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INTERculture intends to contribute to the discovery and emergence of viable alternative approaches to the fundamental problems of contemporary Man, in both theory and practice. Its approach is meant to be integral, which means:

- Intercultural: undertaken in light of the diverse cultural traditions of contemporary Man, and not solely in the terms of modern culture;
- Inter and trans-disciplinary: calling on many 'scientific' disciplines, but also on other traditions of knowledge and wisdom (ethno-sciences) as well as on vernacular and popular knowledge;
- Dia-logical: based on the non-duality between *mythos* and *logos*, *theoria* and *praxis*, science and wisdom, wisdom and love. "Wisdom emerges when the love of knowledge and the knowledge of love coalesce" (Raimon PANIKKAR).

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The Intercultural Institute of Montreal (formerly Monchanin Cross-Cultural Centre) is an institute for intercultural education, training, and research, dedicated to the promotion of cultural pluralism and to a new social harmony. Its fundamental research focuses on social critique and exploration of viable alternative approaches to the contemporary crisis. Its activities, which draw inspiration and sustenance from this research, aim at a cultural and social mutation—radical change—through gradual education and training. Its research and action have, from the very start, been undertaken in light of diverse contemporary cultures. It attempts to meet the challenges of our times by promoting cultural identities, their inter-action in creative tension and thus their eventual emancipation from the final and most subtle colonialism: hegemony by the mind. The Institute's cross-cultural research and action is carried out through its programs in the three following modules: research and action, teaching and training in interculturalism, interculturalism resources and services.

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THE TERRORISM OF MONEY
(intercultural perspectives)

Issue I

Derek RASMUSSEN: The priced vs the priceless
Robert K. THOMAS: Man-made law

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Note from the Editor

IT SEEMS TO US that while there is so much talk today, especially since 9/11/01, about terrorism and anti-terrorism, there isn't enough about the "terrorism of money" which is at the core of our daily lives and relationships, whether in relation to peoples of the world or with regard to the Cosmos and to Reality and Life itself. Terrorism of money, which, by the way, is probably not without a link to the cause of the 9/11/01 terrorist event.

We are therefore inviting our readers in this issue and in an upcoming one, to meditate and research/action with us on this taboo topic, considered in the intercultural light of the life-wisdoms of mankind.[1]

The difficult task ahead of us in these issues, is first to unmask the taboo topic of how the paneconomic ideology has us in its grip and is invading our lives to the point that we and Reality itself are under its tyranny and dictatorship to such a degree that we can even speak of our being enslaved to it, and that we can speak of its destructiveness as being deadly.

1. Our Journal *Interculture* has already taken up the issue of economics in an intercultural perspective. First in 1982, Issue 77, entitled: "Cross-cultural Economics" (72 pp.); in 1984, Issues 84-85: "Development, a universal requisite?" (64 pp.) In 1988, issue 98 presented Dominique TEMPLE on "Economicide" (47 pp.) In 1990, we published a book on the theme *Alternatives au développement* (345 pp.) and two Issues by Alfredo DE ROMAÑA on autonomous (vernacular) economics. In 1992, IIM organized an international colloquium "Living with the Earth" and launched a Manifesto "The end of development" and in 1993, published *Living with the Earth* (270 pp.) and a brief report of the colloquium in our magazine *Horizons Interculturels*. In 1994, Issue 124 "The Scottish Highlands in Colonial and Psychodynamic Perspective" (36 pp.) by A. MCINTOSH, A. WIGHTMAN and D. MORGAN. In 1995, (Issue 126) we published "Regeneration in the Andes" (56 pp.)

Secondly, our task is to try to answer the question "how can we survive its death-dealing impact and devastation?" An answer not easy to spell out and even less so to put into practice in the present context.

Are we going against the current? Maybe we are seeking rather to embrace a deeper current, one where nobody is master? i.e. shifting from the current of monetary security and abstraction, to the current of cosmic confidence and Realization (Reality)!...

Money is literally invading all of our lives and societies and to an extent and depth that too often escapes our awareness. It has us by the throat. We are its slaves. Everything must yield to it, even Reality itself. It is the Great Reductionist. It kills Life and Reality. It is in the process of killing us.

The problem is not so much of not having enough money or of having too much of it, it is one of not being able to live without money and of not having the right to live without it. Our incapacity to live today without money and without even more money, says a lot about how the depth of alienation of our developed societies from who we are as human beings, from Mother Earth, and hence from Reality and from the Gratuitous Gift that Life is. As an African friend of ours, E. N'DIONE, says:

> *the problem that we are facing today is the systematic invalidation of gratuitousness, hence of Life and of what constitutes our deepest value, that of being.*

The problem of poverty cannot be solved by money, because "the problem is not poverty, it is riches" says the Iranian Majid RAHNEMA.[2] *So what shall we do? What do the cultures/wisdoms of the world say about it? What does Reality and Life say?*

Obviously, no one can dictate the meaning of a word, nor stretch a priori its meaning. This is also true with the words: economy, market, riches, price, money, development, modernity, terrorism, etc. It would be wrong to see these words as exclusively negative or positive. We are not trying here to condemn all that comes under these notions of economy, money, exchange, nor to substitute one culture with another one, but to approach questions and answers from an intercultural perspective and with cosmic confidence.

We therefore present this meditation-action on the "terrorism of money" in two issues of the Journal. The first issue will serve as an introduction. It is a direct down-to-earth conversational interpellation, entitled "The Priced versus the Priceless" and "Man-made law." Its approach is a

2. See his book in French *Quand la misère chasse la pauvreté* (Fayard, 2003).

kind of anthropological introduction to the fact that the problem is not "the third world poor" but the so-called "developed euro-Americans and their ideology of 'ever more,'" their money psychosis. The author invites us not to fear what is priceless.

The second (forthcoming) issue which intends to be more philosophical (in the sense of the wisdom of love, not merely the love of wisdom) will try to deepen our theme, first through an analysis, then through indigenous testimonies. The analysis, at first, shall deal with some of the names that can be given to the terrorism of money, but will also illustrate briefly some of the forms that this terrorism is taking with regard to peoples of the world, with regard to the cosmos and to Reality (Life). Secondly, the analysis will propose some alternatives, under two titles:

1) de-economizing our minds and demonitizing our lives, moving beyond the mere "exchange" and "social" economy;

2) recovering and embracing the kinship and gratuitousness of Life and Reality.

We shall conclude with indigenous testimonies.

We are in the process of presenting Interculture *in a new (we hope) less austere format, because* Interculture *which began in 1968, intends continuing to be an adequate expression of the thinking, action and life of the Intercultural Institute of Montreal in its local, national and international dimensions.*

Robert VACHON

THE TERRORISM OF MONEY
Cross-cultural perspectives
Issue I

THE PRICED VERSUS THE PRICELESS

by Derek Rasmussen[3]

I. Pricing Everything

> The lone phone operator in a fluorescent-lit cubicle whose performance is being monitored by a computer is hardly unfolding her or his existence as nature intended. —Andy Fisher (2002: 85)

WHAT DOES IT SAY ABOUT A PERSON if they wish for the end of the week? If the Buddha taught that we should be aware of exactly where we are in this very moment; what does it say that during a work day or week, all we want is for the end to come? For 5:00 PM or Friday to arrive?

When you start each day plotting where you are in the week, how many days till Friday, till the weekend, till time off—then in fact you are rushing the grave toward you, wishing that your life passed quicker before your eyes, wishing the whole thing were over. But what if all that sour momentum builds up, what sort of effect does it have on your psyche? Is it possible that our disease-ridden lives are in part a consequence of so much psychic energy being put into wishing the day were over, wishing the week would end? Isn't this is a kind of slow-motion suicide? Maybe our bodies and their multiple denizens—ribosomes, bacteria, viruses—are just answering our call? ("Hey you! Ya, you up there. You want it to be over?—well here you go then: You've got cancer.")

> A dollar is ...a codified psychosis normal in one subspecies of this animal, an institutionalized dream that everyone is having at once. —Weston LABARRE (1954: 174).

3. Derek RASMUSSEN is a peace activist and meditation teacher who spent the past decade living in the Inuit territory of Nunavut and he has worked for the Inuit as a policy advisor. He is the author of "Dissolving the Inuit Culture through Education and Money" in *Interculture*, Issue No. 139, Oct. 2000 (64 pp.)

The wage-day and the wage-week feel like prison; there may not be physical walls but the walls we've constructed in our minds are much more imposing anyhow. 5:00 PM or Friday is when the gates are unlocked—*we are released.* "My time is my own again." Till Monday; or till 8 AM tomorrow. What creates the walls; how do they go up? Well, we put them up. Because of the ideology of money. The *ideology* of money dominates our lives even though we may not be rich. We say that time is money, so we enclose our life-time, our life hours—we put them into a container and sell it to the highest bidder. Now they own us. This is not slavery—slavery is more expensive and less sophisticated—this is human leasing. Human rental. With all the maintenance and insurance costs falling on the human unit provider-not on the leaser (the employer). And we can't wait for our leases to expire; to get our bodies back.

Now, I can't be sure, but I don't believe that hunter-gatherer society rushed to see a week end; that they impatiently watched the sun arc through the sky, sighing exasperatedly, tapping their feet, wishing for the day to be over. Perhaps it's because they had so much less work to do? Economic anthropologist Marshal SAHLINS (1972) estimates that a hunter-gatherer accumulated the requisites of life (food, shelter, clothing, medicinal plants, tools and tool repair) after expending 15 hours of effort per week—the rest of his time was free for play, song, music, craft and so on. They were the original "affluent society" says SAHLINS. So this prisoner motif is not an attitude that a civilization develops until it is in the thrall of moneyed time. Work is not the enemy, money is.

> Addiction in the modern sense can be understood as a compulsive lifestyle that people adopt as a desperate substitute when they are dislocated from the myriad intimate ties between people and groups—from the family to the spiritual community—that are essential for every society... In order for "free markets" to be "free," the exchange of labour, land, goods and currency must not be encumbered by elements of psychosocial integration such as clan loyalties, village responsibilities, guild or union rights, charity, family obligations, social roles, or religious values...People are expected to move to where the jobs are to be found, and to adjust their work lives and cultural tastes to the demands of a global market. —Bruce Alexander, Professor of Psychology (2001)

1.1 Car Crashes: Hurrah!

The economy of Alberta Canada has gone through an oil-fueled boom in the past 3 decades; Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rose 401% from 1961 to 1999. The alternative analysts at the Pembina Institute dissected this growth and found that car crashes had shot up as well, from 278 per year per 10,000 adults in 1961 to 408 per year per 10,000 adults in 1999 (PEMBINA: 2001). Was this a good or a bad thing? Well, it was awfully good for the economy.

More tow trucks used, more car repairs done, more blood bought and sold, more doctors and nurses and grief counsellors employed—car crashes increased the GDP! GDP tells us the economy is doing well. The higher the GDP, the better off we are, according to conventional economists. Do those families involved in car crashes feel better off? Will

they feel any better if an economist tells them that because of their suffering the economy improved? What's wrong with this picture?

1.2 Motive

The study of history is the study of motive, to paraphrase Simone WEIL (1972: 189). You can study 'how' someone did something, and you can study 'what' they did, but without the 'why' you may as well forget history and just do arithmetic.

It is incumbent upon Euro-Americans to study what we've done to ourselves and the world—how dramatic and unprecedented our way of life is—and to study why we did it. Not just the "what," but the "why." It is a straightforward story really, quite navigable with a bit of common sense, but if you had to turn it into an academic study you could call it *economic anthropology*. Karl POLANYI and his colleagues were in the process of establishing such studies at Columbia University in the 1950s when Joseph MCCARTHY showed up on the scene and drove POLANYI out of America (and up to York University in Canada). The fledgling discipline died out (just try and find it on campuses today); but its rebirth is sorely needed (see Laura NADER, 1997). Without it, the magnifying glass is exclusively pointed at exotic "underdeveloped" peoples, with no understanding of what the rich peoples and nations did over the past fifty years to create categories like "developed" and "underdeveloped." Because the rich nations hold the magnifying glass it is never pointed at them, and so there is no study of 'economic obesity', nor even a category that admits our "overdevelopment."

> To think ecologically is to understand that while some parts of the world are undoubtedly underdeveloped, if one is at all inclined to use that modality of thinking, *it is nonetheless the overdeveloped parts of the world which ought to give greater cause for anxiety. The rich, not the poor, are the problem for humankind and the earth's resources in the long run.* (LAL, 2002: 14)

Why are the rich 20% of humanity the problem? Because this 20% gorges on 80% of the world's resources, leaving 80% of humanity to try to get by on the leftovers (WACKERNAGEL and REES, 1996: 102). And our lazy academics and journalists propound the myth that this whole way of life is just part of a "natural" social evolution—"Millionaires are a product of natural selection" spouted one utilitarian propagandist over a hundred years ago (SUMNER, in WILLIAMS, 1997: 90). And our elites still assert that our money-based culture makes us the most highly-evolved civilization in history, the logical and natural high point in human arrangements.

So why are we the problem? Because our economic beliefs are very destructive and they dominate world affairs. Because most of the world's wealth is ending up in our pockets, and this short-changes everyone else. "Indigenous people have in effect been engaged in a massive program of foreign aid to the industrialized North" for most of the past 400 years, says Jack KLOPPENBURG Jr. (KLOPPENBURG, 1991: 16). Economic develop-

ment brings "heaven" to "at most 5% of the people; the rest are living in hell" (BAHUGUNA in IIM, 1992: 225).

1.3 The sociological equivalent of the splitting of the atom

Euro-America is the result of the biggest, quickest and most dramatic behavioral experiment the planet has ever seen. Euro-America, according to anthropologist Wade DAVIS, is a "new and original culture that celebrates the individual at the expense of family and community—a stunning innovation in human affairs, the sociological equivalent of the splitting of the atom" (DAVIS, 2002). We live in an "Age of Disintegration" says DAVIS, and "as cultures wither away, individuals remain." [This confirms many of our suspicions: We're *not* crazy—the world really is screwed up.]

Scientists split the atom in order to unleash an enormous amount of energy; the market economy splits open the family and the community in order to harness the enormous energy of individual rentable and mobile humans—wage labourers. No more being tied down—to your "land," to your place, to your kin. This new type of civilization would not weave its members into societies, cultures, communities; instead individuals would be "freed" to rent their life hours to corporations and state bureaucracies. Disembedded individuals march to the tune of money and employment, while their loyalty to places and people withers. This is the ideology of "property-based individualism," as C. B. MACPHERSON called it (MACPHERSON, 1964). "Above all, [capitalism] is a system in which the bulk of society's work is done by propertyless labourers who are obliged to sell their labour power in exchange for a wage in order to gain access to the means of life" says historian Ellen MEIKSINS WOOD (MEIKSINS WOOD;1999; 2). This is "what used to be called 'wage slavery', [and] it's intolerable" (CHOMSKY, 2002: 195). It is a "historically specific social form" that has "only existed for a short while—barely a fraction of humanity's existence on earth," and it represents a "rupture" with all previous social forms (MEIKSINS WOOD: 3-7). "In premodern societies, and in nonmodernized ones today, the markets that exist are limited in place, time, and scope...because they tend to disrupt social relations" (LOY, 2003: 66).

