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## The Native In Us, the Earth We Belong To<sup>1</sup>

### Educating the sentiments

The work I produced from the early 1970s and part of the 1980s is probably fairly well-known and readily available in print. The material emerged from a collective debate with other women focussing on the analysis of reproductive labour and the question of the struggle for wage/income, starting with wages for housework. These days, given the pervasiveness and destructiveness of this most recent phase of accumulation, I feel that a commitment revolving exclusively round the wage/income<sup>2</sup> and the reduction of labour time is inadequate unless it is pursued in step with a series of other issues which I will try to highlight.

In fact, I think that, from various viewpoints, the problem of human reproduction is indissolubly linked to issues - above all, land - raised by the indigenous movements. Women continue to be primarily responsible for human reproduction in all regions of the planet, and the problem of their condition cannot ignore the horizons that these issues outline, whether in families of the advanced areas or the village communities of the 'developing' countries.

Before discussing this, however, I must say something about my personal research in the 1980s, a decade of political repression and the 'normalisation' of a movement which, in the 1970s, produced powerful struggles for which the feminist movement I belonged to - Lotta Femminista, or the Wages for Housework area - paid a price in terms of repression, but, also and as usually happens, of the erasure of its history and work. In the 1970s, we carried out and published some studies<sup>3</sup> and, in the 1980s, with great effort, given the circumstances, we completed others. They included<sup>4</sup> Leopoldina Fortunati's *The Arcane of Reproduction* (1981)

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<sup>1</sup> A first version of this article was produced for the Conference "For Another Europe, a Europe of Movements and Class Autonomy" in Turin on March 30, 1996 and then further developed. This article has been originally published in Italian in *Vis à Vis*, n.5, 1997 and then in A. Marucci (a cura di) *Camminare domandando, DeriveApprodi*, 1997, Roma. It has also been published in English in *Common Sense*, n.23, 1998. )

<sup>2</sup> In this publication, I will use 'wage/income' to mean money paid to both contract and self-employed labour as well as the so-called indirect wage which is being progressively reduced by present policies on health, education, pensions, and housing, undermining what is usually described as family or personal income. So, with an increasingly striking urgency in recent years, the struggle for the wage/income also means a struggle against current taxation levels and the arbitrary way in which public money is used.

<sup>3</sup> For an analysis of the significance of violence in the provision of domestic labour in the capitalist mode of production, I mention, first of all, *Un lavoro d'amore* (Giovanna F. Dalla Costa, 1978). For an analysis of the paths followed by women's autonomy in Italy since World War II and their intersections with the processes of emigration, I refer to the book I coauthored with Leopoldina Fortunati, *Brutto ciao* (1977). Moreover, a synthetic and reasoned indication on more analytical publications or materials more intended for immediate use by the movement can be found in Note 5 of my *Women's Studies e sapere delle donne* (1988). This contains no systematic listing of what has been produced by non-Italian feminist groups in the same network.

<sup>4</sup> Published in that period were *La riproduzione nel sottosviluppo* (Giovanna F. Dalla Costa, 1980), republished later with some new material; and my *Famiglia welfare e Stato tra Progressismo e New Deal* (1983), which analyses the condition of the 'new woman' between nuclear family, external employment and the emerging welfare state.

and *Il grande Calibano*, published by Fortunati and Silvia Federici in 1984, two books conceived as part of a larger project which remains uncompleted. I am certain I am right in saying that circulation of these works was actively hindered.

The climate was unfavourable, not least because of Marxism's 'hibernation' when it went out of fashion. And since my own and my comrades' approach was undoubtedly rooted in Marxist analysis, it was difficult for me to find talking partners, of either sex. Our efforts were directed to using a Marxian analysis integrated with our whole approach to housework. We reformulated the concept of class to include women as unwaged workers in that their main job was the production and reproduction of labour-power.

It was just as difficult to find anyone with whom to give explicit expression to a certain number of rather hirsute misgivings I always felt in the Marxist ambit from which I set out. The first and major irritation was over the idea that *capitalist development* seemed to be seen as *ineluctable*. However powerful the struggles were, a new leap and a new level were just round the corner, creating a tunnel vision in which the tunnel's end was never in sight. The leap to a new level of technology obliged the struggle onto a new terrain which then became the only significant portent for liberation.

The second irritation I felt was because of my perhaps mistaken impression of cynicism with which each new level of development was awaited and greeted, which apart from the massacres it caused and in to which little research was devoted, always because of the struggles that would emerge, should have carried new possibilities of liberation. Thus this new level would represent our evil but also our good.

The debate dealt fundamentally with the advanced areas and gave little attention to Third World struggles; the assumption was in any case that the best way of supporting the latter was to struggle forcefully in the former. But this link is not as automatic as it looks; it needs a few more steps, which I shall try to illustrate. The decisions involved require that one should know what Third World struggles are going on and what they are, with a real knowledge of the factors they are moving against. This also requires knowing the relationship these factors have with the new leaps in technology at the most 'advanced' points of development, as well as with the re-stratification of labour at the world level. The most detailed knowledge possible is also required of the direction in which the actors in the struggles would like to see them move.

The idea that capitalist development could be ineluctable chilled me to the bone and froze my imagination. I wondered how many people would in fact survive to be liberated in the famous final stage of development since the fate of an increasingly large proportion of mankind seemed to be death by massacre, and I wondered what sense there would be in the liberation of the surviving few if most had perished. Again, I wondered whether there was any sense in being liberated in a world where no blade of grass would be seen and the population consisted of monsters produced in laboratories. I knew my questions were not original, but they ate at me like woodworm eating wood.

In this debate, the focal points were labour and capital. However all-embracing they may be, I missed any reference to nature. By this, I mean nothing more than plants, the sea, rivers, animals. I lived in a kind of schizophrenia in which I only re-discovered my sensations, imagination, and life in nature, but nature found no place in the debate. I was unable to transfer the life it gave me to the political discourse I was involved with, and I felt unable to indicate nature as a source of life for others, except as a private and confidential observation.

As women, we had brought our labour to the surface, but a black hole remained: the still submerged role of nature.

Beyond any possibility or impossibility of a theoretical debate on the problem, I took a simple decision to try and communicate with those who spoke the same language because they shared what I felt. Finding the present level of development intolerable, I had no intention of appealing to the next level.

In this rather solitary research, I had two fundamental meetings; with the *movement of the indigenous peoples*; and with what *ecologists* were saying, especially the *ecofeminists*.

My first encounter with the indigenous peoples' movement was Rigoberta Menchù's work *My Name is Rigoberta Menchù*, in the Italian edition by Burgos in 1991. I urge everyone to read it. It speaks of the condition of Guatemala's indigenous peoples. It consists of three books. Book One describes Mayan civilisation, and the great discovery for me was that it is a living civilisation, not a dead one. I learned about the traditions, rites, and other ways in which the Mayans hand down their secrets in their villages, or when they are no longer sure they will return there because they are going into the mountains to become guerillas. I also learned that this civilisation still keeps some of its secrets.

This encouraged me to see capitalism's apparent omnipotence, as something that destroys everything or re-shapes it to its own purposes, in more relative terms; there are things that capitalism doesn't know. But I also re-discovered myself in the natives described by Rigoberta, in their respect and love for the land and all living things. In the importance they give to their relationship with animals, I re-discovered a piece of my history and my identity, and I also re-discovered my research:

Above all at sowing time, the animals came and searched through the seeds, so we took it in turns to guard the *milpa*...We took it in turns, but we were happy because we stayed out and slept under the trees. We had fun laying traps...and when we heard the poor animal crying out,we would run to see. But since our parents forbade us to kill animals, we let them go. We just shouted at them, and they never came back...(Burgos 1991 p. 67).

When we girls were together...when we already had our pet animals and we carried them around with us, we talked about our dreams and what we wanted to do with the animals we had. We talked about life a bit, but only in very general terms. (Burgos 1991 p.102).

They killed our animals. They killed many dogs. For us natives, killing an animal is like killing a person. Every being in nature comes high in our consideration (Burgos 1991 p.132).

Book One, then, is a book about love and respect for the earth and its inhabitants, about communication and the society of all living beings.

Book Two which I would describe as a book of horrors, concerns capitalist development i.e. the conditions under which the Maya are obliged to work in the *fincas*, the large landowners' plantations where export crops are grown and how the Maya are killed. It is not just the story of how the land is expropriated, but also how the landowners and the army leave the natives no

more than a small plot of land, the *milpa*, which is so small and unfertile that they are in any case obliged to work in the *fincas*. There, the conditions are inhuman not only because the pay is so low that a day's wage leaves the day-labourers hungry. There is also the security guards' terrorism, and even the most elementary hygienic facilities are lacking; the plantation workers have nowhere to wash and no latrines. The tale I tell here is a tale of what death looks like when it comes to you at your place of work.

Rigoberta's family work on the banana plantation. Her mother knows that Rigoberta's two-year-old brother is dying of hunger and she can do nothing to feed him because she earns too little. He dies and is left unburied for several days because she doesn't have the money to rent a square meter of land in the plantation for his grave. In the end, overcoming a number of difficulties, among them, the difficulties of communication between the different ethnic minorities with different languages, the labourers manage to collect enough money to bury the child.

One of Rigoberta's friends, Donna Petrona Chona, resists the sexual advances of the owner's son and is hacked to pieces by the owner's body guard with a machete, her baby son in her arms. Her body is cut into 25 pieces and is left to rot. No-one in authority comes to investigate so the workers decided to break regulations and gather her remains in a basket to bury her.

