treaty, and GATT Uruguay Rounds, as David Korten [6] notes "was achieved through a massive marketing campaign, using the most sophisticated techniques yet developed by the masters of mass marketing and media manipulation". What they have achieved is to persuade the public that free trade is "synonymous with democracy and political freedom". which could not be further from the truth.

J. P. Narayan, [7] Mahatma Gandhi's political heir, always stated that a responsible society is necessarily a participatory democracy. Tocqueville also noted that in a participatory municipal democracy "each person's co-operation in its affairs ensures his attachment to its interest; the well-being it affords him secures his affection; and its welfare is the aim of his ambitions and of his future exertions". [8] Jefferson also insisted that face to face participation in municipal government and civic education enables citizens to overcome their self-centred interests and assure the public interest.

The localised participatory democracy, Magnaghi notes, must also be as self-sufficient as possible. Village self-sufficiency was also of key importance to Mahatma Gandhi. The emblem of the Gandhian philosophy, in particular, its economic philosophy, was the charka, or spinning wheel. Gandhi never tired of describing how the Indian villages before the British Raj - and there were some 500,000 of them - were very prosperous - indeed, little beehives of activity - a prosperity that was not only based on agriculture, but also on the artisanal production of hand-made textiles. This in each village there were spinners, carders, weavers, and dyers, producing beautiful high-quality cloths. Under the British Raj, huge taxes were imposed on Indian hand-made textiles in order to create a market for the mass-produced cloth from the textile mills of Lancashire.

For Gandhi it was this tax above all that led to the terrible impoverishment of the average Indian village. His concept of self-sufficiency was embodied in the principle of Swadeshi, in terms of which villagers should acquire whatever goods and services they required from their own village. For Roy Dassmann, of the University of Santa Cruz in California - a great environmentalist - the ideal was "ecosystem man" - that is to say a man who lives off his own ecosystem as opposed to "biosphere man" who acquires the goods he needs from distant places - i.e. from the biosphere as a whole.

Magnaghi says much the same thing. For him local trade gives rise to a local economy - it increases the diversity of different products available in the network of rural and urban communities. The supermarket and even more so the hypermarket, destroys this network together with the local economy, creates unemployment by killing off small local enterprises, and replaces them with bigger enterprises committed to the mass-production of lower quality goods.

For the local economy to flourish it must above all derive its sustenance from the land that it occupies, which Magnaghi sees as part of the community itself. This is also the view of that very remarkable man Wendell Berry - a farmer, philosopher and poet:

"If we speak of a healthy community we cannot be speaking of a community that is only human. We are talking about a neighbourhood of humans plus the place itself: its soil, its water, its air and all the families and tribes of the non-human creatures that belong to it ... if this community is healthy, it is likely to be sustainable, largely self-sufficient and free of tyranny. This means that it is they and not the central government that must control the land, the forests, the rivers and the seas, from which specific communities derive their sustenance". [9]

How can one argue with him? Indeed it cannot be left to a distant central government to decide whether huge factory ships equipped with the latest gadgetry annihilate fish populations on which fishing communities have traditionally depended, and which they managed prudently and sustainably for centuries. This can only lead, as it is doing throughout the Third World, to poverty and misery and further migration to the slums of the mushrooming urban centres.

In general the essence of Magnaghi's message is very much that of John Cavanagh, Director of the Centre for Policy Studies in Washington DC and the new Director of the International Forum on Globalization in San Francisco.

"The key to genuine democracy in this decade will be the struggle by communities and citizen organizations to control their own destinies, to take control of their own lands and natural resources, to collectively make their decisions that will affect their futures. The free trade agreements that are currently on the table appropriate these decisions and toss them to the private sector."

It may be worth noting that many of these conditions prevailed until very recently in Switzerland. In that country political power resided with the commune, often made up of a few villages situated in a particular valley. Originally the government of the commune was fully participatory and hence direct. The government was by the Landsgemeinde, the assembly of the elder males, who would assemble in a circle (Ring) in a public place to perform its religious ceremonies, and take the most important decisions regarding the government.

Today this is only done in a few mountain cantons, such as Glaris, Unterwald and Appenzell. Originally the communes sometimes joined together to form a loose association that was referred to in the Grisons as a "jurisdiction". It was only with the Napoleonic conquest at the beginning of the 19th century that these loose alliances or Cantons were institutionalized. These larger groupings further linked together to form the Helvetic Confederation. In spite of this the communes retained much of their original power, the power of the Confederate government being very limited.

