www.alastairmcintosh.com/articles/1996-Trumpeter-Celtic-Shamanism.pdf

the TRUMPETER
Journal of Ecosophy

Volume 13, No. 3 WN 52, Summer 1996

Table of Contents

Editorial: Alan Rike Drengson, **Terminology of the Deep Ecology Movement** 106

ROOTING IN NATURE: Don Lago, **Homeward** 108
Alastair McIntosh, Community, Spirit, Place: A Reviving Celtic Shamanism 111
Don Alexander, **Bioregionalism: The Need for a Firmer Theoretical Foundation** 121
Robert F. Harrington, **Bringing Education Down to Earth** 124

CULTURED PERCEPTIONS: John Henneberger, **Transformations in the Concept of the Park** 127
Jim Rotholz, **On Being Human: Nature Through the Eyes of Culture** 134

CHANGES & PRACTICES: Michael Caley, **Creating Ecosophical Change?** 137
David Sparenberg, **Seeing Gestalt Ecosophy: Two Biocentric Meditations** 140
Alan Drengson, **Some Fundamentals of Ecophilosophy as Ecocentric Inquiry** 142

NAESS PROFILE: George Sessions, **Arne Naess' Conception of Being a Philosopher** 145

DEVALL REPLIES: Bill Devall, **Response to Bron Taylor's criticisms of my review** 147

Richard Fuller, **Book Note: *Reconnecting With Nature*, by Michael Cohen** 151
Bill Devall, **Paul Shepard: A *Tribute*** 152

Subscription Information: *The Trumpeter* is published quarterly by LightStar Press, Box 5853, Stn. B, Victoria, B.C. Canada V8R 6S8. Subscriptions are due the first quarter of the year.The rates for 1996 are $25 Can. in Canada, $25 U.S. to the U.S. Overseas surface is $25 U.S. Institutions $60.

Note to Contributors: *The Trumpeter* welcomes your submissions that are in line with our mission. Please supply clear, typed copy, and send a file of your article on 3.5" computer disk, MacIntosh or IBM-PC. Please keep footnotes and references to a minimum , and include a note on yourself like those you see here. We prefer original, unpublished work, but if material has been published elsewhere provide this information in full. Send manuscripts to Alan Drengson at Box 5853, Stn. B, Victoria, B.C. Canada V8R 6S8.

Artwork: All photographs by Jerry Valen DeMarco.

Date of Issue—September, 1996

Publications Mail Registration No. 0536520.

Printed on recycled paper

Printed in Victoria, B.C., Canada, by Albatross Printing.

Back Issues: Vols. 1 - 12 available. *Vol. 1*: basic ecophilosopical concepts and reading lists. *Vol. 2*: a three issue focus on ecoagriculture. *Vol. 3*:a three issue focus on wilderness. *Vol. 4*: articles on love, sex, ecology of self, ecofeminism, magic, animals, place and ancient ecology. *Vol. 5*: papers on parks, deep ecology, bioexuberance, sustainable development, technology, sense of place, Wittgenstein, and paganism. *Vol. 6*: science, technology, forestry, agriculture, wilderness and world views. *Vol. 7*: land trusts, forestry, aesthetics, wild animals, agriculture, ecology & literature, and deep ecology movement. *Vol. 8*: transpersonal ecology, bioregionalism, process philosophy, magic, spirituality, myth and ecofeminism, environmental education, native spirituality and phenomenology. *Vol. 9*: narrative, religion, deep ecology movement, human place in nature, language. *Vol. 10*: human consciousness, transbiotic awareness, age of ecology and ancient ecosophy. *Vol. 11*: sustainable development, ecofeminism, and elder visions. *Vol. 12*: Capitalism, metaphor, animals, technology, bioregionalism, economics, DEM. Price for back issues: $12 each for volumes 1 & 2, $16 each for 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7 & $20 for vol. 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12. Postage and handling $1.50 per volume in Canada, all other countries $3 per volume, surface.

Distributed to the trade by Bernard de Boer, Inc. and Ubiquity.

© 1996 by The Trumpeter & LightStar Press
All rights reserved
ISSN 0832-6193

Community, Spirit, Place: A Reviving Celtic Shamanism

Alastair McIntosh

A Faerie Story about the Conference of the International Transpersonal Association, Killarney, Ireland, May 1994. [This article is forthcoming in 1997 in the *Edinburgh Review*.]

> It is said that the close study of stone will reveal traces of fires suffered thousands of years ago.... I am beginning to believe that we know everything, that all history, including the history of each family, is part of us, such that, when we hear any secret revealed our lives are made suddenly clearer to us.... Perhaps we are like stones; our own history and the history of the world is embedded in us, we hold a sorrow deep within and cannot weep until that history is sung. (Susan Griffin, *A Chorus of Stones: The Private Life of War*.[1])

Stone

I grew up ten miles from the Callanish Stones on Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, off the north-west of Scotland. To most of us then, the Stones were nothing special. They were a place to take visitors; a place to get cold while standing around as they took pictures. Others may have felt some magic, but I never did, nor any local person known to me as a boy. In those days most of the upper part of the village was comprised of thatched stone "black houses." I remember then, in the early sixties, thinking that this was the most important part to set in my mind because it would soon be gone. It has now been gone, since about 1970, which in my perception was the time when the modern world became most fully triumphant in these western edges of the Old World; the time when, for instance, we lost our coastline fisheries to technology, greed and global economics ... the period when those siblings of earlier generations who had gone forth from our soil to the great New World landed on the moon ... but that is another story. This one is mainly about Stones.

In the nineteenth century, Lady Matheson, proprietor of Lewis, cleaned up the site at Callanish because the stones were being used as a public convenience by the villagers. Apparently this caused quite a fuss, removing as it did the only amenity value the Stones had. There was no inkling of any religious significance, though I do know a modern day wicca woman resident on Lewis who says that, until her recent death there was an old woman living by the Stones who did know some of their secrets; feeling too their connection with the "Sleeping Beauty" mountain to the South, under the Ben Mhor by the awesome Loch Seaforth.

I was back at Callanish in early May this year with a group of students on their Human Ecology field trip. John MacGregor was with us; a wise man, a Harris Tweed weaver who was born in a black house in the nearby Tolstachaolais village. As the students variously admired, photographed, hugged and shrugged off the stones, I asked John if he thought they had any special significance.

"We cannot tell what they meant in the past," he concurred, "though the old people believed they had to do with marking the death of significant persons in the community." But nevertheless, he did feel they had a power; "a power which could be for both good and evil." He had his reasons for such views. And because John is no fool, I wondered if maybe I too should permit a greater degree of respect without, of course, sailing too close to the will-o'-the-wisp spirituality of caricatured New-Ageism.

