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CAN THE 'NORTH' DEVELOP?: AN ECOLOGICAL CRITIQUE OF PROGRESS

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Jane Pocock

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Members of the Examining Committee

Dr. Mohamed Salih
Dr. Jan Nederveen Pieterse

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Enquiries:

Postal Address:
Institute of Social Studies
P.O. Box 29776
2502 LT The Hague
The Netherlands

Telephone -31-70-4 260 460
Cables SOCINST
Telex 31491 ISS NL
Telefax -31-70-4 260 799

Location:
Kortenaerkade 12
2518 AX The Hague
The Netherlands

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the Second World War the world has formed an apparent dualism, a dichotomy between two groups, one of which is necessarily subordinate. I say necessarily because a dualism is the result of a '*denied* dependency on a subordinate other' (Plumwood 1993:41, emphasis added). I am not talking of the East-West divide which was political in nature, but one that overrides such an analysis - the north-south divide. Countries are either developed (the north) or underdeveloped (the south). There is also a middle group of countries referred to as the newly industrialised countries. These have recently been joined by 'ex-Soviet block' countries. Despite these two middle groups, the vast majority of the world is split as mentioned above.

To be classified as developed is infinitely better than to be classified as underdeveloped. To be the former is to enjoy, among other things, many years of formal schooling, access to material goods such as televisions, the benefits created by a high number of scientists engaging in technical research, the speed and convenience which come as a result of a high proportion of the population owning a private car, health care of a high standard due to a large number of medically qualified, doctors and nurses, a greater rather than lesser choice of newspapers and other media.....the list goes on (Human Development Report - HDR 1992). To be the latter is to be the subordinated other, though such a definition will be denied by those enjoying the privileges of development.

Despite this dualism, much time and money has been harnessed to help the underdeveloped become developed[1]. States have to be supported, via international aid, to fulfil certain criteria which, once achieved, will mark their entrance into the promised land of development. These criteria include a country's GNP, poverty rates, level of economic growth, status in the world market (with specific reference to the quantity and type of export products), level of technological sophistication and other, generally economic, qualifiers. As these criteria show, development is defined largely, though not exclusively, in economic terms; the 'cure' for underdevelopment being associated with a stronger economy. Although there have been many changes in the approach to development and the specific means used to achieve it, the basic idea of what development is, the end it is supposed to achieve, has remained essentially the same.

Along with the firm belief that economic growth is the key to development, there is also a great reliance on modern technology to solve the problems associated with underdevelopment. The 'technological fix', in reality often leading to products being obsolete almost before they hit the market place, and the belief that only the very latest technology should be used, have resulted in the development of societies in which

[1]There is, however, a growing body of evidence which indicates that despite massive injections of foreign aid, the net cash flow is from the south to the north rather than vice versa. This is due to the fact that interest repayments on southern debts far exceeds the moneys transferred in the form of 'development' aid. In other words, the poorest nations in the world are in fact partly financing the growth and expansion of the richest countries in the world.

material well-being is closely equated with human well-being (for examples of the use and influence of technology on society see Baker 1984, Zimmerman 1993, MacKenzie & Wajcman 1985, de Gaay Fortman et al. 1979. Merchant 1980. Dobson 1990 and discussions of the Gaia hypothesis as proposed by Lovelock and Margulis such as those found in Segan & Margulis 1981 and Hughes 1983). The fact that a synonym for 'developed' countries is 'industrialised' countries is just one indication of the privilege given to modern technology in the framework of development thinking.

Despite this enthusiastic embracing of the development paradigm. there is growing evidence that it is in a deep crisis. For one. it has shown itself not to work, even when measured by its own criteria. Gustavo Esteva is in no two minds about the success of development. He states categorically that it 'stinks' (Esteva 1987) and although his statement has the ring of sloganeering to it, there is ample evidence to back up his heartfelt opinion. We should not expect such a bastion of the development industry as the United Nations Development Project (UNDP) to use equally emotive language. though its message is similar. Before even looking into the pages of its 1993 Report there is evidence that even in economic terms, all is not well in the world of development: the very cover of the Report gives an indication of how development has failed and will probably continue to fail. The illustration depicts a graph showing that employment is lagging far behind national output in major regions of the world and the gap is expected to grow. The report goes on to spill out a stream of figures which even to a non-economist are shocking. The results of an economic and technical model of development include a type of development in which, as the UNDP figures coolly inform us, only 20% of over sixty year olds in 'developing' countries enjoy income security, that seventeen million people die from diseases such as diarrhoea. malaria and tuberculosis *every year*. that a third of the population in 'developing' countries lives in absolute poverty. that over 850 million people live in areas threatened by desertification. The list of statistics goes on. showing very few positive results of the development efforts of the past five decades.

What is most striking about these figures and the comments that accompany them, is the manner in which they are presented. Readers of the Report are bombarded with figures, statistics. cross tabulations and adjustments said to indicate that the lives of the 'underdeveloped' are bad and in many cases getting worse. Given such results, one world expect a dramatic reappraisal of the aims and methods of 'development', yet this is not to be found. The existence of the HDI itself is a result of *some* willingness to change, to broaden the concept of 'development' to consider the actual social consequences it brings about, but the emphasis is still very clearly on the economic. As in the preceding decades, growth is highlighted as the motor to change without which other changes and improvements are deemed not only difficult but also extremely unlikely.

I find the UNDP Human Development Report frightening reading for two reasons. The first, as highlighted above, is due to the horrific story of poverty and deprivation it tells about the state of the world's population. What is even more harrowing. however, is the scientific, rational way these figures are presented and the often belittling of the efforts by non-state organisations, such as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), which are often trying to bring about changes to people's lives on a local level with real participation

(UNDP 1993:6)[2]. The Report is an economist's market analysis looking little further than percentages. The 'north' forms the standard, the HDI Report giving an indication of how many people have failed to reach this standard. As I will argue below, 'development' needs to be seen as more than economics and the norm needs to be changed. We must learn, like Esteva, to be shocked and distressed by the sometimes terrible conditions in which people find themselves and not merely see their anguish as a statistic on a pie chart. It is this which forms the crux of the matter and which makes me question the validity of the whole development project.

What exactly is meant by development? In the 1940s, when the notion was first used, it was seen as being a rather unilinear process. This is best expressed by Rostow's five stages to development which stated that all nations follow a single path to development. These stages are: 1) traditional society

2) pre-conditions to take-off
3) take-off
4) drive to maturity
5) high mass consumption.

The move from one stage to the next is unidirectional and totally independent of specific cultural indicators. A country had to pass through each of the five stages before it could consider itself developed. Implied in this notion was the idea that Western style, democratic, industrial society was 'the best' and should be emanated by all societies wishing to develop. Backward societies were those which had not yet reached the ultimate stage of human development and would have to radically change their social, economic, political and cultural identity in the name of progress and 'development'. Furthermore, such changes would be inevitably painful; 'There is a sense in which rapid economic progress is impossible without painful adjustments' (Escobar 1992). These painful adjustments are listed and shown to add up to one thing, non-industrialised societies will have to change the basic fabric of their societies if they want to become modern, 'developed' nations and leave the stigma of 'underdevelopment' and, by implication, backwardness behind. Although such a blatant disregard for human well-being would no longer be acceptable today, the basic premise and ideology upon which such a statement rests has not undergone radical change.

Taking Rostow's theory as the basic principle of mainstream 'development', the importance of economic growth is clear. Modernity, becoming modern, was, and still is, the key word in 'development'. Parson's universalistic-achievement social structure based as it is on free exchange, individualism and consumer choice, was the system already in place in Western Europe and the USA and the one to be favoured above other systems (Harrison 1988:10). 'Developing' countries should therefore do all in their power, with the help of foreign aid to promote the process, to become like the industrialised states. 'Development' of the nation

[2]For an interesting though brief discussion of participation see Rahnema in Sachs 1992.

was the key. Individuals may suffer because of the necessary measures which were to be taken but that was the price to be paid to join the modern world (Escobar 1992).

There were, and still are, many currents to this theory. The idea and praxis of modernity has been refined, rejected and criticised over the past fifty years. Bringing the argument up to the present, the ideas expressed by Fukuyama in 1989 provide us with a clear picture of what is now mainstream development theory. Returning to Rostow's ideas of stages to development, Fukuyama declares that Western liberal democracy is the end point of ideological progress and 'in the long run' all nations will reach this ideal stage (Hall et al. 1992:48). Within this framework, the market becomes the all-powerful institution whose job it is to push nations along the road to development.

This is a problematic contention, not least because of its idealisation of Western liberal democracy (op. cit.). David Apter sums up the mainstream paradigm in *Rethinking Development* when he states; '...the development project is "modernization" of "traditional societies" through the establishment of networks and institutions similar to those of advanced industrial societies.' (Apter 1987:16) and there is little evidence to suggest that this notion has changed in any substantial way.

What *has* undergone some redefinition are the criteria used to identify stages of 'development'. Many more factors are now considered when measuring levels of 'development'. Important and useful factors such as educational achievement, child mortality rates, distribution of resources, longevity and many others are made part of the calculation. A country or individual's standard of living is measured by weighing up these indicators one against the other as indicated by the United Nations HDI. Simple economic determinism as a measure of 'developmental' achievement has therefore gone, only to be replaced by this myriad of other indicators which can seemingly be measured, tabulated and compared, both from year to year and country to country. For example, the HDI for 1992 ranks India 121st. In the 1993 index, India is ranked 134rd (a drop due partly to the fact that more countries were measured in 1993 than in 1992). Although this ranking may be quantitatively useful, does this tell us anything substantial about the lives of the millions of Indians working to improve their lives in small ways, in ways which maybe are not even recognised by the bureaucrats at the UNDP? Does it tell us anything about how those people perceive their own lives or whether *they* see themselves as 'underdeveloped'? Such a league table tells us nothing of such matters because these things are largely irrelevant to the 'development' industry. The only definite thing such use of figures tells us is that what constitutes 'development' has changed very little over the past several decades. Countries are still encouraged to 'develop' not in a way which is appropriate to their own history and culture, but in a way which was appropriate to Western Europe and the USA over 100 years ago. Socio-economic progress, as the HDI now terms 'development', is still measured along the standard of Western achievements (UNDP 1990).

To all intents and purposes, therefore, 'development' is still measured along the scale of economic growth. It may no longer be equated *solely* with economic growth but the link is still there. Despite clear problems with the analysis, 'development' is still required to be 'economical'. Growth and progress are accepted in so far as they are economical, their social or ecological viability come in a poor second. What is needed is a

concept of 'enough'. Schumacher points out: 'There are poor societies which have too little; but where is the rich society that says: "Halt! We have enough."? There is none.' (Schumacher 1973:21). 'Northern' style 'development' does not allow for a stop to growth as this is equated with a stop to 'development'.

Part of the reason why indigenous societies and their strategies for change are not recognised as 'development' is because they are not based on economic growth and expansion. We can turn again to Schumacher for an elaboration of this point: 'In the current vocabulary of condemnation there are few words as final and conclusive as the word "uneconomic"' (op. cit.:37). So, self-sufficient communities are uneconomic because they do not generate economic profit. Economic growth cannot, therefore, take place and the community is condemned as backward and 'underdeveloped'. So, whereas 'There is now enough historical material to conclude that before European conquest American, African and Asian societies had attained a state of cultural maturity and prosperity...' (Gomes et al. 1992:28) these societies were considered backward by their European colonisers, as many of them still are today.

At the present time we can see how economic factors are favoured over the so-called uneconomic. In an interesting study of traditional Polynesian and Melanesian culture, John Young describes how they keep their environment stable and secure. Although warning against romanticising the harmonious nature of such cultures, he believes they can be used as examples of stable societies able to feed, educate, provide health care and entertainment for their populations. Through a system of 'tapu' or taboo, a society ensured its citizens refrained from 'anti-social or anti-environmental action [which]...formed the basic ground rules of environmental management, community health and control of population.' (Young 1990:30). Such cultures were, and still are, classified as 'underdeveloped', one of the main reasons being their lack of a growth economy.

Because of the priority given to the ideology of growth, it is doubtful whether any society other than Europe, North America and Japan will ever be raised to the ranks of the 'developed'. Just as a national economy needs its underclass, its minorities, to do the jobs no one else wants, the global economy needs its 'undercountry' to provide it with raw material and cheap labour. The Newly Industrialised Countries have been *newly* industrialised for decades. When will they join the ranks of the regular 'developed' world? There is a certain racism and arrogance in 'developed' societies which makes them blind to social improvements other than those sanctioned and attained by its own populations. Why else this 'addiction' to growth and 'development' when there is ample evidence that it is destructive and that less violent alternatives are available (Gomes et al. 1992)?

This racism is apparent even within the ranks of the 'developed'. Japan is the only 'developed' country without European roots and is the country which faces the most mistrust from the rest of the 'developed' world. Grudging admiration for Japanese successes does not lessen this mistrust. This indicates one of the primary moving factors behind 'development' ideology - the belief, however much denied, of European superiority. 'Development', seen as a legacy of colonial expansion, carries on the traditions of that era, however subtly, in

undervaluing, even totally disregarding local cultures and traditions and in its almost blind belief that 'our' way of structuring society is the only rational way.[3]

Within such a context, to suggest that any of those countries referred to as the 'north', the 'developed' countries, are in fact 'underdeveloped', is met with incredulous stares and very often hostility. It is clear to everyone that the 'north' fulfils, even over fulfils the criteria deemed to distinguish the 'developed' from the 'underdeveloped'. To argue against this is seen as being anti-industrialisation, anti-technology, with a romantic nostalgia for an imagined past. Yet if we look closely at 'northern' societies, we see that many of them are facing major problems - rising unemployment, rising crime rates, the growth of an underclass unable to 'participate' in society and, equally importantly, an ecological crisis. Countless environmental groups and writers have ample evidence to show that irreparable damage is being caused to the planet (see for example George 1992, The Ecologist, WCED 1987, de la Court 1990, Sachs 1993, Capra 1982). Indeed, I will argue that a large number of the ecological and social problems societies are facing today are a direct result of development, or rather *over*development. This phenomenon, which Europe, North America and Japan are now facing, begs the '...painful question of whether the industrialised countries ha[ve] not advanced too far on their particular road to progress.' (de Gaay Fortman et al. 1979:3). Slowly but surely we in the 'north' seem to be destroying our communities, and others which we use as suppliers, through pollution, over-consumption and alienation. We are destroying our natural and human capabilities and resources for the rather nebulous goal of what we choose to term 'advancement'. I consider, and will argue, that the ecological crisis especially, is the critical one, that this crisis is the one we should be most concerned with.

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Within the present development paradigm it is practically impossible to discuss solutions to the eco/developmental crisis at anything other than a rather superficial level. It is the 'development' paradigm itself which is in fact causing the crisis. A real, lasting solution to ecological and social destruction calls for a re-assessment of what development *really* is, how to achieve it and what sort of society it is to lead to. 'Northern' development has a fixed idea with regard to these points (though there is some flexibility as to strategies to achieve it) and has shown itself unfailingly resolute in forcing its opinion on the rest of the world. The idea of 'development', of 'progress', is simply not up for discussion. This is due in very large part to the financial, political and increasingly cultural hegemony the 'north' holds over the rest of the world. The modern understanding of the twin concepts of development and underdevelopment are not 'natural' or neutral concepts - they have not been with us since the beginning of time. Europe's past, for example, did not earn the label

[3]This is a difficult position to prove and will be hotly denied by all involved in 'development'. Within the world of Dutch 'development' co-operation I see this attitude very clearly in the arrogant and often non-respectful way people from 'developing' countries are treated. Just as telling of such a feeling of superiority is the often naive belief, well meant no doubt, that 'we' can go 'there' to help. The implicit suggestion is that not only do 'they' need help, but that 'we', almost by definition of our 'northerness', have the ability to help.

'underdeveloped' until the 1940s. 'Development' is an idea based on the concept of advancement and continual improvement. these two elements adding up to progress. Within the mainstream development paradigm, the only rational action is that which leads to the discarding of the old and the donning of the new. There is a constant search for an improved quality of life with no clear criteria as to what this entails. There is a belief that human beings can and must control their social and natural environment and improve upon it. This notion is based to a high degree on the ideas developed during the period of the Enlightenment in Europe. During this period, through the work of Newton, Descartes and Bacon among others, the idea grew that a rational, value-free and objective study of the world around us is possible, necessary and preferable. The earth was likened to a machine which could be pulled apart and studied piece by piece (see for example, Plumwood 1993, Merchant 1980 and 1992, Hekman 1990, Zimmerman 1993, Hall et al. 1992). The end of such a process would lead, it was felt, to a complete and thorough understanding of how the earth functioned. Not only the natural world was to be studied in this way. The discipline of anthropology, for example, uses the same methods to study 'strange' and unknown cultures.