Markets used to be a carefully controlled activity; societies cordoned them off, held them in certain places at specific times; markets were nested inside societies. Today this trading activity which used to be subordinate to and embedded in societies, now encases human communities and dictates terms to the people (POLANYI, 1957: 71, 57; CAYLEY, 1992: 191-2).

> "Why is it," I asked... "that so many workers live in unspeakable misery?" With their hands they have built great cities, and they cannot be sure of a roof over their heads. ...They have gone down into the bowels of the earth for diamonds and gold, and they haggle for a loaf of bread....Why? ...[It] is the record of profits and losses called *the market*. –Helen KELLER, 1912 (in FONER, 1967: 43)

The necessary spark for this bonfire of societies was the "commercialization of the soil," the "weirdest" of all undertakings, one that turned land into "congealed money" (POLANYI, 1957: 178; BUCHAN; 1991). Before splitting open human bonds to release "labour," the market split open human bonds with nature to create "property," "resources" and "real estate." England blazed the trail, and the rest of Europe soon followed. In a 60 year period the English Parliament passed 3209 Acts of Enclosure which "diverted" four million acres of "traditional common land" into private hands (WILLIAMS, 1983: 12-13). The word "private" comes from the Latin "*privatus*: withdrawn from public life," itself from "*privare*: to bereave or deprive" (WILLIAMS, 1976: 242). These deprivations, thefts of the commons, reached their "engulfing climax" in the early 19th century, when "ten million acres, nearly half of England's arable land had been enclosed" (HEILBRONER, 1980: 60). The landed gentry and the new class of capitalists "privatized" the "commons," and those without property were forced into human rental (wage labour) in order to obtain the necessary bits of metal or coloured paper (money) to exchange for the basics of life—food, shelter, clothing. [By the way, sometimes the people fought back: "In the period 1628-1631, large crowds attacked and broke down the enclosures and entire regions of England were in a State of rebellion" —SHIVA in SACHS, 1992: 211].

This was "*The Great Transformation*" as POLANYI called it. The great destruction of social, spiritual, and natural bonds—the great theft. "Property is theft," shouted PROUDHON, but if everyone could be convinced that 'greed is good' then theft could be made to look "natural." The utilitarian thinkers were enlisted in this cause and they succeeded mightily. Known as the Philosophic Radicals (Adam Smith, David RICARDO, Jeremy BENTHAM) they brought about a revolution in human thinking, converting "well-being" into "well-having" (HALEVY; 1960; LATOUCHE in SACHS, 1992: 255). The triumph of the philosophic radicals meant that "do the right thing" became "get the most things." It was a radical new view of how humans ought to live. "Capitalism invented scarcity—at least as a deliberate method of economic organization" (MCQUAIG, 2001: 29). And although greed is the motivation Capitalism admits to, its true propellant is *fear*.

No civilization ever before had managed to convince its entire membership to believe that bits of the earth's surface could be 'owned' by individual members of one species. No previous human group had managed to convince its entire membership of non-rich persons to voluntarily sell themselves for currency, to convince everyone of the glory of human rental (while condemning human ownership—slavery). No prior civilization had allowed itself to be permeated by cancerous clusters known as corporations: "hugely fictitious bodies" which were allowed to assume the legal rights of human beings without the parallel responsibilities (there would be no death penalty for corporations, no matter how heinous their crime). And finally no other civilization had achieved such widespread acceptance and use of money to represent almost all matters and materials of value. This difference was highlighted by Inuit leader John AMAGOALIK when speaking to a southern television audience in 1976, "We don't look at land as something to be owned, something to be given away or to be

sold. It's a heritage, it's something *inside you"(* CBC website; Front Page Challenge; Dec. 13, 1976).

Money and land ownership were two of the four prybars used to split open communities and homelands—the remaining two were human rental, and corporations—a list first enumerated by POLANYI who referred to them as "fictions" (POLANYI, 1957: 68, 71, 130, 178-9). And today these fictions are "facts." Money flying through our hands, busily renting ourselves out, we are so steeped in market motives, "so enveloped in the capitalist world, so used to our own way of behaving, that it is difficult to imagine people ever behaved differently" (MCQUAIG, 2001: 16). But indeed, this sole focus of "material gain was largely foreign to most people in ancient Egyptian, Greek, Roman and medieval cultures, as well as in most Eastern civilizations"—just as it seems a bizarre idea to modern hunter-gatherer or peasant farming cultures today (MCQUAIG: 17).

> One of the things I find very interesting in our current debates is this concept of who creates wealth—that wealth is only created when it's owned *privately*. What would you call clean water, fresh air, a safe environment—are they not a form of wealth? And why does it only become wealth when some entity puts a fence around it and declares it private property? Well, you know, that's not wealth *creation*, that's wealth *usurpation*.—Harvard Professor Elaine BARNARD (in film *The Corporation*)

1.4 Fear and Scarcity

> To those who say that capitalism is rooted in human nature, we answer "possibly, but so was cannibalism." —League for Social Reconstruction,1930 (in KIERANS, 1989)

Former economic advisor to the US president, Charles SCHULTZE once said that "Market-like arrangements...reduce the need for compassion, brotherly love, and cultural solidarity as motivating forces behind social improvement... Harnessing the 'base' motive of material self-interest to promote the common good is perhaps the most important social invention mankind has achieved" (DALY and COBB, 1994:139). The spark may be self-interest, but the fuel is fear. Fear that there will not be enough to go around. Fear of shortage, fear of scarcity. This is money's biggest weapon: scarcity. "[A]ll this points to the fundamental defect of our economic system, and any other system that requires continual growth if it is not to collapse: *What motivates it is not need but fear*, for it feeds on and feeds our sense of *lack*." (LOY, 2002: 83)

Because so many of nature's abundances have been walled off, made private, we live in fear of being without food and shelter. Living abstract lives dependent on money we are no longer familiar with nature's seasonal replenishment of these abundances—free of charge, available to the deserving and *undeserving* alike. But most of us no longer have tangible lived experience of the earth's cyclical replenishment, free of charge. Natural non-human forces may refill the breadbasket for 99% of the species on earth, but we have forgotten and lost confidence in these forces. When millions of people all share the same belief in coloured paper, they all live

in fear of not having it, and they all accept the power of scarcity, then "mentally the world has been changed out of all recognition" (BUCHAN, 1997: 54).

Try this exercise to help you to appreciate the impact of this. If you check the back pages of the business section of your national newspaper, usually after the stock exchange listings is one column devoted to "commodities": sugar, coffee, orange juice, hogs. Read the headline. The headline will say one of two things: either it will say something like "Record Orange Crop: Prices Plummet"; or it will say, "Prices Surge on News of Frost Damage to Orange Crop." Oh, heartbreak.... This tells you all you need to know about our adolescent culture; in 40,000 years of our species' history, no other human community ever greeted abundance as *bad news*. Or treated crop failure as cause for celebration. Money has terrorized our minds: for monetized Euro-Americans; scarcity is good news, *abundance is bad news*. Calamity means profit. As fisherman and academic Raymond ROGERS says, "Through the massive inversion of reality that drives capital, we increasingly grant social standing to dead things (commodities) and deny it to living things (humans and nature)." ROGERS says that ours is a "world in which living things die to make a dead thing grow" (in FISHER, 2002: 84). It doesn't take more than that to illuminate the vast moral distance we have traveled from the mature civilizations of the planet.

Eight years ago, the caribou herds moved back in close to Iqaluit, Nunavut. The Inuit elders had predicted this, their stories told of a multi-year migration cycle (I think they say forty years) which biologists hadn't been around to notice the previous time. Or the time before that. But the stories told it. And when the caribou came back, the community went out and hunted. There was a lot of meat, (there still is). There was a lot to share. Abundance was celebrated. There were many feasts. The community freezers filled up. Hunters also brought back meat for the elders and others who couldn't get out on the land. Inuit society in Nunavut can still rightly be called a "society," one under assault from price to be sure, but still with much that is embedded and embodied, much that is moral, not moneyed. Gary SNYDER likes to use the phrase "mature cultures" to refer to civilizations that are experienced, long-lived and ecologically-balanced. Nunavummiut live in a mature civilization.

Society, "societas," originally meant a group of people with face to face relations (WILLIAMS, 1976: 246). Today it has morphed into the very abstract sense of "that to which we all belong, even if it is very general and impersonal" (243-5). The word that used to have the sense of face to face relations now means a large agglomeration of atomized individuals molded into mobile human rental units, without mutigenerational links, trying to define themselves within the dominant institutions, language, and geographical boundaries of recently established nation-states. No wonder we have trouble feeling good about "our society," and "our neighbours." We don't know them. And people rarely care abstractly. We tend only to care about real places we've been, real people we know, real animals we've seen. The biggest remaining unit of caring is the nuclear family; it's the biggest unit of non-monetary, non-compulsory generosity. The next level up is the nation state and its compulsory monetary generosity.

Money sits on the fulcrum of self-interest—it's either spent out of self-interest ("buy that SUV") or it's given to absolve oneself of self-interest ("donate to Oxfam").

1.5. The Fibres of Trust

What happens when we pass through a pretty rural town and we find ourselves thinking: "Well sure it's pretty, but how do people make money here?" We have declared our colours, marked ourselves as that frightened form of civilization that doesn't ask "How do folks care for one another, how do they shelter and feed each other?"—but rather asks how do you get that concept, how do you generate a flow of that coloured tree pulp, so that people may divert ("earn") some of those symbols to themselves and trade these symbols for things other people know how to do—build shelter, grow food, etc. We indicate that we are not the type of civilization where people do these things for each other (as they had for thousands of years up until 1800) due to social bonds, duty, generosity, family ties or a myriad of other reasons—instead we show we are the type of sad and fearful civilization where the fibres of trust have been snipped, cut. We no longer believe anyone will care for us. Or that we can care for anyone else, without the supposedly "motivating" symbol of paper money to spring us into action; to propel us to work for each other, to share with each other. Instead we are afraid. And we are alone.

> Dollars dictate the kind of produce you can buy, the kind of holidays you can or can't take, the number of children you can have, and the kind of illnesses that you can survive... Mom always says that ...you can't participate in the economy as if it's money that makes people equal. It's money that makes people unequal. —Natalee CAPLE (2004)

1.6 Money

> Superstition: When you believe in a thing that you don't understand—and you suffferrrr...—musician Stevie WONDER

What are the characteristics of money? We use it, but do we understand it? Do we understand how it affects us? There's a scene in one of my favourite B movies, *Conan the Barbarian*, where Conan catches up with his arch-nemesis, the Snake King (played by James Earl JONES). The Snake King is trapped in a canyon with his loyal maidens perched on the cliffs overhead as Conan bears down on him with a huge sword. Suddenly the Snake King challenges Conan: "You think you're stronger than me, but I have something stronger than your sword!" And the King beckons to one of the maidens above; so she steps off into the air and plummets to her death. Then the Snake King turns to Conan and says, "You know what's stronger than your sword? An idea."

Money is an idea. A concept. But we treat it as if it is a real emotional force, as if it is "frozen desire"(BUCHAN, 1992). SCHOPENHAUER called it "happiness in *abstracto*" (LOY, 1992: 415).

> The English word derives from the first Roman mint, in 269 BC, in the temple of *Juno Moneta*, whose coins carried her effigy. The first coins were minted and distributed by temples as medallions inscribed with the god's image and embodying the god's protective power....They were naturally in demand, not because you could buy things with them, but vice versa: since they were popular, you could exchange them for other things." (LOY, 2002: 78)

> Isaac Newton, whose universal law of gravitation circumscribed the movement of all things under one principle, was charged in 1696 by the king of England with the task of re-minting its entire currency. All the old silver coins were recalled, and Newton, soon to be made Master of the Mint (in 1699) for his services, substituted a new currency whose weight and value were as 'homogeneous, stable, uniform and predictable' as the fall of things under gravity... (ROMANYSHYN, 1989 : 136, 195)

Money only asks "how much," not "what and how" said Georg SIMMEL in his landmark book *The Philosophy of Money* (1990: 259). He might have added that money doesn't ask "why" either. Only money "is free from quality and exclusively determined by quantity," it boils all distinctions down to a "system of numbers," and turns every choice into an "arithmetic problem" (1990: 279, 444; 1950:412). Colourless and indifferent, money "hollows out the core of things...their specific value, and their incomparability" (1950: 414). Money is a "frightful leveler" said SIMMEL, it reduces life to an "evenly flat and gray tone" (414).

The change from metal to paper money occurred when folks realized that "what they needed to reproduce was not money's substance (metal) but its effects (payment)" (BUCHAN, 1997: 55). Originally a means, money is now the penultimate end in itself. "The complete heartlessness of money is reflected in our social culture, which is itself determined by money" (SIMMEL, 1950: 346). Money is a solvent, a bleach, a goal, a plow, a religion, a theft. Because of its corrosive effect on loyalty, Simone WEIL said money is a "poison." "Money destroys human roots wherever it is able to penetrate, by turning desire for gain into the sole motive" (WEIL, 1972: 46). Never before have so many humans suspended their involvement with the requisites of life—food, shelter, clothing, medicinal plants—in favour of belief in the exchange of coloured bits of paper. Under a disembedded market, almost all of our human interactions are money-driven encounters, either with co-workers, store-owners, service providers or paid care-givers.

> Money...has become a totalitarian tyrant in modern Westernized culture. It has penetrated all spheres of human action: food, health, education, well-being, art, marriage... all seem to depend on money. As geometry abstracts forms from physical perceptions....money abstracts from human activities their quantifiable aspect...eventually (making) those very activities dependent on money. The real world is not made of monetizable commodities, like physical entities are not made of geometrical figures.... To have to pay for water, food—and soon even air—is a sign of a sick culture. (PANNIKKAR, *Interculture* 130, 1996; 50-51)

What follows, then, are two case studies in our "sick culture." Each case focuses on money and motive, highlighting the spectacular change that marks our new young Euro-American civilization, and spotlights cases of spectacular blindness in our scholarly class, those who either deliberately avoid looking at these things, or deliberately avoid asking "why?." In the final section of this essay, I'll turn to healthier subjects, the "priceless" realm, and how we might preserve it and expand it.

1.6.1 Case Study One: Money and Motive —The Single Biggest Omission in the History of the West

This is the story of the biggest single omission in Western history books. 50 million human beings came from Europe to the Americas between 1821 and 1932. This isn't taught in high school or university, yet it all happened quite recently, not in the 1600s or 1700s, but around the turn of the century. Only three or four generations ago. My own family fits this mold: my father's grandfather migrated to Argentina from Denmark in 1880; my mother's grandfather came to Manitoba from Scotland in 1870.

> "There were many 'promised lands ' to which to escape, and the British Isles and Germany—first touched by the traumas of capitalism—provided the bulk of reluctant emigrants until 1885" (KOLKO;1984: 68).

Between 1821 and 1931, 34 million Europeans emigrated to the USA; 16 million more went to Canada, Brazil and Argentina. All in 111 years. This movement of humanity was like an explosion. Nothing like it had ever happened before in history. 50 million people had never before up and moved from one continent to another—not in Greek, Chinese, Egyptian, Mayan or Indian history.