Among other things the composition of the Confederate government reflects that of the parliament, which means that it is composed of people from all sorts of different parties and has thereby little power to divert too radically from the status quo. In addition the President is elected for one year only, which again further limits his power. It is no coincidence that few people outside Switzerland are even capable of naming the President, or indeed any of the past Presidents of the Swiss Confederation. Most people have heard of Hitler, Stalin, even of Idi Amin of Uganda, but the Swiss political system has so far never produced such people.

Unfortunately this system of direct participatory government has difficulty in surviving economic development and industrialization. Local people no longer have the time to govern themselves at a local level. Many of them in any case have tended to migrate to the big cities, as is happening everywhere else in the world. Corporations also have become too powerful. Nevertheless Switzerland remains one of the most decentralized of European countries, and it would be invaluable to learn exactly how its direct participatory democracy really worked and how with certain modifications of course, it could provide us with a model of the sort of society that Alberto Magnaghi suggests we should be seeking to create.

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A Meeting of Two Minds, Geddes – Tagore Letters

Reviewed by Angus Calder

Patrick Geddes was the 'Professor', a natural and social scientist who had become world famous as a town planner and whose ideas about ecology now seem prophetic. Tagore, to Geddes and others was the 'Poet'- in fact, not only the national bard of Bengal, but also a major novelist and a man gifted musically andin visual arts. Geddes was recognised in India, where he spent nine years of his 78. Tagore was famous in the West as the first Indian to win a Nobel Prize, for literature. Both men were passionate internationalists. The correspondence presented here by Bashabi Fraser centres on shared educational ideals. No sooner had educational systems in Europe and North America emerged in the forms familiar today - with subjects compartmentalised in standard curricula taught with coercive discipline driving towards examinations - than challenges to them arose.

The industrialised carnage of the 1914-1918 War gave added point and urgency to the 'progressive' movement in education. While in Britain (for instance) the English philosopher Russell and the Scottish teacher A.S.Neill created 'progressive', child-centred schools, both Geddes and Tagore were absorbed by the ideal of international institutions of higher education. The Poet was feeling his way towards one in Bengal, at Santiniketan, the Professor applied his admittedly more schematic and theoretical approach to setting up Scots and Indian Colleges at the University of Montpellier in southern France. From here, Geddes wrote to Tagore in 1927, '...I think we are fundamentally at one in principle, despite all differences in expression? Notably in the idea of converging our studies...upon the service of the community life - at present so depressed - in east and west alike....' Inter-war internationalist idealism foundered in further terrible world war, but the ideas of Tagore and Geddes fed into later educational thought.

Beside documenting a noble attempt at cross-cultural cooperation, Dr Fraser's collection of correspondence restores to life the attractive personality of Geddes's son Arthur who, as disciple of Tagore for two years in Bengal, and later a student at Montpellier, linked the worlds of two visionaries.

Designing Modern America:

The Regional Planning Association of America and Its Members. (Urban Life and Urban Landscape Series.) Columbus: Ohio State University Press by Edward K Spann

The Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA) was a small, loosely organized group interested in issues of city and region, including housing and community development, transportation, recreation, and conservation. Among its principals were architects Clarence Stein, Henry Wright, Charles H. Whitaker, and Frederick Ackerman, housing reformers Edith Elmer Wood and Catherine Bauer, economist Stuart Chase, conservationist Benton MacKaye, and Lewis Mumford, arguably the most influential writer about cities and regions in twentieth-century America. Collectively, RPAA members published an impressive array of books and articles promoting regionalism and other elements of their reformist agenda.

They have also attracted considerable scholarly attention since the publication of Roy Lubove's *Community Planning in the 1920s: The Contributions of the Regional Planning Association of America* (1963); Carl Sussman's edition of articles written by RPAA members, *Planning the Fourth Migration: The Neglected Vision of the Regional Planning Association of America* (1976); Daniel Schaffer's *Garden Cities for America: The Radburn Experience* (1982); Donald Miller's richly textured biography, *Lewis Mumford: A Life* (1989); Mark Luccarelli's *Lewis Mumford and the Ecological Region: The Politics of Planning* (1995); Robert Wojtowicz's *Lewis Mumford and American Modernism: Eutopian Theories for Architecture and Urban Planning* (1996); and Kermit C. Parson's magisterial edition, *The Writings of Clarence S. Stein: Architect of the Planned Community* (1998). Clearly, if the vision of the RPAA has been neglected in the built environment, scholars have not ignored the importance of its members and their ideas.

