

BOOKCHIN AND KROPOTKIN: SOME COMMON INTELLECTUAL AND ORGANISATIONAL THEMES.

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Abstract: Taking as its starting point a common rationalist and scientific orientation, this paper considers how the questions and problems central to Kropotkin's writings brought forth recommendations for an analytical orientation and revolutionary project that is consistent with many of the positions taken by Bookchin. Of course, Bookchin's social ecology and libertarian municipalism is driven by an ecological analysis that was hardly the concern of Kropotkin. However, the paper seeks to show how their anarchist analysis questions the roots of social and economic organization, and sees the road to solving the dehumanisation of capitalism in restructuring the city. This is not to cast any doubt upon the great contribution of Bookchin to modern thought, but rather to show how he has enriched anarchist argument by placing his own innovative analysis within an existing intellectual orientation--the best representative of which is Peter Kropotkin.

"Anarchism is a conception of the Universe based on the mechanical interpretation of phenomena, which comprises the whole of Nature, including the life of human societies and their economic, political, and moral problems. Its method is that of the natural sciences, and every conclusion it comes to must be verified by this method if it pretends to be scientific. Its tendency is to work out a synthetic philosophy which will take in all facts of Nature, including the life of societies..."

This was written by Peter Kropotkin in 1901. I choose to open this short essay with it because it captures the essential orientation of anarchist writers during the twentieth century--including, I believe the orientation of Murray Bookchin, with whom the conference is principally concerned. Of course, Kropotkin was not faced with intensification of ecological destruction, concern for which is at the very centre of Bookchin's "social ecology." What we note here is the "inter-relatedness" of all the multiple species and things which make up nature, of which the human species is but a partner rather than a dominator.

I

It also insists upon the scientific rationality of anarchism from Kropotkin's perspective. For him, authentic anarchist argument must be able to go beyond a simple demand for freedom and equality, and move on to face the complexities of anarchist argument demanded by the large changes imposed on the environment by human social and economic activity--especially those introduced by the rise of bourgeois capitalism and its domination of politics and economics in the modern State.

I will be considering parallel themes in Bookchin's and Kropotkin's writings. Of course this will of necessity be selective, the subject being far too large for a simple paper. At the opening, however, in relation to the importance of being "rooted" in reality, of being rational and empirical, of avoiding flights of fancy that ignore the technical and practical circumstances of thought and behaviour, I will refer in passing to Murray Bookchin's work, *Re-Enchanting Humanity (1995)*, in which he attacks "antihumanism." The antihumanism analysed and dismissed is composed of various ecological approaches that ignore the rational, human-centred concerns of the Enlightenment and after:

"Antihumanism--in sharp contrast to the humanistic ideologies advanced by rationalism, various socialisms, and some forms of liberalism--is a world view that places little or no emphasis on social concerns. The message it offers is primarily one of spiritual hygiene, personal withdrawal, and a general disdain for humanistic attributes such as reason and innovation in impacting upon the natural and social worlds". 2

The antihumanists are those who blandly suggest that humanity might lose a couple of billions to famine to "restore a balance" (neo-malthusians), those who distrust technology and would reject it as being the cause of our problems, and those who would make of Nature (Gala) a mystical being to be worshipped rather than worked with under new and healthier relationships.

None of this is to say that Bookchin is not a passionate writer. Passion runs through all of his works, as those who remember his *Listen Marxist! will* remember. His has always been a passion to stop the domination and destruction of the nature by

attacking its ultimate source—the domination and destruction of human beings in society. To act, through communication and organization, is the psychological necessity, as is evident throughout Janet Biehl's work, *The Politics of Social Ecology* (1998). There, in elaborating the nature of "libertarian municipalism," she stresses the constant character of "movement politics," emphasising education, mobilisation, organisation and leadership aimed at developing social alternatives within a new political culture.

So, at the outset, we are to note that Bookchin is not simply a product of the modern period. In his own words:

"What is significant about this new approach, rooted in the writings of Kropotkin, was the relationship it established between hierarchy and the notion of dominating nature. Put simply; the very idea of dominating nature.... stemmed from the domination of human by human.... [T]his interpretation totally reversed the traditional liberal and Marxist view that domination of human by human stems from a shared historical project to dominate nature to overcome a seemingly "stingy," withholding, intractable natural world...; in order to create a beneficent society."