Another of Rigoberta's little brothers and a friend are allowed to stay in an area where the cotton is being fumigated, and they die of the poison they absorb.

Book Three concerns political organisation and repression, the latter making it in this respect another book of horrors. But in what is said about political organisation, which means guerilla warfare for some and the Peasant Unity Committee for others, I was struck by one thing. Rigoberta, who teaches the people of her *aldea*<sup>5</sup>, and later others as well, how to defend themselves from the soldiers' attacks, is particularly good at setting traps, the same traps as five centuries earlier the natives used when they defended themselves from the *conquistadores*: a heritage of knowledge handed down and preserved. The other origins of capital, unlike those of the advanced Great Britain, differently to what happens in the First World, are very evident here in what has been handed down, as a remembered presence of what happened, of what has been suffered and what defences have been used. But another striking thing is the *concern* the Maya show for the animals, which they *avoid killing* if it is not necessary, and also their concern for talking to the soldiers when they capture them. It is striking how, in defending themselves, they have preserved the memory of the *same weapons*, using them to organise effective forms of resistance today. Conquest and capital; a question that remains open. A weapon has remained close to hand to throw the invader into the sea, no longer a destiny interiorised as ineluctable, but rather a 500-year wait, but then you are ready for when the hidden weapons must be disinterred, to build a new future.

The repression, as I noted, is another book of horrors. Rigoberta's third brother, 16, is captured as a reprisal. He and the other prisoners are tortured and then brought to the square of a village. Here the villagers among which is, hidden, the family of Rigoberta, are then forced to gather round and listen as the soldiers, pointing to the wounds inflicted on each prisoner's naked body, explain which torture each wound corresponds to. They are then burned alive, in front of the villagers.

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<sup>5</sup> A village which is not the seat of a town council and may be scores of kilometers from the town council that governs it.

Rigoberta's father also died by fire, probably burned alive by a phosphorus bomb thrown into the Spanish Embassy in Ciudad de Guatemala after he had led a march of farm workers and peasants inside the building. The mother was captured, tortured to death and her body left to the wild animals. And the soldiers stood on guard to stop the natives from burying remains.

I don't know how high development had reached in the advanced countries in the 1970s and 1980s, but I do know that this was the underdevelopment it provoked and on which it rested. The Maya American natives paid, and continue to pay, just as they did at the origins of capital, with torture, death, forced labour, hunger and the expropriation of the land and the resources to be found in that land. They pay for the continually renewed globalisation of the economy, through the combined strategy of development and underdevelopment on which it rests.

In so far as her book of love and horror deals with belonging to the land, being expropriated from the land, I must say that, in my mind, Rigoberta Menchù confirmed the *centrality* of the *relationship with the land* as a new starting point for a political analysis. She also gave *centrality* to the *native question*, both because of the indigenous peoples' fundamental role in the social body of workers at the world level, and because they represent the persistence in the world of 'other civilisations', with other memories and imaginary landscapes. They are peoples who have refused to disappear with the 'lost civilisations', keeping their daily lives, preserving their secrets and maintaining forms of knowledge which represent an enormous potential for founding another form of development, starting above all from a different relationship with the land and all living beings.

Because of its context, the explosion of the Zapatista movement on January 1, 1994, was certainly the most important event in attracting world attention to the rebellion of the indigenous peoples, and it gave further confirmation to the *centrality* of the above approach. In fact, starting from the claim to land as *common*, Chiapas has increasingly become a *political laboratory* which *movements in all parts of the planet* look to and create links with.

Another important encounter for me was Vandana Shiva's *Sopravvivere allo sviluppo* (1990), as a kind of introduction to eco-feminism. Various authors write in this vein of analysis, above all, Maria Mies (1986). I may disagree with some of the main points in these authors' approach, for example, when they look at the First World primarily as a source of consumption, neglecting the class struggle and conflict that impregnates it, and the poverty that increasingly invades it. Even though many of our conclusions are convergent, our analytical categories are very different. Vandana, for example, uses the female principle as the starting-point for her critique of male reductionist science, while I use the categories of class and capital in which the fundamental division between productive and reproductive, waged and non-waged labour is one of the common threads traversing them world-wide.

But, on the whole, one of the assumptions underlying all these works is one I share: that any political proposal whatsoever, for development or non-development - one can also mark time; there is no ineluctable obligation to develop and develop again - should start from respect for, and the determination to preserve nature's fundamental equilibria, above all, its self-regenerative/reproductive powers; from respect and love for all living creatures. In this sense, we were on shared ground, in any case and always. And also for the continual appreciation shown by these writers for the *knowledge used by indigenous women* in extracting nourishment, resources, and *abundance* from nature, while allowing the *regeneration* of its resources by *using them in moderation* and *returning* what has been taken. For me, an

extremely *innovative* and *significant* political approach could be seen at work in the *decision of the Chipko women* to turn down an offer from the lumber companies of jobs in the saw mills in exchange for felling the forests, arguing that they did not only not need the jobs, but that their children would never suffer hunger if the forest was nearby. Their struggle meant a rejection of development in so far as development means being enslaved to the wage economy's total uncertainty. Not only does the wage have its uses, but also the non-wage. The *love* in Shiva's book (1990) lies in how it describes, almost thanks and caresses the water, the land, the plants, the seeds and animals in their infinite possibilities for satisfying *needs that are also relational*, provided capitalist rules are not imposed on them. The horrors concern the systematic destruction of the diversity of the various species, their standardisation and distortion into laboratory hybrids, genetic manipulation, patents, monopolies, forbidden access, and the resulting creation of hunger and denial of survival for an increasingly large proportion of mankind.

It is no coincidence if these two books were written by women from the world's South, and I have mentioned them because they were important milestones in my identification with the cause of the land and of the indigenous peoples, while also revitalising me by reuniting my heart's quest with what my mind was searching for. Today, the struggle against the capitalist system of social relations must focus on how to construct a new relationship with the land. In this sense, in its affirmation of and claim to a different form of knowledge and volition towards the earth and all living creatures, the indigenous peoples' rebellion represents a moment of strength and a crucial indication for all mankind.

## Structural Adjustment Policies and the Land Question

Seen from a much more 'rational' viewpoint, the land question, seen here negatively as privatisation/expropriation, became *central* to the collective work I have pursued with American comrades of both sexes since the early 1970s, when we started examining *policies* for managing the so-called *debt crisis*, broadly speaking the *structural adjustment policies* applied with *an increasingly heavy hand since the 1980s* in both 'developing' and 'advanced' countries. Above all, because they have extended the poverty they were supposed to cure, these policies have been the vehicle for the *new international division of labour*, which has re-stratified the corpus of the world's workers in increasingly heavy ways, in production, but also in reproduction (Federici 1996), for the neoliberalism that asks workers to make further sacrifices so that firms can compete better in the world economy; for the *new terms of production* that are designed to lower the wage and encourage the de-regulation of labour.

This set of coordinates was the response to the international cycle of struggles in the 1960s and 1970s, but in the 1980s and the present decade these same structural adjustment policies have already stirred a growing rebellion throughout the world. In Italy, in the 1990s, similar measures took giant steps towards acceptance as the *necessary corollary to recent major financial and economic agreements*, including the Maastricht Treaty, all of which are inspired by the free-market approach.

In the crisis of the nation-state, the International Monetary Fund and, in an emerging role, the World Bank have come to form a government without frontiers and international capital's institutional summit. By imposing adjustment policies, the IMF has continually lowered the conditions for human reproduction, while the World Bank has launched complementary

development projects in which *profit maximisation* rests on the *further massive demolition of the factors on which social reproduction* is based. As more than a few analysts have said (George 1989; McCully 1996), these projects represent a hymn of praise to environmental devastation, waste, senselessness, and the annihilation of peoples. A few examples must suffice.

World Bank finance was used to build a nuclear power-station in a seismic zone in the Philippines; the station was never brought on stream because of the seismic risk.

The same source of funding ensured construction of the Tucuruí dam in Brazilian Amazonia; rather than felling 2.8 million trees for a total of 13.4 million tons of wood, they were left to rot under the water. The forest was sprayed with the defoliant, dioxyn, whose devastating effects became widely known during the Vietnam war. Some barrels of dioxyn went missing and are still lying down under the water. Because of the pressure, they could explode at any moment and pollute the lake created by the dam. The lake is the water source supplying the state capital of Belem; the effects on its population of 1.2 million can perhaps be imagined (George 1989, p. 205).

Another project resting on World Bank funds is the Yacyretà dam, a structure 87 meters high and 67 meters long on the Paraná river at the frontier between Paraguay and Argentina. The project promised low-cost electrical energy, but the electricity it produces will in fact cost three times the current market price. Energy needs were overestimated at the design stage and could be covered at a lower cost by using Argentinian natural gas. When the project is complete, 50,000 persons will have been obliged to leave the flooded land. Those who have done so already have received no compensation and have finished up in decrepit shanties. Local fishing has been ruined, and so have the local ceramics craftworkers since the clay the craftsmen need is under water. The damage to the ecosystem has caused the spread of various diseases and sicknesses (*Il Manifesto*, November 29, 1996). The bank's money has also been used to launch the largest and most terrible *transmigrasi*, a transfer of population I shall mention below (George 1989).