William James's Narrative of Habit

by Renee Tursi

Amidst a wracking melancholia that revealed to him "that pit of insecurity beneath the surface of life," a young William James found rescue from his own "ontological wonder-sickness" in a definition of free will posited by the French philosopher Charles Renouvier (Varieties 135; Will 63). In James's 1870 diary entry that records this remarkable instance of mental and moral resummoning, he enlists Renouvier's concept of free will - "'the sustaining of a thought because I choose to when I might have other thoughts'" - in a grim struggle against his own morbid degree of "mere speculation and contemplative Grublei" (Letters 1: 147). Having previously determined suicide to be "the most manly form" to put his daring into, James now vows to direct his "free initiative" towards staunch belief in his "individual reality and creative power" (148).

While scholars have often fixed on this passage for its nascent markers of a pragmatism James most famously lodged in his celebrated declaration that "my first act of free will shall be to believe in free will," they tend to give only a nod to what James attests will be his means to subsequent acts of free will (147). Citing the English psychologist Alexander Bain and his postulates for the acquisition of habits, James writes, "I will see to the sequel" (148). Recollect, he instructs himself,

that only when habits of order are formed can we advance to really interesting fields of action - and consequently accumulate grain on grain of willful choice like a very miser; never forgetting how one link dropped undoes an indefinite number. (148)

Hence James rediscovers in habit, that usually so stolid affair, not only a newly valiant source for the homecoming of his very being, but also a language with which to express his restored creative energy. From this point on James begins with quiet urgency to develop a narrative of habit, one that proves integral to his writing on the processive self and challenges our assumptions about habit's aesthetic force.

Perhaps because we tend to dress habit in so prosaic a mood, readers of William James have neglected to address fully the range of its significance in his writing. More often than not habit's importance to his work is generally dealt with straightforwardly as constituting the topic of his engaging "Habit" chapter in The Principles of Psychology, or is handled as a building-block philosophical concept on the way to grander ideas - its function, for instance, in the tychistic ideas with which James worked. In his bench mark 1935 study of the philosopher, Ralph Barton Perry writes of James's "Habit," curiously, with no further analysis, that "it is not without bearing on its success that it should have sprung from an early and lifelong faith of his own in the benign effect of routine and the cumulative significance of little acts" (2: 90). Gerald Myers, who presents a more recent and deeper interpretative analysis, still only mentions the concept as a physiological layer underlying the will's "psychological habit" (199). George Cotkin, on the other hand, does recognize James's emphasis upon "the salutary role of habit formation," hearing in it an echo of the Victorian predilection to regard habit's disciplinary function as "an anodyne for doubt," yet he keeps his inquiry trained on the influences of "Scottish common-sense philosophy" and the principles of science (69-70). Even in as involved a cultural critique as Ross Posnock's, which at its core places James's work within a genealogical model of human thinking that presents the historical conditions of how we think, there is no intensive examination of habit's presence or power in that kind of human shaping; again, habit becomes subsumed by other ideas, as it does in the work of Bruce Kuklick, James Kloppenberg, and Kim Townsend. Only Joseph M. Thomas's searching exploration into how James's writerly reliance upon habit issues from his deeper and conflicted involvement with the concept stands as the welcome exception. He finds in James a discourse of habit that, in its attempt to "domesticate" experience rhetorically, fluctuates between signalling "an ethos of war" and one of "accommodation" (14, 15).

Just what habit signifies to James can remain enigmatic, for he often relocates its home far from where habit traditionally dwells. Neither routine nor repetition sums up its character, although these aspects certainly come into play. Nor is mere custom alone, what we usually regard as

institutionalized or community-sanctioned habit, the "real" subject at hand, for his use of habit extends well into the spiritual and metaphysical aspects of the human circumstance. Rather, in his writing its features of intuition, intention, and tendency go hand-in-hand with James's ideas of rationality, morality, and the will to express a profound dynamism. If in good part habit causes a "settling in" or hardening of our experience like the rings of a tree, to use James's own image, it also paradoxically serves as the very source of re-animating or narrating those experiences. We have, James notes in his draft of the 1896 Lowell Lectures, "reproductive power stored up in the form of habit," a startling notion when considered creatively (Manuscript Lectures 39). Unlike Josiah Royce, who saw our daily mental negotiation of sense experience as the "destruction of possibilities" (World 450), James credits habit with the perpetuation of possibility, including its moral valence. An original thought would perish if left on its own; only habit, according to James, enables the environment to preserve an idea's ongoing potential. Such a view contradicts everything we have taken on faith from Walter Pater regarding habit and an inventive world on the cusp of modernism, for in 1888 the English essayist suggested that we fail on every creative plane by forming habits.