His arguments rest within that historical combination of anarchism--reason combined with a commitment to struggle against the multiple hierarchies that destroy the freedom of the individual. Freedom is to be found in society, using modern *technics* to organize that society. This was the argument of Bakunin, Faure and Kropotkin--and it is the argument of Bookchin. What is important about Bookchin is that he rephrased these arguments, within the tradition, yet put them against the multifarious alternatives of theory and practice that have dominated the twentieth century. He continued the attack on the Marxists, who until yesterday were such an influence on the "left" in Europe and North America; and, more importantly, he restructured the argument against capitalism within the framework of ecological crisis, new forms of economic organisation, the explosion in the size (and dehumanisation) of the modern urban condition, and reformulated an anarchist alternative with copious references to the history of popular politics in the "city."

My principal concern here is to examine Bookchin's arguments as part of the anarchist tradition with particular reference to Kropotkin (1842-1921), the scientist and

geographer, who, offended by the anarchist individualism of the likes of Stirner and Tucker, was concerned to demonstrate that the social condition should be organised within the framework of modern production methods; but within an anarchist federation of productive affluence in which all individuals might satisfy their needs without debilitating labour or the domination of others. ⁴ His best-known work is probably *Mutual Aid* (1902), which is a rejection of the "social Darwinism" of Herbert Spencer. Spencer had distorted the arguments of Darwin, and argued that competition between individuals in a species allowed for the domination of "the best" and the rule of the fittest. The fascists were later to use this argument to even greater excess, supporting not just capitalism but a revolutionary dictatorship of a self-styled elite. Kropotkin systematically destroyed this argument with innumerable references to the cooperative principle in species and human environments which were successful. His view of a nature's advice or rule to any species was:

"Don't compete!--competition is always injurious to the species, and you have plenty of resources to avoid it!" That is the *tendency* of nature, not always realized in full, but always present.... 'Therefore combine--practice mutual aid'.... That is what Nature teaches us; and that is what all those animals which have attained the highest position in their respective classes have done "⁵

This is a conclusion that gives the lie to social Darwinism, and also to the modern "victory" of capitalism, in which competitive and exploitative capitalism is regarded as the most efficient means of satisfying human needs. To say that "greed is good" (a familiar slogan in England during the Thatcherite years) is to set in process a psychology of exploitation which generates personal misery and social collapse. This was a general principle derived from an analysis of everything from bees and ants to mukrats and tigers. However, when it came to the human species, he took an anthropological overview which concluded that human beings had always been at their survival best when recognizing a natural (and advantageous) imperative to cooperate. Indeed, it is interesting *that in his Ethics (1906) he makes numerous references to the Third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713), who argued that we are possessed of an intrinsic "moral sense," to be called upon by reason. Hobbes, the perpetual pessimist who thought that human nature gave the necessity of absolutism, was Shaftesbury's principal target of criticism. By contrast with pessimists--like Augustine, Hobbes, and Huxley--Kropotkin saw*

human and other animal societies prospering best where mutual aid was practiced. Nature was not a condition of "original sin", not something in which our lives would be "nasty, brutish and short," and not a condition in which competing members of the same species functioned according to the principle of the "survival of the fittest." Mutual aid, as a moral principle in the case of human beings, when consciously (and naturally) pursued by the citizens of various historic communities, had shown itself to be the existing and superior practice of existence for them.

One of these communities was the medieval city, freeing itself from noble and clerical domination, forming guilds, establishing the independence of the city, forming alliances with other cities, establishing popular assemblies and liberties. Bookchin and Kropotkin alike use the medieval city as an example of an alternative to the State:

"...the very same current of mutual aid and support which we saw at work in the village community, and which was vivified and reintroduced in the Middle Ages by a new form of unions, inspired *by the very same spirit but shaped on a new model--the guilds.*"⁶

Guilds were based upon "self-jurisdiction" and "self administration.... not a centralized State."⁷

"in short ... it was not simply a political organization for the protection of certain political liberties. It was an attempt at organizing, on a much grander scale than in a village community, a close union for mutual aid and support, for consumption and production, and for social life altogether, without imposing on men the fetters of the State, but giving full liberty of expression to the creative genius of each separate group of individuals in art, crafts, science, commerce, and political organization. "^a