Returning to the adjustment policies to which these so-called plans are complementary, a cursory look at them shows that they are *substantially identical* in all the countries they are applied to. Officially to pay their debts, and in obedience to the IMF's directives whose primary objectives include *encouraging the growth of international trade*, these countries work out their policies along lines supposed to promote economic growth. The main ones are: devaluation to encourage exports; the liberalisation of trade and imports; the reorganisation of production for export; rationalisation of the public sector through *expenditure cuts, firings and privatisation*; *wage* reductions; investments cuts, especially in *health, education and pensions*; the suppression of *subsidies* for prime necessities; and, where as in more or less vast areas of Africa and Latin America as well as elsewhere *land* is still *managed collectively*, the imposition of a *price on land* with *privatisation*, on the one hand, and *expropriation* on the other. This is very important factor in weakening the villagers' bargaining power since, in villages enjoying a reasonable level of reproduction, the inhabitants have always been able to refuse the most obnoxious jobs and wages that are too low.

The major financial agencies, led by the World Bank, match the expropriation/enclosure of the land and other 'commons' or collective goods needed for survival (for example, water supplies and the forest) with encouragement for population policies which discourage collective forms of social reproduction in favour of models of reproduction typical of the areas of advanced capitalism. This means, first of all, the nuclear family, even though the percentage of

waged heads of family is by no means as high as in the advanced countries in the era of mass industrial production - and the nuclear family also lies in complete contrast with the rooted habits of collective management of the rights and duties in human reproduction.

The problem here is not so much one of fitting the form of the family and social reproduction to the forms in which production is organised, but rather to make reproduction a terrain for strong *behavioural discipline* according to the 'Western model'. Above all, it is a question of *weakening collective reproductive structures* in order to lower the population's bargaining power on work conditions, Individuals are thus deprived of both the material resources available independently of the money economy and the support deriving from the community and the extended family.

As Silvia Federici (1993) has shown, Nigeria is a significant example. Polygamy is the rule in much of Africa and taking care of the children a responsibility of the village, yet the population propaganda campaign started in 1984 demands 'one man, one wife' and 'one couple, one child'. As Federici notes, for the most part, these targets have remained empty propaganda since the cuts in social expenditure mean that, in practice, there is no access to the means of birth control. Thus, the reduction in population that the governments are hoping for is achieved, instead, by the lethal consequences of the adjustment policies.

In the early 1980s, the social damage caused by these policies was claimed to be a transitory accident. Later, as the systematic damage they caused became more obvious the more persistently they were applied, the damage was said to represent a necessary social cost. A whole literature developed on how to alleviate the more aberrant forms of harm, for a form of 'adjustment with a human face'. Another, more recent approach admits that these policies were directly aimed at transforming, above all, the sphere of social reproduction, from family structure to nutrition, hygiene, health, education and pensions, but argues that this gives governments a big chance to convert their country's social reproduction to greater efficiency.

Looking at these approaches, I and the scholars I have worked with agree that these policies are in fact designed to reshape social reproduction, but what is there defined in terms of efficiency, we see as an attack on the population's conditions of reproduction and on the women's labour and struggles, as a prerequisite for take-off in the new phase of accumulation (Dalla Costa M. and Dalla Costa G.F., 1993, 1996; *Midnight Notes* 1988, 1990; *Cafa* 1990-96). More precisely, I think *these policies are the point at which neoliberalism emerges as a planned strategy*, in other words, *they form the programme for an overall strategy of underdevelopment in social reproduction*, which reflects *an increasingly pervasive world-wide level of proletarianisation*, involving a deeper stratification of labour. The aim is to lower the bargaining power of the working body of society so that, in conformity with the conditions needed for neoliberalism fuller extension, new modes of labour are accepted such that *guarantees and acquired rights are progressively dismantled and a return is made to conditions of slavery on an increasingly wide scale*.

In New York, a few months ago, I happened to hear a phone call from a trade-unionist to a local radio station in which he denounced a US company for employing children at a plant in Central America from 7 in the morning to 10 at night. Their shoes were removed so they wouldn't run away. The labour official was about to start touring the country to ask the Americans if they agree that this is the way the goods they buy should be made.

But, as a strategy for the underdevelopment of reproduction, structural adjustment policies are something more than an *attack on women's labour and their struggles in defence of*



a decent level of reproduction in the family or the community. These are struggles designed to obtain and defend income where survival depends on money; and defend resources and goods such as the land, water, the forest, animals, small trading and craftwork where survival does not rest predominantly on money, but may involve it.

Apart from their attack on all this, these policies *also undermine the autonomy won by the women, economically and socially*, in civil as well as political terms, especially as regards 'reproductive rights'. Communities are not immobile in their traditions as is patently clear from the Eritrean women's Charter of Rights and the revolutionary law of the Maya women in Chiapas. In no situation today can women be easily reduced to silence and obedience, as is shown by the Algerian crisis and the protest which burst out in the great demonstration in Afghanistan in October.

Another aspect that needs highlighting (Dalla Costa M. 1995) is *that this overall strategy of underdevelopment in social reproduction involves social macro-operations* very similar to those which characterized *primitive accumulation* at the birth of the capitalist system: not just the expropriation of the land, but also the dissolution of family and community relations today provoked above all by the uprooting and transfer of populations in order to create a mass of impoverished and isolated individuals who have nothing but their labour-power. Now, as then, women are expelled from the preceding means of reproduction and, since waged jobs in plantations and on dams are offered primarily to men, they are in large part denied access to new means; they emerge as the poorest of the poor. If the *individual proletarian woman's* emergence in capitalism is fundamentally in *poverty* and as a *prostitute* (Fortunati 1981), for that is when *prostitution first became a mass profession for women*, the launching of structural adjustment policies on an increasingly ample scale results in *prostitution* appearing as an *international profession for women on an increasingly mass scale*. Another point to note is that, even if it was ignored by Marx, *witch-hunting was a fundamental process* during primitive accumulation (Federici 1981) since it served to forge a *new female proletarian identity*, whose defining features were isolation and subordination in which women are deprived of their power and knowledge as regards sexuality and procreation. In the same way, today, we see the application of increasingly authoritarian population policies of which China's are anything but an isolated example - policies which are completely subordinate to capitalist interests and continue down this same path of denying women material possibilities, autonomy, power and knowledge as regards sexuality and procreation. At the same time, in precisely these same territories, and especially in the more advanced areas, they are progressively overrun by technologies of reproduction which make them increasingly sought-after for male domination and capitalist profit, as well as in the mystification and destruction of social relations. In this connection, it is significant to find so much emphasis laid in so many debates on indifference to the biological father, who has been replaced so nonchalantly by the sperm bank.

In my view, *the trend towards making the individual increasingly into a laboratory product* rather than the child of biological and social parents is matched by *the tendency towards uprooting populations*. Whether you uproot plants, individuals or populations, there is undoubtedly a weakening effect and, for humans, prejudice for an identity which is also defined by knowledge and memories handed down through the generations. Faced by this technology of reproduction, my hope is that, in view of times when plastic and metal are less predominant, the Mayan women will succeed in maintaining and handing on their secret knowledge of wild

herbs which enables them to control how many children to have and when to have them (Burgos 1991).

## Adjustment Policies and Restructurisation in Social Reproduction

Some observations are now needed on *the restructuring of social reproduction* set in motion by *structural adjustment policies*. The IMF and the World Bank are the institutional summit and *the main driving power* behind capitalist restructuring in the new global economy and, precisely through the massive poverty they cause, *their adjustment policies* are the conduit for the *new international division of labour, above all reproductive labour* (Federici 1996). *Adjustment policies and neoliberalism* are the *two pillars* on which the new mode of capitalist accumulation rests.

In fact, the impoverishment caused by the separation of increasingly large masses of individuals from their means of reproduction - *land*, above all, but also all those *individual and collective rights* that contribute to guaranteeing survival - is the root cause of the massive migratory flows providing *low-cost, even slave labour*, to Italy and other countries, while also helping to compress *domestic labour costs*.

Poverty generated elsewhere may explain why Chinese work day and night behind the closed doors of textile factories in some parts of Italy, but the poverty caused by Italian adjustment policies and the Italian model of economic development and aid to the South explains why Italian, and especially southern Italian women and children are often recruited illegally to work 12-14 hours day for as little as \$45, and rarely more than \$350 a month<sup>6</sup>. At the same time, in recent years, the reproductive labour expressed in prostitution has increasingly found its outlet in forms of slavery and a trafficking in women from eastern Europe and Africa. To coercion is added a lowering of the prostitute's earnings and hygienic conditions.

Other levers which act jointly with adjustment policies to send new contingents of emigrants on their way include the falling market price of farm products and the withdrawal of agricultural subsidies. Both ruin the small farmers and separate them from their means of production and reproduction.

The Third World's *monstrous impoverishment* lies behind the *aggravation of reproductive labour among the women* who have stayed behind in the village (Michel 1993), the other terminal of the emigrants' reproductive path. But is also the channel for *a major restructuring of social reproduction on a global scale* whereby Third World women, either by staying in their countries of origins or *emigrating* to the more advanced zones, supply a growing proportion of *low-cost reproductive labour for the First World* (Federici 1996). The labour in question may be related to *sexual tourism* or *prostitution*, house-work, child care or caring for old people and the sick. But it also involves *supplying children* to advanced areas. The figures are spine-chilling. In the early 1990s, 5,000 South Korean children were being exported to the United States each year (Chira 1988), while at the end of the 1980s an adopted child was reckoned to arrive in the US every 48 minutes (Raymond 1994). The existence of 'baby farms' where children are specifically raised for export has been confirmed (Raymond 1994), like the widespread practice

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<sup>6</sup> Italy's public television broadcast a number of services on this issue in 1996. See also *Il Manifesto*, November 16, 1996, p.16.

of using Third World women as surrogate mothers (Raymond 1989). There have also been reports of cases - but how many? - of women whose children have been snatched from their wombs with a Caesarean (*The Guardian*, October 7, 1995) for sale to child traffickers. And it is now common knowledge that people in the Third World sell their own organs because of their desperate need for money, or are kidnapped and have them removed forcibly. In this connection, I can only add that, in the last few years, the sale of one's own *organs* as an extreme means of procuring money has also begun in Italy (Dalla Costa M. 1995). Some scholars like to argue that it is good thing for Third World people to sell their organs because it is a way for them to get the money they need. The argument needs no comment, perhaps only that, in India or other areas of great poverty, someone who sells a kidney usually dies not soon after since it is impossible to survive long with only one kidney in those conditions of reproduction.