Angels

And so to Ireland. I was to present a paper on Celtic shamanism as a mode of social and environmental activism. I had in mind the way in which the ecumenical Iona Community has recovered a contemporary Celtic Christianity. The Community recognised that historical records, such as Adamnan's biography of the missionary saint, Columba, offered little insight of practical modern use. Really, these fragmentary sources could only be of curiosity value and provide speculative inspiration. The real spiritual work had to be grounded in the context of people's lives today, not in those of A.D. 563 when Columba came from Ireland to Scotland. Such contemporary contextualisation is where the "movement of the Holy Spirit" sweeps in. Iona has become what it is—a centre of pilgrimage for 120,000 people a year—through a Spirit-led theology of continuing revelation and not by trying to imitate something which history has left behind. In practice, this has meant finding focus in, for instance, urban areas of multiple deprivation, with people who are suffering or marginalised and in protest at nuclear bases. These things matter as much as having rebuilt Iona's ancient Abbey.

In an south-facing window of Iona Abbey, a small lamp perpetually shines down towards Ireland and out over the great Atlantic. Iona is rooted equally in the brokenness and the joy of our times. This is what makes the lamp a light in the world.

Notwithstanding being its business advisor for five years, I never fully joined the Iona Community because I could not accept, without disqualifying qualification, the apparent imperialism of assertions like, "Christ is Lord." I also believe that the Christian churches do not have a monopoly on the movement of the Spirit, and that we can see from fragments of our own pre-Christian traditions that we

too once had practices very much like those in other cultures where shamanism, or non-clericised spirituality, features. Thus, as we white people around the world reach out for indigenous shamanic insight to help address the pressing issues of our times, why not seek it too in our own native roots? We might even find something worth offering back to the indigenous American, African and Aboriginal cultures which so inspire us. This could turn what can be an unsightly and hungry grasping into a mutual celebratory sharing. Perhaps, unwittingly, the Iona Community shows how to do this: draw what you can from historical, archaeological and folklore sources, but don't be limited by them or exaggerate their significance. Seek too the wind of the Spirit.

So here we are. We're in Killarney, and it's the International Transpersonal Association's conference on the theme: "Towards Earth Community: Ecology, Native Wisdom and Spirituality." 1,600 people are here; a majority American; many excited by such Celtic relics as *Stones*.

Vasunda is my partner for a holotropic breath workshop with two special teachers, Christina and Stanislav Grof. My mind's multidimensionally blown by meeting all these people who have shaped my life over the past twenty years through transpersonal psychology — approaches to psychology which include the spiritual.

I'll come back to the conference shortly, but for now let's jump to the last night. Vasunda's heard there's a faerie Stone Circle near Killarney town. She wants to go there, maybe talk with faeries. Why should I discourage her just because I'm a bit blase about Stones? — Sure, I'll come too. — Let's grab a cab.

Talking to the faeries is something I've ambivalently been coming to terms with over the past year. It happened first in March '93 in the Australian rainforest. I'd been with John Seed and his rainforest action people, running a workshop on "Organisational Finance and Management as a Far-out Spiritual Experience," when I met the Rotting Tree Faerie in the Nightcap National Park. Thankfully, I was able to make the experience respectable by writing it up in a respected periodical.[2] It had been a visionary experience which gave insight into the process of rot and soil formation in a rainforest ecosystem. Faerie stories are great for teaching children; they can work for adults too, not least because their power is unexpected.

Actually, lots of people at Killarney were talking about faeries. It had felt very natural, for instance, lying under an old lime tree with Amy the night of the closing concert of the conference. She was talking with a faerie, feeling far, far out of her body, speaking wonderful realities. Jung might have connected such experiences with archetypal processes in the unconscious. I'm happy enough with thinking that, just so long as it doesn't destroy the magic. I'm also very taken in these respects by the work of theologian Walter Wink who talks about "unmasking the principalities and the powers."[3] He says that "Every species and thing has its angel;" meaning the inner spiritual realities of material and social forms. These are all around to be seen, if we're open to them. Thus Francis Thompson:

> The angels keep their ancient places;-
> Turn but a stone and start a wing!
> 'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
> That miss the many-splendoured thing.[4]

Eloquence

Anyhow, Vasunda and I get out of our cab and set off across a field. We eventually find the ring of Stones. She enters a deeply meditative state. I just wander around getting midge-eaten. She gives the faeries a gift, and asks for something for her son. They give her, metaphorically of course, a silver jawbone. She asks what it means. They say it is the gift of eloquence.

Walking back to Killarney I tell her how, traditionally in Celtic culture, eloquence was considered the greatest gift. And I mean *eloquence*, as distinct from the mere cleverness often implied by our use of the word "articulate." *Eloquence*, as rooted in the deep poetry of all life. And poetry. What is poetry but that pertaining to the Latin "poesis," from the Greek "poiesis," meaning simply but profoundly, "to make!" To be gifted with words, to know the significance of "magic words," of a "spell" ... can be literally to reweave the world, or, as in Kenneth White's "geopoetics,"[5] to see it being rewoven through and with us by the being of nature. Such poesis *is* the cutting edge of reality; part of that creative "sacrament of the present moment" where the mythological framework of reality in which our lives paint their meaning becomes flesh from spirit. "In the beginning was the Word," commences St John's gospel.

And of course, poesis is the music and all the other ways of seeing and being which the *art* of life offers. Starhawk, Adrienne Rich and many of the other feminist prophets of our time take this for granted.[6] "Truth is the dare,"[7] says Starhawk, beautifully paralleling from a "pagan" perspective in her book, "Truth or Dare," what Wink draws from Christianity. Truth is both the goal and the source of courage by which we dare.

In writing this essay now, my wrestling is with how far to tell some experiential truths. Bearing witness to truth, what the Quaker George Fox called "speaking truth to power," is perhaps the only way by which we can step outside consensus reality. This calling to our senses is fundamentally shamanic, fundamentally pertaining to a prophetic theology. I like using the word, "theology." It's a sort of intellectually-based version of "spirituality." It's good for bridging new ways of seeing with those recognised by more traditional cultural frameworks like religion. But personally, I define theology not as most religions. For me it is concern with *the meanings of Life in all its passions*. Whether this includes "God" depends on what you mean by God.

We live in an era of wobbly epistemology — of unsure foundations to what we think we know. Old paradigms in technology, science and economics aggressively strive to hold on as they grow cancerously or grey into self-strangu-

lated corpses. We might laugh, were it not that so much social and ecological suffering is perpetrated. Recent centuries of modernism have not been free of myth. The presumption of objective scientific detachment has itself been myth and is fast revealing its dysfunctionality.