It is this mechanistic world-view that provides the philosophical justification for the concept of 'development', for 'progress'. If this concept is to be challenged, the mechanistic world-view must first be questioned. A belief in the viability of continuous and unlimited growth has resulted in a dramatic destruction of the earth's natural resources, placing a massive strain on the ecological base of the earth. It has thus been argued by Arne Naess (1988), Jonathan Porritt (1990) and Edward Goldsmith (1988) among others, that we are developing ourselves out of existence. The carrying capacity of the earth is limited and we are rapidly reaching that limit. If we want to survive, we have to find an alternative to the present concept and method of 'development'. 'Development' must be redefined and the idea of progress needs to be problematised. I will argue that to do this a reconsideration not only of what is meant by development but also of the whole rationale of the mechano-rational world-view is essential. 'Development' has come to have a very specific meaning leading to the idea that the 'north' no longer needs to 'develop'. I intend to call this into question. To do this I will clearly have to question the very ideas which provide the rationale to progress and advancement and the philosophical foundations on which these concepts are based. This will be the thrust of my research paper.

Leading writers of the Frankfurt School such as Marcuse and Habermas have made the link between human domination of nature and the domination of one group of humans over others. Marcuse sees the very method of modern science as playing an important role in social control and domination. Technology itself he sees as a form of domination and a '...great legitimation of the expanding political power.' (Habermas 1971:84). Like other critiques of science (which I deal with below) he recognises the impossibility of true social emancipation without first developing a New Science. In his review of some of Marcuse's work, Habermas points out that the latter's analysis of the dominating potential of scientific method and technology inevitably

leads one to the conclusion that '...social emancipation could not be conceived without a complementary revolutionary transformation of science and technology themselves.' (op. cit.:85). How this is to happen is unclear and I see great difficulties in bringing such a transformation about. By accepting that the very method of science and technological invention leads to domination and control, we are by implication accepting that the practitioners of that science are in a position of control. They are able to dictate the direction of scientific investigation, deciding what is worthy of further research and 'improvement' and what is not. Breaking this hegemony is no easy task but one which will have to be carried out if the role of science and technology is to change to represent the real needs, whatever they may be, of a particular society or community.

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In *The Debt Boomerang*, Susan George makes the following, rather uncommon statement; 'Readers have the right to know at the outset that ours is a political, social and economic project' (George 1992:xix). She is making it explicitly clear that she and her colleagues are *not* trying to write a rational, value-free analysis of debt. Within the mechanistic world-view, based on the Enlightenment ideals of neutrality and objectivity, such an approach is unacceptable. In his critique of Enlightenment rationalism, Gadamer argues for a clear subjectivity in analysis; '...tradition and prejudice provide the basis for interpretation that is necessary for the achievement of understanding...' (Hekman 1990:15). His postmodern critique of the Enlightenment calls for a recognition of prejudice in an attempt to move away from the fallacy of objectivity and rationalism.

The word prejudice itself may shock, linked as it is to racist and exclusionary ideologies. Gadamer, however, uses the word in a very specific way. It is worth quoting in detail to get a clear picture of his interpretation:

> '...his arguments in favor of prejudice do not amount to an advocacy of bias. Rather, they involve the assertion that all understanding is rooted, contextual, and historical. What he is asserting is that we must and do understand through the "prejudices" of our culture, a fact that any feminist will readily acknowledge. Equally important is the fact that Gadamer's understanding of prejudice involves critique and self-understanding. Prejudice is not arbitrary understanding but, rather, a knowledge of what our prejudices are, and understanding that involves and entails critique.' (Hekman 1990:15).

In other words, it is important to know your prejudice, to be aware of and accept the cultural, social, political and other influences which form the basis of your ideas.

Despite the difficulty inherent in recognising your own prejudice for what it is, I too want to make clear that I have political and social prejudices which colour the way I understand and interpret the data I am confronted with. I am a product of 'northern' education and upbringing. Although critical of the 'north', it influences my basic attitudes and ideas about the world and my relationship to it. As will become clear in

chapter 3, a critique of the privileged position assigned to rationality and objectivity, basic to 'northern' philosophy, is essential to a successful challenge of the dominant development paradigm.

A note on terminology. I have been using terms such as north and south, developed and underdeveloped, progress, advancement and so on fairly freely up till now. In the vocabulary of mainstream development theory, 'north' is synonymous to 'developed' and 'south' to 'underdeveloped'. For the sake of simplicity, I will stick to this definition though with a couple of important qualifiers. The first, as the reader will already have noticed, is the use of inverted commas whenever I use these terms. As I will argue in the next section, I have serious doubts as to whether the so-called 'developed' countries really are developed in any meaningful way. They are highly industrialised, highly organised societies to be sure, but I challenge the equation of this with development. There does not seem to be any other word or expression which could be used to describe 'developed' countries without entering into lengthy descriptive passages which are no less tedious to write than they are to read. The use of quotation marks goes to indicate that I do not accept the standard definition of the word or expression in question.

This modified use of standard terminology needs one further specification. The 'north' and 'south' do not refer primarily to geographical regions, they are rather philosophical or ideological categories. A rejection of 'development' necessitates a similar rejection of the 'developed'-'underdeveloped' dualism. As I have argued above, 'development' is almost universally identified with northern styles and norms. Additionally, although there are growing numbers of people and peoples becoming marginalised due to the 'development' process, many of these groups aspire to a lifestyle of the elites, implicitly accepting that this indicates the way forward.[4] For the purposes of this paper, therefore, I will be assuming that the notion of 'development', as a global aim, is, for all intents and purposes, homogenous, while recognising the local variants as to the means of achieving it.

This global acceptance of mainstream definition of development means that all those, irrespective of where in the world they happen to live or to which nationality they happen to belong, who fulfil the criteria as outlined above, are 'developed'. The discourse of economic growth, industrialisation and progress, is accepted by elites the world over. So although there are strong cultural differences which must not be overlooked, the power elites in India, for example, are just as much part of the 'north', of the 'developed' world, as are the elites in Europe or N. America. Likewise, the growing poverty and polarisation taking place in the so-called 'developed north', mean that the relative position of those at the 'wrong end' of the polarisation may have much in common with the poor and disempowered elsewhere. 'Modern' and traditional or 'developed' and 'underdeveloped' lifestyles exist side by side in many parts of the world, making nonsense of such sharp

[4]I base this comment on my personal experiences in Latin America where I often came across marginalised groups aspiring to an elite life style and rejecting totally their own culture and traditions, perceiving them as backward and therefore to be destroyed.

distinctions. However one defines development or improvement, such definitions cannot be classified as good or bad just because of the region from which they originate. Such an approach only serves to justify the often unfounded claim by elites to speak for others who do not have access to the stage of politics and power. It is for this reason that the 'north-south' divide must be rejected as energetically as the 'developed-underdeveloped' dualism.

Development discourse and the ethic of individualism and growth which comes with it is, therefore, a universal discourse. The nation state is still the major organising unit and the elites which control the nation state believe in the gospel of development. Despite some changes in *how* development is to be achieved and the postmodern concern with 'the other', with pluralism of ideas and 'claims to truth', the hegemony of mainstream development thought and praxis retains an iron hold on global thought and behaviour. Industrialisation and the ideas linked to it, are not challenged by the international elite, be they British, American or Indian. Not surprisingly, of course, since it is the elites which gain the most from this discourse.[5]

By rejecting the 'developed'/'underdeveloped' dualism we free ourselves to explore many other ideas about development and to accept these as viable even though they may not fit in to our ideas of how we should live our lives. Development can come to mean an improvement in quality of life without any pre-definitions as to what the word improvement or quality of life here means (see also Illich 1973). The world does not become a global village which implies homogeneity, but rather a heterogeneous whole, easily able to accept and absorb difference and variety.

One further note on my intentions. It may appear that I am referring only, implicitly at least, to Capitalist society. It is worth looking briefly at how Marxism and Marxists approach the human/nature relationship. A superficial look at 'Marxist' societies such as Eastern Europe or the former USSR, do not indicate much respect for nature. In much the same way as Capitalism, classical Marxism is premised on the idea of progress and development as linear and uniform. The only limits to growth for Marx were those based on political and economical exploitation based on ownership of the means of production. Although such socialist utopians as William Morris called for '...a radical rejection of the core values of industrial society...' (Redclift 1984:40, see also Morton 1984), classical Marxist analysis believed in the progressive nature of Capitalism and industrialisation (Nederveen Pieterse 1991, Redclift 1984), thereby echoing Rostow's stages to

[5]I accept here the economic and political power the US holds and that this can, to a large extent, explain why UNCED in particular went the way the US government wished. US hegemony should not be underestimated yet I think it is a dangerous mistake to blame the lack of progress in the ecological and development debate wholly on the US position. Without the tacit acceptance and participation of the vast majority of the world's elites, the US and the ideas and values it represents, would not be in a position to maintain its privileged position. What we are witnessing today in the discussion around 'development' is the search for a different *means* of achieving it, not a discussion as to the *end* 'development' seeks to reach or whether it is a worthwhile discourse to engage in.

development. In this light, Communist ideology can be seen as going beyond Rostow's fifth stage - high mass consumption - to an even more advanced level of social organisation thus implicitly accepting the notion of linear social development and the idea of progress from a lower to a higher level of development. In his classic work, *Capital*, Marx unequivocally states; 'The country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future' (Nederveen Pieterse 1991:12). In this sense Marxism is just as much part of the Enlightenment meta-narrative as Capitalism is - it is homocentric, sold on the idea of progress and 'development' and takes a wholly utilitarian approach to the non-human world. Ecologically speaking, the only difference between Marxism and Capitalism is that Marxism seeks to share the profits of production, partly obtained by the exploitation of nature, more fairly.

In the light of the growing ecological crisis, however, many present-day Marxists are beginning to re-assess this approach. Ecologists such as Rudolf Bahro called for a revision of Marxism to take account of contemporary problems and crises. Marxism needs to be reviewed to take account of a very different historical context to the one in which Marx and other early Marxists were writing.[6] The left-leaning approach taken by these writers can be seen as an attempt to bring Marx up-to-date - to redefine the political anthropology of the path of human development. A Marxist analysis can play an important role in identifying alternatives, of widening the scope of new world visions.

The layout of this research paper is as follows. In chapter 2, I deal further with a critique of development, this time concentrating on the ecological arguments against the ideas of growth and industrialisation. I show the links between ecological destruction and social decay and how these relate to 'development'. I make clear why I feel that those of us who are now considered 'developed', those of us in the 'north', need to take a critical look at our lifestyle, our standard of living even, in order to recognise that we too need to make changes in the way we live and in our ideas about the future. I also consider some of the 'approved' approaches to solving the crisis and arguing that they do not attack the problem itself, but merely one of its many symptoms. In this respect I make a distinction between what Dobson terms light and dark green approaches. Green consumerism comes under critique as a typical light green solution which does not question the role consumerism plays in the worsening ecological situation. This analysis acts as a backdrop to chapters 3 and 4 in which I discuss some alternative approaches to the mechanistic world-view. Chapter 2 is also concerned with a discussion the role of technology has in solving/causing the crisis.

Chapter 3 concentrates on the philosophical background to the ideology of development. Human relationship with nature both present and past is investigated with the aim of identifying the link between it and

[6]For a fuller analysis of this point than the scope of this paper permits see Redclift 1984, Bahro 1984, Dobson 1990, Bookchin 1982. For a general summary of contemporary socialist/Marxist analyses, see also Merchant 1992).

the ecological destruction now going on around us. I explore how the ideas of development and progress came to exert so much influence on the world scene. Much of the critique to this is based on a feminist analysis of science and technology which calls for a more holistic and respectful attitude toward nature. I also explore possible alternatives to such a world-view. I look briefly at the alternative offered by the anti-development school of thought which rejects the very notion of development whatever its definition. As I show, such an approach serves well as a general deconstruction of 'development', but it cannot help us very much in *re*constructing an ideology of change.

For this it is necessary to look for a different philosophy, one I argue has been found in eco-philosophy. In chapter 4, therefore, I look at already existing alternative world-views such as taoism considering to what extent they offer an approach out of the crisis. I also take a look at Schumacher's Buddhist economics and consider the practical implications of such an economic standpoint. I consider the Gaia hypothesis and other scientific theories to see whether a critique of the mechanistic world-view can be found within the 'northern' tradition.

I also look more closely at one particular expression of eco-philosophy, namely deep ecology. This is one of the most radical elements of the ecology movement and one which has faced a lot of criticism. I am particularly interested here in considering the links and similarities between the eastern world-views I look at and the analysis offered by deep ecology. I concentrate on deep ecology because as a 'northerner' I am interested in exploring viable alternatives which stem from my own culture. Taoism and buddhism stem from a tradition very different to that which most western communities experience so, although I will be arguing that the 'north' needs to look at their analyses, what is needed is a development paradigm for the 'north' which stems from the very values it means to change.

Chapter 5 forms the conclusion in which I draw the many threads of this paper together in order to show where the potential for change lies and what form or forms it may take. Here I also attempt to answer the principal question in this paper and indicated in the title; the question of whether the 'north' can develop.

By writing this paper I hope to be little bit nearer to redefining 'development' - what it is and who it applies to. I do not expect to come up with a blueprint, with a definite set of answers, but I hope to have at least outlined a stating point for further discussion. I hope to find an *approach* to the question of 'development' which will make instigating alternative *forms* of 'development', whether they take place in the 'north' or the 'south' acceptable

One further note on limitations. I am constrained both by time and space in the writing of this paper. The area of study I am looking at has been well written about and still forms part of an on-going debate on the future of 'development'. To analyse, even mention, all the arguments and approaches present in this debate would be a mammoth task and one which is well beyond the scope of this research paper. Of course, references will be provided, thereby enabling the interested reader to delve deeper into a particular aspect of the argument.

CHAPTER 2

AN ECOLOGICAL CRITIQUE OF DEVELOPMENT.

Despite nearly fifty years of hard 'development' work by countless numbers of principled workers, there are still horrific levels of poverty, deaths from curable diseases, exploitation and misery. Though horrific, this is a fairly uncontraversial point, since even the most mainstream of planners admits that 'development' still has a long way to go. To challenge the rationale of 'development' I must look beyond the uncontraversial to ask *why* it has not worked and, more importantly, why it *cannot* work. There are several approaches one could take to discuss these problems: political, economic, cultural. I will be concentrating on an *ecological* analysis since such an approach makes it possible to bring in a large number of factors, providing a clear, overall picture of the crisis. I will be showing to what extent the ecological crisis is a *result* of 'development' and why human pursuit of it must be stopped.

At one level there is a straightforward description of the ecological crisis evidenced by ozone depletion, global warming, deforestation, water pollution, soil erosion and so on (WCED 1987). Going beyond this, however, it is important to look at the social crisis such 'natural' changes bring in their wake. At the same time, I want to consider how 'development', as practised by the mainstream, helps cause these ecological and social crises. In other words, I will be considering in what ways 'development' is responsible for the present ecological crisis and how this spills over into people's lives, most especially the lives of those people to be 'developed'.

Interestingly, the UNDP HDI Reports which I have looked at make little mention of the ecological crisis which is threatening the very existence of life on earth. Considering the overwhelming amount of evidence available on the scale and scope of the crisis, this omission is quite remarkable. It suggests that the mainstream development industry does not recognise the strong link between 'development' and the reality of ecological destruction. This is not to say that it does not recognise the *existence* of a problem, rather that it is slow in making the link between this and 'development'. I will show this connection, using it as a basis for my main argument, mainly that it is about time that the 'north' too started to consider the need to change.

Even those of us not educated in the exact sciences can see that 'something' is happening to the earth. It is equally clear that this 'something' is not very pleasant. Countless numbers of books, reports and articles have been written mapping out the scale of the problem. Even the distinctly non-radical *National Geographic* is adding its name to the list of those concerned with ecological destruction. The November 1993 issue of the magazine was a special on water. Each of the articles in this issue points to the global crisis in water supply. Lakes and seas are drying up, as are underwater aquifers which provide much of the earth's fresh water supply (*National Geographic*, November 1993). Without fresh water, life on earth is not viable.

