

The Journal of William Morris Studies

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Editorial

Patrick O'Sullivan

It is my greatest pleasure to be able to introduce a special issue on the 'green' ideas of William Morris – an idea I have long nurtured. And it seems to me entirely appropriate that the fiftieth anniversary issue of the *Journal* should be the first devoted almost exclusively to the greener aspects of Morris's thought, especially as next year marks the same anniversary of the publication of *Silent Spring*, the book most widely credited with triggering the modern environmental movement.¹ It has been said many times, and by better Morris scholars than me, that it is impossible to categorise Morris, as he was such a many-sided figure. At a time when green ideas scarcely existed, May Morris described her father as 'Artist, writer, socialist', but much more recently, Fiona MacCarthy still chose to portray him as 'designer, poet, businessman', 'appropriated' by greens. But it may be that, in the long run, it is the green aspects of Morris's thought which prove to be the most important, still 'beckoning us forward'.²

In this issue we also commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the *Journal* by printing, as explained by Jan Marsh, a previously unpublished image of Morris by D.G. Rossetti recently come to light. Martin Crick provides a fascinating history of the *Journal* – an article kindly compiled at a time when he was also very busy with the late stages of production of his history of the Society.³ I then give a partial review, in more than one sense, of the development of ideas of 'Morris the Green'. Bradley MacDonald next examines the parallelisms between Morris's aesthetic and his 'green' ideas and those of Herbert Marcuse, a man, like Ruskin before him, whose star has now fallen very low, but whose name was on all our lips back in 1968. (How many of us had actually read him, I wonder?).

Tony Pinkney then discusses the 'Nowherian dialectic of Nature' – first as liberation, second as late Morrisian romance, third as romance landscape, but fourth in an entirely new concept of Nature, 'disastrously troubling', and Eddy Kent considers the possibilities of *News from Nowhere* enabling us to incorporate the natural world into the political arena; to achieve 'a green cosmopolitanism'. Jed Mayer then compares *News from Nowhere* with much darker contemporary accounts such as *After London*, which he intriguingly labels 'ecogothic'. Finally, I offer my own comparison of *News from Nowhere* with a concrete if short-lived

utopia; the collectives which briefly flourished in several parts of the Republican zone during the Spanish Civil War. Articles culminate in the fifteenth instalment of David and Sheila Latham's invaluable annotated bibliography of Morris.

We also carry reviews of books on Morris in Iceland, and on Morris and the idea of community, something in which his Icelandic experience surely played a part. Publications on Morris's contemporaries reviewed consist of volumes on the late poems of Algernon Charles Swinburne, and on the bookplates and badges of C.F.A. Voysey. Morris's craft legacy is once more considered in reviews of books on Arts and Crafts rugs, and on 'Craftsmanship', but we follow these with examination of a much more recent phenomenon – the blog. Finally, as part of 'Morris the Green', Martin Stott reviews books on the recent degeneration of Britain's urban environment: on the concurrent decline of the rural England Morris lovingly included in *News from Nowhere*, and on the 'edgelands' – those neglected corridors – railway embankments and cuttings, canal towpaths, motorway verges – which connect the urban and the rural, sometimes containing highly valuable habitats, also discussed some years ago by Richard Mabey as *The Unofficial Countryside*.

Over the next decades, we are faced with a stark choice – between continued exponential growth and 'progress' on a finite planet, or true sustainability: or as Morris put it, 'So what shall we have, art or dirt?'⁴ I see this issue as one contribution, however small, to our making the correct choice.

NOTES

1. Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1962, 304 pp.
2. May Morris, *William Morris. Artist, Writer, Socialist*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1936, 2 vols; Fiona MacCarthy, *William Morris. A life for our time*. London: Faber & Faber, 2003, page viii; E.P. Thompson, *William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary*, New York: Pantheon, 1976, p. 730.
3. Martin Crick, *The History of the William Morris Society 1955-2005*, London: William Morris Society (forthcoming).
4. 'Art and the Beauty of the Earth', 1881, *The Architect*, October (pp. 282-284), November (pp. 297-298); <http://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1881/earth.htm> (as accessed 23 June 2011).

‘The author of the Earthly Paradise by Dante Gabriel Rossetti’: A newly-discovered drawing.

Jan Marsh

A hitherto unknown portrait sketch of William Morris by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (Figure 1) has been discovered in a copy of *The Earthly Paradise* once owned by Louisa Crabbe. Both book and drawing are in the Mark Samuels Lasner Collection, which is on loan to the library of the University of Delaware. We are grateful to Mark Samuels Lasner, discoverer of the drawing, for permission to publish it here.

The pencil drawing is rough, almost scribbled. It depicts a half-length bearded figure, full-face, with unruly hair, hands clasped on his chest, holding two ill-defined objects, one a stick with a rounded end, the other shaped like a balloon. The background is filled with a diaper pattern. It is on a sheet measuring five by four-and-half inches (127 x 114 mm), which is the back of a printed page, cut or torn from a book, and is lightly pasted on to the title-page verso of Volume I of the first edition of *The Earthly Paradise* published by F.S. Ellis in Spring 1868; this one is from the special edition of twenty-five large paper copies printed on Whatman paper. On the title page is the signature and date ‘Louisa Crabbe / 1869’.

The printed page on the back of the sheet is from William Makepeace Thackeray’s poem, ‘The End of the Play’, written and published in 1848. The page, numbered 159, is either from a Christmas book issued containing the ballad in 1848, or a later reprint. The sketch is drawn within a double-line border, below which is the pencil inscription ‘The author of the Earthly Paradise by / Dante Gabriel Rossetti. 1858’. The inscription appears to be in Louisa Crabbe’s hand, and the inference is that it was added to an unscribed drawing when she acquired her copy of Morris’s work in 1869, and decided to insert the loose sheet.

The authorship and likeness are convincing when set beside Rossetti’s other sketches of Morris, mainly caricatures. The hair is drawn with the same circling

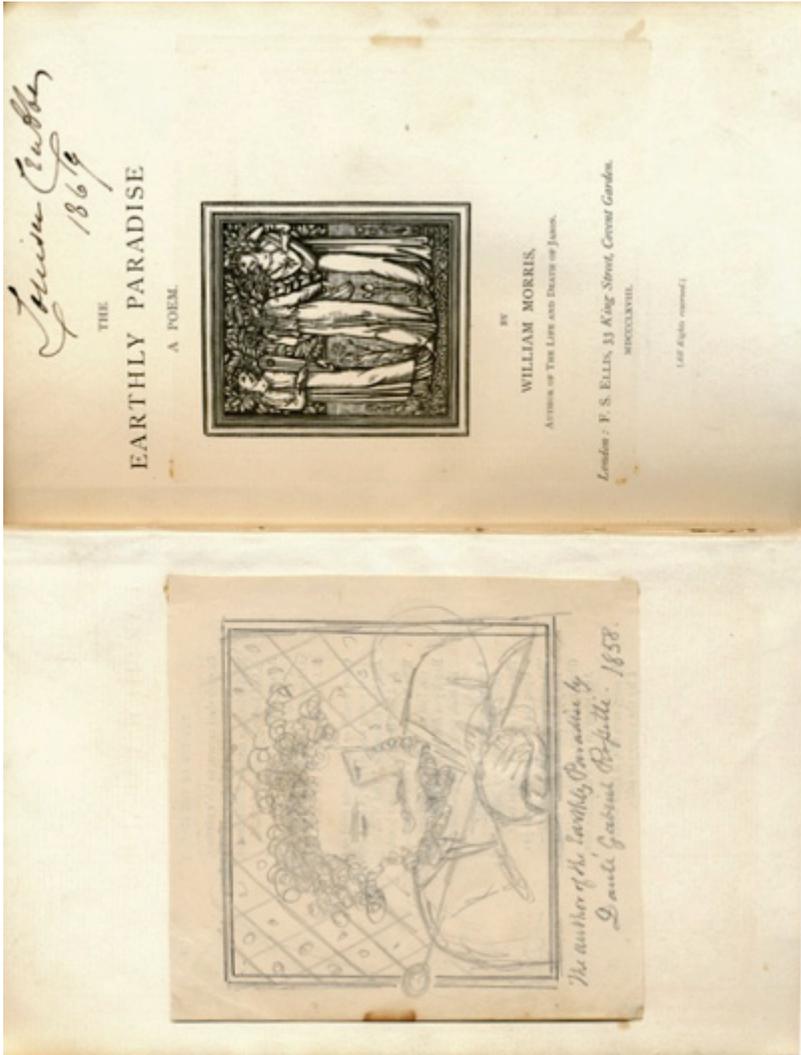


Figure 1: The author of the *Earthly Paradise* by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1858. By kind permission of Mark Samuels Lasner

strokes as that in the undated image known as 'William Morris Presenting a Ring to his Future Wife' drawn in Oxford either in October 1857 or early the following year when Morris became engaged to Jane Burden.¹

How did Louisa Crabbe acquire the drawing of Morris, and how reliable is the inscription? Certainly, Louisa Crabbe, better known in Pre-Raphaelite circles by her stage name Ruth Herbert, was in contact with Rossetti by 1858, for in the summer of that year she agreed to sit to him for the head of Mary Magdalene in a projected painting. 'I am in the stunning position this morning of expecting the actual visit, at ½ past 11, of a model whom I have been longing to paint for years – Miss Herbert of the Olympic Theatre – who has the most varied and highest expression I ever saw in a woman's face, besides abundant beauty, golden hair, etc', Rossetti told a friend, continuing later 'O my eye! She has sat to me now and will sit to me for Mary Magdalene in the picture I am beginning. Such luck!'² On 25 June he sketched her feeding a cage-bird with seed from her tongue, and altogether thirteen portrait drawings and sketches of Crabbe/Herbert by Rossetti are known, together with a study for the Magdalene. Six bear dates – '25 June 1858', '1858', 'Sept 20 1858', 'Dec. 1858', '1858' and 'Oct 1859' – and the others are all ascribed to same period.³

Louisa Ruth Maynard was born around 1830 and as Miss Herbert made her London stage debut at the Lyceum in 1847. She married Edward Crabb in 1855 and separated from him in 1857, having in this same period borne a son and established herself as one of the rising stars of the theatre, playing both female and travesti roles. By 1858 she had several 'admirers', including John Rochfort, who would become her second partner. During this period of her greatest popularity, she sat to several artists, including G.F. Watts and Val Prinsep (whom she would have met at Little Holland House), W.P. Frith (for a figure in *Derby Day*), Frederick Sandys, Henry Weigall and James Rannie Swinton.⁴ When, years later, she met Georgiana Burne-Jones, Louisa recalled the aesthetic adulation she received, remarking that it was 'like being in a new world' to be among artists. 'I sat to them and was there with them, and they were different to everyone else I ever saw. And I was a holy thing to them – a holy thing'.⁵

On 21 June 1858 Rossetti began 'a delicate little drawing'⁶ entitled *Writing on the Sand*, showing lovers on a windy beach, which was destined for Louisa, probably in return for her sittings, and when on 12 July she was allocated a benefit performance at the Olympic Theatre, he both bullied his friends into attending and drew some sketches to amuse her, including two fairly detailed pen-and-ink images of the actress's head in profile flanked by those of two other, plainer women, one with a very hooked nose and prominent teeth, thus underlining Louisa's greater beauty.⁷ These were later framed together with a comic sketch showing Miss Herbert seated beside a row of admirers and in front of a large ugly man, which was inscribed by Rossetti 'For the Benefit of Miss Herbert July 12 /

58'.⁸ One of the admirers bears a thumbnail likeness to William Morris, which can be compared to that in the drawing of him pasted into her copy of the *Earthly Paradise*.

The figure is drawn schematically, in a format allusive of the face cards in a pack of playing cards, and the monarchical allusion is furthered by the objects he holds, the long stick with large knob perhaps representing an artist's mahl-stick, and the balloon-shape possibly a palette. In 1858, under Rossetti's persuasion, Morris was endeavouring to become a painter. Rossetti thought his features were similar to those of François Premier, king of France 1515-1547, whose remarkable portrait by Clouet Rossetti had seen in the Louvre, and on which he based his scribbled image of Morris.⁹

There is no direct evidence that Morris actually met Louisa at this time, however. Indeed it seems likely that Rossetti's caricature sketch was a similar *jeu d'esprit*, drawn to give her a quick impression of what his friend 'Topsy' looked like. It is probable that Louisa Crabbe paid little attention in 1858-9 to Rossetti's short, curly-haired friend. By all accounts Morris could be brusque and abrupt with women; he certainly did not flatter or flirt with them and is unlikely to have joined the fulsome chorus of her admirers. A decade later, he was newly well-known, as author of *The Earthly Paradise*.

By 1868-9 Louisa had virtually given up performing. During the previous ten years she had borne a second son (1859) and a daughter (1861) and continued to star in comedies and melodramas, including the famous *Lady Audley's Secret* (1863) and been installed by Rochfort in a fine house in the Boltons. At the end of 1864, when she became manager of the St James Theatre, she was described in the press as 'a graceful and sympathetic person of much beauty with exquisite golden hair and almost devotional features who supplied many of the Pre-Raphaelite Brethren with angelic faces for their canvases'.¹⁰ She continued to act, as Beatrice, Lady Teazle, Kate Hardcastle and Lydia Languish, giving her final benefit performance in April 1868. That summer, after claiming a civil marriage in Switzerland, she lived publicly with Rochfort, although retaining the name Crabbe. It is not known whether her expensive copy of the *Earthly Paradise* was a purchase or a gift from Rochfort, but it evidently offered a convenient and apt place to tip in the loose caricature from 1858.

NOTES

1. Virginia Surtees, *The Paintings and Drawings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, A Catalogue Raisonné*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971, 2 vols; Vol. I, no. 597. (Afterwards Surtees, 1971).

2. William E. Fredeman, ed, *The Correspondence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, Woodbridge, Suffolk: D.S. Brewer, 2002-2010 (8 vols); Vol. 2, Letter 58.6, p. 214.
3. Virginia Surtees, 'Beauty and the Bird: A new Rossetti drawing', *Burlington Magazine*, vol. 115, February 1973, pp. 84-87; Surtees 1971 nos. VS 325-336 and 109I; see also Surtees 1973, *ibid.*
4. One of Swinton's depictions of Herbert, as The Red Cross Knight from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, was shown at the Royal Academy in 1859, and must have been painted around the same time as she was sitting to Rossetti. For all details of her life, see Virginia Surtees, *The Actress and the Brewer's Wife: Two Victorian Vignettes*, Wilby, Norwich: Michael Russell, 1997, 176 pp. (Afterwards Surtees 1997)
5. Georgiana Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, London: Macmillan, 1904, 2 vols.; Vol. 1, p. 169.
6. Virginia Surtees, ed, *The Diaries of George Price Boyce*, Norwich: New World Publishers, 1980, p. 24.
7. Surtees 1971, Nos. 599a and c.
8. Surtees 1971, No. 599.
9. Curiously enough, a thumbnail portrait of Morris, drawn in a similar manner within a square border, is contained in a sketchbook dating from 1860-62, owned by Morris (BL ADD.Ms45336, f.2). This sketch is attributed to Burne-Jones.
10. Quoted Surtees 1997, p. 68; original source unidentified. *The Illustrated London News*, 21 December 1864, p. 678 announced that Miss Herbert had resumed management of the St James's Theatre.

The Journal of the William Morris Society

Martin Crick

The William Morris Society was founded in September 1955. The constitution stated that one of its objects was 'to improve and diffuse knowledge of the life, work and influences of William Morris'. Its originators recognised from the outset that, with a widely scattered membership, publications were essential if they were to achieve this aim. The organisation was, and has remained, London-based, and the bulk of lectures and seminars have been held in the capital. Thus members living in other parts of the country could only receive value for their subscriptions via the printed word. A shortage of funds, however, meant that other than the occasional *Newsletter* and the *Annual Report*, publications were few and far between in the early years. The Society relied on the generosity of printing schools and colleges, and its work was not high on their list of priorities. Thus the first Society publication, Robin Page Arnot's *Bernard Shaw and William Morris*, did not appear until late 1957 and was distributed to members with the 3rd *Annual Report* in April 1958. It was a real concern for the Society's committee that members were receiving little in return for their subscriptions at that time. Those outside London were virtually disenfranchised, while the growing American membership had received nothing at all for their dues.

The then secretary, Ronald Briggs, who was to serve the Society for twenty five years, continually emphasised the need to give priority to publications over lectures, in order to be fair to the whole membership. He argued that the bulk of the membership was unable to attend lectures, visits or business meetings, and that publications were the only reward for their subscriptions. Moreover, he hoped that published material would attract corporate members, who paid higher subscriptions, tended to be more reliable with their payments, and were able to attract more publicity for the Society. By 1960, however, after five years in existence, there had only been five publications, one of which was an exhibition catalogue, and one a guide to Red House. The idea of a regular periodical, a journal, therefore seemed an obvious and attractive means of achieving the Society's

objective and of giving members some return for their subscription.

A Society journal was first suggested by John Purkis, a future secretary of the Society, at a committee meeting in December 1960. Briggs, however, urged caution. The Society lacked funds for printing, he said, and regular publication could not be guaranteed. Purkis persisted, writing to Briggs on 31 December to push the idea, but he was not to be persuaded. 'This is not the time to take such a risk', he argued. They would need to sell advertising space to make the venture financially viable and that was 'back-breaking and troublesome work'.¹ Yet within months he had changed his mind, his reservations countered by his recognition of the need for regular publications if the Society's membership was to be maintained and expanded. An appeal for funds to launch the *Journal* produced sufficient capital to pay for the first issue. The leading contributor was Briggs himself, who donated the fee he received for an article on Morris & Company in the *Sunday Telegraph*. John Lewis & Company also gave a sizeable donation. Michael Katanka, the radical bookseller, presented the proceeds of a book sale and other contributors were the Society's president Sir Sydney Cockerell, its treasurer Freeman Bass, Walter Spradbury, Sir Thomas Barlow, Walter Gunz, and Halcrow Verstage, the secretary of the Kelmscott Fellowship. Sandersons agreed to take an advertisement on the back cover, whilst the Bowater Paper Corporation provided sufficient paper for the first three issues. Grosvenor, Chater and Company donated the cover paper, and other firms provided the plates and the type.

The first problem was what to call the new publication. Briggs suggested 'The Bridge' because he saw the *Journal* as a means of spanning the distance between members. John Purkis offered 'The Commonweal Revived', and founder member John Kay 'The New Commonweal'. Although Briggs thought it rather colourless, *The Journal of the William Morris Society* was eventually agreed upon as a temporary expedient whilst the members were asked for alternatives.² The next bone of contention arose over editorial control. Some favoured a sub-committee, but Briggs felt that production of the *Journal* was an administrative matter, 'a matter of machinery for which he was responsible'. The only policy which should govern the *Journal*, he said, was that it should be a 'means by which those interested in Morris could express their views to one another'. When a sub-committee was appointed he was clearly unhappy and continued to voice his concerns: 'What mattered was to bring it to life. If the opportunity was lost through excessive deliberation and discussion the whole future of the Society could be endangered'.³ Eventually it was agreed that he should be editor, with the final say on all matters, and that he would report to the committee twice a year. The final issue to be resolved before publication was the cover price. It was important not to invalidate the Society's position as an educational charity and therefore it was agreed to establish a distinct *Journal* fund, separate from the

Society's main account. Members would be charged five shillings per annum for what was intended to be a bi-annual publication, and non-members five shillings per copy. Corporate members would receive it free of charge.

A letter from the Society to members on 12 January 1962 announced the forthcoming first issue, which was published on 20 January. 'People interested in the life, work and times of William Morris may be found in many parts of the world', said Briggs. 'The Journal provides these with a bridge by which they may communicate with one another; it constitutes a focus for ideas about Morris and his relevance to current problems, and a record of contemporary study of him'. In his Introduction, the president, Sir Sydney Cockerell, recalled his friendship with Morris, whilst all articles in this first issue were written by members. Alfred Fairbank contributed one on 'William Morris and Calligraphy'; A.C. Sewter wrote on 'Morris and Company's Stained Glass'. An American member, E.E. Stokes junior, reflected upon 'William Morris and Bernard Shaw' whilst another, Loyd Haberley, one-time controller of the Gregynog Press, recalled lying on the Oxford Union floor in his student days looking up at 'colourful William Morris, alive enough up there in the painted ceiling which was his earliest complete expression. Liking it was my first way of saying that William Morris is an easy one for the fortunate to know'.⁴ Briggs himself wrote a short piece on 'Morris and Trafalgar Square', recalling the events of 'Bloody Sunday', 13 November 1887. Finally Hugh Bushell, one of four members of the Society who had retraced Morris's route through Iceland in 1871, wrote a brief account of their adventure, with some reflections upon Morris's fascination with that country.

One further contribution came in the form of a letter from John Purkis. Members had been invited to write on the theme of 'What I expect of the William Morris Society'. He warned against 'mere historiography', urged more activity of a contemporary relevance, and suggested that the Society became a pressure group on cultural matters. Purkis also warned against the curse of 'fragmentation', fearing that Morris might become 'a corpse for the PhD students to devour'. The Society must aim to assert Morris 'the whole man', he said. One affronted PhD student, Roberta Buchanan, replied to defend her work, but on the main issue she agreed with Purkis. 'MUST we have this ostentatious licking of a dead man's boots with one eye cocked upon the living?' she asked. She urged that there be less of 'the sickly and silly triviality in some of the pages of The Journal and more of those "bigger issues" which Mr. Purkis hints at in his letter'. This lively exchange attracted a response from W.E. Fredeman, the distinguished Pre-Raphaelite scholar, who suggested that 'In order to see the whole man it is often essential to have an intimate familiarity with the separate components – frequently with the trivialities – of his wholeness'. The discussion foreshadowed later debates about the role and content of the *Journal* and indeed the Society itself.⁵

This first issue was attractively produced, a thirty two page demy octavo book-

let in a green cover, and Briggs had been insistent that the Society subscribe to Morris's high typographical standards. The articles were brief yet scholarly, attractive both to the general reader and to the academic, and they certainly covered the range of Morris's activities, thus fulfilling Purkis's plea to address 'the whole man'. The editor certainly nurtured high expectations of the *Journal*. 'I feel that the Society has entered upon a new phase and its position is more secure', he wrote to Cockerell. 'The American libraries should be good for many subscriptions and the task of keeping the membership afloat will, I hope, be easier.'⁶

It was not only US libraries which Briggs hoped to attract. Complimentary copies were sent to over four hundred UK and overseas libraries, and to sixty two UK Chief Education Officers. Members received the first issue free of charge, partly to promote subscriptions, but also as a thank you for their patience and support. One can only marvel at such largesse on the part of a cash-strapped organisation, but early signs were promising. Initial subscriptions totalled one hundred and twenty, and by the end of the year corporate subscriptions had risen to seventy eight. At a committee meeting in March Briggs reported that the Society had enough money in hand to pay for the next four issues, although he warned that five hundred subscribers were needed in order to make the *Journal* independent of advertising.

The second issue was delayed when it was decided to make it a commemorative publication in honour of Sir Sydney Cockerell, who died on 1 May 1962. It was not published until March 1963. Thereafter, the initial optimism dissipated, as publication was beset with difficulties. The four issues comprising the first volume were not completed until the summer of 1964, and there was then a two-year hiatus, owing to technical difficulties in setting quoted material and the footnotes. Eventually, because subscriptions had not been taken out in the desired or necessary numbers, money was transferred from elsewhere in the Society's budget to purchase the necessary equipment. The *Minutes* for 10 October 1963 recorded that even some members of the committee did not subscribe, and the *Annual Report* for the same year noted that the Society was reliant on donations to continue the venture.

The first issue of Volume II finally appeared in Spring 1966, with forty pages instead of thirty two, 'to make up some of the lost ground', and Briggs admitted that corporate members had been 'very tolerant'.⁷ There were at that time 292 individual subscribers in the UK, and 218 overseas, meaning that 185 members did not subscribe. Rising printing costs exacerbated the problems, and in 1966 Sandersons withdrew their advertising, presumably because of the irregular publication and the failure to increase the readership. There was another two-year delay before Vol. II, No.2 appeared, in the summer of 1968, with Vol. II, No. 3 following during Winter of the same year.