Our listening now must be for new revelation from the deep poesis. We need a conscious opening up to remythologisation, but this in an iterative sense to allow direction to change and find the best "feel." It must be grounded in that Zen acceptance of nature as it is, as we find it, but also impassioned and redeemed by that very human Spirit of love which is Holy — which is pertaining to "wholeness," as the Old Germanic origin of the word "holy" means. This creatively inspired re-making and re-telling of story and vision is central to the re-enchantment of life. As Ralph Metzner said at the conference, "Stories tell us about our past; visions tell us about our future."

What a laugh meeting Ralph Metzner who had organised the conference for us! The Irish press joked about his greying pigtail. Had it been otherwise they'd have talked of sell-out ... Metzner of that original Harvard paradigm-busting-until-busted Alpert-Metzner-Leary triune: king, priest and holy fool.

Earth

Anyhow, let's jump back to the end of the conference. We're off down to the Beara peninsula in South-West Ireland. I'm with Amy's friends, Sarah and Jerry. We're going to meet Mike Collard, who grows trees and says that he and we are of the faeries. Last year there were hardly any butterflies in Ireland, or Scotland and England, and he was sad because "nature was not shining." This year there are lots of butterflies — many cuckoos too, he adds; — maybe nature knows that green thinking is starting to win, to be heard. That's why the Earth has shone this spring. A nice, simplistic?, philosophy from this mild one time Oxford philosopher, who doubtless delighted to hear news from the Dublin constituency a week later of the election of Ireland's first Green Member of the European Parliament.

"We are the faeries," Mike says, "and we have waited underground for thousands of years. Now the destruction has culminated and it is time for the re-emergence of the "aes sidhe" — the "Tuatha De Dannan," — the "people of the mother goddess."

The De Dannan were the original god-and-human-like inhabitants of Ireland. According to the old Irish Book of Invasions, they were driven under the Earth when invading "Milesians" arrived. There they became the "aes sidhe," the faeries. In Gaelic, the word "sidhe" means both faerie and "peace." The faeries are the people of peace.[8]

"I believe it was the Milesians who destroyed the ancient forests of Ireland," Mike continues. "We, the faerie folk, had to stay hidden, because if we had fought we'd just have become like them. So we waited, long we waited, and now we're starting to re-emerge."

And Jerry, Sarah and I smile at the incongruous congruity of pictures of Christ and the Blessed Virgin in the home of this devoutly Roman Catholic, devoutly pagan family.

"Who is Christ?" I ask him and his wife, Cathy.

"Well, Krishna if you like," one of them replies.

Hagman

We head far out west the next day, journeying to meet up with Dierdre McCartin and Charlie Rees of the Allihies Folklore Centre. They see that for communities to remythologise, to re-make their story of who they are and what they value, the children first need to learn their existing mythology. Folklore was the most politically powerful thing Dierdre could think of doing to crown a distinguished feminist career in Irish TV and academia. This she had abandoned, after making a film about Mary Daly's visit to Dublin. "I mean, how can you stay on after such a self-proclaimed "positively revolting hag" has caricatured the modern university as "progressively higher degrees of deterioration of the faculties?"

In the Folklore Centre Jerry and Sarah are very taken with pictures and stories of the "Hag of Beara" — a rock said to be an empowered woman turned to stone; a goddess. We set off to visit "her." On the way, we get a strange look from a wild old man. An angry fire blazes in his eyes. — Spooky, says Jerry. We pass him twice. The second time, I wave in propriation. His hand lifts; grudged reciprocation.

It takes a long time to find the Hag. We were looking for something big. But she turns out to be only four or five feet high. Jerry and I chuckle at such apparent Irish hype. Not so, Sarah. I brag that in Scotland we wouldn't call THAT a Hag! Jerry asks me to get out of the way so he can photograph Sarah beside it, "the two hags!" he quips. Sarah leaves a coin amongst others placed in folds of the rock by the superstitious, or the knowing. I'm feeling restless; time to go. We walk away. Suddenly, Jerry's camera kind of jumps out of his breast pocket. It strikes a rock. Springs open.

Now he's really spooked. An Hitchcockesque image of the wild man counterpoints the Hag in his mind. The camera and most of the film are OK. But the "two hags" picture is exposed; gone.

We shuffle away, me debating in myself whether to feel genuine awe at this ... little Hag, or just to have a laugh on Jerry at such timely synchronicity. Back in Allihies, Dierdre's in no doubt. This is folklore in the making! And she's full of stories of people's encounters with the Hag. Seemingly, in olden times, the Hag of Beara was famous all over Ireland, even into Scotland. She was quite someone, female and part-male too, the little Hag; the Hag who HOLDS this, the far South-West corner of Ireland.

Gold

Stones. Stones. Like tourists to Callanish, Jerry and Sarah are talking again about wanting to visit Stones. I sup-

pose they've never seen Stones before. We'll stop at the next site.

We sleep rough around a fire on Kilcatherine Point, close to where the Hag resides. By the time we finish making music and telling stories, the sun has nearly moved round to the east. We had watched it set in the west. For the last few minutes a golden corridor of light had stretched across the Atlantic. And up, staircasing over Kerry hills on the horizon, and further up, through the sun itself, beyond. The sky filled with that molten metal for which those who cannot see it all around daily break their lives and nature.

Of course, we had come predisposed to feel close to nature. Round the driftwood fire we laughed at Jerry's story of a church group back home in the States which always doused the campsite with insecticide before camping out.

Sleep for two or three hours. Then wake up, all covered with midges. Midges drive you mad. Our skin is itching, blotched and puffy. Even hiding in the sleeping bag doesn't work; you have to breathe. Jerry runs to get some "bug" repellant. I can't help laughing at him, at ourselves, after last night's storying. The spray is "natural." Its cinnamon, peppermint and lemon oil works for only a short time. Through my mind run the merits of chemical factories which produce ICI Flypel, Jungle Formula, and other unright-on compounds that really do work. We rekindle the fire. Lying in the smoke works. None of us have slept much. Sleeping out is, sometimes, what it's cracked up to be.

We set off again. Swim in the sea by some caves which make a roaring sound like a giant's gasp. Press on. Perchance we come, mid-afternoon, the first day of June, to a sign at Ardgroom. "Stone Circle — this way."

A card they had in the Folklore Centre comes to mind. The Hippies turn up at The Stones in a flower power painted old VW bus. They dance, hug and chant with the Stones, celebrating the elements as the weather keeps changing. Finally, they're deeply attuned in meditation, when a flash of lightening zaps them to charcoal. Like our midges, nature also has her sting. If we forget that; if we Bambify nature, we lose balanced understanding.

