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THE NOTION OF COMPLEMENTARITY IN MURRAY BOOKCHIN'S SOCIAL  
PROJECT

By

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Thesis deposited at the  
School of Graduate Studies and Research  
in view of obtaining  
the grade  
Master of Arts Political Science

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Alex Chiasson, Ottawa, Canada 1994



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## Summary

The objective of this work is to prove that, within the framework of Vachet's "Crisis of Ideologies", the philosophy of Murray Bookchin does not offer the basis for an ideological renewal. By concentrating our efforts on his notion of complementarity, we will first attempt to prove that it is the central notion of Murray Bookchin's thought. Secondly, we will try to demonstrate, through the analysis of this notion, that we cannot find the basis for an ideological renewal.

Our development is divided in two parts comprising of five chapters. The first part, which is divided into two chapters, outlines the theoretical foundations of the notion. In it, we analyze the role of complementarity on an internal social level, and on the new proposed relationship between humanity and the natural world. In the second part, which is divided into three chapters, we examine the forms of his notion of complementarity within his social project, especially, in relation to the notions of community, politics, and economy.

## PLAN

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Alex Chiasson

*To the memory of Charles  
Fourier(1772-1837) and Karl Marx(1818-  
1883). Penetrating spirits whose works  
and lives will forever be a source of  
inspiration to me.*

“But, we are told, were this the case, history and the destinies of human society would present nothing but chaos; they would be mere playthings of chance. On the contrary, only when history is free from divine and human arbitrariness, does it present itself in all the imposing, and at the same time rational, grandeur of a necessary development, like organic and physical nature of which it is the direct continuation. Nature, notwithstanding the inexhaustible wealth and variety of beings of which it is constituted, does not by any means present chaos, but instead a magnificently organized world wherein every part is logically correlated to all other parts.”

“The gradual development of the material world, as well as of organic animal life and of the historically progressive intelligence of man—both individual and social—is perfectly conceivable. It is a wholly natural movement from the simple to the complex, from the lower to the higher, from the inferior to the superior; a movement in conformity with our daily experience and accordingly also with our natural logic, with the very laws of our mind, which, being formed and developed only with the aid of the same experience, is nothing else but its reproduction in the mind and brain, its mediated pattern.<sup>1</sup>”

MIKHAIL ALEXANDROVITCH BAKUNIN(1814-1876)

“Il n'est pas difficile de voir (...) que notre époque est une époque de naissance et de passage à une nouvelle période.<sup>2</sup>”

G.W.F. HEGEL(1770-1831)

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1 MAXIMOFF, G. P., (1953), The Political Philosophy of Bakunin: Scientific Anarchism, p.55, 60.

2 HEGEL, G.W.F, (1991), Phénoménologie de l'esprit (édition de 1807), p.34.

## INTRODUCTION

### a) General Introduction.

As the Twentieth Century comes to an end, it appears that one of the new movements that has considerable impact on the realm of contemporary political thought is *Ecology*. The origin of the word *Ecology* has been credited to German biologist Ernst Haeckel(1834-1919) in a book published in 1870<sup>3</sup>. However, it has been reported to have been first used by him, in unpublished form, in 1866<sup>4</sup>. From its inception, its objective was to analyze the interrelationships between different sets of life forms and their relationship within the ecosystem. *Ecology* is thus a notion that seeks to study "the economy of nature." Today, we are impelled to become a part of this "economy."

Beyond the initial formulation of the concept, we can identify some of contemporary Ecology's other foundations. As an example, the introduction by Charles Darwin of Thomas Malthus' theory of

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3 "By ecology we mean the body of knowledge concerning the economy of nature—the investigation of the total relations of the animal both to its inorganic and to its organic environment; including above all, its friendly and inimical relation with those animals and plants with which it comes directly or indirectly into contact— in a word, ecology is the study of all the complex interrelations referred to by Darwin as the conditions of the struggle for existence."(HAECKEL, in KORMONDY, Edward J, (1976), Concepts of Ecology(Second Edition), p.x.)

4 Idem.

population into the field of *the animal kingdom*<sup>5</sup> in the late 1850's with the publication of his first monumental work The Origin of Species(1859). With this as a basis many contemporary ecologists attempt to adapt a biological paradigm to the social realm. They focus on analyzing environmental problems primarily in terms of the relationship between the human population and the biotic world. Their exclusive quantitative analysis seems to prevent them from looking at other possible causes such as social organization in place that could conceivably energize these problems<sup>6</sup>. The tension between human population and the natural world thus leads them to conclude that the "ecological crisis" is the result of an unchecked human demographic explosion. The solution offered revolves around efforts to curb this trend to avoid further stress on the biotic realm.

The other argument, i.e., related to social organizations per se, proposes substantial social change that could put into question the foundations of Western civilization; more specifically we are asked, not only to return to *more natural* ways of managing resources, but to

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5 DARWIN, Charles, (n.d.), The Origin of Species By Means of Natural Selection(or the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle For Life) and The Descent of Man And Selection in Relation to Sex, p.13.

6 On the relative indifference these movements grant to social questions, I refer the reader to the recent work by the leaders of this neo-malthusian trend EHRLICH, Paul R., and Anne H. EHRLICH, (1990), The Population Explosion, pp.41-44.

create institutional forms and social structures that favor the integration of human communities within the "natural" world.

Politically, Ecology brings with it the hope of forging a social project that has as its final objective the *reintegration* of humanity within the *natural world*; especially with its quasi-sacred respect for biological diversity. Therefore, for many ecologists, humanity has to break with its tradition of detaching itself from the natural realm which prevails in Semitic thought through to Descartes' famous dichotomy, and form a new symbiosis between both realms. The resultant communities would fuse their activities within the bio-region, thus limiting their *interventions* on biotic life forms.

The idea that human societies must fully integrate the realities of the natural world has a long history that finds roots in the apparently most *unnatural* philosophical and religious systems. Long before the idea became a central component of Ecological thought, such a symbiosis had been a *prevalent ideological* constituent within many tribal cultures, and within many Christian movements such as the Franciscans. These offered, however, largely anthropomorphic, indeed *mythical* or mimetic constructions of nature<sup>7</sup>. Such notions predate the epistemological revolution that started with Francis Bacon which to a large extent destroyed this mode of thought. Its contemporary

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<sup>7</sup> For this development, we must admit that we are inspired by HORKHEIMER Max, and Theodor W. ADORNO, (1972), Dialectic of Enlightenment, pp.3-42.

manifestation thus appears in a context in which the dichotomy between the human and the natural world has developed to the point that the economic and social structures themselves seem to progressively destroy the sustainability of the natural environment. All this in ways that were inconceivable to the forefathers of the scientific revolution.

Therefore, it is not surprising that Ecological thought is an effort to establish the basis of a critique to challenge the principles that have given rise to the predominant political ideologies. For ecologists, these latter ideologies represent the socio-historical justification for industrial society and the historical fusion that links technological innovation and efficient resource usage with progress and human freedom. Also, they tend to depict human intervention upon nature as essentially perilous. As one of the *spiritual fathers* of the Ecology movement Aldo Leopold(1887-1948) expressed, in his A Sand County Almanac, our society has lost the capacity to appreciate the beauty that surrounds us, i.e., *wilderness* (nature untouched by human hands). Leopold proposed that we invert our value system to favor the natural over the artificial, and to no longer think in terms of our interests. Rather, to start thinking about, as well as, becoming part of a greater whole.

From another perspective, Ecological thought does not attempt to reintroduce a series of *anthropomorphic* reflections that animated tribal societies, rather, it seeks to find ways and means to become *natural*. The break that it proposes is far reaching in its ramifications and on the fate of humanity's ontological status in the natural world. Unlike

Environmental thought that practices an essentially reformist approach through political action within the legal and legitimate realms of political power. Ecology seeks to create a quasi intersubjective relationship between humanity and the natural world. Humanity and nature must both enter a *dialogue*. Natural resources can no longer be solely *resources* for human consumption or activity; they have to become our *equals* in a chain of interdependence.

Much to the discontent of French philosopher Luc Ferry<sup>8</sup>, who strongly attacks the Ecology movement as such, non-human entities could have *codified* Rights identical to those of humans<sup>9</sup>. Humanity's sphere of action would be limited to actions compatible with *nature's* development. The reintegration of humanity within nature involves for Luc Ferry a reflection about the status of life forms much in the same vein as the historical struggles of marginal, minorities and women<sup>10</sup>. Animals, plants and trees are the next ones to be *liberated*.

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8 FERRY, Luc, (1992), Le nouvel ordre écologique (L'arbre, l'animal et l'homme), Éditions Grasset, Paris, 277 pages.

9 These principles can be found in several of the works of the Deep Ecology movement. I refer the reader to:

DEVALL, Bill, AND George SESSIONS, (1985), Deep Ecology (Living as if Nature Mattered), pp. 69-73.

10 FERRY, Luc, (1992), Le nouvel ordre écologique (L'arbre, l'animal et l'homme), pp.69-105

Ecology also proposes a break with *Modernism*. Our capacity, as humans, to act on nature would be reduced to our basic needs. The productive systems are decreased to levels that preserve the integrity of a particular ecosystem, i.e., to respect the *intrinsic worth* of every species. Importantly instrumental relationship with nature is denounced. The formation of communities and social structures would be *determined* by their capacity to adapt to ecosystems that would both ensure the development of human life and the availability of the resources to support it.

In summary, Ecology provides us with a new synthesis that totally reshapes our relationship with the natural world. As an example, it surpasses in scope the attempts of Nineteenth Century movements that promoted Animal Rights<sup>11</sup> and argues that humanity re-conceptualize itself within the biosphere, and find its true essence through a direct relation with the natural world. It also proposes that humanity progress from a social order that destroyed its relationship with the natural world to one in which it develops a new sensitivity to the natural world; it instructs us to *think like a mountain*. In this case, the value of nature lies in its own development; not in its capacity to integrate our field of demands.

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<sup>11</sup> An interesting summary of animal right legislation is found in: FERRY, Luc, et Claudine GERMÉ, Des animaux et des hommes, Le livre de poche, Paris, ©1994, pp.455-521.

On another level, the post war context in which Ecology emerged engages us in a, pantheistic inspired, critical reflection about the technocratic-capitalist society. As capitalism spreads and destroys the biotic realm, Ecology tends to look back at models of society that could reverse this dynamic. *Replacing* capitalism's materialism with tribalist animism becomes a potential solution to the *destructive* forces that accompany the expansion of technocratic capitalism's sphere of influence. Also, a counter-Enlightenment, not to say anti-Modern, stance that rebukes Reason and technology's innovation capacities to emancipate humanity, suggests that by breaking away from its true *nature*, humanity has perverted its *real* essence. This *event* was not transformative, not to say progressive, as Rousseau once postulated in his Du contrat social (1762)<sup>12</sup>. Our renunciation of nature did not produce a more cultivated person with greater wisdom. To the contrary,

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12 "Celui qui ose entreprendre d'instituer un peuple doit se sentir en état de changer, pour ainsi dire, la nature humaine; de transformer chaque individu, qui par lui-même est un tout parfait et solitaire, en partie d'un plus grand tout dont cet individu reçoit en quelque sorte sa vie et son être; d'altérer la constitution de l'homme pour la renforcer; de substituer une existence partielle et morale à l'existence physique et indépendante que nous avons tous reçue de la nature. Il faut, en un mot, qu'il ôte à l'homme ses forces propres pour lui en donner qui lui soient étrangères et dont il ne puisse faire usage sans secours d'autrui. Plus ces forces naturelles sont mortes et anéanties, plus les acquises sont grandes et durables, plus l'institution est solide et parfaite." (ROUSSEAU, Jean-Jacques, (1966), Du contrat social, p.77.)

Ecology argues that we have deteriorated. As an example, Paul Shepard maintains that human essence can only be found in a return to the hunter and gatherer roles *assigned* to us by *nature*<sup>13</sup>. Furthermore that the ideal state of humanity is *primitivist*, in that it demands a complete *return* to the forms and practices of a past golden age when our relationship with the natural world is seen as ecological.

From the ideal to the concrete, Ecology has a certain capacity to become a major political force. It is sometimes difficult to open a newspaper and not read about the themes surrounding *population*, the *green-house effect*, *ozone layer*, etc.... . Indeed, with the introduction of these themes into the mainstream press, Ecology is penetrating our culture and inserting its agenda in the political debates of most of the world's critical decision making centers.

*Population*, for example, has been a particularly present theme and has presented a criticism of human society by reducing all ecological and social problems to the growth of human population. In its contemporary voice, developed largely by its main proponent and a founder of the Z.P.G.'s<sup>14</sup>, Paul R. Ehrlich, we find a critique that attacks humanity's presence on the planet as the cause of biotic problems. By continuously procreating *irresponsibly*, we are seen to have been wasting the "inheritance" left to us by the natural world. For Ehrlich the creation of

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13 DEVALL, Bill, AND George SESSIONS, (1985), Deep Ecology (Living as if Nature Mattered), pp.172-174.

14 Zero Population Growth.

agriculture constitutes the commencement of this deterioration. In other words when humanity discovered its intellectual capacity through an *art*, i.e., agriculture, it broke its ecological, or symbiotic, relationship with the biotic world<sup>15</sup>. Our *original sin* against nature took place the moment we tried and *used our reason* to exploit *rationally* nature's resources.

In addition to being open to such atavistic models, Ecology has also produced a specific vocabulary in its critique of contemporary societies. Borrowing such terms as *productivism* from classical Weberian sociology, it developed a critical view of industrial society. Also, by developing notions such as *biocentrism* and *anthropocentrism*, it set the stage for a confrontation between humanity and the biotic world. For ecologists, we must adopt a *biocentric* approach which, in the last instance, purports that every biotic life form has an *equal* status. From a different perspective, *anthropocentrism*, the *enemy school of thought to ecology*, is a world view that approaches all natural phenomena in its relation to *humanity*. In this case, humanity has a *superior* position, as well as a distinct ontological status in the hierarchy of biological life forms. The argument against this approach is well illustrated by David Ehrenfeld. In his 1978 book, The Arrogance of Humanism, he states explicitly that humanity has false ideas about its capacities and gives itself too much importance, that it elevates itself above all other life

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<sup>15</sup> EHRLICH, Paul R., and Anne H. EHRLICH, (1990), The Population Explosion, p. 26.

forms. He even puts forth a doctrine that would give as much importance to a virus than to a human life.

The new forms of human communities that we will discuss later are thus inspired by a biological approach that essentially attempts to redefine humanity's place within the natural world. This approach seeks to re-integrate the *human species* in a biotic order in which the former must lose its *anti-natural* attributes and replace them with *natural* ones. Humanity must reverse its path towards biological annihilation and allow the natural world to regain its supremacy in forming our own societies.