There was some criticism of Briggs on the committee, with suggestions that

he had taken on too much in combining the editorial role with his work as secretary. He would have none of it. The poor subscription rate was one reason for the delays, he said, whilst the printers worked at cost and therefore the *Journal* was not their first priority. He set the headings himself in order to save money, and to be able to say that the Society had had a hand in the printing. Indeed, he said, the *Journal* could be argued to have subsidised the Society because of its attraction to corporate members. Eventually the committee agreed to raise the subscription to ten shillings after Volume II was completed. But even this did not occur without further mishap. Volume II, No. 4 was mistakenly printed on art paper, and could not be distributed, as it was not uniform with previous issues. It was reprinted and finally published in January 1971. Thus subscribers, who had been promised two issues per year, had actually only received eight issues in ten years. There was some compensation, however, in the range and depth of the content, which continued the precedent set in the first issue. Volume I, No.4 introduced the recently opened archive of Rossetti's letters to Jane Morris, held at the British Museum, and also contained W.E. Fredeman's 'selective bibliography' of publications about William Morris and His Circle 1960-62 (see Note 5). The initial issue of Volume II included the first book reviews, and a further instalment of Fredeman's bibliography, this time covering 1963-65. In other issues (Vol. I, No.3 and Vol. II, No.2), readers were given an insight into the Charles Fairfax Murray archive at the University of Texas, which contained numerous letters to and from Morris.

The *Annual Report* for 1971 summed up the problem facing the Society if it wished to continue the *Journal*: 'The difficulties of producing the Journal will be apparent when it is considered that the cost of production is now more than three times what it was when the first issue was published in 1961, whereas the subscription is only twice the original figure'. However, it also demonstrated a somewhat cavalier attitude to finances on the part of the secretary: 'The Journal is a vital part of the Society's work', said Briggs, 'and one which brings it to the attention of a wider audience. No lowering of standards can, therefore, be allowed'.⁸ It is perhaps not surprising therefore that a further four years elapsed before the publication of the first issue of Volume III.

There were, however, other factors at play, not least the Society's acquisition in 1970 of Kelmscott House, and the subsequent establishment there of the William Morris Centre. The House became the focus of the Society's attention during the 1970s, and absorbed most of the secretary's time and much of its finances. Many other activities were curtailed. As Harold Smith, a founder member of the Society, later remarked 'When I remember the meetings of early years and the publications sent to members there can be no comparison'.⁹ The *Annual Report* became a much abbreviated production, and the *Journal* appeared even more spasmodically than previously. The first issue of Volume III was published in

Spring 1974, and the second did not appear until Summer 1976.

From this issue onwards, the *Journal*, hitherto produced by letterpress, was printed by offset litho from camera copy in order to save money, a marked departure from Ronald Briggs's previous insistence on the maintenance of high quality productions. Even so, members only received a further three issues during the next four years, making a total of five during the decade. One event of considerable interest occurred in April 1977, when members were invited to reply to a questionnaire from the Society which aimed to 'ascertain the nature of the Society's existing support, the particular interests of its members, and what ideas they might have for the Society's future developments'.¹⁰ Some 320 of the 920 members responded, 27% of whom reported that they did not subscribe to the *Journal*, almost half because it was too expensive, and a third because it did not cover their interests. Whilst it is difficult to ascertain exactly what they meant by the latter statement, there is evidence to suggest that they felt that insufficient attention was paid to Morris's political activities. The Society had a long-standing policy of steering clear of political debate or affiliations and this was reflected in its publications.

Establishment of the William Morris Centre at Kelmscott House diverted much of the Society's energy away from everyday affairs, and also caused considerable financial outlay which it simply could not afford. Matters came to a head in November 1979, when the Society was forced to close the Centre and, later, put the lease of the house up for sale. There was also upheaval on the committee, with Ronald Briggs and other long-standing members resigning.

One of the first decisions of the committee which took office in May 1980 was that members should receive the *Journal* as part of their subscription rather than paying an additional amount. The next year, 1981, marked the twentieth anniversary of its appearance, and in that year the Society finally achieved its aim of publishing two issues annually, although this was not achieved without problems, the *Annual Report* noting that there were 'too many blemishes and some actual errors'.¹¹ This was not surprising given that the new editor, Geoffrey Bensusan, had undertaken the editing and publication almost single-handed. He resigned after overseeing the first three issues of Volume IV, to be succeeded by Ray Watkinson.

Volume V, No.3, in the summer of 1983, saw the introduction of what was to become a regular feature; David and Sheila Latham's biennial bibliography of publications about Morris, an invaluable tool for members and scholars generally. The first covered the period 1979 – 80. In 1984, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of William Morris's birth, a special double number of the *Journal* was published. As Ray Watkinson said in his editorial note, 'to cater for the whole range of interests that bring people to Morris is far from easy',¹² but the special edition made every effort to do that, covering Morris's politics, literature, archi-

ecture and design, and his journeys to Iceland.

The 25th anniversary of the first appearance of the *Journal* took place in 1986. The Winter issue of 1985-6 (Volume VI, No.4), was only the twenty fourth actual edition, yet eleven had been published since 1981, compared to fourteen during the first twenty years, a measure of the progress being made by the Society. The first issue of Volume VII, in October 1986, was a double number, in order to facilitate a change in the timing of publication aimed at bringing the accounts more neatly into the financial year. Henceforward the *Journal* was to appear in April and October each year, a spring-autumn sequence rather than a winter-summer one. That issue was the last to be edited by Ray Watkinson, and the April 1987 number saw Peter Faulkner installed as editor.

There was some debate at this time about the nature and content of the *Journal*, amidst fears that it was becoming too academic. At the 1984 AGM, Ray Watkinson emphasised the need for 'scholarship' rather than academic respectability. Uppermost in his mind, he said, was the need to cater for 'all sorts and conditions of men and women'. The catholicity of Morris's interests caused a 'special problem' for the *Journal*, said the then secretary Richard Smith, in the *Annual Report* for 1985. To cater for all members' interests in such a small-scale publication was difficult, and could only be done over a sequence of issues. Nonetheless, he said, the Society must ensure that this was done, whilst also doing justice to Morris, otherwise it would not attract new members.¹³

Concerns of this nature have resurfaced from time to time, and are very real. On the one hand, if the *Journal* is to continue to be placed in university and other academic libraries, it must meet the increasingly rigorous academic standards required, and it is vital for the Society that its corporate members continue to subscribe. Yet the *Journal* must also cater for the hundreds of members for whom publications are the only reward for their subscriptions. During recent years one solution has been to increase the scope of the *Newsletter*, which now publishes many of the shorter articles which would once have found their way into the *Journal*.

During its early days the *Journal* was still able to make direct links with Morris and his circle via reminiscences from contemporaries or near contemporaries, and then with May Morris. Such articles were more anecdotal and all articles tended to be shorter. It has expanded considerably since then, providing more scholarly articles, regular book reviews, and features such as the biennial annotated bibliographies of publications by or about William Morris. These bibliographies, meticulously arranged by David and Sheila Latham, are an invaluable guide to Morris's work, covering books, pamphlets, articles, exhibition catalogues and dissertations. In their own words, 'the subject categories and author index will save the impatient specialist from needing to browse through descriptions of woven tapestries in search of critiques of "The Haystack in the floods"'.¹⁵ A

special edition of the *Journal*, in 1998, to mark the centenary of the death of Edward Burne-Jones, was the first to carry colour illustrations, and the Autumn 1999 issue the first to exceed one hundred pages. The Spring 2001 issue was the last to be edited by Nicholas Salmon, who had been editor since the Autumn of 1996. His leaving gift was a catalogue of articles 1961-2000.

Salmon's successor was Rosie Miles, the first female editor, who brought both enthusiasm and a new and professional approach to the role. One of her major concerns was the fact that very few university or college libraries in the UK subscribed to the *Journal*, and her first action was to institute an Editorial Advisory Board, which included many distinguished figures in the world of Morris research and scholarship. The *Journal* thus became a refereed publication, which she hoped would make it more attractive to academic institutions here. For similar reasons she proposed a change of title, and the Winter 2002 issue bore for the first time the masthead *The Journal of William Morris Studies*. A special issue in Summer 2004, dedicated to 'William Morris and the Book Arts', ran to 192 pages and was fully illustrated. For the Winter issue of that year a new, slightly larger, and very elegant format was adopted, designed by David Gorman. The paper size was increased to Royal Octavo, in order to reduce the number of pages, and the *Journal* was now perfect bound with a spine, rather than saddle stitched and stapled as previously. Miles proposed a norm of ninety six pages for future issues, but in her view there was insufficient material of suitable standard for Summer 2005 so a double Summer-Winter issue was published in order to celebrate the Society's 50th anniversary.

In the new higher education world of Research Exercises, and increased pressure on academics to publish, development of the *Journal* in this direction was probably inevitable, but it has raised some concerns amongst the membership. A number whom I surveyed felt that it had become too 'academic and obscure'. 'A bit over my head', said one, 'a little heavy' another. Most, however, praised the *Newsletter*, both for its design and for the breadth of its coverage and, as suggested above, this has gone some considerable way towards achieving a balance between academia and readability.

The *Journal* reached its 60th edition in 2004, providing an impressive resource for all students of Morris. A survey of its contents to that date reveals that, whilst Morris's literary output has received the most attention, all aspects of his work has been covered fairly comprehensively. There have been over ninety articles on his writings, eighty surveying various aspects of his life, sixty seven on his politics, and sixty one on his artistic activities. The founders of the Society, in their letter to *The Times* on 13 September 1955, argued that, whilst a number of organisations existed which examined particular aspects of Morris's work, 'there exists no society whose aim it is to extend the knowledge of the man as painter, embroiderer, weaver, carver, calligrapher, wood engraver, printer, writer, and socialist'.

Through the pages of the *Journal* the Society has certainly covered the full range of Morris's activities, presenting the 'whole man' to its readers. The Summer 2007 issue, a special number devoted to 'Teaching Morris', was Rosie Miles's last as editor. As she said in her editorial, 'there are very few figures indeed who can inspire the sweep and diversity of subjects on which this *Journal* routinely publishes'.¹⁵ That in itself was embodied in the transfer of the Editorship from an English Studies lecturer to an Environmental Scientist, Patrick O'Sullivan.

In his first editorial, he reinforced Miles's view. 'One of the great strengths of *JWMS*, to my mind', he wrote, 'is its eclectic subject matter, which clearly reflects Morris's own enormous range of interests'. He also suggested that 'with the recent onset of widespread greening, the life, work and ideas of William Morris have never been more relevant than they are today'. Morris, he suggested, invented the idea of alternative technology, identified the key role of Work, and of 'local production for local need', observed and correctly identified the effects of the globalisation of capital, and he also examined in some detail the ways in which the problem of economic scarcity can be overcome. Morris's vision, he argued, of an ecological society 'both green, democratic and free', possesses enormous resonance today.¹⁶

The authors of the original letter to *The Times* had suggested that the Society should 'provide a forum for the exchange of ideas on his contemporary influence over the whole range of his artistic and political activities', but this is one area where the *Journal* has perhaps been less successful. The Spring 1990 issue contained an article by Helen Timo entitled 'News from Somewhere: The relevance of William Morris's Thought in 1990', and another by O'Sullivan himself on 'Morris and Ecology'. A special issue in Autumn 1994 discussed Morris and Education, and contained much of relevance to the modern educationalist. Otherwise one searches in vain for direct attempts to assess Morris's work or thought in relation to contemporary concerns. This increased emphasis upon Morris's contemporary influence and relevance is, therefore, a welcome one.

The *Journal* of the William Morris Society has made a major contribution to the work of the Society helping, in the words of Ronald Briggs, 'to keep the Morris flame alive'.¹⁷ For half a century it has sustained and increased knowledge and interest in his life, work and activities. The Society and its members owe a debt of gratitude to the editors for their unceasing labours on its behalf. Jan Marsh has written thus of the Society, but her comment might equally apply to the *Journal*: 'It takes members to new places, shares discoveries and deepens our understanding of a most remarkable man, his artistic and political networks, and his vision of "how we might live", which remains perennially inspiring'.¹⁸

NOTES

1. Letter from Ronald Briggs to John Purkis, 21 January 1961.
2. *Minutes*, Committee of the William Morris Society, 15 June 1961 (Afterwards *Minutes*); *Minutes*, 3 August 1961.
3. *Minutes* 15 June 1961.
4. Loyd Haberly, 'By His Works', *Journal of the William Morris Society*, Vol. I, No. 1, 1961, p. 20. (Afterwards *JWMS*)
5. John Purkis, 'Correspondence: What I expect of the William Morris Society', *ibid.* pp. 20 – 21; Roberta Buchanan, 'Correspondence: What I expect of the William Morris Society', *JWMS*, Vol. I, No. 3, 1963, pp. 30 – 31; William E. Fredeman, 'William Morris and his circle: a selective bibliography of publications, 1960-62', *JWMS*, Vol. I, No. 4, 1964, p. 23.
6. Letter, Ronald Briggs to Sir Sydney Cockerell, 29 January 1962.
7. *Minutes*, 28 July 1966.
8. William Morris Society *Annual Report* 1971, p. 7. (Afterwards *Annual Report*)
9. Letter, Harold Smith to Teresa Newman, 9 January 1980.
10. A copy of this questionnaire is kept in the Society's archive at Kelmscott House.
11. *Annual Report*, 1981, p.8.
12. Ray Watkinson, 'Editorial Note', *JWMS*, Vol. V, No. 4, 1984, p. 2.
13. *Annual Reports*, 1984, p. 12; 1985, p. 7.
14. *JWMS* Vol. XIV, No.4 (Summer 2004), Insert, p. II.
15. 'Editorial', *JWMS*, Vol. XVII, No. 2, (Summer 2007), p. 3.
16. 'Editorial', *JWMS*, Vol. XVII, No. 3 (Winter 2007), p. 7, p. 6.
17. Interview with Ronald Briggs, 10 April 2006.
18. Jan Marsh, Foreword to Martin Crick, *The History of the William Morris Society 1955-2005*, London: William Morris Society (forthcoming).

‘Morris the red, Morris the green’ – a partial review

Patrick O’Sullivan

It is difficult to know where the idea of Morris the proto-green originated. Jack Lindsay, for example, states that ‘at the core of (Morris’s) socialism was the struggle against pollution and destruction of the environment’, and the knowledge ‘that the only way in which the ... tide could be turned was by the ending of commodity-production and competitive systems’. And A.L. Morton alludes to Morris’s conviction that Socialism would renew the ‘thousands of years of co-operation between man (*sic*) and his environment’ which capitalism had ‘brutally interrupted’. But even these rather limited statements were far too much for E.P. Thompson, who found the idea that Morris is ‘a pioneer of responsible “ecological” consciousness’ a ‘remarkable discovery’.¹

As for greens, by the 1970s Nicholas Gould was already writing about Morris in *The Ecologist*,² in an article which correctly represents his views on art, and technology, but fails to mention socialism! In literary criticism, it may be that Raymond Williams was one of the earliest to discuss the environmental aspects of Morris’s ideas. For example, in *Culture & Society*, he indicates that, for Morris, commercialism was responsible not only for destroying human lives, but also for ruining nature.

... our green fields and clear waters, nay the very air we breathe are turned not to gold (which might please some of us for an hour may be) but to dirt; and to speak plainly we know full well that under the present gospel of Capital not only there is no hope of bettering it, ... Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die—choked by filth.³

Williams later pointed out that one of Morris’s greatest potential contributions to what he termed ‘ecological socialism’ is that he offers reconciliation between two apparently conflicting themes: how do we solve the problem of ‘limits’, when a major ‘traditional’ socialist belief is that the way to deal with poverty is *more* production? – a belief which may no longer be sustainable. Mor-

ris’s solution (following Ruskin) involved asking ‘What kind of production?’ (‘Useful work or useless toil?’) – thus emphasising the *quality* of product, not the quantity.⁴

At about the same time, Jan Marsh explored Morris’s influence on late nineteenth century social and artistic movements, in the shape of the Arts and Crafts, and ‘Back to the Land’, which she described as one of example rather than exhortation.⁵ Although his initial reaction to industrial society was aesthetic, for Morris simplicity of life and socialism went together, and by 1884 he had already identified ‘production for need’ – ‘what Nature gives us, and what a reasonable man can make out of the gifts of Nature for his reasonable use’⁶ – as the key to what today we call sustainability.

These themes were taken up by Peter Gould, who argued that Morris’s case illustrates the distinction between ‘environmentalism’, and a more radical approach to nature. Morris’s early agitations on nature’s behalf were aimed at defending human and natural habitats from capitalism via organisations such as the S.P.A.B. and the Kyrle Society, none of which posed much fundamental threat to the established order. But once he became a socialist, Morris was less active in these societies, and sought a more fundamental readjustment between humanity and nature, based on ‘fellowship’, and the ‘fullness and completeness’ of a ‘free and unfettered animal life’.

However, the ‘real, long-lasting and bitter split in the ... socialist movement’ (particularly the S.D.F.) which took place in 1884 was not only between parliamentary and revolutionary socialists, but between ‘realists’ whose strategy was to gain control of productive forces and use them for the public good, and ‘utopians’, whose socialism placed much more emphasis upon ‘the totality of individual needs’. Therefore, defeat of the utopians, and adoption of a more utilitarian calculus, may not only have led to a victory for parliamentary socialism, but to the long postponement of discussion of environmental issues by the parliamentary left to which Raymond Williams referred a century later.⁷

In 1990, I made my own initial attempt at explaining the greener aspects of Morris’s ideas.⁸ I pointed out that, especially in *News from Nowhere*, Morris anticipated many aspects of modern green thought – alternative technology, renewable energy, simplicity of lifestyle, community self-reliance, production only for need, prolonging the life of goods in order to reduce resource depletion, reduction of waste, and above all the key role of what is defined as ‘work’ (for both men and women) in allowing us all to express our essential humanity in a free and sustainable society. But Morris went further than most greens, of course, both then and now, and explained that the kind of restorative changes to ecosystems and landscapes they demand can only be achieved by abolition of the profit motive.

It is profit which draws men into enormous unmanageable aggregations called towns, for instance; profit which crowds them up when they are there into quarters without gardens or open spaces; profit which won't take the most ordinary precautions against wrapping a whole district in a cloud of sulphurous smoke; which turns beautiful rivers into filthy sewers, which condemns all but the rich to live in houses idiotically cramped and confined at the best, and at the worst in houses for whose wretchedness there is no name.⁹

And of course the really important thing about Morris is that in *News from Nowhere*, he showed us that an ecological society does not need to be an authoritarian one – a lesson many greens still have not learned.

By the mid 1990s, Morris's role as an ancestor of the modern green movement began to be more widely acknowledged. Peter Marshall described him as 'an advanced ecological thinker', and David Pepper as elaborating 'virtually all of the themes "discovered" by radical environmentalists over the past quarter-century about a century before they did'. Unlike his early mentors Ruskin and Carlyle, Morris possessed a clear strategy for change, and the notion that 'if people envisaged a future which was not discordant with nature, it *would* come about'.¹⁰

In 1994, Nora Gillow kindly invited me to give the Annual William Morris Lecture at the William Morris Gallery.¹¹ Here, I examined Morris's attitude to a number of then key environmental problems – Pollution, Conservation (of resources), Preservation (of habitat), and Multiplication (of people).¹² Even in his first lecture on Art and Society, Morris identified the essential cause of what today we call pollution.

Is money to be gathered? cut down the pleasant trees among the houses, pull down ancient and venerable buildings for the money that a few square yards of London dirt will fetch; blacken rivers, hide the sun and poison the air with smoke and worse, and it's nobody's business to see it or mend it: that is all modern commerce, the counting-house forgetful of the workshop, will do for us herein.¹³

In other words, pollution is not a 'side-effect' of industrial capitalism, or even an 'externality', but a direct consequence of industrialisation, the market economy, and in particular, use of the profit motive. Such is the insanity of this system, that

... the time will come when people will find it difficult to believe that a rich community such as ours ... could have submitted to live ... such a mean, shabby, dirty life as we do.¹⁴

In 1973, the pioneer environmental philosopher Richard Routley had called for a

new environmental ethic, based on (1) respect for the needs of future generations, (2) the rights of non-human animals, and (3) the intrinsic value of Nature.¹⁵ In terms of resource conservation, Morris had already identified the importance of the first of these

What kind of an account shall we ... give to those who come after us of our dealings with the earth, which our forefathers handed down to us still beautiful ... ?¹⁶

Morris was concerned that the wealth of Nature, handed down from the past, would be destroyed for the future – not the spurious wealth created by the market, however, but that natural wealth which human beings will always be able to rely on, provided they conserve it wisely, and exploit it only for need

... I will forever refuse to call (articles of folly and luxury) wealth: they are not wealth, but waste. Wealth is what Nature gives us, and what reasonable (people) can make out of the gifts of Nature for (their) reasonable use. The sunlight, the fresh air, the unspoiled face of the earth, food, raiment and housing necessary and decent; the storing up of knowledge of all kinds, and the power of disseminating it; means of free communication ... works of art, ... all things which serve the pleasure of people, free, manly and uncorrupted. This is wealth.¹⁷

Although nowadays many greens associate ‘resource conservation’ with ‘shallow environmentalism’,¹⁸ Morris possessed a much wider definition of natural wealth.

In terms of habitat preservation, Morris did not follow the Romantics or the Transcendentalists in advocating wilderness preservation. Instead, what he wished to preserve was the English cultural landscape, produced by what we now know to be more than six thousand years of what Morris believed to be sustainable land use, before the advent of the market.

... the land is a little land, too much shut up within the narrow seas, it seems, to have much space for swelling into hugeness: there are no great wastes overwhelming in their dreariness, no great solitudes of forests, no terrible untrodden mountain-walls: all is measured, mingled, varied, gliding easily one thing into another: little rivers, little plains, swelling, speedily changing uplands, all beset with handsome orderly trees; little hills, little mountains, netted over with the walls of sheepwalks: all is little; yet not foolish and blank, but serious rather, and abundant of meaning for such as choose to seek: it is neither prison nor palace, but a decent home ...¹⁹

Morris did know the value of wild nature, but mainly for its instrumental value as a source of resources, or its inherent value as a place of human recreation.

We like pieces of wild nature, and can afford them, so we have them; let alone that as to the forests, we need a great deal of timber, and suppose that our sons and sons' sons will do the like.

... children ... often make up parties, and come to play in (Kensington!) woods for weeks together in summer-time, living in tents, ... We rather encourage them to it; they learn to do things for themselves, and get to notice the wild creatures; and, you see, the less they stew inside houses the better for them. ... many grown people ... go to live in the forests through the summer; though they for the most part go to the bigger ones, like Windsor, or the Forest of the Dean, or the northern wastes.²⁰

However, there are also natural processes operating independently of human beings, which may be a source of what Routley saw as the third aspect of his new ethic – the intrinsic value of nature

.... all the while, Nature will go on with her eternal recurrence of lovely changes – spring, summer, autumn, and winter; sunshine, rain and snow; storm and fair weather; dawn, noon and sunset; day and night – ever bearing witness ... that (we have) deliberately chosen ugliness instead of beauty, and to live ... amidst squalor or blank emptiness.²¹

More controversial may be Morris's attitude to the fourth issue – Multiplication (of population). United Nations policy states that the best way to approach the causes of rapid population growth is to raise the economic, political, cultural and educational status of women.²² And in *News from Nowhere*, from descriptions of the relationship between Dick and Clara, from conversations between Guest and Old Hammond, and from statements later in the book by Ellen – 'I shall have children; perhaps before the end a good many; – I hope so' – it is clear, I think, that, as far as Morris is concerned, in *Nowhere*, women have already gained equal political, economic and social status to that of men, and hence, presumably, full control over their own fertility.²³

However, Jan Marsh, for example, has criticised Morris for confining women's labour in *Nowhere* largely to the domestic economy.²⁴ But here, Morris was surely not writing about the middle-class households of the nineteenth century, or even the mid-twentieth, from which much of the modern feminist critique of 'women's work' sprang. What Morris surely had in mind was the rural medieval economy, in which raw materials were produced in the woods and fields (mainly, but not exclusively) by men, and processed in the house (again, mainly, but not exclusively) by women.²⁵ As Carolyn Merchant has shown, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with development of commercial society, it was precisely this kind of 'subsistence' work which was professionalised and

commercialised, to the detriment of the economic status of women.²⁶

The population of Nowhere is ‘pretty much the same as it was at the end of the nineteenth century’,²⁷ (i.e. *ca* 40 million) a statement which may also be implausible to many greens, especially those who still subscribe to the idea that the underlying cause of all environmental problems is ‘overpopulation’. However, like his contemporary Peter Kropotkin, Morris was convinced that by adopting intensive methods of food production, and producing food locally, including in cities, it would be possible to feed substantial urban populations, most of whom, unlike their modern counterparts, would produce their own food.²⁸

In 1996, Florence Boos contributed her own very extensive survey of Morris’s green ideas to *Centenary Essays*; an article which gives us the subtitle of this issue.²⁹ Unlike Thoreau, Darwin or Muir, Morris was not really a ‘nature’ writer, which turns out today to be one of his strengths, in that his principal preoccupations were cultural-anthropological – the relationship between human freedom and nature.