The massive *impoverishment* created by adjustment policies is, then, at the origin of a *major restructurisation of reproductive labour* at the world level; if *women* emerge as the *poorest among the poor*, we would in any case find no consolation if poverty also became more male. But parity of poverty seems to be the hidden aim of numerous studies and much research that isolate women's poverty from the analysis of the macrofactors that cause it, blinding both men, many of whom obviously suffer from poverty too, and women to what needs to be done.

## **Annihilation Policies as an Effect or Corollary of Adjustment Policies on Populations rendered Superfluous**

Discussion of the effects of structural adjustment policies would not be complete if no attention was paid to the link between impoverishment and the deaths propagated by related operations such as the expropriation of land and the denial of monetary and non-monetary resources, *policies of annihilation* designed to achieve some of the effects aimed for with adjustment policies or introduced as a complement to them.

They include *tolerance for the spread of epidemics*. In sub-Saharan Africa, the International Monetary Fund is called the Infant Mortality Fund; in January-February 1996 alone, 2,500 children died of meningitis because it was impossible to buy the necessary vaccine for the equivalent of \$3.50. The spread of epidemics is linked to further paring of the health system, leading to a failure of drinking water supplies, the spread of infected blood and medicines which have run beyond their expiry date or gone bad or are fake or harmful<sup>7</sup>. Then, there is the overall degradation of the environment due to structural adjustment policies and maldevelopment projects.

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<sup>7</sup> The scandal of the 'false medicines' broke out at the end of October 1996 and received amply coverage in the major newspapers. How many deaths and how much disease has been caused by 'illegal medicines', 'informal medicines' and 'legal medicines' taken out of circulation in the advanced areas because harmful or expired, yet nonetheless sent to the 'developing' countries? For some of the facts, see *Il Manifesto*, October 27 1996, which includes a quotation from Gianni Tognoni, a pharmacologist at the Mario Negri Institute in Milan, for years active in controlling the pharmaceutical products in developing countries: "The Monetary Fund makes no controls, and local governments register any product. There is an extremely vast informal market, reaching as high as 80% of the total in the continents we are talking about (Africa, India, Latin America)."

Another series of annihilation policies involve *war*<sup>8</sup>, *genocide* which has to all intents and purposes been authorised<sup>9</sup>, and *military and police repression*, all of which eliminate the impoverished and expropriated from a world in which, precisely because they are impoverished and have been expropriated, they are seen as 'surplus'. Then there is the '*enclosure of populations*' in *refugee* and *concentration camps* more or less concealed in the war zones. To mention one case quite close to home, cases of suicide have begun to be reported among the Tuareg (Dayak 1995; Gaudio 1993; Beltrami and Vaistrocchi, ed. 1994) in the Algerian refugee camps; previously, suicide was unknown in their culture.

The execution of the Nigerian author, Ken Saro-Wiwa, was followed by a massive exodus of refugees from southern Nigeria to Benin, most of them men, aged 18-59 and members of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People<sup>10</sup>. At the same time, the suspension of Red Cross aid caused scores of deaths in the camps for about 60,000 Mauritians in northern Senegal. The victims were mostly children who died of deprivation and disease; the refugees may go as long as ten days without food, and no medicines are available. Further deaths came from marsh fever since the camps are near the Senegal river (*// Manifesto*, March 27 1996). In November of the same year, the refugee camps in Zaire became battlefields thanks to a resurgence of fighting between Tutsi and Hutu.

Yet further annihilation is produced by the *uprooting and forced transfer* of populations. The *major hydroelectric and dam projects*, financed primarily by the World Bank, usually involve major *population transfer and re-settlement* schemes (George 1989; McCully 1996). The re-settlement is naturally the part of the project that leaves *the least permanent trace*. But apart from mega-hydraulic and agricultural projects, there are also *pure population transfer projects* funded by the World Bank. One of the most striking, and most widely denounced, is the *transmigrasi* in Indonesia (George 1986; *The Ecologist* 1986). Because of alleged overpopulation on Java and Bali, due in fact to the concentration of the land in few hands, the government decided on a forced 'internal migration' of 70 million to the outer and other islands: Sumatra, Sulawesi, Kalimantan (formerly Borneo), and Irian Jaya in New Guinea. The scheme was funded to the tune of \$75 billion. The total population involved was later reduced to 'only' 20 million. The scheme was a combination of *genocide*, *ecocide* and *ethnocide*. One of the aims of the forced introduction of new population was to strike at the native communities in the wilder islands, by creating conflict with the newcomers because of the scarce resources, cultural differences and different crop choices. Very many of the 'migrants' died of hardship and hunger or were eaten by the animals which deforestation had deprived of their natural forest habitat. Some managed to escape, but were imprisoned to stop them talking. By progressively depriving them of their resources, the natives in the outer islands were supposed to gain a *sense of state and government* and a *single god*, to turn them into *disciplined labour*

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<sup>8</sup> How often do these wars sold by the media as 'tribal' stem from a reality of land expropriation and the curtailment of resources so that conflicts break out between various parts of the population over what are now insufficient resources for everyone to survive?

<sup>9</sup> In Brazil's Mato Grosso, the *garimpeiros* (gold hunters), *fazendeiros* (landowners) and *madeireiros* (workers for logging firms dealing in rare woods) are continuing killing and torturing the natives, with some cases of castration. Torture and other acts of violence have been registered in recent months in the Amazon region where an increasingly pressing army of loggers is working for Asian companies in searching for mahogany and other expensive trees (*// Manifesto*, November 29 1996, p.18)

<sup>10</sup> On Shell in Nigeria, see the article by Steve Kretzman, "Nigeria's 'Drilling Fields'. Shell Oil's Role in Repression", in *Multinational Monitor*, January-February, 1995.

for the plantations and mines. First-hand testimony tells how a thousand families arrived in one zone, but only twelve survived (George 1989, p. 206 et seq.). On Irian Jaya, there was recently a revolt of 3,000 tribals (*Il Manifesto* March 13, 1996) against Freeport Indonesia, the US company which mines gold, copper and silver in their territory and uses them as workers. What is at stake is not only their working conditions, but also their identity, their territory, their commons and their culture<sup>11</sup>. But the *transmigrasi* is just one of the best-known among many projects of this type in which the citizens of advanced or less advanced countries unwittingly finish by financing projects for the impoverishment and uprooting of others. Moreover, the contributions from their own pockets hang an even heavier millstone of debt around their own necks and the necks of others.

In conclusion, the overall thrust of my argument is that, *nowadays*, the crucial components in adjustment policies and the World Bank's development plans are *expropriation of the land* and the *dissolution of communities by uprooting, transferring and enclosing their people so as to weaken their identity and organisational network*. As when the enclosures were under way in England and Africans were being traded towards the Americas, they *are essential* for capital's expansion, and therefore for the construction and re-stratification of a planetary class.

## Implications

The *major operations* involved in *adjustment policies* as well as in very many of the *World Bank's development projects* thus form the channel for a *grand strategy for the underdevelopment of reproduction as the basis for a further development of production*. At the same time, as I have tried to show, the *relationship human beings* have with the *land* remains the *crucial moment in these policies and projects*. But, if all this is true, the *issue of the land and what relationship* people should have with it must return to the *centre of the analysis*, the struggle and the *political proposals*. I will now try to indicate at least some of the implications that I believe must follow.

A *first implication* is that, if a continual class re-foundation and re-stratification in the new world economy is made possible by major operations involving the land, struggles concerning the land must take a central role in any adequate political re-composition; international support must be constructed with more attention for the North-South axis than the so widely debated European Union. In this sense, it is *fundamental to know, transmit, interpret and support the indigenous struggles*, but also other struggles of the populations and women of the planet's various Souths in so far as *their focus is the land*. Above all, get to know them as the first step in thinking about how to support them, what relationship to have with them, and how to translate them into our context: All this implies giving strength, but also receiving it. In this connection, I remain convinced that it is important for people to know and be *informed of the victories* as well as *struggles*; it helps undermine capital's apparent omnipotence and make people place less belief in the coming highest level of development which is just round the corner. Papua New Guinea may lie on the edge of our normal vision, but its people have successfully built up a

<sup>11</sup> Their territory has been devastated, their natural hunting reserves and crops destroyed, their rivers polluted, their people killed, tortured and raped. The Papua Liberation Movement is also making its voice heard in the region. On March 18, 1996, Indonesian troops opened fire on a march of 2,000 university students in Jayapura to mark the arrival of the body of independence leader Thomas Wapai Wainggai, who died in jail in Jakarta.

movement against structural adjustment and privatisation, forcing the government to withdraw measures which the World Bank wanted introduced to end the common ownership of land. The same is happening in India. In some zones, the agriculturists have succeeded in forcing withdrawal of the concessions given to companies for plantations to grow export crops.