Further evidence of the ecological crisis can be found in the tropical rainforests which are disappearing at an alarming rate. There are many reasons for this, one of which is population pressure from forest

communities and new migrants from the slums of the impoverished cities. By far the largest destroyers of the tropical forests, however, are the timber companies which are cutting down hundreds of acres of forests for the production of timber and paper goods. Equally guilty are the large landowners who clear acres of primary forest, converting it into cattle ranges (Seager 1993). Their activities have a ripple affect leading to further destruction. In the first place they have to cut down trees to build roads to allow them access to still deeper parts of the forest. This in turn facilitates and to some extent encourages the migrations from urban areas as well as from the rural areas where impoverished and landless peasants are looking for more land to cultivate. Paradoxically, this migration can also move in the opposite direction. Whereas in some areas the poor move to forests to escape the squalor of urban slums, in other areas poor peasants are forced to move into the cities in the hope of finding work there.[7]

Such a change in the ecological set up of the rainforests can have profound effects. For example, animal and plant species are put under increasing pressure as their habitats are destroyed. Human settlement brings with it pollution and waste which further damage the delicate ecosystem of the forests. It has also been shown that a full one sixth of all greenhouse gas emissions leading to *global* climate change are a result of deforestation (George 1992:4). The resulting global warming is melting the ice caps, raising sea levels, thereby playing a role in increasing the risks of flooding in low lying areas such as Bangladesh and the Netherlands.

Not only are we witnessing an increase in the earth's mean temperature, other climatic changes have also been reported. Climatic disturbances such as altered rain patterns and more severe storms are having a profound affect on society (George 1992:5). It is not difficult to imagine what such changes may include: disruption to agriculture, more erosion due to insufficient tree cover which is compounded by stronger winds, and increase in skin related diseases as harsher weather conditions, especially a sharper sun, attack our natural protection system.

International logging and the growth of cities plays a major role in deforestation, the problem being exacerbated by poor farmers being forced onto forest lands for their food production (George 1992). In contrast to the point made above of forest lands forming an escape from city squalor, the move may also be in the opposite direction. As viable farmland runs out and rain forests become out of bounds as an area of expansion due to international pressure, people are forced to move to the cities to find work to pay for the food they previously produced themselves. Cities grow and with them urban poverty and all its associated problems.[8] Deforestation will also inevitably lead to the extinction of countless animal and plant species. Human activity is

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[7]For example, a fairly recent government policy in Ecuador allowed urban dwellers a free piece of forest land if they moved out of the cities to become farmers.

[8]It should be noted that I am not only talking about the urban squalor of such mega cities as Mexico City or Sao Paulo which are 'famous' for their levels of poverty, but also those cities such as New York, Liverpool or Athens in the 'developed' countries. These places too are facing increasingly greater problems of crime, drug addiction and violence due, in large part, to a destruction of local communities and a feeling of hopelessness as more and more people see themselves being unable to cope with the accelerating pace of 'progress'. The recent violence in Den Haag after a football match or the murder by two young boys in Britain of a five year old are two cases in point.

therefore not only endangering our own survival, but also that of other species, all in the name of science and progress.

Another major threat to the planet and its life forms is ozone depletion. The ozone is a layer of gases above the earth's surface which protects the earth from the sun's radioactive waves (Hall et al. 1992:125). This layer is destroyed as other chemicals from the earth's surface combine with it, causing a 'hole' to appear. These earthly chemicals are found mainly in such modern-day products as solvents, chemical cleaning fluids, refrigerator cooling systems, paints and aerosols. The effects of this depletion could again lead to increased instances of skin cancer. What is of greater concern, however, is the long-term effect the depletion of the ozone layer could have on plants, especially marine plankton which form the basic unit of the oceanic food chain. These fragile organisms can be 'burnt' as they are attacked by the harmful rays. The effects of this on food production, especially, though by no means exclusively, for those populations living on subsistence farming, are clear.[9]

These problems are exacerbated because it is not really *known* what the long term affects of such destruction will be. As I will discuss below, dominant 'northern' science teaches that all of nature's secrets can be discovered and analysed. What is gradually becoming clear, as the ecological crisis deepens, is that all the answers *cannot* be found - that there is more to nature than biology, physics and chemistry.

Within the 'north' there seems to be a certain lack of perception of how personal behaviour affects the environment and the earth's ecological balance as a whole. In the 'north' we are almost totally separated from the production process. Our food comes to us ready packed and prepared in cans, bottles and packets which we throw away out of sight when finished with - to all intents and purposes our waste disappears. The car offers a good example of this. An environmentally aware individual knows that the exhaust from the fumes causes pollution which goes straight into the atmosphere adding to the problem of climate change. In theory then, one would expect that such an individual would not drive a car, at least not unnecessarily. Yet there are probably millions of such people right now stepping behind the wheel. The problem is, as Illich points out, that 'they drive cars because they consider the pollution created by one car insignificant' (Illich 1973:55), which, of course, is true. It is not a question of not being *aware* of the problems of climate change or ozone depletion, it is that the scope of the analysis is so huge that it is difficult to place individual action within its parameters. Put simply, it is almost impossible to feel *personally* responsible for a chemical reaction happening miles above us. The fact that we *are* personally responsible is neither here nor there.

There are other aspects of the ecological crisis, however, of which it is not only the symptoms which are visible but the actual problem itself. Air and water pollution are possibly the clearest examples . Quite apart

[9]This last point is based on the comments and discussions between myself and PADS colleagues.

from the fact that urban dwellers especially can actually *see* the air pollution on their windows, paint-work, clothes and skin, there is ample evidence to show that pollution from industry and households is getting worse. This both in terms of the quantity of pollution and in terms of the effect it has. A case often cited in this respect is that of Love Canal in New York State. In 1978 a local resident, Lois Gibbs, discovered that her neighbourhood was built on top of a chemical waste dump. Using the singularly 'unscientific' method of going door to door to collect information, Gibbs was able to draw up a pattern of cancers, birth defects, liver and kidney disorders and respiratory problems occurring in the vicinity of the dump (see Seager 1993:264-5 and Capra 1982:235). Although unable to *prove* that these health problems were due to the toxins in the dump, the correlation is never-the-less very strong. [10]

Love Canal is just one example indicating the perils of chemical waste. In this instance the chemicals came from industry, but households also produce a large share of chemical pollutants entering the air and water systems (Seager 1993). Ironically, many of these are from the detergents used to keep our personal environment, our homes, clean. It would seem that the passion for hygiene and cleanliness and the belief that we can test for and control the side affects of this passion are in fact slowly poisoning us. The fact that 'from 325 to 375 million tonnes' of toxic waste are produced annually (de la Court 1990:70) makes it possible to begin to visualise the scale of the problem.

It is perhaps worthwhile at this point to stress that most of this pollution, and in fact other forms of pollution too, are produced by the 'developed' countries of the north and by the elites in the south. Industrialisation, which is generally equated with 'development' and progress has led to 'polluted air, irritating noise, traffic congestion, chemical contaminants, radiation hazards' and so on (Capra 1982:235). The 'ecological footprint' (Rees & Wackernagel 1994), the amount of global resources needed to produce the goods deemed necessary for well being, is much higher for those of us living a northern 'developed' lifestyle than those seen as 'underdeveloped'. In other words, the 'north' has a greater ecological impact on the earth than other regions, the average American 'costing' '16 times that of a Third World person' (Seager 1993:214).

The HDI Report too has produced some figures to support this. The 1992 Report looks at the total figures for commercial energy consumption per capita. It reports that in 1989 the figure for *all* 'developing' countries was 505 kg (of oil equivalent) whereas it was a staggering 4,930 for industrial countries. Likewise, if we look at the Greenhouse Index which measures the amount of carbon heating equivalents which are released per capita we see that in all 'developing' countries the figure stands at 0.9 metric tons and for all industrial countries at 1.5 metric tons (UNDP 1992:180)!

Another highly visible aspect of the ecological crisis is the effect of acid rain which causes the death of lakes and rivers as the acidity levels rise to unworkable and unsustainable proportions. The result of this is not

[10]The notion of scientific proof is very important here. Within the 'northern' tradition, a phenomenon will often not be recognised until it can be scientifically proved to be happening. As was partly seen during the UNCED Conference in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, without clear, *scientific* proof of fault, polluters are often let off the hook since they can argue that more research is needed or that other factors are at work. This places the burden of proof on those suffering from the effects of pollution instead of on those who produce it.

just the death of habitats and ecosystems, which would be bad enough, but also a serious reduction in the quality of life of those who depend on those habitats. As water supplies dry up or become irreversibly polluted, people in 'underdeveloped' countries with no other source of water have to go further to collect their water. Since it is usually women who carry out this task, their already heavy burden is increased, resulting in their working days becoming longer and harder.

Even for those living in the 'developed' north, who are not faced with such direct effects of acid rain, the effects of this hazard are clear. Natural flora is destroyed as the trees in our parks and gardens die. Quality of life is eroded as nature becomes poisonous. A report in the Dutch newspaper, *Volkskrant*, gives one example of how this is happening. On 28 July, 1994 it carried a report stating that the seas around Holland are becoming so polluted that people catching their own seafood run a serious risk of food poisoning. What to many was a relaxing hobby or a holiday pastime has become a health hazard.

Equally distressing for some is the evidence that buildings are being destroyed as the acids in the air act as corrosives, damaging our cultural heritage. On the global scale of destruction this is a minor problem, but it highlights some more far-reaching and serious effects. As the world around us deteriorates, as the quality of the natural environment drops, society faces an increase in psychological and social problems. As the level of industrialisation increases, more and more people fall prey to bad health. Ailments such as heart disease, strokes, stress and depression seem to increase as pollution levels rise (Capra 1982:24). Equally worrying is the increase in social malaise as evidenced by increasing levels of violent crimes, suicides, alcoholism, drug abuse and so on (op.cit.).

Faced with this mounting evidence of ecological crisis and the social disruptions it brings it its wake, we must begin to ask ourselves to what extent our own behaviour is to blame. On our news bulletins we hear and read stories of the ravages of such 'acts of god' as droughts and floods destroying villages and towns. Many 'natural' disasters have been shown to be the result of human activity - they are not 'natural' at all (George 1992, WCED 1987): a tragic example can be seen in the devastating effects of the floods seen recently in Bangladesh. We must ask ourselves whether they would have been as devastating had there been sufficient tree cover to avoid the erosion which gave the water an easy path on its destructive journey.

It is clear that it is now high time that the 'north' recognised its role in causing the ecological crisis. It is easy to point to the benefits of 'development', stating categorically that these cannot be taken away. It is more difficult, certainly from the inside, the 'north', to look critically at these so called advances and recognise them as ecological and social destroyers which must be tackled. It is no longer possible for the 'north' to continue on its zealous converting crusade, persuading or forcing the rest of the world to follow its lead. It must start to look inwards at its own norms and values and at its own societies in a critical light and admit that here too some form of development has to take place.

Ironically, in the face of 'northern' pretensions to be in the forefront of 'cleaning up' the pollution caused by industrialisation, the technology developed for the cleaning up process is just as much part of the problem as 'dirty' technology is. The Brundtland Report informs that 'purification technology represents a growth market', naively seeing this as a positive development. This cleaning up ideology deftly leaves the crucial question of how the problem occurred in the first place unanswered. It deals with the symptoms of the crisis, not the crisis itself. Green technology '...merely shift[s] the problem around, often at the expense of more energy and material inputs and therefore more pollution. Favourite devices such as refuse incineration, sulphur extractors in power stations and catalytic converters in cars cost money and energy while at the same time generating new pollutants.' (quoted in Dobson 1990:76). Such changes, while appearing to deal with an immediate problem, do not consider the underlying causes of that problem. As I will argue below, it is the ideology of growth which is to a large extent to blame for the awful levels of pollution and ecological mayhem witnessed today. Clearly, therefore, any response which does not, to any significant extent, reject such an ideology, will have a limited impact on the problem. As Thijs de la Court asks in his critique of the Brundtland Report, is the philosophy of attempting 'to do more with less' one that will bring about any lasting solution to the ecological crisis (de la Court 1990)?

Equally problematic is the question of green consumerism. The idea of green consumerism is in some respects a contradiction in terms. An ecological thinking which goes beyond the superficial, which attempts a *deep* analysis and puts forward deep solutions will argue that green consumerism is logically impossible. It is, as Jonathan Porritt points out, '...having your cake and eating it, and it can't be done.' (quoted in Dobson 1990:17). The reason why it cannot be done is because it tries to combine two mutually exclusive ideas. Consumerism is an integral part of 'development', leading as it does to economic growth. Yet it is this very growth, as I have shown, which has led to the present crisis. A deep green analysis of the problem must insist on *less* consumption, not *better* consumption. Equally, it is arguable whether such strategies actually have much affect since they make it very easy for *everyone* to become an environmentalist. Everyone includes some of the most polluting companies in the world which are able to sell the idea that they too are fighting pollution (de la Court 1990:127).

The promotion of green consumerism, recycling and the like as offering *the* solution to the ecological crisis should therefore be avoided. Such an approach can blind us to the real cause of the problem which is consumerism itself. Becoming aware of the limitations of these light green strategies, as Dobson call them, goes part of the way to recognising that they *could* be used to prepare the way for a deeper, a dark green, analysis and understanding of the causes of the ecological crisis. In chapter 4 I will be taking a closer look at how to bring about change, for now it is enough to say that change has to start somewhere. It is foolhardy to expect people to make radical changes to their lifestyle if they do not have a clear understanding of where the problem lies. The strategies outlined above '...show it is possible to do something...' (op. cit.:141) and this can act as a stepping stone to a deeper level of analysis. As such they should be cautiously and critically

encouraged, though backed up by a critical analysis of the root cause of the ecological problem with the aim of expanding the level of activism.

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That there is a problem is fairly clear. I now want to take a closer look at how these two: ecological destruction and industrial 'development' go hand in hand. The following extract is from an article in the September/October 1990 issue of *The Ecologist*:

> 'in the process [of what is termed 'development'], massive volumes of pollutants have been released to the atmosphere, into rivers, ground water and topsoil, acidifying and poisoning the soil, disrupting ecosystems and damaging health, and even making an appreciable contribution to climate change. Yet the Euregio is home to a mere 0.1% of the world's population. With additional inputs of raw materials, fuel resources and animal fodder from around the world, largely from the impoverished South, the region has moreover played its part in the destruction of other regions and communities far afield.'

The area being described is not some 'Third World' horror story, it is not even one of the large urban areas in Europe or the USA. It is in fact a description of what is considered to be one of the more beautiful and unspoiled parts of the Netherlands and Belgium; the Limburg Borderlands. The Netherlands is one of those countries other people would like to live in; it is a liberal, open country with a respect for its environment, the pollution of which it keeps strictly under control. It is what the development industry would call a highly developed nation, coming ninth place on the UNDP HDI Report for 1992. It is also one of the most densely populated and polluted countries in the world.

Not only does 'development' literally 'stink' (Esteva 1987) therefore, it would seem that a high level of industrial 'development' brings with it grave ecological consequences. As *The Ecologist* article states, this region 'epitomises the consequences of seeking progress through industrial expansion.' yet this is precisely what the rest of the world is actively encouraged, and in fact is seeking, to do.

It could, to some extent correctly, be argued that such problems were caused by the *style* of 'development', not 'development' itself. The development of heavy industry assumed to be needed to get an economy growing, is bound to cause pollution. Industry is at a stage now where it can begin to develop cleaner, 'greener' technology and products which have a more benign effect on the environment. The computer, for example, saves paper, makes organisations more efficient and can reduce the need for long distance travel as communication becomes easier and faster. Equally, green consumerism, despite its limitations, encourages us to buy safer, cleaner products; products with less chemical additives, less plastic packaging and re-usable or more safely disposable containers. If *everybody* became a green consumer, if *all* industry became cleaner, the problem, it could be argued, would be at least on the way to being solved.

The reality is, of course, that everybody does *not* become a green consumer and many industries still produce massive levels of toxic wastes. Indeed, an industry such as the nuclear industry cannot, by its very nature, do otherwise and the same is true of other industries and products as well. Equally, the profit motive is often stronger than ecological concerns. In a society based on high levels of commercial competition, costs must be kept as low as possible. In such circumstances ecologically sound practices which are not explicitly laid down in law and which add to company expenditure can easily be brushed aside or simply ignored

The difficulty with an approach which encourages a cleaning up operation is that it merely deals with the *symptoms* of the crisis, not the crisis itself. Ivan Illich (1973) is sceptical as to the value of such an approach, claiming that it prescribes 'palliatives' (:47) without investigating the real causes of the crisis. These palliatives '...tend to shift garbage out of sight, push it into the future, or dump it onto the poor' (op. cit.). The twin concepts of growth and progress which add up to 'development' are not questioned. The fascination of the development industry in a country's GNP figures indicates its spotlighting of economic growth as *the* measure of progress. New, more modern products, which, individually at least, work faster and more efficiently are preferred over 'old fashioned' products. Old fashioned here is a relative term since the products and processes thus condemned may have done the job well but not *better* and that is what progress is all about. Such a view has several results, the most clear one being that goods become obsolete almost before they have had time to reach the market place. This is especially obvious with computer technology in which new 'improvements' are being made all the time. Products and production processes can, therefore, never be left as they are, since they can always be improved upon and made better. To stand still is to go backwards, and as good consumers we discard our 'old' models for the latest ones in our never-ending pursuit of progress.