According to Boos, it was with Morris’s adoption of socialism (1883) that he began to develop insights into the *causes* of the defacement of nature.³⁰ Morris’s initial reaction was aesthetic, although even here, he had already identified the likely consequences of ‘progress’ – ‘a danger that the strongest and wisest of mankind, in striving to attain complete mastery over Nature, should destroy her simplest and widest-spread gifts’.³¹ But in his later essays (e.g. ‘The Society of the Future’, 1888, ‘Makeshift’, 1894), he makes the connection with social justice, and with consumption

Shall I tell you what luxury has done for you in modern Europe? It has covered the merry green fields with the hovels of slaves, and blighted flowers and trees with poisonous gases, and turned the rivers into sewers; till over many parts of Britain the common people have forgotten what a field or a flower is like, and their idea of beauty is a gas-poisoned gin-palace or a tawdry theatre ...³²

As for ‘Morris and ecology’, Boos sees some parallels between his own thought and that of present-day ‘deep ecologists’ and ‘spiritual ecologists’,³³ but surely she is correct when she also writes that his clearest heirs are ‘social ecologists’ or ‘ecosocialists’; advocates of environmental *and social* justice. In particular, Morris’s discussion of the growth and rapacity of the nineteenth century global colonial market is ‘strikingly prescient’. She concludes

Morris’s prose embodied a deep and resonant late-nineteenth-century critique of contemporary environmental and social devastation ... (to which he) added a fiercely concrete ... sense ... of the need for a proper harmony of people and the natural order they live in, ... and a radical call for the communal ownership not

only of 'property' and the 'means of production', but also ... the inherent beauty of our common possession of nature—woods, rivers and sky. ... His fundamental insights were ... founded in the conviction that human happiness lies in our ability to live in ... symbiosis with (nature) —understanding it, preserving it, transforming it, and sometimes resisting it, in loving and artistic ways.³⁴

The above (both myself and Boos) seems to have been too much for Sara Wills, who suggests that the 'refashioning ... remaking and relabelling' of Morris as proto-green has once again 'appropriated (him) for a back-projected history of "green" discourse', and that (quoting Isobel Armstrong) 'Once more, ... we (are) "re-valuing" a Victorian by claiming that he was like us'. Instead, Morris's idea of 'nature' was not ecocentric, but anthropocentric: 'there was nothing "eco-centric" about Morris, "if being "eco-centric" ... means putting the whole "eco-system" above its human parts ...'³⁵

Instead, the (main) 'importance of Morris's work lay ... in his thinking (1) about the ways in which nature might be "reasonably shared" (within) and between *human* societies (emphasis original), and (2) the (essentially green) notion that 'if one gets livelihood right, nature stands a much better chance of surviving'. In Morris, this is achieved by insisting that work be pleasurable, which in turn leads us to 'consider the possibility of new relationships within work, and between work as production and nature'.³⁶

However, having cast some green writing about Morris as 'more celebratory than critical',³⁷ Wills arrives at a position not unlike that of several more enthusiastic advocates of 'Morris the Green' – including Boos and myself – that his ideas regarding a 'shift in the work paradigm' would render competition and the profit motive obsolete, would lead to major socioeconomic as well as ecological change, and would reduce the human 'ecological footprint' on nature. Therefore, Morris may indeed not be the intellectual ancestor of 'deep greens' or 'spiritual greens', but he is, along with Kropotkin, a direct antecedent of 'red-greens'.³⁸

Bradley Macdonald further examined an idea mentioned by Boos – that Morris's initial ecological thoughts were aesthetic, but that his earlier insights were modified by his conversion to socialism. However, for MacDonald, it is the aesthetic experience which informs the later socialist ideas, generating an explicit sense of ecological regeneration and sustainability. Morris's 'ecosocialist vision' thus arose not just from his exposure to Marxism, but also from his commitment to 'a notion of critical beauty', which he obtained from his earlier medievalism, Pre-Raphaelitism and aestheticism, all of which furnished him with 'an intense naturalism which ... (provided) him with (the) impetus to articulate what would later become a consistent ecological vision'.³⁹

Like Boos, MacDonald maintains that Morris's early lectures (1877-1883)

largely examine art and beauty related to pleasurable labour, intimately related to a reverence for the Earth. But he soon realised that only way to regenerate art and beauty was to transform social conditions, and to abolish the profit motive, and its consequent overproduction. His socialism was therefore a logical outcome of his thinking about the arts, and as soon as he realised that pleasurable labour could only come about under socialism, he devoted himself wholeheartedly to it.⁴⁰

Morris’s idea of socialism was clearly ‘incubated’ in his thinking about the nature of art. When he described his vision of socialism, he could not help but discuss its role in bringing about an ecologically sustainable world. At present, the real limit to human impact on the Earth appears not to be, as previously thought, the availability of scarce resources, but the ability of the planet to absorb human impact – its ‘carrying capacity’ for our ‘ecological footprint’.⁴¹ Responding to this problem will require a decrease in consumption and contraction in industrial production which many greens (and anti-greens) portray as a *reduction* in the human ‘standard of living’. Morris’s thought is the key to solving this conundrum.⁴²

Morris’s analysis – ‘amazing in its prescience of what (became) almost *de rigueur* (during) the twentieth century’ – still represents the clearest assessment of the ways in which ecological sustainability is linked to socialism (and *vice versa*), and is based not just on an appreciation of the Earth as an abstract entity, but an ethical injunction for its restoration and continued protection. His melding of a unique combination of theoretical and conceptual ideas and discourses into a potent ecological analysis and vision, therefore mean that he must be regarded as one of the most important visionaries of ecosocialism.⁴³

Martin Delveaux argues that, in *News from Nowhere*, Morris did not just envisage a new social order in which communities are socially just, participatory, independent, economically viable and environmentally sustainable. By stressing the need for a decentralised and ‘polycentric’ country, and by showing how co-operation, as opposed to competition, can form a symbiosis between the members of the society, he also effectively linked the local with the global, a central green idea. In ‘The Society of the Future’ (1893) describes

... a society which does not know the meaning of the words rich and poor, or the rights of property, or ... nationality: ... in which equality of condition is a matter of course, ... a society conscious of a wish to keep life simple, to forgo some of the power over nature won by past ages in order to be more human and less mechanical ...⁴⁴

People no longer differentiate between ‘country’ and ‘town’, a change which followed a reversal of the processes which created the great manufacturing cities

of the nineteenth century – ‘Enclosure’, and forced removal of labouring people to the town.⁴⁵ Communities are economically self-reliant, producing only for need, in a polity based on ‘Federations of Independent Communities’, integrating the local with the global, the individual with the collective.

Such changes not only pre-figure, as indicated, such earlier movements as ‘Back to the Land’ and ‘Back to Nature’, but also ‘bioregionalist’ elements of modern environmentalism.⁴⁶ Delveaux therefore suggests that *Nowhere*, as described by Morris (and *pace* Sara Wills), is clearly an ecocentric (as opposed to an anthropocentric) society, in which human beings and nature are of equal importance. Since ownership does not exist, people cannot possess nature.

Interaction between Morris’s ‘ecological’ ideas and his designs is discussed by David Faldet, who suggests that several of his ‘Thames tributary’ patterns not only commemorate locations which figure in Morris’s life, but also incorporate the sinuosity of the meander, that most fractal of features of an undamaged river valley, thus typifying ‘the fertile power of slowness’. In *News from Nowhere*, the rejuvenated Thames – clear, recolonised by salmon, and therefore re-oxygenated – is the symbol of ‘an epoch of rest’, re-establishing ‘the old lines of connection between people and the Earth’.⁴⁷ This theme is further explored by Jed Mayer, who suggests that *Trellis*, for example, portrays ‘an ethic of natural stewardship’ which brings order to nature but does not dominate, and that *The Strawberry Thief*, like Darwin’s tangled bank, illustrates ‘harmony and symmetry amongst abundance and complexity’.⁴⁸

Such qualities stem from Morris’s underlying pre-occupation with the limitations of scientific method for understanding the natural world, a theme which runs through his lectures of the 1880s, in which he was influenced by Ruskin, Edward Carpenter, and (again) his early, Pre-Raphaelite experience. As with Ruskin, Morris’s critique of industrial capitalism emphasises ways in which ‘scientific and commercial culture reduce humans, animals, and landscapes to the status of raw material to be worked for material gain’. Both imagined a ‘greener’ science which provides ‘an alternative means of interacting with the natural world which emphasises the aesthetic and the emotional ... as well as the intellectual’. Morris’s designs educate the eye into seeing patterns and coherences in nature which convey ‘a more harmonious relationship between humans and non-humans’, ‘an image of natural cooperation drawn from the familiar (and the) domesticated’.⁴⁹

Similar patterns were recorded during the nineteenth century by Ernst Haeckel, and the early twentieth by Darcy Thompson, and are now part of the new ‘science of complexity’ based on pattern rather than process, understanding rather than manipulation, and in an echo of Morris (and of course, Kropotkin), cooperation rather than competition. In choosing the Thames Valley as the

‘bioregion’ of Nowhere, Morris even prefigures later twentieth century developments in the environmental sciences.⁵⁰

In 2008 I was delighted to be asked to give the Penelope Fitzgerald Memorial Address, part of which I devoted to a Morrisian critique of ‘dark green’ environmentalism, in the shape of James Lovelock’s *The Revenge of Gaia*, which I compared to Edward Bellamy’s *Looking Backward*.⁵¹ Lovelock (probably rightly) believes that the Earth is now in a dangerous and unstable condition, and may soon ‘flip’ to a new state much less comfortable for us. The potential impact of such a change on human life is severe, so that we need to take urgent action. There is hope (of a kind!) – ‘it might even be possible to sustain ten billion or more (of us) living in well-planned, dense cities, eating synthesised food’ – but such changes will demand sacrifices, none of which will be of any use unless we control our population. One fundamental problem, however, is that human beings are ‘a planetary disease’, programmed by evolution as ‘tribal carnivores’. Therefore, as we cannot trust humanity to ‘do the right thing’ by itself, what we need is ‘a book of knowledge ... a manual for living well and survival ... , and (of course!) ‘a small permanent group of strategists who ... will ... be ready for surprises to come’.⁵²

The Revenge of Gaia is therefore typical of the misanthropic, pessimistic, elitist and authoritarian aspects of much green thinking which have long (and rightly) made it unattractive to socialists. But its regimentation, mechanisation (of production and life), authoritarianism, elitism and artificiality are also very similar to *Looking Backward*, and both texts, in which human beings live completely artificial lives, totally separated from nature, are essentially ultra-modernist. They are also the antithesis of *News from Nowhere*, in which Morris explains how to build an ecological society which is neither authoritarian nor totalitarian.

In September 2009 I updated my earlier lecture at the William Morris Gallery,⁵³ in terms especially of two issues which had found their way onto the environmental agenda since the first occasion – globalisation, and sustainability. In Morris’s day, globalisation meant the colonial world market, which by then had more or less reached its zenith, and against which he spoke and wrote many times, not just its devastating social and environmental effects, but also that it was system out of control; a point which resonates strongly with us today.

It is clear ... that in the last age of civilisation men had got into a vicious circle in the matter of production of wares. They had reached a wonderful facility of production, and in order to make the most of that facility they had gradually created (or allowed to grow, rather) a most elaborate system of buying and selling, which has been called the World-Market; and that World Market, once set a-going, forced them to go on making more and more of these wares, whether they needed them or not. So that while (of course) they could not free themselves

from the toil of making real necessities, they created in a never-ending series sham or artificial necessities, which became, under the iron rule of the aforesaid World-Market, of equal importance to them with the real necessities which supported life. By all this they burdened themselves with a prodigious mass of work merely for the sake of keeping their wretched system going.⁵⁴

Morris had earlier described the impact of this system on the colonial world

... the Indian or Javanese craftsman may no longer ply his craft leisurely, working a few hours a day, in producing a maze of strange beauty on a piece of cloth: a steam engine is set a-going at Manchester, and that victory over nature and a thousand stubborn difficulties is used for the base work of producing a sort of plaster of china-clay and shoddy and the Asiatic worker, if he is not starved to death outright, as plentifully happens, is driven himself into a factory to lower the wages of his Manchester brother worker, and nothing of character is left him except, most like, an accumulation of fear and hatred of that to him most unaccountable evil, his English master. The South Sea Islander must leave his canoe-carving, his sweet rest, and his graceful dances, and become the slave of a slave: trousers, shoddy, rum, missionary, and fatal disease – he must swallow all this civilization in a lump, and neither himself or we can help him now till social order displaces that hideous tyranny of gambling that has ruined him.⁵⁵

Ironically, since Morris's time, economic globalisation has been reversed, with manufacturing largely removed from Europe and North America and centred on China, and provision of services to India. Under the Doha round of the GATT, it is even proposed that provision of *local* services be taken away from individual communities, and given over to global corporations. Fortunately, this round is currently seriously stalled.

As for sustainability, the definition most people follow is that provided by the 'Brundtland Report' – 'Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs'⁵⁶ – but in my lecture I proposed another, simpler definition which I believe represents true sustainability – 'Local production for local need'. Once again, Morris had already arrived at this definition, some one hundred and twenty years before.

The wares which we make are made because they are needed: men make for their neighbours' use as if they were making for themselves, not for a vague market of which they know nothing, and over which they have no control: as there is no buying and selling, it would be mere insanity to make goods on the chance of their being wanted; for there is no longer any one who can be *compelled* to buy them. ... whatever is made is good, and thoroughly fit for its purpose. Nothing *can* be made except for genuine use; therefore no inferior goods are made. More

over, as ... we have now found out what we want; and ... are not driven to make a vast quantity of useless things, we have time and resources enough to consider our pleasure in making them.⁵⁷

Two recent essays must also be given very brief attention. In the first, Tony Pinkney laments the apparent lack of economic and scientific progress in *Nowhere*; that in this essentially ‘fourteenth century Gothic paradigm’, some people (Annie, Old Hammond) are disappointed with the parochialism which has beset their revolution.⁵⁸ What *Nowhere* therefore lacks, according to Pinkney, is a fourth element beyond the air and the water it has cleaned, and the earth it has healed – fire, in the shape of progress. Indicating that similar problems are encountered in Ursula Le Guin’s magnificent utopia, *The Dispossessed*, Pinkney opts for what he considers a more dynamic solution, Ernest Callenbach’s *Eco-topia*.⁵⁹ But that book – a highly centralised, strongly governed and regulated, ‘hi-tech’, ‘technocentric’ future, which has retained both money, and competition between private corporations⁶⁰ – can surely in no way be compared to *News from Nowhere* (or *Annares*). Besides, mature ecosystems use ‘fire’ (i.e. energy) not to promote progress, but to perform work, all of which, in ecological terms, is highly ‘useful’.

In the second, Piers Hale⁶¹ discusses the Darwinian context of the familiar issue of socialism and ‘human nature’. Apparently, many late-nineteenth century socialists still adhered to the by then scientifically discredited evolutionary concept of the French zoologist Jean-Baptiste de Lamarck (1744-1829) – the inheritance of characteristics acquired during an organisms lifetime – to explain how they might succeed in ‘Making Socialists’. Under the onslaught of pro-capitalist scientists such as Thomas Henry Huxley (‘Darwin’s Bulldog’; 1825-1895), these ideas were eventually abandoned by (one-time) Fabians such as H.G. Wells; another factor which may have led to the century of neglect of environmental issues by the social-democratic left in Britain referred to by Raymond Williams (Notes 4, 7). Of course, as Hale ultimately points out, ‘making socialists’ does not rely on genetic inheritance, but on cultural learning, so that this flirtation with Modernism on the part of that particular generation of socialists is at least doubly unfortunate.

Over the past thirty-five years, the image of William Morris has been transformed from confused and hesitating proto-modernist, who did not really mean what he wrote in *News from Nowhere*,⁶² via ‘designer, poet, businessman’, to one of the most important founders of the modern red-green movement (such as it is). As discussed, he achieved this via a synthesis between his earlier aesthetic ideas and his later Marxism which stressed the equal importance of human and

environmental factors – so much so that Morris is one of the few ‘green’ critics of capitalism who provides us with a concrete example of how to build an ecological society without resorting to authoritarianism. Perhaps this will yet be Morris’s greatest contribution to ‘The Society of the Future’.

NOTES

1. Jack Lindsay, *William Morris. His life and work*, New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1975 (1979), pp. 382-383; ‘Introduction’, in A.L. Morton, ed, *The Political Writings of William Morris*, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1979, pp. 27-28; E.P. Thompson, *William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary*, New York: Pantheon, 1976, p. 801.
2. Nicholas Gould, ‘William Morris’, *Ecologist* 4 (6), July 1974, pp. 210-212.; http://www.theecologist.org/back_archive/19701999/ (as accessed 27 June 2011).
3. ‘Art and Socialism’, 1884, as quoted by Raymond Williams, *Culture & Society: 1780-1950*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1958 (1983), p. 152.
4. Raymond Williams, ‘Socialism and Ecology’ (1982), in Robin Gable, ed, *Resources of Hope. Culture, Democracy, Socialism*, London: Verso, 1989, pp. 210-226. (Afterwards ‘Socialism and Ecology’).
5. Jan Marsh, *Back to the Land: The Pastoral Impulse in Victorian England, 1880-1914*, London: Quartet, 1982, pp. 12-17.
6. ‘Useful Work versus Useless Toil’, 1884; as in A.L. Morton, ed, *The Political Writings of William Morris*, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1973 (1979), p. 94. (Afterwards Morton)
7. Peter C. Gould, *Early Green Politics. Back to Nature, Back to the Land, and Socialism in Britain, 1880-1900*, Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1989, pp. 16-17, 24-27, 30-32; ‘Socialism and Ecology’, p. 7.
8. Patrick O’Sullivan, ‘The Ending of the Journey: William Morris, *News from Nowhere* and ecology’, in Stephen Coleman & Patrick O’Sullivan, eds, *William Morris and News from Nowhere: A vision for our time*, Hartland: Green Books, 1990, pp. 169-181.
9. ‘How we live and how we might live’, 1884; Morton, p. 153.
10. Peter Marshall, *Nature’s Web. Rethinking our place on Earth*, London: Cassell, 1992, p. 313; David Pepper, *Modern Environmentalism. An introduction*, London: Routledge, 1996, p. 214 (Afterwards Pepper, *Modern Environmentalism*); *Ecosocialism. From Deep Ecology to Social Justice*, London: Routledge, 1993, p. 129 (emphasis original; afterwards Pepper, *Ecosocialism*).
11. ‘The man who saved the world – ecology and the thought of William Morris’, William Morris Annual Lecture, William Morris Gallery, 27 October

1994. See also *William Morris Society Newsletter*, January 1995, p.19.
12. John Passmore, *Man's responsibility for Nature*, London: Duckworth, 1980, 227 pp.
 13. ‘The Lesser Arts’, 1877; Morton, p. 53.
 14. ‘How we live and how we might live’; Morton, p. 153.
 15. Richard Routley, ‘Is there a need for a new environmental ethic?’, in Michael Zimmerman, ed, *Environmental Philosophy. From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*, London: Prentice Hall, 1999, pp. 17-25.
 16. ‘Art under Plutocracy’, 1883; Morton, p. 58.
 17. ‘Useful Work versus Useless Toil’; Morton, p. 91.
 18. Arne Naess, ‘The shallow and the deep, long-range ecology movements. A summary’, *Inquiry*, 16, 1973, pp. 95-100.
 19. ‘The Lesser Arts’; Morton, p. 46.
 20. James Redmond, ed, *William Morris, News from Nowhere*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970, Chapter X, pp. 62-63; Chapter V, p. 23. (Afterwards *NfN*)
 21. ‘The Lesser Arts’; Morton, p. 59. For discussion of instrumental, inherent and intrinsic value, see Patrick O’Sullivan, ‘On the value of lakes’, in Patrick O’Sullivan & Colin Reynolds, eds, *The Lakes Handbook. Vol. 2, Lake Restoration and Lake Rehabilitation*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2005, pp. 3-24.
 22. United Nations International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 1994 (ICPD ’94), Summary of the programme of Action, <http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/populatin/icpd.htm> (as accessed 4 July 2011).
 23. *NfN*, Chapter IX, ‘Concerning Love’, pp. 43-53; Chapter XXIX, p. 168. See also Florence S. Boos, ‘An (almost-) egalitarian sage: William Morris’s later writings and “The Woman Question”’, in Thäis Morgan, ed, *Victorian Sages and Cultural Discourse. Renegotiating Gender and Power*, Piscataway, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1990, pp. 187-206, 296-301.
 24. Although they do take part in the harvest, and there is always Philippa the stonemason; *NfN*, Chapter XXVI, pp. 148-152; Jan Marsh, ‘Concerning Love’, in Stephen Coleman & Patrick O’Sullivan, eds, *William Morris and News from Nowhere*, Green Books: Hartland, Devon, 1990, pp. 107-125.
 25. E. Estyn Evans, ‘The ecology of peasant life in medieval Europe’, in William L. Thomas, ed, *Man's role in changing the face to the Earth*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956, pp. 217-239. For a different Morrisian take on this issue see Ady Mineo, ‘Eros unbound: sexual identities in *News from Nowhere*’, *Journal of the William Morris Society*, IX, 1992, pp. 8-14, and ‘Beyond the Law of the Father: the “New Woman” in *News from Nowhere*’, in Peter Faulkner & Peter Preston, eds, *William Morris. Centenary Essays*, Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1996, pp. 200-206.

26. Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature. Women, ecology and the Scientific Revolution*, San Francisco: Harper Collins, Chapter 6, pp. 149-155.
27. *NfN*, Chapter X, p. 62.
28. A topic given considerable attention by Kropotkin; *Fields, Factories, and Workshops, or Industry combined with Agriculture, and Brain Work with Manual Work*, London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1912, Chapters III to V, 'The Possibilities of Agriculture', pp. 79-240.
29. Florence S. Boos, 'An Aesthetic Ecocommunist. Morris the Red and Morris the Green', in Peter Faulkner & Peter Preston, eds, *William Morris: Centenary Essays*, Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1996, pp. 21-46. (Afterwards Boos)
30. Boos, p. 23.
31. 'The Beauty of Life', 1880; Boos, p. 29.
32. 'The Society of the Future', 1888, as quoted in Boos, pp. 34-35. See also Morton, p. 193.
33. See Naess (Note 18) and George Sessions, *Deep Ecology for the Twenty-first century*. London: Shamballa, 1995, 520 pp.; Carolyn Merchant, *Radical Ecology. The search for a liveable world*, London: Routledge, 2005, 283 pp. For a similar overview of Morris's relation to the wider green movement, see Jacqueline Guegain, 'William Morris, prophète d'un âge d'or écocentrique', in Marie Thérèse Bernat & Michael Hearn, *Morris et L'Utopie*, Lettres et Civilisations Étrangères, Arras: Artois Presses Université, 2007, pp. 109-125.
34. Boos, pp 44-45.
35. And that there are 'more appropriate uses' of this 'monumental Victorian'; Sara Wills, 'Woods beyond Worlds? The greening of William Morris', *Australian Victorian Studies*, 7, 2001, pp. 137-149 (pp. 138, 139, 140).
36. *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 143.
37. Sara Wills, 'Nature, socialism, livelihood: the greening of William Morris?', *Melbourne Historical Journal*, 31, 2003, 74-92 (p. 75). See also Sara Wills, 'Writing about Morris's nature', in Martin Crotty & Doug Scobie, eds, *Raiding Clío's Closet*, Parkville: University of Melbourne Press, 1997, pp. 219-230, and *The Greening of William Morris: A Reasonable Share in the Beauty of the Earth*, Circa, 2006, 314 pp., neither of which were available to me in time for writing this article.
38. For a discussion of these terms, see Pepper, *Ecosocialism*, pp. 45-55, and Pepper, *Modern Environmentalism*, Chap. 1, especially pp. 42-43.
39. Bradley MacDonald, 'William Morris and the vision of ecosocialism', *Contemporary Justice Review*, 7, 2004, pp. 287-304. (pp. 287, 288, 295; Afterwards MacDonald)
40. *Ibid.*, p. 295, 296.
41. Mathis Wakernagel & William Rees, *Our Ecological Footprint. Reducing*

- human impact on the Earth*, Gabriola Island, British Columbia: New Society Publishers, 1996, 160 pp.
42. MacDonald, p. 288, 291, 292.
 43. *Ibid.*, pp. 298, 300, 301.
 44. 'The Society of the Future', 1893, as quoted in Martin Delveaux, '“O me! O me! How I love the earth”: William Morris's *News from Nowhere* and the birth of sustainable society', *Contemporary Justice Review*, 8, part 2, 2005, pp. 131-146. (Afterwards Delveaux, *CJR*) See also Morton, p. 201.
 45. Martin Overton, *Agricultural Revolution in England. The transformation of the agrarian economy, 1500-1850*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, 257 pp.
 46. Kirkpatrick Sale, *Dwellers in the Land: the bioregional vision*, San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1985, 230 pp.
 47. David Faldet, 'The river at the heart of Morris's ecological thought', in David Latham, ed, *Writing on the Image: Reading William Morris*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007, pp. 73-84. (p. 77, 79) Although Martin Delveaux (*CJR*, p. 150) suggests that *News from Nowhere* is not located in any particular bioregion, it surely takes place in the valley ('watershed', catchment, drainage basin) of the River Thames.
 48. Jed Mayer, 'William Morris and the greening of science', *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 17, 2008, pp. 57-76. (p. 67, 70)
 49. *Ibid.*, pp. 62, 64, 68 (Though Morris was much the more sceptical, science being 'too much in the pay of the counting house ... and the drill sergeant'; 'The Lesser Arts'; Morton, p. 53).
 50. *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70; Brian Goodwin, *How the Leopard changed its spots. The evolution of complexity*. London: Phoenix Giants, 1995, 233 pp; Patrick O'Sullivan, 'The ecosystem-watershed concept in the environmental sciences – a review', *International Journal of Environmental Studies*, 13, 1979, pp. 273-281.
 51. James Lovelock, *The Revenge of Gaia. Why the Earth is fighting back – and how we can still save humanity*. London: Allen Lane, 2006, 177 pp. (Afterwards Lovelock, *Revenge*); Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward, 2000-1887*. London: Penguin New Edition, 1986, 240 pp.
 52. Lovelock, *Revenge*, p. 141, pp. 4, 10, pp. 157-158, p. 153.
 53. 'William Morris and Nature', Lecture given as part of *News from Nowhere revisited*, William Morris Gallery, Lloyd Park, Walthamstow, London, 8 September 2009.
 54. *NfN*, Chapter XXV, p. 79.
 55. 'How we live and how we might live'; Morton, p. 140.
 56. World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 43.