One consequence is that it is important *to link up with the international networks which place expropriation of the land and debt policies at the centre of the agenda*. Two examples are the *Debt Crisis Network* and the *50 Years is Enough! campaign*, and both are forums in which the various positions enter into debate. The *large regional meetings of the Zapatista rebellion and the first intercontinental meeting "for humanity and against neo-laissez faire"* in late July/early August this year in Chiapas are also fundamental; the debate and the decisions taken concern all of us.

Yet, these struggles have a long history in terms of the networks formed round them and as an organisational experience. Adjustment policies and World Bank development projects have in fact long been the source of conflicts in the world, not only *rurally* but also in an *urban context* (George 1989; *Cafa* 1990-96; *Midnight Notes* 1988; 1990)

The women's struggles in Indian *cities* in recent years have a *precedent* in organisations created in the early 1970s against rice price increases and the *poor quality of the rice produced by laboratory hybrids*. The Women's Anti-Price Committee in Bombay started in 1972 (Omvedt 1980, 1987). The protest grew so strongly that tens of thousands were marching the streets and building barricades. In the winter of 1973, 20,000 Bombay women marched on the home of the Minister for Food to see what was cooking in his kitchen. In the same way, organisations were built up and rebellions flared *against forced sterilization*. Women also spearheaded protests against the Bhopal incident in 1984 in which 2,500 were killed and hundreds of thousands injured when a poisonous chemical cloud descended on a slum neighbourhood (Roosa 1988). In India's slums, whose population continues to be swollen by those expelled from the land, there is the long history of urban revolts for land as *somewhere to live and somewhere to have an address*. Each year, 200,000 rural immigrants arrive in New Delhi alone (Roose 1988).

But, above all, thanks to the analyses and practical liaison work of scholars and activists in the North and South of the world, the revolts in India and elsewhere against the effects of higher development in the urban zones - price and quality of food, a place to live, pollution, ecological disasters - have found links to the struggles in the rural zones in defence of the land, the forest, water and biodiversity.

Struggles against the degradation of the environment and the lines laid for capitalist development have joined up with struggles to defend subsistence and the community as the essential basis for elaborating a different form of development. I think this is the most feared type of linkage because of the powerful political recomposition of the population that it represents. It is no coincidence if this chance for political recomposition is continually undermined by annihilation, forced transfer (including the causes that force people to emigrate), ghettoization and the enclosure of the populations. This chance is also undermined by attempts to create lines of conflict and division, even representing conflicts as ethnic those which in fact stem from lack of land or other scarce resources.

In very many regions, struggles concerning the land revolve around a defence of its communal management where this is still practised. This leads to the *second implication* of what we have been saying: how far our land should be defended and reinstated as a public

resource and collectively usable space; how far land rights should be won back as the rights of all mankind.

The *third implication* concerns the fact that all struggles for the land are at the same time struggles to *defend biodiversity* and the *different*, above all native *forms of knowledge* that *safeguard this biodiversity and work with it*. It is no coincidence if, in their struggles, the native peoples uproot eucalyptus saplings from the plantations because they destroy soil and water resources while giving no food or shade to the villagers (Shiva 1990, 1995); defend the *batua*<sup>12</sup> from destruction by herbicides (Shiva 1995); or defend varieties of cereals and woods with a high nutritional value as well as the animals which, in millennia of natural evolution and balanced cooperation between man and nature, have proven resistant to, and capable of multiplication in the most varied and hostile climates. But the struggles of those who defend the earth's resources and their renewability and biodiversity are also a vital moment of liaison for us because they are defending a *piece of land and a biodiversity* which is also a life-resource and a source of food and abundance for us.

The *fourth implication* is closely linked to the previous one since it is linked to *safeguarding biodiversity*, by defending the land as a source of natural evolution. As such, it is a common good whose claims must be defended against the pressing demands of industry and laboratories to patent and manipulate genes produced by nature in the course of millions of years<sup>13</sup>.

These implications are already pursued by some environmentalist movements in the advanced world, and it is in our interest to pursue them, too. And, if this is the case, the struggles on these issues in the world's so-called South must be recognised as a defence of our material and cultural interests as well. To welcome them into our political approach means a commitment on two fronts: to bring them into our demands, practices and protest against present policies, inside and outside the agricultural sphere; and to find concrete ways of supporting them.

In particular, since the Zapatista rebellion, large sections of the movement throughout the world are involved in initiatives designed to offer concrete economic, political, social and cultural aid. In Italy, we mention only what is developing around the *Ya basta* campaign.

But, as I said at the outset, struggles with deeper historical roots in the advanced areas such as those for income or wage or on working time do not automatically translate into support for Third World struggles. If anything, experience shows that, when conflicts explode in the advanced areas, capital has already migrated or exported productive processes to the world's various Souths where the price of labour is lower; or, by various forms of expropriation, has induced individual emigrants to move to the more developed countries where they get the worst-paid jobs. It is increasingly clear that limiting the struggle to issues of time and/or money or giving priority to proposals in which only these two aspects of the problem are considered<sup>14</sup>,

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<sup>12</sup> Batua is a grass rich in Vitamin A which grows along with wheat. It is fundamental against blindness. Forty thousand Indian children go blind each year for lack of the vitamin which nature supplies free in the batua plant, but herbicides destroy when they eradicate it (Shiva 1995).

<sup>13</sup> The problem is amply debated, especially in connection with the Human Genome project. See, among others, Teresa Riordan's article in the New York Times, November 27, 1995. On the dangers of genetically manipulated food, in particular, see Mae-Wan Ho (typescript, 1996).

<sup>14</sup> Here, I refer to these two dimensions which in any case define the coordinates of what the appeal's signatories include in the 'third sector'. I will discuss this in greater detail below.

is not enough, as can also be seen from contemporary appeals as to "what is to be done" such as the Appeal of the 35 (*Il Manifesto*, October 27 1996).

The progressive *privatisation and expropriation* of the land through which the world economy's working class is continually re-structured at bargain-basement prices cannot be ignored. However good the intentions may be, failure to recognise the centrality of operations concerning the land in the economy's new globalisation betrays an approach which is Northern and development-oriented, on the one hand and, on the other, envisages the rights of poor people as no more than to pick up the crumbs from the rich man's table.

The approach is North-oriented in that it looks at the policies in the advanced areas without analysing their roots in the other areas; and it is development-oriented since it sees the present type of development as something ineluctable, for the evil it may do for us, but also the good. Yet, when it grasps the enormity of the evil and the paucity of the good, it does no more than ask for a small reduction in the evil. We don't know how many crumbs Lazarus got, but at least the bread of his time was a natural product.

Defences against unemployment, wage reduction, and labour de-regulation are certainly fated to crumble as long nothing is said or done about issues such as expropriation, privatisation and, now more than ever, the poisoning of the land on which capitalist accumulation still rests. Thanks to them, accumulation continues to mass together the new expropriated poor, forcing them to work for any wage and under any conditions in their homeland or as emigrants, while new technological leaps are piled on top of each other - aberrations, technologies for the genetic manipulation of life. The earth itself is destroyed as a self-regenerating source of food and abundance, imposing an increasing dependence on the market-laboratory and, with it, poverty and hunger - and also representing the most lethal threat to the reproductive power of the working social body at the planetary level.

In any case, the debate on the wage, income and working time now requires a strong transnational liaison, at the trade-union level too, to set acceptable bargaining standards for the North, South and East. In this sense, the decision of the US trade unions to schedule joint bargaining with their Mexican counterparts is important. But there are also numerous other organisational examples, among the workers of the *maquilladoras* in Central America or in the Asian free-trade zones who have built up autonomous contacts with the unions in Europe and the US. Then, there were the workers at the subsidiary of an American company in Guatemala. The machinery was moved out during the night, and the workers' wages left unpaid, but the employees informed the unions in the US which represented their case with the mother company<sup>15</sup>. At the international level, the unions must above all raise the increasing use of prison labour and its conditions (De Angelis 1996 p.17). There must be a true globalisation of the perspective within which bargaining on time and money is considered, and the struggles on these issues so closely linked to survival in the advanced areas must go hand in hand with the struggles for land, especially in the world's South.

Above all, while also pursuing struggles for wage/income, the problem must also be raised of which and how many 'commons' can be won back, not only to defend ourselves from the market, but also to strike back at the market's pervasiveness.

How can struggles for money be linked to the defence and reconquest of land as commons? And, with them, the defence and reconquest of *biodiversity, integrity, and natural*

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<sup>15</sup> These initiatives are described by Silvia Federici in "The Worldwide Struggle against the World Bank and IMF" in *Midnight Notes*, No. 12, *Studies in the New Enclosures*, to be published shortly.



*renewability?* - since, as the indigenous communities teach and show, they *multiply our life possibilities* rather than reducing them and turning them into monstrosities.