In light of this summary, there are many questions regarding the relationship of the Ecology movement to the socio-historical, and ideological context, which it seeks to transform. We are tempted to ask if Ecology constitutes an ideological movement that proposes a profound break with traditional ideological thought? In other words, as much as this movement seems to express a criticism of the *pillage* of natural resources and proposes that we *go back to a relation of symbiosis with nature*, can we affirm that this constitutes a fertile ground for a social project that can be liberating and generative of a context that expands human capacity and development? Does it present a new world view that opens up a path towards a society that is capable of solving some of the limits and contradictions of capitalist society, or is it doomed to become a crude form of biologism that reduces humanity to *a species amongst others* and a "*cancer to the natural world?*"

*Our study of Ecological thought has permitted us to discover two tendencies that energize the debate within the movement in relation to the social project. The first tendency proposes a radical break from the social relations that have been present in class society. It seeks to create the basis for an economic infrastructure that has as its foundation the development of the person within an egalitarian society. The second tendency proposes a centrally guided<sup>16</sup> society that uses the State as a law-making and coercive agent in order reduce our impact on the natural world. It also advocates a return to a golden age in which humanity relied more on intuition than reason.*

This, of course, can lead us to examine the degree to which of relevance of Ecology contributes to the development of human thought, i.e., does it surpass the traditional ideologies it condemns as being either anthropocentric or productivist. Our criteria would be that a sound ecological society must be built on a proper interpretation of the natural world, it must not be tainted with elements of the reified ideological notions of the natural world which have been at the core of our supposed perverted relationship with nature; it must articulate a new and more coherent doctrine of the natural world that surpasses both the mythological and the rational; it must provide us with a new and original synthesis of freedom and efficiency that will enable humanity to

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16 Please note that a centrally guided or governed society is easily conceivable within small ecocommunities. PLATO's Republic could constitute a prototype for such communities.

make a qualitative leap forward in its search for greater freedom and self-development; it must go beyond the theories of T.H. Malthus<sup>17</sup>; and it must not simply offer a return to a smaller and simpler form of community that has purged itself of everything which is technological?

From another viewpoint, Ecology must not mean simply ridding humanity of its *surplus population* or of its *surplus reason* in order to let nature evolve and develop. This hardly seems to constitute a *great leap forward*. A return to our origins or a prior historical state can be as dangerous as it is attractive to some.

Our initial conclusion is that Ecology does not seem to create the basis for a new social project that can propel humanity to forms of societies which surpass the limits of the ones it attacks. It does not offer the necessary foundations for a new, and greatly needed, social project that fully addresses our frontiers of time and space, but also of scarcity.

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<sup>17</sup> In other words accept mass starvation as a necessary and acceptable consequence of a demographic explosion\*.

MALTHUS, Thomas Robert, (1992), An essay on the Principle of Population (or A View of its past and Present Effects on Human Happiness: With an Inquiry into our Prospects respecting the future Removal or Mitigation of the Evils which it occasions), pp.226-228.

b) Murray Bookchin's thought and social proposal.

Before articulating a definite conclusion about the atavistic nature of the Ecology movement, we must study a counter-movement to this trend. This body of thought offers a critique of society as well as to the brutal exploitation of natural resources generated by capitalism. It also postulates that it is within a symbiosis between humanity and nature can permit human society to create the social structures which will enable not only *nature* to flourish, but also capacitate humanity to develop, thus engendering in both realms a higher sense of being and a greater freedom. In fact, it is within the realm of this relationship that humanity can form an institutional *order* which could become the *realm of humanization* .

The Social Ecology project, founded by American philosopher, social critic and political activist Murray Bookchin(b.1921), puts forth a social project which regards the integration and the interplay of humanity to and with its biological matrix, as providing the basis for a greater form of human emancipation. This integration is established on a relationship of complementarity between *first nature* (brute nature) and *second nature* (human society).

The sources from which Bookchin's project is developed are several. First, the works of anarchist theoretician Peter Kropotkin<sup>18</sup> have a

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18 Peter Kropotkin(1842-1921) was a major theoretician of Anarchism. His work attempts to give a scientific validity to anarchist

definite influence. Kropotkin's anarchism is a theory built on the themes of *mutual aid* and the creation of decentralized communities. Twentieth Century thinkers such as Lewis Mumford<sup>19</sup>, whose reflections dealing with the integration of technologies and decentralized communities, are insights which are often echoed in many of Bookchin's writings. Another source is the utopian socialist tradition that proposed largely agrarian and craft based economies. Hegelian dialectics also have a definite influence along with French Enlightenment thinkers and their revolutionary and activist spirit<sup>20</sup>. Anarchist Mikhail Bakunin<sup>21</sup> thanks

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theories(Mutual Aid, Ethics, the article Anarchism for the Encyclopedia Britannica, La science moderne et l'anarchie). He proposes an integrative production process which no longer opposes intellectual labour to manual labour(Field, factories, and Workshops and The Conquest of Bread).

19 Lewis Mumford(1895-) is an American sociologist whose impact and influence on Murray Bookchin is tremendous. His works on urban theory(The City in history) and technology (Technics and Civilization, and The Myth of the Machine) propose an harmonious integration technology and society.

20 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1981), "The Role of Intellectuals in the 1980s", in Telos, Number 50, pp. 130-132.

21 Mikhail Bakunin(1814-1876) was one of the main theoreticians of Anarchism during the era of the First International. Although he left us a great deal of fragments and unfinished projects, his books include

to his relentless attacks of the State and authority. French social inventor Charles Fourier, whose insights on ecological balance were at least a century and a half ahead of their time<sup>22</sup>. And Karl Marx in his criticisms and observations of capitalism.

Bookchin's social project is primarily associated with two ideological movements: Ecologism and Anarchism. His association with Ecology will be justified by the fact that he proposes a reintegration of human communities and field of action within bio-regions. His links to Anarchism can be explained by his conviction that his social project envisions a society which fosters freedom and human development without the mediation of the State or of any coercive governing body.

In practice, however, there are problems that he must confront. Within the Ecology movement, the synthesis Bookchin proposes between human society(*second nature*) and the natural world(*first nature*) makes

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such classics as God and the State and Statehood and Anarchism. His work demonstrated great insights in the power of authoritarianism.

22 Charles Fourier(1772-1837) was, without any doubt, one of the greatest pre-Marxist revolutionaries. His work aims at creating in a great era(*harmonie*) whose social construct the *phalanstère* is considered to be the ideal human community. Importantly to our work, Bookchin goes on to call him "...the earliest social ecologist to surface in radical thought..."(BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991; 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), p.331.). His works include La théorie des quatre mouvements(1808), Le nouveau monde industriel et sociétaire (1829), Le nouveau monde amoureux(written between 1800-1810 but published only in 1967).

him stand at odds with the radical ecology movement. He openly rejects the notions of *biocentrism* for a foundation of a social project, *anthropocentrism* as the basis of a critique of contemporary society, and of *biological democracy*. Bookchin rejects all forms of *centralism*.

The fusion of nature and society supposes in this case a prior antagonism between both. However the reintegration he proposes is based on the development of both nature and society within a relationship of complementarity. Thus humanity can change its relation to nature. It can actively contribute to the development of biodiversity. Nature is not *all giving* as most Ecologists contend in that humanity itself can contribute to its development. On this level, Bookchin stands at odds with the main currents of the radical Ecology movement (e.g. population theorists, Deep Ecology). For Bookchin, the causes of their ecological crisis stem from a logic which permeates social organizations which engender a destructive approach to social relations and, in the aftermath, to nature itself. He thus rejects population theorists and atavists. Getting rid of the people<sup>23</sup>, or of reason, would constitute an even greater disaster.

Bookchin's relationship with Anarchism is also very dubious. He finds himself at odds with the movement due to his criticisms of *worker*

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<sup>23</sup> Bookchin develops his views on the population question throughout his works. Although many hints are given in a wide array of his texts, we refer the reader to the essay "The Population Myth", originally published in Green Perspectives n°8 and 15, and is reprinted in BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1994c), Which Way for the Ecology Movement?.

*oriented* strategies for social change. This puts him at loggerheads with most traditional approaches be they *anarcho-syndicalist* or *anarcho-communist*. For Bookchin, even if the workers comprise *part* of the strategy toward an ecological society, they do not constitute a *hegemonic force* which has the power to *lead a revolution* and form the basis of a *free and egalitarian society*<sup>24</sup>.

As his articles against the Deep Ecology movement explain, Bookchin opposes *eco-mysticism* and its Malthusian component of the doctrine<sup>25</sup>. For this, he is criticized by the scholars and activists of that movement as being a thinker who is essentially anthropocentric (Eckersley<sup>26</sup>) in that he does not place humanity within a biocentric ontology. Also, given that he proposes social solutions to ecological

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<sup>24</sup> This position is constant throughout the last few decades and is also very present throughout his work. Compare the positions in (BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1986; 1971), Post-Scarcity Anarchism, pp.203-214) and (BOOKCHIN, Murray, & all., (1993), Deep Ecology & Anarchism (A Polemic), p.49) to refer to one of the earliest(1970) manifestations to one written quite recently(1992).

<sup>25</sup> BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1987a), "Social Ecology Versus 'Deep Ecology': A Challenge for the Ecology Movement", in Green Perspectives, Number 4 and 5, pp. 1-23.

<sup>26</sup> ECKERSLEY, Robyn, (1992), "Divining Evolution: The Ecological Ethics of Murray Bookchin", in Society and Nature, Volume 1, Number 2, September-December 1992, p.135-143.

problems, he is criticized as not providing answers which correspond to the immediacy of the ecological challenges(Naess<sup>27</sup>). And his stance in favor of rationality over intuition exposes him to attacks.

Furthermore, in his criticisms of Marxism, and anarcho-syndicalism we find a critique of the hegemonic role of the working class as the main agent of social change. Critiques from the Marxian school, while in some aspects echoing Marx's own criticisms of Anarchists(From Stirner<sup>28</sup> to Bakunin<sup>29</sup>, via Proudhon<sup>30</sup>), and later critiques such as the

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27 NAESS, Arne, (1992), "Deep Ecology and Ultimate Premises", in Society and Nature, Volume 1, Number 2, September-December 1992, p.116.

28 A whole section of The German Ideology is dedicated to this criticism\*.

\*MARX, Karl, and Friedrich ENGELS, (1976a), Collected Works Volume 5(Marx and Engels: 1845-1847), pp.117-450.

29 Marx's opposition to Bakunin is epoch-making. Written relatively late in Marx's life(1877), an interesting text is "Notes on Bakunin's Statehood and Anarchy" in MARX and ENGELS, Collected Works vol. 24(Marx and Engels 1874-1883), International Publishers, New York, ©1989, pp.485-530.

30 To refer to a few, "The Poverty of Philosophy" in MARX and ENGELS (1976b), Collected Works vol. 6, p.105-212. Also "On Proudhon"(1865) in MARX and ENGELS, Collected Works vol. 20(Marx and Engels 1864-1868), International Publishers, New York, ©1985, pp.26-33.

ones addressed by Lenin towards Kropotkin<sup>31</sup>, mainly see him as a *petty bourgeois* thinker<sup>32</sup>. Meanwhile, the anarcho-syndicalist critique interpret Bookchin's project as being an eclectic blend of various tendencies well developed before him<sup>33</sup>. In fact, for Bookchin, a worker based strategy does not imply by any means a progressive change as is the case with socialism and traditional anarchism.

For Bookchin, the importance of the working class is disintegrating with the generalization of automation and the larger participation of technocrats in the control of work processes and power relations. Instead, he proposes that a strategy that incorporates society, *as a whole*, needs to be devised and serve as the basis of the movement towards a revolutionary change. The agent of social change is *the People* or humanity *as such*, which strives to liberate itself from a *legacy of domination* and the *hierarchical* organization of society. Class domination, religious domination, or State domination, are all seen as part of a larger legacy that creates the condition, or preconditions for socialization within these domains.

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31 KROPOTKINE, Pierre, (1976), Ouvres, p.411.

32 MELLOS, Koula, (1988), Perspectives on Ecology (A Critical Essay), pp.98-107.

33 PURCHASE Graham, "Social Ecology, Anarchism, and Trade Unionism", in BOOKCHIN, Murray, & all., (1993), Deep Ecology & Anarchism (A Polemic), p.35.

While his social project is clearly incompatible with both approaches that his work condemns, where to situate him in relation to other approaches remains ambiguous. At first glance, his theory seems to form a social project that is quite distinct from either Ecology and worker-based movements. As an example, while Deep Ecology proposes small human communities that integrate a natural food chain, such models are for Bookchin *primitivist* in that they seem to deny to humanity its positive contribution to the transformation and enrichment of ecosystems. Whereas Bookchin's critique of worker-based movements is grounded on their apparent historical incapacity to achieve a more egalitarian society and their apparent integration to the capitalist system. The proletariat as a class has not disintegrated in a classless society. It is disintegrating within a class society.

Bookchin's approach thus seems to reject the traditional dominant ideologies in that his project does not contribute to humanity's enhanced capacities to produce more efficiently and more abundantly. His concerns also lie with realities that were not necessarily central to most of the problems and the situations that shaped XVII<sup>th</sup> to XIX<sup>th</sup> Century thought<sup>34</sup>. For example, Liberalism paved the way for a greater and more rational use of the natural world. Instead of living within a mythical and anthropomorphic reading of the natural world, it proposed

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34 Although some aspects of his thought reveal similarities with some of the movements. The Ideologies elaborated were largely unconcerned with the integration of the human world in the natural world.

scientific knowledge for its productive use. Bookchin's social project attempts to offer us solutions to the chaotic destruction of the biotic realm by an expanding society, in itself revealing the limits of its ideological basis. Bookchin's philosophy attempts to offer both a social construct and solutions to both open up and help the development of the person as the basis of a more rational use of the natural world and a positive and creative contribution towards biodiversity.

As the traditional ideologies seem exhausted, these reflections can lead us to a series of questions relating to the contribution of his thought within a larger ideological context. Is Murray Bookchin a thinker who has elaborated a theory that facilitates a qualitative leap forward in humanity's search for a greater freedom? Does Murray Bookchin's abandonment of a worker-based strategy, both in militancy and ideology, reveal a new political orientation for the Left? Does his social project constitute a guide for action to solve the struggles within contemporary capitalist society? Does his critique offer a new social project that can enable us to create social structures that foster a fertile ground for human development? Or even, does his philosophy essentially propose a return to ideas that are essentially pre-capitalist, and thus not form a viable and new ideological project?

c) The Crisis of ideologies.

In order to answer questions such as the originality of the Ecology movement relative to the traditional ideologies it wants to *attack* and *supplant*, we must choose a theoretical framework that will guide our inquiry. André Vachet, author of L'idéologie libérale(1970; 1988) and Marcuse: La révolution radicale et le nouveau socialisme(1986), proposes what we consider to be an adequate framework for such an analysis.