57. *NfN*, Chapter XV, p. 82.

58. Tony Pinkney, 'Versions of ecotopia in *News from Nowhere*', in Phillipa Bennett & Rosie Miles, eds, *William Morris in the Twenty-first Century*, Oxford: Peter Lang, pp. 93-106 (p. 98). (Afterwards Bennett & Miles) They may not be the only ones. Towards the end of the book, Ellen, Pinkney's 'new kind of utopian', (p. 102) states

I should be quite content to dream about past times, and if I could not idealise them, yet at least idealise some of the people who lived in them. But I think sometimes people are too careless of the history of the past – too apt to leave it in the hands of old learned men like Hammond. Who knows? *happy as we are, times may alter; we may be bitten with some impulse towards change*, and many things may seem too wonderful for us to resist, too exciting not to catch at, if we do not know that they are but phases of what has been before; and withal ruinous deceitful, and sordid (*NfN*, Chapter XXIX, pp. 167-168, my italics).

59. Ursula Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, London: Panther, 1975, 319 pp; Ernest Callenbach, *Ecotopia*, Berkeley, Calif.: Banyan Tree Books, 1975, 181 pp.

60. Martin Delveaux, 'From pastoral arcadia to stable-state mini-cities: Morris's *News from Nowhere* and Callenbach's *Ecotopia*', *JWMS*XIV, No. 1, 2000, pp. 75-81. (p. 79) It has also been described – rightly, in my view – by David Pepper (*The Roots of Modern Environmentalism*, London: Croom Helm, 1984, p. 204-208) as 'ecosfascist'.

61. Piers J. Hale, 'William Morris, Human Nature and the Biology of Utopia', in Bennett & Miles, pp. 107-127. See also my 'Editorial – Science under Plutocracy', *JWMS*, XVII, No. 2, pp. 3-14.

62. See my article, this volume, p. 93-111.

Morris After Marcuse: Art, Beauty, and the Aestheticist Tradition in Ecosocialism

Bradley J. Macdonald

It is the province of art to set the true ideal of a full and reasonable life before him, a life to which the perception and creation of beauty, the enjoyment of real pleasure that is, shall be felt to be as necessary as man as his daily bread, and that no man and no set of men, can be deprived of this except by mere opposition, which should be resisted to the utmost.

Art can do nothing to prevent the ascent of barbarism—it cannot by itself keep open its own domain in and against society. For its own preservation and development, art depends on the struggle for the abolition of the social system which generates barbarism as its own potential stage: potential form of its progress. The fate of art remains linked to that of the revolution. In this sense, it is indeed an internal exigency of art which drives the artist to the streets—to fight for the Commune, for the Bolshevik Revolution, for the German revolution of 1918, for the Chinese and Cuban revolutions, for all revolutions which have the historical chance of liberation.¹

To bring together the ideas of William Morris and Herbert Marcuse is not such a stretch as one might first imagine. Both of these committed socialists did not separate the practices and ideals of art and socialism, and both, given these interlocking commitments, could not help but envision ecological regeneration in a future socialist society. This mutual convergence in their thinking of art, beauty, socialism, and ecological sustainability has led to both Morris and Marcuse being heralded as key figures in the tradition of ecosocialism. As an important subtradition within radical ecology, ecosocialism has consistently argued that capitalist economic practices, given their myopic commitment to profit, have created intensive and extensive conditions of ecological destruction in the form

of pollution, resource depletion, global climate change, and the devastation of a panoply of flora and fauna, ensuring a continual and growing antagonism between human beings and nature.

Moreover, ecosocialism has further argued that a socialist revolution will help to alleviate humanity's destruction of the environment in such a way as to establish a renewed harmony between human beings and external nature, in the process allowing nature to flourish and regenerate. To put it in the words of Marcuse, with which, I am sure, Morris would agree: '[T]he liberation of nature from the destructive violation of industrialisation, repressive industrialisation, is an essential part of the liberation of man'.² Yet the real issue which arises within this subtradition is how socialism can imply a renewed relationship to nature, particularly given that traditionally socialism has been conceived along very similar lines as capitalism (as its dialectical twin, so to speak), only now a growth-orientated mode of production controlled and owned by the community for the sake of the community. Indeed, it is the way in which both Morris and Marcuse conceive of socialism via their aestheticist commitments which allows them to seamlessly integrate a 'limits to growth' caveat in their conceptions of socialism.

What I want to argue in this essay is that there can be much to learn from bringing Morris into relation with the theory of Marcuse, who, as is well known, was an important exponent of the first generation Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School in the twentieth century. What can students of both Morris and Marcuse gain from such a comparative and critical analysis? On the one hand, given Marcuse's reputation as an important philosopher in the tradition of Western Marxism, to see the intimate similarities between his work and Morris's ideas can help to resuscitate a renewed acceptance of the importance of Morris within this tradition. Even with the continual appreciation of Morris's ideas by scholars in this *Journal* and elsewhere, there is still not a consistent sense that Morris represents a significant *theoretical* figure in the Western Marxist tradition. Of course, Morris did not help in rectifying this type of dismissal: at times he downplayed his theoretical pedigree by claiming that his position could best be seen as 'constructive' socialism, an orientation which he insisted lacked the 'analytical' character of other socialists who, he confessed with some envy, engage in the 'dreamy contemplation of the perfection of some favourite theory'.³

Yet, on the other hand, given Morris's intimate participation in the 'revival of socialism' as a 'practical socialist' in late nineteenth-century England (from first joining the Democratic Federation in 1883 to his death in 1896, Morris continually engaged in socialist organisation and politics, not to mention giving lectures to middle class and working class audiences for the sake of educating individuals on the 'religion' of socialism), the unique theoretical preoccupations of Marcuse's theory may, in turn, not seem as so elitist and anti-political as some commentators on the Frankfurt School have argued.⁴ At the very least, such an

attempt to bring both together in some fruitful dialogue should be enlightening about the characteristics and concerns of their socialist positions, and, as the title of this essay suggests, in clarifying the particularities of what I have termed, the 'aestheticist' tradition of ecosocialism.

II

The art of modern Europe, whose roots lie in the remotest past, undiscoverable by any research, is doomed, and is passing away; that is a serious, nay an awful thought; nor do I wonder that all artists, even the most thoughtful, refuse to face the fact. I cannot conceive of anyone who loves beauty, that is to say, the crown of a full and noble life, being able to face it, unless he has the full faith in the religion of Socialism.

The relation between art and revolution is a unity of opposites, an antagonistic unity. Art obeys a necessity, and has a freedom which is its own—not those of the revolution. Art and revolution are united in 'changing the world'—liberation. But in its practice, art does not abandon its own exigencies and does not quit its own dimension: it remains non-operational. In art, the political goal appears only in the transfiguration which is the aesthetic form.⁵

In using the term 'aestheticist', I am of course referring to a recurring aesthetic ideology which took traction during Morris's lifetime, and which continued to flower in the avant-gardist aesthetic positions of the twentieth century which influenced Marcuse. Most simply, aestheticism is a position which defines the most important function of art as the production of beauty for the sake of beauty. It thus militates against any attempt to use art for moral or political propaganda purposes, which would inevitably taint the particular experience of which art can supply. Ultimately, this movement initially gained purchase in a number of nineteenth century artistic groups concerned with keeping the beautiful uncorrupted by the growing rationalisation and industrialisation associated with capitalist society, manifesting itself, particularly in the English context, in avid calls for keeping art's truths and forms separate from the bourgeois world of 'dogmatic morality' and capitalist 'living interests'.⁶

In this register, then, we find an avid concern with beauty and the ideal of 'art for art's sake'.⁷ While some commentators have seen aestheticism as leading to a form of escapism and withdrawal from human life (or, at the very least, the aestheticisation of individual behaviour or 'dandyism'), this could not be further from the metapolitical intentions of some of its more political and radical

proponents: for certain advocates of aestheticism (what we might call 'critical aestheticism') at least, such a commitment to the beautiful is intimately related to ensuring that certain truths and forms can continue to exist so as to provide a better ideal for a truly human life. Beauty for its own sake becomes a call for a social world that reflects the beautiful—'*the poetry to be lived*'.⁸

As a key proponent of English aestheticism early in his artistic life, this critical aestheticist dimension was vital to Morris's development as a political theorist.⁹ As is well known, Morris began his life devoted to the principles of Pre-Raphaelitism (a particular discourse of aestheticism infused with an attempt to portray medieval and natural themes in its artistic representations), and was a fellow traveller of the Aesthetic Movement (of which Algernon Charles Swinburne, a lifelong friend, was a key proponent). While earlier commentators on Morris's life were adamant about separating certain aestheticist commitments from his development as a socialist, I think that this completely overlooks the important political dimension this position assumes.¹⁰ At the very least, Morris nurtured a critical notion of beauty from his early aestheticist position (even if he felt he was no more than an 'idle singer of an empty day', as he famously portrayed his poetic self in the 'Apology' at the outset of *The Earthly Paradise*), which was given an important social dimension once it was rethought via John Ruskin's 'labour theory of beauty', that is, the potent notion that the conditions for the flourishing of beauty were directly related to the labouring conditions of ordinary workers.

When Morris in 1877 began writing lectures on the nature of art, he laid out the following propositions which he would repeat in various ways: that art was in a state of decay under the grinding teeth of capitalism; that in the past, particularly as expressed in the medieval social world, art was a natural outgrowth of the conditions of pleasurable labour of the everyday worker; and, that the regeneration of art in modern society demands more than a few artists committed to producing beautiful artworks (such as his own artistic self). Instead it requires large-scale social transformations, which can then bring about pleasurable labour and in turn a renewed aesthetic sense in which beauty becomes an intimate part of everyday life. Prior to his conversion to practical socialism in 1883, these lectures (Morris claimed in a letter to Andreas Scheu), represented 'socialism seen through the eyes of an artist', and were extremely important conceptual platforms for the constitution of Morris as a socialist.¹¹

Moreover, the aestheticist underpinnings to Morris's thinking were also clearly central in reinforcing his attachment to natural beauty, and, in turn, in intensifying his concern for the destruction of nature under capitalism. Not only was it, as one sympathetic critic noted in 1852, a principal tenet of Pre-Raphaelitism to 'go to Nature in all cases, and employ, as exactly as possible, her literal forms':¹² Morris quickly developed an expansive notion of art which inevitably included nature and 'all the externals of our life'. The destruction of natural beauty, more-

over, can easily be a catalyst for the withering away of the aesthetic sense in general. 'Can you expect the people to believe you to be in earnest in bidding them to love art and cultivate it', Morris cajoled middle-class art enthusiasts in 1881, 'if they see you in your greed for riches, or your fear of what are falsely called commercial interests, take no heed of and pay no reverence to the greatest of all gifts to the world, the very source of art, the natural beauty of the earth?'¹³ What then is important to see in Morris's development as a thinker, is that these early aestheticist commitments continued to circulate throughout his work in various ways, and that their influence on Morris as an ecosocialist was fundamental.¹⁴

A very similar commitment can be seen in Marcuse's thought, although its incubation within a different aesthetic and intellectual context (respectively European art and German philosophy), led him to articulate his aestheticist position in a more conceptual, rigorous, and, as we shall see, purist way. As clearly portrayed in the quote with which we began this section, Marcuse always assumed the importance and the necessity of aesthetic autonomy. Given the cultural, political, and economic closure of advanced capitalist societies (which he poignantly labelled, 'one-dimensional society'), Marcuse was continually concerned with the need, in order to provide a fulcrum for articulating alternatives to the *status quo*, to keep open alternative languages and cultural forms. Thus, for art to provide a negation of the current capitalist life-world, let alone a vision of future liberation, it must speak a language not shared by one-dimensional society. And, for Marcuse, such a critical distancing applies to all aspects of society: that is, not only should the language of the *status quo* be eschewed (and, of necessity, transformed by the intrinsic qualities of authentic art): a truly 'revolutionary' art must be careful in trying to aid too closely the necessities of political revolution.

For sure, to argue for the need to keep art in critical tension to political exigencies does not at all deny the Marxist materialist thesis that art is conditioned by the totality of prevailing social relationships. Nor, should one add, does this argument deny the 'affirmative' quality to art in the context of a repressive society: ensconced within a museum and printed in a popular text, art can indeed provide a necessary catharsis which allows one to return, satiated, to performing one's 'pleasurable' alienation at work and at home.¹⁵ As Marcuse argued, art and revolution are part of an 'antagonistic unity'. Art clings to the society from which it arose (in its reality-content, social conditioning of style, and via its cathartic role, which expiates one's sense of discontent with what exists), while, through the way in which the aesthetic form inevitably transforms this particular social element into a universal human condition, it opens a dimension for creating sensibilities which point beyond the current social conditioning and modes of repression. And, for Marcuse at least, it is only in its own autonomous realm associated with the aesthetic form that art can play any role in the revolutionary struggle for emancipation and liberation. '[T]he radical qualities of art', Marcuse argued,

that is to say, its indictment of the established reality and its invocation of the beautiful image (*schöner Schein*) of liberation are grounded precisely in the dimensions where art *transcends* its social determination and emancipates itself from the given universe of discourse and behavior while preserving its overwhelming presence . . . The inner logic of the work of art terminates in the emergence of another reason, another sensibility, which defy the rationality and sensibility incorporated in the dominant social institutions.¹⁶

As with other critical aestheticists, such as Morris, Marcuse could not *but* see that a commitment to 'art for art's sake' was equally a commitment to 'art for politics' sake'.

At this juncture, we can already see some interesting similarities, not to mention telling differences, between Morris's critical aestheticist stance, and Marcuse's. In a certain sense, they both realise that, under particular conditions of social life, art will of necessity be something separate from the everyday world of capitalism; only in that distancing can it provide an ideal beyond the exigencies of profit and domination. In 'Art Under Plutocracy', Morris argued against diluting art so that it could be closer to reigning popular tastes, given that this would ultimately do a disservice to its true cultural function:

Therefore the artists are obliged to express themselves, as it were, in a language not understood of the people. Nor is this their fault. If they were to try, as some think they should, to meet the public half-way and work in such a manner as to satisfy at any cost those vague prepossessions of men ignorant of art, they would be casting aside their special gifts, they would be traitors to the cause of art, which it is their duty and glory to serve.¹⁷

Yet, while Marcuse seems to assume that true art will always maintain a critical distance from the social world (a consequence of the universal function of aesthetic form), Morris's reading of history moved him to realise that art can easily become a practise closely wedded to the everyday life of humans given particular social conditions; in such times (as existed during the Middle Ages), the whole society shared a flourishing aesthetic sense. '[T]hat is to say', Morris clarified, 'the instinct for beauty which is inborn in every complete man had such force that the whole body of craftsmen habitually and without conscious effort made beautiful things, and the audience for the authors of intellectual art was nothing short of the whole people'.¹⁸

Clearly, for Morris, art was not to stay a preserve of a few gifted individuals, but should become a defining feature of the whole community. And, it is this social or popular sense of art's mission (what he had called earlier, 'the art of the people') which gives Morris's thinking a clear connection to larger social and political practices, one that is sometimes lacking in Marcuse's. Moreover, as is

well known, Morris experienced no problems in using his artistic and poetic gifts in creating literature, poetry, and songs for propaganda purposes, the most famous and lasting, of course, the literary utopia, *News from Nowhere*.

Yet, while Marcuse would argue forcefully for the autonomy of art from political exigencies (be they *status quo* or revolutionary), in the context of the late 1960s he began to see a growing 'cultural revolution' and 'new sensibility' which bespoke of the possible translation of the promise of art into everyday life, a movement from the cloistered aesthetic dimension into the open horizon of radical transformation.¹⁹ Drawing upon the aesthetic theory of Immanuel Kant, in *Critique of Judgment*, Marcuse laid open the potential theoretical and conceptual linkages between the 'aesthetic' and the 'political', as seemingly expressed in the political practices of the New Left and the cultural discourses of the counterculture during the 1960s: the 'aesthetic' pertains both to the senses widely construed (and thus to Eros, or the life-affirming instincts), and more specifically to the individual art work. In this way, as a mode of human sensibility, the aesthetic dimension shares aspects of wider transformations occurring in society, and offers a 'negation of the entire Establishment, its morality, culture; affirmation of the right to build a society in which the abolition of poverty and toil terminates in a universe where the sensuous, the playful, the calm, and the beautiful becomes forms of existence and thereby the *Form* of the society itself'.²⁰ Moreover, the aesthetic dimension as expressed in the aesthetic form provides an *ontological basis* for the interconnection between the fate of humanity and of nature, and therefore possible co-liberation. In an important chapter in *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, entitled, 'Nature and Revolution', Marcuse conveys the ecological implications of Kant's philosophy:

The aesthetic form in art has the aesthetic form in nature (*das Naturschöne*) as its correlate, or rather desideratum. If the idea of beauty pertains to nature as well as art, this is not merely an analogy, or a human idea imposed on nature—it is the insight that the aesthetic form, as a token of freedom, is a mode (moment?) of the human as well as natural universe, an objective quality. Thus Kant attributes the beautiful in nature to 'nature's capacity to form itself, in its freedom, also in an aesthetically purposive way, according to chemical laws ...'²¹

Like other aestheticist ecosocialists such as Morris, Marcuse's position is able to articulate the intricate and intimate way in which the beautiful undergirds both the human and the natural worlds, providing an interesting way in which to characterise their mutual fate, and liberating possibilities.

III

And amidst this pleasing labour [associated with the future socialist society], and the rest that went with it, would disappear from the earth's face all the traces of the past slavery. Being no longer driven to death by anxiety and fear, we should have time to avoid disgracing the earth with filth and squalor, and accidental ugliness would disappear along with that which was the mere birth of fantastic perversity.

A revolution cannot be waged for the sake of beauty. Beauty is but one criterion which plays a leading role in one element of the revolution, i. e., the restoration and reconstruction of the environment.²²

Like Marcuse, Morris was ultimately clear that capitalism was at the root of devastating destruction of the Earth. Each assumed in their own way that the rapacious attempt of capitalism to increase production and turn all facets of the environment into exchange value, creates a natural world in which no potential release, let alone truly human engagement, is possible. In the context of a developed capitalist system, Marcuse argued, nature all too often becomes '[c]ommercialized nature, polluted nature, militarized nature'.²³ Similarly, Morris maintained that under capitalism 'Commercial war' was 'swallowing up with its loathsomeness field and wood and heath without mercy and without hope, mocking our feeble efforts to deal even with its minor evils of smoke-laden sky and befouled river'.²⁴ If nature happens to escape this destructive facelift, it lingers in separate spaces as 'wilderness', neatly disciplined and 'protected' in parks, acting only as a temporary respite from the drudgery of everyday life. In such a context, humans are deprived of their ability to engage their environment aesthetically and pleasurably; an interchange which, for both Morris and Marcuse, would allow for the flowering of human potentialities.

In the context of capitalist blockages of humanity's truly sensuous relationships with its world, both humans and external nature are doomed to continued objectification and exploitation. Given this mutual fate, Marcuse argued that the struggle for human emancipation is intimately tied to the liberation of nature. 'What is happening', Marcuse averred (in reference to the growing ecology movement of the 1970s), 'is the discovery . . . of nature as an ally in the struggle against the exploitative societies in which the violation of nature aggravates the violation of man. The discovery of the liberating forces of nature and their vital role in the construction of a free society becomes a new force in social change'. What ties humans and nature together in this political project, are the shared potentialities associated with the aesthetic dimension ('the life-enhancing, sensuous, aesthetic

qualities inherent in nature'), which intrinsically raises the potential for a society which 'repels violence, cruelty, [and] brutality'.²⁵

When (as in the quotation with which we began this section) Marcuse claimed that 'beauty' could only be one aspect of a true socialist society, he was clearly making sure to avoid oversimplifications regarding the regulative ideals of socialism. But, and this is important in understanding the nature of his ecosocialist position, Marcuse was convinced that traditional notions of socialism (which confined themselves strictly to transformations within the productive process) could easily fall prey to the growth-orientated and eco-destructive patterns of its dialectical twin, capitalism. In order to avoid such problems, in its understanding of the realm of the material base, true socialism must include the realm of morality, aesthetics, and sensuousness.²⁶ The terrible dilemma concerning a socialist revolution is how one can assure that the humans who inhabit the new world possess a radically changed sensibility which would consistently militate against returning to the repressive ways of the past. For Marcuse, this can only come about by ensuring that there is the inauguration of a new sensibility (in a sense, a new matrix of the body, heart and mind), and it is here that the aesthetic dimension plays a key role.

If anything, Morris's ecosocialist position clearly seems an early precursor to Marcuse's vision. As with Marcuse's late twentieth century conception, Morris could not help but see the interconnections between the practises and the discourses of art, beauty, socialism, and ecological regeneration. Yet, as opposed to Marcuse's sometimes abstract rendering (which hinges on the Kantian assumption of the ontological sharing of aesthetic form in the human world and the natural world), Morris presented an intimately sociological and materialist position. In this sense, while Morris's notion of 'beauty' may not have possessed the same philosophical or theoretical weight as that of Marcuse, it did articulate a clearer understanding of the intimate connection of art to the material conditions of the working class. As we know, beauty for Morris is a reflection of pleasurable labour, a condition of economic life which can be revived through socialism. True socialism, then, can bring about a renewed world of beauty and art in the hands of everyday workers: such a revived aesthetic sense will then initiate a wholly renewed cultural sensibility in which, inevitably, the externals of human life, i.e. nature, will be an important concern for all of humanity. It is because Morris's concept of beauty is not wholly beholden to the cultural sphere, tied as it is to the structuring conditions of economic life, that he could easily argue, *pace* Marcuse, that beauty can indeed represent a powerful and all-inclusive goal for a future epoch of rest, plenty, and pleasure.