To mention only the cases closest to home, I am thinking of 'mad cows', trout that taste of chicken, and chicken that tastes of fish. But in the end everything will taste of petroleum. What will we do with a wage when all we can buy is poison? Clearly, the question of the land is also a struggle against the biotechnological laboratories which manipulate living species<sup>16</sup>, from vegetable hybrids which are easily subject to diseases (the Karnal Blunt fungus has infected American hybrids of wheat and barley, destroying 1,200 tons in Arizona alone, *Il Manifesto* March 17, 1996) to cows which make more milk thanks to the Bovine Growth Hormone or produce fatless meat. It is a struggle against the *progressive industrialisation* of food production, *crop specialisation by geographical area*, and the *liberalistic internationalisation* of the markets. I see the following statements from former Peruvian President Alan Garcia as very significant:

Food imports aren't just a problem of foreign currency; they also make a country lose contact with its own history and geography (George 1989, p. 283)

Societies are born of food, they live off food and they build their awareness of time and space through the food they eat...This is why the democracy we want in Peru is not an urban democracy, nor a bureaucratic and administrative one. Peru wants a new historic encounter with its land through a national confirmation of what our food and our geography are...We want to pursue a transformation of much larger scope, inspired by the indigenous food model since this is the only way in which there will be a revolution on all fronts: national independence, justice and social liberation (George 1989, p. 284)

But, following the natives' lesson, the *question of the land* is also a question of a *loving and respectful relationship* with other living beings, whence a rejection of nutrition that comes, not only from the genetic manipulation of animals, but also from their *cruel treatment in battery conditions or in laboratories*. This is another implication on which people should speak out and make a practical commitment against the horror, for example, of a calf which will never be able to move, sometimes not even stand up, suck its mother's milk, walk on grass or eat it, but will only twist its neck to suck the chain holding it in search of the iron it is denied so that its flesh will be 'yet whiter'<sup>17</sup>.

To sum up, in the new techniques and technologies, there is no life. I cannot continue discussing future possibilities of liberation inherent in future levels of development, while today allowing these same techniques and technologies to continue destroying life.

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<sup>16</sup> In this connection, significant documentation was produced by the organisations of rural and tribal communities as well as women from the South and North at the NGO Forum to develop alternatives to the lines of action emerging from the technical documents prepared for FAO's World Food Summit in Rome (November 13-17, 1996). An example is the Leipzig Appeal drawn up by Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva, which I have proposed for signature by men and women in Italy. With Mies, Shiva and other women scholars and activists from various countries, I delivered a report to the conference for the Women's Food Day held at the Forum on November 15

<sup>17</sup> The calf's "testimony" is from France, in the book, *Le Journal d'un veau* by Jean Louis Giovannoni (1996) in which a calf speaks up about our world and its terrible slaughters.

In themselves, the new technologies will never give me food to eat. My food comes from the earth. I cannot accept that it should come from the poisoning of the soil or the destruction and torture of animals in laboratories and intensive husbandry. In the same way, I cannot accept that it should come from forced labour or the exclusion of an increasingly large share of humanity from the possibility of feeding themselves.

If this is the *agricultural solution* lying behind the new technologies, I think that this is where the first battle must be fought, not only linking up with the struggles of the Third World agriculturists and agricultural labourers, but also asking what it means here to struggle for another relationship with the land and its creatures, in order to win back our commons.

It is now recognised that the 'technological solution' to agriculture and animal husbandry has not worked<sup>18</sup>. The liberation from labour based on a greater productivity of the land by producing greater yields through the simple application of growing mechanical, chemical and biotechnological inputs has proved to be a false one. Through the various stages of the Green Revolution up to the most recent biotechnologies, each solution has simply opened up even greater problems while destroying forms of life and progressively poisoning the land. The impossibility of a 'technological solution' for human reproduction (Dalla Costa 1972) and, if I may be allowed the observation, also for the production of new human beings, reappears for other forms of life. What is alive needs care, above all, and care is one expression of living beings; technology can play a role only for marginal aspects. The earth is alive, and its technological manipulation has shown that it cannot be pulled on one side without ripping it apart on the other. But if this is true, and if human presence, labour and care remain a necessity for the earth to provide regenerative food sources and territories in which to live, the idea that, even in the famous last stage, technology can produce liberation from work is a Utopia.

Since labour of reproduction is linked, not only to bringing up children and caring for adults, but to all living things with which we want and must have relations if we want to find the resources and joy to regenerate our own lives, a still greater terrain for struggle is opened up, around the working time and the working day of men and women. The demand for the necessary time to take care of interpersonal relations is immediately extended to care for the land. At stake is not only the extension of the time needed to take care of the 'reproduction' of life, but the speed which has been imposed on reproductive labour, in the overall intensification of labour induced by new technological leaps ahead. *To slow down* the working day is thus on the agenda of a crucial battle for those who, in their struggles around labour time, want above all to free the processes and rhythms of life's reproduction. The technological credo which has compressed and progressively suffocated the necessary time for human reproduction and for man and his relationship with the land has simply made the future more improbable.

If the approach is changed and the dimensions of the problem resized, how much space and what role can be given to technology? And, above all, is it possible as of now to have a technology which is not inspired by the capitalist approach? This is a question that a growing

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<sup>18</sup> I am referring, not only to the eco-feminist literature, but also to very large part of ecologist literature in general, above all the documentation of the numerous rural organisations which voice protest and pursue rebellion in the world. For an approach from the viewpoint of the relationship of the crisis of Nature to the crisis in the capitalist mode of production, see James O'Connor's observations on the 'second contradiction' in the US magazine, *CNS Capitalism Nature Socialism*, and published in Italy by the magazine of the same name, that took the name *Political Ecology* in 1996, (O'Connor 1992).

number of men and women are applying themselves to in various parts of the globe, and it means they are giving up other beliefs in order to do so, for example, the belief that one should never look back. As the English recognised, their engineers were unable to surpass the irrigation works carried out on the Indian rivers before their arrival (Shiva 1990). In the same way, much 'alternative' technology and many fruits of man's cooperation with nature are incorporated in many of the so-called 'natural' seeds, which are by no means 'primitive' (Shiva 1995, Schwarz 1994). Does it make sense and is it possible to preserve this technology and its criteria?

But what is the 'past' one looks back to? What is the 'past' in general? It is the present of the vast majority of the planet's inhabitants, and it is a future that so many people are defending against the present that others would like to turn into the sole agenda.

### Indications from Struggles and Alternative Self-Organisation

The struggle begun by the agriculturists in the Indian region of Karnataka against the GATT agreements agreed to in Uruguay in March-April 1994 is indeed a great struggle around the question, Past? Present? Future?

The *Karnataka Farmers Union* was created fourteen years ago and now enjoys a political role in twelve of Karnataka's 19 districts, with ten million members from all castes and religions. Its targets include the patenting of seeds whereby companies claim property rights that enable them to deny the rights of the local people to their seeds, therefore prejudicing their survival. The laboratory-produced hybrid seeds they sell are sterile, so once the agriculturists have been forced to use them, they will have to rebuy them every year, and they will also be forced to buy the fertilisers and pest control products needed to make them grow, most often from the same firms. But if they try to use and sell natural seeds, they finish up in court, charged with illegally selling seeds derived from the hybrids - and it is the defendants who have to prove their innocence.

Protest against seed patenting is flanked by growing disillusionment with the Green Revolution; its devastating effects, the ecological and economic unsustainability of the inputs needed by its hybrids, and their abnormal water consumption have become evident. The union, then, is leading struggles against the patent system, hybrids, single-crop economies, and the various polluting and destructive technologies. It is also defending the maintenance of natural seeds and the land in the name of 'food sovereignty', intended as the right to food self-sufficiency on the basis of the availability of land and the maintenance of its reproductive powers. Its aim is thus to pursue a diversified, economically and ecologically sustainable agriculture based on natural methods of reproduction for the various species and addressed primarily to domestic needs. As a practical alternative to the proposals and solutions imposed by the multinationals, major international organisations and governments, these agriculturists have created a series of cooperatives to develop and sell their natural seeds, calling them Seed Satyagraha, 'satyagraha' being the word for Gandhi's non-violent struggle. They have also created a centre in Bangalore where the seeds are preserved and distributed. Major rallies have been held in the same city, and meetings and links built up with farmers in France and other European countries (Schwarz 1994).

The most frequently cited examples of abuse of the patent system include the *neem* root, from a plant which grows everywhere and is used for its medicinal properties, even as an

insecticide. A multinational has patented its derivatives, provoking a particularly tough and ample struggle in the region (Burns 1995).

The Karnataka Farmers Union is part of a much vaster network of rural organisations, *La Via Campesina*, which was founded in 1992 and is very strong in Central and Latin America, with solid liaison points in various other countries. Its second international conference was held at Tlaxcala in Mexico on April 18-21 this year. Its main concern is "food sovereignty" as described above. But self-organisation to defend the foundations of subsistence - land and natural seeds, above all - and the rebellion against policies that everywhere tend to destroy them are growing in, and penetrating into various regions of the planet. Against these policies and the major economic and financial agreements supporting them, the Zapatista rebellion is a crucial moment of struggle and self-organisation, not only to guarantee land and life, but also, as Marcos has put it, "to be able to choose another movie".<sup>19</sup>

In any case, it is interesting to note that community forms of organisation to guarantee life and land have taken on very different shapes, in Latin America as in the rest of the world.

Also linked to *La Via Campesina* is the New Frontier cooperative in the Brazilian state of Santa Catarina do Sul, where collective organisation is applied to the land, labour, machinery and infrastructures and allows sixty families to live better than the small private farmers in the area. Although divided into sectors, the work is shared equally among all. The cooperative started out by occupying land in 1985 and, in 1988, legal rights were won over 1,200 hectares. Today, the families in the cooperative enjoy decent housing with water, light, telephone and sewers, and their cereals, vegetables and fruit are produced ecologically. They have pasture and animal husbandry, trees and plantations of matè grass, a mill and a clothes factory.

The cooperative's founding members are active in the Sem Terra Movement which, in the last decade, has won the assignation of many hectares to hundreds of landless families and is now organising land occupations in the Mato Grosso (Correggia 1996). The guarantee offered by the cooperative against hunger and poverty already suffered rests, first of all, on the fact that there is an abundant distribution of the food produced within the cooperative every day or every week. The surplus is sold, and the profits distributed. Guaranteeing internal food consumption irrespective of market mechanisms is the greatest defence against the wheat, which arrives at much lower prices from nearby Argentina, bringing hunger with it rather than nutrition. There is a kindergarten and, according to reports arriving from the cooperative, domestic work is shared between men and women.