In a relatively recent article published in the International Political Science Review<sup>35</sup>, Vachet gives us some preliminary remarks to a much broader project that attempts to criticize the present ideological situation which he describes as one of disarray and in search of new foundations. For Vachet, the present ideological situation has demonstrated an incapacity to produce what can be called a truly original global thought. In other words, the social projects that are derived from current global thought are limited in that they do not put forth solutions to the problems found within the present socio-historical context. The reality that gave rise to these ideologies has been largely surpassed and human communities have mutated enormously since

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35 VACHET, André, "Essai sur la situation idéologique de notre temps: considérations préliminaires", in International Political Science Review, (1990), Vol. 11, No. 1, pp.33-44.

their inception. Political thought, which needs an organic link to the present social *movement*, seems trapped somewhere in the XIX<sup>th</sup> Century<sup>36</sup>.

It cannot be said however that we have arrived at a *golden age* in which the emergence of an important middle-class and the pacification of the class struggle through the *welfare State*<sup>37</sup> have destroyed the potential for a critique of civilization. Also, far from being the growing social force of the XIX<sup>th</sup> Century, the proletariat, in the most advanced societies, is struggling for survival as the forces of Capital mutate and relocate in the new emerging world economy. Social struggles are still rampant either in the political, economic, and even ethnic, spheres within society. Although we witness an active ideological struggle where we observe that the ideologies, which are still at the forefront of the debates are getting too old, or even becoming outmoded<sup>38</sup>. Independently from them, society seems to be in search for the basis of a new civilization. Ideological thought and societal practice no longer have an organic link as a new civilization seems to be emerging.

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36 VACHET, André, (1984), Crise de civilisation et Université... enseigner aujourd'hui, p.31.

37 Please note that when this text is written(1994), even the welfare State itself seems to be in crisis(e.g. New Zealand) and thus unable to continue hiding the grim realities which animate the class struggle.

38 VACHET, André, (1990) "Essai sur la situation idéologique de notre temps: considérations préliminaires", p.34.

The social projects that were brought forward between the Seventeenth and Nineteenth centuries are now largely incapable of providing the organic link needed within the contemporary social realm. During their inception, they could aspire to comprehend and act upon the social order of a specific social formation. They found their validity by their capacity to *respond*, and bring forth, social projects that corresponded to the emergent industrial, technological, and efficiency oriented societies.

Today, according to Vachet, we are in a situation characterized by an absence of renewal of global thought<sup>39</sup>. Political ideologies no longer seem to propose social constructs that are capable of addressing contemporary social realities. The social projects developed are either a repetition of past designs or a re-articulation of the substantive components of traditional ideologies. Their criterion for validity does not correspond to their capacity to act on the social realm, but on their projects' own inner-logic. In other words, they gain their validity in relation to their *internal coherence*, rather than their capacity to respond to the *movement* that Vachet sees as the forging of a new civilization. The *last moment* or last *great synthesis* was produced by Karl Marx. Since then, nothing, on a global level, of a *very original* nature seems to have arisen<sup>40</sup>.

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39     Idem.

40     Idem.

The inadequacies of the political ideologies of the Nineteenth Century can be possible contributors to the tragedies of the Twentieth Century. Political Thought and ideologies seemed impotent when confronting the grim realities of two World Wars. Also to be explained is the failure of Socialism to create a freer society<sup>41</sup>. A project that proposed the abolition of the State, lived by the State. This absence now seems to lead to a pattern of political, economical, and social disintegration. This absence of new political ideologies manifests itself in the rise of neo-Nazi, or neo-fascist movements, strongly supported political parties in a chaotic Russia, or in a culturally, historically and economically rich nation such as France with the "Front National." "Ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia is a grim specter that is more than a mere possibility. Disturbingly, ideological thinking is still looking to the past to deliver solutions to contemporary problems.

For Vachet, given that Western civilization is driven by a dialectic of efficiency and freedom, the only way to escape this crisis is to develop a new synthesis between both, thereby opening the possibilities inherent within the contemporary social *movement*, i.e. a *new synthesis* that would permit a Hegelian *leap*<sup>42</sup>. The new civilization that is postulated above needs the *creation* and the *invention* of structures that can open to us a previously never imagined social order. An exit door to the crisis would thus have to propose a break from the traditional notions of

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41     Idem, p.36.

42     Idem, p.39.

freedom and efficiency in ways that go beyond the limits of traditional ideologies.

With this purpose and general conceptual framework in mind, we examine the philosophy of Murray Bookchin. Could it possibly offer us, if not a complete break, at least some elements that could constitute an opening? In Bookchin's acceptance that ideological thought must not be constructed within the limits of the past (i.e. the problems of scarcity), and should offer the basis of a creative relationship between humanity and nature, we can at least detect an effort to break from the traditional notions of productivism and of the Cartesian dichotomy between humanity and nature. Also, Bookchin breaks from the other movements of Ecology that seem closed in that he does not propose a *primitivist* social project. He brings forward a project which encourages the development of the human being above all other forms of social determinations. By not rejecting Western civilization, i.e., freedom and efficiency dialectic, he opens himself up to a reflection that proposes a surpassing of the traditional ideologies. However, can we say that Bookchin offers a social project that proposes anything substantively different from the heritage out of which he identifies himself with?

As mentioned above, the projects put forth by the biologic tendency of the ecology movement seem cemented and limited in relation to the causes of the crisis by attributing all ecological responsibility to human beings *as such*. They either try to rewrite Malthus' Essay on Population, adjusting it to contemporary demographic *data*, or, they propose a *return*

to *wilderness* where humanity must integrate a *State of Nature*. Bookchin's problem is similar. Does he surpass or even create a radically new form of *utopianism*? Or does his theory result in a *return* to ideological models such as a pre-Marxian socialism that have had their relevancy destroyed by the qualitative transformations of our era?

In summary, does Bookchin's social project present us both in form and in substance an ideological breakthrough that could contribute to the resolution of our current crisis?

d) Hypothesis, Strategy, and Method:

In order for us to answer these questions, or at least lay some of the foundations, it is necessary that we establish that there is a central notion in Bookchin's social project. The notion of complementarity<sup>43</sup> appears as the central notion in Murray Bookchin's thought. Much of what is developed by the author focuses on the potential creation of a social order that will solve the age-old problems of social hierarchy and domination by developing a social order based on complementarity. Here, Bookchin's thinking is somewhat similar to William Godwyn, the

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43 "Complementarity, as distinguished from domination, presupposes a new sensibility that respects other forms of life for their own sake and that responds actively in the form of a creative, loving, and supportive symbiosis."(BOOKCHIN, in CHASE, Steve (ed.), (1991), Defending the Earth (A Debate Between Murray Bookchin and David Foreman), p.34)

founder of modern Anarchism, who proposed in his Essay on Political Justice(1793) that *benevolence* is the main element on which to build a social system<sup>44</sup>, and to Peter Kropotkin who postulated that the law of *mutual aid* is the "main factor" in the evolution of humanity and other animal species<sup>45</sup>.

Bookchin's definition of complementarity unites socially created opposites and destroys the social structures that perpetuate hierarchy and domination. It provides the basis for a *unity in diversity*. Humanity's relationship with itself is no longer antagonistic as it stops its drive to homogenize society. Its strengths and weaknesses as well as its interests and passions are united. Bookchin's ecological society seeks to create a unity which both fosters diversity and personal development. In his ecosociety, humanity no longer opposes, destroys, and attempts to dominate. Humanity as a whole is united and develops. In the same tradition as the utopian thinker, Charles Fourier, who finds that "attraction" is the central component to social links<sup>46</sup>. Bookchin's solution to the problems associated with a chaotic social order is to

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44 WOODCOCK, in KROPOTKIN, Peter, (1989), Mutual Aid (A Factor of Evolution), p.xxiii.

45 For Kropotkin's development of the notion of 'mutual aid' we refer the reader to his account in the collection of essays published on the topic, Mutual Aid (A Factor of Evolution), and also his posthumous and never completed work Ethics.

46 FOURIER, Charles, (1972), L'ordre subversif (trois textes sur la civilisation), p.61-73.

introduce complementarity as a new basis for a society aiming to create a fertile symbiosis within the human community, as well as between it and nature.

By adopting the notion of complementarity and integrating the biotic realm, his proposed society finds its source of inspiration in an ethic that is grounded in the natural world. Animals that kill and eat other animals, i.e., the wolf and the rabbit, do not reveal a cruelty inherent to the natural world<sup>47</sup>. Rather, they either sacrifice or contribute themselves to a greater development of complexity in life forms. The rabbit that is being eaten up by the wolf, or the plant by the cow, participate in a natural process that strives towards complexity and diversity. They are not part of a cruel and unforgiving nature; rather, they participate in a purposive dynamic that strives towards complexity<sup>48</sup>. Thus the ethic of complementarity is inspired and grounded in the natural world.

With this proposal, Murray Bookchin introduces a new approach that aims to integrate two realities that have been historically dichotomized since the appearance of hierarchical society, i.e. humanity's relationships within society has been severely crippled by the of domination of some over others, and a similar relationship with the natural world, thus engendering an ecological crisis. He postulates that

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47 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1994c), Which Way for the Ecology Movement?.

48 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1984), "The 'Radicalization' of Nature", in Comment, p.6-7.

by opening up the social sphere to complementarity, perceptions towards the natural world will be transformed accordingly.

Compared to the *dominating* ideologies that were developed in the Nineteenth Century and that had as their main objectives to create the conditions for the expansion of productivity, with the progressive destruction of the biotic realm by an expansive and ill-planned economical activity and waste driven society, a new social project must try to replace the focus that is still given to efficiency and economic growth by an approach that aims at opening up both new possibilities for human activity and the actualization of new values. Humanity must no longer permit societies that seek to dominate the natural and biotic realm, rather it must adopt an approach that will create a society that opens up a greater development of both realms.

In order to begin a reflection of Bookchin's contribution to the crisis of ideologies, we must take a position. Our first hypothesis is that the notion of complementarity is the central aspect of Bookchin's philosophy. On the basis of the notion of complementarity, our second hypothesis is that Murray Bookchin's thought does not offer a solution to the crisis of ideologies. Thus, it does not potentially offer us some elements that could surpass traditional ideologies.

Our work will take the following direction. In order to validate our first hypothesis, we will examine how it can potentially offer us a break from the discourse of traditional ideologies. At first, we will try to show that complementarity is the central notion of Bookchin's social project,

then we will attempt to prove that it does not offer a certain amount of traits that enable it to surpass the limits of traditional ideological thought.

To show how the notion is present in his philosophy and is the central aspect of his thought, the strategy adopted will focus on analyzing this notion in Bookchin's thought. The work will be divided into two parts. The first, which will be composed of two chapters will deal with the place of complementarity on a theoretical level. In a first phase, we will analyze it in relation to the social dimension, then we will proceed to analyze how it is developed in relation to the natural world. The second part will examine the forms of institutions that emerge out of complementarity. In the third chapter, we will examine how this dimension reflects on the demands for a new form of community. Thereafter, we will present how it is developed within the political dimension of the community. Finally, we will explore the economic dimension, i.e. look at how it fits in the production process. The conclusion will be divided into two parts. In the first, we will provide an overview of the notion of complementarity. In the second, we will reflect on the place of Bookchin's philosophy in our conceptual framework.

## PART I

### Society and Nature

In the first part of the work we will discuss the notion of complementarity on a theoretical level. To do this, we will focus on Bookchin's social proposal and the fact that ecological problems have as their causes the expansion of domination and hierarchy within human society. In short, the cause of ecological problems and of humanities aggressiveness towards the natural world stems from the state of social institutions. The solution offered by Bookchin is the creation of a society which has as its basis the notion of complementarity. In what follows, we will examine the notion of complementarity and how it relates to the social dimension and natural dimension. In the first chapter, we will examine how it appears to be an alternative to domination, in the second chapter, we will show how it enables us to integrate the natural world thus forming with it a fertile and creative relationship.

## CHAPTER 1: Complementarity: Social Level.

Given that the ecological crisis has as its cause the social organization of human communities<sup>49</sup>, the first aspect addresses is the way in which complementarity is dealt with the social level. For Bookchin, the origin of the problem was the introduction of hierarchical society and a legacy of domination. In this chapter, we will examine this development and show how, by adopting a social order which is derived from complementarity, we can lay the foundations for solutions to the ecological problems. We will argue that what is needed is a social transformation.

Historically, humanity has not always been entangled in a logic of domination. In fact, there was a time when small societies could exist without institutionalized coercion and domination. The links which united communities were spontaneous and organic in that they integrated the person to the whole in relation to his/her aptitudes. Human society at the time was in a relative state of symbiosis with the

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49 "Ecology(...) has always meant *social ecology*: the conviction that the very concept of dominating nature stems from the domination of human by human, indeed, of women by men, of the young by their elders, of one ethnic group by another, of society by the state, of the individual by bureaucracy, as well as of one economic class by another or a colonized people by a colonial power" (BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1980), Toward an Ecological Society, p. 76.)

natural world, and the natural world was united with human society<sup>50</sup>. But then, an isolated act which started within organic society began to take on a life of its own. It planted the seeds that destroyed this harmony. Let's make an account of Bookchin's analysis.

In Bookchin's thought the origin of the ecological crisis does not stem from the conflict between humanity and nature; this would open up the possibility that humanity is *par excellence* the most anti-ecological, or anti-natural, creature that has ever emerged on the planet<sup>51</sup>. Humanity has no attribute which makes it inherently anti-ecological. Rather, the crisis stems from the institutionalization of roles and functions which emerged within organic society. By institutionalizing roles and functions, society divided and segregated certain groups from others and opened itself to a relationship of exploitation and coercion, it adopted a new *mentality*, or in Bookchin's terms an *epistemology*<sup>52</sup>, of rule and domination which expanded to its surrounding natural environment.

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50 "From this feeling of unity between the individual and the community emerges a feeling of unity between the community and its environment."(BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), p.46.)

51 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1989), Remaking Society, p.32.

52 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991; 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), pp.89-90.

Humanity built its communities into places of pre-determined roles and well defined power relations. Instead of communities which focus their organization on the *integration* each person's skills and talents to the activity of the whole, they began to predetermine the place and the value accorded to each specific activity. They first of all opposed and divided the inhabitants by age group, gender, and position within the division of labour. To illustrate, they separated and distinguished the old and the young, male and females, and intellectual from manual labour. Humanity lost its *unity in diversity* through its regulation of the horizontal interactions of the community<sup>53</sup>.