NOTES

1. 'How I Became a Socialist', in A.L. Morton, ed, *The Political Writings of William Morris*, New York: International Publishers, 1973, pp. 244-245 (Afterwards Morton); Herbert Marcuse, *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1972, pp. 121-2. (Afterwards *Counterrevolution and Revolt*)
2. Herbert Marcuse, 'Jerusalem Lectures,' in D. Kellner, ed, *Art and Liberation: Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse, Volume Four*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 156. (Afterwards Kellner).
3. 'The Society of the Future', 1887; Morton, p. 190.
4. See Perry Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism*, London: Verso Books, 1976, p. 34.
5. 'The Exhibition of the Royal Academy', in May Morris, ed, *William Morris: Artist, Writer, Socialist*, (2 vols), London: Basil Blackwell, 1936, Vol. 1, p. 240 (Afterwards AWS); *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, p. 105.
6. Algernon Charles Swinburne, 'Letter to the Editor', *The Spectator*, June 7, 1862; Walter Pater, unsigned review of *The Earthly Paradise*, *Westminster Review*, October 1868, as in Peter Faulkner, ed, *William Morris: The Critical Heritage*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973, p. 92.
7. For a general overview of the core meanings to the traditions of aestheticism, see Kelly Comfort, 'Introduction: Reflections on the Relationship between Art and Life in Aestheticism', in *Art and Life in Aestheticism: De-Humanizing and Re-Humanizing Art, the Artist, and the Artistic Receptor*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, pp. 1-21.
8. Bandiera (Gerald Massey), 'Poetry to Be Lived', *Red Republican* 1, No. 3, July 6, 1850, p. 19.
9. The following discussion of Morris's aesthetic ideas and their relation to his socialist convictions are developed at greater length in Bradley Macdonald, *William Morris and the Aesthetic Constitution of Politics*, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 1999, 200 pp. (Afterwards MacDonald).
10. I am thinking of the magisterial works of E.P. Thompson and Paul Meier, who, in their zeal to make Morris a 'relevant' socialist or Marxist, argue for the irrelevance of some of his aestheticist commitments, or at the very most that they created an interesting antagonism toward Victorian capitalist society, a critical void which could then be filled with more relevant political concepts and ideas. For a more elaborate discussion, see Macdonald.
11. To Andreas Scheu, 5 September 1883; in Norman Kelvin, ed, *Collected Letters of William Morris, Vol. II, Part I*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, p. 230.
12. David Masson, 'Pre-Raphaelitism in Art and Literature', in James Sambrook, ed, *Pre-Raphaelitism: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Chicago: Univer-

- sity of Chicago Press, 1974, p. 74.
13. 'Art Under Plutocracy', 1884; Morton, p. 58; 'Speech at the Meeting of the Kyrle Society', 27 January 1881; *AWS*, Vol. 1, p. 196.
 14. For further development of this issue, see Bradley J. Macdonald, 'William Morris and the Vision of Ecosocialism', *Contemporary Justice Review*, Vol. 7, No. 3, September 2004, pp. 287-304.
 15. For Marcuse's classic statement about the 'affirmative' quality to culture, see 'The Affirmative Character of Culture', in *Art and Liberation* (Kellner, pp. 82-112). For a discussion of the affirmative role of 'catharsis' unique to the aesthetic form, see Herbert Marcuse, *The Aesthetic Dimension: Towards a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1978, p. 10.
 16. *The Aesthetic Dimension*, pp. 6-7.
 17. 'Art under Plutocracy'; Morton, p. 61.
 18. *Ibid.*
 19. See Marcuse, 'Cultural Revolution', in Kellner, Vol. 2, pp. 123-162. In *An Essay on Liberation*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1969, pp. 23-48, Marcuse raises the possibility that the new cultural and affective energies expressed by radical movements and the counterculture, may be pointing toward the aesthetic dimension becoming a socially productive factor in rearranging social and technical institutions. (Afterwards *Essay on Liberation*)
 20. *Essay on Liberation*, p. 25.
 21. *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, p. 67.
 22. 'The Society of the Future'; Morton, p. 202; Herbert Marcuse, 'The Philosophy of Art and Politics: A Dialogue between Richard Kearney and Herbert Marcuse'; in Kellner, p. 233.
 23. *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, p. 60.
 24. 'Art and Socialism', 1884; Morton, p. 125.
 25. *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, pp. 59, 67, 68,
 26. *Essay on Liberation*, pp. 7-12.

The Dialectic of Nature in Nowhere

Tony Pinkney

I want to offer a four-stage theoretical model of how Nature functions in *News from Nowhere*, a model (or dialectic) which takes as its starting point the notion that Nature in Morris's utopia is a matter of *genre* as well as politics, of literary form quite as much as content. This being so, we shall witness the operation of a textual dynamic whereby a new initiative in terms of Nature at one level may produce unwelcome consequences at another, which then must be 'managed' by further textual innovations at a third level, which in their turn may ... and so on. To what extent this might be a conscious process on the author's part, I shall not be concerned with here; for I shall be guided by D.H. Lawrence's great dictum: 'Never trust the artist, trust the tale'. And after all, as *News from Nowhere* itself knows in its discussion of Eton, what ultimately counts is not the 'founder's intentions', but what subsequent history (or textuality, in the present case) makes of them.¹

As for my opening assumption, that Nature is inseparably a matter of both politics and genre in this work, I shall not argue that through as an abstract proposition; but I hope it will gain in persuasiveness as the first move of the Nowherian dialectic – politics impinging troublingly upon genre – is demonstrated in detail in what follows. I shall be presenting this dialectic as a broadly diachronic process through the text, both for ease of exposition and because to some extent it does genuinely seem to lay itself out across the book in this manner. But as *News from Nowhere* is itself aware in the case of aesthetic changes after the revolution, 'there was much overlapping of the periods'. (p.153) The various textual logics I depict here are in fact at work simultaneously as well as sequentially; and this is apt enough in a work whose later vision of Nature will make great play of its 'mingling' and 'blending', its complex melding of apparent opposites.

Stage one in the Nowherian treatment of Nature is familiar enough, as a matter of both practical observation and theoretical statement in the post-revolutionary world of the twenty-second century. With the defeat of capitalism in

the civil war of 1952-54, the deprivations of that economic system on physical as well as human nature begin to be systematically undone; and by the time we move from the immediate Morrow of the Revolution to the 'future of the fully-developed new society', (p.3) Nature has been fully restored to itself. William Guest swims in the waters of a Thames so clean that salmon have returned to it; he breathes in air from which industrial smoke and noise have been entirely purged and which is redolent now only with the delightful scents of early summer; and he treads an earth which is no longer the 'old shoes and soot' of which Morris once complained that his Kelmscott House garden was composed,² but is rather so wholesomely fertile that it produces abundance of strawberries, roses, and fruit trees. Guest's journey by horse and cart across London to Bloomsbury only reinforces these opening impressions; for this is not just utopia, but ecotopia too. Such firsthand sense perceptions will later be further reinforced by the leisurely journey upriver to Kelmscott Manor in the final third of the book, where they also receive a good deal of doctrinal support. We have already read Old Hammond's exposition of England as a 'garden' where nothing is spoiled or wasted. Clara will later emphasise that humanity no longer considers itself separate from its natural environment, and Dick Hammond will use the memorable metaphor of the theatre to evoke this benignly altered Culture/Nature relationship.

However, as Morris himself knew in his sombre meditation on political defeat in *A Dream of John Ball*, what you fight for is not always what you get; and in *News from Nowhere* this ironic reversal takes place not politically but generically. For that a certain generic instability is built into this utopia in the first place is signalled by elements in its subtitle: 'some chapters from a utopian romance' – to which one is surely inclined impatiently to retort: well, make up your mind, which are you, utopia *or* romance? We certainly know, as a matter of biographical fact, that Morris wrote his political utopia in the midst of his renewed – indeed indefatigable – bout of romance-writing in later life: if the latter begins in 1888 with *The House of the Wolfings* and ends in 1897 with the posthumous *The Water of the Wondrous Isles* and *The Sundering Flood*, then *News from Nowhere* fits snugly into that period, written as it was in 1890 and published in book form in 1891. And many critics over the decades have recorded their sense that the utopia/romance boundary is peculiarly porous in Morris's later work.

If *News from Nowhere* is indeed both utopia and romance at once, if it constitutes some curious, perhaps unprecedented generic hybrid, then there are two ways of responding to that fact. One might regard such hybridity as intentional, as a particularly clever piece of literary construction on Morris's part whereby he intends to have the best of both worlds, welding the unique strengths of utopia and romance into a new artefact which is richer than both and reducible to neither; we might then have to invent a new generic term altogether and refer to the book as a 'utomance' or a 'romopia'. Alternatively, one might (as I shall do here)

view such generic ambivalence as fatality rather than intentionality, as a danger that threatens *News from Nowhere* at every point as a utopia risks being magically metamorphosed into a romance, almost without its knowing it. Politically, Morris wants to write a utopia; but in literary terms, the romance form powerfully elbows its own way into the project and at times may even take it over entirely. Does it matter if it does, however? What exactly is at stake here, if we once start to see Morris's great work as a tug of war between these two genres?

Let us return to the text, then, and see how this struggle works itself out in detail, which will be stage two of my Nowherian dialectic. I have discussed William Guest's early dealings with utopian water, air and earth, but in fact the most substantive image of Nature present in the early chapters of *News from Nowhere* is the *forest*, first abstractly, in the discussion of Epping Forest in the Hammersmith Guest House, and then practically, as Guest encounters the new Kensington/Middlesex Forest on his way across London with Dick Hammond. In the transfigured garden-city, as we soon realise, these two forests almost meet, and no sooner is this new arboreal reality introduced into the text than questions of genre are at once at stake, as Dick Hammond alerts us: 'This is Kensington proper. People are apt to gather here rather thick, for they like the romance of the wood; and naturalists haunt it, too; for it is a wild spot even here... it gets through Kingsland to Stoke-Newington and Clapton, where it spreads out along the heights above the Lea marshes; on the other side of which, as you know, is Epping Forest holding out a hand to it'. (p.23) The 'romance of the wood': though Dick later apologises to Guest for not being a 'literary man', he has certainly hit the nail on the head as far as the literary-formal issues at stake here are concerned.

For no natural phenomenon, surely, could be more central to Morrisian romance than the wood or forest. A forest for Morris is always, almost by definition it seems, a 'wood beyond the world', to borrow the title of his 1894 romance, an eerie, unmappable and dangerous space outside society. In the very first of his later romances, *The House of the Wolfings*, the Goths live amidst a great forest called Mirkwood (a name which Tolkien would borrow for *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*); and it is deep in the forest that the goddess Wood-Sun gives to Thiodolf the magical hauberk which proves to be more of a curse than a gift. In the opening pages of *The Roots of the Mountains* Face-of-god confesses to his kindred that 'the dark cold wood, wherein abide but the beasts and the Foes of the Gods, is bidding me to it and drawing me thither';³ and the very next day he gives in to this strange compulsion, discovering a world full of figures named Wood-wise, Wood-wont, Wood-wicked, and the like. Only a few lines into *The Water of the Wondrous Isles* we learn that the town of Utterhay is hard on the borders of a great wood which its inhabitants fear to enter, and in no time at all Birdalone is kidnapped by the witch-wife and led away into that forest, which is appropriately named Evilshaw. In *The Well at the World's End* we hear first of

the Wood Debateable on the northern edges of the kingdom of Upmeads, but the young hero Ralph heads south towards the Wood Perilous instead and when he reaches it his adventures at once commence in earnest; for as the maiden of Bourton Abbas puts it, 'it is the Wood which is the evil and disease'.⁴ Woods or forests in Morris, we might say, are 'debateable' generically as well as militarily; they are the places where an apparently naturalistic world can metamorphose in the blink of an eye to romance. It is, then, not just the young Face-of-god but Morris's fiction itself that 'longest for the wood and the innermost of it'.⁵

Once we have grasped what an essential romance *topos* the wildwood is, we can see how its appearance in *News from Nowhere* transfigures every early element of the text to the point where we feel it has indeed almost generically metamorphosed from utopia to romance. Old Hammond may defend the presence of great forests in Nowhere on utilitarian grounds (the utopians need lots of timber for building), but they have textual effects well beyond the merely utilitarian. Why, for instance, does William Guest arrive in Nowhere in June? Might that not partly be because, as *The Well at the World's End* alerts us, June is the appropriate month for setting off on a romance quest? Guest's five a.m. dip in the Thames anticipates the early-morning outdoor-bathing motif which is repeated innumerable times in the late romances, and the more radically mythic notion at work here, of a magical water which cleanses and heals, is (as the book's name suggests) at the very heart of *The Well at the World's End*. Moreover, those tasty salmon in the river may themselves evoke the mythic Salmon of Wisdom which Jessie Weston alerts us to in Celtic fairy-tale in *From Ritual to Romance*.⁶ Dick Hammond as ferryman and old Hammond as his occasionally crusty ancient relative are from the very start close to the textual roles allotted by Morris's own late romance *The Story of the Glittering Plain* (published at the same time as his utopia) to Puny Fox the ferryman and the ancient and embittered Sea-Eagle of the Isle of Ransom; when Hammond senior announces that he is 'old and perhaps disappointed', (p.50) he certainly sounds as though he too needs renewing on the shores of the Glittering Plain itself. Even to take Guest as one's surname, as the visitor to utopia does here, is already to enter the terrain of pre-realist narrative modes; for there are several such figures in the Icelandic sagas Morris translated.

Moreover, we have a particularly clear example of this generically transformative process before us as we see how Henry Johnson, the Golden Dustman of *News from Nowhere*, begins to mutate, via Tennyson's poem 'The Lady of Shalott', towards full-blown romance significance as Lancelot: 'I looked over my shoulder, and saw something flash and gleam in the sunlight that lay across the hall; so I turned round, and at my ease saw a splendid figure slowly sauntering over the pavement; a man whose surcoat was embroidered most copiously as well as elegantly, so that the sun flashed back from him as if he was clad in golden armour'. (p.18) With that final 'as if' formulation, an imminent generic trans-

formation, whereby Boffin metamorphoses into Tennyson's dazzling Lancelot or even into the Knight of the Sun who bests Ralph early in *The Well at the World's End*, is linguistically disguised (or contained) as mere simile or metaphor.

There is one moment in *News from Nowhere* when the generic transformations to which this text is subject come close to the surface of its consciousness, though it is another non-realist genre – fairy-tale rather than romance – which is at issue here. The illustrations from the Grimm stories on the walls of the hall of the British Museum lead to an interesting discussion of the nature of art in utopia; but for our purposes what is more to the point is Dick's observation that such non-realist genres can come to invest quotidian reality itself, as when 'we used to imagine them going on in every wood-end, by the bight of every stream: every house in the fields was the Fairyland King's House to us'. (p.87) This is a retrospective observation about the vividness of imagination in childhood, but the habit seems in Dick's case to persist into adulthood too. Thus at Runnymede he remarks: 'doesn't it all look like one of those very stories out of Grimm that we were talking about ... we have come to a fairy garden, and there is the fairy herself amidst of it'. (p.133) If *Nowhere* decorates itself with fairy-tale images, so fairy-tale archetypes come to incarnate themselves in its social reality, to the point indeed where they begin to pervade the language of the text even when they are not specifically evoked as a topic of debate, as when Guest remarks on 'the spell' that Ellen had cast about him, (p.174) or when Dick refers to Guest as throwing a 'kind of evil charm' about him in the Kelmescott fields. (p.178) And it is certainly no accident, as we shall see later, that this 'fairy-tale-isation' of *Nowhere* clusters around Ellen in this way.

The 'romancing' continues apace as William Guest and party travel upriver; for the whole journey on the 'wet way from the east' from Hammersmith to Kelmescott might be regarded as a version of Birdalone's quest across the great lake in her Sending Boat in *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*. At the level of official political content, the trip up the Thames offers Guest a chance to see utopian country life after his initial exposure to its transfigured urban existence in London; yet no sooner does he set off in his boat than he takes on the aura of a hero setting off on an arduous quest, of Jason embarking with his comrades on the *Argo* in pursuit of the Golden Fleece, or of a riparian version of Browning's *Childe Roland*. I will suggest elsewhere that the whole of the river adventure may be plausibly rewritten in terms of the narratological categories of Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folk Tale*, with Guest as the hero liberating the princess (Ellen) from captivity in Runnymede;⁷ and this should hardly surprise us given Hammond's evocation of a Norwegian folk-tale in his expositions to Guest and the extended discussion of the Grimm fairy stories over lunch in the British Museum.

It is certainly the case, at any rate, that as an older man entranced by a very much younger woman who desires a secret knowledge which he alone can offer

her, Guest takes on the Arthurian mantle of the mage Merlin to Ellen's Vivien at Runnymede and after. The 'force-vehicles' on the Thames which travel without any visible means of propulsion might be seen as versions of the magically self-powered Sending Boat of *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*. The somewhat difficult parent-child relationships that Guest comes across upriver – Ellen and her (grand)father, Phillippa and her daughter – have about them something of the aura of that abusive adult/kidnapped child pairing which is such a recurrent feature of Morrisian romance. And Kelmscott Manor is an entirely appropriate destination for this romance quest up the Thames since, as the opening pages of *The Well at the World's End* clearly show us, it is itself a kind of 'hinge' between the genres of utopia and romance, serving as the place where one ends and the other begins.

By now, however, matters are getting out of hand, textually speaking, and the third stage of the Nowherian dialectic must therefore kick in. If the political liberation of Nature (stage one) led on to what is coming close to a full-blooded generic transformation (stage two), then *News from Nowhere* must now attempt to close back down the turbulent generic forces it has set free; it must do its best to put the genie back in the bottle, in terms of literary form and mode. Thus against the run of those earlier doctrinal formulations which asserted humanity's benignly interactive role in a redeemed natural environment, we have Old Hammond's sudden startling claim that the Nowherians 'won't stand any nonsense from Nature in their dealings with her'. (p.63) I shall read this as a self-reflexive textual moment, in which the work is describing its own technical procedures in stage three quite as much as it is saying anything substantive about labour practices in the new society. For the book now goes to work in a systematic way to contain or 'manage' the natural energies (and their concomitant generic implications) that it had set free in the first instance.

It does this by a strategy of what we might call, after F.R. Leavis, 'adjectival insistence'. The term comes from Leavis's exasperated account of *Heart of Darkness* in the Conrad chapter of *The Great Tradition*:

Had he not ... overworked 'inscrutable', 'inconceivable', 'unspeakable' and that kind of word already? – yet still they recur. Is anything added to the oppressive mysteriousness of the Congo by such sentences as: 'it was the stillness of an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention'? The same vocabulary, the same adjectival insistence upon inexpressible and incomprehensible mystery, is applied to the evocation of human profundities and spiritual horrors ... So we have an adjectival and worse than supererogatory insistence on 'unspeakable rites', 'unspeakable secrets', 'monstrous passions', 'inconceivable mystery' and so on.⁸

The thrust of Morrisian adjectival relentlessness proceeds in exactly the opposite

semantic direction to the Conradian version, as we shall see, but Leavis's stress on readerly exasperation applies as aptly to the heart of utopia as to the heart of darkness. We already in fact have an excellent analysis of Nowherian adjectival practice in John Helmer's shrewd essay on 'The Prettiness of Utopia', where he notes the '*tableaux* of innumerable objects' that constitute such a memorable part of *News from Nowhere*'s literary appeal, and then comments: 'We are struck by the recurring sameness of the means of describing these things, so that all of them – men, women, behaviour, objects, gardens – are touched by the same adjectives – pretty, nice, quaint, dainty, handsome and gay ... To be sure, this repetition has been noticed before, and critics of *News from Nowhere* have tended to call the work after Morris's own names – as pretty, quaint or dainty'.⁹

These are admirable observations, and Helmer produces plenty of apt textual detail to back up his general case; but his essay seems to me incomplete because it misses out the one crucial Nowherian adjective which is both implicit in and ultimately comes to govern all the rest. Helmer's spirited effort to uncover weightier etymological significances which Morris is trying to unleash in his recurrent adjectives does not, I think, in the end hold water; for even if we can intellectually appreciate Morris's would-be recovery of powerful roots, these cannot override our modern sense of the belittling force of his most frequent adjectival choices. Pretty, nice, quaint, dainty, handsome and gay: yes indeed, these words are used with as much monotony in Morris's utopia as 'unspeakable', 'implacable', 'brooding' and so on in Conrad's darkly dystopian work. But the central element of Nowherian adjectival insistence is the epithet 'little' – to the point, indeed, where it even comes to dominate chapter headings themselves: 'A Little Shopping', 'The Little River'.

Helmer persuasively demonstrates how ubiquitous his chosen adjectives are through the text, and I merely want to add to that analysis the point that they are so often combined with the key word 'little'. So that, for example, there are 'quaint and fanciful little buildings' upon the new Hammersmith Bridge, (p.8) a 'pretty little brook' runs through the new Middlesex forest, (p.23) a 'dainty little basket' is filled with Latakia tobacco, (p.31) a 'pretty gay little structure of wood' occupies the new Trafalgar Square, (p.36) we see a 'very pretty little village' and a 'little town of quaint and pretty houses' on the journey upriver, (pp. 124-125) Ellen's boat is a 'gay little craft', (p.155) and Ellen herself sees England as 'this little pretty country'. (p.161) Sometimes the epithet threatens to multiply out of control, shouldering every other adjective from the sentence, as when Ellen's cottage is described as 'a little house, one of whose little windows was already yellow with candle-light' (p.127) or when Kelmscott church becomes 'a simple little building with one little aisle'. (p.179) Later in the book the adjective is raised almost to the status of an existential philosophy in its own right, as when we learn that the Nowherians are 'eager to discuss all the little details of life: the weather, the

hay-crop, the last new house, the plenty or lack of such and such birds'. (p.147) And this is to ignore all the uses of 'little' on its own, which are so frequent in the book that I defy anyone to tot up their total number – little twigs of lavender, little forest ponies, little shiver of the night-wind, little clouds, little plain, little hill, little avenue of lime-trees, and so on – not to mention its equivalents such as 'small' or its intensifiers such as 'tiny' (e.g. 'a tiny strand of limestone-gravel' at Kelmscott, p.172).

No doubt the application of such remorseless adjectival insistence gives the book, like its glass-blowers, 'such a sense of power, when you have got deft in it'; (p.40) and certainly it has 'compelled nature to run into the mould', not of 'the ages' as Guest would have it, but of the epithets. (p.121) But the reader's response is very different, surely: 'I was beginning rather to resent his formula ... his formula, put with such obstinate insistence'. (p.131) This is William Guest on Ellen's grandfather, but it could just as well be us as readers of *News from Nowhere*, protesting against its own adjectival insistence. There is nothing about the Thames itself which compels it to be experienced in this 'belittling' mode; indeed, when William Guest describes it as 'what may fairly be called our only English river', (p.159) one feels that he is favourably contrasting it with other more diminutive rivers, and we can certainly find passages in Morris's other writings where the Thames is evoked in altogether more eerie and impressive mode than it is in *News from Nowhere* (see, for example, his fishing expedition in the floods at Kelmscott on November 1875, or his experience of the Northern Lights on the river during August 1880).¹⁰ It is not, then, the nature of the object which calls into being this insistent vocabulary of littleness; it is, rather, a textual strategy, an imposition on the object from without, whereby the generically disruptive energies of liberated Nature can be reduced back down to something manageable.

What *News from Nowhere* is doing to its object-world by such adjectival insistence can be clearly grasped by a comparison with what Gudrun Brangwen does to the natural world as an artist in D.H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*. Whereas the Conradian adjectives of *Heart of Darkness* open their objects out in the direction of a vague, echoing portentousness, the Nowherian epithets consistently diminish them, much as Gudrun does in her practice of sculpture. Here is Ursula Brangwen evoking her sister's artistic predilections: 'Isn't it queer that she always likes little things? She must always work small things, that one can put between one's hands, birds and tiny animals. She likes to look through the wrong end of the opera glasses, and see the world that way – why is it, do you think?'¹¹ Both Gudrun in her sculpture and *News from Nowhere* in this phase exercise a clenched 'will-to-power' over the natural object, rejecting all that is spontaneous and thus unpredictable about it in favour of their own projects of conscious control and diminution. Gudrun thereby aligns herself with those other embodiments of domineering rational will in *Women in Love* – Gerald Crich, Hermione, Loeke

– and Morris’s utopia, though it can powerfully diagnose such dominative will-power elsewhere, here in stage three of its own dialectic of Nature falls subject to it itself. The impulse behind both Gudrun Brangwen’s work and *Nowhere’s* adjectival insistence is neatly encapsulated by the French phenomenological critic Gaston Bachelard, who argues that ‘The cleverer I am at miniaturizing the world, the better I possess it’.¹²

Morris’s systematic semantic ‘belittling’ of the created world of the text then generates its own narrative counterpart – its ‘objective correlative’, in T.S. Eliot’s famous term – in the form of the leisurely journey upriver from Hammersmith Guest House to Kelmscott Manor. While Marlow in the narrative frame of *Heart of Darkness* looks down the Thames towards its opening into the North Sea, William Guest’s upriver trip towards the riparian source takes him towards an ever-dwindling rather than expanding landscape, into a vision which Morris had vividly evoked in his first-ever public lecture in 1877: ‘the land is a little land ... all is measured, mingled, varied, gliding easily one thing into another: little rivers, little plains, swelling, speedily changing uplands, all beset with handsome orderly trees; little hills, little mountains, netted over with the walks of sheep-walks: all is little’.¹³ By this point the initial vision of a liberated post-capitalist Nature which unsettlingly threatened to open out into the sinister numinous energies of the romance genre, all forests, witches, questing knights, kidnapped children and magic boats, has been closed down into a traditional aesthetics of the ‘beautiful’: a world of gentle ‘minglings’ and ‘blendings’, of quaint, pretty and above all little natural objects which constitutes the greenly English riverscape that, in readerly retrospect and for many contemporary eco-critical interpretations of the book, dominates our overall memory of *News from Nowhere*. The disturbing romance intimations of phase two of the Nowherian dialectic have by now been as thoroughly excised from the text by Leavisite adjectival insistence as the colourful medieval images on the walls of Kelmscott Church was by Puritan whitewash.