As reliance on high technological advancement grows, so does dependence on 'experts'. We are no longer able to control our environment ourselves as the expertise needed to do so has become a specialised discipline which the lay person cannot understand. Ivan Illich has extended this idea to all spheres of social and cultural life. 'Overprogramming' as he terms it, leads to reliance on doctors for our health, teachers for our education, skilled builders for our houses and so on. Such overprogramming leads to insecurity as people become aware of what they do not know - 'learning thus becomes a commodity' (op. cit.:59). The lay knowledge of experience and intuition becomes devalued and is eventually lost.

It is almost impossible to avoid this reliance on 'experts'. As a society 'develops', so options for living a different life-style are eroded. Such 'radical monopoly' (op. cit. 1973) leads to the 'dominance of one type of product' (op. cit.:52) over all others - thus schools take over education, doctors take over health care, cars take over transport. This monopoly can only come about because of 'hyperseparation' (Plumwood 1993:49) which involves privileging one set of criteria over another, creating a dualism in which 'the other' is seen not only as different but also as inferior. Thijs de la Court offers us a prime example of radical monopoly in practice:

> 'As in so many of the industrialised countries, the road system cannot cope with the intensity of traffic, raw materials are consumed, foreign dependence increases, and environmental pollution is further aggravated. In North Africa, trucks and jeeps are

> ousting camels. Cars give speed, power, status. Camels offer food, milk, dung, transport, shadow in the daytime and warmth at night. camels are more reliable and cheaper, are part of the culture of the desert people, and are eminently adapted to local conditions' (de la Court 1990:27).

Unfortunately for camels they do not represent 'development' whereas cars with their speed, comfort and freedom, do. Even when the number of cars on the roads increases to such an extent that drivers spend most of their time in traffic jams breathing in toxic fumes, the alternative remains unacceptable. The whole infrastructure is built to accommodate cars - there is no going back.

There are some difficulties with these ideas as Illich uses them. In his discussion of overprogramming and radical monopoly, he seems to be suggesting that *everything* associated with 'northern', industrialised societies should be rejected. At one point in his analysis he states that traffic speeds higher than the speed reached by a bicycle lead to problems. This is a somewhat one-sided look at 'development'; after all, motorised transport can make life much easier for many people, just as 'northern' medicine *can* free the sick from pain and suffering.[11] Part of reconstructing 'development' is to get away from the 'goodies' and 'baddies' style of discussion which poses one set of ideas against another. Such arguments are easy to make but impossible to argue against since the points of reference are different. It is easy to romanticise the 'underdeveloped' as having a benign effect on the world around them, of having all the answers to a cleaner, fairer and safer world. It is more difficult, though more honest, to take a truly *critical* look at culture and traditions. A critique of 'development' cannot be based on the argument that to be 'underdeveloped' is better. The arguments put foreward by Illich *could* be used to suggest that natural medicine, self-built housing, societal learning and so on is free of critique. This must be rejected just as strongly as the mainstream notion that everything in the 'north' is better must be rejected. I want to get away from such an either/or discussion which can only result in perpetuating divisions and comparisons, the very things this paper attempts to avoid.

Illich does, never-the-less, make some important points. It is clear that within the 'development' discourse a reliance on external agents such as cars, doctors and teachers is seen as progress and progress is to be encouraged above all else. The 'north' seems to have become addicted to the idea of improvement (Gomes et al. 1992, Illich 1973)) and it is this addiction which is being exported in the name of 'development'. Unfortunately, not only is 'development' destroying social, cultural and ecological well being, it is also simply impossible to carry out in practice. If the whole world were to industrialise along the lines of the 'north', another planet would be needed just to provide us with the necessary raw materials (de la Court 1990:45). In any case, substances now taken from the earth such as oil to keep the industrial system going are running out or, as seen in the destruction of the rain forests, habitats are being annihilated and with them our chances of survival.

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[11]This is not to suggest that 'northern' medicine is the only medicine able to do this - it is one of many medical traditions which successfully treats disease.

It would seem then that there is ample evidence of the ecological destruction we are all personally causing. Despite attempts to point the finger of blame at the 'underdeveloped' in the 'south', accusing them of destroying their own forests or of reproducing too quickly, it is clear that much of the problem stems from the 'north' and the very ideology which has set itself up as the saviour - that is, the ideology of 'development' and 'progress'.

No alternatives to this ideology are brooked - if an improvement scheme does not fit into the mainstream 'development' paradigm it is easily dismissed by the 'development' industry. It may not necessarily be sabotaged, but the life-style and culture of the community in question will be put under a lot of pressure to conform. Changes which do not fit in with the mainstream may find themselves without financial or ideological support, leading to marginalisation. It is easy, of course, to over-state the extent to which 'development' is imposed. There are many examples to be found of groups and organisations challenging the status quo and defining for themselves what development is (Sen & Grown 1985, Schumacher 1974 offer some examples). Despite these attempts, the financial and ideological backing still goes to mainstream 'development' projects.[12] We should also not forget that the common understanding of 'development', by which I mean the definition accepted by 'normal' people not actively involved in securing it, is the same as that presented by the mainstream 'development' industry.

[12]Thijs de la Court wrote a strong critique of the Brundtland Report, calling for a change of approach. If followed, his ideas could be the start of a big change in development thinking.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL CHALLENGES

Clearly then, there are serious problems with 'development' yet most attempts to question its rationale are more often than not met with hostility. The key as to why this should be seems to lie in the philosophical foundations of the 'northern' scientific model and how this informs the human relationship with nature. Since President Truman 'invented' 'underdevelopment' after the Second World War, countries have been trying to 'develop' along the lines of massive industrialisation as established by the USA and Europe a century or so earlier. It is now true to say that 'development' has become globally synonymous with industrialisation and progress. At the level of the state and bureaucracy and even within many sections of civil society, the 'north' provides the standard to which all others must relate.

One of the most important factors maintaining this process is the notion of consumption. 'Development' as described above can only take place, can only find its rationale, if the majority of people are delinked from the production process and buy the commodities they need in the market place. For the market to continue its existence, a majority of its practitioners must make a profit. The only way to achieve this is to sell more. To ensure that people continue to consume, new needs, euphemistically termed markets, must be created. As industrialisation has progressed, therefore, so has the notion of need. We now 'need' a television set, possibly even more than one, in each home, we 'need' a car, a dishwasher, 'exotic' foodstuffs, the latest style in jeans, fast food restaurants and so on. To live simply, to do without these things, either voluntarily or because of necessity, is seen as a lack, as an unfulfilment of needs.

As the idea of 'needs' thus grows, so does the quantity and type of articles which can be bought, 'consumed'. What has taken place is the commodification of all resources, in which social and cultural life gains a monetary value, turning it into a commodity to be bought and sold. This commodification goes beyond those articles an individual would buy or sell, it encompasses the very basis of life - water, air, soil, in short, nature itself. Thus forests become a source of timber, rivers and streams become irrigation waters, plants become possible medicines and animals become fur coats, workers and pets.

Low level consumers are 'underdeveloped', 'backward', 'old fashioned', 'traditional' or simply poor. Here there is paradox - 'development' is 'good' yet, as has been shown, has caused ecological destruction and social crisis which has now reached such a level as to pose a real threat to life. It is necessary to look beyond this paradox to ask why, despite the mounting evidence, it appears to be so difficult to stop the process of industrialisation which is causing 'overdevelopment', the destruction of nature and a declining quality of life. We have to look to our 'everyday, common sense reality' (Merchant 1992:47) to find the answer. What philosophy, what belief system determines the 'northern' world-view and hence its insistence on overconsumption, overproduction and ultimately overexploitation of the natural world?

To be able to sell nature it is necessary to be separate from it; to be outside of nature and superior to it. Though to most of us with a 'northern' education and upbringing this seems logical, humans have not always viewed their relationship with nature in that way:

> 'If all the beasts were gone, we would die from a great loneliness of the spirit,
> for whatever happens to the beasts also happens to us. All thing are connected.
> Whatever befalls the Earth, befalls the children of the Earth.' (Dobson 1990:37).

This statement by Chief Seattle was made in 1855 as the American Indians were being exterminated or moved onto 'reservations'. To many in the 'north' this close relationship with nature may now sound alien, but it is only in the last three hundred years or so that we have learnt to deny human integration with nature. In earlier cultures 'The relationship between most peoples and the earth was an I-thou ethic of propitiation to be made before damming a brook, cutting a tree, or sinking a mine shaft.' (Merchant 1992:41). Within the Christian religion God was at the centre of the universe as the controlling force with man, *men*, as a sort of second in command. The earth was seen as alive and as functioning in much the same way as other organisms. It had a circulatory system, it eliminated gases and other wastes and gave birth to offspring. This last point indicates the close association nature has had with womanhood - The Earth Mother was nurturing and caring, looking after those who looked after her (Merchant 1980 and 1992, Plumwood 1993, Hughes in *The Ecologist* 1981, Seager 1993). As long as peasants '...nurtured the land, performed ritual dances and returned its gifts to assure continued fertility' the earth would protect their needs (Merchant 1992:43).

The earth as a living organism, a mother or goddess, made abuse of her unethical. It put a restraint on how humans could treat nature and the extent to which they could use the earth for their own benefit. Ecological balance was therefore maintained in order to keep the Earth pacified and to ensure stability and security.

Although such a world-view is ecologically sound, it is economically restrictive. As capitalism began to spread in Europe, so did the need to 'kill' nature - to deny her any organic properties. Growth demanded a steady stream of natural resources such as oil and gas which could not be maintained or ethically justified within the organic conception of nature. A disruption in this conception culminated in the critical period of the Enlightenment in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when the European world-view and its relationship to nature changed dramatically. A largely organic conception of the cosmos in which nature was revered and humans had their place within it, gave way to a mechanistic world-view; man (literally) placing himself at the pinnacle of the natural order (Plumwood 1993:105). This position gave him the right, he felt, to dominate all nature and to force it to do his bidding. It is this mix of arrogance and confidence which gave man the push he needed to justify and make possible his expansionist and ultimately exploitative behaviour.[13]

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[13]A small note of caution here. In any critique it is easy to focus on the negative and dismiss or merely ignore the positive. When criticising the mechanistic thinking of the Enlightenment period, it is important to also

Nisbet (1980) has made an interesting study of the history of the idea of progress. According to him, 'No single idea has been more important than, perhaps as important as, the idea of progress' (op. cit.:4). What is interesting about his analysis is his explanation as to why this idea was *not* such an important ideology during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the period I am interested in. He states that a positive idea of progress is dependent upon '...respect for and acceptance of the past...' (op. cit.:103) and further that '...without a past, conceived as coming down in cultural substance as well as in time to the present, no principles of development, no stages emerging from one another, and no linear projection of the future are possible' (op. cit.:103). The period of the Enlightenment is singular in its refusal to build upon the ideas developed in its immediate past. Francis Bacon, one of the leading figures in developing an ideological justification for a changing concept of nature, was very clear about the dragging effect the past had on progress; '[Men] have been kept back as by a kind of enchantment from progress in the sciences by reverence for antiquity, by the authority of men accounted great in philosophy, and then by general consent.' (in J.J. Clarke 1993:85). This period is self defined as an era of true discovery and inventiveness, dismissing all that came before it. More than this, it negates the existence of other forms of knowledge, effectively denying its dependence on earlier discoveries and ideologies (Nisbet 1980). This disrespect for other forms of knowledge, other truths and belief systems has remained up to the present time and fuels mistrust and rejection of the 'other'.

Bacon and others were responsible for bringing about the radical change in thinking linked to the scientific revolution. This revolution introduced a vision of the earth and all of nature as a machine to be pulled apart, studied, understood and controlled. Nothing was beyond man's (it generally was men who carried out this research or who were indeed deemed capable of carrying it out) capacities. Carolyn Merchant lists the assumptions which grew out of this period, ultimately allowing for the (over)exploitation of nature:

> '1. Matter is composed of particles (the ontological assumption).
> 2. The universe is a natural order (the principle of identity).
> 3. Knowledge and information can be abstracted from the natural world (the assumption of context independence).
> 4. Problems can be analysed into parts that can be manipulated by mathematics (the methodological assumption).
> 5. Sense data are discrete (the epistemological assumption).' (Merchant 1992:49)

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point out its positive role in improving the condition of many people's lives - medical advances improved health care, agricultural inventions lightened the burden of work, political ideology opened up the way for universal suffrage and a democratic system. As I made clear in chapter 2, this paper is trying to get beyond good/bad dichotomy, part of that process being to recognise the positive elements of a to-be-critiqued discourse.

To the Western educated these assumptions make perfect sense - they frame the moral standards and the ethics upon which those standards are based (Hooker 1992). Furthermore, these assumptions justify the manipulation and control of nature by humans.

Implicit in these assumptions is that humans are *capable* of fully understanding nature and the working of the cosmos. From here it is a small step to the belief that nature is to be controlled by humans. This attitude was and is justified by looking at the scriptures. The New Testament places men, not God, at the centre of the universe and establishes the belief that nature was created for human benefit. It can be debated whether humans therefore have the right to abuse and destroy nature for their own good (see Young 1990 and Engel & Engel 1990) but that we have the right to *use* nature became well established. Nature became a lesser form of creation (along with women and 'barbarians'!) and as such was of less value than man and not protected by the same ethical code prohibiting abuse.

Taking this argument further, Merchant points out that science, the pursuit of knowledge, became the 'objective value-free, context-free knowledge of the external world.' (Merchant 1992:55). *A* claim to truth became *the* truth. Science and technology, which are turned to to correct the 'problems' of nature, can be harnessed in the name of 'the people' with no reference to or even recognition of the vested interests in developing a certain technology over another.

Lois Gibbs' findings in Love Canal indicate that it *is* possible to challenge the monolith of modern science, but it remains no easy task. Until the burden of proof is placed on the shoulders of those who wish to bring about more scientific 'advancement', it will be very difficult to change the method of scientific enquiry and the dominating role of technology in society. Ironically, it may well be that only a total ecological or social calamity will provide the final push necessary to activate a change in ideology. If this is the case, we can only hope that it does not prove to be too late.

Feminist analysis offers a critique to the belief in the objectivity of science. Feminists such as Bleier have noted that (in 1986) 72% of US federal research and development funding went into defence (Bleier 1986). Such a statistic has led feminists to question the objectivity and value-free nature of science and, by extension, technology. In the same volume, another author, Marion Namenwirth writes; 'Repeatedly, in the course of history, the pronouncements of scientists have been used to rationalise, justify, and naturalise dominant ideologies and the status quo. Slavery, colonialism, laissez-faire capitalism, communism, patriarchy, sexism and racism have all been supported...by the work of scientists...' (in Bleier 1986:29). Dependence on technological 'progress' could easily be added to this list.

Although science and scientists may try to convince the public and themselves that they can operate outside of the cultural and social influence of societal prejudices, it is of course impossible. They influence and are influenced by society, their priorities reflecting societal interests. It should also not be forgotten that

scientists get their funding from public and private organisations - if scientists do not do research within socially sanctioned areas their chances of securing funds is likely to be limited.

This analysis makes it possible for us to get a clearer view of the culture/nature dualism of the Enlightenment. During this period nature and culture became separated from each other; nature becoming associated with the female and culture, in the figure of the probing scientist, with the male. The scientist is the investigating subject able to study and thereby dominate the object, in this case nature (Hekman 1990).

Writers such a Bleier, Namenwirth, Fee, Haraway, Rose (all in Bleier 1986) and Hekman (1990) call for the development of a new, feminist scientific method - one which recognises the scientist's subjectivity and the subjectivity of technological research. Such a method goes beyond merely promoting more women to scientific positions. It assumes an *essential* female approach by returning to the woman/nature link. By stressing women's traditional reproductive role, it claims that women are nearer to nature and can therefore nurture a deeper understanding of her workings. Women are again adorned with the virtues of intuition and selfless love and care which give her a privileged position over men in relation to nature. All those feminine elements of modern dualisms which have been used to exploit women are looked at again and privileged. In effect, the male/female dualism is turned upside down, placing women in the privileged position.

Although useful, this approach reverts to a view of the scientist as unscathed by social values and norms. It suggests that women, *by their very nature,* are able to overcome cultural influences in a way men are not. It is equally problematic because it champions the *essential* woman. It denies the cultural forming of gender and male/female relations, reverting instead to purely biological differences. Val Plumwood assesses some of the dangers of an approach which does not get *beyond* dualisms but merely reverses them in women's favour. As she says; '...dualism is a process in which power forms identity, one which distorts both sides of what it splits apart.' (Plumwood 1993:32). This is a discourse which feminists should be very wary of using as it inevitably reinforces cultural and elitist conceptions of woman and womanhood (see Bleier 1986, Hekman 1990 and Kirkup & Keller 1992 for a more detailed account of this debate).