In any other reasonably curious academic discipline (other than North American History), one would expect that the intercontinental flight of millions of members of any large species would be a focus of intensive research—imagine biologists' fascination if 50 million zebras or camels crossed from one continent to another?! All in just over a hundred years? Whole scientific careers would be based on figuring out what had prompted so many creatures to move! Whole departments would be studying the territories the animals invaded and their impact on the local flora and fauna. But the instigators and impacts of a sudden movement of 50 million humans don't merit a textbook—let alone a department—in any North American university. Nothing. *Nada.*

The only researcher to put dates and numbers to this rapid human exodus was historian Gabriel KOLKO, and when he did, he discovered something surprising: in some years, almost half of those landing on America's shores were "re-immigrants" (KOLKO, 1984: 69). That is, almost half of these people were coming here for a second or third time. They had already been to North America to work for a few years, and then had returned to their European roots to try and buy homes and land for their families; now they were returning to America. They were the first commuters. They didn't think they were moving here permanently; America was just a job. And they didn't behave as though they were going to stay.

According to KOLKO, this is one of the reasons why our ancestors didn't join unions or community organizations here as much as they did "back home"—they didn't consider North America to be home (KOLKO: 71). For most of our great-grandparents, "home" until 1940 still meant England, Scotland, France, Ireland, Poland, Germany, Italy and so on.

Our ancestors came to the Americas to find wage-work, but many of them returned home to Europe to try to buy a 'pied a terre' in their true 'indigenous' homelands. Who or what uprooted them in the first place? Money uprooted them. As I described earlier, the commons back in Europe had been privatized out from underneath them. Money dissolved their roots; money deprived them of their common land; money sent them packing. Millions of our homeless ancestors were unleashed on the world; and the world is still reeling.

1.6.2 Case Study Two: If We Price it, People Will respect it...

> The key to restructuring the economy is the creation of an honest market...[The market] does not incorporate the indirect costs of goods and services, it does not value nature's services properly.... Unfortunately, we have a faulty accounting system at the global level...Economic prosperity is achieved in part by running up ecological deficits—costs that do not show up on the books but that someone will pay eventually....Once we calculate all the costs of a product or service, we could incorporate them into market prices by restructuring taxes. If we create a market that tells the truth, we can avoid being blindsided by faulty accounting systems... —Lester R. BROWN (92-95; Feb/Mar 04, "Blueprint for a better planet")

Global environmentalist and founder of Worldwatch, Lester R BROWN is a big promoter of the "price everything" cure. Get a Market that "tells the truth." Contains "all the costs." Another name for what Lester BROWN is promoting is "full-cost accounting." Putting everything on some kind of global grocery check-out counter and pricing it all. Beep, beep, beep. That, they assume, will make the economic system "honest." Canada's biodiversity: $60 billion (MOSQUIN, 1994: 37). A good sex life, price it ($72,000 according to the *Globe and Mail*). The Human Body—what's it worth? ($20,000 for medical experiments). "A serious proposal to sell air had its beginnings around 1960... Assign ownership rights and let people trade" (JACKSON, 1994: 69). Even prominent environmental publications have jumped on the bandwagon (see "The New Economy," by DAILY and ELLISON, *Orion*, Feb. 2002).

But Karl POLANYI already described the problem with this 60 years ago. Markets used to have a limited prescribed place within societies; now they enclose societies. Markets used to be embedded in and controlled by societies, now societies are embedded in and controlled by markets. So BROWN and others are actually proposing to embed *more* things in markets—expand the prison walls so that *everyone* has to obey the warden. But as Noam CHOMSKY has commented, this vision of the world "is so full of hate that no human being would want to live in it" (CHOMSKY, 2002: 200). Market relations extend monetized values into every corner of

life; they are unsympathetic to initiatives to re-establish human and natural values, reciprocal giving and generosity, the bonds that link and create meaning between people, and between people and nature. Money replaces these type of values; it is disembedded value.

> Globalization is tearing down ethical and ecological limits on commerce. As everything becomes tradable, everything is for sale—genes, plants, cells, seeds, knowledge, water, and even pollution. *Life has lost its sanctity*.... The proposal to give market values to all resources as a solution to the ecological crisis is like offering the disease as the cure. The reduction of all value to commercial value and the removal of all spiritual, ecological, cultural and social limits to exploitation is (being completed) by globalization. (SHIVA, 2000:128)

Some businessmen in the forest industry like to refer to "value-added" wood production; by this they mean, not just exporting raw logs and lumber, but finishing it into chairs, and tables—"adding value." While creating more skilled worthwhile jobs is a good idea, we must be careful with the phrase "value-added." A tree is a tree. There is no value to add to it (although it can be robbed of value through destruction). No value for a 300 year-old life form can be stored in currency. You don't "add" value to trees—they are invaluable! Indeed it's this very delusion that one can go prospecting (intellectually or materially) for things that no one has noticed yet, things not yet "valued"—a new idea or a new "find"—that can make us rich—this is the delusion that propels us into cannibalizing cultures and landscapes. Entrepreneurs dream about finding "unexploited niches," some valuable resource or helpful reciprocal act that is not yet monetized and which they can take over and charge money for. But a Red Pine doesn't charge for oxygen. Period. And 40,000 years of human linguistic evolution can*not* be expropriated by a corporation like Kotex who now claims to own the word "period." Nor should 7 years of research allow Monsanto to "own" the genetic code of a seed which took nature millions of years to create.

> The proponents of the privatization of water supply...are not bound by the idea that access to safe water is an intrinsic, non-negotiable right; much less would they be able to entertain the suggestion that even the language of rights, which is the inheritance of modern political thought, is grossly inadequate in capturing the idea of water as gift. The free-trade economy has no conceptual place for gifts. (LAL, 2002:134)

To some, obviously, "owning" water sounds reasonable. If market relations have swallowed up the society, then the answer ought to lie in making the market pay for the things its getting for free—right? Wrong. The modern global economy is a monetized game of musical chairs; it only works if someone is left without a chair. Something or someone has to have no value, if someone further down the line is going to receive that value in the form of profit. The system is based in *scarcity*. If it's going to work, someone or something has to go without. In practice, this means that forest is worthless, as is this mountain containing coal. If—if—we could place a monetary value on a mountain or a forest that would in some shaky way capture some of the thousands of years of evolution of these natural spaces and the species dependent on them, and the beauty and pleasure

they brought (and would account for the future) to humanity, then, presumably the price would be rather high. And if the price was at all fair, you can be sure that it would block any business from cutting down the trees or strip-mining the coal from the mountain. So they will not be priced; and if they are included in "full-cost accounting," well then the price will be too low to bother thinking about. Our system is predicated upon scarcity of worth: if everything is worth a lot of money, the market economy collapses; so some "unmeasurables"—like childrearing, clean lakes, domestic labour, for example—necessarily fall outside of the priced realm. Some of our "most cherished social treasures"—"communal solidarity," "cultural gestures"—are considered unworthy of "dollarized" representation (LATOUCHE, 1997: 260). As Ivan ILLICH warned, feminists "are mistaken when they ask for wages for housework. The best they can hope for is not a shadow price but a consolation prize" (ILLICH, 1982: 57).

> People keep talking about using the capitalist system to correct the ills that the system creates. And I just think that's a real conflict. It can't be done....Basically there's a conflict with a system that depends on waste, depends on conspicuous consumption...depends on 5.5% growth rate every year. Edward ABBEY had a wonderful quote in one of his books about how our economic system must expand or expire. I think he coined the phrase that "growth for the sake of growth is the ideology of the cancer cell." And nothing could be truer. But people don't say that what you have to do is radically change. Without some kind of enormous social and economic change it's just going to go on. (John NICHOLS in LOEFFLER, 1989: 62)

1.7 ANTIDOTE—Study the Rich

> The focus of anthropological inquiry should be turned back on ourselves —PADEL, anthropologist (quoted by Vinay LAL, 2002: 129)

> The extreme affluence and wastefulness of American society, for instance, is comprehended the instant we register the fact that it alone produces half of the world's garbage. ... [W]hen we consider who generates the garbage, it is an open question whether the rich or the poor should be viewed as constituting a problem for global society. (There) is no better way of writing a history of poverty than by writing about the super-rich....There is an old saying that the poor will always be with us; but (what of) its complementary half, namely that the rich will always be with us? (LAL: 151)

Once every six months or so I engage in a ritual act of sacrifice, a superstitious gesture intended to protect me from evil—kind of like warding off the evil eye. I don't sacrifice a goat. I don't whisper an incantation. By the way I'm not alone in this ritual, I'm sure many of you engage in it as well. In the security line-up at one of Canada's airports, I put a set of nail clippers into a little plastic bin. All of us air travelers do this. We do this as a way of saying, "Please let no act of violence befall us on this trip." We sacrifice our nail clippers.

We don't sacrifice our SUVs. SUVs that have driven fuel economy averages down to their lowest point in 20 years (21 miles per gallon). We

don't start a conservation campaign. We don't push for a change in our energy policies; we don't talk about the extended network of military bases around the world which is needed so that we can get oil out from under the feet of people struggling under despotic governments—governments we arm and support. Gas costs about a dollar a gallon in the USA. If the hidden costs of gasoline—car accidents, air pollution, military bases (to stop local people from controlling their own oil), subsidies to the oil companies—if these were included, the cost of gas would shoot up to $14 per gallon, according to the International Centre for Technology Assessment (*Sierra Magazine,* April 2002). By the way—all these costs get paid—we just pay them through our taxes, medical bills, and insurance premiums. Subsidizing corporations and the military is a large part of why the U.S. government is $7.1 trillion in debt. Yet we won't sacrifice our SUVs.

If Euro-American urban citizens could "reduce as drastically as possibly their generation of garbage and their levels of consumption," this would be " their best contribution to the lives of the people in the South" says Zapotec-Mexican activist Gustavo ESTEVA (ESTEVA in IIM, 1992: 127). As far as our consumption habits go, according to Thomas Michael POWER, chair of Economics at University of Montana, "not much more than 10% of our economic activity provides us with those things that are necessary for our biological survival. The rest of our economic activity is devoted to attractive but discretionary phenomena" (POWER, 1996: 23).

> If enough Americans refused to buy a new car for one given year, it would permanently alter the American economy. —Gary SNYDER, "Four Changes" (*Turtle Island*; 1974: 98).

The single most important place to make structural changes, institutional changes, changes to our economic system, is North America (USA, Canada, and then England, and then the rest of Europe). But on university campuses, where are the Departments of Overdevelopment Studies? ("The personal assets of Bill GATES and his Microsoft co-founder, Paul ALLEN, combined with those of fellow billionaire Warren BUFFET exceed the combined GDP of the world's 41 poorest countries" —LAL, 2002:149).

We graduate thousands of university students from programs analyzing "underdevelopment," and they then rush off into the field to study the victims. Not a single faculty is focused on the perpetrators. But it's the Euro-American way of life that needs to be put under the microscope, not intriguing tribes in far-away lands (RASMUSSEN, 2004:128). Our market system knocks millions overboard, and then we dispatch university graduates to rescue a few of them; this is what Inuit leader Sheila WATT-CLOUTIER called "the rescuer phenomena" (NETF, 1992: 12). We pick at strands from the noose around the victim's neck, but we never ask the identity of the hangman. Look in the mirror. The noose is the economy; the hangman is us. We, the privileged 20% of the world's people, hoover up 80% of her resources. The remaining 20% goes to 80% of the people. The world doesn't suffer from a poverty problem, *it suffers from a wealth problem* (LOY, 2003:62; SACHS, 1996). If all the people on earth used as much paper (including recycled paper) as the USA consumes, "then in two

years not a single tree would be left on the planet" (PANIKKAR in IIM, 1992: 29). Already, half of all bird species are gone, three-quarters of butterfly species are extinct, and almost one-third of all plant species are extinct—all in the past few decades (SCHINDLER et al, 2004). Scientists regularly compare industrialized humanity's affect to that of a meteor hitting the planet. The planet groans every time another First World baby is born. Novelist John NICHOLS, author of *The Milagro Beanfield War*, explains:

> Population is an extraordinary problem in the world. But the biggest population problem exists in the United States. That is the most serious population problem on earth, because every time a North American child is born, that child is going to put a demand on the earth's resources that, in its lifetime, would take 5000 Bolivians to meet, or 10,000 Bangladeshis to meet. You understand? So the most serious threat to the physical survival of the planet is when a North American child is born... It's not a billion Chinese who threaten it, or 800 million Indian people who threaten it... it's not the third world countries that threaten (the planet's) survival, ...(it's) America and Western Europe. (LOEFFLER, 1989: 63-64)

Before we get too upset about with his summary, let's look at this another way: Perhaps what NICHOLS is saying is 'good news'. Think about it: If you were a doctor facing an epidemic, wouldn't you search for the cause? You wouldn't traipse all over the planet looking at the sick, you'd try to isolate the causes. And if the devastation was spread all over the world, but the causes were in just a few countries—wouldn't that be better than the other way around? And if there were billions of victims, but the cause could be traced back to just a few million or a few hundred thousand people—wouldn't that be better than the other way around? We are in the *best position to change things*, because most of the levers of power are here. Wolfgang SACHS has narrowed down our constituency even further: the people who have the biggest responsibility to change their behaviour and market relations are the global middle-class, "those with cars, banking accounts and career aspirations"; those who make up "the majority in the North and small elites in the South and [whose] size roughly equals that 8% of the world population which owns an automobile" (SACHS, 1996: 17). We don't have to change everyone's mind; we just have to change 8%.

> To think ecologically is to understand that while some parts of the world are undoubtedly underdeveloped, if one ...use[s] that [way] of thinking, it is nonetheless the overdeveloped parts of the world which ought to give greater cause for anxiety. *The rich, not the poor, are the problem for humankind and the earth's resources in the long run.* (LAL, 2002:14)

At a Christmas gathering of Western Buddhists a few years ago, one teacher suggested that we should start up a meditation program inside prisons in Canada. "That way we could address the root of violence in society," she said, "that's where violence starts—in prison." I couldn't have been more shocked if she had said that the sun starts from plant leaves and then flows back toward a giant ball of gas in the heavens.

Violence does not start in prison; that's where the dispossessed end up. Violence starts when some people dispossess others of the requisites of life—access to land and sea, animals, food, water, and access to materials for fashioning clothing and shelter—this is the first theft, the theft that prompted that old anarchist PROUDHON to say "Property is theft." Enclosure is violence. Denial of access to the means of life is violence. Property is violence. ("Of the United States' total assets, 1% of Americans own 95%." –LAL, 2002: 150). Christian minister and activist A.J. MUSTE summed it up in 1928:

> The basic fact is that the economic, social, political order in which we live was built up largely by violence, is now being extended by violence, and is maintained only by violence. A slight knowledge of history, a glimpse at the armies and navies of the Most Christian Powers, at our police and constabulary, at the militaristic fashion in which practically every attempt of workers to organize is greeted, in Nicaragua or China, will suffice to make the point clear to an unbiased mind.
>
> The foremost task, therefore, of the pacifist in connection with class war is to denounce the violence on which the present system is based, and all the evil—material and spiritual—this entails for the masses of people throughout the world; and to exhort all rulers in social, political, industrial life, all who occupy places of privilege, all who are beneficiaries of the present state of things, to relinquish every attempt to hold on to wealth, position and power by force, to give up the instruments of violence on which they annually spend billions of wealth produced by the sweat and anguish of the toilers. So long as we are not dealing honestly and adequately with this *ninety percent of our problem*, there is something ludicrous, and perhaps hypocritical, about our concern over the ten percent of violence employed by the rebels against oppression. Can we win the rulers of the earth to peaceful methods? (MUSTE, in HENTOFF, 1967:180)

Five years ago when the East Timorese people were struggling for independence from the (Canadian-armed) Indonesian military, the CBC and the Globe and Mail both used the same headline: "Violence erupts in East Timor." But violence doesn't erupt. Violence is not a volcano. Violence is an act; someone commits an act of violence against someone else. But the media metaphor for violence in the Third World is a forest fire: a conflagration bursts forth, completely taking the First World by surprise, and they must rush peacekeepers or war-makers to the scene to "quell" the disturbance, to put it out like firefighters. Journalists figure that every fire needs a spark to start it; so they'll look nearby for a single cause to explain everything. It's treated like spontaneous combustion or some other dumbfounding inexplicable occurrence. The complex trail of events that actually leads right to our doorstep—yes, yours and mine, friend—is repeatedly covered up.