We are not talking of a golden age in the past. This was no utopia. However, - in spite of inequalities, of patriarchy, of patterns of exploitation, it was a functioning example of an alternative to the State, showing that the State was by no means a foregone conclusion. It indicates a capacity, a capacity that is "natural." Bookchin looks to the same--referring also to other historical antecedents. However, in relation to the communes and guilds in the medieval towns, he reiterates Kropotkin when he says:

"What made the medieval guilds [sic] particularly significant in ways that

mark a sharp departure from towns of the past is that they attained a degree of legislative and governing authority that made them the principal municipal institution of many communes. however parochial they seem to us today, European towns by the thousands achieved a degree of autonomy that few municipal entities had acquired in the past or were to acquire later. --.[Control from below thrived at the expense of an institutionally weak feudal society..."⁹

Like Kropotkin, Bookchin is confident in the example of human history that there is no inevitable authoritarian fate for the species, that feasible alternatives to the State do exist. That the State did become the predominant form was not an inevitability. There are, however, no guarantees that the State will disappear.

Now Kropotkin argued that the end of the medieval city's autonomy was not simply a product of the growth of capitalism. He points to a multiplicity of reasons, including expanding trade and the rise of the bourgeoisie; but the "main reason" was for him the "change of ideas and principles":

"Self-reliance and federalism, the sovereignty of each group, and the construction of the political body from the simple to the composite, were the leading ideas in the eleventh century... [T]he conceptions had entirely changed [by the 15th and 16th centuries]. The students of Roman law and the prelates of the Church, closely bound together since the time of innocent the Third, had succeeded in paralyzing the idea... [T]hey taught...that salvation must be sought for in a strongly-centralized State, placed under semi-divine authority; that one man can and must be the saviour of society...the old federalist principle faded away, and the very creative genius of the masses faded out. The Roman idea was victorious, and in such circumstances the centralized State had in cities a ready prey." 10

Political consciousness and political culture were restructured not in any way that can be conceived as progressive, but rather in a debilitating manner that was based on a theory that people "can, and must, seek happiness in a disregard of other people's wants ... in law, in science, in religion" This is the philosophy of liberal utilitarianism formulated by Bentham, and reformulated as social Darwinism by Huxley, and popular today amongst the neo-liberals.

The frustration and disgust at the dominant political culture of the modern

period, which is regarded as the major barrier to change, is also found in Bookchin's arguments. Domination was not invented by capitalism, nor is the destruction of nature simply an invention of capitalist technology: "Men did not think of dominating nature until they had already begun to dominate the young, women, and, eventually, each other. And it is not until we eliminate domination in all its form that we will really create a rational, ecological *society*." ¹² *Cultural causes, and cultural cures, are as central as any other* (without suggesting this is the "sole cause" of the condition we are in). So we see him comment on American political culture, in terms one might equally apply to European culture(s), as, "... currently the most ill-read, ill-informed, *and, culturally, the most illiterate country in the world.*" ¹³ Any revolutionary project must cut through that barrier of ignorance.

In this context, the revolutionary project is not to be aimed at a single class, the industrial proletariat. Kropotkin looked to a human potential, born of the human condition, rather than the development of a particular form of industry and technology. The capacity for integrated human action based upon mutual support, mutual aid, "...did not die out in the masses:"

"it flows still even now, and it seeks its way to find out a new expression which would not be the State, nor the mediaeval city, nor the village community of the barbarians, nor the savage clan, but would proceed from all of them, and yet be superior to all of *them in its wider and more deeply human perceptions.*"¹⁴

His anthropological and historical studies were bent on showing that human behaviour always and everywhere has had a mutualist component, that this is normal in everyday life, that it is the basis of stable societies, of ethical behaviour, and of rational courses of action that can be seen in both revolt and the creation of alternative societies based on solidarity. As such, anarchist society is not an automatic, teleological necessity, but an act of ethical choice: "...it is not love and not even sympathy upon which Society is based in mankind. It is the conscience--be it only at the stage of instinct--of human solidarity."¹⁵

There can be no suggestion that this will be automatically circumvented by the development of a class with a communist consciousness (after the manner of Marx). Rather than the proletariat, Kropotkin talked of "the masses" who must rediscover their

capacity, never lost, for mutual aid in a communist society. Bookchin goes even further than this in his judgement of the revolutionary potential of the proletariat:

"The working class has now become completely industrialized, not radicalized as socialists and anarcho-syndicalists so devoutly hoped. It has no sense of contrast, no clash of traditions. . . . Not only has the mass media commandeered it and defined its expectations.... but the proletariat as a *class* has become the counterpart of the bourgeoisie as a class, not its unyielding"

This recognition of the bourgeoisification of the proletariat goes back at least as far as Bakunin's analysis of revolutionary possibilities in Italy, Central Europe and Russia, in which he argues in favour of the revolutionary and anarchist potential of rural populations, unrehearsed in the limited opportunities for participation found in representative democracies. The capacity for change is antagonist ... an organ within the body of capitalism"¹⁶ not class limited, but a universal capacity. Its advocates can seek support everywhere. As Bookchin states in his interview with Janet Biehl, "I would have no compunction whatever about going to places that have no democratic traditions, either ideological or institutional, and trying to convey the benefits of a genuinely democratic society. My job would be to function as a propagandist and an agitator.... trying to explain to why, on solidly rational grounds, not traditional ones, they should discard an old system and adopt a new one. Such an endeavour would help offset the extent to which people's oppression has become deeply rooted even in their own thinking." ¹⁷

Certainly not calculated to appeal to the "cultural relativists," this statement explicitly indicates the capacity for introducing the values of "rationalism" and "solidarity" to persons from varied cultural and economic backgrounds. Gone is any dependency on expertise delivered from above by the State, the World Bank, the IMF, and the myriad of other hierarchical statist and international agencies that have done so much to inhibit development and enhance economic and political hierarchy in the developing world.

Such is also the message of Janet Biehl in the body of her text. There is little mention of "classes" in her analyses and explanations. She emphasises the loss of citizenship that has occurred in the modern period, in a situation where the casting of a vote, and the paying of taxes, is the extent of one's involvement in the political realm.

That is because the realm has been largely taken over by the State. Therefore, her programme for "libertarian municipalism" calls for decentralisation of the city (in which most of the world's population is now conglomerating, and which "atomize" their populations as community is lost in magalopolis). "Least of all does an atomized society foster the active, mature citizenship needed for a direct democracy."¹⁸ The goal becomes that of creating an authentic political realm, one of participatory politics, of a broadening of the numbers involved. This requires new values and behaviours, summed up in the terms, "solidarity" and "reason." The "character structure for mature citizens capable of democratic political participation," involves certain virtues:

"Of these virtues, the most important are solidarity and reason By any definition, citizenship presupposes a commitment to the public good--that is solidarity. In contrast to the cynicism that prevails today, mature active citizens would understand that the perpetuation of their political community depends on their active support for and participation in it....

"Reason, another quality that is much maligned today, would also be of crucial importance to direct democracy.... indispensable for overcoming any personal prejudices. ...They would need reason--as well as a great deal of personal strength and character--in order to be strong enough to uphold the good of the community." ¹⁹

All of which brings us to the character of the society which is to be pursued.

Embrace technology, but let us ensure that it is organized for humane purposes. The constant message of Bookchin, stressed by Bookchin since his Post-Scarcity Anarchism, and reiterated in all of his writings thereafter, is that we have the capacity to satisfy human needs on a universal scale, but the order of politics and economics in its present condition is a perpetual hindrance. The problem is that the ownership and organization of technology under capitalism defeats its potential. Post-scarcity "...has not been fulfilled... not because the technology is base but because the social arrangements that use it are base." ²⁰

Social arrangements are the source of flawed technological organization, the destruction of communities in the creation of highly centralized cities in which every person is a "stranger" ²¹ the disempowerment of individuals in an increasingly centralised and hierarchical economic and State structure. Under this system of domination, technology is subordinated to the material interests of the powerful, those

who own and/or control it. Inherent to the situation is a denial of authentic politics (in which all participate in community decisions), and a policy of economic development which places Nature in the position of an exploitable resource, to be pillaged rather than protected.