To return to the postmodernism of Gadamer, any new scientific method would have to recognise cultural prejudice and accept that this will influence not only research priorities but even the findings of that research. Rose emphasises the importance of experience and vernacular knowledge when searching for 'truth'. Lois Gibbs' experiences in trying to prove to scientists the link between chemical toxins and disease in Love Canal are a prime example of how this method would work. Such a postmodern approach would recognise the partiality of truth and the subjectivity of both observer and observed.

Within the development framework of course, this critique can be used to move beyond the 'developed'/'underdeveloped' dualism. By privileging experience and recognising the importance of culture and tradition in patterns of 'development' it is possible to move a step closer to forming culturally specific ideas of

development and progress. Likewise, there is increased recognition that what may represent technological advancement and social utility in one society, or one *sector* of society, does not necessarily represent the same in another culture or social group. An approach which recognises this, would allow for truly indigenous and local development efforts without imposing any pre-defined notion of development. The work of the DAWN network, for example, emphasises the centrality of women in bringing about change. The network is very clear about who the privileged actor in such a development is - the poor Third World woman. More than that, they see her as the only *possible* actor because of her central role in nurturing and providing for the family and community. Women's whole life experience is one of juggling between the provision of various basic needs. They are, therefore, in a perfect position to analyse the needs of their communities and affect the changes necessary to meet those needs. While I sympathise with this analysis, I am uncomfortable with the all embracing and somewhat exclusionary implications it carries with it. In the first place, it seems to see Third World women as a homogenous whole, denying the existence of difference between them. It should be clear from my earlier comments that I am wary of such an analysis. Secondly, this approach seems to totally deny men the opportunity, ability or willingness to bring about change. Just as all women are painted in the colours of the saviour, so all men are seen as the enemy. I find this short sighted and divisive as well as lacking political analysis. It cannot be argued that *all* men bring about ecological destruction and although men do tend to hold power over women, many men are themselves subjugated and exploited. To my mind any new development paradigm would have to accept that there is difference and heterogeneity in all communities and social groups which cannot be brushed aside without careful analysis.

Feminist critique, however, goes further than merely emphasising the importance of the investigator's subjective prejudice. Within a postmodern framework which recognises plurality and a heterogeneity of truths (Hekman 1990), some feminist writers such as Elizabeth Fee are calling for a discourse approach to science. This approach is characterised by 'conversations' (in Bleier 1986:47) between the knower and the known in which both parties are active agents reacting to each other. Nature becomes '...a dynamic and complex totality requiring human co-operation and understanding rather than dead mechanism, requiring only manipulation and control' (op. cit.). The role of the scientist changes from the classical one of the rational, objective investigator, to '...a person whose thoughts and feelings, logical capacities and intuitions are all relevant and involved in the process of discovery.' (op. cit.)

Not only must there be a dynamic relationship between knower and known, but also between disciplines. Modern knowledge has been divided and sub-divided resulting in ever more specific realms of expertise. Again, this can be traced back to the Enlightenment period's development of scientific method. Science was not only said to be concerned with 'digging further and further into the mine of natural knowledge' (Merchant 1992:47), but also likened to a clockwork mechanism. Spiritually, God became reduced to sort of

cosmic clock maker (Merchant 1980:226) which effectively removed all mysticism from nature. 'Truth' could be discovered by literally dissecting the object of study which, like a clock, could thereafter be put back together and expected to function in the same way as before. All phenomena were seen as no more than the sum of their parts, making such a method possible and desirable. Equally, phenomena were considered context independent, meaning they were not influenced by the external environment. Cartesian influence emphasised the need to 'divide every problem into as many parts as needed to resolve it' (Merchant 1992:52), an approach which will eventually result in specialisation of area of interest. It is clearly impossible, if every problem is to be so sub-divided, for one scientist to follow every line of investigation, thus necessitating specialisation and expertise limited to one particular area. By continually dividing and sub-dividing every problem it becomes impossible to get an all-encompassing picture of the various dimensions involved or of the various analyses and solutions possible. And, as already mentioned, such an approach leads to the creation of so-called experts who know a lot about one thing and very little about anything else and who disqualify all other knowledge and knowledge systems.

Some feminist scholars, among others, have called for a holistic, 'respectful' and honest approach to science. The work of geneticist Barbara McClintock would seem to offer an example of such an approach. McClintock recognised the importance of 'a more holistic, less hierarchical, conception of the organism' (in Bleier 1986:63), calling for the development of 'a feeling for the organism' (in Kirkup & Keeler 1992:187-195). She also appreciated and voiced the value of intuition and a certain amount of mysticism involved in scientific discoveries.

Such a 'deep reverence' (op. cit.:194) for all matter is reflected in other world philosophies and the notion of a holistic approach to science and nature in general is one of the most consistent elements in many alternatives as I will show below. After all, 'northern' ideology may have claimed universal applicability, but there are other philosophies and world-views, even alternative interpretations of the 'northern' world-view of great global significance. They should be considered for this reason alone but also for the fact that they offer a new approach to tackling the ecological crisis.

Before coming onto the question of alternatives, I want to take a deeper look at the dominant world-view, to fully understand how this leads to ecological crisis. After all, it is possible to believe that science is value-free without this necessarily leading to the commodification of nature and its overexploitation. I will look to ethics to analyse the justification for human behaviour toward nature (in Zimmerman 1993, Merchant 1992, Leopold 1949, Dobson 1990). In *A Sand County Almanac: And Sketches Here and There* published in 1949, Aldo Leopold introduces the idea of a land ethic, the land here incorporating all natural phenomena such as rivers and mountains as well as all living creatures and plants. He argues that nature has been incorporated into the economic valuing system of modern society. Within such a system, he argues, it is only those elements of

nature which, in the final analysis, have an economic use-value which need to be protected, thus explaining why so much of the natural world is being destroyed without creating feelings of remorse. Sylvan takes up this point, linking it to a need for a change in environmental ethics if as humans we are to *be able to* change our behaviour toward nature. As he points out; '...men do not feel morally ashamed if they interfere with a wilderness, if they maltreat the land, extract from it whatever it will yield, and then move on; and such conduct...does not rouse the moral indignation of others.' (Sylvan in Zimmerman 1993:13).[14] It is this moral indignation which needs to be found. Until such indignation towards the abuse of nature can be nurtured, the destruction and plundering of nature will go on more or less unabated.

Within the mechanistic world-view, behaviour is mediated 1) by economic interests and 2) by what has been called the '"prisoners" dilemma' (Hooker 1992) in which individuals follow concerns of self interest, not trusting the other to act in a co-operative way to improve the conditions of both. In this way both lose out as they try to out-smart each other. Without an ethic or world-view that condemns the over exploitation of nature for its *own* sake or which condemns selfish self-interest, any action humans take towards it will be justified - we may feel that carrying out experiments on animals is cruel, but we can see the benefit it will bring us in the long run and therefore tend to accept it as a necessary evil. Put simply, the mere *possibility* of a reduction in human suffering justifies the suffering of any number of laboratory animals.[15] Perhaps the most perverse example of this is the use of laboratory animals to test cosmetics and toiletries. Our desire to beautify ourselves, to smell and feel 'clean' (with all those chemical toxins in our bodies!) justifies the torture and abuse of countless animals.

As I have stated above, there is a distinct separation between the human animal and the rest of the natural world. Indeed, in the 'north' we usually see ourselves as so separate that we do not conceive of ourselves as animals at all, never mind as being part of the natural world. This hyperseparation is based not only on the mechanistic world-view, but also on a ego/homocentric ethic. Egocentrism argues that 'what is good for each individual will benefit society as a whole' (Merchant 1992:64), while a homocentric ethic strives for the 'greatest good for the greatest number of people' (Merchant op.cit.). While at first sight these may appear contradictory, in combination they maintain the mechanistic world-view which keeps humans 'in charge'. In this sense, whether the human role in nature is one of domination, stewardship or as perfector (in Zimmerman

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[14]The Green Revolution is a prime example of this. Modern technology was harnessed to full capacity to increase agricultural yields and 'improve' seed varieties. Human skill is here clearly seen as being able to improve on nature, to do a better job. The social results of some of the measures taken may have been disappointing, but these did not change the general view that it is possible and expedient to interfere with nature.

[15]Here again, a faith in technology which, it may be argued, it does not deserve is evident. Time and again we have witnessed the downfall of a technological 'advance' as it proved itself to be less of the 'saviour' than was at first thought - CFCs being a case in point. When they were first 'invented' it was never conceived that they would lead to a destruction of the earth's protective layer. The question of the use of technology to help solve the problems of the environment is a very complicated one and I will not look at it in any depth here. It may be interesting to note, however, that different world ethics reject the separation and domination mentioned above. If, like taoism, for example, we believe in a natural order (Sylvan & Bennet 1988) which is self regulating, we cannot presume to dominate it or even to 'steward' it (in Zimmerman 1993).

1993:130) is largely irrelevant since all three approaches are based on the assumption of human superiority and the rights of humans to interfere with nature to whatever extent is deemed necessary. Therefore, while homocentrism may promote a more holistic, inclusive relationship with nature, it is based very firmly on the belief that human interests are above and beyond the interests of nature (Merchant 1992), largely rejecting the view that nature has an intrinsic worth irrespective of its use-value to humans.

Ego/homocentric ethics can be linked to the ethos of 'development' and the privileged position of progress within that ethos. 'Development' discourse positions human knowledge as an ever-expanding commodity. Progress is an on-going process to which there is no clear end. In effect, to give up on progress, to stand still, is to go backwards. Within this paradigm it is clearly impossible to see nature as anything other than a resource; even protecting nature because of its beauty is protecting it for human pleasure rather than for itself - the attempt to conserve elephants, gorillas and tropical forests is not because their 'right' to life is recognised, but because they are 'cute', look similar to us or are (potentially) useful. Nature is something to be captured, beaten into submission and forced into revealing its secrets.

This analysis can be used to understand the general hostility toward ideas of alternatives to 'development'. The period of the Enlightenment brought with it a strict dualism creating a hierarchy of values. It would not be true to say, however, that before this period , dualisms had not existed. Val Plumwood indicates this when she traces many of the ideas formed during this important period in European history back to early Greek civilisation (Plumwood 1993). During the rise of Cartesian and Baconian scientific method, however, these dualisms became entrenched, taking on the nature of irrefutable truths. The ensuing hierarchy of values thus effectively created the 'other' - a figure separate and different to the norm and generally of less value than the norm. In her fascinating study, Plumwood distinguishes some 'key elements in the dualistic structure in western thought' (op. cit.:43). Such elements include the dualisms of culture/nature, reason/nature, male/female, human/nature, civilised/primitive, production/reproduction, subject/object and self/other. The second of each pair is seen in negative and subordinate terms in a dichotomous relationship with the first.

Such a relationship seems to exist within 'development' thinking. Several of the dualisms highlighted above can be found in the 'developed'/'underdeveloped' divide. 'We', the 'developed' are the norm against which 'they', the 'underdeveloped' appear in a negative light. Within such a model, it is clearly *impossible* for the dominant, the master, to accept even the possibility of valuing the norms of the subservient, the slave. To do so would be to deny oneself and ones norms and values. The various HDI Reports offer perhaps the best examples of what Plumwood terms hyperseparation and incorporation (op. cit.:49-52). Hyperseparation 'emphasise[s] and...maximise[s] the number and importance of differences', leaving it to incorporation to define these differences in negative terms. In creating a classification and hierarchy of 'development', the HDI does just that - the 'developed' are at one end of the scale being endowed with the most positive criteria, while the

'underdeveloped' are at the other end with the least number of these criteria. Thus the 'other' of 'development' thinking is the 'underdeveloped', the 'backward' who is in no way similar to 'us'.

That this forms the basis of much of the racism and Eurocentrism in 'development' discourse is evident. If 'we' are the norm, 'we' must be better than the 'other', giving 'us' the right to pass judgement on 'their' ways of life, their cultures and traditions. This patronising attitude can at times be witnessed within the Dutch 'development' industry though perhaps its clearest expression can be seen in the fact that the 'underdeveloped' do not, as a rule, make studies and write reports on the 'developed'. If they do, their findings are more often than not rejected as unscientific or the authors accused of superficiality. The Dutch publication *Internationale Samenwerking* (IS) from the ministry of development co-operation, for example, published an interesting article in its November 1993 issue which highlighted just this point. Two young Africans were asked to carry out a study of the attitudes of several large Dutch non-governmental organisations (NGO) towards Africa. Their findings were rather negative, the NGOs displaying '...western, neo-colonial arrogance' along with a suffering from a 'superiority complex' (IS 11/93:14, my translation). The most interesting aspect of the article was the reaction by the NGOs. They were understandably unhappy with the report, saying it was subjective and based on ignorance of Dutch culture. As one of the researchers pointed out, however;- 'If people from the south come here there are suddenly loads of problems,...Yet they can go to work in the south after a two week acculturation course' (op. cit.:15).

Such an analysis indicates that within the present dominant western philosophical framework it is all but impossible to countenance an alternative. To do so would be to call the self into question, to throw doubt on 'our' values and prejudices. The example above illustrates this well, as does the example used by Thijs de la Court in his book *Beyond Brundtland*. He reports on the increased use of motorised vehicles even when these are not appropriate (de la Court 1990:27). A simple comparison of the advantages of camels over cars makes a choice of cars seem particularly foolhardy. However, by taking a look at such a decision using the framework of hyperseparation and incorporation, it becomes clear why cars are the preferred choice. Global 'development' discourse promotes speed, mobility and individualism, endowing these with the revered stamp of modernity. If equal or even greater value is given to camel transport, it cannot be insisted that the modern is superior, thus bringing the 'northern' perception of quality of life into question. I imagine that, like myself, most people shy away from such a radical upheaval to their philosophical well-being.[16]

It is clear that the struggle against the prevailing 'development' philosophy will be an uphill one. It demands not just recognising that the 'other' has the right and ability to live differently - after all, this is something that the growing influence of postmodern thinking and plurality has already to some extent brought about. A radical change demands critically reconsidering the rationale of 'northern' society, redefining ideas about progress and advancement and human relationship with the natural world. In other words, not only does

[16]This is not to deny of course that global power and business elites are equally concerned to maintain their hold on power. Continuing along the present 'development' path suits their interests very well. Put simply, car manufacturers will make every effort to promote and sell their products whatever their suitability may be.

the logic and reality that northern culture teaches has resulted in the good life need to be challenged. the very *definition* of the good life must be questioned.

Before looking at some of the alternatives it may be useful to pause for one moment to make clear why it is necessary to consider a new approach at all. I pointed out in chapters 1 and 2 of this paper that there are serious problems with the state of the world's health and that if something is not done about it the human race may well 'develop' itself and the rest of life out of existence. In this chapter I have already looked at why it is that the world has been following a development model which is not only destructive but also largely inappropriate. I have suggested that the ecological crisis is. to a large extent, the result of almost total acceptance of the 'northern' 'development' model which is itself justified by the mechano-technical world-view which separates humans from all other life forms. Richard Sylvan has argued that this very fact demands the development of a new ethic. He characterises 'northern' ethics as '...basic (human) chauvinism - because under it humans...come first and everything else a bad last...' (in Zimmerman 1993:15). Such an ethic protects humans from the behaviour of other humans. but the rest of the natural world is left out in the cold. Even a superficial look into history, however. indicates that this ethic has not always even been successful at protecting us from ourselves. Nazi terror during the Second World War provides an easy example of human cruelty to other humans, though it is by no means the only one. The point is, what are the realistic possibilities of extending this ethic to nature if it cannot even be fully extended to all humans?

Sylvan (in Zimmerman 1993) argues for the development of a new ethic, what he calls an environmental ethic, which would lay the necessary foundation to bringing about a change in human behaviour toward nature and thereby, I would argue, to reconsider what development is and how it is to be achieved. A change in 'the basic model of life humankind has created in the modern age' (in Engel & Engel 1990:30) is needed, along with an ethic which values and respects nature and natural processes. To this I would add an ethic which reduces human arrogance toward nature and a more humble view of our own ability to understand and control it.