> We cannot have peace if we are only concerned with peace. War is not an accident. It is the logical outcome of a certain way of life. If we want to attack war, we have to attack that way of life. A.J. MUSTE (1928)

Without forsaking far away places and those who go there to help alleviate suffering, when will Euro-Americans wake up to the fact that the

real work is to be done here, at home? The bodies may drop in far away countries but the bullets are made here, and the resource thefts which prompt the firing of the bullets start here—there is no need to go "long-distance" to deal with the *source* of the problem.

Now it makes sense why so many of those old detective movies seem so familiar—the ones where the corrupt police chief keeps sending his detectives off on wild goose chases to arrest the small fry, while no one suspects that the Chief himself is the criminal mastermind. No one ever gets the least bit curious about his huge house and those fancy cars in the driveway. Well, today we have millions of North Americans with huge houses and fancy cars in the driveway, and we're still focused on hunting down the latest lowly street hood—SUHARTO, PINOCHET, or the thugs running Columbia or Turkey. Time after time; show after show—the same plot. Focus on Indonesia. Not on the Big Four who paid the bills and called the shots there (US, Japan, Germany, Canada). The Foreign Affairs Ministers and so on will wring their hands and say we're just trying to put together a special squad so we can catch the little guys at the bottom of ladder faster. "But what about the big guys, the bosses—you know... ahem... us?"

Nope.

You'd think eventually the citizenry would go "what the heck?!" But we watch the same show over and over; only the nationalities of the victims changes. Do you really want to catch the mastermind? Check out your own mutual fund. Examine your RRSP. If you're an Ontario teacher, examine your pension fund—you control one of the biggest financial forces in Canada (focusing a year on your retirement could help the poor more than thirty years of your employment!). Eric Reeves did this. He's an English professor at a University in Massachusetts. He found out that Talisman Resources, a Canadian company, was exploiting death and destruction in the Sudan to access that country's oil reserves. Reeves took 6 months off work, learned everything he could about the issue and then became a leader in the divestment movement, successfully convincing several large U.S. public pension funds to pull their money out of Talisman. Although the Ontario Teachers Pension Fund refused to divest (it's managers ignored votes by the teachers' federation), the Texas Teachers Fund did dump its Talisman shares. Even though the Canadian government cozied up to Talisman and played along with the thugs in the Sudan, eventually pressure from church groups and people like Reeves forced Talisman to flee the Sudan (DROHAN, 2003: 279-81, 264). Success stories like this ought to become school textbooks.

> If you're going to be an anthropology teacher you should be also able to teach your students the dynamics of their own culture, at least in the critical area of understanding imperialism and capitalism. If you can't communicate that to your students, then you've got no business talking to them about the Xingu [of Brazil]. (SNYDER, 1977:23)

One school teacher recently told me that his students suffer from "disaster fatigue"—too many problems. Students feel bad because "they

know they can't save everyone." But we don't have to save everyone: we just have to stop ripping them off. Medicine's 2000 year-old Hippocratic Oath says "First, Do no harm."

How many students have studied Africa in school? Thousands? How many have studied the mining companies based in Toronto that take the resources of Africa at extremely low cost, paying extremely low wages? Any? How many students in Toronto study Talisman Resources based in Toronto? None. That's why students are tired. They're bored with the same old plot, with being told to enlist as lowly detectives to go find out who dislocated and killed the people of Sudan and tried to steal their oil, only to return to their parents' house and find a gas-guzzling SUV sitting in the driveway. "How's the case going, dear? Any clues?" Nope.

> Foreigners often cannot understand how the values of our society stunt our humanity, emasculating and pacifying us...One night, in a conversation with a Dutch priest recently returned from Indonesia, this had hit me with a stunning force. ... "I have a question," he remarked quietly. "Why don't you Americans dissent?" Dead silence greeted him. "Let me explain. I have worked in Indonesia for nine years on fishing and farming cooperatives....You've heard a bit about the anti-Communist bloodbath after SUKARNO was thrown out. But not enough ....Over a million people died...because they believed in justice....Justice meant enough to eat...a fair price for their crops and fish...And then the terror began, and they were hunted down like jungle animals. And the streams and rivers literally ran red, and bodies were everywhere. ...And now Western investment comes back, especially American. Dissent has been crushed and they can again begin to bleed us. Do you understand what I'm saying? My people are dead because they asked nonviolently for what belonged to them. But you Americans, you upset me. If you protest seriously—and you should, because no one is more responsible for tragedy in the world than you—you are indicted, you get a better trial than in most countries, trials from which you can at least speak to educate others. And then you get a few years in jail. So I'm puzzled. Why don't you dissent? —Philip BERRIGAN, s.s.j. (1973:140-141)

We should dissent and organize, and some of us do. Read chapters 6-10 of Understanding Power (CHOMSKY, 2002) for a primer on resistance and the movement to build a new society. Build true bonds with companions, in places that matter to you, and begin to undo the wrongs we are committing. The wrongs we are causing to be committed far away in order to guarantee that each house has a lawnmower and a Sport Utility Vehicle. Indeed, we need to change our way of life so that our governments will stop arming dictators just so that our businesses can loot their countries. We need to bring back trains, and stop depending on cars—especially the gas-guzzlers. Less fuel, more meaningful connections to our surroundings.

We should build oodles of solar and wind power stations to equip every backyard and town. Small still *is* beautiful. We should grow food locally, shortening the supply chain, putting less stresses on the ecosystem and other cultures. And we need brave teachers and students to study our own obese GDP and tell us how to trim our economic waistline. This is the right thing to do. We, the rich are the cause of most of the worlds' suffering. And we should fix it. It's the right thing to do.

It's not enough to sacrifice some nailclippers.

II. The Priceless

2.1 Breaking the Addiction: Recover our life/time

Historians talk about enclosure of the commons, but we have enclosed human life, extended the price franchise to the life-hours of a species. The Ruling Elite says to the people: the land that used to root you we have taken; the human arrangements that used to connect you we have broken; the pattern-languaged face-to-face myths and stories that once flowed between you and your place we have frozen into print and commodities. Now you must master alpha-numeric symbols (school) in order to lease your life-hours to us in order to get access to the land (we took from you). Frightening isn't it? Where everything drips and reeks of pricing, how can we take seriously media-government-corporate blather about improving worker or student "self-esteem"? People aren't dumb. They know where they're headed: into a world that says that their life hours are worth $6 minimum wage—and are worth nothing at all if they contemplate reality, plant a garden, raise a child, help their neighbour, sing a song. The original response to this—the wisest—was to demand the land back, to resist enclosure, but this was ground down by the armed force of the nation-state, and resistance reverted to the shallowest kind of response: "OK take the land, but give us money," "raise our pay." Sad really. Now we just negotiate the terms of our enslavement, we do not clamour for an end to slavery. Socialists utter a rather weak request for adequate pricing of human life-hours, environmentalists and Kyoto-goers call for pricing of trees and clean air, feminists request that child care and housework be included in the priced realm.

But what we really need is a movement for economic atheism; a groundswell of non-believers, people who will no longer allow the Dominion Bond Rating Agency to tell them what their society is "worth." Can we recover the ability to enjoy each day, each minute, each week—not to wish that it was over? To do this we will have to repudiate the false god, stop bowing before it, and stop building shrines to it (commodities: stuff, stuff, stuff). As philosopher Phillipe ARIES has said, despite all this talk about 'materialism' we aren't really materialists, we have no real love of material, no deep understanding of it, we can't work *with* it; we just love the act of accumulating it (buy, buy, buy). Like cult members we need to be deprogrammed, to break through the brainwashing which equates a moment with 3 cents. Each moment is as it is; it can only be treasured when we take the price sticker off.

> If what the Hindus, the Buddhists, the Shoshone, the Hopi, the Christians are suggesting is true, then all of industrial/technological civilization is on the wrong track, because its drive and values are purely mechanical and self-serving—*real* values are someplace else. The real values are within nature, family, mind, and into liberation. ... 'What is the natural-spiritual price we pay for this particular piece of affluence, comfort, pleasure, or labour-saving?' 'Spiritual price' means time at

> home, time with your family, time that you can meditate, the difference between what comes to your body and mind by walking a mile as against driving (plus the cost of gas). There's an accounting that no one has figured out how to do. ...Nobody can move from Right View to Right Understanding in a vacuum as a solitary individual. The three treasures are Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. In a way the one that we pay the least attention to is Sangha—community. What have to be built are community networks.... When people, in a very modest way, are able to define a certain unity of being together, a commitment of staying together for a while, they can begin to correct their use of energy and find a way to be mutually employed. And this, of course, brings a commitment to the place, which means right relation to nature. (SNYDER, 1980: 109-110)

2.2 Recover Traditions

I was listening to CBC radio a couple of years ago and Michael ENRIGHT was interviewing a fellow named Aloysius in Newfoundland. It seems Aloysius had a farm which was within the city limits of St Johns. The first question that ENRIGHT asked him was "How does it feel to be living such an old-fashioned way of life in the middle of a bustling city?" Aloysius answers politely. But I'm not so polite as I find myself hollering back at the radio: "What's so old-fashioned about food? Don't you eat food still? Or do you live on techno-nutrients from outer-space or something?"

> All too many people in power in the governments and universities of the world seem to carry a prejudice against the natural world—and also against the past, against history....The integrity and character of our own ancestors is dismissed with "I couldn't live like that!" by people who barely know how to live *at all*. (SNYDER, 1999: 233)

Today's city types seem to talk and behave as though they've transcended the need for land, crops, animals, weather—these things are "old fashioned." These are solid, awkward, often dirty, material things (and modern folks are not really materialists, according to Aries). Modern life is chock full of abstractions and concepts, life at a distance, 'everything solid melts into air' said Karl Marx. Progress is what is new, most recent—and what went before is outdated, "traditional'. OK then—throw your coffee cup on the floor. Smashes to pieces. That's progress. It happened more recently in time so the fragments are modern. The cup is now old fashioned, traditional.

The fact is, no one can be a 'back-to-the-lander.' We never left the land. None of us. Even those super-SUV-driving types who deny it are still 'on the land'. After all, what do they eat—space juice from Mars? They still eat food grown on planet earth (somewhere)—be it bananas from Columbia or rice from Cambodia. It's still dirt, sky, water, photosynthesis. Beetles, bugs, water buffalo, bacteria and birds. And people and songs, and apprenticeships and advice (somewhere). Even the super-SUVs are propelled by animals. Shellfish and other sea creatures, dead and crushed millions of years ago and fossilized into a fuel that they pump from the depths into their gas tanks.

They haven't left the land—none of us has. We've just put layers of concrete between it and us. Layers of concrete and concepts—but we cling even more to concepts than we do to concrete. We still need the land, live off the land, die on the land—as much as we deny it or distract ourselves from it.

2.3 LOVE: Bread and Benevolence

The free-market economist Milton FRIEDMAN once summed up the simple utilitarian beauty of capitalism by saying, "We owe our daily bread to the forces of the market, not to the benevolence of the baker" (in BAKAN, 2004: 117).

Who is this 'We'? Does this include our children? A father goes to work, earns money and buys bread from a baker. Several people in the family eat the bread, there's a chain of feeding here. Does a 7-year-old son say "I owe this bread to market forces...to my father's financial interest (in me)"? Or does he owe it to his parents' love? Family members don't "'truck and barter' over how much you're going to eat for dinner" (CHOMSKY, 2002: 203). But this is the lie propounded by economists. In 1956, economist D.H ROBERTSON asked "What is it that economists economize?" His answer: "love, the scarcest and most precious of all resources." (DALY and COBB, 1994: 140)

The late Malvina REYNOLDS classic song "Magic Penny" has a chorus:"Love is something that if you give it away/ You end up having more." Business Week columnist Robert KUTTNER says,

> This conception of love, of course, is the antithesis of the market model, whose essence is scarcity. In market exchange, it is absurd to think you can get more of a commodity by giving it away... Indeed a number of smart economists have argued precisely that we need to maximize our reliance on the market because altruism and love are themselves scarce commodities...By harnessing self-interest, markets reserved altruism, empathy, and fellow-feeling for special occasions. (KUTTNER, 1997: 59)

Should we follow FRIEDMAN and allow market relations to reach down, down into the family, into human bonds of love, and dissolve them and replace them with money? The majority of intra-family relations are based on love—not money. So I ask: Do we want to shrink these boundaries of love (mostly confined to the family), or expand them? A father doesn't buy bread for his daughter out of market motivations, but out of love. He gives. Generosity. (Sanskrit: "*dana*"). In the East, *dana* is the first principle of morality, a pillar of Hinduism and Buddhism. It is the most radical revolutionary act one can engage in. To give without weighing returns. *Dana* is not a calculation, it is not a transaction, it is not reciprocity. It is The Gift.

Back to the question: Do we want to expand the boundaries of love, or shrink them? In a way, the corporate money imperative has made this question very focused, very easy to see (I suppose for that we should be grateful).

When Bechtel Corporation privatizes water delivery in Bolivia, and gets a law passed making drinking rainwater *illegal*, well, we *know* this is outrageous. *Outrageous*. Rain is a gift. It is the generosity of the heavens. It is, in a way, one of the planet's acts of love. The entire planet is a giant experiment in loving-kindness. It is priceless. (And by the way, the people of Bolivia eventually kicked Bechtel out and got their water back; see the film "The Corporation").

> Let me say this before rain becomes a utility that they can plan and distribute for money. By "they" I mean the people who cannot understand that rain is a festival, who do not appreciate its gratuity, who think that what has no price has no value, that what cannot be sold is not real, so that the only way to make something *actual* is to place it on the market. The time will come when they will sell you even your rain. At the moment it is still free, and I am in it. I celebrate its gratuity and its meaninglessness. —Thomas MERTON ("Rain and the Rhinoceros":1965)

2.4 Place = Culture + Nature

> Only human beings have come to a point where they no longer know why they exist... they have forgotten the secret knowledge of their bodies, their senses, their dreams. —John (Fire) Lame Deer (in Fisher, 2002: 58)

> The universe does not contain atoms; it contains stories. —Jorge Luis BORGES.