‘The times have grown mean and petty’, declares the Old Grumbler; (p.128) and certainly the depiction of Nature in *Nowhere* has become mean and petty in this phase of the book’s dialectic, so we might borrow another of the text’s memorable phrases and refer to this third stage as ‘the time of the Degradation’. (p.138) But if Nature is closed down in this way, if the text adjectivally leaps upon it as a tiger upon its prey (to purloin an image from Old Hammond) and seeks thus to contain its generically transformative energies, we shall note, as the fourth and final stage of my Nowherian dialectic, a strong counter-impulse whereby *News from Nowhere* not only registers its deep frustration at this containment strategy, but actually breaks it open all over again, in a major aesthetic shift within the text from an aesthetics of the beautiful to an altogether more turbulent cult of the sublime.

'Having nought but this little they yearned for much': this is *The Well at the World's End* on King Peter's sons;¹⁴ but it applies aptly enough to *News from Nowhere* too. For a whole series of allusions to the North now betrays the text's frustration with its own southern Thames valley enclosures. Old Hammond's reference to 'Old Horrebow's Snakes in Iceland' gets a chapter all to itself, (p.73) and while the immediate point being made is a satiric gibe at nineteenth-century class politics, the reference to Iceland evokes everything which we know that those eerie, violent Northern lavascapes meant to Morris – so far removed as they are from the genial Home Counties Englishness of his utopia. Moreover, we hear references to proposed journeys to the north within utopia itself, as if the text is feeling the pull of these northern landscapes: Hammond suggests that Guest has a look at the Yorkshire 'Three Peaks', Dick proposes letting him see how his friends live in the north country, and Ellen offers him the opportunity to come with her to Hadrian's wall. Beyond such suggestions, we even begin to hear of actual events in Nowhere which seem as if they belong to the troubled northern landscapes of Iceland. There is, after all, Walter Allen's startling reference to 'the earthquake of the year before last', (p.143) at which the mind surely boggles: if William Guest had arrived in Nowhere two years earlier, then, would he have found its Mote-houses in rubble, its everyday social routines shattered, and significant numbers of its utopians dead and wounded among the debris? An event of this kind simply does not make sense, does not 'compute', in the placid Thames valley riverscapes which the book presents to us, so we must take it, I believe, as a powerful local instance of the text hankering for more than the aesthetics of the beautiful allows, for a degree of physical turbulence and social upheaval that point us much more towards the traditional aesthetic opposite of the beautiful: the sublime.

News from Nowhere may not actually be able to deliver the earthquake of which it notes the occurrence – non-human Nature in the text is by now too rigidly tied down within a rhetoric of the beautiful and the 'little' for that – but it generates an alternative means of reintroducing into itself some of the violently disruptive values which the earthquake symbolically stands for. We must note, first of all, that the book forges an equivalence between external Nature and the female body; this is achieved by means of a series of doctrinal statements and by subtler metaphorical touches within the local texture of the prose. Old Hammond refers early on to 'some beautiful and wise woman, the very type of the beauty and glory of the world which we love so well', (p.49) and he reinforces this equation later when he refers to 'delight in the life of the world; intense and overweening love of the very skin and surface of the earth on which man dwells, such as a lover has in the fair flesh of the woman he loves'. (p.113) The conventional Western coding of Nature as female (Mother Nature, etc) and woman as close to Nature (removed by her biology from male Reason) is intensified within

Morris's utopia both by such theoretical statements and by delicate local touches throughout the book, as when the British Museum waitresses are 'chattering sweetly like reed warblers by the river-side', (Ch.XVI) or when Clara, impressed by the beauty of Ellen's garden, 'gave forth a little sweet "O," like a bird beginning to sing'. (p.127). This equation being made, a new concept of Nature in the text can then be embodied by the extraordinary new female figure who materialises in the last third of the book: the twenty-year-old Ellen, whom Guest, Dick and Clara first meet at Runnymede.

That Ellen represents a new force in the text is at once clear from the semantic field which attaches to her: 'strange and almost wild beauty', (p.130) 'her strange wild beauty', (p.137) 'this strange girl' (p.157) – already with this terminology we have moved far away from the dainty littleness which characterises so much of the object-world of the book at this point. If in one sense she intensifies Guest's pleasure in Nowhere, she also very quickly hollows it out thoroughly, so that he begins experiencing pain, jealousy, anxiety, even bitterness. She herself knows perfectly well how emotionally disruptive she is, as when she informs Guest that 'I have often troubled men's minds disastrously'. (p.162) 'Disastrously' is a very strong term in itself, particularly when we have already heard stories of sexual jealousy leading to multiple deaths; and 'often' only compounds the offence here, surely. Anyone might once or twice in a lifetime disturb the mind of members of the opposite sex, but to do it 'often' implies that this is almost a habit or hobby; and indeed she seems to be at it again in Runnymede, where she apparently has two or three boyfriends on the go at the same time.

William Guest may have been baffled by the utopian new world in the early pages of *News from Nowhere*, but once Ellen turns up in the text he realises retrospectively how familiar much of it was to him after all, as he makes clear in what is in my view the book's major statement about its twenty-year-old heroine: of all the persons I had seen in that world renewed, she was the most unfamiliar to me, the most unlike what I could have thought of. Clara, for instance, beautiful and bright as she was, was not unlike a *very* pleasant and unaffected young lady; and the other girls also seemed nothing more than very much improved types which I had known in other times. But this girl ... was in all ways so strangely interesting; so that I kept wondering what she would say or do next to surprise and please me. (p.157)

What is at stake here is Ellen's *uncategorisability*, not only in nineteenth-century terms but even with the new, transformed concepts which utopia itself offers ('work-pleasure', 'easy-hard work', and so on). If, as we have seen, in this book Nature and woman are ultimately indistinguishable concepts, then with the arrival in the text of this strange, wild, disastrously troubling and entirely uncategorisable young woman, we can say confidently that we are now in the presence of Nature as the sublime, as that disruptive force of awe and grandeur

conventionally represented by mountains, waterfalls, volcanoes, storms or the sea.

If Ellen thus represents the sublime, then the turbulence she incarnates cannot be embodied by any adequate sensory form, not even by her famous 'embrace' of Kelmscott Manor (though I do not have space to demonstrate this here). The fierce desire which is structural to her being exceeds all externalisation, all oneness with the natural realm. So disruptive is she, indeed, that she is capable, even in a chapter entitled 'The Little River', of breaking open the shrunken concept of Nature-as-the-beautiful towards a renewed opening onto the genre of romance; for she remarks to Guest that 'the smallness of the scale of everything' paradoxically gives her 'a feeling of going somewhere, of coming to something strange, a feeling of adventure'. (p.163) It is as if Ellen senses the imminence of Kelmscott Manor just a few miles further up the river not as the endpoint of this utopia, but rather as the starting point of *The Well at the World's End*.

If Ellen herself cannot find a way of externalising her inner feelings, no more can the text in which she appears find a satisfying way of 'embodying' her, of giving her a role and future in the book which is an adequate 'objective correlative' of the disruptive force she represents. There is a merely gestural reference to her perhaps having a good many children in the end, and this textual elusiveness is apt enough, since the sublime is that which always resists and exceeds representation. We will have to make up our own stories of Ellen's turbulent future in Nowhere; this is indeed a responsibility which she herself enjoins upon us when she tells Guest that the other Nowherians 'fell to making stories of me to themselves – like I know you did'. (p.162) What Ellen as the sublime above all alerts us to is the lack of finality of Morris's utopia, its openness to further revolutions beyond the Great Change of 1952-54, to what old Hammond dubs 'the world's next period of wise and unhappy manhood, if that should happen'. (p.88) It certainly *will* happen with Ellen around, but how we actually model those further revolutions, how we in detail develop and plot what in effect then becomes a sequel to Morris's own future vision, is a matter for us and our own cultural, narrative and political predilections. But we have certainly broken decisively beyond the closure of the book's third-stage cult of the 'little', of the benign blendings and minglings of the Englishly beautiful.

Finally, then, let me sum up the Nowherian dialectic of Nature in highly schematic form. First of all, politically speaking, with the defeat of capitalism in 1952-54, Nature is liberated; it is slowly restored to itself after its thorough-going nineteenth-century despoliation. Almost immediately, however, in the second stage of the dialectic, such reinvigorated natural energies, particularly as they cluster around the *topos* of the forest, threaten to transform the text generically; they begin to transmogrify a utopia into a late Morrisian romance, reprogramming its every last textual detail in mythic or archetypal mode. Third, in a powerful coun-

ter-strategy which is embodied narratively in the journey upriver, but even more so in the relentless adjectival insistence of the book, *News from Nowhere* attempts to shut down the transformative generic energies it has unleashed, subsuming the sinister dimensions of romance landscape within a genially English aesthetic of the 'beautiful'. But the book then, to its credit, becomes deeply frustrated by its own strategy of diminishment, and in the fourth and final stage of the Nowherian dialectic (having previously enforced an equation between Nature and woman), it generates a new kind of woman, who articulates an entirely new concept of Nature. 'Disastrously troubling' as Ellen proclaims herself to be, she embodies the sublime within this book, those overwhelming forces of Nature which disrupt enclosed certainties, overwhelm routine and which will ultimately throw the whole of Morris's twenty-second-century society into a renewed turmoil or metaphorical 'earthquake' from which it may or may not recover. Just as the Nowherian dialectic began with politics (the liberation of Nature from capitalism), so it ends there too, with a glimpse at the 'political Sublime' into which Ellen may precipitate her world, plunging it into an uncategorisable 'change beyond the change', to borrow an apt phrase from *A Dream of John Ball*. But to try to model how *that* might go would be the task of another essay altogether.

NOTES

1. David Leopold, ed, *William Morris, News from Nowhere: Some Chapters from a Utopian Romance*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 138. All subsequent citations included in the text.
2. Georgiana Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, London: Macmillan, 1912, Vol. 2, p. 86.
3. Michael W. Perry, ed, *More to William Morris: The House of the Wolfings and The Roots of the Mountains*, Seattle: Inkling Books, 2003, p.105. (Afterwards *More to Morris*)
4. *The Well at the World's End. A Tale by William Morris*, New York: Ballantine Books, 1975, p. 37. (Afterwards *The Well*)
5. *More to Morris*, p.106.
6. Jessie Weston, *From Ritual to Romance*, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1957, pp. 124, 130.
7. See my unpublished 'Narratology in Nowhere: The Structural Adventures of William Guest'.
8. F.R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1948, pp. 177-9.
9. John Helmer, 'The Prettiness of Utopia', *Journal of the William Morris Society*, IV, No. 1, Winter 1999, pp. 5-7.

10. Norman Kelvin, ed, *The Collected Letters of William Morris, Vol. 1, 1848-1880*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984, p. 276; Nicholas Salmon with Derek Baker, *The William Morris Chronology*, Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1996, p. 104.
11. D.H. Lawrence, *Women in Love* (1922), Chapter III, 'Class-Room', Harmondsworth: Penguin Books (Charles Ross, ed), 1989, p. 88.
12. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, New York: Beacon Press, 1992, p. 150.
13. 'The Lesser Arts', 1877, in A.L. Morton, ed, *The Political Writings of William Morris*, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1973, p. 46.
14. *The Well*, p.2.

William Morris's Green Cosmopolitanism

Eddy Kent

What is the relationship between Nowhere and everywhere? At the end of William Morris's *News from Nowhere*, the protagonist finds himself imagining a resolution to just this predicament. It is quite easy to classify *News from Nowhere* as a hopeful text. It begins with a despondent Victorian socialist trapped in a toxic metropolis desperate to catch a glimpse of actually-existing communism. After whisking him one hundred and fifty years into the future, and treating him to a tour of that ideal society, the novel ends with the traveller hoping that others could share his vision. Having just seen—or at least dreamed—the ‘new day of fellowship, and rest, and happiness’ which will follow the socialist revolution, he falls back into the nineteenth century pondering the significance of it all: ‘indeed *was* it a dream? ... [I]f others can see it as I have seen it then it may be called a vision rather than a dream’.¹ William Guest's salutary wish consciously calls attention to the role of text, the ‘news’ in *News from Nowhere*. It discloses the role of literature in the dissemination of hope and the activation of social reform energies through the shared experience of reading.

This essay takes William Guest's conditional ‘if’ in order to consider the ethical, political, and aesthetic challenges Morris faced when attempting to scale up from the personal to the universal, from the dream to the vision. How might others see as Guest has seen? And, for that matter, who might those others be? The answer to the latter question opens onto the former. In the first chapter, the anonymous framing narrator is told that Guest intends the tale to ‘be told to our comrades, and indeed the public in general’.² Morris clearly wished this novel to extend beyond the small community of English socialists who subscribed to *Commonweal*, where it was first serialised. But the precise identity of broader ‘public in general’, the ‘others’, is another matter.

In order to obtain a rough approximation, recall that the inaugural issue of *Commonweal* not only contained ‘The Manifesto of the Socialist League’, whose declared aim was to ‘destroy the distinctions of classes and nationalities’,³ but

also an article by E. Belfort Bax which asserted internationalism even more forcefully:

For the socialist, the word frontier does not exist; for him, love of country, as such, is no nobler sentiment than love of class. Race-pride and class-pride are, from the standpoint of socialism, involved in the same condemnation. The establishment of socialism, therefore, on any national or race basis is out of the question.⁴

Given Morris's ongoing commitment to the principle of internationalism, the 'others' could very well mean the world entirely.

For these reasons scholars such as Regenia Gagnier have sought to understand William Morris in terms of cosmopolitanism. In explaining the ways in which Morris reached out to the world, Gagnier identifies the latter decades of the nineteenth century as a historical juncture, when 'there was less perceived conflict between individualism and the social state'. She then proposes that one of the ethical stances emerging out of this milieu is cosmopolitanism. For Gagnier, Morris is an exemplary representative of such an ethic, since his literary protagonists seem always to be animated by the question, 'what do we share, if anything, as human beings distinctly embedded in thick but always interdependent environments'?⁵ This nuanced approach to cosmopolitanism, with interdependence balanced finely against local feeling and the virtues of particular spaces, refutes cruder interpretations which would associate the concept with an abstract 'rootlessness' or a homogeneous world citizenship.

Gagnier's expansive reading of cosmopolitanism requires some qualification, however. Lauren Goodlad notes that Victorian understandings of the term *cosmopolitan* tended toward the pejorative, and more particularly were associated with non-imperial forms of international capitalism. Its usage in nineteenth-century literature, according to Goodlad, 'stands for the social impact of capitalist mobility and, by extension, for the shadowy attributes of Jews and other perceived arrivistes'.⁶ Likewise, the word cannot simply be reconciled with the terms socialist or internationalist; terms which Morris used publically to describe himself. None of this detracts from the way Gagnier's rubric illuminates the ways in which a writer such as Morris tried to mediate between the part and the whole.

My intention is to suggest that Morris's cosmopolitanism includes an even wider sense of the cosmos which has not yet been engaged. In an early review of *News from Nowhere*, Maurice Hewlett complained that Morris had 'exaggerated the dependence of human nature upon its environment ... The result is not an earthly, but an earthy, Paradise'.⁷ And the idea of an earthy paradise is the point of departure for my argument. For while *News from Nowhere* might indeed imagine a cosmopolitical utopia where, as Gagnier suggests, hospitality and fellowship are

the governing rules, I would add that this cosmopolitan view includes the possibility of the natural world being fully incorporated into the political arena.

The relationship negotiated cosmopolitically is hence not merely between individual humans, but also simultaneously, and more fundamentally, between humans and nature. Morris's interest in nature and its reciprocal relationship with human welfare are well known, and scholars such as Patrick O'Sullivan have previously argued that the political ideas contained in *News from Nowhere* 'if put into practice, would bring about [change], first of all in human society, but also, and no less important, in the surrounding nature'. Similarly, Florence Boos notes that Morris was a 'green' very much *avant la lettre*, and has catalogued the ways in which his 'convictions and ideals anticipated several strands of "western" and "first-world" ecological theory and practice'.⁸ My paper tests the limit of this union between nature and politics, situating William Morris as a writer who witnesses not only the awful effects of industrial capitalism, but also is keenly aware of the emergence of new regimes of population control within the liberal state. In imagining a state-less society, where human actors are fully conscious of the impact of their activities, *News from Nowhere* provides the only ethical response: a subsumption of politics into the natural world; a green cosmopolitanism.

To call Morris a cosmopolitan is to cause nearly as much trouble as naming him a green. In both cases, scholars must position him as a prophet or, at best, among the vanguard of our more recent understandings of either term. However, my intention is not to show Morris as a man ahead of his time, but as one absolutely bound to his day. In order to explain what I mean by green cosmopolitanism, the first part of the paper will contrast the term against other ways in which Victorian writers imagined the relation of nature and politics. By discussing Walter Besant's dystopian novel *The Inner House*,⁹ published two years before *News from Nowhere* in 1888, I mean to situate Morris's social vision within a wider context of the Victorian response to the emergence of biopolitics. Next, in order to position his views more precisely within that biopolitical discourse, I will consider some of Morris's lectures. My final section turns to *News from Nowhere* in order to find a discrete articulation of Morris's green cosmopolitan position. I identify the ways in which Morris works in order to replace modern consciousness with what I call an ecological consciousness, one which is further reflected by his use of the utopian genre in order to bypass the generic limitations of the conventional Victorian novel. I read Morris as seeking to move away from a literary style which develops an individual, sovereign subject (a concept produced by and inextricable from capitalism), and toward a 'systems' approach, where the relations of parts to the whole can be fully understood.

II BIOPOLITICS

As conceptualised by Michel Foucault, 'biopower' describes a tactic for the political management of life. In his famous lectures at the Collège de France, Foucault explained how, during the nineteenth century, there was 'an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations'.¹⁰ Among these were the myriad forms of overseas colonial policy (including the catastrophic mismanagement of the 1876-78 drought in British India related to *El Niño*), but also domestic proposals on matters of nutrition, housing, or urban design. In fact, the opening scene of *News from Nowhere* can be read biopolitically, as Morris introduces his reader to the disaggregating effects of London's 'public' transit system. Immediately upon the conclusion of a meeting of the Socialist League, a place of communion and potential revolutionary activity, Guest, like the rest of his colleagues:

... took his way home by himself to a western suburb, using the means of travelling which civilisation has forced upon us like a habit. As he sat in that vapour-bath of hurried and discontented humanity, a carriage of the underground railway, he, like others, stewed discontentedly.¹¹

In this scene of commuter hell, we see late-Victorian Londoners literally oppressed by the atmosphere produced by advanced industrial capital. Here Morris displays the ways in which the technology of urban transit overcomes William Guest's ideological commitment to solidarity and brotherhood. Even during the Victorian period, London's underground has already successfully retarded the possibility of community. Not only has the city sprawl disaggregated people of common interests, forcing Guest to commute home by himself, but the underground's hot and malodorous environment stifles the conversations which might lead to new social formations. Here, alienation is amplified by the incredible proximity of the cramped commuters. The juxtaposition of socialist ideals and social failures could not more stark.

Besant's *The Inner House* takes a dimmer view of socialism, and places the dread of biopolitically-managed life into the future. The novel opens with a brief prologue set in the London of the near future (1890), where a German researcher announces that he has discovered an elixir which extends human life indefinitely. Designed to forestall 'Decay', the elixir promises to perfect humanity by allowing everyone to enjoy fully whatever activities or experiences provide them pleasure. The professor explains his hopes for the discovery to his London audience, suggesting that when 'you have enjoyed all that you desire in full measure and running over; when not two or three years have passed, but perhaps two or three centuries, you would then, of your own accord, put aside the aid of Science and suffer your body to fall into the decay which awaits all living matter'. Tinged

with eugenicist ideology, the professor explains how elixir should be gifted only to those who ‘help make life beautiful and happy’ and forbidden to ‘those whose lives could never become anything but a burden to themselves and to the rest of the world—the crippled, the criminal, the poor, the imbecile, the incompetent, the stupid, the frivolous’.¹²

The novel then jumps forward some centuries, and away from London to Canterbury. A new narrator, Samuel Grout, the chief bureaucrat in what he calls a socialist paradise, picks up the tale. In order to orientate the reader, he first explains the changes which have taken place to the land. Canterbury is now arranged around a huge, central common, which centre contains a massive greenhouse producing all kinds of fruits and vegetables (from tropical oranges to humble potatoes); a communal dining hall where citizens gather together every evening; a library, a museum and, of course, the famous cathedral. It is a world without factories or even machinery, the People having decided that ‘machinery requires steam, explosives, electricity, and other uncontrolled and dangerous forces’ which can only be maintained at the cost of ‘thousands of lives’.¹³

It is also profoundly sterile. The buildings of the future are all redbrick; Canterbury cathedral still stands, although Grout admits that it ‘could not possibly be built in these times; first because we have no artificers capable of rearing such a pile, and next because we have not among us anyone capable of conceiving it, or drawing the design of it; nay we have no one who could execute the carved stone work’. The society described in *The Inner House* reeks of equality. Men and women all wear uniforms of flannel and Grout boasts that:

We have reduced life to its simplest form. Here is true happiness ... Food plentiful and varied: gardens for repose and recreation, both in summer and winter: warmth: shelter: and the entire absence of all emotions. Why the very faces of the People are all growing alike: one face for the men, and another for the women: perhaps in the far-off future, the face of the man will approach nearer and nearer to that of the woman, and so all at last will be exactly alike, and the individual will exist no more.

Since people now can only die through accident, their chief motivation has become the preservation of life itself. Overseeing that task is a self-appointed class of scientific experts who operate out of the cathedral, which has been renamed the House of Life. Grout, who in 1890 was a working-class East Ender, explains how he and his fellow administrators are now ‘a Caste apart: we keep mankind alive and free from pain’.¹⁴ The remainder of the novel relates a heroic rebellion against this bleak regime, telling the story of how competition, chance, risk, and speculation ultimately produce a better existence.

I bring up Besant’s novel not because of any intrinsic literary merit, but

because it represents the prevailing view of the relation between socialism and the state. For many late-Victorians, the prospect of being ruled by an emancipated and unrefined proletariat entailed just such horrors. Besant's world of redbrick buildings, infinite routine, and cheap monochrome flannel clothes, would have outraged Morris, but the German professor's initial hope that scientific advancement should serve to increase opportunities for those capable of making life 'beautiful and happy', seems not so heretical.

Whereas Besant represents the Victorian working class as incapable of ever thinking beyond their stomachs, Morris takes a more holistic view. For him, the souls and bodies of working people have been mutually impoverished by the current mode of social organisation. Restore workers to the world from which they have been alienated, Morris maintains, and art will follow. In an early contribution to *Commonweal*, he explains this idea:

It is the lack of this pleasure in daily work which has made our towns and habitations sordid and hideous, insults to the beauty of the earth which they disfigure, and all the accessories of life mean, trivial, ugly — in a word, vulgar. Terrible as this is to endure in the present, there is a hope in it for the future; for surely it is but just that outward ugliness and disgrace should be the result of the slavery and misery of the people; and that slavery and misery once changed, it is but reasonable to expect that external ugliness will give place to beauty, the sign of free and happy work.¹⁵

As Elizabeth Carolyn Miller has argued, the only way towards that change for Morris lay not via gradual reform, but a fundamental transformation of the entire basis of society. Morris, in Miller's view, was writing amidst 'a debate over evolutionary versus revolutionary socialism, over reformist versus revolutionary approaches to political change, and over progressive versus dialectical theories of history'.¹⁶ The fundamental transformation in mind is what Morris repeatedly termed in his lectures the substitution of competition by fellowship.