From that moment onward a series of vertical systems of command and obedience emerged which favored the particular interests of a few, or a specific group. Diversity, the expansion and development of the person's identity, no longer was the aspiration of the institutional order, in fact, it endeavored to obliterate this diversity. For Bookchin, the moment hierarchy imposes a social order in which the person must

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53 "In organic societies the differences between individuals, age groups, sexes - and between humanity and the manifold of living and nonliving phenomena - were seen (to use Hegel's superb phrase) as "unity of differences" or "unity of diversity," not as hierarchies. Their outlook was distinctly ecological, and from this outlook they almost unconsciously derived a body of values that influenced their behavior toward individuals in their own communities and the world of life."(Idem, p. 5.)

integrate, not as a subject, but as a member of an age group, gender, etc.<sup>5</sup>, homogenizes the community's sphere of socialization, thus solidifying existing relations<sup>55</sup>, which develop a permanent life of their own. *The King is dead, long live the King.*

Developing on the consequences of this historical event, Bookchin finds that humanity has changed its approach towards the natural world (*first nature*). Human community no longer acts in a relationship which could be characterized as *symbiotic* within its biological matrix (*First Nature*)<sup>56</sup>. It confronts and opposes *first nature*. Consequently it adopts

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54 "A world so completely tainted by hierarchy, command, and obedience articulates its sense of authority in the way we have been taught to see ourselves: as objects to be manipulated, as things to be used." (Idem, p.350)

55 "By hierarchy, I mean the cultural, traditional and psychological systems of obedience and command, not merely the economic and political systems to which the terms class and State most appropriately refer." (Idem, p.4.)

56 "I refer to social ecology's insight that all our notions of dominating nature stem from the very real domination of human by human. This statement, with its use of the word "stem," must be examined in terms of its intent. Not only is it a historical statement of the human condition, but it is also a challenge to our contemporary condition which has far-reaching implications for social change. As a historical statement it declares, in no uncertain terms, that the domination of human by human preceded the notion of dominating nature.

as its mission, for any kind of potential *future* human liberation, the domination of the biotic realm<sup>57</sup>. Nature progressively becomes, with the development of this legacy, the *obstacle* that serves to justify the domination of hierarchical social institutions which in turn expand their field of domination to the biotic realm.

The origin of domination within human society emerged when the *elders*, within the tribal society, institutionalize their function within the *division of labour*. Being aware of their vulnerability, as catastrophe always looms, they placed their roles above the rest of society. Since within organic society, the elders did not enjoy the security of their younger co-members. The institutionalization of their roles not only preserved their place, but assured their own safety<sup>58</sup>.

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Indeed, human domination of human gave rise to the very idea of dominating nature." (BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1989), Remaking Society, p. 45.)

57 "Implied in this basic reactionary myth is the notion that forms of domination, like classes and the State, have their sources in economic conditions and needs; indeed, that freedom can be attained after the "domination of nature" has been achieved, with the resulting establishment of a classless society. Hierarchy somehow seems to disappear here in a shuffle of vague ideas or it is subsumed under the goal of abolishing classes, as though a classless society were necessarily one that is free from hierarchy." (Idem, p. 45.)

58 "Gradually, organic societies began to develop less traditional forms of differentiation and stratification. Their primal unity began

In organic society, the division of labour was not based on a relationship of exploitation, but on the capacity and predisposition to work. As an example, men were more apt and able to do physical labour which required mobility, also, they were not affected by the reproduction process in the same direct and intensive manner as women. Men would thus spontaneously adapt and integrate specific functions which suited their predisposition. Women, on the other hand, became the child rearers and responsible for the domestic realm. They were not *inferiors*. In that context, there was a relationship of *interdependence* and of complementarity. In order to keep the group in existence the strongest had to help the weakest. Each had to integrate into the organic whole; with no hierarchy or relation of domination, a relationship of complementarity began to develop embryonically.

As mentioned above, for Bookchin the emergence of hierarchical society originates with the elders awareness of their place and their vulnerability in organic society. Elders were no longer able to fend for

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to break down. The sociopolitical or "civil" sphere of life expanded, giving increasing eminence to the elders and males of the community, who now claimed this sphere as part of the division of tribal labor. Male supremacy over women and children emerged primarily as a result of the male's social function in the community – functions that were not by any means exclusively economic as Marxian theorists would have us believe. Male cunning in the manipulation of women was to appear later."(BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991; 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), p. 5.)

themselves or justify their presence when a crisis, i.e, food shortage, natural disasters, occurs. They were physically weak and thus were not in a position to be considered essential to the survival of the whole since in that context what was needed was strength, agility, or other traits associated with youth. Because their contribution to the survival of organic community was not in their capacity to act but rather in their knowledge of the past and its traditions, the origin of the development of hierarchies and domination occurred when they institutionalize their knowledge. By doing so, they created the external and formal spheres which assured them the monopoly of safety and security considered *essential* to the community. Consequently, they could sacrifice youth for whatever reason they justified as being appropriate. They became a *branch* of individuals *above* the others<sup>59</sup>. Becoming the *voice* of nature, they adopted the role of *priests* or shamans, enabling them to create the mysteries surrounding the *evil forces of nature* .

Bookchin's social project aims to reverse this legacy. As we shall see later, the unity to nature that he proposes is of great importance since it is within this framework that we can develop our own social stability. By *interacting* with nature we not only assure a greater

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59 "Moreover, *hierarchy*, a strictly social term, is exclusively characteristics of second nature. It refers to institutionalized and highly ideological systems of command and obedience. Etymologically, the word derives from the Greek term meaning priestly forms of organization."(Idem, p. xxii.)

stability, but also we create the conditions which open us to the development of complex life forms. Nature is thus not a cruel or stingy force; it evolves continuously towards complexity and offers a fecund *terrain* for us to integrate and develop in a relationship of freedom.

The social structures, he proposes, act as a guide which mediate our approach to knowledge and *shape* the processes by which we deal with the universe. The ecological crisis thus *does not* coincide with the appearance of humanity as a species on the planet, rather the *first moment* of the ecological crisis manifests itself when the organic community goes through a mutation that destroys the spontaneous reunion of interdependent individuals and puts in its place a hierarchical society based on power relations and permanent codes of command and obedience. The generalization of this logic, and its subsequent devastating effects on the mutualist practices of organic society is the basis for the confrontational relationship with the natural world. *Second nature* is no longer in a relationship of *complementarity* with *first nature* . Humanity tries to dominate it, and its *rapport* becomes one of antagonism.

Although the development of hierarchy co-exists with a wide array of traditions of organic society, we can observe that it develops to impose a particular order on society. Their sphere of influence of hierarchy and domination encompasses the whole of human life and the only reason that can justify the existence of remnants of organic society, namely solidarity and *complementarity*, is that they are socially *efficient*. While

the activities of hierarchical society remain similar to the organic ones, i.e., hunting, agriculture, the importance given to each person's contribution is no longer one of interdependence, though many of the activities can appear to be the same, the social construction and *ideology* which surround them are not. As an example, man's work becomes more important than women's work, intellectual work dominates physical work. No longer can human beings integrate a social world which integrates them according to their capacities, but rather, one must develop specific capacities regardless of one's inclinations.

The passage from organic community to hierarchical society is not a short and linear process. A tension between both is always present. As alluded to earlier, remnants of organic community still remain. However, the overall consequences of this transformation are felt not only in humanity's internal relations but also in its link to the non-human world. The aim is no longer directed at integrating society with nature, but instead, at *separating* itself from nature in order to better *control* and *dominate* it. The epistemology, i.e., the study and the strategy we use in order to attain *knowledge*, directed at nature, uses an *ideologically* tainted pre-determination that imposes society's hierarchical viewpoints on nature. This propensity will be to dominate and destroy differences that affect humanity's strategies towards *learning* its *discourse*.

Domination and hierarchy will thus become integrated in, and form the basis for, our ideals and sciences. For instance, at the

beginning of The Republic, Plato will accept that we should act according to our *specific identities* (capacities and talents), and thus opens us to a *possible* social structure formed by complementarity. However, we still find in Plato a tainted social setting which postulates a theory of government built on the epistemological as well as scientific notion of a dual reality and that imposes a strong hierarchical order. Bourgeois thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke will postulate in their theory of Government, the creation of a State that is above civil society, in order for societies to develop a permanent frame for economic activity. Even Karl Marx will designate a progressive role to hierarchy and domination in that it progressively enables humanity to *domesticate* and dominate the natural world<sup>60</sup>. Sigmund Freud, in his famous Civilization and its Discontents(1929), will legitimize hierarchy as being necessary to enable humanity to sublimate its *pleasure principle* as it confronts a universe of scarce resources and chaotic movement(*Reality Principle* ), thus insuring its survival. And, finally, at the beginning of

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60 MARX, Karl, (1982), Le Capital(critique de l'économie politique) livre premier: Le développement de la production capitaliste), p. 728:

"Comme il(le régime de petits producteurs indépendants-A.C ) en exclut la concentration, il exclut aussi la coopération sur une grande échelle, la subordination de la besogne dans l'atelier et aux champs, le machinisme, la domination savante de l'homme sur la nature, le libre développement des puissances sociales de travail, le concert et l'unité des fins, les moyens et les efforts de l'activité collective."(Underlining is ours-A.C.)

the Twentieth century, hierarchy and domination will take on, in the name of efficiency, a rational and mathematical dimension with the generalization of Taylorism<sup>61</sup> within the sphere of production. Such are only some of the most illustrative examples of the ubiquity of this legacy.

Thus, in order for humanity to find its freedom, it must create a society grounded in complementarity ultimately leading at a symbiosis with *first nature*. The result of such a new social order will be the development of *all* life forms.

To sum up, the notions of hierarchy and domination are developed in communities in order to create and institutionalize a dominant group. By the predetermination of one's fate and destiny, the individual is rendered *powerless*. Society's ultimate objective is to homogenize individuals into a Procrustean bed, destroying the persons capacity for spontaneous development, and nullifying his or her subjective growth. Complementarity reverses this logic and lays the ground for the empowerment of the person.

The first condition to be addressed to permit the development of the person's subjectivity. is the *invention* of decentralized human societies which are grounded in *complementarity*. For Bookchin, the

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61 Scientific management by F.W. Taylor. Developed and explained if not by F.W. Taylor himself, then by Harry Braverman in his classic study Labor and Monopoly Capital(1974).

notion of complementarity is thus at the center of his social project, it constitutes the foundations upon which our social relations must be built if it is to surpass the "legacy of domination". Nature, as we shall see in the next section, serves as a grounding for such a society.

## CHAPTER 2: Complementarity: Ecological dimension.

Within the proposed social transformation, complementarity becomes the basis for a new relationship between humanity and the natural world. Being grounded in the natural world, complementarity serves as the basis for a new relationship between *first nature* and *second nature* where humanity assumes a creative and fertile role in service to the evolutionary processes of both the natural world and the human community<sup>62</sup>. In this chapter we will examine the attributes of this new relationship, then show how complementarity serves as the basis of this evolutionary process.

Much of what is debated about Bookchin's thought focuses on the ambiguity of the relation between both natures. For some, he is a thinker who does not break with the Cartesian model which places humanity as the central form of life in the universe (*antropocentrism*). For others, his links to Modernism are questionable since in his project humanity is not detached from nature. Also, the premises of Bookchin's social project puts him on shaky grounds with both the biocentrists and the anthropocentrists although his notion of nature attempts to surpass both these theories. For him, nature is not a *purposeless* accumulation of random acts but rather is embedded in a movement that strives towards complexity. Also, the relationship of humanity with the natural

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62 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991; 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), p.278.

world does not subscribe to a purely instrumental approach, nor is it one in which humanity seeks a return to a time when it had reached a level of harmony with the natural world. Simply put, for the *moderns*, he is pre-modern. The fact that he proposes a reintegration of humanity within the natural world suffices to justify their attacks, especially since for him, humanity can achieve its true essence only within a symbiotic relationship with the biological realm. Moreover for the schools of thought which propose a pre-modern relationship with nature (i.e. Deep Ecology), he appears as being anthropocentric in that humanity has a distinct role in the evolutionary process.

Bookchin is not a *modern* thinker in that he does not see *man* as a creature that attains his *manhood* by negating the *natural* that is within him. He rejects the idea of denying our past, as well as the future, and continually starting anew with no links of continuity to the past. According to Bookchin, there is no possibility for humanity of having a relationship of domination for humanity over the natural world; we are part of nature. The attributes which make us human are the product of a long evolutionary process. Our quest to dominate nature is thus unrealizable<sup>63</sup>. Unlike thinkers such as David Ehrenfeld who propose

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63 "Eco-anarchism must work with the supposition that humanity as a whole is highly distinctive. It occupies a very unique place in evolution, which, to be sure, does not justify the notion that it should, much less can, "dominate" nature. What makes human beings unique in contrast to all nonhuman forms of life is that they have extraordinary powers of conceptual thought, verbal communication

the Amish sect as a model society<sup>64</sup> and who equate a *virus* with humanity<sup>65</sup>, or Deep Ecologists, such as Paul Shepard who propose a return to pre-historic times in order to self-realize as hunters and gatherers<sup>66</sup>, Bookchin opens us up to a fecund symbiotic relationship between both realms which strive towards diversity<sup>67</sup>. He does not equate humanity with the biologism and crude determinism of the Sociobiology approach of E. O. Wilson<sup>68</sup>; the society he envisions is not

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structured around a formidable array of concepts, and sweeping powers to alter the natural world in a way that could be utterly destructive or magnificently creative."(BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1989), Remaking Society, p.198)

64 EHRENFELD, David, (1978), The Arrogance of Humanism, p.262.

65 Idem, p.208-210.

66 DEVALL, Bill, AND George SESSIONS, (1985), Deep Ecology (Living as if Nature Mattered), p.172-174.

67 "Participation unites the biotic ecocommunity with the social ecocommunity by opening new evolutionary possibilities in nature and society. Differentiation yields richer possibilities for the elaboration of these ecocommunities and adds the dimension of freedom, however nascent in nature or explicit in society."(BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1987b), The Modern Crisis, p.27.)

68 For Wilson's development, we refer the reader to:

WILSON, E.O., (1980), Sociobiology(The Abridged Edition), The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 366 pages.

stagnant and closed to innovations. Our reason and creative capacity are products of *natural* evolution and must contribute to our development as a species.

Bookchin's project focuses on solving the problems that have resulted from the generalization of the dualisms inherited from the hierarchical value system. His Ecologism largely subscribes to a monist view in that humanity is part and dependent on the whole, where nature is always in a movement towards complexity and diversity<sup>69</sup>. Our communities *must* therefore reflect and creatively integrate this whole.

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Also, Bookchin's criticism of Sociobiology, written in 1982, is reprinted in BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1994c), Which Way for the Ecology Movement?, AK Press, Edinburgh/San Francisco, 75 pages.