My friend Tommy AKULUKJUK says it: "You don't have a culture. You get your culture from books, from school—that's not a real culture. A real culture comes from your parents, from your family, from your community." Tommy and David JOANASIE know their language (Inuktitut)—they *know* it. They know the roots of the words, the origins of phrases and ideas in Inuktitut, the "why" of the words—why the words mean what they do. *Kajjarniq* (Inuktitut): means "to reflect positively while out on the land." There is no word like that in English. There isn't any common philosophical concept in English that captures this beautiful Inuktitut word. For that matter, what Euro-American knows the origin of the word "society," or "nature," or "wealth"? How can we really have a conversation with each other without knowing the 4/5^{ths} of the ideas that move like icebergs under our words? Truly we have no culture. Tommy asks, "Why do they make us Inuit study Napoleon in northern schools? What difference does that make to me today on the land? When will I use that?"

We ought to have "a people's history," as Howard ZINN would say, one with motives in it that can teach us why things are so screwed up right now. Instead, we learn about Napoleon and a bunch of wars, things that bore and confuse us, and divert our eyes from the mix of drudgery, triviality and obscene wealth surrounding us.

We think we have a culture but we're fooling ourselves—we have no real tools that we draw from our books and schools—just literacy, numeracy and 9-5 time training, so that we will be obedient wage-slaves. This is not a living culture. And, as James HILLMAN says, "nature is dying because culture is dying" (HILLMAN, 1992: 238). If we want to save nature we're going to have to resuscitate a real culture, one with guts and glory, one with real tools and stories that we need and can use. We need a healthy mix of ages to teach each other; the risky frisky youth to make the necessary mistakes the adults are too timid to make, and the wisdom of the elders to calm and guide and inspire us. Then our life'll be so rich that we won't need money. Oh, we can still use it, but we won't need it. As the old song goes: "Money talks—but it don't sing/and it don't dance." And market relations will have to be shrunk down to a manageable size, not all big and scary and running loose in the streets, scaring the children.

> What has sustained indigenous people all these centuries? Language. Music. Stories. That's what has sustained us. It has not been NGOs. It has not been organizations. —Al HUNTER, Anishnawbe elder (in IIM, 1992: 213)

In order to feel like we really belong here Europeans need to know and tell the story of the 100 million Host People; and we need to know and tell the story of our 50 million ancestors—the largest exodus in human history. We, the descendants of the 50 million, need to revive a storytelling tradition, an oral culture, a culture of elders. Books and schools are not enough. The very fact that a book is an "external memory device" means that we allow ourselves to forget things because we can always resort to "looking it up." If we don't have a living truth, an oral truth, passed on from generation to generation, for a real purpose, then we are not really "a people" (RASMUSSEN, 2000a). Stories cannot exist as some kind of surplus activity, a leisure pursuit. A real story is not a luxury, it is a tool (BASSO, 1996: Chapter 4). We have to make the story become a necessity again, something we need and use, not something that just sits on a shelf. A real story of the 50 million would acknowledge our roots back in Europe, our old indigenous homelands, and would tell the reasons why our ancestors left. It would acknowledge and respect our Hosts and their land, and it would tell the story of how we can, in time, become indigenous to this new place as well.

2.5 Place: Honour our Hosts

> Compared to the rest of the world... Europe [during the time of Columbus] was a very homogeneous place. Almost everybody spoke Indo-European related languages and shared the same cosmological worldview and even the same general political system. [North American] Indians, on the other hand, were used to an enormous plurality—500 different cultures, seven different language families, 400–500 languages spoken, and many different religions. Within a day's walk of any place, you would encounter another group of people who looked differently, spoke differently, and had a different view of men and women. So, when Europeans first arrived it was no big deal. You read account after account of Indians saying, "Oh yeah, and they came too—and they don't bathe." That was the big thing that all the Indian accounts talk about. Whereas for the Europeans it changed everything. (Author Michael DORRIS, in conversation with Bill MOYERS: 462)

Several years ago, during one of the UN rounds of environmental negotiations, representatives from indigenous groups got together to express their common concerns in the Kari-Oca Declaration. One of the things they took issue with was the term "land claims." They said: "We must never use the term 'land claim'... It is non-indigenous people who are making claims to our lands. We are not making claims to our lands" (IWGIA, 1992: 59-60).

Yes, we Euro-Canadians *are* making *claims* to these lands, we just aren't *inhabiting* the land. The commercialization of the soil, the "weirdest" of all undertakings, is going full tilt. We buy and sell the land like crazy: but do we really know it? Not until we truly settle into this place and feel that *it* owns *us*, will we feel like we really belong here. So, the time is long overdue for us to make this place home. From 1821-1932, tens of millions of Europeans arrived on two continents misnamed "Amerige" 300 years before by a clumsy German cartographer who mistakenly thought Amerigo VESPUCCI had "discovered" these lands. A hemisphere that had once been home to between 100-145 million indigenous people (8 to 12 million living north of Mexico), and had seen 95% of its original inhabitants wiped out by European weapons or disease, is now named after an Italian (STANNARD, 1992: 11).

> Our ancestors re-discovered a hemisphere: but what was lost?
>
> We lost in this manner whole communities of people, plants, and animals, because a handful of men wanted gold and silver, title to land, the privileges of aristocracy, slaves, stables of little boys. We lost languages, epistemologies, books, ceremonies, systems of logic and metaphysics—a long hideous carnage. (LOPEZ, 1992: 15)

Of the host peoples who survived in Canada only a handful actually signed treaties with the newcomers, or—more precisely—with the newcomers' Queen. And of those treaties that were signed, only half are being honoured. This is an important distinction emphasized by Adele PERRY, a history professor at the University of Manitoba. In a television interview two years ago, journalist Alison BLACKDUCK asked PERRY how Canada might look different today if Indian Treaties had been honoured. "Well, they are being honoured," answered PERRY. "At least half of them are anyways. That is: the half of each treaty that serves the interests of the settlers." PERRY said she had, in fact, exercised her treaty rights that very year when she bought a house in Winnipeg. This is a treaty right for us newcomers; we just seem to have forgotten it. We also seem to have forgotten the half of these treaties wherein we made commitments to our hosts.

2.6 Place: Becoming Indigenous

You cannot know who you are until you know where you are. So said Wendell BERRY. Let me propose another way to approach the problem of money. Money has dissolved roots, leveled all comparisons to arithmetic, bleached the colour of difference out of things. Money is property; property is theft. Money, a means, has become an end, a goal. Money makes greed a virtue, not a sin.

What undoes theft, recolours a life, inserts contrast, and sets down roots? Place. We must inhabit this place. "Stay Put," as Gary SNYDER admonished environmentalists 30 years ago, "Dig In" (SNYDER, 1974: 101).

Some of the Host Peoples have continually occupied parts of these lands for over 13,000 years. American poet and anthropologist Gary SNYDER calls these long dug-in communities "mature cultures"; and he draws a parallel between them and 'climax ecosystems' (SNYDER, 1980: 115-116). Mature cultures are culminations of hundreds of generations of social and biological trial and error. Our way of life—only in place for a few generations—has not been tried and tested over the long term. In fact, to many it feels like the wheels are already flying off this contraption. Most mature civilizations view Euro-American civilization as a dangerous adolescent: ignorant, violent and driven to excess (HARTMANN, 1998: 118-163).

> The last eighty years or so has been like an explosion. Several billion barrels of oil have been burned up. The rate of population growth, resource extraction, destruction of species, is unparalleled. We live in a totally anomalous time. It's actually quite impossible to make generalizations about history, the past or the future, human nature, or anything else, on the basis of our present experience. It stands outside the mainstream. It's an anomaly. People say, 'We've got to be realistic, we have to talk about the way things are.' But the way things are for now aren't real. It's a temporary situation. (SNYDER, 1980: 112-5)

Euro-American civilization is not only short-lived, it doesn't show many signs of becoming a very anchored or continuous civilization. Without an oral or storytelling tradition to carry on the collective wisdom of the group, and without a revered place for elders in our social arrangements, Euro-Americans have to lean entirely on a relatively recent invention known as "education" to train our populace and instill common myths to paper over the cracks between individuals (PRAKESH and ESTEVA,1998: 17; RASMUSSEN, 2000b). In 1929, half of us lived on farms; today 90% of us live in cities, without any need to be regularly involved with the soil and water and plants and animals around us (KEATING, 1997: 71-3). Furthermore, Euro-Canadians move on average once every 6 years, usually leaving our older relatives behind (BERLIN, 1997: 20). If you ask most Euro-Canadians if they live in the same neighbourhood that their parents or grandparents grew up in, the majority will say no. Multi–generational proximity is almost non-existent for us. Contrast this with Inuit communities, where it is not uncommon for 3 –4 generations to live within a few blocks of each other; and where a vital part of family life is going "out on the land" hunting, fishing, berry-picking together. There is a lot of intergenerational contact, easily facilitated by the rhythms of life on the land. As Gary SNYDER writes: "The human community, when healthy, is like an ancient forest. The little ones are in the shade and shelter of the big ones, even rooted in their lost old bodies. All ages, and all together growing and dying" (SNYDER, 1999: 230).

> Land is thus tied up with the organizations of kinship, neighbourhood, craft, and creed... [It] invests man's life with stability; it is the site of his habitation; it is a condition of his physical safety; it is the landscape and the seasons. We might as well imagine his being born without hands and feet as carrying on his life without land. (POLANYI, 1957: 178)

When a map of species extinctions is superimposed over a map of human wanderings, one discovers that the areas with greatest human immigration and emigration are the areas with the highest level of plant and animal extinctions (NABHAN, 1997:45). People who connect with a place look after it; those who are rootless do not. "Globalization is creating a world of powerless places at the mercy of placeless powers" (WACKERNAGEL and REES, 1995). Our Euro-American way of life has exacted a terrible toll: on far-flung parts of the world, on this part of the world, and on us—on our mental health and communal friendliness, on our families and communities, and on our cooperativeness and sharing. So back to the antidote: Place. We must inhabit this place. Basically, we must become indigenous to this place. This will take generations; a hundred years, 200 years, probably more. *So what makes a people indigenous?*

Inuit are indigenous; they know their land, their kinship ties, their long oral history, their associations with the animals, the weather, the place. The difference between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples is how we relate to this place. Indigenous people believe that the land and sky embrace them, lay claim to them, own them. In contrast, non-indigenous people believe that *they* own the land, *they* own the water, *they* own the sky.

> An Indigenous People are those who believe that they belong to a place; a Non-Indigenous People are those who believe that places belong to them.

Can we "dig in" and inhabit this place? For us, this is a hugely difficult task. Our schooling and economy trains us *not* to have trust in each other, *not* to cooperate, *not* to share; but in the 1970's North American young people got together and swam upstream against these forces. In 1971 there were over 3000 communes in the USA, home to over a million people trying to re-grow the ability to live socially. There were "more rural communes established between 1965-70 than in all American history" (Hunt, 1999: 8). Eventually market forces re-divided and atomized folks, and eroded trust and cooperation. But we shouldn't forget that we made the attempt, and we can try again.

> People are free when they are in a living homeland, not when they are straying and breaking away... People are free when they belong to a living, organic, believing community, active in fulfilling some unfulfilled, perhaps unrealized purpose. —D.H. LAWRENCE (in WILLIAMS, 1983: 227)

2.7 Food

Despite the label for our era, we are not really materialistic—most of us have completely lost touch with the material reality of our lives—our shelter, our clothing, our food. The best place to start a turnaround is with our food. "The average forkful of dinner travels 1,500 miles to reach your lips" says Bill MCKIBBEN (MCKIBBEN, 2003: 47). Fossil fuels, food, and self-reliance are all captured in that equation. Perhaps we could start by getting our food closer to home and getting to know a bit more about what will grow in our own soils and weather.

> Todd MURPHY opened up a diner about a year ago...Ham and eggs, all-day breakfast, bottomless cup of coffee... But the Farmer's Diner is maybe the most local joint in the whole United States—something like 80% of the food it serves was raised within sixty miles of the kitchen. ...[M]aybe 'local' really is what comes next...people wanting to shorten their supply lines. (MCKIBBEN, 2003: 47)

Gustavo ESTEVA is an advocate for Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) which "teaches urban people how to support small local farmers who farm with wisdom, caring for local soils, waters, and intestines. In doing so, local communities simultaneously ensure that unknown farmers from faraway places like Costa Rica or Brazil are not exploited with inhuman wages and left sick with cancer or infertility" (ESTEVA and PRAKESH, 1998: 24).

> We also know that when our food comes from so far away, we will never know the whole story of suffering perpetrated unintentionally by us.... Therefore, by decreasing the number of kilometers which we eat, bringing our food closer and closer to our local homes, we know we are 'empowering' ourselves to be neither oppressed by the big and powerful, nor oppressors of *campesinos* and small farmers who live across the globe; and we are re-skilling ourselves to look after the well-being of members of our local community" (ESTEVA and PRAKESH, 25).

"Poverty breeds community" as Rossland, BC activist Ann DAMUDE says. When you've got less money you share more things and borrow more things—you need your neighbours to rely on. But growing more of your own food, and playing more of your own music (rather than store-buying stuff) is not just about saving money—"it's also a better way to live," says DAMUDE. "Support handicrafts, gardening, home skills, midwifery, herbs—all the things that can make us independent, beautiful and whole" says Gary SNYDER. "Simplicity is light, carefree, neat and loving—not a self-punishing ascetic trip." (SNYDER 1974: 98)

> A basic cultural outlook and social organization that inhibits power and property-seeking while encouraging exploration and challenge in things like music, meditation, mathematics, mountaineering, magic, and all other ways of authentic being-in-the-world. ...More concretely: no transformation without our feet on the ground. Stewardship means, for most of us, find your place on the planet, *dig in*, and take responsibility from there—the tiresome but tangible work of school boards, county supervisors, local foresters—local politics. Even while holding in mind the largest scale of potential change. Get a sense of workable territory,

> learn about it, and start acting point by point. On all levels from national to local the need to move toward steady-state economy—equilibrium, dynamic balance, inner-growth stressed—must be taught. Maturity/diversity/climax/creativity ...Let no one be ignorant of the facts of biology and related disciplines; bring up your children as part of the wildlife. Some communities can establish themselves in backwater rural areas and flourish—others maintain themselves in urban centres, and the two types work together—a two-way flow of experience, people, money and home-grown vegetables. Ultimately cities may exist only as joyous tribal gatherings and fairs, to dissolve after a few weeks. (SNYDER, 1974: 100-101)

We are an uprooted cluster of individuals, and we need to come home. But we cannot do it by evicting those who were already here. We cannot do it by price-tagging every tree, poem, river or helping hand. We cannot do it by fear, by greed, or by delusion.

We *can* do it by inviting our neighbours over for tea, by planting a plum tree knowing our children will be around in 10 years to pick the first fruit. We can do it by letting the land call us home.

> Social change takes time. Communities are built on the practice of patience and imagination—the belief that we are here for the duration and will take care of our relations in times of both drought and abundance. These are the blood and flesh gestures of commitment... each time we knock on our neighbors' doors, each time we sit down together and share a meal. In our increasingly fundamentalist country, we have to remember what is fundamental: *gravity* —what draws us to a place and keeps us there, like love, like kinship. (WILLIAMS, 2004)

2.8 How do we keep going?

A couple of years ago, I went down to Berea, Kentucky to a small Christian college, to meet Ivan ILLICH. ILLICH gave a public talk to maybe 200 students and activists from the area. ILLICH had walked down from the stage, refusing to use the microphones, preferring instead to speak with his unamplified voice. He stood and spoke from the first row of seats in the auditorium. We all moved in closer to hear him. Near the end of the talk there was a time for questions, and a black woman rose to ask him a question. "Given the difficulty of improving things in society, and given how often there is frustration and failure, how do we keep from despair? How do we keep going?" she asked.