The commonest question raised in the past about situations of this kind was how the young people experiencing something so 'backward' could fail to flee and seek emancipation in the city. But, given the disasters of the global economy, it seems much more important that these citizens of the earth should have found a way of avoiding the ranks of the 800 million who go hungry. It may also be worth considering what Esteva (1994) has to say about the city's failing magnetism. Commuting between town and country is becoming more common; the city is being 're-ruralised' and, if the commuter stops traveling, he tends to stop where he set out from. In a global economy which uproots 'marginalised majorities', the strengthening of deep, strong roots has begun. The greater the disenchantment with the promises of development, the greater the growth in a sense of self-organisation, inventiveness and, provided the urban context is not required, the alternative use of whatever has been brought

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<sup>19</sup> I am referring to the statements made by Marcos and reported by the press for the Venice film festival where the video documentary by Gianni Minà, *Images of Chiapas*, was shown this September.

back from the city: money, goods, knowledge, relationships. Dona Refugio refuses to buy a gas stove; she still prefers the fire in the centre of her kitchen (Esteva 1994).

At the same time, in the advanced areas, while the global economy has continued expelling a growing number from access to sources of income by both lowering wages and deregulating labour, an increasing number of individuals are wondering how to link a struggle for wage/income or against its absence with some way of guaranteeing subsistence; and how to win back the commons as a defence against the market and a blow against its pervasiveness. In the 1980s and 1990s, numerous First World communities have tried and experimented with answers to this question, from the United States, gripped by de-industrialisation and high-tech unemployment, to Australia, whose most important export market, especially for food, was closed off by Britain's entry into the EU. According to the situation, in these two decades, struggles and the difficulties of launching struggles have been flanked by a multiplication, at the rural and urban level, of attempts to organise alternative economies, or at least to open up alternative economic and social spaces. And there have been often successful, and quite substantial efforts to win back commons and hold down abilities and resources locally, so that they are no longer captivated by the distant mirages of free-trade internationalisation in production and markets. For many people, experiments in this direction have represented the sole resource of survival or a resource for improved survival, in addition to whatever additional income can be scraped together, and besides whatever struggles for income are still being pursued.

An historical precedent worth mentioning because of its importance is the *Unemployed Citizens League in Seattle* during the Great Depression - the most extensive organisation for self-help, in practice for an alternative economy. The State of Washington was organised into 22 districts in which the League covered 13,000 families for a total of almost 40,000 persons, who depended on self-help programmes for the exchange of goods and services, some of which were also produced within the organisation. At the end of 1932, there were over 100 self-help organisations in the US, in almost 30 states. Many of them had their own money tokens and were involved in reopening for their own uses small factories closed down by the crisis (Dalla Costa M. 1983).

Precedents like these are by no means isolated in the history of alternative initiatives in the United States, but similar attempts in the last couple of decades tend to be something more than a self-defence measure in particularly difficult economic times (Ortoleva 1981), although this in itself should not to be underestimated since, in order to struggle, one has to eat. The more recent initiatives aim more at grappling in a more permanent way with issues seen as essential for fighting the type of development we now have, in order to set another type of development in motion.

Here, they can be given only a brief mention, but I think the experiences most worth citing come under the general headings of 'social ecology', 'bioregionalism'<sup>20</sup> and various forms of 'community economy', which are now taking new paths and showing a new vitality. Clearly, a common denominator here is the attempt to create new relations between individuals and with the land, at the same time seeking to relocate resources, goods, capacities, abilities and money regionally, rather than letting them be gobbled up by the uncontrollable kingdom of the global economy and global finance. I think it is important to mention urban experiences, or

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<sup>20</sup> The relevant literature is vast. To mention just one of the better known authors, Murray Bookchin, *The Ecology of Liberty* (1995). For a review of ecological movements in the US, see James O'Connor (1994).

at least experiences in advanced areas since what is being done in the Third World's rural zones, although little known in Italy, is easier to imagine. An objection often raised in Italy is that these ideas about installing new relationships with nature, human resources and the work of reproduction may be feasible in the rural Third World, but can hardly put down roots in advanced areas.

I will mention some examples which are not directly concerned with the land, then others based on the land as such. But they all concern the land as a collective space where the citizens, its inhabitants, are building up self-organisation to keep, defend and enhance resources locally.

My starting point will be as far from the land as can be envisaged, with money, a resource that is increasingly scarce in the pockets of agriculturists and blue-collar and white-collar, as well as self-employed workers, yet increasingly abundant in the salons of global finance whose speculative wagers have already endangered life for a large part of the planet's population. The time was thus ripe for many people to wonder how they could get money, but ensure that it was a more useful and user-friendly money.

One approach has been to coin a new currency envisaged as a means of exchange rather than speculation, and only valid locally, something that is completely legal in the United States and other countries. The idea is to create a currency to bolster and set in motion the local production of goods and services in order to provide stronger roots for the life-possibilities and life-choices of the individuals forming the local community, rather than letting them be uprooted and abandoned to the poverty and isolation provoked by global finance's unpredictable moves.

Among the various schemes for building extensive alternative economies resting on a new monetary system, the first place must go to the *Local Employment and Trading Schemes*, whose system of 'green dollars' registers the coordinated exchange of services by telephone calls to the central office. The system was created in the Comox Valley in British Columbia by Michael Linton, an unemployed computer programmer. He started noticing how many other people were in the same situation and developed an interest in 'community economics'; the first LETS got going in Canada in 1988. The unit of exchange is the 'green dollar', equivalent to its US equivalent, but the currency is not put into circulation; it remains an accounting unit to make the monthly credit and debit account supplied to each participant with the names of the others and the services they offer. When Britain entered the EU, Australia had to destroy large quantities of food that could no longer be sold there; the result was bankruptcies and extensive unemployment, so in 1992 the Australian government invited Linton to get Australian LETS going and provide whatever was needed to teach how to make the system work and how to computerise its management. Now, LETS are so widespread in Australia that some say they could easily maintain survival if the market economy collapses.

The same sort of scheme is also wide-spread, with some variations, in the United States and Britain. In Australia, and probably elsewhere, the schemes are also combined with the market economy in various ways. For example, many people agree to accept 25% of payment on a LETS account and have seen their business increase. Above all, many people, by resting their income and expenditure on the LETS as well as the market economy, have been able to lighten the market's pressure on their life and life-rhythms. Still others have turned their LETS surplus over to churches which have used them for the unemployed or people in other forms of

difficulty. Among other things, the equivalent of LETS handed over to charity is tax deductible (Meeker-Lowry 1995; 1996).

Another scenario can be found by moving to upstate New York where Ithaca and Binghamton are located about an hour's bus ride from each other. In 1991, Ithaca created a local monetary system which many other cities would now like to emulate. The inventor of the Ithaca Hours is Paul Glover, an expert in community and ecological economics who wrote, *Los Angeles: A History of The Future* (1984). One Ithaca Hour corresponds to \$10, the average hourly wage of a qualified worker; its circulation is limited to the city, but that is all that is needed since the aim is to keep money locally and boost the city's economic life. Significantly, another 400 communities in 48 states have taken the kit which teaches them how to apply the system, and they are now following in Ithaca's footsteps (Meeker-Lowry 1995 p.16; 1996).

*Deli Dollars*, named after the delicatessen for which they were invented at Great Barrington in the US, are also designed to keep financial resources locally. The shop was on the verge of closing because the rent was doubled when the contract ran out. Money was needed for a down-payment, and normal credit channels were not available. So the owner turned to SHARE, the *Self-Help Association for a Regional Economy*, which suggested he should issue his own currency. He called it the Deli Dollar. In practice, it was a receipt which became a purchase coupon. Customers who wanted to keep the shop open lent \$9 each and received a coupon giving them a credit of \$10 in goods from the shop within a given period of time. Shop, money and professional ability thus remained within the community. The example served as a model for various commercial and productive activities in a number of sectors. It even got into the national press and onto the major US and Japanese TV networks, and projects inspired by it multiplied (Meeker-Lowry 1996).

Another system, *Time Dollars*, is already working in 150 communities in 38 states, with thousands of participants. Unlike Ithaca Hours and LETS, the value of the hours exchanged can be weighted differently, for example, for someone who needs costly equipment to supply the service he is offering. The Time Dollars maintain the absolute equivalence of the hours being exchanged. In New York, *Womanshare* is a special Time Dollar programme so that the many professional abilities of women are used, and used better. It is worth stressing that, in these systems, the work involved in reproduction receives the same recognition as any other work with professional standing, and therefore the right to a fair wage in the market economy. As I have already noted, only in exceptional cases such as the use of costly machinery or other especially onerous conditions do some systems adopt other criteria of evaluation. Time Dollar programmes have been activated in Boston, St.Louis, San Francisco and El Paso and, in Michigan and Missouri, they have received the support of local and state institutions. In some cases, they have been incorporated into local health systems (Meeker-Lowry 1995; 1996).

Moving to yet another scenario, in her 1995 publication, Mary Mellor (1995) noted how, over thirty years earlier, the cooperative movement in Britain found a new lease on life. The cooperative movement was founded in Brighton in 1818, to provide healthy food to its customers. It grew and developed until, in the 1950s, it could count on 12 million members, or almost a quarter of the British population. In the 1960s, new cooperatives were formed, many of them with the aim of supplying genuine foodstuffs.