The domination and destruction of the environment is linked directly to the mentality of the domination of person by person. Men have dominated women (who globally still perform most of the "field work" in the developing world), and Bookchin has specifically linked social ecology to the demands of feminism.²² Slave-owners, land-owners, priests, state capitalists (or, if you prefer, state socialists) have dominated our various and unique historical condition. That view of a necessary hierarchy became a under capitalism. The centralised domination of society, in 'Church and State, became the accepted corollary for the on-going development of economic and technological forces through centralized and exploitative control. The domination of nature was assumed, the production of wealth (in terms of goods to satisfy human needs) was unprecedented; and socialists like Robert Owen and Karl Marx thought that the solution was to be a simple question of redistribution. Owen, as an example of what Marx called a "utopian socialist" was probably closer to an environmentally-accomodating solution when he used his wealth gained from owning cotton mills to build utopian societies--although he does seem to have missed the point by making them agricultural communes. Marx, as Bookchin reitePates ever since his stimulating *Listen Marxist!*, accepted the structure of production, grounded in hierarchical precepts. Therefore, his political solution became one which was grounded in hierarchy; and when the Marxists eventually grabbed political power (in societies, where Marx would never have thought it to happen) they sought simply to reproduce the structure of capitalism under a system of state ownership. The product, as we have seen in the last two decades, was to devastate the environment more horribly and excessively than had capitalism in the West.

Many conclusions can be dr6wn from this. First, Marxism, in theory and practice, was never an improvement in the human condition--and Bookchin calls marx a bourgeois thinker. Second, the triumph of liberalism is simply the triumph of another monster. Third, the economic structure of human beings, at the local and global levels, is still one of exploitation, an exploitation of the people which extends into the

destruction of all plant and animal life, within the balance of nature is probably already doomed (sorry to sound like a pessimist).

Fourth, the presumption that central planning of private or public entities will in any way alleviate our condition is foolish. Hierarchical assumptions, producing hierarchical conclusions, develop massive projects which benefit continued domination of the privileged over the masses (urban and rural). It is a continuation of a theological mentality that some powerful force above us (such as God, the State, or 'ecologically-minded corporations) will intervene to save us.

Belief in "salvation from above" is but the continued psychology of the helpless, and the precondition for a denial of self and subordination to authority. God did it once--as Hegel saw, as he regretted the loss of civic identity in the ancient city states:

"The purpose which the Christians ascribed to this Infinite Being was poles apart from the world's moral goal and purpose....They despised the mundane joys and earthly blessings they had to forgo and found ample compensation in heaven. The idea of the church took the place of a motherland and a free polity, and the difference between these two was that, in the idea of the church, freedom could have no place, and, while the state was complete on earth, the church was most intimately connected with heaven. ...Thus the despotism of the 'Roman emperors had chased the human spirit from the earth and spread a misery which compelled men to seek and expect happiness in heaven; robbed of freedom, their spirit, their eternal and absolute element, was forced to take flight to the deity." ²³

People turned away from politics because of helplessness, a lack of ability to fulfil themselves in their immediate circumstances. Without suggesting that Kropotkin or Bookchin are Hegelian, they would appear to be working from the same general view put by Hegel--that we must organise our own lives directly as part *of* a community, and only therein can we *fulfil* ourselves, give ourselves purpose, develop personal and group lives based upon reason.

When Kropotkin writes of mutuality he is showing, with innumerable everyday examples, the natural tendency and value of "solidarity". He is contemptuous of religion with its clergy "...so anxious to prove that all that comes from human nature is sin, and that all good in man has a supernatural origin, that they mostly ignore the facts ²⁴ Theirs is the religion of the

dominating State, of people who need to be ruled, of people who live as isolated units, psychologically devoid of the opportunity for comprehensive restructuring of society--and nature. And where do we find this most clearly--in the modern city. "in the cities...the absence of common interest nurtures indifference, while courage and pluck, which seldom find their opportunities, disappear, or take another direction."²⁵

Yet it is the city which is today the focus of human existence. In order for an anarchist alternative to exist, the city must be alterable. Its negative attributes as presented to us in the form of millions of isolated individuals, none looking each other in the face, must be seen as contradiction to authentic city life. Both Bookchin and Kropotkin see the solution as one of economic and political decentralisation in a framework of communal/municipal ownership of the means of production and direct democracy as the vehicle for decisionmaking. This involves a return to citizenship, lost to the vast majority in the modern urban mores. It must be an on-going project, one of public education part of which involves forming alternative institutions. Bookchin and Biehl point to the necessity of forming citizen's assemblies within the framework of the existing statist institutions (which is referred to a "dual power" by them). What is essential is that involvement be broadened to include as many people as possible in counter-State activity; for (in Kropotkin's words) "it...we understand the social revolution, not at all as a Jacobinist dictatorship--not at all as a reform of the social institutions by means of laws issued by a convention or a senate or a dictator. ...[T]he masses will have to take upon themselves the task of rebuilding society--will have to take up themselves the work of construction *upon communistic bases*, without awaiting any orders and directions from above. #26