Well, at least, that would be the received wisdom.

Fire

So here we are. We're walking a mile up a farm lane to the Stones. Let's capitalise it all just for a laugh: THE STONES. The beauty enchants us. So many flowers. So much lichen, and ferns and birdsong and butterflies. Nature this beautiful does change consciousness. Such recognition is the essence of deep ecology, but the experience is robbed from most people today who have rare access to real nature. Read 19th century observers on the desecration of nature in the wake of such land "improvement" as sheep farming. Take, for instance, Dr John Mackenzie's memoirs (1803 - 1886) of Loch Maree in Scotland:

> It was in as lovely a spot in a wild Highland glen as any lover of country scenery could desire to see. I mean *then*, for then no sheep vermin had got hoof in it, as ere long they did. Then only cattle ever bit a blade of grass there, and the consequence was that the braes and wooded hillocks were a perfect jungle of every kind of loveable shrubs and wild flowers, especially orchids — some, of the Epipactis tribe, being everywhere a lovely drug that I often got many thanks for sending to botanic gardens in the South. The milk cows never troubled their heads to force through this flowery jungle, laced up with heaps of honeysuckle and crowds of seedling hazel and other native trees and shrubs. Till my Father's death in 1826, no sheep's hoof defiled the glen unless passing through it to the larder. But very soon after, an offer of a trifling rent for sheep pasturing let these horrid brutes into the glen, and every wild flower, and every young seedling bush or tree was eaten into the ground, so that an offer of a thousand pounds would not find one of my loved wild flowers or a young shrub from seed — nothing but a bare lot of poles, whose very leaves were all eaten up the instant one of them appeared. Those who remembered the wooded glen of 1826, and now looked at it, would never believe it was the same place — unless seen from a distance, for the sheep could not eat up the beautiful wild hills.[9]

... Or take the Loch Katrine of Sir Walter Scott, whose description brought the first tourists flocking from the south:

> So wondrous wild, the whole might seem

The scenery of a fairy dream...[10]

Read too the old Chinese nature mystics like Wang Wei.[11] Or Celtic shamanic poets from the same era, especially the seventh century Irish Suibhne, who in his love affair with nature after going "mad" in battle was forever being "ravished" by the Earth's sweetness.[12] Ask how far modern consumerism is but a perverse retail therapy, driven by advertising to produce a consensus reality which pretends to answer such loss of the Eden where only our souls know we belong. Ask too how far quantity of consumption could be substituted by right relationship with nature, community and the creative spirit, thereby enhancing quality of life while shrinking material GNP to sustainable levels. And why should we not level, as a very *political* demand, policies for national "development" focused around nothing less than the affirmation of life in its discovery of love?

Our pace slackens. Conversation lulls. We act, perhaps, "as if" we are starting to walk on holy ground.

The sea spreads out and fills our vision below. Above are the vertebral hills of the Beara peninsula. We see the Stones now. A small circle of about seven, rooted in rocky plateau, mediating between this ocean and that mountain range. Higher up on the moor is smoke. A farmer burns heather and gorse. Dimly I am aware of him, but do not notice his collie dog which Jerry later said was also there.

Fire on the moor! As boys on Lewis we used to light the heather to see how many hillsides could be set ablaze with just one match. My record was three. We grew up in nature, but mostly had little deep feeling for it; at least, not that we were then aware of. The old ways were fast going back in the 'sixties. Only vague nostalgia suggested any residual value in place or culture. We were not taught our history in school. It was not in the curriculum. We would leave home once "educated" enough. Leave the heavy religion; maybe not leave the heavy drink. Seek sex without everyone talking. Leave Lewis to the landlords with their ridiculous southern "sporting" ways. Our aim was to "get out and get on in the world." Moorland served only as a seat for sheep subsidy to keep the old men going. Certainly, no need for Stones. Little for poetry either. And had we not, after all, been conveniently told by the coldly religious in primary school that folk dancing "was a sin," because Salome had danced with the head of John the Baptist? But as the new music of the later 'sixties swept in, it didn't suit us to apply that injunction to the disco. Happily now it's all changed again, as the combination of rock and rediscovered folk music join hands in a powerful cultural and politicised renaissance.

Anyhow, there's a fire burning on the moor up above. And at the Killarney conference David Whyte had read Yeats' shamanic poem about "fire in the head." I learned more about reading poetry from this Englishman that night than in all my formal education. What struck me was the way he would keep repeating important phrases. He read this from Yeats:

I went out to the hazel wood,
Because a fire was in my head,
And cut and peeled a hazel wand,
And hooked a berry to a thread;
And when white moths were on the wing,
And moth-like stars were flickering out,
I dropped the berry in a stream
and caught a little silver trout.

Wind

Oh yes! So Yeats had given it a name. "Fire in the head!" Recognition of his recognition rocked me. Gale-force. Gaelforce. Wind now storming fire in head.

Angst

Let me explain. Let's move back awhile to the conference opening ceremony, we'll return to these Stones in a minute.

Sister Imelda Smith, an Irish nun, was leading us in the welcoming ritual. She called for the voices of the land and peoples from all four corners of the world to enter the spirit of the conference. We sung responses. My head ignited.

Running through my mind had been the presentation I was to give later in the week. Its form had not yet crystallised: "Community, Spirit, Place: the Revival of the Celtic Shaman" — was the title to which my silver trout had to rise. But I knew I wanted to talk about activism — about showing signs of being alive — "liberation," in Guttierez's sense of "to give life,"[13] and what Walter Wink means by naming the powers and unmasking them, so that they can be engaged.

I was wanting to connect ecological with social justice. Wanting to talk about Scotland today, where 0.08% of the people own 80% of the private land and 20% of our five million population live below the European decency threshold, many in urban Soweto segregation ghettos of multiple deprivation. A Scotland where the last wolf was shot in 1743, just 3 years before the Battle of Culloden sealed the tomb of the old clan kinship system. A Scotland where many of us have grown up in nature, estranged from it, not least because it and we are controlled by landowning "lairds" based in Switzerland or Dubai or the States or England. And a Scotland where attitudes were too often afflicted from a pulpit which, perhaps as a transcendent response to such terrible loss of the immanent, cast nature as more accursed than blessed.

So here I was, wanting to ask some of these 1,600 people, mostly American, whether they were ready to unpack their history. To re-read history; re-membering, re-visioning, re-claiming the people that they are; learning how, for instance, half a million Scots had been forced off the land in the nineteenth century Highland Clearances to make way for commercial sheep farms and playboy sporting estates. Seeing how many who had gone to the New World, to Australia and elsewhere, perpetuated and reperpetuated their oppression against other native peoples.