On the face of it, habit would appear to be a force hostile to James's open-minded thinking and writing, an ossifying power that could eventually render inert the goodness of even the most moral possibility. Beckett, who famously called habit "the great deadener" in an age of tremendous cultural remove from James, appears to answer him directly on this score (Waiting for Godot 82). Beckett writes that by giving our thoughts a place to rest from "the suffering of being," habit all too soon imprisons them (Proust 8). In a pertinent echo of one of James's enfigurations of habit in Pragmatism - that you can never wholly rinse away the taste of the whiskey that first filled the bottle of our own as well as our collective genealogical experience (83) - Beckett harangues that "the whiskey" or our cumulative thinking eventually "bears a grudge against the decanter" (Proust 10). Thus habit seems to have cast only a sinister and truculent shadow across the history of the everyday. Samuel Johnson observed that at first the grip of habit is too weak to be noticed, but soon it becomes too tight to be broken (165), for from the realm of the personal to the political, the consequences of habit's ease toward a customary passivity have never been slight. Francis Bacon recognized that "the contentious retention of custom is a turbulent thing" (qtd. in Abbott 24), and like Beckett, Emerson brooded on how soon habits become fixed, finessed by propriety and then worn as a "badge" of one's distinctions (75).

Poetically, as well, habit has earned scant appreciation. By the end of the nineteenth century, Pater leads his clarion call against it with the hope of fostering a truly modern sensibility. To him, a great artist's making will necessarily be in a supreme "failure [. . .] to form habits" (85). James himself could make the oracular pronouncement that genius comes only to the man who perceives in an unhabitual way (Principles 2: 754). Once a new manner has become "the race's average," he writes in The Will to Believe, "it becomes "a dead and stagnant thing," built up layer upon layer like the trunk of a tree (193). Yet the sturdiness and sheer means of support inherent in the metaphor's image undermines his attempt at a detraction of habit's qualities. As his own layered narrative of habit reveals, James would characterize the "failure to form habits" as anything but a strictly sublime moment. What he terms in "Habit" our own organic "plasticity," a quality of pliancy that might exhilarate the artist, should, to James's way of thinking, petrify him as well (Principles 1: 110). He suggests that the resulting uncanny metaphysical homelessness takes us far from what an artist might regard as an interesting cognitive or creative freedom; certainly James projects from his own experience that such a habitlessness could be manifestly paralyzing. Even in such a "popularized" and confident rendering of habit as we encounter in Principles, James's apprehensions and discomforts with the kind of uncanniness that the "unhabitual" gives rise to are never far below the surface. "Shipwreck in detail," to use James's words (Some Problems 73), looms ever-present because in disquieting ways, as Richard Hocks writes, "the same is always returning as the different" (Henry James 89).

A beginning look at the force of habit in James leads quickly to a simple but crucial premise. While the familiar maxim tells us that habit is second nature, there is no question that, to James, it operates as the very first kind of nature we have. "Make it clear," James writes in a teaching note to himself, "that without a body we need not be in the least subject to the law of habit" (Psychology: Briefer 448).(1) We are nothing, then, if not "bundles of habits," he informs us in Principles (1: 109). But as far as "mind" or "consciousness" per se is concerned, we are much more than bundles of mere physiology or biologically-based instinct. In late nineteenth-century American literary

representations of psychological thought, as Gordon O. Taylor has written, there occurs a shift from an earlier notion of consciousness as a series of "static, discrete mental states" reflective of conventional values to a more fluid and physiological concept emphasizing "the nature of the sequential process itself" (5, 6). That is to say, the frame of reference moves away from regarding thought as an abstract mirror of sanctioned ethics and more towards viewing it as a response to environmental factors - the mind as "soul" replaced by the mind as "brain." For James, however, intellectual and scientific explorations remain wholly steeped in moral hues.(2) So the allaying effects of habit that James had experienced in the face of severe personal alienation suggest that, for him, it not only functions on the simple biological level, but also on the most intuitive and thus aesthetic - or pure sensory - level for a performance that, according to his pragmatic thinking, necessarily results in real, practical, and moral effects.

The preliminary terms of this process emerge in James's own episode of "panic fear" (reminiscent of the 1844 "vastation" experience of his father, Henry Sr.) that he presents as a "case" in The Varieties of Religious Experience, but later reveals as being in fact autobiographical.(3) Having entered his dressing-room one evening while in a pessimistic state, William was suddenly overcome by "a horrible fear of [his] own existence," a condition he refers to as a kind of soul sickness (Varieties 134). In the same instant an image appeared in his mind of a patient he claims to have seen in an asylum, a man who used to sit all day with his knees tucked under his chin, "looking absolutely non-human." As James reports it,

This image and my fear entered into a species of combination with each other. That shape am I, I felt, potentially. [. . .] I awoke morning after morning with a horrible dread at the pit of my stomach, and with a sense of the insecurity of life that I never knew before, and that I have never felt since. (148)

By speaking simultaneously of an estrangement from his own familiar self and an eerie identification with someone or something wholly unfamiliar, James introduces elements that make up the uncanny, which, according to Freud, also functions aesthetically. To discern the rudimentary connection between habit and the uncanny that James goes on to make, however, first begs two questions: why must the Jamesian self undergo such a struggle in its quest to feel at home in the world? And why does James find the language of habit so well suited to the task?