The goal will be the new decentralised city, the new decentralised society. It is possible because of technical developments, and those developments can provide a more varied and less arduous lifestyle for the inhabitants of "confederated" municipalities. In the words of Janet Biehl:

"...creating an ecologically benign and decentralized society would not require a return to relentless toil, Social ecology (the body of ideas of which libertarian municipalism is the political dimension) recognizes that the growth of productive forces in modern times has rendered moot the age-old problem of material scarcity. Today, technology has been developed sufficiently to make possible an immense expansion of

free time for living in comfort and security, rationally and ecologically, for social rather than merely private ends."²⁷

In similar mind, Kropotkin wrote lengthy works to prove this point, particularly *Fields; Factories and Workshops Tomorrow (1889)* and *The Conquest of Bread (1913)*. In the massive detail of technical information as it relates to agricultural and industrial production, he points to a variety of employment, shorter working days, great abundance, equality, and direct democracy in a federal system of communes. He is particularly concerned to show how agricultural methods are developing to provide a highly productive agricultural sector almost anywhere in the world. The historic difference between town and country will disappear. Much of the organisation of labour sounds much like that of the utopian, Charles Fourier--who also emphasized the importance of industrial productivity, but who was not a communist. (Given their similarities, we should not be surprised to find Bookchin and Kropotkin occasionally referring to Fourier). Here are two summary statements by Kropotkin, indicating the direction of what we might call his "reconstructional anarchist" system of social production:

"Agriculture cannot develop without the aid of machinery, and the use of machinery cannot be generalised without industrial surroundings: without mechanical workshops, easily accessible to the cultivator of the soil, the use of agricultural machinery is not possible... But this is not yet all. Agriculture is so much in need of aid from those who inhabit the cities, that [at present] every summer thousands of men leave their slums in the towns and go to the country for the season of crops....

"As to the workers, who ought to be the real managers of industries, [in future] they will find it healthy not to perform the same monotonous work all the year round, and they will abandon it for the summer, if indeed they do not find the means of keeping *the factory running by relieving each other in groups.* ,²⁸

"The so-called 'division of labour' has grown under a system which condemned the masses to toil all the day long, and all the life long.... [but] to work five hours a day would generally do for supplying each member of a civilised nation with the comfort now accessible for the few only If everyone took his share of production, and if production were socialised then more than one half of the working day would remain to everyone for the pursuit of art, science, or

any hobby she or he might prefer... Moreover, a community organised on the principles of all being workers would be rich enough to conclude that every man and woman, after having reached a certain age--say of 40 or more--ought to be relieved from the moral obligation of taking a direct *part in the performance of the necessary manual work And such a community would not know misery amidst wealth.*" 29

Revolution is not the shooting of elitist politicians and bureaucrats, of oligarchs and monopolists who receive the benefits of the misallocation of production and resources (although we may not shed a tear). Revolution is the broadening of consciousness to the possibilities of the beneficial application of technology for the benefit of the species and the planet, and then seeking ways for its implementation. Local autonomy, direct democracy, with political and economic decentralization based upon local control--that is also the message of Kropotkin and Bookchin, and of Biehl's "libertarian municipalism."

Finally, I would like to add a word concerning the concept of "evolution." Kropotkin was convinced that the evolutionary development of humanity was moving towards stateless communism. Bookchin also looks to evolutionary theory, and identifies a specific developmental role for human beings in it. Debby Bookchin succinctly described this theory of evolution when she described Bookchin's ideas concerning the development of human nature in three phrases:

- a) first nature (primordial);
- b) second nature (human society and culture, which has so far been mostly hierarchical and destructive of the natural environment); and
- c) third nature, which acknowledges that our species is interventionist in the natural environment, and now seeks to ensure that this intervention is, for want of another word, "ethical"

She states that Bookchin,

"argues that we must develop a rational and ecological society which he calls third nature, or free nature, in which humans live in harmony with each other and the natural world. In such a society reason becomes a hallmark of

nature expressed through humanity, and one of natural evolution's own products. And humanity becomes the voice of nature rendered self-conscious and fully rational... With the emergence of humanity the possibility begins to exist that evolution can be rationally--and ethically--guided by one of its own agents: human beings" 30

That grand philosophical position of the social ecology movement, requires in practice a Kropotkin style of restructuring--local production for local needs (what Kropotkin calls "integration" as "opposed to "division of labour"), decentralisation and human scale economies, direct democracy, and a rich quality of life for all. That is what "libertarian municipalism" seems to be all about as both possibility and necessity. It is the latest expression of anarchist practice, conditioned by the conditions prevalent at the end of the twentieth century.