III MORRIS'S COSMOPOLITANISM

In 'How We Live and How We Might Live', Morris sketches an ideal fellowship, and in doing so outlines what might be called a provisional cosmopolitan vision. It is a world where:

any citizen of one community could fall to work and live without disturbance of his life when he was in a foreign country, and would fit into his place quite naturally; so that all civilized nations would form one great community, agreeing

together as to the kind and amount of production and distribution needed; working at such and such production where it could be best produced; avoiding waste by all means.¹⁷

Distinctions are important here, since Morris is not suggesting that the world be flattened in a single political order, or that individual differences be repressed in order to further the cause of human progress. Instead, he suggests that difference is essential. Elsewhere, as in 'What Socialists Want', Morris defies the association of socialism with uniformity with the declaration that 'Socialists no more than other people believe that persons are naturally equal'. The vision presented in 'How We Live and How We Might Live' includes multiple communities, and retains a sense of the foreigner as something always unknowable. What might change, Morris suggests, is our collective attitude toward that difference. He explains that various European nineteenth-century nationalisms are really just a reflection of commercial competition, a system 'which always must include national rivalry, [and] is pushing us into a desperate scramble for the markets on more or less equal terms with other nations'. The resultant waste and suffering of such pursuits, Morris explains, are not well understood by everyone but, at the same time, he maintains that the solution is not to dismiss the nation conceptually. If it is currently the case that capitalism underwrites contemporary ideas about national belonging, Morris holds out hope that there are still other ways of thinking and feeling about the nation. He makes an appeal to Nature, suggesting that 'it is best for those who feel that they naturally form a community under one name to govern themselves'.¹⁸

Natural feeling is a slippery concept. Indeed, entire disciplines of aesthetic and affect theories are based on the conviction that there is no such thing. Feelings, like tastes, are both acquired and mutable, a point which Gagnier captured when she named Morris 'the educator of the emotions in his literature'. When Morris writes of a group of humans who naturally feel affiliated with each other, he is uncomfortably close to other, less palatable, late-century ideas about the division of humanity. Martin Delveaux's study of *fin de siècle* environmental literature similarly warns of Nature's political ambivalence. Delveaux rejects any understanding of environmentalism as essentially radical, progressive, or humanitarian. Insisting on environmentalism as a discourse, he argues that it is just as often easily adopted by any number of interests. Attachments to 'the local', Gagnier & Delveaux subsequently note, are well suited to support nationalist or even fascist ideologies.¹⁹

The challenge is to explain how such a world where humans who 'naturally' feel in community with each other can self-organise, and yet remain so open that a foreign guest can arrive unannounced and 'fit into his place quite naturally'

might operate. Gagnier cites Jacques Derrida's notion of unlimited hospitality as one possible solution, but it is important at this stage to observe how often Morris makes appeal to metaphors of Nature. In 'Useful Work versus Useless Toil', Morris writes of the law of nature which compels humans to work for their survival, in order to extract the necessities they need for an abundant life. In 'What Socialists Want', he enumerates that abundance, claiming that 'everybody should have full enough food, clothes, and housing, and full enough leisure, pleasure, and education'. Taking cue from Thomas Carlyle, Morris cites the presence of poverty and ugliness within a country of bountiful natural and human resources as proof that the current social order has spectacularly failed.²⁰

Unlike Carlyle, Morris did not appeal to some lost or mistaken Christian morality. Morris took from his readings of Marx the knowledge that the primary schism of Victorian society was not between Modern 'Man' and 'his' Natural Self, but between Modern 'Man' and Nature. His call for a revolution in the basis of society amounts to replacing modern consciousness with an ecological consciousness. By ecology, I refer to the move towards systems theory emerging in the green discourse of the *fin de siècle*. Led by the ideas of Eugenius Warming and Alfred Russell Wallace, European naturalists began to think less about specific organisms, and more about whole environments. Ecology studies worlds or regions as compositions of interdependent organisms. Relevant to my analysis of Morris is the point that ecology undoes anthropocentric worldviews—that is, it perceives humans as creatures embedded in systems which they might influence, but cannot control. In some ways, it is the biological complement to Marx's declaration in the *Brumaire* that 'men make their own history, but they do not make it out of self-selected circumstances'.²¹

Morris imagines the struggle between humans and their natural world to be productive rather than destructive. In 'Attractive Labour,' he writes of moving beyond competition between individuals and nations and commencing 'the nobler contest' between humans and Nature. Conceiving this contest dialectically, he speculates that humans would find that 'when conquered, [Nature] would be our friend, and not our enemy'. In 'Useless Work versus Useless Toil' he argues that the victory will be realised when 'our work becomes a part of the pleasure of our lives'.²²

It is clear, then, that Morris's idea of work-pleasure is what would form the grounds for his ideal community: to the degree that they recognise each other as workers labouring under the same conditions, humans will 'naturally' feel attached to each other. Solidarity, in more orthodox Marxist terms, emerges out of class consciousness. With this in mind, recall the hypothetical citizen outlined in the cosmopolitan vision of 'How we Live and How We Might Live', who can 'fall to *work* and live without disturbance of his life when he was in a foreign country, and would fit into his place quite naturally'. By working under

the same conditions, he shall grow to fit into the foreign territory. Morris's green cosmopolitanism asserts that it is not specific kinds of work or specific products, but work-pleasure which will structure our affinities to each other.

IV NEWS FROM NOWHERE

Consider how Clara, an otherwise happy citizen of Nowhere, reacts upon being told how life was lived in the Victorian age of modernity:

Was not their mistake once more bred of the life of slavery that they had been living?—a life which was always looking upon everything, except mankind, animate and inanimate—'nature', as people used to call it—as one thing, and mankind as another, it was natural to people thinking in this way, that they should try to make 'nature' their slave, since they thought 'nature' was something outside them'.²³

To imagine the reunion of humanity with nature is the central project of Morris's novel. It represents a future where humans have forsaken the role of slavemaster; have relinquished their sovereignty over nature, along with the ideology of private property. Instead, they have become a community of caretakers—managing and tending the natural world for the increase of the common wealth.

When William Guest wakes, he finds England completely altered; two things characterise his early impressions of the utopia. The first is that he sees the entire country transformed into an idyllic garden, a communist paradise where all are healthy and happy, where all work is virtuous and a source of pleasure, and where the environmentally and morally corrupting influences of industrial capitalism have been eliminated. The second remarkable thing is that nobody—with the exception of Old Hammond—really remembers how that transformation took place.

The coincidence of natural improvement and historical amnesia is, through an ecological lens, entirely sensible, because it sutures the rift between humanity and nature created when Enlightenment philosophy and capitalist economics combined in order to invent modern subjectivity. In a modern worldview, Nature serves as a theatre for History. In order to stage the Hegelian pageantry of historical progress, it is necessary to presuppose a stable, natural backstage. But in Nowhere the theatre play and the backdrop are one. Irresponsibility regarding the backstage of nature has been taken away. Instead, its citizens patiently and deliberately tend to the other organisms in their spheres. Or, to invoke Old Hammond: '[England] is now a garden, where nothing is wasted and nothing is spoilt, with the necessary dwellings, sheds, and workshops scattered up and down the country, all trim and neat and pretty'.²⁴

Significantly, though the citizens of Nowhere have abandoned delusions of owning and claiming independence from Nature; they have not ceased their noble contest. Old Hammond explains that they retain their 'sense of architectural power ... [T]hey know that they can have what they want, and they won't stand any nonsense from Nature in their dealings with her'. Production in Nowhere incorporates not only handicraft and manual labour, but also depends on 'an abundance of mills', as well as those mysterious 'force-barges' seen shuttling commodities and people along the Thames, and whose means of propulsion is never explained.²⁵

So it is that humans continue to shape the world in powerful ways. But now that their actions are governed by an ecological consciousness, the natural world begins in turn to shape them. Old Hammond tells Guest about the nearly disastrous flight from city to the country which followed the overthrow of the old order. People 'flung themselves upon the freed land like a wild beast upon his prey', and (were the old modern consciousness still in place), 'would have created much misery'. Now, however, the invaders 'yielded to the influence of their surroundings'.²⁶ Awareness of this kind of reciprocity, where work on the land affects both worker and the world, is what I am calling an ecological consciousness.

And the effect of this consciousness is that England and its inhabitants appear much improved. Unlike Besant's dystopian future, where science has calculated precisely how many humans the land can sustain, and strictly manages both the daily activities and the reproductive capacity of its citizens, Morris presents a world where all humans seems aware of their full impact upon the world. Actions which would harm a fellow citizen, or impair the ecosystem, are rarely pursued. Provision is even made for unborn generations, as indicated in one scene where Hammond explains to Guest that the 'wastes and the forests' are preserved with a view to the needs of 'our sons and sons' sons'.²⁷

If modernity ushers in the pageantry of History, a narrative of humanity's internecine struggle to first extricate itself from, and so to control, dominate, and own the land, then an ecological consciousness requires another approach. As already noted, with the exception of Old Hammond, nobody in Nowhere recalls how they arrived at this social order, and this happy amnesia indicates the way that even time itself has been revolutionised. In *History and Class Consciousness*, the Marxist thinker Georg Lukács argued that the wage system embedded in industrial capitalism worked in order to regiment time in precise units which were both arbitrary and interchangeable, with the effect that

... (the) finished article ceases to be the object of the work-process. The latter turns into the objective synthesis of rationalised special systems whose unity is

determined by pure calculation and which must therefore seem to be arbitrarily connected with each other. This destroys the organic necessity with which inter-related special operations are unified in the end-product.²⁸

For Lukács, the economic unit of the hourly wage served to alienate labour from its object, a form of what Morris would call 'Useless Toil'. In *News from Nowhere*, Clara suggests the effect of such alienation by asking her companions

... don't you find it difficult to imagine the times when this little pretty country treated by its folk as if it had been an ugly characterless waste, with no delicate beauty to be guarded, with no heed taken of the ever fresh pleasure of the recurring seasons, and changeful weather, and diverse quality of the soil, and so forth?²⁹

Instead of the artificial clock, people now measure time according to the seasons, the transition between them composing a 'beautiful and interesting drama'.³⁰ Both work and dress now adjust harmoniously to seasonal, rather than artificial dictates.

The simultaneity of pre-modern craftwork, modern mills, and futuristic force-machines also signals way in which Morris deployed the utopian genre in search of a deeper revolution, one which entails the overthrow not just of a particularly depressing stage of history, but of History as such. The utopian genre plays into this move away from history, but such a recourse is not without risk. By the time he became a socialist, the use value of utopia was in serious doubt. The grand projects of Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen had failed and in 1880, Engels published *Socialisme utopique et Socialisme scientifique* (not translated into English until 1892), which devastated utopianism on the grounds of its idealism. For Engels, the trouble with utopian thought was that it repeated the fanciful thinking of the Young Hegelians, who believed that if good ideas could replace bad ones, the world would change. They believed that socialism 'is the expression of absolute truth, reason, and justice, and has only to be discovered to conquer all the world by virtue of its own power'; but because utopians appeal to universal truth, 'independent of time and space', they cannot represent the class interests of the proletariat.³¹

In his final contribution to *Commonweal*, from whose editorship he had been ousted a year earlier, Morris surveyed the history of socialism in Britain and made the following pronouncement:

I say for us to make Socialists is the business at present, and at present I do not think we can have any other useful business. Those who are not really Socialists — who are Trades' Unionists, disturbance breeders, or what not — will do what they are impelled to do, and we cannot help it. At the worst there will be some

good in what they do; but we need not and cannot heartily work with them, when we know that their methods are beside the right way. [...]

Our business, I repeat, is the making of Socialists, i.e., convincing people that Socialism is good for them and is possible. When we have enough people of that way of thinking, *they* will find out what action is necessary for putting their principles in practice. Until we have that mass of opinion, action for a general change that will benefit the whole people is impossible. [...]

Therefore, I say, make Socialists. We Socialists can do nothing else that is useful, and preaching and teaching is not out of date for that purpose; but rather for those who, like myself, do not believe in State Socialism, it is the only rational means of attaining to the New Order of Things.³²

News from Nowhere assumes this challenge, self-consciously working to translate a dream into a vision via its tactical adoption of the utopian form. Guest hopes not that readers will see the details of the future, but rather will acquire the ability to 'see it *as I have seen it*'. The task is not to map the future but to revolutionise hermeneutics, to educate readers into a new way of seeing.

I wish to close by suggesting that Morris's emphasis on natural cultivation carries with it an attempt to extract prose fiction from its reification by capitalism. We note that while Shakespeare is well-remembered in the utopian future, Victorian novelists are not: Dickens is poorly understood and poor Thackeray has a readership of one—and that same man seems to be the only curmudgeon left in England. The passionate Ellen explains that this rejection occurred because the novel is a technology of bourgeois individualism, overdetermined by its fidelity to a liberal capitalist worldview. Even well-meaning novelists, she says, who 'here and there show some feeling for those whom the history-books call "poor," and of the misery of whose lives we have some inkling' invariably

... give it up, and towards the end of the story we must be contented to see the hero and heroine living happily in an island of bliss on other people's troubles; and that after a long series of sham troubles (or mostly sham) of their own making, illustrated by dreary introspective nonsense about their feelings and aspirations, and all the rest of it; while the world must even then have gone on its way, and dug and sewed and baked and built and carpentered round about these useless—animals.³³

Well in advance of literary critics such as Ian Watt or Nancy Armstrong, Morris's Ellen realises that novels privilege the interior space of the individual.³⁴ The emphasis on interiority—that hallmark of the novelistic genre—appears to the communist reader in the future as 'dreary introspective nonsense'.

This view is what led Patrick Brantlinger to call *News from Nowhere* a socialist anti-novel,³⁵ but the paradigm change carried by Morris's revolutionary ecologi-

cal insight makes me suspect that it is closer to a post-novel. It could be argued that whereas a Dickensian commitment to progressive reform binds his agitated readership in the shackles of temporal progress, Morris's utopia short-circuits time and puts emphasis instead on space and systems. *News from Nowhere* teaches its readers not what the future will look like, only that that they are currently ignorant of the full impact of their activities. Capitalism and anthropocentrism are shown to be logics which externalise costs into a place or time for which they claim no responsibility. Natural community, or green cosmopolitanism, is predicated on each part feeling conscious of its relation to the whole. Reach this and politics as we know it, including the State, will vanish.

NOTES

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A Darker Shade of Green: William Morris, Richard Jefferies, and Posthumanist Ecologies

Jed Mayer

When William Guest, the mental traveller of William Morris's *News from Nowhere*, steps out into the England of 2102, he enters a sunny, robust, and healthy environment, a visionary ecology brought about by a more enlightened future populace. Many of these changes were proposed in Morris's lectures and essays, which from 1877 onward would place an increasing emphasis on the relationship between the human exploitation of nature and other, social injustices. As a kind of culmination of Morris's vision of a social and ecological harmony, the future painted in *News from Nowhere* is almost universally bright. Nevertheless, the work was clearly inspired by an earlier, darker vision of future ecologies and their effects on human society. In his response to one of the key works in a subgenre of late Victorian gothic novels which evoke horrific images of nature – one which I will describe later as 'ecological gothic', or 'ecogothic' – Morris envisioned a world liberated from human dominance. By reading Morris's future vision in light of contemporary posthumanist theories, this essay will seek to situate Morris within some of the more challenging developments in contemporary ecological thought.

After London (1885), the sole work of fantastic, or science-, fiction by the naturalist Richard Jefferies, occupies, in its generally grim portrayal of a future England taken over by the unchecked forces of a wild nature otherwise celebrated in Jefferies's work, a curious place in the author's *oeuvre*. Part I of the novel, 'The Relapse into Barbarism', depicts in meticulous detail the transformation and evolution of the English landscape following a largely unexplained 'change'. The absence of human impact allows plants and animals to develop unchecked, the wheat fields to be eaten by birds 'feasting at their pleasure' and 'trodden

upon by herds of animals', and the great watercourses of England changed or destroyed by plant growth and the destruction of dams by 'water rats'.¹ After nature takes its revenge, humans are brought to a feudal state of existence, divided by petty conflicts and mired in ignorance and superstition, as depicted through the romantic quest narrative of Sir Felix, which makes up the novel's second part, 'Wild England'.

Jefferies's vision of a future ecology and its social consequences is almost unremittingly pessimistic, yet in this dystopian vision William Morris found the roots of his own ecological and social utopia. While at Millthorp, the experimental farm near Sheffield of friend and fellow socialist Edward Carpenter, Morris wrote to Georgiana Burne-Jones in May, 1885 to tell her of reading 'a queer book called "After London" ... I rather liked it: absurd hopes curled round my heart as I read it. I rather wish I were thirty years younger: I want to see the game played out'.² The discovery of hope in a portrayal of ecological catastrophe helped to make more vivid for Morris the limits of anthropocentrism, and offered greater possibilities for advancing a mode of environmental criticism which would regard humans as only one strand of a diverse web of organic life.

Although the importance of human stewardship of the nonhuman world would remain an abiding concern of Morris's social criticism, Jefferies's dark ecological vision challenged the limitations of human dominance, opening up, in *News from Nowhere* and other works, what might be called a posthumanist perspective. Cary Wolfe has identified two main strands in contemporary posthumanist thought: one, which I here mean (cautiously) to identify with Morris, situates itself before and after the emergence of the autonomous subject of Enlightenment humanism, that disembodied human 'I' imagined as existing outside of the contingencies of biology and history. In Cartesian philosophy, this idea, of the sovereign human subject, is achieved via a constitutive rejection and mastery of the nonhuman, a freedom from, and dominance over, the material world, resembling the possessive individualism of Western capitalism.

The other form of posthumanism, often called 'transhumanism', is regarded by Wolfe as an extension, rather than a critique, of Enlightenment humanism. Following Donna Haraway's influential 'Cyborg Manifesto', a number of cultural theorists have embraced the technological and philosophical possibilities of developing beyond the limitations of human embodiment. The notion of becoming posthuman, Wolfe argues, 'derives directly from ideals of human perfectibility, rationality, and agency inherited from Renaissance humanism and the Enlightenment'. Thus 'transhumanism should be seen as an intensification of humanism' rather than a challenge to its philosophical limits.³

Morris's scepticism regarding the perfectibility of humans via technology became particularly acute during the later 1880s, culminating in his response to that other vision of the future which would significantly influence *News from*

Nowhere; Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*. In his review of the novel, Morris characterises the author's naïve faith in technological solutions to human problems as an extension of the possessive individualism which a truly socialist utopia should reject. While 'a machine-life is the best which Mr Bellamy can imagine for us on all sides', Morris stresses that 'the development of man's resources, which has given him greater power over nature, has driven him also into fresh desires and fresh demands on nature, and thus made his expenditure of energy much what it was before. I believe that this will be always so, and the multiplication of machinery will just — multiply machinery'.⁴

More precisely, Morris came to regard this 'multiplication of machinery' as connected with a disastrous enhancement and extension of particular human tendencies aided and abetted by Enlightenment faith in human transcendence over nature. In his visionary lecture 'The Society of the Future', delivered on 13 November, 1887, Morris presented his idea of a future in which humanity had relinquished its dominance, forming a society united by a common 'wish to keep life simple, to forgo some of the power over nature won by past ages in order to be more human and less mechanical, and willing to sacrifice something to this end'.⁵

Although some of Morris's earlier social criticism regarding the role of technology in a future socialist state is often ambivalent, particularly in pieces such as 'How We Live and How We Might Live' where he writes of 'machinery being used freely for releasing people from the more mechanical and repulsive part of necessary labour',⁶ the later 1880s saw Morris developing a more nuanced critique of human dominance, perhaps inspired by his reading of the opposed posthumanisms of Jefferies and Bellamy. In 'The Society of the Future' he argues that technological efficiency 'tends to reduce man to a machine without a will; to deprive him gradually of all the functions of an animal and the pleasure of fulfilling them, except the most elementary ones. The scientific ideal of the future of man would appear to be an intellectual paunch, nourished by circumstances over which he has no control, and without the faculty of communicating the results of his intelligence to his brother-paunches'.⁷ The idea of the animal—which in Cartesian thought signifies the merely physical, material substance, or *res extensa*, from which the *res cogitans* or thinking subject, distinguishes itself—is reclaimed by Morris as being coextensive with the human; indeed, as constitutive of what is most vital in humanity.⁸ To the rational subject — which, as Foucault argues, is imagined as 'transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history'⁹ — Morris polemically attaches a fleshly, animalistic 'paunch', thus restoring the transcendental subject to the physical world it seeks to transcend.

The strange mingling of bitterness and joy which Jefferies's *Wild England* inspired in Morris reflects the unsettling experience of witnessing human domi-

nance give way to a new biological order. Writing again to Georgiana Burne-Jones, a fortnight after the letter from Millthorp, Morris confesses that he has 'no more faith than a grain of mustard seed in the future history of "civilization", which I know now is doomed to destruction, and probably before very long: what a joy it is to think of!' However dystopian Jefferies's work might have been in intention, its reception by Morris was clearly liberating. Although Morris regards human civilisation with scepticism and bitterness, its dissolution brings him a kind of posthumanist joy, as he celebrates the future death of the myth of human progress: 'I used really to despair once because I thought what the idiots of our day call progress would go on perfecting itself: happily I know now that all that will have a sudden check— sudden in appearance I mean—as it was in the days of Noë'.¹⁰

Clearly, supposedly antonymic terms such as 'utopian' or 'dystopian' will not suffice for characterising the complex response engendered in Morris by his reading of *After London*. In an essay on Margaret Atwood, whose 'ecotastrophes' *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood* continue to explore themes raised by that book, Dunja M. Mohr offers the term 'transgressive utopian dystopias' to describe works such as Jefferies's, which 'incorporate within the dystopian narrative continuous utopian undercurrents'. In the heroic quest narrative of the second part of *After London*, there is a sense of liberation from the constraints of modern industrial society which functions as a utopian undercurrent to the ecological catastrophe of the first part. But at the novel's conclusion, the story of the character Sir Felix culminates in the building of an estate at a position of significant economic and military importance, thus re-establishing a kind of human dominance. The 'transgressive' element of Jefferies's 'utopian dystopia' emerges via Morris's critical reading, as he processes the text in order to 'criticize, undermine, and transgress the established binary logic of utopia', a logic which posits a clear distinction between 'good' and 'bad' futures.¹¹ In this respect, Morris read Jefferies in the manner which Fredric Jameson has identified as the critical perspective offered by works in the genre of science-, or speculative, fiction; namely, 'to defamiliarize and restructure our experience of our own present, and to do so in specific ways distinct from all other forms of defamiliarization'.¹²

The first part of *After London* offers a remarkable example of the defamiliarising potential of speculative fiction. The unidentified narrator takes on the voice of a future natural historian, providing a strikingly detached and unemotional description of nature's gradual takeover. The wild and 'waste' places which were becoming increasingly marginal during the nineteenth century gradually creep in, while the urban spaces which were once central, grow increasingly marginal as they are covered by unchecked growth: 'By the thirtieth year there was not one single open place, the hills only excepted, where a man could walk, unless he fol-

lowed the tracks of wild creatures or cut himself a path'. Humans are now obliged to follow animals, and as Jefferies's visionary natural history progresses, meticulous attention is paid to the evolution of animals left to run wild. Attempts by the dwindling number of humans to raise crops are foiled by the rising mice population, a problem mitigated somewhat by expanded weasel numbers, rather than human stewardship. The cause of the change remains shrouded in mystery, but some claim that 'the first beginning of the change was because the sea silted up the entrances to the ancient ports, and stopped the vast commerce which was once carried on'.¹³ Water, the very element which facilitated global expansion of the British Empire, becomes the source of its downfall, an irony which would not have been lost on Morris.

News from Nowhere shows Morris adopting Jefferies's defamiliarising strategies to depict an ecological shift in many ways as dramatic as that portrayed in *After London*, but with a significantly different tone. Whereas Jefferies renders its dethronement with grim detachment, Morris shows a future humanity actively bringing about and welcoming its own disempowerment. After violent social revolution and political upheaval, 'People flocked into the country villages, and, so to say, flung themselves upon the freed land like a wild beast upon his prey; and in a very little time the villages of England were more populous than they had been since the fourteenth century, and were still growing fast'. Urbanised humans become animalistic in their return to country life, but unlike Jefferies's future human populations, which become increasingly brutal and violent, Morris's migrants grew more gentle: 'The town invaded the country; but the invaders, like the warlike invaders of early days, yielded to the influence of their surroundings, and became country people'.¹⁴

In distinguishing Morris's envisioned future from that of other late-Victorian speculative writers, Peter Preston observes that the world seen by William Guest 'has taken shape as a result of a desired change formed by the collective will of men and women thinking and acting in accordance with a desire for peace, harmony and beauty'.¹⁵ In Morris's later social criticism, the model for these ideas of 'peace, harmony and beauty' is nature itself, and thus it might be argued that the 'desired change' offered by *News from Nowhere* is brought about humans acting in accordance with the nonhuman. This point is emphasised in a key speech by Clara, the lover of William Guest's guide Dick, as she contrasts their way of doing things with that of the nineteenth century:

Was not their mistake once more bred of the life of slavery that they had been living? – a life which was always looking upon everything, except mankind, animate and inanimate – 'nature,' as people used to call it – as one thing, and mankind as another. It was natural to people thinking in this way, that they should try to

make 'nature' their slave, since they thought 'nature' was something outside them.¹⁶

During these moments of critically looking backward to the nineteenth century, Morris intensifies the defamiliarising effect of his posthumanist vision for polemical purposes, offering a radical critique, not just of the effects of industrialisation and urban sprawl, but of the anthropocentrism which serves as their conceptual foundation. The very landscape of Morris's imagined future, in its blurring of boundaries between town and village, wild and domesticated, artificial and natural, vividly embodies these posthumanist ecological attitudes. Morris's unambiguously enthusiastic portrayal of future ecological change is in stark contrast to that of *After London*, which betrays a strong sense of anxiety about the powers of uncontrolled nature. As J. R. Ebbatson argues, their respective representations of the relationships between humans and nature reveal 'a fundamental opposition in the mind of the two authors'.¹⁷

Despite the abiding love of wild spaces, and the celebration of nature in all its diversity running throughout Jefferies's life and work, there is also a strong faith in the human dominance of nature which is a part of Enlightenment philosophical heritage. While environmentalists and animal rights advocates such as Edward Carpenter and Henry Salt found inspiration in Jefferies's work, they also criticised his celebration of blood sports, and his tendency to objectify nature.¹⁸ In a late essay entitled 'Natural History,' published in *Knowledge: An Illustrated Magazine of Science* two years before the appearance of *After London*, Jefferies celebrates human ascendancy over nature, which he regards as providing a chiefly utilitarian value to a civilisation of great scientific advancement. After weighing in on the debate over vivisection then currently raging, lending his voice strongly to advocacy of physiological experimentation, Jefferies praises scientific inquiry in diverse fields, united in their salutary belief 'that every single atom of matter should be employed for the good of the human race. While this motive animates the inquirer, the search is consecrated and the seeker dignified'.¹⁹

In contrast to the misguided beliefs of earlier generations, whose idea of natural history was informed by a reverence of the natural world, 'In our age nothing is holy but humanity. The human being is the one shrine towards which all pilgrims of our latter-day faith toil; the human being of itself, irrespective of race, sex, age, or distinction of good or bad. These are the ethics of natural history'. Though the unabashed anthropocentrism of this passage is so pronounced as to resemble caricatures of the increasingly professionalised 'Priesthood of Science' to be found in antivivisectionist tracts of the time, Jefferies concludes his lionisation of modern scientific faith in unambiguous affirmation: 'I want to see it recognised as a truth so great as to be the first lesson of youth, the law of manhood, the chief dogma of the world'.²⁰ Though it would be wrong to characterise *After London* as

merely a polemical dramatisation of a world bereft of human dominance, given the fact that at least one contemporary reader was able to find in it the basis for a radical ecological vision, the wild England envisioned in that work would seem to embody the anxieties haunting the otherwise sunny confidence in the values of Enlightenment humanism expressed in this brief essay.