Growing up within the James household, William found himself immersed in an untamed atmosphere of intellectual aimlessness, one that indulged in what Posnock describes as "purposeless knowledge of pure curiosity" (40). In 1868, queasy from forever "pointing at the void" in wonder, he was on the verge of despair himself from the over-examined life (Will 63). While Townsend has made much of James's sexual consternation as the source of his anxiety, in particular within the context surrounding James's episode of "panic fear," such a reading cuts short James's spiritual and metaphysical needs. If James's anxieties eased during his courtship and subsequent marriage to Alice Howe Gibbens, they did not disappear. James, like his father, found that anxiety would come to be essentially a spiritual problem, but unlike his father, he could meet that problem only by way of a pragmatic philosophy, not a religion in its traditional sense. As he contends in "Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results," religion is "a living practical affair" (Pragmatism 265). Hence "knowledge about a thing is not the thing itself"; the man who might best understand religion "might be the man who found it hardest to be personally devout" (Varieties 385). A sick soul to James, then, is one suffering from ontological doubt and purposelessness. In response to such an ailing soul, James offers the conviction that the only kind of life worth living is one we fight for spiritually and otherwise with unrelenting grimness and grit. Even an altogether morally good universe would be "too saccharine to stand," he implies:

Doesn't the very "seriousness" that we attribute to life mean that ineluctable noes and losses form a part of it, that there are genuine sacrifices somewhere, and that something permanently drastic and bitter always remains at the bottom of its cup?

(Pragmatism 141)

Such a statement, published in 1907, should refute any reader who thinks James had altogether vanquished the menace of his earlier personal despondency. As his life shows, learning how to live with uncertainty was the younger James's own besetting sin and grace. Ultimately it was in a

philosophy of pluralism, in welcoming both the treachery and elation that can come with unfinished uses of knowledge that James could continue to make his way.

Lighting much of the path for James was the language of habit. It propels his thinking and prose style through a continual use of habit-based analogies that illustrate his meaning. As a launching point, James finds in Hegel the phrasing (although certainly not the ideas) he needs to express what he considers to be not only the central theme for all philosophies, but the driving metaphor for his own ontological searchings. The aim of knowledge says Hegel, in a passage James quotes, "is to divest the objective world of its strangeness, and to make us more at home in it" (A Pluralistic Universe 10).(4) Given James's own depressive crisis, the question of how we come to feel at home in the world carried with it an intensely earnest meaningfulness. In contrast to the rationalist ideas of his day, James's pluralism offered a view

neither optimistic nor pessimistic, but melioristic rather. The world, it thinks, may be saved, on condition that its parts shall do their best. But shipwreck in detail, or even on the whole, is among the open possibilities. (Some Problems 73)

Adherents to pluralism, explains James, having no "'eternal' edition" to rely on, must always live with a certain degree of insecurity (The Meaning of Truth 124). This open-ended perspective meant he had no patience for rigidly fixed classifications or "systems with pigeon-holes" (qtd. in Perry 2: 700). They violated his sense of the character and expression with which life performs for us. We must take the "continuous transition" of life at face value, says James (Essays in Radical Empiricism 25). That means "first of all to take it just as we feel it" and not bewilder ourselves with disaffected abstractions about it; we must feel it before we can think it.

Thus our craving for explanation, in James's view, is decidedly psychological in nature, not philosophical. Such a conclusion led him to term rationality a "sentiment" rather than an a priori fact. That thought arises in us as a feeling of active agreement rather than passive acceptance establishes the beginning of thinking on the aesthetic, familiarizing level. When we come to understand an idea, James writes in his chapter on "The Sentiment of Rationality" in The Will to Believe, it means that idea has come to feel "at home" in us. If, however, the objective references of our thinking are drained of emotional relevance, as James himself clearly could attest, we are left with a "nameless unheimlichkeit": a condition of psychological homelessness that leaves us with powers, but no motives (71). This condition is the opposite of nightmare, which allows us motives but no powers, yet "when acutely brought home to consciousness it produces a kindred horror." To James, certain absolutist theories, such as materialism, which, with their ready-made worlds, deny "reality to the objects of almost all the impulses which we most cherish," count among the most objectionable philosophies for their potential to bring about this grievous state. If we concur with such a scheme, a dreadful feeling of homelessness overcomes us at the thought of there being "nothing eternal in our final purposes, in the objects of those loves and aspirations which are our deepest energies."