ILLICH didn't have a pat answer. There was a long pause while he considered her question. We all waited quietly. Then ILLICH motioned to Lee HOINECKI, his best friend, who was sitting in the audience; he motioned to Lee to come up. Lee stood next to Ivan, and ILLICH put his arm around his shoulders. Ivan smiled at the woman who had asked the question, and said one word: "Friendship."

The terrorism of money does not consist merely in the fear of not having money, but also in having no one to turn to. No community-tribal safety net. No one else to help us get by. All this is linked to living alone

and living in our heads, of being abstract—of putting all our eggs in one basket, relying on an abstract concept: money. And so we are afraid.

What is the antidote? Recovering to the Pricelessness of Kin, Friends, *Sangha*, Nature. Kinship with our human brothers and sisters as well as kinship with nature: animals, plants, insects, wind, creatures, sea, land. In a word: the commons, cosmic confidence, gratuitousness (to be outlined in a future issue of *Interculture*).

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MAN-MADE LAW

by
Robert K. THOMAS[4]
(A Cherokee anthropologist)

[*Editor's note: the following is the report of a story, told orally by the late Cherokee anthropologist Robert K. THOMAS to his and our close friend and collaborator the anthropologist Merrill JACKSON, who had put it down in writing adding his own comments as he narrated, and bequeathed it to the IIM before he also passed away. We are happy to publish it here for the first time.* In memoriam *R. V.*]

Merrill JACKSON narrates:

K. POLANYI has given an account of the shift from the feudal peasant world to the market economy or of the rise of the self-regulating market. It is a nice western account and explanation, very thorough and complete, terribly convincing, of that shift.

Here is another account of the same reality but from a wholly different perspective, not western, tribal, namely that of an old Cherokee Indian grandfather as narrated to his grand-son, the anthropologist Robert THOMAS when the latter was 10 years old.

Robert THOMAS tells us that his own father died when he was ten and his mother, in the depression years, went to the city to work. So he was brought up by his maternal grandparents (which was quite natural in the Cherokee matrilineal tribe) . They had a rather typical poor people's Oklahoma house. A train went by there—from Kansas to Texas—and one could see that train from the back porch.

4. To further understand the Cherokees and THOMAS, see his articles in *Interculture*, issue 86, 1985 "La communauté et l'institution dans les groupes indiens" pp. 9-18; also issue 110, 1991, "American Indian and White people", pp. 35-48.

Every night, after dinner, the old man would sit and have his pipe on the porch. That's the time when people think says THOMAS, when they think things through (in comparison to people of western societies, many North American Natives do not talk much). It's a time when people take time to reflect, says THOMAS.

Every night, when the train when by at seven, the old man would get up, go over to one of the posts on the porch, lean against it, and watch carefully as that train went by. After it had passed he would return to his chair, rock and think some more and say nothing. Bob THOMAS was very interested to know what his grandfather was thinking at that particular time, but he knew that he was not to ask questions, that eventually something would be said or done or he would see for himself what was what. He waited and waited impatiently. The word never seemed to come. Nothing seemed to come. What is this train all about? Why does my grandfather pay so much attention to it? (Parenthetically, that is the nature of growing up in relationships: no lecture, no comment, and things simply emerge. I remember one day when I was at Bob's house one of his grandsons was asking him a lot of questions, and Bob suddenly saying to him: why, son, you don't' sound like an Indian at all! That really shut him up. When one grows up in such a relational environment, without books, without lecture, without comment, things emerge and with it comes knowledge, understanding.)

But there came a day when Bob's curiosity was too much for him. So he said rather timidly: "Well, grandpa, what is that train all about?" The old man turned to him and said, "Well, son, I can't tell you quite yet. Not until you've taken a trip to Kansas City. I'll take you to Kansas City some time and then I'll be able to explain it better to you."

Eventually, the day came when they went to Kansas City. It was in the Depression. Bob saw many things. There was very little comment from the old man. They just went around and saw everything. Perhaps they bought some provisions... I don't know.

Anyway, Bob noticed the white people in line for food... a soup kitchen... a soup line, or something like that... people in line to get something to eat. He judged they had nothing to eat at home, so they were lining up here getting their bowls of food. On the other hand, he saw a longhouse (it was a hotel), where people who seemed to be dressed much better were going in. They must have eaten in there, because he saw some other people taking some food (that seemed to be like leftovers) out the back, and putting it into garbage cans (that's what he found out later they're called). There were other people who came and picked the food out of the garbage cans to eat it. Those people apparently had no food, just like the others in the soup line. There were many questions in this little boy's mind. When they got home, and when the right moment came, Bob asked [his grandfather], after dinner, sitting on the porch, some things about Kansas City. He said, for example:

> Why is it that the grandfather of the longhouse (the hotel), why didn't he ask in the people, the relatives that were eating out of the cans in the back yard, since, apparently, there was enough food because there were leftovers. Why didn't he invite people, those relatives, to come in and eat along with the others? It doesn't seem understandable.

And it was clear that a lot of right people didn't have enough to eat. But this was a puzzle, where there was food to eat, and too much, more than enough, and people weren't invited in. Well, the old man said:

> Now, I can start to explain a little better to you. It's because there's a law that the white man has. This law did not come from God. *It's a man-made law. And this law says that everyone must get as much as he can*. That's what that law is. You see, everyone was doing that. The people in the soup line—they were getting as much as they could (that happened to be only one bowl of food). The people who went into the longhouse—they got what they wanted as much as they could. And, the people eating out of the cans—they were also getting as much as they could. Now, I have to go back to the beginning, when we first met the white man, to explain the rest to you. And then I can tell you about the train.
>
> 'When the white people first came to this island (this island is North America), our cousins over on the sea, on the East, thought that they came off the foam of the sea because they were white (the foam of the sea is white, you know). So, they thought that maybe they were going somewhere else, eventually... coming off the foam of the sea to rest on this island. But then there were more that came. And more. And our ancestors' cousins over there, on the East sea, said to them, 'Well, you're resting here before you're going somewhere else, and now there are more and more of you, so we'd better have an understanding. We'll say that as many of you as can sit on a deer skin, that many we will allow to stay, but no more than that." Because, it seemed that more were coming and none were leaving... so, they thought there had better be some understanding. This is when we began to learn that the white man is different. Either God made him different, or something. Anyway, he was different, and very, very clever in a certain way, that our ancestors didn't know. They had a different kind of knowledge and cleverness. Instead of spreading out the deer skin, they cut it into strips... until they could make an enormous circle with the deer skin strips and thus make a large area in which the white people could congregate. So a very large number of white people could get within the deer skin and this technically... they said they were still just sitting within the deer skin, so that our ancestors and cousins would have no argument. That's when we understood that they were very clever. And that's how there came to be more of them.
>
> But we also noticed something else: they had a holy book with them. This holy book (according to what we have heard... we have seen it out here too... it's really a wonderful book) comes from God. It comes from the Creator and it says wonderful things. But we noticed that all the right things for the White Man, according to the Creator, right there, in that book... we noticed that they just won't follow that book unless someone makes them do it. They have to have two things to do it. They have to have the book and at the same time, they have to have some-

body to force them to follow that book. Our people, they need to know the Truth, the Right way... they need to know the Creator's way for them, and then they would do it. But the White man, he needs to know this from the book, but then he needs someone to force him. They had a grandfather across the sea, so they told us (that's the King of England, of course), and he had soldiers—warriors—and these warriors forced him to be what was in that sacred book. So that's what we learned about the White man: that he had a sacred book, but he couldn't follow it, or wouldn't follow it, of his own accord. He had to be forced to! What we understood is that they had the law of God, that they had the Creator's law, just like we had a Creator's law. It ain't the same law, but they both come from the Creator and they're both right. They had it in that book. But they wouldn't follow it unless the warriors of the grandfather forced them to. That was about anything: about killing people, or about running around taking other people's things, like taking things away from the Indians. They had to have the grandfather send out his warriors to stop them from doing bag things. So they needed both of these things together to act right.

Then there came a day when they said they didn't like this grandfather anymore, they didn't want him. That's strange to hear that you wouldn't like your grandfather, that you wouldn't want your grandfather. But I guess they were so far away from him, for so long... I don't know, but we just don't understand that. But one day, the said, 'We will not have you for our grandfather anymore" (This is the American Revolution, of course). So, they said, 'you are no longer going to be our grandfather." We've never heard of such a thing as that before. But, you see, they wanted to get rid of that grandfather, and they did. After that, they went crazy... because they needed to have the sacred book, and they needed the warriors of the grandfather to make them follow that book. Then they could behave right, they could act right. But if they didn't want that grandfather anymore, got rid of him, said that they would never follow him anymore, they wouldn't even think he was their grandfather anymore... then, of course, there was nobody to make them follow that book. So, when that happened, they started to go crazy. And they started to come further and further into Indian land, our people's land. They just went crazy. They did crazy things, they shot all kinds of people... without thinking.

And then, little by little, there came about something to help hem stop being crazy. And this was a new law. They had God's law before, but it needed the grandfather's warriors to tell them to do it. Now that was gone, they weren't crazy now: they had a new law—man-made law. It didn't come from God at all; it's a man-made law. And this man-made law is that everybody should get as much as he can. That's all. And that settled them down a bit because, then, everybody did that, and everybody went ahead, and everybody understood that everybody else would do that—all those white people. So everybody's getting as much as they can... everybody understood that. Like you saw in Kansas City... everybody understood that... everybody was getting as much as they can. So, in Kansas City, you see... if that grandfather of the longhouse (the hotel), if he had asked in those people that were eating out of the cans in the back, if he asked them into the house to eat that very same food, then he would be breaking that law, the man-made law... because you're supposed to get as much as you can [...] because the grandfather was getting something out of the people that came in to eat there, he

was getting as much as he could. And the people who went there to eat were getting as much as they could, and the people eating out of the garbage cans were getting as much as they could, and the people in the soup line were getting as much as they could. But if you invite anyone else into that longhouse, where the grandfather wasn't getting as much as he could out of them... if he asked them in like that, then he would be breaking that law and then they would go crazy again. Back there on the East sea, when they went crazy and started to cross this island (after they got rid of their grandfather they started to cross this island), they killed a lot of Indians, our cousins (brothers, sisters, they call them) and anyone else without thinking, and they came into our hunting grounds, and they did things that are against the Creator's law. But when they got this man-made law, they settled down a little, and they kept going across this island, taking everything they could, everybody getting as much as he can. It isn't a good law—it's a man-made law—but they at least weren't so crazy as they were at first, and eventually they came to the end of the island and they saw the western sea. Then there was no more land, no more place to go and get more land.

So then, they might have gone crazy again, but that's when they invented something else, they made up something: it's called money. You've seen money... ten cents... you know what money is... but you don't understand what it is to the White man. When he couldn't get anymore land, what he decided then is that he would get more and more of this money, and that would be the same thing. He could still have his law, the man-made law, and get more and more and more money. And that would be the same to him. So he could still follow his law. So that's how it is. They've been going like that, and that still works today. Now, you shouldn't bother them very much. You shouldn't upset them too much, or they'll go crazy again... because this is just a man-made-law. They've got to follow it... get as much as they can... If they get off that, then they'll go crazy again. So you can't brother them much, those white people. You have to give them what they want... just get as much as they can, then they'll get a bit calm. Otherwise they're going to go crazy again. Because this is only a man-made law, son.

Now I can explain that train to you. It used to be that there were cattle down in Texas that they needed up there in Kansas. So the train took the cattle from Texas all the way up to Kansas. Then there was wheat in Kansas that they needed to have down in Texas. The people wouldn't have enough to eat except meat... so they sent this wheat down on the train. There was a need for it down there in Texas and there was a need for cattle up there in Kansas. That's what that train was for, then. But, as time went on, the White man came to the stage where he didn't have anymore land to go and... he wanted to get as much as he can and now he had to make it money... to get as much money as he can. Now, that train isn't anymore what it used to be. They used to need cattle up in Kansas; they used to need wheat down in Texas; but they don't anymore... because right now they have enough cattle in Kansas. So, what are they running that train for, son? That's what I think about every night... It's something you want to keep thinking about.

It's like this... Now, when you want to send cattle here or there, you've got to pay money. Now, somebody is running that train in order to get more of that money. In order to follow the White Man's law which is

the man-made law, they've got to get more money, otherwise they're going to go crazy... like they did the other time. So they got this law. It isn't what you think. That train is not taking anything necessary down or anything necessary up. But in the White Man's mind, it is necessary... because they're following their law. They're getting more money by doing it—taking the cattle here and there—they get more money this way and that follows their law.

So, I'd be thinking here at night about that law, and about the White Man, and how he has to follow that law. You remember, back in Kansas City, the grandfather of that longhouse... he was getting money too. And that's the reason that he let those people in—anyone who could give him money. Anyone who couldn't give him money, he wouldn't let in. Now, that's a grandfather! Grandfathers don't act that way, among us people. It ain't natural, and it's not God's law. And it's not in that sacred book because I read the sacred book. It ain't there either because the son of God there said many other things though the other way. He said to love your brother, and love all those around you.

And according to that book, then it should have been the way we would have done it: you would invite the people in—those people that were eating out of the cans—according to the book. But there was no one to force them to do it according to the book, so they followed this man-made law, which is getting as much as you can.

So, that means that even a grandfather to his own grandchildren... he'd have to get money out of them (because that's what they have now, money... you've got to get as much money as you can), ask every body who'd come in there and give him money. Whoever can't give him money, he won't let them in. If he invited people in that were eating out of the garbage can and they couldn't give him money, then he would be disobeying the White Man's law. And you can't do that. Now, that's the end of the story, son, of that train, and of the white Man, and of his law, the law that he follows. I thing about that every night, because it's very deep."

That's the end of the story [...] It covers just about all central issues of the nature of liberal economics...supply and demand, the (self-regulating market... the whole bit's right there... and how people get rattled if you go off from that standard. It covers just about the whole range.

IIM IN ACTION

AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE BY THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Interculture, since its beginning in 1968, under the name *Monchanin Journal*, has always meant to reflect the thinking and action of the Intercultural Institute of Montreal, initially named: Monchanin Centre.

Our Journal began in 1968 by being simply a newsletter of the Centre's activities, before transforming itself gradually and exclusively into expressing the intercultural thinking and vision of the latter, now called the Intercultural Institute of Montreal.

So during many years (1975–1985) we published a small separate Bulletin that gave news about the Centre, a Bulletin that turned out into a magazine called *Intercultural Horizons* (1985–1993), more adapted to the general public.

For sure, the dynamism of the Centre's praxis was always being reported briefly, along general lines, in the Director's official annual report, but since 1975, did not reach the readers of our Journal *Interculture*.

The new chronicle "IIM in Action" in our Journal Interculture, therefore aims at remedying all that, by giving a more elaborate report of IIM's praxis.