69 "Life acquires greater flexibility with warm-bloodedness, a development that renders specific life-forms more adaptable to different climates. Species interact with each other and their environment, moreover, to produce increasingly more diversified ecosystems, many of which open new avenues for evolutionary development and greater subjectivity that leads to elementary choices in following, even developing, new evolutionary pathways. Life, at these levels of complexity, begins to play an increasingly active role in its own evolution. It is not the mere passive object of "natural selection"; it participates in its evolution so that we are obliged to change our terminology from Darwin's day and speak of "participatory evolution." (BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1989), Remaking Society, p.200-201.)

Unlike most philosophies that constitute our Western heritage, Bookchin's philosophy does not see humanity's relationship with the natural world as being confrontational. Nature is not a mute and stingy entity, nor is it an obstacle to human development. For him, humanity's emancipation as a society does *not* depend on its capacity to exert domination over nature<sup>70</sup>, i.e., humanity is not the species that has the universe as its tool for its industry. It is also not a species that has a *God given* mission to *evangelize* the planet. Our capacity to name and to *know* nature is by no means a special attribute; it is the result of our *development and complexification* as a species within the confines of dialectical naturalism. Humanity can only find its emancipation by integrating the natural movement.

However, the human being is not reducible solely to its biological existence. Human action and behavior cannot be reduced to a person's genetic composition, i.e., his repudiation of E.O. Wilson's effort to constitute sociobiology demonstrates this. His attacks on similar schools of thought are formed, not only on the potentially *reactionary* social message they express, but also because of the reduced place of humanity within nature.

In his philosophy, humanity is seen as the most complex *natural* achievement within the evolutionary universe in that it has achieved a capacity for self-directness which enables it to creatively participate in

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<sup>70</sup> BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991; 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), p.38n.

natural evolution<sup>71</sup>. For Bookchin, *humanity* is *nature rendered self-reflective*. Humanity is therefore not a species which constitutes itself *apart* from other biological forms, as the acolytes of *anthropocentrism* postulate, it is the achievement, and we could even venture to say, a stage, of a greater dynamic and dialectical phenomenon which aims towards the *complexification* and *diversity* of life forms. The potential for *diversity* and *complexification* becomes the criteria by which we must constitute our societies, i.e., we must work within a logic that enables such a development to occur.

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71 "If we survey the evolutionary unfolding of this ever-cumulative process - in which life-forms reabsorb early developments into their own development, be it early nerve networks that cover skin, nerve ganglia that form our spinal cord, "reptile" brains, and the like - we can more than hypothesize that nature exhibits a tendency toward its own self-directive evolution, a drift toward a more conscious development in which *choice*, however dim, reveals that biotic evolution contains a potential for freedom. To speak of nature simply as a "realm of necessity" is to overlook its fecundity, trend toward diversity, matrix as a development of subjectivity, self-identity, rudimentary choice, and conscious intentionality, in short, a realm of potential freedom in which life, at least, emerges from its long evolution as the basis for genuine selfhood and self-directiveness. It is in the human species that we find this development fully actualized, at least within the limits created by social life and the application of reason to the conduct of human affairs. Humanity, in effect, becomes the potential voice of a nature rendered self-conscious and self-formative."(BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1989), Remaking Society, p.201.)

Nature, for Bookchin, according to the American scholar of Anarchism, John Clark, does not follow an Aristotelian teleology<sup>72</sup>. The movement does not lead to predetermined developments, its end is by no means logical. Bookchin's approach is one of *potentiality*. The movement embedded in nature opens up choices, directions, from which nature can evolve; it is a progressive "*unfolding of potentiality*."<sup>73</sup> The more humanity can develop into a complex creature, the more it finds freedom and subjectivity; the more the ecosystems develop and diversify, the more they become *complex and stable*<sup>74</sup>. Our freedom is thus linked to our capacity to live with the dynamic and form a creative symbiosis with nature.

Being a product of natural evolution, humanity is thus conceived as having more *importance* than ants or worms since it is the highest and most developed form of life. Whereas ants and worms are genetically programmed and never innovate in relation to themselves and the environment, humanity has the capacity to create its community and social relations. The purpose of humanity is to evolve out of *first nature*

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72 CLARK, John, (1992a), "What Is Social Ecology", in Society and Nature, Volume 1, Number 1, May-August 1992, p.86.

73 Idem

74 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1984), "The 'Radicalization' of Nature", in Comment, p.3.

and fully constitute a *second nature*<sup>75</sup>, i.e., it must surpass *brute nature* and enable it through community to constitute a *realm of humanization*.

In this chapter, we have seen how complementarity is the central link between *first nature* and *second nature* and that our relationship to nature is not one which is antagonistic, or as Marx would call it a *realm of necessity*. Rather, it is one of symbiosis. *Our link with nature is not one of intersubjectivity, since there can be no rational dialogue between the natural world and humanity*<sup>76</sup>. There can neither be a *Natural Contract* as the French philosopher Michel Serres would have us believe in his Contrat Naturel<sup>77</sup>. Nor is it a *negative* symbiosis in which humanity would re-appropriate its' Neanderthal persona. For Bookchin, humanity has attained a point, in its evolution, which enables it to become *the*

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75 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1994a), "History, Civilization and Progress (Outlines for a Criticism of Modern Relativism)", in Green Perspectives, Number 29, p. 5.

76 Although it seems clear to us that Bookchin accepts such a view. He does appear to contradict himself in some areas of his work when he does open up to the possibility of an intersubjective relationship between humanity and nature. His later essays, which confront the Deep Ecology movement, have helped to define the kind of relationship he proposes. In fact Bookchin, in his 1991 preface to The Ecology of Freedom does clarify his positions. We thus choose to accept these clarifications which, on the whole, are more consistent, to the social ecology project.

77 SERRES, Michel, (1990), Le contrat naturel, Éditions François Bourin, Paris, 192 pages.

*voice of nature* in its movement towards complexity. Thus humanity's mission should be the *steering* of natural evolution.

He argues that complementarity will shape our relationship to the natural world<sup>78</sup> and produce a society which, being grounded in a natural dynamic, will participate in natural evolution. It will reverse the epistemology of rule and constitute a new approach to knowledge<sup>79</sup>. The natural world will no longer be *stingy, mute, or even devoid of any purpose*, it will become humanity's partner within natural development.

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78 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1987b), The Modern Crisis, p.68.

79 Idem, p.65. and

"The claim of epistemology to adjudicate the validity of knowledge as a formal and abstract inquiry has always been opposed by the claim of history to treat knowledge as a problem of genesis, not merely of knowing in a formal and abstract sense. (...) Their seemingly autonomous construction of the world is actually inseparable from the way they were constructed by the world..." (BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991; 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), p.38).

## PART II

### Community, Politics, and Economy

By solving its social problems and building a social order which is grounded in complementarity, humanity opens itself to a greater development. On a theoretical level, it seems clear that this symbiosis between the natural world and humanity could be the basis for a new relationship which is both fertile and liberating. But another aspect of Bookchin's work, which is developed here, deals with the forms such a social order would take, without going into the details of how this social order would be constituted since Bookchin does not describe such matters. On this level, he does not follow the utopian tradition of Thomas More or Charles Fourier who describe how society *should* be organized in great detail. He does, however, develop principles which elaborate on the basis of such a society. In these next three chapters, we will put his theory into the context of the social order that he criticizes, and demonstrate how the notion of complementarity could take shape within the more practical aspects of human society. We will first deal with his notion of community, then politics, and finally with his thoughts on economy.

### CHAPTER 3: Complementarity: Community Level

The social ecology project aims to create small-scale, decentralized communities which are set within an agrarian matrix, i.e., communities which form centers for collective administration and become the space for cultural life. Its concrete manifestation, the City, forms the social sphere in which the community assembles and develops. It fosters diversity within its Citizens and is the space in which complementarity permits both a balance between the cultural life of its Citizens, and the biotic realm which surrounds it.

However, the generalization of the logic of domination with its anti-ecological heritage has built the grounds for the steady destruction of organic elements within communities. With this in mind, one of the major problems that Bookchin considers an important source of contemporary ecological disintegration is the phenomenon of urbanization<sup>80</sup>. Urbanization creates the setting where emerges a formless community of disparate *monads*. This phenomenon invades

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80 "The real urban crisis of our time(…) has resulted not from the emergence of the city as such; rather it resulted from the emergence of a relatively new and cancerous phenomenon that poses a deadly threat to the city and countryside alike: urbanization."(BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1992; 1987), Urbanization Without Cities (The Rise and Decline of Citizenship), p.x.)

and conquers the City as well as the agrarian world<sup>81</sup>. Urban areas expand their *paved* world on the biotic. As urbanization triumphs with the new form of community, Cities lose their local distinction and variety<sup>82</sup>. They become urban areas. Humanity becomes fragmented as it no longer has any links to community.

The notion of community is contrasted by his critique of the modern urban area<sup>83</sup>. With the advent of the capitalist economy and the progressive and very violent destruction of the peasantry as a class, the City has lost its link with its agricultural matrix. The City, historically, was the political, administrative, religious, and industrial center which enabled the development of the agricultural activity which surrounded it. It was a moral center which fostered personal as well as cultural development<sup>84</sup>. For Bookchin, there was no antagonism

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81 Idem, p.3.

82 Idem.

83 Please note that we will not refer to contemporary urban areas as Cities. For Bookchin a City is more than a chaotic amalgamation of people. It is first and foremost an active and organic community. We will thus refer to the modern phenomenon as either the urban area, the megapolis, etc.

84 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1992; 1987), Urbanization Without Cities (The Rise and Decline of Citizenship),, p.6.

between the City and the country since they both worked in symbiosis<sup>85</sup>. In their own way they, Cities would create spheres that would be animated by a relationship of complementarity.

In the social ecology project, the City is the political meeting place for the community. Within it, humanity debates and develops its community life<sup>86</sup>. The notion of *decentralization* has to be understood in that context. The community must be the local point of all political decisions of the collective<sup>87</sup>. It is not part nation-State or a Federation, it remains autonomous from all others. Possible links to other cities enable a *Confederation*. We must stress that the whole can not override the particular part and that there is no *permanent* structure, i.e., a Nation-State, which can establish itself from the particular union of cities<sup>88</sup>. The City thus forms the primary and indissoluble union that serves the community in its internal and external relations.

The example of such communities in history and the potential emergence of such an order enables Bookchin to attempt a reinvention of society within the scope of a relationship of *complementarity* which

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85 Idem, p. 3.

86 As we will develop in the next chapter, Bookchin distinguishes *politics* from the phenomenon of *statecraft* .

87 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991b), "Libertarian Municipalism: An Overview", in Green Perspectives, Number 24, p.1-2.

88 Idem, p.2-3.

fosters and permits the conditions for communities to develop their imagination and creativity. It is not *feudalism revisited*, as some might believe, nor is it an atavistic project. The form of the relationship (reunion and symbiosis of town-country) may resemble past models (the ideal<sup>89</sup>) in that it is based upon an organic social structure. Once having attained a *post-Scarcity*, societal relationships based on freedom and rationality can take place. Bookchin is not a modern prophet of the "return to the land movement", or a neo-narodnik.

Instead, Bookchin strives to transform the relationship between human society and nature to *accommodate* both distinct, and very interdependent, realities. The criticisms directed at contemporary urban regions are compared to the historical relationship between town and country. As the contemporary urban region strives at control of the rural world, it destroys the *local* mutualist organizations and replaces these organizations with *suburbs*. This shift tends to not only destroy the ecological order of a bio-region, but also to simplify and homogenize our link to our community. The suburbs form a type of community which from the outset are centrally planned and built around a definite pre-conceived structure with homogenization and real-estate as the highest results of such an enterprise.

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89 This term is motivated by a criticism Henri Lefebvre addresses to Lewis Mumford's works on urbanization\*.

LEFEBVRE, Henri, (1974), Le droit à la ville suivi de Espace et Politique, p.49-50

In his attempt to build an ecological society Bookchin proposes that the City re-integrate its specific bio-region and that it serve as the medium to open up a relationships aimed at developing the *latent* creativity within humanity. He adopts a Fourierian notion which proposes a relationship of complementarity between both<sup>90</sup>, where the City, established within its agrarian matrix, creates a place of meeting and of free activity. It is not a zone of disparate individual monads, it serves the function of bringing together harmoniously and productively the differences and distinctions of people. Also, it is one which permits a certain balance between our biological and social needs.

To sum up, the contemporary urban region is perceived by Bookchin as a major component of the ecological crisis for two reasons. First, it is a society which results largely in the dislocation of the agrarian class, i.e., humanity loses its direct link to the biotic realm. Second, it discourages and destroys organic-based practices. Not only does it deter the links which foster complementarity between its citizens, it forms the basis for a negation of diversity. The contemporary urban region also *disempowers us* in that it destroys humanity's link to, and balance with, the ecosystem. Urban areas are thus implicitly anti-ecological.

The notion of decentralization aims at integrating the City within a biological matrix and/or Bio-regions. The notion of complementarity

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90 GORET, Jean, (1974), La pensée de Fourier , p.71.

emerges here in the sense that our communities act as agents of balance between the agrarian matrix and the center for human development, i.e., human society integrates the bio-region and acts in a creative symbiosis. The City itself becomes an ecocommunity in that it is grounded in its biological matrix; it is linked to the bio-region, and becomes a space which permits and fosters a development of *first nature* .

For Bookchin, the City cannot be a construct of engineers or urban-planners<sup>91</sup>. It must be the *spontaneous* creation of those who form it. By choosing the Greek *polis* as his main inspiration, Bookchin seeks to show how a society which is liberated from *toll* becomes a center for the human development of the *Citizen*. The City must be the base of human association and the direct space for a political community. It is free to form confederations with other Cities and thus create links that can enrich and diversify it in a cultural sense or even an economic one. Nonetheless, even though they are self-sufficient, Cities will not be closed off to others. They must be open to change and integrate diversity rather than seek to homogenize.

The notion of complementarity thus aims at integrating both the natural and human worlds. The City must aim at becoming the place for human development and the center which enables humanity to achieve its greater promise, i.e., a place in which humanity develops its potentialities. A strategy towards the creation of ecocommunities must

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91 "The Myth of City Planning"(in BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1980), Toward an Ecological Society, pp.133-170.)

give the City the mission of integrating itself in the biological matrix,  
and be the embodiment of such a relationship.

## CHAPTER 4: Complementarity: Political Level.

As the City becomes an ecocommunity in which the ethic of complementarity forms the fertile and creative symbiosis between the human and the natural world, *first nature* and *second nature* enter into a new relationship. Our next step deals with two dimensions, the Political and Economical, that are the formative components of the person. Once the community is established, maintaining and managing it requires the creation of institutions and practices which serve to link the Political and Economical and establish a basis for the development of the person. Within the community, the role of politics serves as this link.