Later in the conference I was to learn a name with which to name the Powers, "lateral violence." Violence, that breaks out sideways when it cannot be channelled vertically. Violence against others who are oppressed, because the real oppressor is invisible or unreachable.

Listen to this account of the Highland Clearances, written down around 1928, from Catherine MacPhee of North Uist in the Hebrides. "MacPhee" is a very ancient Scottish name meaning, "of the faeries." Interesting. Listen, then, to this faerie woman speak. No tinselled escapism here!

> Many a thing have I seen in my own day and generation. Many a thing, O Mary Mother of the black sorrow! I have seen the townships swept, and the big holdings being made of them, the people being driven out of the countryside to the streets of Glasgow and to the wilds of Canada, such of them as did not die of hunger and plague and smallpox while going across the ocean. I have seen the women putting the children in the carts which were being sent from Benbecula and the Iochdar to Loch Boisdale, while their husbands lay bound in the pen and were weeping beside them, without power to give them a helping hand, though the women themselves were crying aloud and their little children wailing like to break their hearts. I have seen the big strong men, the champions of the countryside, the stalwarts of the world, being bound on Loch Boisdale quay and cast into the ship as would be done to a batch of horses or cattle in the boat, the bailiffs and the ground-officers and the constables and the policemen gathered behind them in pursuit of them. The God of life and He only knows all the loathsome work of men on that day.[14]

Love

I want to reflect a bit on nationality and ethnicity in this section. It will be speculative. Ground I've not charted before, so I'm worried about causing offense or seeming naive. But this is what an "essay" is for — to *assay* ideas.

A question. What is it like to find that your forbears have been mainly on the oppressor side of history? Or that your nation is in this role today? Is there anything they, we, can learn from, say, the parent in therapy coming to terms with having abused a child?

Another question. What of the rootless and the *deracinated*? There's another word not in most dictionaries, but needing usage because it's a good one. It's French, meaning, "to have been uprooted." It fits so many people today: deracination through war, mobility, economic dislocation, etc.. Deracination is the first step in becoming rootless. Is it reversible? Can we redefine "belongingness" as being, I'd suggest, *willingness to cherish, and be cherished, by a place and its peoples*? The Celtic tradition has precedence for this. Celtic community (inasmuch as it is unwise to generalise about the past) was sometimes more a bonding of spirit than of lineage, as indicated by a Gaelic proverb that "the bonds of milk (nurture) are stronger than those of blood."

Consider the cultural position of England. I am part-English, and find it much harder to "own" that part than is the case with my Scottish antecedents. Mike Collard had been saying he felt like he came from an endangered peoples, the indigenous English countryfolk: the ones who understood ecology and community, who had tried to preserve England as a "green and pleasant land" against the tide of enclosure and industrialisation. This, a Yeomanic Englishness, a substantially Celtic Englishness, largely destroyed in Roman and Norman times ... before even Mrs Thatcher, Francis Bacon or the piratical Drake.[15]

Consider too those young Germans who come to the Celtic edge in growing numbers to learn our culture and especially music. They say they cannot sing their own folksongs because of the way they were abused by the Nazis. Celtic culture once covered much of Europe. It has many elements of being a common global heritage as well as being place-specific. Pushed back by Roman and other influences, it clings on to Europe's very edge. But as a conference speaker had said, "When the centre collapses the periphery becomes central." Yet, consider how dis-heart-ening it must be for these sensitive German people to feel uncomfortable with their own more immediate taproots! I tell them that, in a less recognised and more easily resolved way, we had it too. Our dance music was squashed with the 1747 Act of Proscription, the Act of cultural genocide following defeat at Culloden. Bagpipes were made illegal except in the army. Dance tunes were turned into military marches, rhythm rapped by sharp snare drums. Pipe bands became an instrument of war, wielded to frighten other native peoples into respect for the British Empire. But now, we are reclaiming what is ours from the military; dancing again with swing; playing with no constraint on unregimented improvisation. Can Germany, that which should be a beloved Germany, can it possibly do likewise?

Here, at this conference, there's hardly any English, a few Germans, but lots of Americans. So I'm wondering if I can weave into my presentation something about our "Anglo-American" "special relationship;" a different understanding of cultural history, especially addressing those Americans who maybe feel bad about their country's geopolitical antics. You know, really the only difference between them and me is that my great great great grandfather compromised at home. He stayed in the Highlands and became home farm manager to Lord and Lady Stafford of Dunrobin Castle, Sutherland: quite the most notorious of the Clearance landlords. The great-several-times-over grandparents of many of the Americans here were the ones who left, but [then sometimes] became the oppressor of the black man, the red woman, the hispanic, and the poor of their own kind in the land of the brave and the free.

It seems paradoxical that Ireland should have marked my first meeting with native Americans. Looking across the Atlantic from Lewis I have often wondered about them. In 1851 the Scottish land rights campaigner John Murdoch wrote in *The Highlander* of parallels between our respective cultures saying, "... the dying wail of the cheated redman of the woods rings in our ears across the Atlantic."[16] The 1886 Crofting Act gave peasant smallholders security of tenure, but still under the landlord's "feudal superiorship" and the landlord's have kept the vast bulk of the land and

resources. In this respect, our crofting communities today **have a status** very similar to that of "Indian" reservations.

I am touched as the indigenous American activist, Winona La Duke, explains to the little girl with her that "Alastair is a kind of white Indian.... There are white Indians in places like Ireland and Scotland, but you just don't hear very much about them...." But I also wonder why we can't all be white Indians? What makes one "indigenous?"—Connectedness with folk and place, I suppose. Vasunda, Eric and Bron all talk about the importance of bioregionalism to re-create this. But first we need to break cultural karma. We need to get past those patterns of abuse that prevent identification with the nature of a place, which force perpetual restlessness.

The great Hindu-Catholic theologian, Raimon Panikkar, said at a conference we had in Glasgow in 1989— "No Life Without Roots" —that "only forgiveness breaks the law of karma." That's good: forgiveness—which is acceptance —of self and others. But first we have to recognise, to name, to re-member that which needs forgiving; that which is in need of, salvation. The very word "salvation" means "to heal." We have to see through maya to shift karma and iteratively break karma to see through maya. Thus, a question I want to put is whether we actually need a *cultural psychotherapy*;[17] a transatlantic cultural psychotherapy; a movement towards healing wounds of the broken and to this day laird-ridden disempowered communities left behind in the Old World, and also those of the sometimes brash, breaking, un-communities of the New World.

We heard a lot from Mrs Thatcher and Mr Reagan about the transatlantic "special relationship." Some relationship! One of worshipping the Golden Calf and Moloch — that fire-filled Old Testament stone god into which the children were burnt alive to procure riches.