It seems to us appropriate to open this first chronicle "IIM in Action," by going straight to the heart and soul of that 30 year old praxis, by introducing briefly our readers to some of the achievements of the General Director of IIM, Kalpana DAS, central pillar, heart and soul of our Institute for the last 25 years, and whose 25th anniversary as Director and Co-ordinator of the IIM we are commemorating this year.

We also believe that this small imperfect tribute to her, fits in very well with the theme of this first issue, "the Priceless," and with the theme of the upcoming second issue: "demonetizing our lives, and putting back into the centre of our lives both 'gratuitousness' and the 'commons of ecumenical kinship.'"

Robert VACHON

Homage to Kalpana Das

ON THE OCCASION OF HER 25TH ANNIVERSARY AS GENERAL DIRECTOR, SOUL, HEART AND "*SHAKTI*" OF THE INTERCULTURAL INSTITUTE OF MONTREAL (1979-2004)

BY ROBERT Vachon,
FORMER DIRECTOR OF IIM (1970-1979),
FOUNDER, DIRECTOR OF *INTERCULTURE*
(1968-2004)

INTRODUCTION

Yes, as General Director, soul, heart (and allow me an expression that I am using here for the first time, in order to be interculturally just towards her) as "*Shakti*" of IIM; this key word of her own Hindu Bengali spiritual tradition, which refers in India to the "Presence/silent soul-force/She who cares and holds everything together" and which is translated in India simply as Ma (the Divine Mother) and which is applied to mothers and women who act as such.

Our founder and first General Director (1963–1970) Jacques LANGLAIS c.s.c., in his autobiography "Du Village au monde, à la rencontre des cultures"[5] writes, and I translate:

> "Another event which was to be of great importance for the Centre's future, has been the quiet arrival of an exceptional woman from India, Kalpana DAS. This happened around the end of 1968, soon after our Centre's incorporation, at a time when the Centre was alive with new initiatives, projects, activities. It was also at a time when a change of guard was about to happen at IIM... The quality of her discretion was one to which our North-American culture had not habituated us... Kalpana DAS discovered Robert VACHON and Monchanin Centre while attending a talk that Robert VACHON gave at the India-Canada Association, of which he was vice-president and one of the founders." (p. 278)

5. P. 278. Les Éditions Carte blanche, Outremont (Québec) 2000, (438 pp.) Distributor in Canada: Fides, 163 Deslauriers, St. Laurent, Quebec, Canada H4N 2S4. Tel. 514-745-4290.

I would like however to clarify that it was on the occasion of an event that I had organized in order to mark a Gandhian centenary and where I had invited and presented the speaker Swami RANGANATHANANDA from the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Society of Calcutta, a society that Kalpana knew well.

After the conference, she came to me—accompanied by another young Hindu woman—to congratulate me for what I had said in my presentation, having never heard, so she said, a westerner speak so positively and with such conviction about the Hindu world. It was raining very hard that evening, so after the conference, I offered to drive these two young women to their place of residence: the Maria Goretti Centre, run by the Holy Cross Sisters. They accepted. During the course of the long conversation that I had in the car with Kalpana, I had discovered at last a Hindu who was interested and could answer my questions about Hinduism, since I was preparing a six month trip to India in view of a total immersion in the Hindu world. She graciously accepted to answer my queries in order to prepare my trip, and in the process, she began to hear about our Centre, to frequent it and to become active in it during my eight month absence in Asia (beginning in January 1970).

The "change of guard" that Jacques LANGLAIS speaks about, is that upon my return from India, I was named, in August 1970, General Director of IIM (then called Monchanin Centre), where I had been working since 1967. I had accepted *temporarily* to be Director in order to allow Jacques LANGLAIS to pursue his doctoral studies on China. Thus I found myself taking up a task which I found to be a difficult challenge.

In March 1971, this twenty six year old Hindu woman, Kalpana DAS, who considered education to be something other than schooling,, and being greatly impressed by the spirit of openness and voluntary simplicity of the Centre, offered to join the team. She brought with her the intercultural and interreligious philosophy of the great Rabindranath TAGORE and the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Society.

So I widely opened the doors, all the more so since it seemed to me primordial that the staff be composed of persons coming from religions and cultures deeply different from that of the Western and Christian religion, and ready to enter into intercultural/interreligious dialogue and learning at an interpersonal and life-style level (a pluralism at the staff level which was not yet the case at the Centre). She thus joined our team in March 1971.

1969–1978

It is interesting to note that her *curriculum vitae* includes besides her formal training in political science and philosophy, the following:

> since 1969, research-action in intercultural studies at the Intercultural Institute of Montreal, with an

interdisciplinary approach. Focus on education, communication, international development, human rights, community development.. Four fields of interest: Native Indian, African, Asian cultures, Indic philosophy and political thought...

From 1971 to 1978, Kalpana participates and is my right hand in all of the Centre's endeavours, activities, research, writing, weekly Friday evenings of intercultural sensitization for the general public, week-end and total immersion seminars, panels to secondary schools and colleges (taking place in the schools or at the Centre), cultural resource persons service, *Monchanin Journal*, etc.

Moreover, it is she who in 1972–1973, with the financial help of the new Quebec Ministry of Immigration, conceptualizes and runs the first two year project of intercultural education for children (age four to ten) from different cultures and religions of our neighborhood and of Montreal, a program which, through the years, has reached some 100 children, and of which a very rich interesting report is written by Kalpana in our MONCHANIN JOURNAL, Issue 45, pp. 5–14 May–June 1974 (available at the IIM), and where can already be found the main lines of her own intercultural philosophy in consonance with that of our founder and of our Centre at that time. Here are some excerpts from her text (pp. 5–13):

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION BY KALPANA Das

A Search

Intercultural education: what is it?

Let us not confuse multicultural education with intercultural education. Learning or acquiring some information and intellectual knowledge about other cultures, is one thing; but discovering the deepest and the highest values of other cultures as the very dimensions of ourselves is another. This is precisely the distinction I would like to make between multicultural and intercultural education. The very word "interculture" suggests a mutual fecundation of cultures. This, obviously, demands a radical questioning of one's own culture and a reaching out for undiscovered horizons of one's own being revealed by someone else i.e., in this context, by some other cultures. I am quite aware, however of the fact that we ought to have some factual knowledge "about" and some kind of an opening toward other cultures before we choose to be permeated by their values and before a symbiotic synthesis takes place. In other words, multiculturalism is a necessary step toward interculturalism, but they are not the same.

Why?

We are living today in a "world" environment, i.e. we are no longer living in any one particular national or cultural environment. We are living in a multinational and multicultural one. The advanced means of communication have conquered the distance and physical isolation between the peoples of the world. However, we have not yet been able to tear down the barriers of religious, racial, national and cultural prejudices which keep us apart in the very midst of our physical proximity. We are still incapable of resolving the problem of domination of one group of people over the other. Our ignorance about each other has brought us to the point where some of us are living in indignation and others in pride. What should be done about it? The first thing that comes to my mind is: education. But an education which helps people to understand the environment, to live in it, to be in harmony with it.

So far, it has been and still is the educational imperialism of the West which is prevailing throughout the world. In that process, the non-Western societies have gained a lot, but they have sacrificed more in order to survive.

The domination of one particular culture over the others will gradually destroy the growth and flowering of a being (the dominated one) in its own colour and rhythm; it will stop the multidimensional growth of all as they tend to be nourished by different cultures.

The task ahead:

It is imperative that we radically question our system of education and revise it according to our present needs. Maybe we should aspire to obtain a creative and harmonious synthesis of the different notions and ways of education in the various cultures.

We do not know in what concrete shape or form it will manifest itself. I would like to share here some of the questions I have been asking myself, some of the important intuitions I have become aware of, as we start this exploration in intercultural education.

Relativising our notion of education: the Hindu, Western, African traditions.

... [Here, Kalpana expands on the difference between these three.]

Relativising our notion of pedagogy:

Different traditions have given emphasis to different faculties of the human being, or to one faculty more than the other. Thus, while in the Hindu tradition, it is the intuitive and instinctive faculties of man that get the most attention, in the Western tradition, it is the objective and rational faculty around which the net of learning is woven, whereas in Africa, it is the communion faculty which is the centre of the learning process. While the context for the Hindu is the cosmos, for the Westerner it is the world order, and for the African it is the earth.

Hindu pedagogy is concerned with myth, existential rather than intellectual inquiry, self-experience (*anveshana* and *anubhava*); Western pedagogy focuses on objectivity, reason, scientific experiment, creativity and self-analysis; logos is the sacred myth of the West; African pedagogy is one of oral transmission and of initiation. It is impossible to develop this in detail, here.

In the context of intercultural education, can we teach the values of one culture by following the pedagogy of another culture? To be more specific and precise: can one truly teach the values of African culture in an American way? Obviously, teaching African culture in an American way would certainly

give some information and incite some awareness concerning African values, and this is of great importance. However, by no means would it bring one to the total understanding and discovery of the core values of African life as an African understands them and as dimensions of one's own being.

If we teach African culture in an African way, the very method or way of teaching must carry us into the experiencing of the values of the African lifestyle. The method of education is totally based on the aim and purpose of education, which is again determined by the highest values and ideals of a civilization. So, in order to teach African culture, one needs to have experienced that culture from within. Otherwise, whatever one teaches about that culture is nothing but one's intellectual understanding and perception of that culture. Some practical applications of these reflections will be dealt with in the next chapter: an experience of intercultural education of children at Monchanin Centre.

... [Kalpana describes further this experience pp. 8–14.]

Some time later, she received a letter from Tenzin GEYCHE, secretary, Office of H.H. the Dalai Lama in Dharmsala, India: "I have found some of the articles in your publication [*Nos. 45, 47, 49*] extremely interesting. I think that these publications will be useful to the Tibetan Children's village and I am forwarding the publications to them."

In 1972, Kalpana initiates a new program at the Centre *in the realm of intercultural education*: an intercultural training program for teachers and professionals, when the "association franco-ontarienne des professeurs de religion des écoles secondaires d'Ottawa" requests a session of cultural sensitization. In 1973, she organizes and directs a pilgrimage to India for Ottawa, Quebec City and Montreal teachers at the secondary school level, prepared by a week-end total immersion seminar in Hindu spirituality and culture. In 1977, the UQAM (Université du Québec à Montréal) requests her to give a nine hour intercultural sensitivity workshop to a group of teachers in the course "Formation des maîtres au niveau élémentaire." In 1977, she is sitting at the SIETAR (Society for Intercultural Training and Research—USA) committee that is organizing that year's Congress, then invited to give a session at the School for International Training in Vermont (USA).

In the realm of social intervention, she has, since 1975, set up intercultural consulting and counselling services both at the level of individuals and institutions (social workers, psychologists, *services sociaux du Montréal métropolitain* (CSSMM)), training programs at the Centre or where requested, and acts also as consultant in numerous community groups, government institutions, based on her intercultural vision and pedagogy of "research-action of Intercultural Alternatives."

I can truly say in all sincerity that without her collaboration between 1971 and 1979, I could never have made it as General Director of Centre Monchanin. That is why, in 1979, when I saw that she spoke enough French (her fifth language), I proposed at our General Assembly that she be named General Director. Consensus there

was! And I continued to collaborate actively with her in all aspects of the functioning of the Institute, and as treasurer and director of our Journal *Interculture* to this day.

1979–2004

A life totally dedicated to Research-Action of Intercultural Alternatives

She went beyond the administrative role of an executive director and has been the visionary, the initiator of a variety of programs and services, giving a structural organizational framework of the intercultural philosophy and *praxis* of the Institute; her activities comprised public education, intercultural teaching, training, directing intercultural projects at the community grassroots level as well as in various institutions.

IIM began first as a meeting and friendship centre between persons from different religions, cultures, languages, and as one of information on religions, cultures, but on the basis of personal testimonies and contemplative listening, hence as complementary to the academic approach. It has gradually developed into a centre devoted to learning from the different religions and cultures, but from within, avoiding that anyone of them dominate others, and finally it has transformed into a *Research and Action Group for Intercultural Alternatives*, which does not consist primarily in managing problems of diversity, but in *harmonizing to the Pluralism of Reality.*

For the Institute, interculturality is not primarily a problem to be managed and solved, but a mystery to be discovered and lived as fully as possible. Interculturality, in its view is not Multiculturalism, nor integration of immigrants nor of different cultures to any one universal religion or culture, ancient or new (development, modernity, radical democracy, Indigenous, Chinese or other view) but it consists in absorbing as much as possible the pluralism of Reality and in living it to its fullest. This interculturalism does not confuse the mystery of Pluralism with the problem of plurality. Nor does it reduce the former to the latter. This is what the Institute tries to express when it describes itself as a Research and Action group for intercultural alternatives.

Our Institute did not start from a mandate given by somebody (a government or a religious institution), but is rather the result of a call, a vocation arising daily from the unavoidable pluralism of the whole Reality and of which no one can possess the ultimate definition.

Interculturality here continues to be that "no man's land" that all of us can enjoy as long as we do not try to possess it. It is rather a matter of being possessed by it, whose name is beyond all name and is no one's property. So it is not so much a matter of doctrine, theory, philosophy as an existential attitude of listening to the pluralism of Reality.

It is this existential attitude which is first and foremost sought, encouraged and required from the "animators" and teachers at IIM. It cannot be imposed on someone and cannot be taught through mere definitions, but is communicated through the testimony and dialogi-

cal dialogue of our respective daily lives. It is not the product of credits, academic diploma, nor of mere autonomous individual or collective opinion. This labour of Research-Action for Intercultural Alternatives is therefore not a "job"; it is not something you do for a salary or in order to build oneself a professional career in the system.

It is only by becoming aware of the radically alternative nature of that Interculturalism at the IIM that one may truly appreciate the twenty five years of the extraordinary achievements of Kalpana as General Director, Director of Personnel and Training. She has hired some 95 persons at the Institute during these twenty five years.

Being aware of this core matter, also helps us appreciate her achievements in the realm of conceptualising, elaborating and running herself personally the research training programs and the numerous creative and varied projects of the Institute during all these years. It also helps us appreciate her role as consultant and counselor officially and personally to so many local, national and international organizations, professional, governmental, community, at the level of schools, universities in Quebec, Canada and elsewhere, etc. The mere enumeration of all this would require pages and pages. A great part of all this can be found in the 500 pages of the annual reports she has written during these twenty five years and that are available at IIM.

Let me just mention briefly here first of all, the programs and sessions of intercultural training that she has personally given to professionals in the fields of social work and schooling, her initiatives in intercultural regeneration of the commons, the important international congress that she organized in 1992 at Mount Orford, Quebec, where she has created the International Network for Cultural Alternatives to Development (INCAD), which she is still co-ordinating, and whose manifesto has recently been taken as a basis of a new network in Europe called ROCADE (Réseau des Objecteurs de Croissance pour l'Après-Développement). I mention also her creation of IIM's data bank ROOTS on the indigenous know-how throughout the world (see our Web site: iim.qc.ca) her attempt to create the IGRA (International Grass Roots Alliance) project (see our Web site). In 1993, she organised the important Congress: "Bilan et perspectives de l'Interculturalisme au Québec," and from 1993 to 2001, she worked in partnership within ERASME, running research-action projects on the Haitian and Hindu communities in Quebec and also on Afro-Caribbean youth gangs.