Claiming himself to be *libertarian*, one the most important dimensions to Bookchin's work is the critique he addresses to the State and its panoply of coercive powers. For Bookchin, the State is not only a historical reality that appears with the emergence of the bourgeoisie as a ruling class, it has a permanent place within hierarchic human community. The State serves to solidify the domination and the hierarchical order. As Bookchin writes in The Ecology of Freedom:

"... the state is not merely a constellation of bureaucratic and coercive institutions. It is also a state of mind, an instilled mentality for ordering reality. Accordingly, the state has a long history - not only institutionally but also psychologically.<sup>92</sup>"

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92 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991, 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), p. 94.

The bureaucracy as the manifestation of coercive institutions is not dependent on its own capacity to regenerate. It relies *heavily* upon a belief system and a pre-determined state of mind which sanctions its functioning. It does not impose itself on its own, as it requires a large degree of participation of the "oppressed" classes and other such groups<sup>93</sup>.

Bookchin develops his critique of the State on two levels. The first is directed towards the essence of the State. It relates to his critique of hierarchy and domination as explained earlier and second, to his concern with the State's mode operations, i.e., the strategies and methods which allow it to *absorb* all the power and *drain* the population's capacity for subjective development<sup>94</sup>. Bookchin

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93 "Its capacity to ruse by brute force has always been limited. The myth of a purely coercive, omnipotent State is a fiction that has served state machinery all too well by creating a sense of awe and powerlessness in the oppressed that ends in social quietism. Without a high degree of cooperation from even the most victimized classes of society such as chattel slaves and serfs, its authority would eventually dissipate."(Idem, p 94-95.)

94 "In restructuring society around itself, the State acquires superadded social functions that now appear as political functions. It not only *manages* the economy but *politicizes* it; it not only *colonizes* social life but *absorbs* it."(Idem, p.127.)

distinguishes other dimensions which relate not only to the objectives and results of the State, but also to its organizational forms and directions it takes. By opposing *statecraft* and *politics*, he attempts to introduce an ecological notion politics.

By *statecraft*, Bookchin refers to the expanding process of *professionalization* within the public sphere. The State, by constituting a series of separate institutions *above* the members of the community in effect disempowers the population. It concentrates power in the hands of *specific* administrators and *State professionals* whose objectives are to *determine* and *administer* the social realm<sup>95</sup>. *Statecraft* is as easily conceivable in Liberal Democracy as it is in other models, for the *public sphere* no longer constitutes a decision making body that involves and integrates the members of the community, as is the case in Bookchin's ideal of the Athenian *polis*. It is exercised by a specific group and acts in favor of particular interests. *Statecraft* thus is a specialized activity that is detached from the *Citizens* .

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95 "Statecraft consists of operations that engage the state: the exercise of its monopoly of violence, its control of the entire regulative apparatus of society in the form of legal and ordinance-making bodies, its governance of society by means of professional legislators, armies, police forces, bureaucracies, and the ancillary professionals who service its operations such as lawyers, educators, technicians, and the like."(BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1992; 1987), Urbanization Without Cities (The Rise and Decline of Citizenship), p.243.)

By *politics*, Bookchin refers to the activity of direct participation of the population in the public realm<sup>96</sup> which becomes a *reunion*, or a meeting *place*. Essentially, it is a liberatory activity that involves *active* Citizens in the affairs of the community and requires their participation. In turn, Citizens expression of their subjectivity permits them to *attain* their potential. Politics is thus *educational* and *developmental*.

The widespread emergence of *statecraft* has led to the dissolution of the *mutualist* links of organic society. By *professionalizing* the bodies which are associated with the public realm, the State seeks to control the spontaneous and *non-formal* links which contribute to the development of freedom and diversity within the community. The ever expanding sphere of influence of *statecraft* obliterates the capacity for each Citizen to develop his/her subjectivity. It *fragments* and *homogenizes* human culture and human needs.

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96 "Politics(-) is an organic phenomenon. It is organic in the very real sense that it is the activity of a public body - a community, if you will - just as a plant is rooted in and nourished by soil. Politics, conceived as an activity, involves rational discourse, public empowerment, the exercise of practical reason, and its realization in a shared, indeed participatory, activity. It is the sphere of societal life beyond the family and the personal needs of the individual that still retains the intimacy, involvement, and sense of responsibility that is enjoyed in the private arenas of life."(Idem, p.243-244.)

*Statecraft* generally manifests itself in the form of institutions in centralized permanent social and political bodies. Its aims are to subjugate and control by using strategies of coercive and psychological domination. Bookchin illustrates this point by discussing the reasons behind the construction of the Pyramids in ancient Egypt. For him, the pharaoh who builds his pyramid does not wait until his death for his burial ground to be completed. As he lives, he convinces himself and society of his own power, i.e., by witnessing and creating the toil and human suffering that is incorporated in the physical effort to build his pyramid. He reveals his *superiority* by exercising physical domination over the masses he controls. He assures himself that the work leaves a profound imprint on those it dominates<sup>97</sup>. The energy spent, the work, the whips, serve to remind the population that it is he *who* dominates.

*Statecraft* is the manifestation of the development of hierarchical society. As described above, it aims at destroying any bond which organically unites the members of a community. It strives to *homogenize* and exerts its authority on the resulting fragmented population. Whatever differences could exist within the people is nullified. It is rendered dangerous to *the stability of society*. Its power lay in the hands of specific groups of bureaucrats or religious leaders. The public sphere thus becomes the domain of *experts*. They are placed intellectually and physically above the rest of the population.

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97 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991; 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), p.249.

Bookchin proposes not only the abolition of statecraft, but the positive *reintroduction* or even the creation of democratic institutions. Inspired by the Athenian model of the Periclesian *polis*, Bookchin wants to reintroduce the notion of an active and *positive* participation within the realm of politics<sup>98</sup>. The function emerging from this activity must become formative and educational. Politics should be a *space* that *opens* humanity, not only to its subjectivity, but to the *otherness* of its fellow Citizens<sup>99</sup>. Complementarity thus permits humanity's integration within liberatory structures to enable the development of complexity and diversity.

The liberatory structures should encourage the reintegration of the person in his or her community. The reinvention of such structures would enable the development of a decentralized political framework in which power is assumed by the Citizens, thus enabling individuals to conduct themselves in *unmediated face to face* relations. The individual does not delegate his/her power to a representative, a Congressman, or Member of Parliament. He/she directly exercises it. Political activity is thus opened to the creativity and spontaneity of each individual.

The notion of decentralization as it relates to political organization must be seen in this perspective. The activity of politics

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98 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1992; 1987), Urbanization Without Cities (The Rise and Decline of Citizenship), p.xvii.

99 Idem, p.61-62.

acts as a mediative space to foster human development, education, and all-roundness<sup>100</sup> while the power that is exercised by the *Citizen* in a community is grounded in complementarity<sup>101</sup>. Not only is politics an open space for rational discourse, it is inspired by the natural process towards complexity. The political body acts as a moral link not only amongst humanity but also assures a fecund relationship between *first nature* and *second nature*. Decentralization is not a *transfer of power* from a central State to lower levels of government, rather it is the destruction of the modern centralized State and the *re invention* of the community to create a decentralized political body from which freedom can emerge.

By creating such new institutions, the notion of complementarity permits the expansion, development, and education of humanity; it unifies with others, not by its capacity to *conform* to a hierarchical structure, but, by its capacity to *create subjects* within a society. Complementarity is central to this development as it opens up the subject to his/her identity. The political realm acts as the meeting place which permits both dialogue and confrontation from which results in the Citizen's development.

As seen above, the notion of complementarity proposes that politics replace statecraft by creating a new public sphere to open up the

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100 *Idem*, p.59-60.

101 *Idem*, p.26.

development of the person through active participation within socially defined and liberatory institutions. The political setting constitutes the *realm of humanization*.

## CHAPTER 5: Complementarity: Economic Level

The process which leads to subjective identity is generated by political activity and thus shows how the notion of complementarity is present within that context. The second dimension, in the quest for human development, is economic activity. For Bookchin, the essence of this activity must be the expansion of the person's capacities. To do so, he introduces several new approaches for building a new relationship between the human and the natural worlds.

One of the most crucial problems that the ecological crisis has to address is the generalization of the capitalist market economy<sup>102</sup> in which the principle for survival is "growth or death" with all of society's efforts aiming towards economic expansion. This engenders a quest to use the natural world in ways that follow this logic and opens up the possibility to exploit, for economic purposes, *natural resources*. More so,

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102 "From the 1950s onward, the market economy has not only imperialized every aspect of conventional life, it has also dissolved the memory of the alternative lifeways that precede it. We are all anonymous buyers and sellers these days, even of all the miseries that afflict us. We not only buy and sell our labor power in all its subtle forms, we buy and sell our neuroses, anomie, loneliness, spiritual emptiness, integrity, lack of self-worth, and emotions, such as they are, to gurus, specialists in mental and physical "well being," psychoanalysts, clerics in all grabs, and ultimately to the armies of corporate and governmental bureaucrats who have finally become the authentic sinews of what we euphemistically call "society." (BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1987b), The Modern Crisis, p.82-83.)

capitalist society is the first to function only on the belief that *nature* is a *quantifiable resource* to be exploited and used; it breaks the organic link between humanity and the natural world. Humanity's quest is therefore to use the natural world and to dominate it.

In capitalism, we have reached the *ultimate* stage of destruction of the symbiotic relationship between human society and nature which prevailed from *preliterate* societies to *feudalism*<sup>103</sup>. Importantly, it is the economic incarnation of the legacy of domination. Its main components: hierarchy in organization, commodification of life, abstract/concrete exploitation of labour, fragmentation, etc. suggests that it is a *latent cancer* within every society<sup>104</sup>, dissolving social relations and ultimately all *value* and *moral* bonds<sup>105</sup> and importantly, our link with the natural world.

Capitalism, by destroying the spontaneous social links, reduces human relations to *buyers* and *sellers*. Once the market-economy is unleashed from any kind of social bonds<sup>106</sup>, it sets into motion a

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103 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1985), "Were We Wrong?", in Telos, Number 65, p.70.

104 "Capitalism, always a *dormant system* in the larger context of precapitalist social orders, essentially burst upon the world in a period of sweeping social decline."(Idem, p.66.)

105 Idem, p.74.

106 "The identification of the market with capitalism, in fact, results only from a highly specious reworking of historical fact.

constant expansion of its sphere of domination. The principle of economic growth has within itself the elements to destroy the ecosystems<sup>107</sup>. Instead of *liberating us*, capitalism has chained us to the ever growing demands of *expansion*. Our subjective development is refrained and nullified.

Capitalism's promise of an end to *scarcity* enabled the development of a centrally controlled apparatus which served to expand its domination of workers. *Work* in capitalism is not only the source of *depersonalization* and atomization, it is the *incarnation* of the total-hierarchical organization of society based on *discipline* and *clock-control*<sup>108</sup>. Work is no longer an activity which is creative, it is timed

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Markets existed for ages in many different forms, but they were carefully integrated into larger, more demanding, and socially more legitimate communities that structured life around orders, largely united kinship and craft ties.(...) It was precisely capitalism, the uncontrolled market, that became society, or, more precisely, began to eat away at society as a cancer, a malignancy that threatened the very existence of the social bound itself."(Idem, p.65.)

107 "Capitalism is a system that is permanently counter-revolutionary(...)" (Idem, p.70.)

108 It is interesting to note that on this point we detect an influence of Lewis Mumford's work. I refer the reader to Mumford's discussion on the influence of the clock and the monastic life, on pp.12-18 in MUMFORD, Lewis, (1934), Technics and Civilization.

and regulated. Work has no mission to be a constitutive part of our subjective development.

Also, our entire relation to the social world is reduced to the *exchange* of goods and services. We sell our labour power for an *abstract measure* of money and consume products that originate from a universe that is generally unknown to us and often in conditions which are better left unknown. Not only does capitalism reduce our relation to the universe to that of a great big *supermarket*, it takes away from us the *materiality* and the natural dimension of the *Goods produced*. As Bookchin writes:

"This extraordinary, indeed pathological, disjunction of nature from its manufactured results stems from a largely mythic interpretation of technics. The products of modern industry are literally *denatured*. As such, they become mere objects to be consumed or enjoyed. They exhibit no association with the natural world from which they derive. In the public mind, a product is more intimately associated with the company that manufactured it than with the natural world that made its very existence and production possible."<sup>109</sup>

As consumers we tend to disassociate the material and the intellectual properties incorporated in the production of an object. It loses, in the *public eye*, its link to natural reality and human creativeness and, in itself, becomes totally neutral and impotent. Production strives to

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109 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991; 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), pp. 309-310.

become *unnatural* in that it conceals the links between the natural world and the product, i.e., destroying nature's presence within the object.

Within capitalism, our actions and motivations are to constantly compete and *supplant* the *other*. The logic of "growth or death" engenders a series of centrally guided relationships that encourage increase in production. To paraphrase John Locke, God, who has given us reason, also gave us the capacity to use and transform nature into whatever we please. It is the *mission* of the reasonable and *industrious* to use it and transform it for *their own use*, and *their own good*. Production is thus unlimited. Our link to the product, which is mediated by the market, is thus limited to its lowest common denominator: the commodity<sup>110</sup>.

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<sup>110</sup>"This crisis (*The Ecology crisis-A.C.*) is not "somber evidence of an insidious fraud hidden in the vaunted productivity of wealth of modern, technology-based society," as Commoner would have us believe; rather, the crisis is evidence of a marketplace nexus that equates economic survival with growth — a nexus that is perhaps best summarized by the maxim "grow or die." The environmental crisis is inherent in bourgeois society, not in a "modern technology-based society." It is "somber evidence not of an "insidious fraud" but of the very law of capitalism. It stems not merely from greed but from a market-oriented system in which everything is reduced to a commodity, in which everyone is reduced to a mere buyer or seller, and in which every economic dynamic centers on capital accumulation. Hence the prevailing society is *inherently* antiecological, not only morally delinquent." (BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1974; 1962), Our Synthetic Environment, p.xxxiii.)

For Bookchin, we must reverse this logic and transform it along an ecological direction. Having attained a level of development which is part of a post-scarcity historical context, humanity must seek new methods for economic activity in order to generate a greater human development<sup>111</sup>. Therefore, the notion of complementarity must, in the economic realm, integrate the choices of the technics humanity adopts. Post-scarcity does not solely rest on human capacity to produce enough to meet its primal needs, it hinges on humanity's capacity to organize its economic activity in *ways* which integrate the ecological context<sup>112</sup>. For Bookchin, we have solved the historical problem of scarcity that has

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111 "Freedom from scarcity, or *post-scarcity*, must be seen in this light if it is to have a liberatory meaning. The concept presupposes that individuals have the material possibility of choosing what they need – not only a sufficiency of available goods from which to choose but a transformation of work, both qualitatively and quantitatively. *But none of these achievements is adequate to the idea of post-scarcity if the individual does not have autonomy, moral insight, and wisdom to choose rationally.* "(BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991; 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), p.69.)