In contrast, James's ever-malleable design for the macrocosm waits for us to engender truths upon it - not vice versa. We fool ourselves into thinking that the world comes to us in a completed form, James explains (using the ideas of the German thinker R. Hermann Lotze), only because once we have the sentiment of rationality about something, when we next recognize it "out there" it feels a priori. His opposition in the 1870s to Herbert Spencer's "spectator theory" of knowledge stems from his conviction that "the knower is not simply a mirror floating with no foot-hold anywhere, and passively reflecting an order that he comes upon and finds simply existing. The knower is an actor" (Essays in Philosophy 21).

In keeping with this model James reaches for an animating, active phrase to extend his ideas. He writes that realities paraded before our consciousness for the first time invoke in us the practical question "what is to be done?" instead of the theoretic "what is that?" (Will 72). Hence our thinking comes not just by way of opportunism, a frequent misinterpretation of James's pragmatism, but by way of an inextricable and rigorous moral quality as well:

We are acquainted with a thing as soon as we have learned how to behave towards it, or how to meet the behavior which we expect from it. Up to that point it is still "strange" to us. (73)

Our thoughts are ours by answering us with their uses, good or bad - our own thoughts are "what we are least afraid of" because they now feel agreeable and familiar (75); they carry with them what in Principles he calls their "warmth and intimacy and immediacy" (1: 232) - terms that answer our needs in the deepest sense.

By linking as he does here the qualities of homelessness, strangeness, and fear along with their contrary states, James anticipates Freud's exploration of the uncanny, which traces meanings of the German word for uncanny, "the unheimlich" (literally "unhome-like"), that bring together these same terms. In surveying the word unheimlich's varied usages, Freud discovers that certain definitions of the uncanny journey so far in the direction of ambivalence that they meet their opposite meaning: terror comes to be tinged with a freedom from fear, the unfamiliar with the familiar. Thus all paths lead Freud to designate the uncanny as "that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar" ("The Uncanny" 17: 220).

To James, our mind travels a similarly circular road, but one contentedly lacking the predetermined, transgressive nature of Freud's. Never free from "the ingredient of expectancy," our consciousness, as James sees it, constantly seeks to "banish uncertainty from the future" (Will 67), to turn the strangeness felt in the "aboriginal sensible muchness" of our experiential world into thoughts that feel at rest, at peace, and familiar by constant appraisal against the past (Some Problems 32). Again he turns to the home-like for an analogy of this process:

What is meant by coming "to feel at home" in a new place [. . .]? It is simply that, at first, when we take up our quarters in a new room, we do not know what draughts may blow on our back, what doors may open, what forms may enter, what interesting objects may be found in cupboards and corners. When after a few days we have learned the range of all these possibilities, the feeling of strangeness disappears. (Will 67-68)

Every new room in life, every unclassified experience strikes us a baffling "mental irritant" that we must soothe by explanation (67). Echoing Hume and the empiricist tradition, James holds that to explain something means that we can refer to its antecedents, and that to know something is to be able to predict its consequences. Remarkably, the agent that allows us to do both, James asserts, is habit. Are not all intellectual satisfactions mere matters of consistency, he asks:

not of consistency between an absolute reality and the mind's copies of it, but of actually felt consistency among judgments, objects, and habits of reacting, in the mind's own experienceable world? And are not both our need of such consistency and our pleasure in it conceivable as outcomes of the natural fact that we are beings that do develop mental habits - habit itself proving adaptively beneficial [. . .]? (The Meaning of Truth 58)

In other words, habit gives us footholds in the morass of the unknowable by emptying experience of its uncanniness. Only then do thoughts truly feel sufficient and at home.