Endnotes

1. From "Modern Science and Anarchism," published as part of Peter Kropotkin's, *Evolution and Environment* (originally published in Russian in 1901), Montreal and New York, Black Rose Books, 1995, pp. 51-52.
2. Murray Bookchin, *Re-enchanting Humanity: A Define of lthe Human Spirit Against Antihumanism, Misanthropy, Mysticism, and Primitivism*, p.5. (London and New York, Cassell, 1995).
3. Murray Bookchin, *Remaking Society*, p. 154. (Montreal and New York, Black Rose Books, 1989).
4. "I gradually came to realize that anarchism represents more than a new mode of action and a mere conception of a free society; that it is part of a philosophy, natural and social, which must be developed in a quite different way from the metaphysical and dialectical methods which have been employed in sciences dealing with man. I saw that it must be treated by the same methods as the natural sciences; not on the ground of mere analogies such as Herbert Spencer accepts, but on the solid basis of induction applied to human institutions." Peter Kropotkin, *Revolutionary Pamphlets* (ed. Roger N. Baldwin), New York, Dover Publications, 1970, p. 21.
5. Peter Kropotkin, *A. Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*, p. 75. (London, William Heinemann. 1907).

6. *Ibid*, pp.

163-164. 7.

Ibid., pp.

178-179. 8.

Ibid, p. 186.

9. Murray Bookchin, *Urbanization Without Cities: the Rise and Decline of Civi:enship*, p. 130. (Montreal and New York, Black Rose Books, 1992).

10. *Mutual Aid*, p. 220.

11. *Ibid*., p. 228.

12. *Remaking*

Society, p. 44. 13.

Ibid., p. 162

14. *Mutual*

Aid, p. 220.

15. *Ibid*., p.

xiii. 16. *Ibid*.,

p. 132.

17_ "Interview with Murray Bookchin" (November 12, 1996), in Janet Biehl, *The Politics of Social Ecology: Libertarian Municipalism* (Montreal-New York-England, Black Rose Books), p. 156.

18.

Ibid.,

p. 84.

19.

Ibid.,

p. 86.

20.

Ibid.,

p. 98.

21. "The return of the stranger expresses the fearful crowd of today, a crowd in which everyone moves guardedly through the modern city with a sense of subdued dread toward surrounding people and unfamiliar neighborhoods. As urbanization

spreads, so too does the state machinery needed to administer it. Whatever its form, the nation-state increasingly approximates a totalitarian state and a privatized individual, riddled by egoism and fear.... When totalitarianism eventually does emerge, it is likely that the coherent self, so direly needed to resist it, will have undergone such erosion that it may well lack the psychological resources to recognize the danger, much less oppose it." Murray Bookchin, *Urbanization without Cities: the Rise and Decline of Citizenship*, p. 224. (Montreal and New York, Black Rose Books, 1992).

22. "The success of the revolutionary project must now rest on the emergence of a general human interest.--And if that general interest can be embodied in a nonhierarchical demand, it is the demand raised by women for a substantive equality of unequals--that is, the expansive ideal of freedom. The question we now face is whether the ecological and feminist movements can live up to this historical challenge. that is, whether these movements can be broadened into a sweeping *social movement*..." *Remaking Society*, p. 169,

23. Friedrich Hegel, *On Christianity: Early Theological Writings*, 162-163. (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1961).

24. *Mutual Aid*, p.278.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 277.

26. *Revolutionary Pamphlets*, p. 188.

27. *The Politics of Social Ecology*, p. 98.

28. Peter Kropotkin, *Fields, Factories and Workshops Tomorrow*, p.156-157. (Harper & Row, New York and London, 1974).

29. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

30. Debby Bookchin, "Thinking Ecologically: The Ideas of Murray Bookchin" (1989). This statement is from an outline of a book proposal, which arrived on my desk when I was doing some work for Black Rose Books in Montreal. I trust that Debby will forgive me for using it.