Mention must be made of the great international colloquium that she organized and directed in 2000 in Bangalore, India, on recovering indigenous knowledge. She also participated in 2001 as speaker in the major colloquium that took place in Paris on "Undoing development and remaking the world," and in 2003 in the "America Profunda" Colloquium in Mexico City.

In 2003, she completed a research-action project with cultural organizations on "Living conditions and mental health of the elderly in ethnocultural communities in Montreal" and organized the 40th anniversary celebrations of the IIM. Finally, she was invited as speaker at the 2004 Barcelona "Human Movements and Immigration World Congress," where she gave a presentation on "Immigration in Plurinational States."

I have only lifted a corner of the veil of her achievements.

But what is even more important to stress is her capacity of attentive and respectful "caring" for each member of the IIM team, allowing each one to blossom. This "caring" is done from the perspective of her Hindu tradition which is one of "family kinship," of which the Westerner has generally no understanding and which I cannot describe here.

Discreetly, silently, the invisible "Presence" is there, the "*Shakti*" who holds everything together.

CONCLUSION

Finally, as a conclusion to this homage, I wish to leave our readers with two fundamental recent texts published by Kalpana DAS for the public.

The first one is an excerpt of an overview text according to the last four decades, that she prepared for IIM's 40th anniversary (2003) and which was published in her descriptive annual report of the year 2002–2003 (pp. 5–10). It is entitled "Forty years later."

The second is an excerpt from the last official version of IIM that she recently prepared for the general public "IIM, a Research and Action Group for Intercultural Alternatives."

It seems to me that these two, along with the homage, may serve as a good basis and background to situate within the whole of IIM what we intend to report in this new section of *Interculture* entitled "IIM in action."

All our infinite gratitude, Kalpana! Happy anniversary and "*ad multos annos*!!!"

R. V.

Text I

Published in April 2003

After forty years...

by Kalpana DAS

Contextual challenges and the shaping of an alternative interculturalism

Forty years have passed by and it seems to be an impressive accomplishment in terms of the longevity of a grassroots organisation. Each of these four decades is marked by a new beginning. Such has been the tradition at the IIM, a tradition of adapting and adjusting to the changing trends and needs of the immediate socio-politico and cultural environment as well as facing the challenges of global forces, all the while sustained by the seminal intuitions on the pluralism of Reality and of the world, and the imperatives (inevitability?) of interculturality.

The philosophy and practices of the Intercultural Institute of Montreal are rooted in the non-institutional and community sector and in the living situations and lived experiences of people. It has been and it is our belief that societal transformation is possible only through a synergetic process that begins with people and extends to communities and finally touches the fabric of a society as a whole.

Drawing a portrait of the social, cultural, political environment of each decade in which the IIM has evolved, will shed some light on IIM's vision of interculturality and its *praxis*. It all began within the historical, socio-cultural, religious and political context of Quebec and of Canada. In 1960s the role of the Catholic Church and its influence on Quebec society and on its people; the historical conflictual relations between the English and the French (the Two Solitudes as it was named by some); the subjugation of Aboriginal Nations; different waves of European and non-European immigrants which constituted the racially, culturally and religiously diverse population of this country etc. made up the particular context in which our thought and action have evolved.

From the late 1970s till today the greater involvement of the State, its governments and its institutions in the field of cultural diversity and intercultural relations induced a different dynamic for our work. Government policies of multiculturalism (Canada) and interculturalism (Quebec); the language Bill 101 of Quebec; policies concerning aboriginal nations and the movements for their cultural renaissance and their self-determination; increasing institutionalisation and politicisation of inter-ethnic and race relations

etc. brought us to articulate an alternative vision and practices of interculturality at the IIM.

Although an international dimension was always present in our vision and action, it is since the 1980s that we explicitly took the international context into account as a backdrop for the elaboration of a comprehensive framework of intercultural philosophy and practices. Intercultural issues involved in all international affairs seemed to us to be crucial for any kind of theorisation of interculturality.

We realised that it is of extreme importance to have a clear understanding of the nature of cultural conflict and cultural distance as determining factors in intercultural relations and intercultural studies. These two factors are further complexified by the history of colonialism and through the stratification of cultures of the North and those of the South on the scale of modern/non-modern or civilised/primitive cultures. Moreover, the field of activities such as international development and co-operation, human rights action, international aid, globalisation and so on needed to be investigated from the perspective of interculturality in order to draw relevant lessons for the formulation of an intercultural philosophy and theory.

The 1990s were the years when two parallel trends emerged. On the one hand, governments, their institutions particularly in education and health and social services as well as the different disciplines in universities introduced their programs related to intercultural or inter-ethnic relations and immigration; and on the other hand, many individuals introduced training programs in intercultural communication and diversity management for institutions, businesses and industries and so on. Thus creating a new market based on the principles of the market such as competition and packaging. In the process a very different history began to be written about the intercultural field of studies and action where often the pioneering work of the non-institutional or community sector (which was many years ahead of the formal sector) found no place. At the IIM once again we had to find new ways to continue with our work by combating these trends in order not to be recuperated into the dominant system and maintain our self-identity. This is when we focused on articulating, in our discourses and in our action, a community or grassroots pluralism and interculturalism and took a different road.

As a result a clear distinction emerged between the approach to interculturality within the framework of the State and the dominant culture on the one hand, and the approach of the grassroots at local and international levels on the other hand. Thus through the constant adjustment to the challenges of time and widening of the scope of our inquiry and quest we have articulated a vision, a theory, and practices of interculturality that can claim to be alternative.

The features of IIM's programs and its approach

This being said the IIM consciously took the posture of proposing instead of opposing the Statist and the institutional or mainstream approach, and worked

towards offering a different point of view on the pluralistic societies of the world and providing a wide range of programs and services in the field of interethnic, intercultural, interreligious, interracial relations as well as in intercultural studies. Over the last forty years its programs covered a variety of fields, topics and issues related to pluralism and interculturalism and it is impossible to enumerate all here. Since its beginning in 1963 till today, i.e. 2003, its programs traversed a very long road of innovations starting with intercultural socialisation of youth and adults from all walks of life and from diverse cultural-religious backgrounds; experiential culture learning and intercultural/interreligious dialogue and encounter; intercultural debates on social issues of the day; passing through intercultural communication, education and training programs for professionals and social actors both in institutional and community sectors of our society; establishing an international network for intercultural reflection and action in the field of international development, human rights and social movements; conducting research-action projects on specific issues concerning particular groups such as youth, elderly, family of immigrant and ethnocultural communities, and most recently on interculturality at the grassroots.

The method of our work is fundamentally based on a continual interaction between reflection and action which are mutually stimulating .We work towards developing an intercultural method which is experience based, applied to different fields of reflection and action and dialogical.

The following are some of the important features of our approach:

a) Ethnocultural and intercultural investigation into the realities of specific groups, communities and societies and into the nature of their interaction and co-existence

b) Interdisciplinary dialogue between social science disciplines, community-based knowledge and the wisdom/knowledge systems of different cultures

c) Balancing North-South relations in the area of knowledge in order to avoid dominance or new types of crypto-colonialistic theories regarding pluralism and interculturality

d) Making efforts to integrate different modes of knowledge and epistemologies

In short the philosophy and practices, the programs and services of the IIM address the intercultural issues which go beyond the majority-minority or race relations, beyond the problem of diversity management and equal opportunity. We attempt to deal with cultural diversity and interculturality at the level of the transformative possibilities they offer in order to meet the contemporary economic, ecological, social, political and civilisational challenges of our time. Today our efforts are focused on searching for grassroots-based intercultural alternatives to these challenges. Moreover it should be noted that our work is essentially oriented towards social/popular education (learning) and social change rather than policy development for governments and their institutions all the while

engaging in a dialogue whenever it is possible with them. The regeneration of the commons (civil society) through an intercultural process is one of our main goals.

The realities of 2002–2003

Recovery from the "crisis": we are all well aware of the sudden financial crisis we had to face the previous year (2001–2002). In the last annual Assembly we gave an account of all the measures taken to cope with and to overcome the "crisis ." Two core questions were put to the Assembly. In the context of the market driven government policies and the political management of our societies by the corporate rules, "how do we continue to subsist?" and "how can action for social change be pursued without stability and sustained efforts?" Have we found any answers to these questions and recovered from the "crisis "? The answer is obviously ' no'. This is the reality and we need to find creative alternatives for our survival.

As one can surmise, this precisely has been the challenge for the year 2002–2003. To face this multifaceted challenge the following approaches seem to us to be realistic and constructive. Firstly, certain principles for alternative economics seem to be the most viable means without renouncing all together the rightful claim of the community groups to the monetary resources. The diversification of funding sources in the private sector remains to be explored better. But our reality is that there is a chronic lack of human energy and time.

The principles such as economy of enough instead of economy of more, voluntary simplicity and communal sharing in terms of life style hold the key for our survival. We need to deepen the understanding of these values and explore the concrete ways to better implement them in the life of the Institute. Secondly, the Intercultural Training Programs are IIM's important assets that generated in the past and has the potentialities to generate considerable resources. These programs had to be put aside to a great extent. We are hopeful to find time and energy to offer these programs on a regular basis next year. Thirdly, intensification and improvement of our fund-raising activities should be carefully planned.

Balancing budget, staff and programs/services: The shift in funding policies both in the public and the private sectors has become the determining factor for adopting any strategy to strike a balance between our budget, staff and the programs and services that we can offer in a year. A large part of our time and energy are spent in "juggling" our way through to function with some sanity. The difficulties lie in the fact that over forty years we have established at the IIM comprehensive programs and services that need to be sustained on a long term basis whereas the funding agencies are only interested to give finances for short term projects . This runs the risk of creating a situation of inventing projects for the purpose of physical survival of the organisation and jeopardises its mission and real expertise. Moreover there is no certainty of getting the grants for the projects we submit and the approval and the entry of the

funds are delayed from 4 to 6 months after our fiscal year begins in April. This state of affairs render it impossible to establish a definite budget for the year as well as stable staff.

Finally, this past year has been the year to find ways to readjust to these new administrative issues. This is evident in the profile of our staff and the revenue of the year. By using our reserve and self-generated funds, and subsidised employment of some staff members through Quebec Employment program we managed to live through the year. One thing is clear, this will be the mode of operation of the organisation from now on.

Text II

IIM, Research and Action Group for Intercultural Alternatives

by Kalpana DAS

[Editor's note. We limit ourselves here, dear reader, to the titles of her longer presentation; the detail of her description can be found in an IIM brochure that is available (free) at the IIM.]

OUR COMMITMENT

The Intercultural Institute of Montreal is a non-profit research and social action organization, dedicated to promoting an ever-deepening understanding of cultural pluralism, intercultural relations and social change. Its scope is at once local, national, and international.

Although harmonious ethnic relations and cultural diversity are generally recognized as desirable, little is understood about the transformative possibilities they offer our pluralistic world.

IIM is committed to exploring these possibilities in order to meet contemporary economic, ecological, social and civilizational challenges. These can only be met by a sincere search for wisdom and cosmovision from each and every culture, through dialogue, understanding and co-operation.

The philosophy and practices of IIM find their roots in the non-institutional and community sectors of our societies. The Institute's spirit has been one of engaging itself in a dynamic interaction between the public and private or the formal and informal sectors, without compromising its identity as a community organization.

It is our belief that a societal transformation is possible only through a synergetic process that begins with people and extends to communities and finally touches the

fabric of society as a whole. Thus our commitment is twofold: to reflect philosophically, elaborating intellectual discourses on pluralism, interculturalism and social change, and also to raise the voice of dissent, articulating alternative lifestyles at the grassroots.

The operational framework of the IIM is conceived on the basis of this intercultural philosophy, which translates into the composition of its staff and Administrative Board as well as into all of its administrative policies.

GUIDELINES FOR OUR ACTION

The following are the guiding principles for our action at the IIM:

- Pluralism of reality, i.e., the recognition that diversity and interconnectedness/relationality are inherent to human societies and to Nature.

- The notion of CULTURE is at the core of intercultural philosophy and practice. Culture is the matrix that gives meaning and forms to all human activities (economic, political, social, religious and so on) of a people and of a community.

- Transforming the monocultural paradigm of modernity, which purports to be the universal model for human life to a pluralistic and intercultural horizon where diverse cultural cosmovisions and paradigms can co-exist and interact with each other.

- Acceptance of cultural identity and of cultural affirmation is essential to effective interculturalism. Negation of cultural identity and differences renders any intercultural theory flawed.

- Giving priority to the issue of our responsibility towards aboriginal and first peoples throughout the world by collaborating with them in their struggle and supporting their rights to follow their ancestral lifestyles in their contemporary dynamics.

- Intercultural philosophy and action are necessarily based on a local-global dynamic. This means deconstructing the paradigm of inequality inherent to North-South relations, thereby forging a new basis for dialogue between the cultures of the North and of the South.

- Framing in intercultural terms the contemporary issues of our societies and of the world, so as to seek cultural and intercultural alternative responses in practice.

- Contesting the hegemony of the dominant "scientific" knowledge and recovering the subjugated systems of knowledge of peoples and cultures as they may offer alternative solutions to present-day problems.

FOCUS OF OUR PROGRAMS: LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL

- Research-action on pluralism and interculturalism.

- Action towards strengthening the grassroots social spaces and reclaiming people's commons (reinforcing civil society).

- Advocacy of people's rights to cultural identity with a special focus on aboriginal and first nations.

• Cultural studies on and advocacy of the knowledge systems of peoples, cultures and communities, in the following areas: health and healing, education, agriculture and food, economy and sustenance, environment and ecology, politics and social movements (e. g., human rights, women's movements, etc.) and spirituality.

• Intercultural teaching and training for alternatives addressed to: educators and teachers; social and health-care professionals; community workers and activists; agents for international development and co-operation.

• Producing and providing intercultural resource materials: publishing a journal (*Interculture*), monographs and "manuals"; providing audio-visual resources; offering a fully equipped library and documentation services.

• Offering intercultural referral and consulting services.

Program descriptions

MODULE A
RESEARCH AND ACTION

Field 1. Grassroots Participation and Intercultural Community Development (local)

Program 1a. Regeneration of Communities and Neighbourhoods.

Program 1b. Social Movements and Cultural Pluralism.

Field 2. Knowledge, Innovation and Intercultural Alternatives (local and international)

Program 2a. Local and National Research Projects

Program 2b. International Network for Cultural Alternatives to Development (INCAD)

Program 2c. International Grassroots Alliance: for the Protection and Promotion of Local Knowledge (IGRA)

Field 3. Foundation for Pluralistic Societies

MODULE B
TEACHING AND TRAINING IN INTERCULTURALISM

Program 1. Pluralism and Alternatives (international).

1a. Alternative philosophy, theories and practices of pluralism and interculturalism.

1b. Cultural and intercultural alternatives in the fields of development (e.g. education, health, agriculture, economy); human rights and justice; social and environmental movements.

Program 2. Intercultural Training (local)

Program 2a. General Programs

Program 2b. Profession-Specific Programs

MODULE C
INTERCULTURAL RESOURCES AND SERVICES

1. Publications
2. Bilingual Intercultural Library
3. ROOTS Database
4. Ethnodoc and Referral Service
5. Intercultural Consulting Service