We begin to comprehend habit's primacy for James when he declares it to be "the source of whatever rationality" things "may gain in our thought" (Will 67).(5) If the conceived world consisted of singularities only, with no two things alike, our powers of reasoning would be rendered useless, "for logic works by predicating of the single instance what is true of all its kind" (Pragmatism 69). As William Hazlitt wrote, without custom (and prejudice), "I should not be able to find my way across the room; nor know how to conduct myself in any circumstances, nor what to feel in any relation of life" (Sketches 69). Yet any such notion of "truth" in a Jamesian context must be understood as a psychological conception, not a theoretical one. Whether or not any "real" sameness exists in things, or whether or not we are correct in our assessment of a "sameness" in things, has no bearing on James's pragmatic view of habit. As he states in his chapter on "Conception" in Principles, "our principle only lays it down that the mind makes continual use of the notion of sameness, and if deprived of it, would have a different structure from what it has" (1: 435). For James it comes down to a matter of our intention (and the force of habit's intention) to cover the same, as always, through the mediation of language - be it merely thought or actually articulated. "Perhaps even, in view of our theoretically possible error," he writes in his notes for Principles, "it might be well to change the name of the psychological principle of sameness, & to call it the law of constancy in our meanings" (Manuscript Essays and Notes 285). Moreover, by provision of a kind of continuing answering trust that habit can coax from our thoughts, thinking becomes believing and gives our

ideas their meaningfulness and profound moral potency. "What is this but saying that our opinions about the nature of things belong to our moral life?" he wrote in 1875 (Essays, Comments, and Reviews 307).

An entire spectrum of such habit-born canniness comes to bear somewhat dramatically on the very elemental and even poetic narrative link James makes to habit. As his discussion of psychical research illustrates, he is thoroughly dependent in this realm upon the language of habit. In 1909 he published "The Confidences of a 'Psychical Researcher,'" an essay that reflects his later philosophy of religion and flirtation with metaphysics in its discussion of "supernatural" or "psychic" phenomena. James's open-mindedness welcomed inquiry into the vaguenesses of this aspect of the universe as much as any other. But having devoted a fair amount of his own energy to keeping abreast of formal research into the field, as well as to witnessing ("or trying to witness") such phenomena, James concluded that he could only remain puzzled (Essays in Psychical Research 362).(6) Yet while he was convinced that fraud was behind most psychic performances brought to his attention, his "white crow" embodied in the acclaimed "spiritist" Leonora Piper aside, he by no means dismissed the idea that such other-worldly phenomena occur. In his essay "Is Life Worth Living?" from The Will to Believe, he writes that

our science is a drop, our ignorance a sea. Whatever else be certain, this at least is certain - that the world of our present natural knowledge is enveloped in a larger world of some sort of whose residual properties we at present can frame no positive idea.(7) (50)

One explanation he offered for the experience of psychics was that while the medium feels that spirits exhibit a "tendency to personate," the more likely scenario is that, if there be spirits at all, they are unwitting "passive beings" whose stray bits of memory are at the hands of the medium's "will to personate" (Essays in Psychical Research 368).

By opening the door to psychological (or, one might argue, psychoanalytic) aspects without totally abandoning the metaphysical ones, James is able to open his language and widen the terrain by removing its restrictive definitional fences in a way that once again, through the force of habit, recasts the uncanny in home-like ways. Indeed, James re-emphasizes that with this essay he goes on record for "the presence, in the midst of all the humbug, of really supernormal knowledge" (372). He wrote The Varieties of Religious Experience, in good part, to give evidence of what he meant by such a statement. As he explained in 1904 in answer to a colleague's questionnaire on religious feeling, "the whole line of testimony" on the point of having felt God's presence, for example, leads him to conclude that such real effects cannot be refuted (Letters 2: 214). "No doubt there is a germ in me of something similar that makes response," he acknowledges, for even though James was personally incapable of spiritual belief in the conventional sense ("I can't possibly pray," he wrote, "I feel foolish and artificial"), he felt that his "need" for some sort of cosmic divinity, pragmatically speaking, proved his belief in the idea of such a force or in a "universe of spiritual relations surrounding the earthly practical ones" (214, 213). He used the term "religion" in the supernaturalist sense to mean that it is in our relation to "an unseen world" that the "true" significance of our human life lies (Will 48). "Religious experience," per se, he defines as "any moment of life that brings the reality of spiritual things more 'home' to one" (Letters 2: 215). So he holds that other sorts of preternatural phenomena might likewise find equally valid response; "'normal' or 'sane' consciousness," he maintains, "is so small a part of actual experience" (213).

Steeped in the language of habit, James's early model of consciousness bears its own consistency with this point of view. Developed from the scientific approach to psychical phenomena taken by the German philosopher, psychologist, and physicist Gustav Theodor Fechner, James's rendering presents a threshold process along the lines of Fechner's wave theory.(8) According to James, our level of consciousness can rise and fall; "normal" consciousness, finding itself in a lowered state, might then very well experience an overflow of the supernormal or unconscious into its own "stream of thought." This notion, by assigning consciousness a purely filtering, sieve-like function rather than a generative one, not only allowed for paranormal occurrences, but also provided the initial steps toward satisfying his desire to do away with the Cartesian model of a mind that produces its contents.(9) But even with the gate of consciousness lowered, so to speak, just how, without the "humbug" help of a self-styled spiritualist, might unexplained forms of knowledge actually go about getting themselves rationalized by us?