Such an ethic would have to *make sense* in the same way that the mechanistic world-view makes sense. This requires that any new ethic or philosophy develop from within present reality. In other words it is necessary to look to already existing world-views, world-views which are considered alternative or different from the 'northern' point of view but which have a base in cultures and traditions around the world. As I will show, many non-western cultures offer an ethic which, though possibly partly subsumed under the 'northern' mechanistic world-view, still have a distinct vision of the cosmos and human relationship to it. Equally, there are alternative *interpretations* of 'northern' or dominant philosophies and religions which offer an entrance point to developing an environmental ethic or eco-philosophy which would lead the way to solving the ecological crisis and the terrible social and cultural destruction it brings with it.

One of the prerequisites of such an alternative is to get beyond this Euro/US centric view so that each society can be considered on its own merits and be given the freedom to decide its own future. As Esteva puts it, we must 'regenerate space' (Esteva 1987). He talks of creating 'new commons' and 'hammocks' which can be used as a means of communication across interests: groups of individuals can come together, work together to achieve a specific, limited goal and then disperse again to join with other groups with other goals. The point of all this is not merely to create some huge self-help network, but to give people the freedom to find their own present and their own future without compromising that of others. He states; '"we" cannot conceive of any possibility of a "global design" that is not an inhospitable reduction of the perception of others to the shape of our own' (op. cit.:22). This point of view gives people the power to control their environment without infringing on that of others and takes a massive step away from the 'northern' model so loved by mainstream 'development'.

This respect for each others 'space' carries a lot more with it of course. Borrowing from Foucault, the proponents of this point of view see knowledge as synonymous with power. Those in possession of scientific knowledge are able to present it as the truth and thereby disqualify other knowledge systems as irrelevant and of showing distinct signs of 'underdevelopment' (Escobar 1984-5). Again, we see this reflected on the pages of Internationale Samenwerking where, in article after article, the 'south' is analysed along the lines of what it lacks, which coincides with those criteria used to define the 'north' as 'developed'. On a practical level what this results in, in terms of 'development', is that foreign 'experts'; doctors, engineers, hydrologists and so on, go to 'developing' countries as aid workers and impose their knowledge on the local population, bringing about changes to a society about which they have limited information and even less understanding. The changes thus brought about may indeed have the desired effect from the expert's point of view but may just as easily bring irreparable damage and unforeseen changes to the community in question. Furthermore, by undermining local knowledge, self perception is changed until people begin to believe that their methods really are inferior and backward. Travelling and working in Latin America for two years, I was able to witness this disturbing change in self perception. Anything foreign made, especially if it came from the USA, was seen in a positive light and local goods became a sort of second best, only to be bought if the price of imported goods was prohibitively high. Ironically, it was often the foreign aid workers, partly responsible for this perception, who valued the locally produced goods more highly. Such products were often idealised and given a quaintness representing a better, more natural way of life now unfortunately disappeared in their own countries.

Here there are the beginnings of an alternative. There is an attempt to deconstruct the notion of 'development' and a call for an '....open-ended quest and interaction of free and questioning persons for the understanding of reality' (Sachs 1992:128). An alternative thought process also allows the 'north' to stop seeing 'development' as something which has to happen to the 'other', the 'southerners'. It provides a framework within which the 'north' can begin to consider its own development. To return to an earlier concept, hyperseparation and incorporation have been questioned, leading to the possibility of a more honestly subjective analysis of 'our' way of life.

There are problems, or rather omissions, inherent to this approach, however, which make it of limited use. Wolfgang Sachs' *The Development Dictionary* can be taken as representative and shows where these omissions lie. The contributors analyse certain aspects of 'development' and their shortcomings well, but then stop. There are no elements of the sorely needed *re*construction, no argumentation of how 'development' is to be replaced. Although this type of analysis may be interesting on an intellectual level and possibly even serve to make some people think more critically about 'development' it is of little practical use.

An illustration of this is to be found in the contribution by Esteva. He suggests 'hospitality' as a possible replacement for the term 'development'. This is a positive and exciting idea but which unfortunately does not go very far. Esteva himself recognises the criticisms his ideas will have to face; that they are utopian, impractical on a large scale and offer no future, yet provides no answers, not even an attempt at answering these criticisms. Certainly, '....the people....believe that these foundations....define a joyful, promising and fully pragmatic way of life' (op. cit.:22), but so what? Such statements do not help in dealing with the problems of reality. They do not address the problems of the spread of AIDS, the disintegration of societies due to social and ecological crisis or the destruction of the rain forests. We cannot turn the clock back and pretend the atom was not split or that the forests are still intact. However much Esteva may not like the fact, we are living on one earth and the interconnecting of societies and the forming of loose 'hammocks' will not solve all global problems. What is needed is a philosophy and set of ideas which can act to deconstruct 'that edifice called the Western world' (Slater 1993:7). By exploding the idealised version of what it is to be 'northern', and 'developed', freedom is created to explore new avenues of development; what it is and how to achieve it.

CHAPTER 4

ALTERNATIVES?

Mainstream 'development' grew out of a system which privileges industry and growth. The fact that mainstream 'development' efforts have not led to global wealth and well-being but to deepening global, social and ecological crisis suggests that now the time has come for the 'north', as the holder of cultural, political and economic hegemony, to reconsider the values it espouses by looking beyond its own narrow definition of 'development'. It needs to consider how its definition has deepened, even caused, the present global ecological and social crisis and how it must change in order to avert total disaster. I will be looking at some elements of Chinese thought as expressed in the ideologies/religious views of taoism and buddhism as well as looking at some alternatives within the 'northern' tradition.

My aim will be two-fold. First, to show that all is not lost - there are present-day alternatives to the dominant concept of 'development' and relationship to the natural world which challenge scientific rationality as the basis for human relationship with nature. Millions of people around the world live according to a set of ethical rules which have dictated their relationships with nature over thousands of years. Equally, there are new movements forming which are attempting to formulate other ways of living in relationship with nature.

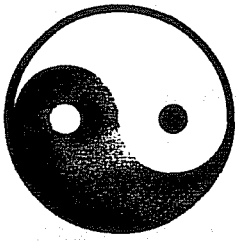
Second, I want to explore the (possible) linkages between these approaches to consider whether there are any discernible 'rules of conduct' in relation to the earth which could radically change the destructive course of 'development' and industrialisation. That these alternatives pose serious challenges to the power base of the global elite is clear and inevitable. Capital will undoubtedly try to defend its position of power as grassroots movements begin to reject its philosophy of growth and progress. That the ensuing struggle will be painful is equally inevitable yet necessary if the mainstream 'development' discourse is to be displaced.

This chapter is called 'Alternatives?'. The question mark is an important aspect of the title since it indicates very clearly that I do not intend to give any definite answers or come up with hard and fast rules about how to achieve an alternative type of 'development'. I will be looking to see where differing ideologies and world-views can come together, can play down the differences between them and search for areas of mutual understanding. It is an attempt to '...reconcile the warring religious factions...' (Clarke 1993:14) in order to make it possible to appreciate, though not necessarily always agree with, the point of view of the 'other'. The formation of dialogues between differing beliefs is a prerequisite, I feel, to finding and accepting a new type of development which is not Eurocentric but which recognises difference and heterogeneity. I am *not* looking for *the* answer to the development problematique.

taoism[17]

The basic principles of taoism are of balance and order. For harmony with the world and oneself to be possible, an individual must fit into this order and become '...one with Tao...' (Capra 1982:104). Tao refers to '...the eternal order of the cosmos...' (Weber 1951:181), this being achieved by attaining *wu wei* or non-action. *Wu wei* promotes a 'hands off' attitude to change and indeed all human action: non-action, non-assertion, non-aggression and non-destruction are the guiding principles to inform human behaviour (Sylvan & Bennett in the Ecologist 1988). Following *wu wei* does not contemplate doing nothing, but refers rather to the type of action which should be followed. It refers only to the type of action which is contrary to nature or to The Way which defines the proper lifestyle for harmonious living (op. cit.). The written law of taoism, the Tao Teh Ching, argues that '...the happiness of the people would be promoted most safely through the natural laws of harmonic cosmos.' (Weber 1951:188).

Harmony is maintained by the smooth workings of yin and yang which form the two parts of a dynamic though stable circle of existence. The yin/yang polarity can be contrasted to Val Plumwood's analysis of the dualisms of 'modern' society. There is a certain amount of agreement as to how the divisions are formed, for example both modern dualisms and yin and yang divide along lines of female/male, intuition/intellect, soft/hard and so on. Plumwood, however, recognises that in 'modern' society these divisions form strict dualisms in which one element dominates the other, seeing it literally as 'the Other'. Within taoism, these divisions are not dualisms but two sides of the same coin. The taoist symbol of yin and yang illustrates this relationship perfectly.



[17]I am intentionally writing buddhism and taoism without using capital letters. This is in order to make the distinction between the official church (capital letter) and the everyday awareness based on the primary principles of the religions referred to (small letter). The buddhist scholar Sulak Sivaraksa sees this distinction as crucial in the struggle for change. Buddhism with a small *b* '...means you don't want to do provocation or to build temples but you want buddhist awareness, the mindfulness. With small *b* buddhism, you regard Christians, Jews and Moslems [or christians, jews and moslems] not as rivals but as brothers and sisters.' (Reconciliation International 1988:5).This approach represents a recognition of the relativity and thus the relative *un*importance of individual thought systems and ideologies. This recognition makes it possible to blur the borders between oneself and the 'other', to recognise oneself in the other and accept that the self is both subject and object - both self and other.

Each side needs the other for its own existence. An element of yin is present in yang and vice versa. Indeed, because of the cyclical nature of the cosmos, the yin will inevitably become yang and then back to yin again, ad infinitum. Hence the emphasis on non-action.

Taoist principles can, and indeed are being used to counter the destructive nature of the mechanistic world-view. The chart below, adapted from Sylvan & Bennett, shows the contrasting philosophical ideas which shape the mechanistic world-view and taoism.

Dominant Western Paradigm	**Taoism**
Domination over nature	Harmony with nature
Nature as resource - no intrinsic value	Natural environment has intrinsic value
Human supremacy	Impartiality
Material economic growth predominant goal	Follow Tao-te - the way of virtue
Consumerism	Doing with enough
Competitive lifestyle	Voluntary simplicity
Centralised/urban centred/national focus	Decentralised/bioregional/local focus
Hierarchical power structure	Hierarchy without power structure
High technology	Limited technology

Taoist philosophy rejects just about every element of 'northern' ethics. Based on the points identified above, taoism forms three basic principles which will lead to a harmonious lifestyle. The first is genuine relatedness and empathy towards all beings leading to a deep love of the world around us. Second, it encourages a lifestyle of frugality, though it should be emphasised that this is not an *impoverished* lifestyle but a *simple* one based on need. The third principle is of modesty and humility, rejecting competitiveness and life in the 'fast lane' (op. cit.). The importance of intuitive knowledge is stressed along with characteristics of adaptability and generosity. Together, these elements add up to the complete opposite of 'modern', 'developed' societies and a total rejection of the mechanistic world-view. Indeed, in taoist terminology 'modern' society and science is on a 'wild yang trip' (in Engel & Engel 1990:71) which can only lead to destruction.

On an intellectual and spiritual level the benefits of following these taoist principles is clear. Life would undoubtedly be more peaceful and less hostile and destructive if the principles outlined above were followed. Following The Way challenges industrial 'development' on both a practical and philosophical level. Indeed, one of the strengths of taoism is that its philosophy immediately offers its followers some practical guidelines on which to base everyday behaviour. It indicates that a different approach to life and the cosmos is

possible and as such should be embraced as forming part of the foundations of an ethic based on ecophilosophical principles.

buddhism

Buddhism is another ideology which teaches a more 'peaceful' relationship with the world. A brief look at the teachings of buddhism will suffice to indicate that this influential world religion can challenge the dominant 'development' paradigm. The four cardinal virtues of buddhism include friendliness, compassion, joy and equanimity between humans and between humans and nature (Embree 1988). In a long passage proclaiming the morals a buddhist should strive to attain are many references to non-violent action. compassion, respect for oneself, others and nature. Politically too, buddhism espouses egalitarianism and compassion (op. cit.).

Like taoism. it urges believers to follow The Way, or The Middle Way, again stressing the dangers of extremes. Interestingly. and particularly pertinent to the argument at hand, buddhism emphasises the heterogeneity of approaches and strategies which will lead to truth. The Noble Eightfold Path provides a framework for behaviour while stressing that 'The ways to the Goal are as many as the lives of men.' (Humphries 1951:223). This opens up the way to culturally specific interpretations which are nevertheless contained within a universal framework of 'correct' behaviour. Individuals or communities do not need to become buddhist, but the basic tenets of its belief system can certainly be used as foundation stones, should these be necessary.

E.F. Schumacher provided an example of such an approach back in 1973. During his travels in Burma he studied buddhist beliefs and was later able to use this knowledge to distinguish what he termed 'Buddhist economics'[18]. Such an economics is based on buddhism's belief in the three inter-related functions of work. The first is to help utilise and develop a person's faculties, the second to help individuals overcome egocentredness by joining in with communal activities and the third, to produce the goods and services needed for existence (Schumacher 1973:49). Work is therefore more than a productive force, it is of equal social importance. This does not differ largely from 'northern' economics and societies where work is often the most important factor in an individual's identity in society. The difference is, I feel, that whilst in 'northern' societies the social importance of work is derived from its economic function, in Schumacher's Buddhist economics this relationship is reversed. In other words, the person is more important than the goods or wealth he or she produces. Labour intensive production methods, the recognition of the complementary between work and leisure and the emphasis on the use of technology as a tool rather than as an alienating machine are all aspects of such an economic view (Schumacher 1973 and Young 1990).

[18]It should be noted that Schumacher was at pains to point out that his 'Buddhist economics' did not simply refer to economics carried out in a buddhist country. He argued that what took place in most buddhist countries was northern economics transposed onto a buddhist society. A true 'Buddhist economics' would be based on the principles of buddhism, placing them in an economic setting and using them to guide policy making and to determine economic choices.

It is equally important to note that what is referred to as work in 'northern' culture is not creative activity but *paid* work. In other words, it is not *what* activity one carries out which is the determining factor, but whether one receives payment for it or not. Unpaid work is highly undervalued and not considered an economic activity (hence the almost universal negation of the economic value of women's household work). Social status is derived to a large extent from how much one earns rather from what one does. In such an analysis of work there is no place for its more social or community building role as described by Schumacher above.

It is clear that following this buddhist approach to work and production would create a more harmonious relationship between humans and the rest of the natural world. Such an approach would also have immediate practical ramifications. The buddhist desire for peace rather than goods mean that ownership and production become mere means to an end as opposed to ends in themselves as they are in 'northern' culture (Schumacher 1974). A society following the principles of Buddhist economics would limit production to what was needed for a peaceful and harmonious life, self sufficiency would take precedence over production for export or profit. Indeed overproduction would not make sense, it would be seen as illogical and uneconomic (in the buddhist sense of the word of course).

Equally important is Schumacher's preference for the use of renewable energy sources over non-renewables, likening these to income and capital respectively. 'A civilisation which treated it "natural capital" such as coal, oil and metals, as income, had long-term prospects no better than a business which sold off its capital assets to pay off its debts' (Young 1990:99). Such use of non-renewable energy sources may be cheaper and more profitable within mainstream economics but, from a buddhist perspective, is an act of illogical violence against nature and humans.

As far as technology is concerned, Schumacher is not suggesting a return to earlier, perhaps less useful, forms of technology. He is arguing for technological choices to be made with the worker and not the product in mind. A piece of machinery which lightens the workload is to be accepted, whereas machinery which merely increases the speed of production whilst demoting the worker to a mere technician should be rejected. Thus; 'The carpet loom is a tool, a contrivance for holding warp threads at a stretch for the pile to be woven round them by the craftsman's fingers; but the power loom is a machine, and its significance as destroyer of culture lies in the fact that it does the essentially human part of the work' (Schumacher 1973:50).

Schumacher wrote his book more than twenty years ago but his ideas are still relevant today. The growing awareness of the ecological crisis especially, has made his analysis on the over-use of oil and coal, for example, more pertinent than ever. Likewise, there are many documented examples of small scale, village or community based units producing for their own self-sufficiency or acting in protest against the sort of 'development' projects that they perceive to endanger their existence (see for example, Verhelst 1987, Wignaraja 1993, Sachs 1993, Dobson 1990, Elliot & Gare 1983, Sen & Grown 1985). The essential point is that all communities whether they are classified as 'developed' or 'underdeveloped', modern or traditional, 'northern' or 'southern' can develop their own strategies, possibly borrowing and adapting ideas from other

traditions. Such as approach goes some way towards weakening the 'developed/underdeveloped' dualism which at present holds so many activities in the straitjacket of conformity.