112 "Freedom from scarcity, or *post-scarcity*, must be seen in this light if it is to have a liberatory meaning. The concept presupposes that individuals have the material possibility of choosing what they need – not only a sufficiency of available goods from which to choose but a transformation of work, both qualitatively and quantitatively. *But none of these achievements is adequate to the idea of post-scarcity if the individual does not have autonomy, moral insight, and wisdom to choose rationally.* "(Idem, p.242.)

been at the core of historical justifications for hierarchy. Humanity has now the technics which can assure not only the satisfaction of material needs but generate abundance. Not only does this imply that our capacities to produce are diversified but that labour no longer has to be a *toll*. If automation can easily take care of it, what remains becomes artistic<sup>113</sup>. Thus, the notion of *post-scarcity* permits us to choose *how* we are going to organize the social productive sphere.

Grounded in the ecological context of the bio-region, economic activity should be locally and democratically directed by the community. On this aspect, we must specify that Bookchin's thinking concerns both the technics used in production and the logic which animates exchange and redistribution; his criticism and proposal focuses on both the nature of technology and the economy.

Regarding to the question of technology, an *authoritarian technology* refers to a technique whose inception is developed according to its capacity to solidify the control of a group in a given power relation; its opposite, a *liberatory technology*, has as its objective to foster the freedom

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113 "A liberated society, I believe, will not want to negate technology precisely because it is liberated and can strike a balance. It may well want to assimilate the machine to artistic craftsmanship. By this I mean the machine will remove the toil from the productive process, leaving artistic completion to man."(BOOKCHIN (1986; 1971), p.156.)

of the individual in that it is *human-scale* and offers a greater degree of autonomy.

Regarding exchange and redistribution, a *market economy* refers to the dynamic underlying an economic activity having as its basis and end the production and exchange of goods; a *moral economy* refers to an economic activity that is guided by a certain number of moral principles. Let us examine all four notions and assess how the notion of complementarity is affected by each of them.

*Authoritarian technics* originated not out of the *realm of necessity*, but rather, from a *realm of domination*<sup>114</sup>. Such technics were not imperatives imposed on society by *our confrontation with the evil forces of nature*. Rather, they were put into place by *society's dominating groups in*

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114 "Initially, a libertarian is distinguished from an authoritarian technics by more than just the scale of production, the kind or size of implements, or even the way in which labor is organized, important as those may be. Perhaps the most crucial reason for what produces this distinction is the emergence of an *institutional* technics: the priestly corporation; the slowly emerging bureaucracies that surround it; later the monarchies and the military forces that preempt it; indeed, the very belief systems that validate the entire hierarchical structure and provide the authoritarian core of an authoritarian technics. Lavish material surpluses did not produce hierarchies and ruling classes; rather, hierarchies and ruling classes produced lavish and material surpluses."(BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991; 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), p.242.)

*order to insure their domination.* From their inception, their objectives were not to serve the community as a whole but instead, to *solidify* the dominating group's control over society. Authoritarian technics thus *objectified* labour in that it became a *mere* physical or intellectual activity, and detached the person from the end result. It permitted and perpetuated a certain group's domination as it centralized the power of command and direction of economic activity. The end result was the fragmentation of the population, thereby destroying the spontaneous links that could serve to unify an organic community.

*Liberatory technics*, on the other hand, are not only aimed at efficiency, but are also oriented towards the creativity, the unknown, and the aesthetic dimension of human activity. They seek the individual's physical, intellectual, and sensual development. *Size* alone does not constitute the criteria that renders a technology liberatory. Although, in Bookchin's thought, small-scale technics are a necessary factor, they are not always the main component of a liberatory technology. Small-scale technics may easily be part of a broader hierarchical context which permeates them. After all, the Roman empire had small-scale technics<sup>115</sup>. Even today, with all of the modern advancements in *team production* in *decentralized* organizations, it is clear that the overall structure in which they function serves the interests of a social formation that is built on domination and hierarchy. By having efficiency as its main goal, the ideological foundations of contemporary

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115 *Idem*, p.247-249.

capitalism, *growth or death*, permeates all of the dimensions of the organization. In order to attain a liberatory economic context, decentralization *as such* is by no means sufficient.

For a technic to be liberatory its aim must be the expansion of the worker's (the one who labors) subjectivity, it must open the door to a greater development of his/her being. Technics must not only try to integrate ecosystems, but also create a fertile activity which fosters biodiversity. Capitalism stunts this development since it does not concern itself essentially with anything but growth.

For Bookchin, the Luddites, who were noted for their strong sense of solidarity and their destruction of machines in order to postpone the penetration of industrialism within the community, essentially had it "right."<sup>116</sup> They were not motivated by purely *economic interest*. Nor were they a *faction* of the petty-bourgeoisie who tried to fight off the *progress* of the industrial mode of production. Echoing the work of British historian E.P. Thompson, which stresses the popularity and the communal goals of the Luddites<sup>117</sup>, Bookchin criticizes capitalism for the destruction of the communal bonds and the moral dimensions which used to govern economic activity. By destroying the social links and forcing children into the proletariat, the Luddites were more concerned

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116 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1985), "Were We Wrong?", in Telos, Number 65, p.70.

117 THOMPSON, E.P., (1980), The Making of the English Working Class, pp.598-604.

with moral and communal values rather than purely economic interests<sup>118</sup>. They were in fact trying to maintain a harmony between social relations and technology.

A *liberatory technic* must also be human-scale. Though it must integrate the ecological context in which it develops it must to respond to communal as well as individual needs. Further, it must be chosen by the members of the community where the goal of the interaction between community members and the technique must be a greater sense of selfhood and the development of the person. Both on an ecological and a social dimension, it must to be in direct relation to the particular characteristics of the community.

The question of nuclear *energy* serves as a good example to illustrate Bookchin's notions of authoritarian and liberatory technology. Given that nuclear energy demands a heavily centralized organization, it constitutes a force which is above the population, and as such serves the dominant group and the hierarchical order by enslaving society to *false* needs (created by a dominating group). Also, it solidifies the control of these groups over the population by engendering a relationship of dependence.

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118 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1985), "Were We Wrong?", in Telos, Number 65, p.70; and THOMPSON, E.P., (1980), The Making of the English Working Class, p.600-1.

In contrast, a *liberatory technic*, such as solar and wind energy, can become liberatory technologies since they can be operated in the context of a decentralized community and also be accessible to all. They do not require a hierarchical social structure and objectives and, are potentially human-scaled technologies and their use can be realized within the *home*. They are also ecological since their main source of energy is directly linked to the life-chain. These technologies can form a link of complementarity between the subject and his/her bio-region.

Coming back to the notion of work in the context of liberatory technics, it has the potential of becoming an activity which responds to the individual's passions and capacities, therefore imagination and artistic creativity could become the primary factors to animate economic activity. Unlike Marx who limits emancipation from work as being measured by the reduction of toil labour time<sup>119</sup>, Bookchin reintroduces

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119 "The later Marxian concept implies the continued separation between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom, between labor and leisure – not only in time, but also in such a manner that the same subject lives a different life in the two realms. According to this Marxian conception, the realm of necessity would continue under socialism to such an extent that real human freedom would prevail only outside the entire sphere of socially necessary labor. Marx rejects the idea that work can ever become play."(MARCUSE, Herbert, (1969a), AN Essay on Liberation, p.20-21.)

"La condition essentielle de cet épanouissement(royaume de la liberté. A.C.) est la réduction de la journée de travail."MARX, Karl,

the Fourierian synthesis of work and pleasure<sup>120</sup>. The reduction of time *as such* is not a priority since the activity acts as a mediation between productivity and subjectivity. Work is not a painful task, it is pleasurable since *toll* disappears with automation. Work becomes artistic and attractive.

By choosing a *moral economy* grounded on complementarity and decentralized activities over a *market economy* built on atomization and centralization, Bookchin argues that economic activity fills our biological and intellectual needs and also puts us in a relation to nature based on principles which foster a fecund interaction not only amongst ourselves, but also between humanity and nature.

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(1984), Le Capital(critique de l'économie politique) livre 3: Le procès d'ensemble de la production capitaliste, p.855.)

"Free development of individualities, and hence not the reduction of necessary labour labour time in order to posit surplus labour, but in the general reduction of necessary labour of society to a minimum, to which corresponds the artistic, scientific, etc., development of individuals, made possible by the time thus set free and the means produced for all of them."(MARX, Karl, and Friedrich ENGELS, (1987), Collected Works Volume 29(Marx: 1857-1861),p.91.)

120 For an account of Fourier's theory of the attractive character of work we strongly recommend a reading of his classic Le nouveau monde industriel et sociétaire. For at least one specific references please read p.133-137.

The proposed *moral economy* enables us to choose, within the confounds of the political, which sectors of activity must be developed and which technologies it will use within a relationship of complementarity with nature and ecological society. Also, how it will to give each individual the capacity to attain a sense of selfhood while simultaneously *helping* or *steering* natural development.

According to Bookchin, the notion of technological innovation was not socially disruptive in pre-capitalist worlds, it was adaptive<sup>121</sup>. Technology integrated the social matrix in which it was introduced. In capitalist society, innovations are on the other hand the overriding factor in the destruction of social relations. Technology disconnects itself from its social matrix and becomes the dominant factor that engenders the chaotic movement of people within and among industries. We do not have a say on the direction of new technics, nor do we have any level of control over the *manner* in which they will integrate the social sphere. More so, technology becomes an autonomous sphere

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121 "The most important feature of technics in a preindustrial societal complex is the extent to which it ordinarily is *adaptive* rather than *innovative* . (...) Technical innovation occurred in response to major climatic changes or to violent invasions that often transformed the invader as much as the invaded."(BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991; 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), p. 244.)

where our uncritical acceptance of its constant change causes us to lose our autonomy.

Bookchin thus links the *choice* of a technology on the democratic will of a community to choose which ones will be integrated in the social spheres. The development of technics and work processes must be related not on their capacities to produce for production's sake, as is the case in capitalist society, but rather on their capacity to integrate the ecological context and enable the enhancement of the person. Thus, on one hand, enabling humanity to integrate the bio-region and use the forces inherent to the natural context, and on the other hand, enabling humanity to develop a broader sense of selfhood within the subject. Importantly, technology is not simply an extended limb or tool which is used to extract material and transform it, more fundamentally, it is a mediative entity which enables us to integrate our subjectivity to the natural world and help to form it. Therefore, it must foster diversity and freedom within the person while simultaneously creating the conditions enabling the development of diversity within the natural world.

What Bookchin proposes is to abolish the economy based on commodity production and replace it with one grounded in a relationship of *complementarity* between society and nature with the direction of the activity linked to the person's development. As an example, choosing an activity which enables the development of the person and a symbiotic relationship with nature, we chose to be active in the development of all life forms.

Economic activity no longer has to be steered by increased centralized command, it has to be oriented towards a relationship of complementarity between the producer and the object produced and facilitate a greater unfolding of the person's intellectual, manual, sensuous, as well aesthetic faculties, i.e., the unfolding of his/her subjectivity.

Complementarity thus integrates the technological sphere, causing an ecosociety to base its activities on the possibilities inherent within each individual and ensuring a greater diversity in activity to respond to its social context in which it serves. Production therefore becomes an aesthetic experience just as much as a rational enterprise.

## CONCLUSION:

### a) Complementarity (An Overview)

As we endeavor to create a new society grounded in complementarity rather than on domination, one is led to wonder if this change is a departure from the social projects of the past. Bookchin's approach does seem to constitute a departure from the leftist strategies largely developed in the Nineteenth Century and does constitute a total departure from the traditional ideologies which have developed within the capitalist mode of production. In this part, we will assess the extent of Bookchin's departure from the past.

Bookchin recognizes that the current social movement is leading up to a break from our traditional notions of civilization and a new social project has to offer a total, rather than partial, transformation. He advances that the legacy of domination has left us in a situation in which it can still realize its mission of fragmenting society and deal with ecological problems through State generated (thus expanding its sphere) efforts, in turn creating the conditions for a new and total domination over the development and freedom of the person. However, this could be a sign that this legacy has shown its limits and that humanity now must take the future into its own hands and build the communities which will permit people to achieve the potential inherent in both themselves and in the natural world. Instead of staying within a legacy

which has assured human survival through repression<sup>122</sup>, it may be time to break with this heritage and build a new and liberating social order.

The notion of complementarity thus tries to surpass the legacy of domination which accompanied the social projects that permeate the ideologies of our era. In fact, Bookchin's social project has the potential to integrate and foster the person's development to degrees that were unthinkable in the eras between this society and the pre-capitalist world. The new social organization that he proposes is inspired by the neglected communal promises of the Enlightenment. The creation of an ecocommunity would fill these promises by breaking away from the scientific and calculating reason which emerged from the generalization of the capitalist-industrial mode of production. Rather than serve instrumental rationality, reason could be re-united with the imaginary. The aesthetic and the practical would no longer be split but rather complement each other.

If there are signs of departure of Bookchin's notion of complementarity with the past, it can be found in the way that he proposes to create a society which puts work as a creative activity. *Toll* is replaced by automation and human activity becomes creative and artistic. However, does Bookchin's social project represent an ideological return to the anarchist and socialist traditions? After all, these have similar criticisms concerning the directions of technology and resolve

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122 MARCUSE, Herbert, (1966), Eros and Civilization(A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud), pp.21-105.

similar questions by accepting an economic system based on automation and expanding the aesthetic dimension of a person's activity.

These reflections which appear to offer us elements of renewal can also be found in the projects of utopian thinkers who witnessed the potential of the technological revolution of the last century. Some elements were part of their own social projects and reflections about the role and place of technology. Kropotkin's social project, for example, also proposes automated technology as a precondition to the liberation of human activity<sup>123</sup>. Furthermore, Charles Fourier proposes a symbiosis between pleasure and work that would enable the person to develop all of the possibilities attached to the activity<sup>124</sup>. For both these thinkers, freedom from drudgery and the adaptation of work to the inherent dispositions of each person can be achieved as productive activity focuses more and more on the aesthetic and the imaginary.

With respect to Marxism, Bookchin postulates a possibly more encompassing notion, i.e., domination, to rationally explain the present crisis in the world. Does this constitute a return to some of the opposing schools to Marxism within the variants of socialist thought? If Marxism is the last great social project, as Vachet contends, then it is possible that Bookchin's approach reverts to pre-capitalist schools of

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123 KROPOTKIN, Peter, (1990), The Conquest of Bread, pp.148-155

124 FOURIER, Charles, (1975), Vers la liberté en amour, pp.201-203.

thought and integrates their own proto-ecological<sup>125</sup> insights to the ecological crisis?