The Seikatsu Club Consumer Cooperatives provide a similar example from Japan, linking the cooperative's members as consumers to the sources of biologically produced food.

In Britain, cooperatives have increasingly spread through the poor and rundown city neighbourhoods, to supply cheap, nutritious food, but also encouraging the creation of small local enterprises for essential services such as repair shops and laundromats. As Mellor also observes, though the point may apply elsewhere than in Britain, cooperatives supplying genuine food have come to be run more by the middle class than by workers or poor people. These days, however, as I will illustrate below when I talk about the US, the poor communities unable to obtain decent nutrition because of the high level of development are taking the initiative in cooperative or other movements, based in any case on self-organised networking addressed to solving the problem of food. In the same way, in the US too, it was and is the indigenous movement's struggles for land which have radicalised so many battles for healthy food and a healthy environment in terms of class composition and a class perspective. In other words, the issue of land as something to be preserved for its value as source of nutrition and habitat has characterised, and in many cases recomposed the struggles of Native Americans, Hispanics, Afro-Americans, Asiatic Americans and white blue-collar workers. One example is the struggles against toxic waste dumps which, on the basis of an environmental racism, are situated by preference in neighbourhoods inhabited by coloured people or poor whites (Schwab 1994), sapping the health of the territory they live in, their primary source of nutrition.

In Minnesota, Wisconsin and Vermont, the struggles have been set off by the Bovine Growth Hormone, given to cows to make them produce more milk. The hormone has united animal liberationists, ecologists and small farmers against big agro-business. In fact, in a sequence repeated in every corner of the globe, the animal's ruin is the ruin of small-scale economies and the environment. It remains an open question for us, too, and offers new case histories whichever way you look.

In Arizona, the Indians and small white farmers have joined forces to fight the mining companies which want the territory of the reservations because they recently discovered that it hides reserves of uranium, oil and coal, and also to fight agrobusinesses which want the farmers' land because it is suited to intensive cultivation. In this case, and in others, sections of the population who have always been at odds have found common ground in defence of land. But the Zapatista rebellion also releases and empowers other demands, here as elsewhere. For the Indians, for example, more force is given to the suits they have filed to recover the land stolen from them (Schwab 1994).

But, if there is a multiplication of initiatives for alternative uses<sup>21</sup> of the land against global economic policies, there is also a multiplication of conflicts to defend the land from increasing new uses for the few which prejudice its use as a common good for the many. Around leisure facilities such as golf courses for the wealthier few, blood has already begun to flow, for example, at Dalat in Vietnam, where the blood is the blood of those whose food came from the rice-fields located in the same area (*Il Manifesto* May 26 1996), or at Tepoztlàn near Cuernavaca in Mexico, where the local people have risen up in protest because they want the area designated as fairway and green to remain a public park and common environmental good (Cacucci 1996).

In October 1993, the New York Times announced that the Census Bureau would no longer count the number of Americans living on farms. As the newspaper explained, the reason was that the 32 million farmers, or a third of the population, on farms in 1910-20 had fallen to 23 million in 1950 and only 4.6 million in 1991, less than 2% of the population - a loss

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<sup>21</sup> I thank Steven Colatrella for giving me important indications and bibliographical references.



of half a million in farming population every year for 41 years. Moreover, in 1991, 32% of those running a farm and 86% of those who worked there no longer lived on the farm itself. As Berry observes (1996), this also meant that politicians no longer had a problem of how the farmers would vote; they had simply disappeared.

A rural world like this, with all its implications for land management, the management of farm produce and unemployment, is matched by an industrial world where more and more workers are being left on the streets, as the backdrop to a movement now starting to emerge in the advanced areas, with food as its main issue.

Born not only to fight the implications of the existing model for agricultural and industrial development, but also to try and formulate different life-alternatives, the movement is growing in a number of American cities. Many of them have been hit by unemployment, followed by the flight of large stores and the closure of many shops. The orientation is towards a locally based biological agriculture to guarantee the community food, above all fresh and genuine food.

This is the case in Binghamton, the town near Ithaca mentioned above. When IBM moved to the Third World and the supermarkets closed down, new uses could be found for the land freed up, not only for biological crops, but also for different crops, discovered thanks a new availability of time in which new relations were opened up with the Indians in the local reservations. The same is true in the former auto capital, Detroit, and in San Francisco, where the director of SLUG, the *San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners*, Mohammed Nuru, says: "It is the entire cycle that we are grappling with, not just a single issue." (Cook and Rodgers 1995)

The entire cycle is precisely what creates an impoverished community unable to count on the normal structures of reproduction such as decent homes, food, shops and public green spaces. In this way, self-organisation to obtain food becomes the engine of self-organisation for a series of other initiatives, based on local abilities and resources and designed to re-shape and re-draw the human habitat so that different sections of the population and different abilities in work are recomposed in a new whole. The idea of food security for the community started putting down roots simultaneously on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts in the 1990s, and there is now the embryo of a national *Community Food Security Coalition*. This has created networks to ensure the production of genuine food produced according to biological criteria, and its distribution at low prices, above all locally.

The coalition says it wants to install a "more democratic food system". It links together 125 groupings of food banks, family farm networks, and anti-poverty organisations, which did not normally work together in the past. Clearly reflecting new impulses for inter-personal links, they create contacts between small rural or urban farmers, food banks, free meal programmes for the poor, and low-income communities. Or else they have given a new slant to old programmes such as *Community Supported Agriculture*, which dates back to the mid-1960s, originally guaranteeing fresh milk and vegetables in the poor suburbs of Tokyo. Similar projects were set up in Germany in 1968, and in Switzerland, at Geneva and Zurich, in the 1970s.

The first CSA project in the US was inaugurated in 1985, at South Egremont in Massachusetts (Imhoff 1996), and similar projects spread to all the states of the Union by the early 1990s. In CSA, the community advances money to small local agriculturists or supply direct labour, in the latter case building up credits for an equivalent quantity of the product when it is in season. Overall, there is a spreading commitment to buying fresh food from local farmers rather than from supermarkets.

One of these CSA projects begun in October 1995 linked the *Southland Farmers' Market* and the University of California (UCLA) in a scheme to guarantee weekly supplies of cheap fresh vegetables to low-income neighbourhoods. The creation of local market gardens and the building of local markets to guarantee cheap supplies of fresh vegetables is spreading to many American cities.

In Austin, Texas, schemes of the kind have been developed in the Eastside, the poorest part of the city where 40% of the families are below the poverty line and have difficulties in obtaining food, especially decent food. There and in other cities, transport has also been provided so that the customers can get to the small shops set up to sell the produce. Similar experiences have been developed at Oakland in California where activists have built up links with service networks to supply food to schools and to the homes of the seriously disadvantaged. Thus, the Homeless Garden Project at Santa Cruz in California is expressly addressed to supplying fresh food and work to the city's many homeless. The basic difference between these projects and others set up in the past is that they do not rely solely on the distribution of food or food coupons by the state or other bodies, but aim for "production and distribution in terms of self-sufficiency" (Cook and Rodgers 1995; Imhoff 1996; Berry 1996). Other initiatives for a greater control of the land include Public Land Trusts in which funds are put together to buy land to be preserved as virgin nature or to build homes. These can be sold, but not the land they are built on so the price is kept more accessible to poorer buyers. Up to this point, I have given only some first examples of alternative self-organisation, to make the point that the strongest and most significant movements emerging in the world's North and South are proving to be those whose agenda is food sovereignty and security, and therefore, above all, the availability of land. Apart from the few initiatives mentioned above, many others can be listed as a corollary of a movement which already has a substantial itinerary behind it<sup>22</sup> in advanced and Third World areas and urban and rural settings. New approaches are being experimented, and what emerges in my view is an attempt to couple a new relationship with the land, for *cultivation, habitation* and as a *public space*, with the maintenance locally of other resources, from working abilities to money, by reappropriating use value against exchange value. In this sense, it is a case of self-organisation in order to relocalize development.

Movement in this direction marks a clear difference from initiatives representing a large part of what is known as the 'third sector' in Italy, covering non-profit, charity and volunteer organisations. This is because there is no reason to believe that, not only capitalist development, but also its fall-out is inevitable, so that the wounds can only be patched up provisionally. Nor is there any reason to take an entrepreneurial approach to the malaise, nor even to activate a volunteerism straitjacketed by the global economy's laws, nor pursue ambiguous manoeuvres amidst them, confirming the subordination of beneficiary to benefactor. Still less to stand by as spectators of a parasitic proliferation of transnational bodies and initiatives surviving thanks to an allegedly 'ineluctable' extension of hunger and death through the world. Self-organisation, on the other hand, can start from "food sovereignty" as the first stretch of an Arianna's thread to follow out of the "labyrinth of the ineluctable"; self-organisation

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<sup>22</sup> Still one more example. In Lima in Peru, 85% of the bus lines are controlled by unofficial operators. The alternative transport network makes it possible to cover any route through the city for a maximum of two journeys at less than \$0.10. Above all, the network covers the routes that people really need (George 1989, p. 290).

as the will to say *ya basta* by linking up with all those who have taken the same decision, applying hearts and minds to managing the land, labour and money to build different paths.

I think some form of *bioregionalism* or *social ecology* or *community economy* as described above would be worth building up in Italy, too. From the struggle for the wage/income to a self-organisation committed to new forms of alternative economy to contain the market and experiment new alternative ways of living, I think the 'new globalisation' should be fought on a number of fronts, by finding new alliances, discovering old and new commons, and taking ourselves new liberties.

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