Such world-views, although stemming from a non-'northern' tradition can never-the-less offer the 'north' a different paradigm upon which to base its relationship with nature. Just as the romanticization of traditional culture must be avoided, so must the portrayal of everything which comes out of 'northern' culture as exploitative be fought against. In the literature there are numerous examples of views and ideas stemming from a specifically 'northern' perspective, yet opening the way to a heterogeneous view of development and nature (see for example Merchant 1992, Dobson 1990 Bahro 1984 and Starrs 1990). Interestingly, some of these mirror the very ideas outlined above. In her study of a new environmental ethic, for example, Catherine Starrs expresses the need to find a middle way to ethical behaviour. It is essential to find a *broader* perspective which would incorporate the '...creative middle' (Starrs 1984:16). Her approach takes a scientific look at the human brain yet ends up coming to similar conclusions as ancient Chinese philosophies. This convergence illustrates a plurality of ideas while at the same time showing how cross-cultural dialogue, within and between countries, can strengthen and extend already existing ideologies and belief systems.

All this is not to suggest, however, that all elements of buddhism or taoism or any other non 'northern' world-view are compatible with an ecological ethic. What I have tried to show is that individuals, communities, even states, must be prepared to look to traditions other than their own in an attempt to find answers to the ecological and social challenges which need to be faced.

Gaia Hypothesis

For the 'northerner' it is possible to look closer to home to identify an ethic which recognises human/nature interdependence. Christians can turn to the Bible and reinterpret its teaching in an ecological light. Likewise, Jews can look back to their traditions to find a basis for an ecological ethic (see Merchant 1992 and Engel & Engel 1990). Within the exact sciences too it is possible to find theories and laws which allow for an ecological analysis of the functioning of the world. The Gaia hypothesis, though taking its name from a Greek goddess, is firmly based on laws of biology and chemistry. The two names most associated with this concept are the scientists James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis. They have attempted to provide a scientific basis to the belief that the earth, Gaia, *actively* regulates the temperature and composition of its atmosphere (Sagan & Margulis 1983:160). This force is not external to the earth, as is the Christian god for example, but an integral part of it - it is the interaction of all life on the planet which regulates it. This hypothesis goes beyond the mere personification of the earth since it is based on the presumption that it is the *sum* of all the parts which breathes life into Gaia. Within such an analysis the human animal, described as the 'microbes...of Gaia' (op. cit.:166), is just another bundle of microbes in a complex and diverse (Goldsmith in *The Ecologist* 1981:183) unity of microbes we choose to call the earth. There is no privileged position, clearly distinguishing this hypothesis from the mechanistic world-view which places humans at the centre. This hypothesis sees the earth itself as a living, sentient being able to control its environment and adapt when under threat.

At the level of theory, this hypothesis works and those ecologists searching for a new discourse can find comfort in it. For the romantics, too, it has the appeal of charm; the living earth of which we are but a minor element contributing to the proper functioning of the whole (J.D.Hughes 1983:57). Even on the level of practice, such a view can lead to change in human behaviour towards the earth: 'Earth responds to human treatment in kind. She rewards responsible, wise labour and punishes the lazy and harmful'. (op. cit.:59) This represents a reversal of the dominant discourse on the human relationship to nature and lays the way for a more respectful treatment of the earth.

The Gaia hypothesis represents a rejection of anthropocentrism since there is an assumption that Gaia will correct herself in order to maintain stability. The danger of such an idea is that instead of leading to a positive change in human attitudes and behaviour towards nature, it may paradoxically lead to a 'more of the same' attitude. If Gaia is self regulatory and humans are inextricably part of a complex and diverse system, whatever we do will be righted by Gaia. There are arguments against this (see, for example, Goldsmith 1981) but these can be conveniently lost or forgotten about by those wishing to maintain the status quo, even assuming they accept the Gaia hypothesis in the first place.

The arguments for and against the Gaia hypothesis are many (see for example Goldsmith 1981 and *The Ecologist* Vol.13 for a more detailed analysis). For the purposes of this paper it is sufficient to note that a concept of the earth as a living organism can act to bring about some changes to the 'northern' perception of human's position on earth, but by itself does not lead to a change in world-view. This hypothesis cannot be proven to the extent that it is accepted by the scientific community; in that sense, although based on science, it is similar to a religious or spiritual belief, the validity of which it is impossible prove in any scientific sense of the word.

There are other scientific laws which can more easily be proven and which may, therefore, be able to play a role in questioning the mechanistic view of nature. The laws of thermodynamics, chaos theory, quantum mechanics and holomovement have all added to the scientific understanding of a living earth. Since 'northern' culture demands proof of a phenomenon before it believes it, such theories can play an important role in changing the 'northern' perception of nature and human relationship to it. For most people in the 'north' the spirituality of taoism or the living earth beliefs of American Indians may be just that bit too far removed from their present day perceptions to act as a catalyst to a new perception of the world. With physical laws of science this is different. I may not fully understand the complexities of thermodynamics but I can appreciate the *type* of argument used and relate these to opposing arguments. It is not necessary to offer an in-depth analysis of these theories, indeed the scope of the paper does not allow for such an analysis, the essential point to be made here is that alternatives to the mechanistic perspective of the human/nature relationship can be challenged on many levels and from many different, maybe even opposing, ideologies and world-views.

The point is *not* that the whole world convert to buddhism, or that all women join witches covens to rediscover their link with nature, but to recognise that out of such traditions and beliefs it is possible to extract

elements which can help a culture or country develop a more benign relationship with the earth and with other humans.

☯

I have outlined some of the philosophies which offer a challenge to the dominant 'northern' world-view. Trying to change the basic ethical foundations of human relationship with the cosmos is no easy matter since it goes to the very heart of our existence and belief systems. The analysis above, however, suggests that there are already existing ideologies and beliefs which could be used to change the world-view and change the rationale which now offers little alternative than to strive for more growth and 'development'.[19] Deep ecology indicates the desirability of taking as broad a view as possible and incorporating as many ideologies as possible in developing a new environmental ethic which can challenge the growth and industrialising message of present 'development' discourse. The deep ecology movement to some extent combines or makes use of the philosophies described above showing how spirituality, religion and science can come together. It is this which I now want to take a short look at.

As I stated in chapter 1, I am a pragmatist. Philosophy for its own sake is not my main concern, philosophy as a justification for action is. In a rather long but interesting article, Edward Goldsmith (1988) has developed what he calls 'The Way' to transforming deep ecology into a practical philosophy. As the name of the article suggests, his vision is partly based on taoism. He also implicitly accepts the Gaia hypothesis, referring to the earth as Gaia and accepting that it has a natural order acting as a single self regulating unit (Goldsmith 1988:160). He draws up 67 laws or principles which he says govern Gaia and which, if followed, would form the basis of a practical ecocentric ethic. He champions subjectivity, intuitive knowledge and emotion as the forces to drive Gaia, all of which mirror the taoism and buddhism outlined above.

With particular reference to 'development' and progress, Goldsmith leaves no doubt that the proper functioning of Gaia rejects industrialisation and the heavy reliance on high levels of technology as the way foreward to a stable, ecologically sound society. In principle 40 he states; 'A climax social system is one which is designed to fulfil its functions within a climax...ecosphere. That is why the tribal vernacular society is the most highly developed, and why a modern institutionalised society...is a...*disclimax society*.' (Goldsmith in *The Ecologist* 1988:175). By disclimax society he means societies which do not function within the parameters of

[19]Having said this it is important to avoid a glorification and romantification of indigenous or traditional communities. While it may be true that modernisation and development have destroyed much indigenous knowledge and practice, the temptation to seek the answers to the ecological crisis in the past or in cultural practices alien to us must be avoided. Although it may be justified to take on board some of the 'environment friendly' elements of other cultures and other times, to accept them as the new 'truth' would be to deny the complexity and diversity of human experience. Although I will be arguing that, in the 'north' at least, we must develop a new world view, this must be based on the reality of history and cultural traditions. To 'import' ideas from the 'south' would be just as foolhardy as the present attempt to impose a universal concept of development.

ecological balance leading to instability and crisis. Since 'developed' societies are not stable, they represent '*regression to a lower state of evolutionary and hence social development.*' (op. cit.).

Such an analysis can be useful since it turns the table on 'development' so that the 'developed' become the 'underdeveloped' and vice versa. It also turns our attention to 'vernacular man' and 'vernacular society' which he does not define but which can be interpreted to mean traditional or pre-industrial society. Such societies have a privileged position in Gaia because they represent the symbiotic relationship between the earth and humans. Such societies follow 'The Way' which ensures a stable cosmos (op. cit. principle 51). This analysis can be useful as it manages to deconstruct the dominant 'development' paradigm, portraying the 'north' as a technocratic society which follows the 'anti-way' (principle 52), while at the same time initiating a reconstruction of 'development'.

It also, however, re-emphasises the 'developed'/'underdeveloped' dualism which I have argued needs to be rejected. Although it may be true that 'traditional' societies have a more benign affect on their environment, what is needed is an analysis of how 'modern' communities can change their behaviour. Equally, there needs to be a recognition that modern and traditional societies often exist side by side and certainly within the global economy all but the most remote of communities are now being drawn into destructive industrial 'development'. It is not enough to promote the 'other', or to replace the superiority of the 'northern' paradigm with a celebration of the traditional. Although a proper appreciation of cultural difference is an essential first step, the ultimate aim must be to reject the use of such polarities as expressions of 'northern' domination which distort reality (Plumwood 1993).

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Such doubts, however, may simply reflect my own preoccupations and interests rather than form a major weakness of Goldsmith's analysis. Below, I will take a critical look at deep ecology as outlined by the Norwegian Arne Naess. He goes beyond the mainstream analysis in defining the cause of the ecological crisis. I have argued throughout that at the philosophical base of contemporary modern society is an ego/homocentric world-view which places the human animal at the apex of a natural hierarchy and whose knowledge 'take[s] in the whole of educated knowledge' (Dobson 1990:8). Nature is the subordinate 'other' within this discourse just as the 'underdeveloped' is the 'other' of 'development' thinking. Deep ecologists such as Naess would argue that this world-view is not only the root cause of the environmental crisis, it is also what is halting a true solution to it. Deep ecology calls for a holistic world-view based on ecocentric ethics. This world-view recognises intrinsic value in the natural world and insists on human responsibility to the whole of nature, not just those parts of it which serve to improve our well-being (Merchant 1992:64). The chart below outlines some of the essential points which distinguish this ethical framework form that of ego/homocentrism which shapes the dominant world-view.

EGO/HOMOCENTRISM	ECOCENTRISM
Maximisation of individual self-interest	Unity, stability, diversity, harmony of ecosystem
Duty to other humans	Duty to whole environment
Individual salvation	Human and cosmic survival
Stewardship by humans as God's caretakers	Faith that all living things have value
Mechanism	Holism

(Adapted from Merchant 1992:65)

Under mechanism are included all those elements of the mechanistic world-view as discussed in chapter 3. Holism represents the opposite approach spelled out in five elements. They are:

1. Everything is connected to everything else.
2. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts.
3. Knowledge is context dependent.
4. The primacy of process over parts.
5. The unity of humans and non human nature. (Merchant 1992).

This approach is easily recognisable as being reconcilable with taoist philosophy and even Schumacher's Buddhist economics. Equally, many of the scientific theories outlined above form the backbone of a deep ecological analysis. In practical terms what this ecocentric ethic calls for is a respect for all of nature and a recognition of human's position within nature. Naess (in Zimmerman 1993:187) described this approach as friendly: a simplistic term maybe, but one which I feel is easily comprehensible to people looking for guidance in reassessing human relationship with the natural world. Holism as set out above also provides a framework for scientific research and the implementation of appropriate technology. Clearly echoing the feminist critique of science, holism recognises the interconnectedness of all matter and the importance of the whole over and above its constituent parts. Ecocentric ethics, therefore, provides a starting point to a new relationship with the rest of nature, one which can be placed within already existing philosophies and world-views. Equally important to finding the links with other ideologies, is the emphasis on pluralism within deep ecology. In his writings, Naess is careful to point out that difference, a plurality of views and approaches, is implicit to deep ecology. The cultural divergencies of human societies are part of a heterogeneous natural world which is maintained by that very complexity. Deep ecologists need to '...accept those differences which are inevitable if the richness and diversity of life on earth is to flourish.' (Naess in *The Ecologist* Vol.18, 1988:129)

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It is the notion of sentience which is important and which strongly separates ego/homocentric ethics from ecocentric ethics. A sentient being is one which has the power of sense perception (*The Concise Oxford*

Dictionary). Peter Singer rightly argues that an ethic based on homocentrism will balk at causing undue pain to sentient beings even if such an ethic implies that we have a right to do so. As he points out, we can ask ourselves 'What is it like to be a possum drowning' and understand that it is probably very unpleasant (Singer 1993:277). This understanding is based on the fact that we as humans would find it unpleasant to be drowning. We extend the perception of such a feeling onto other creatures, in this case the possum, which we conceive to have sentience. It is possible to do this because it is recognised as a creature which can feel, which has a conscience of sorts. Such an understanding can act to limit human activity if this activity harms sentient beings. Such protection is, however, not available to what are *believed* to be non-sentient beings. To use Singer's example, can we logically ask ourselves what it feels like to be a felled tree? We cannot. A question of that sort does not make sense within the mechanistic view of nature as non-reactive and non-feeling and indeed is irrelevant to our considerations of how to treat non-sentient beings.

In fact, a reliance on sentience as a dividing line between those aspects of nature to be included within our ethical boundaries and those which fall outside is, I believe, the wrong standard to be using. To consider whether deep sea oil *minds* being depleted or whether a mountain is *concerned* about having roads laid across it are largely irrelevant questions it terms of taking action to stop these things occurring. Such questions are based on an anthropocentric approach to nature which sees humans as standing above nature and therefore justified in making decisions about it (Merchant 1992).

Deep ecologists go beyond this kind of analysis, insisting that all humans must recognise their place *in* nature, rather than see themselves as *above* it. From this comes the notion of biocentric egalitarianism meaning that '...all things in the biosphere have an equal right to live and blossom...' (quoted in Singer 1993:281). Clearly if we accept such a concept, then the idea of sentience as a defining term becomes defunct. Biocentric egalitarianism argues for the valuing of nature on its own terms. In other words, it dismisses the mechanistic belief that nature is for human benefit, arguing instead that it has intrinsic value. This is a rather problematic concept since it is based on a notion of value which, within 'northern' ethics, is only present in the human mind. It is therefore left up to humans to measure, which will necessarily be based on a human notion of value which is influenced by the way humans relate to nature which brings us back to the idea that the human animal has the right to make judgements about the rest of the cosmos. Rolston III argues that '...intrinsic values are objective and actually found in nature.' (Merchant 1992:79) which may or may not be so, but how are they to be measured? It requires simple faith to accept such a view and, as with the belief in any faith, an interpretation of the praxis inherent to it.

Rolston III indicates what a deep ecological praxis may look like; 'Animals need to be valued intrinsically for what they are, and instrumentally for the roles they play in ecosystems ' (Rolston III in Engel & Engel 1990). He turns to taoist notions of balance through yin and yang and the notion of action by inaction to try to get closer to a strategy for social conduct.

Another problem is the question of what biocentric egalitarianism implies in practice. Does it, for example, mean that all creatures, that all nature, should be shown the same level of reverence and have the

same right to exist? Deep ecology accepts the killing of animals to satisfy vital needs (Naess in *The Ecologist* 1988:130) but this begs the question that if humans have vital needs, do other creatures also have such needs? An ecocentric ethic recognises that nature does indeed have needs, which leads us to the question of whose needs take precedence.

Singer also points out that while egocentric egalitarianism sounds reasonable in theory, it does not truly represent the actual working of the natural world. In nature animals get killed and the weaker get killed more often than the strong. Although there remains a *balance* in nature, it would be wrong to call this balance egalitarian. Just as in ego/homocentrism, equality translates in practice as *relative* equality in which some are more equal than others. There is no reason to believe that this is not also the case within nature. Even within the same species, even within the same group, 'power politics' plays a role. Baboon 'power politics', for example, is as complicated as any UN conference. It is based on strict hierarchies, a system of social favours and symbolic acts and gestures to ensure that every member of the troop knows and keeps to his/her position within the group (Attenborough 1990:218). Nature is not egalitarian and to base a social movement on the false idea that it is, is not a good basis for success.