Special relationship! One of Cruise missiles and the Trident nuclear submarine programme. As I write, seventy nuclear missiles for Trident are on their way to Scotland from the States. Our Secretary for Defence describes the first test firing as, "a visible demonstration of the effectiveness of the UK's independent strategic nuclear deterrent."[18] A more honest description might be velvet thuggery.

You know, when I think of America I feel a bit like the Kogi in Alan Ereira's film about the "elder brother's warning" from the "heart of the world." Go into many a Highland croft house at Christmas; Irish homes too, and see from the cards where the extended family now resides. To us, you are our younger sisters and brothers who, wrenched from us, went or were sent out into that new world and repeated there what had been done to you.

It's because you are of us that we have high expectations and hopes of you. Why, too, your eternal return resides here. This is why, deeply, underneath all our anti-Yankee anger, even in spite of Vietnam and Latin America and nuclear tests on Pacific Islanders and because of Alice Walker and Noam Chomski and Walt Whitman and Adrienne Rich ... we care about you.

We need mutually to heal, to stop crushing ourselves and others and the planet. A transatlantic cultural psychotherapy? Perhaps.

And may God bless America.

River

Remember (because I'm getting a little confused even if you're not) that we're at the opening ceremony of the International Transpersonal Association's conference in Killarney.

The fire in my head sparked by Imelda's ritual is not unique. I have known it a little previously. I remember October 1991. We were on the Inner Hebridean Isle of Eigg. I was there with Tom Forsyth. His name is another of those old Scots ones meaning, "man of the faeries." Also, Bob Harris. Harris means in Gaelic, "of the hills." We were to present, for public approval, the aims of a land restitution trust, the Isle of Eigg Trust, set up to challenge the right of wealthy individuals to own what had once been the common land of a whole community and to break these communities either through ignorance or for the "sport" of it.

I was to make the speech. Crossing the island to the village hall was a powerful experience. It felt as if the voices of the Old People, the folk long passed over, the transported folk ... their voices, were *coming up from out of the rocks*, as if into me. To them I owed the eloquence which won a degree of community endorsement unprecedented in recent Scottish land history.[19]

Alice Walker. Black American poet with an Irish/Scot name. Her words speak to what the three of us knew that night.

> While love is unfashionable
> let us live
> unfashionably.
> Seeing the world
> a complex ball
> in small hands;
> love our blackest garment.
> Let us be poor
> in all but truth, and courage
> handed down
> by the old
> spirits.
> Let us be intimate with
> ancestral ghosts
> and music
> of the undead.

The old spirits. Intimate with ancestral ghosts. The music of the undead... like the great Scottish fiddler J. Scott Skinner said when praising those musicians who "still remembered to render their country's music by the light of nature, maintaining its ruggedness and character, and not making it insipid and genteel."[20]

> While love is dangerous
> let us walk bareheaded
> beside the Great River.
> Let us gather blossoms

under fire.[21]

Fire, in the head again tonight as this ritual unfolds! But this time, huge fire. A Great River of gleaming silver fire. I'm seated with John Seed's soulfriend, Heart Phoenix. We're in this huge marquis with five TV screens. My heart mingles with the Great River of hers. I get this vision of the Old People of Scotland entering the conference. Tears are welling up and running down my cheeks. Usually I can't cry. Now my eyes are streaming.

The Old People have come. The ancestral ghosts have arrived. Feel the calibre of their spirit! Listen to Mary MacPherson, Mairi Mhor nan Oran of Skye, the greatest late nineteenth century bard of the Clearances:

> ... It reminded me of many things I had done,
> some of which I shall not gather in until the
> end of my days -
> going to waulkings and weddings in winter,
> not with lantern light but with a burning peat;
> lively youngsters engaged in music and dancing then,
> but that time has gone and the glen is saddened;
> the ruins of Andrew's house, overgrown with nettles,
> reminded me of when I was young....
> with light-hearted young people who have now
> been driven away
> descendants of native folk who were free of vanity
> and guile....[22]

Procession

So here we all are. By the Great River. Streams of living water form into a shining mantle around my shoulders. The silver jaw opens: "This is the mantle of Scottish history. Share it with those who come here."

Fire in the head. And next I'm under the ocean. I'm looking at and feeling for the Atlantic seabed. Daily its habitats are ploughed up with modern fishing techniques. I have worked with the seabed; seen gentle livelihoods of prawn creelers and scallop divers destroyed by crude dredging technology running seven times twenty-four hours a week. The mantle of the ocean's angst rests on me too.

Then the mountains. The noble hills they want to superquarry, exporting motorway road aggregate to Europe and even the States. And I'm seeing the empty glens, the "forests" of the "living dead" — those few dear old Scots pines, the last remnants of native forest, drawn and quartered to the stocking pressures of deer and sheep. The trees too have come here, rustling the inside of my skull to have witness borne on their behalf.

Part of me asks if this is silly. "Mantle of Scottish history" my ass! But tears flood my face. They sweep away such, false humility; the fear of rising when called; the pride that twists humility to avert possible fall and ridicule.

Medicine

I slept poorly the next three nights. The fire would not let go; truly, burning somewhat. My friends who had also come to the conference, Brendan, Mary Anna, the two Jo's, Rachael — they probably found me a little strange, distant-like. It was easier with strangers. No "usual self" to live up to.

Thursday at last came, the day of my presentation. Words, images, music and poetry. Honoured by the help of a black American activist academic, Janis Prior, to recite Alice Walker's poetry ... poetic because she had just chaired a wonderful session with Alice Walker's daughter at her college the previous week. And Ann O'Conner from Ireland and Steve Blamires of Scotland to read Celtic material.

Transatlantic cultural psychotherapy. Earlier in the day I had attended a presentation by Jane Middleton-Moz.[23] She was now at mine, hearing something already being reshaped by what she had said. Get this! Jane works to heal communities, mostly indigenous American, whose structures have broken down so much that alcoholism and other addictions are just taken for granted. She said that people usually only ask her in when "generational trauma" becomes so pronounced that the children start killing themselves. She draws out their humour, compassion and stubbornness, hoping to overcome learned helplessness, observing that "seventy percent of the people I work with found solace in nature."

It was Jane who had brought up the "lateral violence" concept. "Children," she said, "are the canaries of our planet, of our communities." And I find myself thinking of some of our Scottish Highland communities where even adolescent children can be well established on the path to alcoholism. I think how difficult it sometimes is to have a coherent public meeting in some such communities where there are folk, genuine folk, who can speak only when they have "a good dram on them." Heavy drink and nicotine toggling with heavy religion. Heavy helplessness.

"The meek are getting ready," says next week's page in the Peace Diary. They would be if they weren't so meek.