Bookchin's social project tends to have the same limits as those of traditional anarchist thinkers, both seem to postulate a return to an enlightened agrarian community. If, by chance, such a return could constitute a point of departure from traditional ideologies, then Bookchin's social project would give us some elements to get out of the crisis, i.e., a decentralized community built around the notion of complementarity, can surely open us to a new relationship amongs ourselves and promote a greater development of the person. But, on the

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125 Calling Kropotkin a potential environmentalist is defensible. George Woodcock in his introduction to The Conquest of Bread does state it. Kropotkin's call for small scale communities that are integrated to the biological context could open up studies which could place this thinker as a potential source of Ecology.

Fourier, on the other hand, is a thinker who could easily be interpreted as a force that has largely linked social causes with environmental decay(both biotic\* and climatic\*\*). In fact, much of his social project involves a reintegration of human community within the natural order. Also it could be defended, in our opinion, that Fourier sees the environmental crisis hitting his own society as having social causes.

\*FOURIER, Charles, (1973), Le nouveau monde industriel et sociétaire, p.41.

\*\* Ibid, p.450.

other hand, can this social project surpass the ones proposed by the utopian traditions of Charles Fourier, Peter Kropotkin, and even William Morris? One is left to wonder. A Hegelian leap demands that a new social project propose both transformation in form and content. In fact, we could be tempted to ask if Bookchin's social project is not an attempt to introduce solutions to problems which have disappeared with the full development of capitalism, i.e., as is the case with the agrarian based socialism of Fourier. Therefore is the return to small-scale autonomous communities a sign of the emerging civilization?

It is also possible that Bookchin falls into one of the traps created by the current crisis of ideologies which makes it possible for older projects to resurface. After all, is the creation of a small-scale *polis* the only condition for the emergence of an ecological society? To return to Jura may be more mythical than forward seeking. Craftsmanship may provide a direct link between the producer and the product, it may even create an ethical bond between both and may even unite them and foster the development of the person. But is this a surpassing, or a return?

The new relationship between humanity and nature that Bookchin proposes would seem to offer a break from traditional ideologies. On this dimension, some signs are apparent. His rejection of the passive approach to natural development could open up some possibilities. The notion of complementarity also offers a break from the instrumental approach of Marx. For example, in a communist society, not only would

we dominate the natural world, but we would domesticate it. We would adapt the natural world to the control of the society, and thus, humanity would not participate in its development and its evolution. In this connection, the relationship that Bookchin proposes is not a simple, passive, or even the primitivist return to the wilderness discourse propagated by many Deep Ecologists, he argues that society must constitute an organic and fertile links with the the natural world. Humanity must act and direct natural evolution, that is its mission.

#### b) Potential Openings and Limits.

In this work, we have demonstrated that the notion of complementarity is the central aspect of Murray Bookchin's social project. No other notion is as central to social ecology. However, in relation to the crisis of the ideologies, social ecology appears to contain certain limits in that it proposes forms of communities developed for past social projects. Thus, it does not seem to break with traditional ideologies and, even if social ecology appears as the most avant-garde body of thought within Ecology, it does not resolve the current crisis of ideologies.

Essentially, Ecology is an emerging ideology which aims to re-integrate humanity within its biotic realm and, as such, has the potential of effectively addressing some of the more destructive transformations of our post-War economies. These transformations

created and accelerated ecological problems to dimensions which were generally unforeseeable, with some exceptions, at the time the ideologies of Liberalism and Socialism were developed. For example, Marx does describe the disastrous effects of capitalism on the biotic realm<sup>126</sup>. Nonetheless, Ecology may not need to articulate an entirely new world view to address these problems, on the contrary, many of these problems may find solutions within contemporary ideologies.

Even if there are semblances of an ideological renewal, Ecology does not seem able to break with the traditional ideologies which are at the root of current problems. It employs a different form in the presentation of the problems but substantially does not surpass the foundations of earlier ideological projects. Luc Ferry has recently shown that much of this ideology is formed by the philosophies of

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126 Marx's analysis of the problem as it relates to the biotic realm can be found in Capital vol 3:

"La grande industrie et la grande agriculture exploitée industriellement agissent dans le même sens. Si, à l'origine, elles se distinguent parce que la première ravages et ruine d'avantage la force de travail, donc la force naturelle de l'homme, l'autre plus directement la force naturelle de la terre, elles finissent, en se développant, par se donner la main: le système industriel à la campagne finissant aussi par débilitier les ouvriers et industrie et le commerce, de leur côté, fournissant à l'agriculture les moyens d'épuiser la terre."(p.848.)

Utilitarianism and Romanticism<sup>127</sup>. Our study has revealed that by far one of the most successful and complex body of thought of this ideology, i.e., Bookchin's, does not fully address the present crisis of ideologies in that it does not offer a radically new *discourse* which would enable the creation of new institutions or social structures.

On the other hand, we are tempted to state that Murray Bookchin's philosophy contains elements which could foster a renewal in political thought. For one, the reintegration of humanity within the natural world involving the creation of human communities which serve both the biotic and the social realm, and the integration of society and nature in a fertile link of complementarity offers a new approach which puts into question the dominant ideologies. Nature is no longer an accumulation of resources but rather the basis for the evolution of complex life forms on which we are dependent for our own evolution. These elements are forward looking in that they propose a break with a good part of our heritage.

Yet given that ideological thought seems to have failed on a State wide level, can we say that Bookchin's communitarian project constitutes the ideological breakthrough to create the "new politics?" While the ideal City of the Greek *polis* might not be the contemporary model, could we not imagine small-scale and self-sufficient communities in which modern means of communication act as a logistical support for

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127 FERRY, Luc, (1992), Le nouvel ordre écologique (L'arbre, l'animal et l'homme), pp.80-105.; pp.53-66

the enhancement of a world wide culture? After all, the generalization of communication technologies at one time reserved to elite or to large organizations, and now available to all, opens up new possibilities for the creation of a new civilization. A return to *face to face* unmediated contact, while ideal, may not be fully needed. As the advent of the telephone followed many decades later by the Personal Computer, has shown it is possible to create new social links which surpass the traditional limits imposed by our traditional external frontiers. Technics, as such, may appear to represent *dehumanization* and even pervert our contact with the external world, but has not the invention of language, as Rousseau once stated, created new social links? Technics constitute and open up new possibilities for communities that are coherent and liberatory and which would appear to be in line with Bookchin's proposal.

As it concerns human development, Bookchin's new human-scale society could be, for some, misleading. For many, such notions refer to a pre-capitalist craft-based society, and Bourgeois and elitist ideologists quickly conclude that they glorify human mediocrity. But for Bookchin, an ecosociety would be constituted by well-rounded people, liberated from the limits imposed by the process of socialization and segregation originating in the social division of labour, or in our age, the welfare state. His argument for human-scale societal structures to foster the development of the person is expansive and not regressive. The capacity of an individual to control and act within his/her technological context increases substantially. To paraphrase one of Fourier's projections, the

poorest person in an ecosociety would be infinitely richer than a multinational owner in capitalism.

Bookchin's approach also constitutes an effort to reintroduce the utopian tradition in our own historical context. However, the problem with this approach is that many traditional socialist and anarchist movements were conceived within the limits of their historical context and represented specific class interests. Classes associated with craftsmanship, such as the petty-bourgeoisie, in relation to whom much these ideologies were developed no longer have the power to be an important force within the social movement. They are now more relics than reality.

On this level, Bookchin does not fall into the trap of atavism as so many ecologist do. His historical roots are in the Enlightenment and the utopian. From Fourier and Kropotkin, he inherits the powerful forces of imagination, creativity, and pleasure. His synthesis of the natural and the human world brings a new scope and a new, and very important, dimension to leftist thought. The shift from essentially productivist ideologies to usufruct could be an element permitting the *leap*. On the other hand, this could reveal that he does not fully recognize the profound changes that have occurred with the introduction of the capitalist mode of production, and that he does not fully accept the *breaks* or moments of *rupture* that have lead to the transformations that have given humanity the instruments for material abundance.

Further studies on these themes could be done. For example, it would be interesting to analyze the different links that could be made between Bookchin's social ecology project, and the more traditional utopian schools of socialism. If Bookchin offers us a point of departure, would the notion of complementarity surpass Kropotkin's *mutual aid*, or even Charles Fourier's attraction? These links could constitute a determinant factor in evaluating his thought. For example, Kropotkin's *mutualist naturalism* opens up nature to us where inner-species solidarity acts as a major factor in their development and, Fourier seems to present the potential for a relationship built on complementarity between humanity and the natural world.

The new relationship that Bookchin proposes between humanity and the natural could be interpreted as a reintroduction of Charles Fourier's social invention within the confines of our historical period. After all, Bookchin himself, in his later years, tends to separate himself from Kropotkin and define his social project as quite distinct from it<sup>128</sup>.

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128 For Bookchin's critique of Kropotkin, we refer the reader to an unpublished manuscript\* by the author which has been written as an Introduction Kropotkin's Mutual Aid. This manuscript has been communicated to us by Janet Biehl, collaborator of Murray Bookchin. And also, we refer to a recent article published in which he attacks anarcho-syndicalism\*\*.

\*BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1990c), "Introduction to Peter Kropotkin's Mutual Aid", UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT, pp.31-38, pp.40-48.

In relation to Fourier, we find that on a global level the criticisms that Bookchin addresses to contemporary society, resemble Fourier's of his own social context. Both attribute the problems in the natural world to social organizations which are chaotic and neglect the person's development.

What might appear to be a point of divergence between the two, i.e., the notion of complementarity and Fourier's notion of "attraction," both lead to the creation of small-scale communities that have as their objective the reintegration of humanity within a larger natural movement which strives towards complexity. Bookchin's ecosociety and Fourier's *phalanstère* both constitute realms of subjective development; they both act as mediative structures between humanity and its enhancement. Therefore, Bookchin's social project, although in many ways quite distinct from Fourier, does have similar underpinnings.

Also, Fourier conceived his social project in an entirely agrarian social order. Industrialism was limited in scope, and in fact, had to be within the agrarian matrix<sup>129</sup>. Grounded in the natural world, work

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\*\*BOOKCHIN, Murray, & all., (1993), Deep Ecology & Anarchism (A Polemic), pp.55-58.

129 "L'ordre sociétaire n'envisage dans la manufacture que le complément de l'agriculture, le moyen de faire diversion aux calmes passionnels qui éclaterait pendant la longue fériation d'hiver et les

could ultimately be performed within the confines of life and the biological cycles of the bio-region.

This dimension, i.e., a return to an agrarian matrix, could be a determinant factor for the contemporary relevance of Bookchin's proposal. In accepting the view that the last great social project, as Vachet states, was elaborated by Marx, we can perceive another dynamic taking place. For Marx, the XIX<sup>th</sup> Century took a very positive view of resultant technical progress initiated by the bourgeoisie. We can see that the steady destruction of pre-industrial social structures by the ever expanding forces of the emerging capitalist society constituted a moment of historical departure which now continues to lead to the creation of new social realities and new possibilities regarding freedom and human communities. Such a reasoning would lead us to believe that social projects of the type proposed by Fourier have been surpassed in that they are limited in their capacities to confront and benefit from new contemporary possibilities.

Is a return to a stage prior to capitalism really the way out of the crisis of ideologies? Though Bookchin's philosophy is closely linked to pre-capitalist economic structures, it does not necessarily surpass some utopian thinkers. Their social projects confronted a world in transition, whereas Bookchin confronts a whole new social movement. He reintroduces the social projects of utopian thinkers in our contemporary

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pluies équatoriales."(FOURIER, Charles, (1973), Le nouveau monde industriel et sociétaire, p.196)

context without necessarily surpassing them. After all, Charles Fourier wrote his project at a time when cities, or communities of small groups, were a viable option for society. The mega-urban area of today is the reality and humanity has been profoundly affected by this new form of community.

If Bookchin's philosophy constitutes a positive effort to get us out of this crisis, it is in his criticisms of traditional ideologies and their limits and potential dangers as they confront a world-wide ecological crisis. While humanity has had deal with such crisis in the past, the dimensions of the current crisis us requires that we adopt a qualitatively different approach that is compatible with the advancements that have potentially solved the problem of scarcity. Since the social movement and social transformations do not always require an expansive productive sector, once abundance is attained, the possibilities of change within social structures can take on different forms. As Herbert Marcuse once wrote in his 1966 "Political Preface" to Eros and Civilization:

"Whereas previous revolutions brought about a larger and more rational development of the productive forces, in the overdeveloped societies of today, revolution would mean reversal of this trend: elimination of overdevelopment, and of its repressive rationality."<sup>130</sup>

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130 MARCUSE, Herbert, (1966), Eros and Civilization(A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud), p.xviii.

Today, Bookchin's argument for the positive reintegration of humanity within the natural realm can create the conditions for the actualization of the human potential that is denied in hierarchical or class based society, since quantity in production would no longer be the main factor to justify hierarchy and domination. In this respect, Marx's justification of the bourgeoisie's historical mission, in the Manifesto of the Communist Party<sup>131</sup> and on a philosophical level, in the manuscript known as "Feuerbach"<sup>132</sup>, appears to be surpassed. On this level, Bookchin seems to break away from traditional ideologies in that he proposes a rupture with this logic and proposes the emergence of an "*ecological, rational, and artistic*"<sup>133</sup> economic activity.

To validate or invalidate the conclusions of this study, one could compare Bookchin with Charles Fourier and Peter Kropotkin. We are confident that these thinkers contributed a number of elements which have not only inspired Bookchin, but that Bookchin adopts outright with no regard to the limits of their thought on contemporary society. Fourier and Kropotkin have given us rich contributions for an understanding of the tensions in their own societies. Their concept of

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131 MARX, Karl, and Friedrich ENGELS, (1976b), Collected Works Volume 6(Marx and Engels: 1845-1848), p.485-496.

132 MARX, Karl, and Friedrich ENGELS, (1976a), Collected Works Volume 5(Marx and Engels: 1845-1847), p.52-53.

133 BOOKCHIN, Murray, (1991; 1982), The Ecology of Freedom (The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy), p.216.

community was very conceivable for a society in which technological transformations, which are at the center of our society, had just begun to take place.

With the end of a civilization, it is normal for thought to isolate itself from its needed organic link with the social movement. Maybe a good deal of what Bookchin proposes cannot be considered original. In fact, much of it, i.e., decentralized societies and craft based economies, has appeared in other social projects. But then, it is difficult to find a social project which at least proposes a positive reintegration of humanity and the natural world that is both enriching to humanity and to the biotic realm. If he surpasses the traditional ideological view of a natural world opposed to humanity, such as that associated with a *realm of necessity* which has to be surpassed and dominated to create a *realm of freedom*, then his social project can be deemed as a positive leap from those traditional ideologies. On the other hand, his frequent reference to pre-Marxian developments flaw his contribution to the crisis of ideologies and, as a social project for contemporary society, it does not constitute the basis of for complete ideological renewal.

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