On the level of practice, therefore, the notion of intrinsic value is problematic, essentially because it demands faith in the notion before leading to action. Philosophers and theorists may find this an interesting domain for discussion, but for activists in the Green movement (Dobson 1990) it can be nothing more than a backdrop. They are more concerned with finding ways of getting the rest of humanity concerned and active. Whether we practise 'agape love' (Hooker 1992:159), have 'reverence' and 'responsibility' towards life (Skolimowski in Engel & Engel 1990:100), this must in some way be translated into social action.[20]

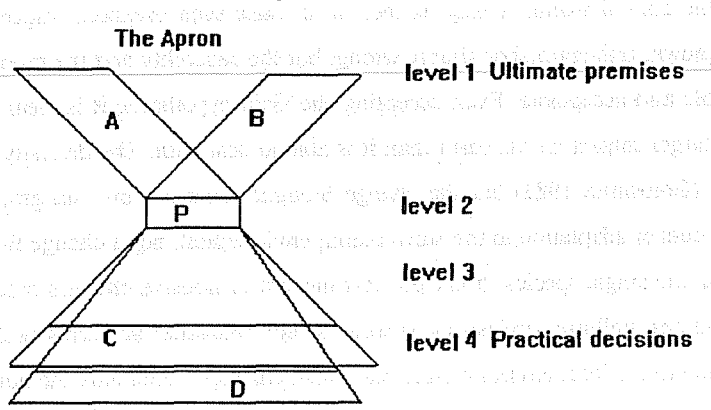
The linked questions of intrinsic value and biocentric egalitarianism are, therefore, tricky ones. Philosophically it may be fine to argue that humans are just another part of nature, but in practice of course we have a much greater influence on the workings and stability of the earth than any other creature. Lovelock and Margulis in the Gaia hypothesis show that in fact it is oceanic micro-organisms which are the most essential organisms is ensuring the stability of the earth (Goldsmith 1981). This is a humbling thought but does not address the fact that, through technology, the human animal is capable of bringing about massive changes to the workings of the earth. Not all of these changes, maybe even most of them, will be beneficial to nature. Human capability can destroy whole ecosystems in literally a matter of minutes with oil spillages, mining and the most devastating capability of all, nuclear power. This puts (some) humans in the position of being able to

[20]This is, of course, an unashamedly anthropocentric argument as it presumes that humans do indeed have the knowledge and skills to bring about a change. While accepting this, it would seem to me that unless the earth can right itself (see Gaia hypothesis, above) we have to assume that we can, in some way, reverse the trend of human activity and at least attempt to make some changes. Many social movements and groups are already involved in trying to bring about such a change, just as many religions such as taoism or jainism call on their followers to act with reverence towards the earth. Maybe for those of us not rooted in such a tradition the words of Aldo Leopold can form a basis for action; 'A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.' (Leopold in Zimmerman 1993:108), though even this remains problematic.

make life and death decisions about the natural world. It may be foolish to make such decisions, especially since the outcome of them is often unknown, unimagined or simply wrong, but the capability and the rationale are there to make such actions probable and acceptable. Even accepting the Gaia hypothesis, it is clear that humans as a species can have a much larger impact on the earth than it is able to deal with. The diversity and complexity of nature may be dynamic (Goldsmith 1981) but the change brought about is slow and gradual. More importantly, such change is a process of adaptation to the surrounding environment, not a change forced upon the environment for the benefit of one single species. It is clear that the sort of massive changes brought about by human intervention - dams, mines, polluting industries as well as such industrial accidents such as Chernobyl are not examples of adaptation to the local environmental but forced changes which only the human species is capable of bringing about.

The most crucial aspect of deep ecology is its questioning and rejection of mechanism as a valid ecological ideology and the whole Enlightenment concept of the human relationship with nature. It argues instead that the ideas encompassed in such an analysis are the main philosophical *cause* of the ecological crisis, and by extension the development crisis, and therefore cannot be expected to provide a solution to it. It therefore introduces a new science of nature, a new spiritual paradigm and a new ecological ethic (Merchant 1992). In doing so, it shakes the complacency of the dominant paradigm, presenting it with an alternative world vision based on historical and contemporary reality. It develops a holistic New Ecological Paradigm (Merchant 1992:89) which is able to synthesise and incorporate many different visions, movements, religions and philosophies. Therefore, within deep ecology we find peace loving, even pacifist, taoism and buddhism standing on the same platform as the often violent and aggressive Earth First! movement (Seager 1993).

This multi-dimensional approach means that deep ecology can potentially inspire vast numbers of individuals and communities to action. Arne Naess visualised this multi-dimensional approach in the so-called apron diagram as shown below (Naess in The Ecologist 1984:202).



Source: A. Naess 'Deep Ecology and Ultimate Premises'. In The Ecologist Vol. 18, 1988:131

This diagram serves to illustrate how deep ecology, or rather how a deep ecological analysis, can spring from many sources and make use of many different ideologies and points of view. The upper section of the 'apron' represents possible basic premises from which a deep ecological analysis may flow. The second level represents the deep ecological platform which sets out the eight basic principles of deep ecology. These eight points represent for Naess a set of common denominators which separate a deep analysis from other levels of analysis. Although the deep ecology platform is fixed, it may lead to different general consequences based on the fundamental premises, these consequences leading in turn to different practical solutions to the social and environmental crisis. This multi-dimensional approach, therefore, indicates how it is possible for various cultural traditions, many of which will be in some conflict with each other, to instigate a deep ecological analysis and define some practical solutions based on a context dependent view of reality.

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I have argued that deep ecology is based on an ecocentric ethic and holds up a holistic view of nature to some extent represented by the Gaia hypothesis. One of the main strengths of the deep ecology movement is that it is not a movement at all, in the sense that a movement is 'collective protest against some form of social injustice...' (Wignaraja 1993:5) because deep ecology presents itself as a cluster of ideas rather than as a unified movement. This enables it to accept activists and theorists from a wide range of philosophical, ideological and religious backgrounds and tolerate an equally wide range of general normative consequences and particular rules of action. (Naess in Zimmerman 1993).

Within the context of 'development' the value of this approach is clear. It allows communities to analyse their needs in their own, culturally specific terms, and draw up their own plans of action to meet those needs.[21]. This does not necessarily mean that international co-operation in the fulfilling of those needs must stop, but that the recipients of the co-operation define the terms in which it is given and the ends it is to serve.

What stops deep ecology becoming a mere amalgam of ideas with an 'anything goes' sort of approach is Naess' insistence that there are basic principles to deep ecology which must be adhered to. These are found at level 2 of the 'apron' - the central pivot from and to which ideas, world-views and ideologies can lead.[22]

Although I am not totally happy with the deep ecology platform, especially with its apolitical and sexist nature, its strength lies in its ability to draw together many different ideologies, religions and world-views. With its eight basic principles it establishes a list of priorities which can be interpreted along various lines coinciding with culture and tradition[23]. Equally, it tolerates a plurality of practical implications. This is its major strength.

I am convinced that alternative development must start by accepting that both alternative and development are heterogeneous ideas. Mainstream 'development' has made these terms its own, linking them uncompromisingly to 'northern' style 'development' based on the concept of progress. The *style* of analysis offered by deep ecology means that it has the potential to bring a change to the predominant world-view of the earth and all of nature as mere aids to human existence. By extension it shows that the ideology of development can be. I would argue *must* be, context specific. Expertise could then be seen to exist at many levels, the academic scholar or technician being just one source of knowledge among many.

To conclude, I believe that the style of approach inherent to deep ecology, taoism, buddhism and the Gaia hypothesis as analysed above, is one which could be used to change the dominant development paradigm. It shows it is possible and beneficial to take strengths from many quarters and adapt them to ones own context. I am not preaching massive conversion. What I *have* attempted to do in this chapter is show that alternative development refers to a more open approach to the whole problematique. The very concept of 'development'

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[21]This is not ignoring the dynamics of power which play a part in the social organisation of any society or group. Some members of the community have or take the power to make decisions which affect the lives of the rest of the society. Even if such elites, whether at the household of state level, have the apparent consent to make decisions, there is no guarantee that those decisions will not be made in their own interests rather than in the interests of other members of the community.

[22]For a more detailed analysis of the deep ecology platform see the special Deep Ecology issue of the Ecologist. A more critical analysis can be found in my own paper on the subject written for the MJS310 course.

[23]Unfortunately this paper is not the proper place in which to go into more detail regarding the deep ecology platform. For the interested reader much can be gained by looking at the analysis of deep ecology offered by ecofeminism and social ecology. Here I can refer the reader to Merchant 1992, Plumwood 1993, Dobson 1990, Clarke 1993, Sachs 1993 and Zimmerman et al. 1993. My own critique would also concentrate on the difficulty of implementing the platform. As a starting point and analytical tool it has great value, but it tends to assume that people and communities have the means by which to implement their ideological beliefs. At the level of power relations especially, be they class, ethnic or gender, deep ecology falls short. The human race is portrayed as a homogenous whole with little differentiation as to the relative effect of a particular individual's or society's impact on the earth.

needs to be re analysed, possibly using some of the ideas outlined above, so that its boundaries can be extended beyond the rather narrow definition it now carries.

CHAPTER 5

PERSONAL CONCLUSIONS AND NEW INTRODUCTIONS

A conclusion marks the end of a piece. It offers an opportunity to look over the work which has been carried out, to analyse the strong and the weak points of an argument and draw the threads together. A conclusion can also be an opportunity to look into the future - to lay the foundations for a new beginning. This conclusion does just that. More specifically I will use this opportunity to consider the potential for future development or developments in the light of the arguments I have presented throughout this paper. In that sense I hope that this conclusion will not signal an end point but rather a start.

This conclusion has two distinct aims. The first is to bring the many threads of my argument together to see whether I have managed to make a case for development in the 'north'. The second aim will be more personal - what I have learnt from the writing of this paper.

I have shown that, to use again the words of Esteva, 'development' stinks. Not only has it failed on human terms, the ideology inherent to 'development', that of progress and growth, has resulted in severe ecological destruction which has now reached such a level as to pose a threat to the very existence of the earth as we know it. Much of this destruction takes place in the 'north' or because of 'northern' practices in any part of the world.

Within the context of 'development', progress refers to constant improvement, regardless of whether improvement is necessary or not. A faster car, a better computer, new medical methods, further searching into deep space, all these are elements of progress. The fact that this ideology of progress has led to social and ecological destruction has remained conveniently hidden or has been simply ignored. This dominant 'northern' paradigm has global influence and can more or less dictate how the rest of the world develops and changes.

Over the last couple of decades it has become more and more clear that the world-view so enshrined in 'northern' thinking leaves a lot to be desired. I have shown how this world-view, the result of a change in human relationship with nature brought about during the Enlightenment period, has resulted in destruction on such a scale that all life is now threatened. The painful question which remains after such an analysis is what, if anything, can be done to reverse the spiral of destruction 'northern' 'development' has brought about. To answer this question I looked at several ideologies which offer a different world-view. The four I looked at were only four amongst many other ideologies I could have looked at. I make this point because it is important to understand that I am not suggesting the mass embracing of the four ideologies I chose to highlight. The main point of my discussion was to point out that the 'northern' way is not the only way to development if development is released from its present restricting meaning of economic growth and improvement. Buddhism, taoism, the Gaia hypothesis and deep ecology offer other possibilities, suggest a relative approach to truth and confirm my belief that problems faced by a society can best be solved within the context of that society and not

by superimposing pre-defined solutions based on ideological or political beliefs developed under other circumstances to deal with a different set of problems.

In the light of this, my argument has been that what is meant by development must be redefined. To take it out of the inverted commas, 'development' must become a broader concept, one that realises that just because a thing is possible does not make it desirable and that change and improvement in the quality of life cannot be achieved by destroying or even simply harnessing all that nature is. Context specificity is an essential element of a new development paradigm, enabling societies to define their own needs and their own solutions to meeting those needs. Not only is such a change desirable, I feel that it is essential if the very serious problems of ecological disintegration even total destruction are to be avoided.

On a personal level I now feel ready to look more deeply into the ideas and beliefs which I have only been able to consider very briefly up to now. Though I would not presume to have written a piece of great inspirational value, I hope that those who take the time to read my research paper find it sufficiently interesting to read further, to maybe look more closely at some of the ideas I have touched upon and perhaps even take action to change the way 'development' is perceived and carried out. That is why this last chapter is just as much about new introductions as conclusions and why it is the most challenging and difficult to write.

In many ways the paper turned out differently than I had expected. I had been hoping for definite answers to rather indefinite questions and some clear indications of the way forward. This has not happened. With hindsight it is clear that this could never have happened within the framework I had set myself. The very nature of the paper and the arguments used made this impossible. Trying to find answers instead of *an* answer, strategies instead of *strategy*, new approaches instead of *an* approach all mitigate against the finding of a clear cut blueprint for the future.

This is just as well. I would have been doing the many ideas and ideologies a disservice if I had tried to bundle them together and force them to take on a shape other than their own. Certainly I used their work for my own purposes but in doing so I hope that I did not distort their work. I used it, I hope I did not *abuse* it. Equally I made it clear that co-operation and dialogue between ideas is possible, that there are many areas where ideas and ideologies cross indicating the potential for new learning and new ideas.

I would also be doing my PADS colleagues a disservice had I come up with a definitive plan of action. As I am sure they will confirm, one of the benefits of the academic study we have been following is that we have had an opportunity to discuss many different ideas and points of view. It has become clear to me that there is no such thing as right and wrong as blanket terms - what is right in one place, in one time, for a particular group is wrong in another context. At this late stage it would be a rejection of the rich cultural and ideological traditions which make PADS that which it is if I were to assume that I had found *the* answer to the world's problems and present them in the form of this research paper as such. The very essence of my research paper

has been to argue that context specificity is essential to finding answers to the many questions which are being asked. An acceptance that there is not one answer is a single step in that direction.

I hope I have managed to bring this across for it is this which, more than anything, forms the foundation to what I feel should be a new approach towards 'development'. In chapter 4 especially, I tried to make clear that a multiplicity of approaches is not only desirable but also inevitable. As I have argued, one of the reasons why 'development' has failed is because it tried to impose a model, a blueprint for change. With the deepening ecological and social crisis in the 'north' as well as the 'south', it has become clear that 'development' as defined nearly 50 years ago needs radical reassessment if change is to be 'friendly' and 'respectful' to humans and the rest of nature.

Whether this reassessment takes the form of postmodern analysis, a red/green alliance, multidisciplinary scientific dialogue, the setting up of bioregions or a return to the worship of Mother Earth is irrelevant. The change will come about within the specific social/historical context each society, community even individual finds itself in. The most basic answer to the crisis in development is that there is no answer. It is impossible to put forward a master plan of how the world should be and then set out to impose it. This is what mainstream development attempted to do and has failed miserably. The starting point must be a new attitude towards each other and nature: an attitude which recognises, even celebrates difference, which admits that no single culture, tradition or ideology is in possession of the absolute truth, indeed an attitude which realises that no such absolute truth exists.

My impulse for writing *this* research paper was to answer the question of whether the 'north' is able to 'develop'. It has become clear that this can only be answered once other questions have been looked at first. The most basic of these is what is development - is it really as defined by the mainstream or are there other definitions? I did not spend time really analysing this question since to do so would have been to concentrate on irrelevancies. The problem of defining development is thus basic in that it colours the approach taken to achieve it, yet also irrelevant since it cannot be answered. *I* can answer the question for myself just as you, the reader, can answer it for yourself. As I have argued throughout, however, there is nothing to say that my analysis is any better than yours, indeed it is impossible to say so.

What I have been arguing for is a willingness to look beyond individual horizons, to consider just as seriously the positions of the 'other'. This does not have to lead to a melting pot of ideas in which all lose their individuality, but to a richer analysis of the problems societies face and the solutions available. I have not been arguing that the whole of the 'north' become buddhist or taoist or take on board the ideas of the Gaia hypothesis. I have been arguing that if we, as individuals, as societies, as states from the 'north' are not willing to even consider what other traditions have to say we may find that we have 'developed' ourselves out of existence.

I am convinced that the 'north' has to change, has to develop (*not*, I must emphasise, 'develop'). The ecological destruction industrial society creates cannot continue. In order to change, it is essential that the very essence of 'northern' hegemony be put up for discussion. Merely discussing whether women are the most

important resources to development or whether throwing leftover food into the 'biobak' is ecologically sound or not is not enough. Such details do not question what development is all about. Without this questioning, development, change, progress, whatever term we chose to use, will continue to be defined by the elites to serve the end they have in mind.

I am going to end this research paper with a quote from the British singer/songwriter, Roger Waters. I found these lyrics particularly pertinent to the topic I have been discussing and certainly to the state the world now finds itself in. I fear that if the 'north' especially does not change, Waters' prophetic lyrics will become reality.

And when they found our shadows
Grouped around the TV sets
They ran down every lead
They repeated every test
They checked out all the data on their lists
And then the alien anthropologists
Admitted they were still perplexed
But on eliminating every other reason
For our sad demise
They logged the only explanation left
This species has amused itself to death.

(From Roger Waters **Amused to Death**. Roger Waters Music Overseas Ltd./ Pink Floyd Music Publishers Inc.)

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