Jane's words reverberate: "Children are the canaries of our communities." The very night I return from Ireland, a phone call comes through about one of our traumatised Highland communities. An adolescent boy has hanged himself while at play. It happened just an hour ago. Purely accidental tragedy. And pure coincidence, but it felt eerily prophetic.

A friend, Alastair Hulbert, writes to me about his interactions with the Forward Planning Unit — the think-tank of the President of the European Union. They've been discussing ecological economics, and theology — Jacques Delors is a devout Catholic. Alastair has been calling for a "theology of insistence;" a visionary and proactive counterpoint to the more familiar theologies of resistance. Yes. And in this, like Macdairmid, "I am concerned for the blossom." Concerned for the children ...

... hear Ben Shianta:

> Many are the poor bothies destroyed on every side,
> Each one only a grey outline on the green grass;
> And many a roofless dwelling

A heap of stones beside the bubbling spring;
Where the fire and the children were,
There the rushes grow highest.[24]

Shining

So the conference is over now. And here's me, and Jerry Cook, and Sarah Hinkley. Remember? We're at Ardgroom on the Beara peninsula in South-West Ireland. We're walking up this incredibly beautiful lane to The Stones.

Silent now. Missing absent friends, my children too — they'd love it here. Sarah says Amy's with us, present through her at times. Wishing I had been more fully present with people at the conference instead of feeling, as I did after the presentation, somewhat poised at the keystone of overexposure and loneliness.

Yes, here's me and Sarah and Jerry. Sarah's inside the Stone circle now. Jerry's standing back. And it is holy ground we are walking on. At a Clearance village on Skye three weeks ago I had taken off my boots and walked barefoot for three miles, until the Golden Eagles came. Holy pilgrimage. Promised land. Coming up here, too, I should have taken my shoes from off my feet.

Let me taste fire;
and let no anger come from my lips;
dry my eyes with sand;
pile stone upon my chest;
breathe me empty;
and the ground under my feet;
is alive for those who lived here.[25]

I kneel, just outside the magical ring. Eyes closed. Can still kind of vividly see Sarah praying inside. Reopen my eyes. It was almost as if I had been seeing her through the eyelids. Visual imagery unusually good today. And nature is so present! So wholly present in these clumps of rushes; rushes with foxglove growing through: and shamrock, the little shamrock, trifoliate spiral whirl, tripartite goddess, holy trinity, heart of the lotus shamrock of a holy crucified Ireland.

Echoes of David Whyte's style in my mind. Differing poetic strands mingle, a common poesis.

Where the fire and the children were. Lively youngsters engaged in music and dancing then. Fire in the head. Not with lantern light but with a burning peat. Fire on the moor. The Children, concerned with the blossom. Engaged in music and dancing then. Canaries of our planet.

Where the fire and the children were THERE There there the rushes grow where the fire and the children were There the rushes grow highest by the ruins of Andrew's house, overgrown with nettles.

Where the fire and the children are ... there. Let us be intimate with ancestral ghosts and HERE COMES the Fire in the Head the music of the undead (syncopated triplets of Highland dance) and WE SHALL GATHER BLOSSOMS under fire.

My eyes shut on the Stones again. Still kneeling in this place where rushes grow highest. Now, prostrate. Arms outstretched. Body pressing grassy ground.

Immediately I am asleep.

"Immediately," Jerry said later, "It was almost immediate. Really strange. I could tell by your breathing. You'd fallen immediately asleep."

We'd heard the previous day a tale from Charlie about the "hungry grass," magic grass that enshrouds with a mantle of instant sleep, leaving the sleeper afterwards, "hungry." — Hungry for what? — Food, they'd say. — What sort of food? — We don't know.

"I mean," Jerry continues, "I know we were all short of sleep from the midges. But after all that spooking with the Hag yesterday I was almost wondering if you'd found some hungry grass!"

... I was dimly aware of slipping into a deep pool of sleep. As I closed my eyes an afterimage of the Stones endured. But it was also as if I was seeing underground, down into the mantle of the Earth.

It seemed as if all the Stones were connected: as if they were fixed shoots from a common root; a grounding in some sort of magmatic flux circumferencing the planet.

Something unusual was happening. But by now I was too nearly asleep to question it. Again, the silver jaw opened. Words rang in the last glimmer of consciousness.

"This is the deep energy of the Earth. These stones connect it. That is what such places are about."

Then I am inside the stone circle where Sarah had been. There is no sign of her or Jerry.

From the ground around each stone, golden fire is blazing. Flames several feet high flare out and trail off into smoke.

In the Narnia chronicles, C.S. Lewis refers to the deep magic of the Earth, put in place when time began. But I'm puzzled; seeking even now a more mundane explanation.

I step out of the circle. What might be behind the stones?

— Ahh! Found it! A shepherd is there. A farmer, collie dog beside him. So that's it. He's burning off gorse — the fool. Doesn't he realise fire will crack the stones?

The man is large bodied, maybe thirtyish. Perfectly ordinary looking, except that he has a strangely perfect complexion. His face positively shines. He sits with his back against one of the stones.

I walk in front. Stand and stare. He seems not to see me. Flames and smoke billow all around. He is totally tranquil. Utterly unperturbed.

I wake up. Only a few minutes have passed.

Who had this man of the shining countenance been? Was he really so oblivious to the fire? Could he see it no more than he could see me?

Or was the fire just normal to him? Was it so natural, so inevitable and so belonging here that perhaps even he was from the flames? Unconsumed. Burning bush. Holy ground.

I think of Mike Collard. The Tutha De Dannan as the original faerie folk. Their re-emergence. And shining countenance, countenance, countenance.

Wasn't there an apocryphal name somewhere? Maybe a poet's idiom, or Evans-Wentz? I can't source it. But suddenly memory connects with heart. Recognition — real or imagined — wells-up. Re-cognition. Tears of joy.

On account of their countenance the Tutha De Dannan were known as, *"the shining ones."*

> "Chunnaic sinn bristeadh na faire, is neoil na trailealachd air chall an latha sheas MacCalium laimh rinn."
>
> *"We saw the dawn break, and the clouds of thraldom flee away, the day MacCallum stood beside us, at the Faerie Bridge."*
> Mairi Mhor nan Oran, Bard of Skye.[26]

Notes

[1] Griffin, S., *A Chorus of Stones: The Private Life of War*, The Women's Press, London, 1992, cover quotation.

[2] McIntosh, A., Rainforests and High Finance: A Faerie Tale and Open Letter to Alice Walker, *World Rainforest Report*, 26, 1993, Australia, pp. 18-20.