James's answer aligns habit and knowing in a fanciful but serious musing on the birth of human consciousness; its cosmic scope and narrative buoyancy illustrate what Ann Douglas has aptly described as James's "celestial gaiety" (140). Reflecting the work of the American pragmatist Charles Peirce, James's speculations suggest that we consider radicalizing the ideas of evolutionary theory and assign the same principles to inorganic matter that have been applied to organic matter. Then, drawing on the ideas of panpsychism - a theory that proposes a universe entirely steeped in psychical aspects - he says we might imagine that amidst the aimless possibilities which were first swimming about in a kind of cosmic sea, "a few connected things and habits arose, and the rudiments of regular performance began" (Essays in Psychical Research 369). These wisps and shreds, or "diffuse soul-stuff' of the original chaos, would, thanks to habits begun, be in a position to have some relation to the cosmos, but not enough to be "hunted down and bagged" (373,369). When we do experience occult phenomenon, James goes on to say, we feel them to have something of this nature; they are incoherent, wayward, and fitful. "They seem like stray vestiges of that primordial irrationality," he writes, "from which all our rationalities have been evolved." Coming through our lowered threshold of consciousness as "lawless intrusions," these uncanny phenomenon disturb us as well and seem to have but one purpose: to baffle. So if there is an environment of other-consciousness trying to get into "consistent personal form" (373) - the complement to a "will to personate" on our side of things - it would have to design a strategy to make itself congenial to our own process of consciousness:

it might get its head into the air, parasitically so to speak, by profiting by weak spots in the armor of human minds, and slipping in and stirring up there the sleeping tendency to personate. It would induce habits in the subconscious region of the mind it used thus, and would seek above all things to prolong its social opportunities by making itself agreeable and plausible. It would drag stray scraps of truth with it from the wider environment, but would betray its mental inferiority by knowing little how to weave them into any important or significant story. (373)

Primordial irrationality, then, must produce a conception of sorts that can mature into a welcoming form. Hence only habit, in its role as what the Scots used to call the "canny woman" or midwife, can facilitate the "birth" of narrative in the form of a canny, familiar story.

These elements come together in a letter to his wife, Alice, of a night spent in the New Hampshire woods during the summer of 1898. Occurring as it did during his preparatory phase for a series of upcoming lectures in Scotland on religious themes - what was to become, of course, The Varieties of Religious Experience - the incident, a "Walpurgis Nacht," as he termed it, caused in him a moment of "spiritual alertness" that distilled for him a variety of influences he felt to be concurrent in that circumstance: nature, the idea of America, the "wholesomeness" of his travelling companions, thoughts of his wife and children, his brother Henry, and the subject of his present work (Letters 2: 76-77). The metaphysical result came to him, he wrote, as an "intense significance of some sort, of the whole scene, if one could only tell the significance"; as it stood, the whole event remained "a mere boulder of impression" that nonetheless he felt would be keenly - and rightly, as it turned out - linked to his Edinburgh lectures.

It is in a kind of poetics of habit that he makes what he can of the whole experience. He writes to Alice that as "memory and sensation all whirled inexplicably together," he felt the experience would be "worth repeating year by year, if repetition could only procure what in its nature I suppose must be all unplanned for and unexpected" (77). He believed that in such a habit-related idea he understood what a poet is: "a person who can feel the immense complexity of influences that I felt, and make some partial tracks in them for verbal statement." A month later, in an address delivered at Berkeley, he was able to make the more confident pronouncement that poets and philosophers are both "path-finders" in that respect, and that the articulation of such an uncanny "boulder of impression" has something to do with habitual canny-making narrative properties (Pragmatism 258). In The Varieties of Religious Experience, he describes how this poetic task evolves in the human spirit. A "sick soul" will recognize "the profoundest astonishment" at his own unsatisfactory state and will say to himself:

The strangeness is wrong. The unreality cannot be. A mystery is concealed, and a metaphysical solution must exist. If the natural world is so double-faced and unhomelike, what world, what thing is real? An urgent wondering and questioning is set up, a poring theoretic activity, and in the

desperate effort to get into right relations with the matter, the sufferer is often led to what becomes for him a satisfying religious solution. (128)

Thus his habit-driven narrative again reveals in its language the desperate human need to banish metaphysical homelessness.