3 Wink, W. *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament* (1984), *Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Forces That Determine Human Existence* (1986), *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination* (1992), all from Fortress Press, Philadelphia.

[4] Cited in Wink, W. *Unmasking the Powers*, op. cit., p. 170.

[5] White, K., Elements of Geopoetics, *Edinburgh Review*, 88, Edinburg, 1992, pp. 163-168. White is one of the most important contemporary Scottish environmental poets; an exemplar of Celtic zen. He holds the chair in 20th century poetics at the Sorbonne, but, ashamedly, is poorly known at home. Geopoetics is a "higher unity" of person and place.

[6] See, for instance, Rich, A., *What is Found There: Notebooks on Poetry and Politics*, W.W. Norton & Co., London, 1993.

[7] Starhawk, *Truth or Dare: Encounters with Power, Authority and Mystery* (Harper San Francisco, 1990, p. 27.

[8] A good sourcebook is Ellis, P. Berresford, *Dictionary of Celtic Mythology*, Constable, Lond, 1992. Ellis comments on Irish "similarities with the invasion myths of the Indian *Rig Veda* (which)demonstrates a closeness to the Indo-European root of Celtic culture" (p. 129).

[9] Shaw, C. Byam, *Pigeon Holes of Memory: The life and times of Dr. John Mackenzie, edited from his manuscript memoirs*, Constable, London, 1988, pp. 22-23. I am grateful to Ronnie Black of the Department of Celtic, Edinburgh University. He drew my attention to this piece when I asked him for old examples of reliable documentation indicative of people being aware of feeling loss over ecological degradation. A typical contemporary expression of such loss and demand for political action to control landlords who only care about maximizing the numbers of stags to shoot is Watson, J. & Nicoll, R., Deer Green Place: what price conservation in Glenfeshie ... Cairngorms up for sale, *Scotland on Sunday*, Edinburgh, 12 June 1994, p. 10.

[10] O. Scott cited in Shaw, C. Byam, op. cit., p. 31.

[11] Wang Wei, *Poems*, trans. G. W. Robinson, Penguin Classics, 1973.

[12] Heaney, S. (trans.), *Sweeney Astray*, faber and faber, London, 1983. See also a fine selection of Celtic nature poetry, including extracts from Suibhne Geilt (Crazy Sweeney) in Jackson, K. H. (ed.), *A Celtic Miscellany*, Penguin Classics, London, 1951.

[13] Gutierrez, G., *A Theology of Liberation*, SCM Press, London, revised edition 1988, p. xxxvii.

[14] From Carmichael, cited in McIntosh, A., Wightman, A. & Morgan, D., Reclaiming the Scottish Highlands: Clearance, Conflict and Crofting, *The Ecologist* 24:2, March/April 1994, pp. 64-70. (We wrote this article to summarize, especially for overseas readers, Highland history as part of the wider history of enclosure of the commons, with special focus on the contemporary socio-ecological effects of landlordism and efforts being made by crofting (smallholding) communities to re-empower themselves and procure land restitution. A much longer piece, which includes an analysis of the contemporary psychospiritual dynamics of the Highland Clearances, is at press, to be published in French and English in 1995 by *Interculture*, Montreal as "The Scottish Highlands in Colonial Perspective.")

[15] See Fuller, F., Barbarians and Empire, *The CoEvolution Quarterly* (now *Whole Earth Review*), Summer 1983, pp. 14-26.

[16] Murdoch, J. cited in Hunter, J., (ed.), *For the People's Cause: From the Writings of John Murdoch*, HMSO, Edinburgh, 1986.

[17] I must thank Kathy Galloway of the Iona Community for birthing this term and similarly Maxwell McLeod for coming up with "retail therapy" — both in discussion where we were wrestling to find adequate vocabulary.

[18] Brown, P., Protest delays Trident test, *Guardian weekly*, 150:23, 5th June 1994, p. 8

[19] McIntosh, A., "A Collector's item" or community ownership — the Isle of Eigg debate, *Edinburgh Review*, 88, 1992, pp. 158-162.

[20] O. Skinner, J.S., *A Guide to Bowing*, c. 1900, cited in Hardie, A., *The Caledonian Companion*, Hardie Press, Edinburgh, 1992, p. 25.

[21] Walker, "While love is Unfashionable," *Revolutionary Petunias*, Women's Press, London, 1988, p. 68.

[22] Cited in MacLean, M. (ed.), *As an Fhearann: From the Land*, Mainstream, Edinburgh, 1986, p. 62. For combination of texts with a great many pictures, this commemorative publication for the 1886 Crofting Act must be the most useful work available for getting a good feel for the Highland situation. The most authoritative scholarly analysis is Hunter, J., *The Making of the Crofting Community*, John Donald, Edinburgh, 1976.

[23] Middleton-Moz, J., *Will to Survive: Affirming the Positive Power of the Human Spirit* (1992), *Shame and Guilt: Masters of Disguise* (1990), *Children of Trauma, rediscovering your discarded self* (1989), all from Health Communications Inc., Florida.

[24] In MacLean, M. (ed.), ibid., p. 37.

[25] Cited in MacLean, M., (ed.), ibid., 25. Mairi Mhor nan Oran was speaking here of the Rev. Donald MacCallum, land rights activist: "The land is our birthright, even as the air, the light of the sun and the water belong to us as our birthright (ibid.)." The parallels between 19th century Highland land activism and 20th century Latin American liberation theology are presented by Meed, D.W., "The Land Question Answered from the Bible"; The Land Issue and the Development of a Highland Theology of Liberation, *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 103:2, 1987, pp. 84-89.

25 CHAITANYA, AMAME THE GODDESS, SCOTIA, 1994

ALASTAIR MCINTOSH is teaching director at the Centre for Human Ecology, University of Edinburgh, where for six years he developed the acclaimed Master of Science degree course in human ecology. He is active in Scottish community land restitution issues, in trying to prevent the superquarrying of Scottish mountains, and in movements such as the Iona Community and the Quakers concerned with peace, social justice and spirituality. Recently Edinburgh University launched their fourth attempt to destroy the controversial Centre for Human Ecology, announcing "suspension" of the MSc course and axing of all staff posts as of September 1996. Amidst international outrage, a *New Scientist* editorial headed *A Narrow Kirk in Edinburgh* (4th May 1996) denounced this "considerable loss to the university's intellectual tradition ... (meaning that) a tradition of fearless inquiry will be broken." Unless a final reprieve can be won, staff and students are to consider taking the centre's soul out of the university, perhaps even establishing a tiny Free University in the Celtic bardic tradition. Alastair McIntosh, Craigencalt Farm, Kinghorn Loch, Fife, Scotland, KY3 9YG, +44 1592 891829, alastair@gn.apc.org.