Late Victorian literature is rife with expressions of such anxieties, as economic fluctuations, unrest in the colonies, and doubts regarding the morality of Imperial rule increasingly undermined national faith in progress and improvement. In late-Victorian gothic fiction particularly, fears regarding the nation's future emerged in a variety of grotesque forms. Patrick Brantlinger has identified a particular set of texts as embodying what he describes as 'Imperial Gothic', fantastic tales depicting horrors 'symptomatic of the anxieties that attended the climax of the British Empire', which 'seem often to be allegories of the larger regressive movement of civilization'.²¹ In works such as Rider Haggard's *She*, Conan Doyle's *Sign of the Four*, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, and the early stories of Kipling, the foreign assumes monstrous forms which threaten to undermine British sovereignty and their heroes' sanity.

Many of these works depict what Stephen Arata characterises as narratives of 'reverse colonization', as alien forces take over domestic spaces, bringing about a 'terrifying reversal' in which 'the colonizer finds himself in the position of the colonized, the exploiter becomes exploited, the victimizer victimized'. Arata stresses that these 'fantasies of reverse colonization are more than products of geopolitical fears. They are also responses to cultural guilt', as the invasive forces become monstrous reflections of Britain's own colonising practices. Such horrific reversals present 'powerful critiques of imperialist ideologies, even if that potential remains unrealized'.²² *After London* might be classified as just such an Imperial gothic narrative of reverse colonisation, but with a notable difference: the monstrous forces do not come from abroad but emerge, quite literally, from native soil. If the narrative patterns of Jefferies's depiction of ecological catastrophe resemble in some ways those of Imperial gothic, then clearly a slightly different, though related, set of anxieties is being manifested.

Since the publication of Alfred Crosby's *Ecology and Imperialism*, a number of historians and cultural theorists, including Helen Tiffin, Graham Huggins, Michael Hardt, and Antonio Negri, have addressed the ways in which attitudes toward the nonhuman have shaped imperialist attitudes and practices.²³ Although it is now generally acknowledged that during European colonisation of India, Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean, 'the lands of the colonized and the non-human populations who inhabit these lands were often plundered and damaged, as an indirect result of the colonisation of the people', as Val Plumwood argues, 'the concept of colonization can be applied directly to nonhuman nature itself, and that the relationship between humans, or certain groups of them, and

the more-than-human world might be aptly characterized as colonization'. During the process of colonisation, differences between colonisers and colonised are often exaggerated, and non-Europeans regarded as closer to animals and nature than the colonisers themselves, a perspective which serves to underwrite Imperial domination. 'The ideology of colonization', Plumwood argues, 'involves a form of anthropocentrism that underlies and justifies the colonization of non-human nature through the imposition of the colonizers' land forms and visions of ideal landscapes in just the same way that Eurocentrism underlies and justifies modern forms of European colonization'.²⁴ Eurocentrism may thus be seen as informing attitudes towards nature at home as well as abroad, as wilderness and other wild places are regarded as resources to be exploited as well as exotic realms holding a dangerous allure.

Jefferies's visionary account, in *The Story of My Heart*, of an epiphanic spiritual and sensual merging with nature, was likened by Henry Salt to Buddhist philosophy, and may be seen as Orientalist in its exoticisation of nature, while the darker side of this allure clearly emerges in hypnotic descriptions of nature's reverse colonisation of England in *After London*. Although the novel is unique in the meticulous detail and richly evocative language of its ecological catastrophe – informed by the author's extensive knowledge of natural history – there are a number of works of the later-nineteenth and early-twentieth century with which it may be compared. Darko Suvin's exhaustive survey of late-Victorian science fiction includes a significant number of narratives focusing on ecological disasters; clearly reflecting cultural anxieties regarding the environmental effects of industrial development and urban sprawl. Several other works from the 1880s present a future England suffering under the effects of industrial 'fog'.²⁵

Other works portray England overtaken by animals such as intelligent apes, or Swiftian horses. Some even envisage a future ecology disastrously transformed by climate change, or suffering from overpopulation. Yet others imagine the germs of disease used in warfare.²⁶ Many of these motifs appear in the most enduring of these late-Victorian fictions, H. G. Wells's *War of the Worlds*,²⁷ which depicts invading Martians, explicitly presented as a vision of what humans will evolve into, colonising our planet by changing its ecologies. These accounts of reverse colonisation by nature may be seen as occupying a distinct subgenre of the gothic; one which might, for its peculiar reimagining of cultural anxieties regarding human environmental abuses in the form of monstrous or horrific future ecologies, be called 'ecogothic'.

While the ecological future imagined in *After London* seems more anxious about what happens when we cease dominating nature—perhaps reflecting an implicit awareness of the practical and philosophical limitations of the exclusively materialistic treatment of the nonhuman presented in 'Natural History'—the novel's most haunting images emerge during its account of the

pestilent space London becomes once it is flooded. As the eastern windings of the Thames become clogged with the refuse of commerce, the checked waters rise to cover the vast city, forming a polluted swamp which exhales a toxic miasma.

They say the sun is sometimes hidden by the vapour when it is thickest, but I do not see how any can tell this, since they could not enter the cloud, as to breathe it when collected by the wind is immediately fatal. For all the rottenness of a thousand years and of many hundred millions of human beings is there festering under the stagnant water, which has sunk down into and penetrated the earth, and floated up to the surface the contents of the buried cloacæ.²⁸

Although a sense of benumbed awe attends the description of nature's reclamation of England, it is not until unchecked growth meets urban pollution that Jefferies's future ecology takes on a voice of genuine horror. When Sir Felix later encounters the pestilent swamp which London has become, the sense of loathing is more explicitly directed towards the human producers of those pollutants which make this uncanny environment so toxic:

He had penetrated into the midst of that dreadful place, of which he had heard many a tradition: how the earth was poison, the water poison, the air poison, the very light of heaven, falling through such an atmosphere, poison. There were said to be places where the earth was on fire and belched forth sulphurous fumes, supposed to be from the combustion of the enormous stores of strange and unknown chemicals collected by the wonderful people of those times.²⁹

In contrast to the celebration of human science and industry of 'Natural History', this bitterly ironic description of the 'wonderful' inventors of the past suggests a nagging concern with the effects of such development. Although Sir Felix finally escapes this toxic environment, and lives to lay the foundations of a future kingdom, the taint of the encounter lingers, poisoning any sense of hopefulness with anxieties regarding the by-products of human development. The haunting sense of human complicity in future ecological disasters may be seen as the defining quality of what I am calling 'ecogothic', a literary subgenre which emerges in response to late-nineteenth century growing concerns with the deleterious effects of industrialisation.

The uncanny merging in late-Victorian ecogothic of the artificial and the natural, reflects an awareness that the categories of nature and culture are permeable, particularly as idealised natural spaces free of the signs of human presence were dwindling. As Timothy Morton argues, the modern idea of 'environment was born at exactly the moment when it became a problem. The word environment still haunts us, because in a society that took care of

its surroundings in a more comprehensive sense, our idea of environment would have withered away'.³⁰ Along with a number of postmodern ecocritics who bring post-structuralist and deconstructive practices to bear on environmental questions, Morton argues that the idea of nature as something 'over there' needing our protection which informs environmentalist thought fundamentally misrepresents the complex relationships between humans, other organisms and the planet we share. One way of thinking our way out of untenable ideas of nature, Morton argues, is by recognising, and in a sense embracing our current ecological plight, rather than imagining environmental solutions which seek to purify nature, restoring it to a pristine wholeness which has never really existed. Morton calls this approach – a mode of interconnectedness in which we 'stay with a dying world,' a 'gothic' identification with nature's decay – 'Dark Ecology'.

Now is a time for grief to persist, to ring throughout the world. Modern culture has not yet known what to do with grief. Environmentalisms have both stoked and assuaged the crushing feelings that come from a sense of total catastrophe, whether from nuclear bombs and radiation, or events such as climate change and mass extinction. ... If we get rid of the grief too fast, we eject the very nature we are trying to save.³¹

Our persistent attachment to idealised images of nature – part of the Romantic legacy of modern environmentalism – has hindered engaged contemplation of the ecologies in which we are actually immersed. While the devastation of natural beauty is certainly an occasion for grief, it is not one for escape. The grotesque ecology which emerges from the coalescence of nature and industry in *After London* is a haunting one, yet fantastic as it is, this ecogothic vision serves as an apt representation of the strange ecologies which emerged during the nineteenth century, and remain our polluted heritage.

Although the future ecologies presented in *News from Nowhere* would seem far removed from the toxic environment of Jefferies' future London, ecogothic imagery suffuses Morris's social criticism. While idyllic visions of an unpolluted English landscape are also abundant in his essays and lectures, these often seem to hover just out of reach, representing a fading Romantic ideal. The image of dying nature is a palpable and persistent one, emerging memorably in what might be considered Morris's first piece of environmental criticism, his lecture on 'The Lesser Arts' delivered in 1877:

Is money to be gathered? cut down the pleasant trees among the houses, pull down ancient and venerable buildings for the money that a few square yards of London dirt will fetch; blacken rivers, hide the sun and poison the air with smoke and worse, and it's nobody's business to see to it or mend it: that is all that

modern commerce, the counting-house forgetful of the workshop, will do for us herein.³²

Here, as in so much of his later writing, Morris makes vivid the deleterious effects of industrial development by maintaining 'pleasant trees' and 'blackened rivers' in fraught equilibrium. Although he never succumbs to despair at what we have lost, he also refuses to allow his listeners to become complacent in fantasies of lost beauty. This is a technique he learned from John Ruskin, whose later writing is also rife with images of dying nature, the most memorable being *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century* – that exhaustive weather report on late-Victorian air pollutants and their moral meaning.³³ Such works provided Morris with a more complex vision of ecology in a state of flux, one in which brightness and beauty are inextricably tied to corruption and decay.

Such imagery would seem to be absent from Morris's vision of the future, suggesting that his idyllic vision stands apart from the hybrid imagery of Jefferies, Ruskin, and other practitioners of ecogothic. Nevertheless, the dark ecological perspective from which Morris's visionary ecology arose is present in the frame narrative of *News from Nowhere*. At the beginning of the novel, the protagonist envisions a brighter future from his seat on the underground railway, 'that vapour-bath of hurried and discontented humanity'. At the novel's melancholy conclusion, after we, along with Morris's protagonist, have shared extensive experience of this idyllic future vision, it fades, and the narrator reflects that he was 'conscious all along that I was really seeing all that new life from the outside', and decides he could not have stayed; because he belongs 'so entirely to the unhappiness of the past' that future happiness 'even would weary you'.³⁴ The vision has added 'hope' to his 'struggle', but he must continue to strive for this vision fair; a vision made all the more vivid via its grounding in a darker perception of nature.

NOTES

1. Richard Jefferies, *After London*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980, pp. 1-3. (Subsequently *After London*) 'Water rats' here presumably refers not to actual rats (i.e. members of the genus *Rattus*), but to the old English country name for the Water Vole, (*Arvicola amphibius* L.; hence 'Ratty' in *The Wind in the Willows*).
2. Philip Henderson, ed, *The Letters of William Morris to his Family and Friends*. London: Longman's, Green & Co., 1950, p. 236. (Afterwards Henderson)
3. 'A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the

- Late Twentieth Century', in Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, London: Routledge, 1991, pp. 149-182; Cary Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism?* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010, p. xv.
4. Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward 2000-1887*, Boston: Ticknor & Co, 1880, 470 pp. Morris's review appears as 'Looking Backward' (1889), in Clive Wilmer, ed, *William Morris: News from Nowhere and Other Writings*, London: Penguin, 1993, p. 357. (Afterwards Wilmer)
 5. 'The Society of the Future' (1887), in Norman Kelvin, ed, *William Morris on Art and Socialism*, Minneapolis, New York: Dover Publications, 1999, p. 183. (Afterwards Kelvin)
 6. 'How we live and how we might live' (1884), in May Morris, ed, *The Collected Works of William Morris*, London: Longman's, Green & Co., 1915, Vol. XXIII, p. 24.
 7. Kelvin, p. 177.
 8. In his later work, Jacques Derrida has explored ways in which the rational subject achieves an imagined autonomy by rejecting its connection to the physical body, which is identified with the animal. Thus, 'the discourse on the subject ... continues to link subjectivity with man. Even if it acknowledges that the "animal" is capable of auto-affection [or autonomy, freedom], this discourse nevertheless does not grant it subjectivity'; "Eating Well", or the Calculation of the Subject: An Interview', in Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor & Jean-Luc Nancy, eds, *Who Comes After the Subject?*, London: Routledge, 1991, p. 105. We might thus, following Louise Westling, describe the critique of humanism I have been discussing, in its concern with resituating the constitutive role of the animal in humanist discourse, as 'animal posthumanism'; Louis Westling, 'Literature, the Environment, and the Question of the Posthuman', in Catrin Gersdorf & Sylvia Meyer, eds, *Nature in Literary and Cultural Studies: Transatlantic Conversations on Ecocriticism*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006, p. 29.
 9. Michel Foucault, 'Truth and Power', in Paul Rabino, ed, *The Foucault Reader*, London: Vintage Books, 2010, p. 59.
 10. Henderson, p. 236.
 11. Dunja M. Mohr, 'Transgressive utopian dystopias: the Postmodern reappearance of utopia in the disguise of dystopia', *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik*, Vol. 55, part 1, 2007, p. 10.
 12. 'Progress versus utopia, or, Can we imagine the future?', in Frederic Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions*, London: Verso, 2005, p. 286.
 13. *After London*, p. 3, p. 15.
 14. Wilmer, p. 104.

15. Peter Preston, *Dreaming London: The Future City in Morris & Others*, London: The William Morris Society, 2007, p. 44.
16. Wilmer, pp. 193-194.
17. J. R. Ebbatson, 'Visions of wild England: William Morris and Richard Jefferies', *Journal of the William Morris Society* III, No. 3, Spring 1977, p. 21.
18. In his monograph on Jefferies, Salt laments that 'his early books are disfigured by many revolting details of the seamy side of sportsmanship, which are intolerable to any reader in whom either the humane or artistic instinct is well developed'; Henry Salt, *Richard Jefferies: His Life & His Ideals*, Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 37.
19. Richard Jefferies, 'Natural History', *Knowledge: An Illustrated Magazine of Science*, 5 January 1883, p. 6.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988, pp. 228-229.
22. Stephen D. Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist: Dracula and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization', *Victorian Studies: A Journal of the Humanities, Arts and Sciences* Vol. 33, part 4 (Summer 1990), p. 623.
23. Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, rev. ed. 2004, 386 pp.; Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001, 478 pp.; Helen Tiffin & Graham Huggan, *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment*, London: Routledge, 2010, 245 pp.
24. Val Plumwood, 'Decolonizing Relationships with Nature', in Bill Ashcraft, Gareth Griffiths & Helen Tiffin, eds, *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, London: Routledge, 1995, pp. 503, 504.
25. Darko Suvin, *Victorian Science Fiction in the UK: The Discourses of Knowledge and Power*, Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1983, 461 pp.; William Delisle Hay, *The Doom of the Great City: Being the Narrative of a Survivor Written A.D. 1942*. London: Newman, 1880, 52 pp.; J. Drew Gay, *The Mystery of the Shroud: A Tale of Socialism*. Bristol: Arrowsmith, 1887, 134 pp.; Robert Barr, *The Face and the Mask*, London: Hutchison, 1894, 304 pp.
26. Arthur Montagu Brookfield, *Simiocracy: A Fragment from Future History*, Edinburgh: Blackwood & Co., 1884, 186 pp.; Walter Copland Perry, *The Revolt of the Horses*, London: G. Richards, 1898, 229 pp.; John Ames Mitchell, *The Last American: A Fragment from the Journal of Khan-I, Prince of Dymph-Yoo-Chur, and Admiral in the Persian Navy*, New York: Stokes, 1889, 78 pp.; Henry Crocker Marriott Watson, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire; or, The Witch's Cavern*, London: Trischler, 1890, 291 pp.; William

- Fergus Hume, *The Year of Miracle: A Tale of the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred*, London: Routledge, 1891, 148 pp.; Robert Potter, *The Germ Growers: The Strange Adventures of Robert Easterley and John Wilbraham*, London: Hutchison, 1892, 274 pp.; Matthew Phipps Shiel, *The Yellow Danger*, London: Richards, 1898, 348 pp.
27. H.G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds*, London: Heinemann, 1898, 303 pp.
 28. *After London*, pp. 37-38.
 29. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
 30. Timothy Morton, *Ecology Without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007, p. 141.
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
 32. Wilmer, p. 252.
 33. John Ruskin, *The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century: two lectures delivered at the London Institution, February 4th and 11th 1884*, Orpington, Kent: Allen, 1884, 152 pp.
 34. Wilmer, p. 43, pp. 228, 206.

¡Homenaje a Aragón!: *News from Nowhere*, collectivisation, and the sustainable future

Patrick O'Sullivan

Perhaps we were dreamers. Utopians. Yes, all of us; but remember that even liberalism was a utopia until it was realised, and then socialism appeared the utopia. We were (and remain) convinced that one day the utopia of ours – the most utopian of all perhaps – will be realised; for if it isn't, (humanity) will not be content ...¹

What kind of document is *News from Nowhere*? Most authors label it a 'utopian romance', a vision, or a dream, but it has also been described as 'England reborn', 'a summing-up of ... Morris's life's work', 'a vision of the future as Morris would have liked to see it', and 'a world we are meant to help bring about'.² Clearly it is also a utopia of some kind – 'a constructive utopia', a 'kinetic utopia', an 'Arcadian utopia', 'an actualised utopia', 'the first utopia which is not utopian'.³ It also possesses, at least for some, a 'green' dimension – 'our first ecotopia', 'the best ecotopia so far imagined'; 'an eco-socialist future rather than a romantic utopian past'; 'in many ways an ecotopia before the name'.⁴

Reactions to it were not always positive. J.W. Mackail, who apparently did not much approve of Morris's political ideas, termed it a 'slightly constructed and essentially insular romance': contemporary reviewer Maurice Hewlett thought it 'not an earthly, but an earthy paradise'. More recently, Barbara Gribble described it as 'a vision impaired', and 'an inquiry into self-deception and *stasis*', a term used by several writers.⁵ One point upon which some of the most distinguished Morris scholars agree is that it is 'in no sense ... a literal picture of the future', 'must not be ... read as a literal picture of a communist society' or 'of a socialist utopia', and was 'never intended as a blueprint from

which people could plan a working social system'.⁶ Or as G.D.H. Cole wrote

... *News from Nowhere* was neither a prophecy nor a promise, but the expression of a personal preference. Morris was saying, 'Here is the sort of society I feel I should like to live in. Now tell me yours!' ... We must (therefore) judge *News from Nowhere* not as a complete picture of a possible society, but as ... something that a decent society will have to include, and to foster.⁷

Perhaps one of the best descriptions, with its allusions to 'human nature', is by Stephen Coleman – 'a vision of how humans could be'.⁸

News from Nowhere has also been difficult for some to accept on account of its supposed 'medievalism', or, the reverse, its lack of modernity – an issue recently revived by Tony Pinkney,⁹ and comprehensively discussed by Ruth Kinna. For example, both H.G. Wells and Raymond Williams described it as 'impractical', G.D.H. Cole 'outmoded', and A.L. Morton 'an allegory'. Philip Henderson maintained that it was 'an insult to Morris's intelligence to suppose (that) he really believed in the possibility of such a society', while Paul Thompson insisted (in what seems to me a revealing phrase) that it was 'really quite modern'. Even Kinna herself, having first suggested that 'Morris understood *Nowhere* as a literal idea of what the future could be', concludes that 'Treating *News from Nowhere* as a literal picture of socialism suggests (that) Morris's vision cannot be realised'.¹⁰

I have decided here to go against *all* of these writers, however distinguished or perceptive, and begin my argument with the premise that while *News from Nowhere* may or may not be an accurate description of a socialist or a communist society, it undoubtedly is, for me, and by many criteria, a just about perfect description of an *ecological* society. Therefore while it may or may not conform particularly well to the laws of history, it is, as far as I can tell, entirely consistent with the laws of physics. For me, *News from Nowhere* is not just an example of what an ideal society *might* look like – and therefore an expression of what E.P. Thompson termed 'desire' – but also of what such a society must eventually *be* like; the expression of (ecological) 'necessity'.¹¹

In an attempt to resolve these somewhat abstract arguments, perhaps what we need is a concrete example. And here we run across the old problem that, in the words of countless bar-room pundits over the decades, 'Like Christianity, Socialism/Communism is a good idea which has never been tried'. However, I can offer one example which I hope readers will find helpful – the collectivisation which took place in parts of Republican Spain, during the years 1936-1939.¹² While this episode is not, again, a perfect mirror of *News*

from *Nowhere*, it does share a number of characteristics which may help me explore further why Morris's 'vision' is, for me, and for many greens, still the best description of the kind of world we will *all* soon need to construct.

II

There is no space here to venture very far into what Gerald Brenan described as *The Spanish Labyrinth*.¹³ During the early hours of 19 July 1936, rebel elements of the Spanish military (not yet exclusively led by General Francisco Franco) staged a military coup – a *pronunciamiento* – against the democratically elected Republican government. This event soon led to division of the country into two zones – Nationalist or rebel territory mainly to the north and west, and Republican or Loyalist Spain to the south and east. In many parts of the latter, the resulting 'power vacuum' either made it necessary, or provided an opportunity, for various organisations, especially the anarcho-syndicalist *Confederación Nacional de Trabajo* (National Federation of Labour; CNT), to implement their revolutionary ideals. As a result, the CNT, often with cooperation from the socialist *Unión General de Trabajadores* (UGT; General Union of Workers), implemented widespread collectivisation of agriculture in the countryside, and, in a few cities, of industry.

So much for an outline of 'How the Change came'. As for the detail, one account does indeed read as if extracted from the pages of *News from Nowhere*.

At the corner of his street stood an insurgent artillery detachment of two guns, dominating the ... road upon which his house is situated. On this ... road a detachment of armed workers, under the command of a non-commissioned *asalto* officer, approached the insurgent cannon, which could have blown them up with one shell. But they succeeded in a surprise. They ran towards the guns, their rifles with the muzzle upwards, so that it was impossible to use them. The artillery men, baffled by this inoffensive behaviour, waited to see what would happen next. Before any command could be given, the workers had reached the soldiers, and with passionate words began to exhort them not to shoot upon the people, not to participate in an insurrection against the republic and against their own fathers and mothers, to turn round and arrest their officers. And thus it happened. The soldiers immediately turned round. The whole Barcelona garrison had been told that they were under orders from the Government to put down an anarchist rising. When they saw that they had been misled they dropped their arms, or turned them against their officers who had driven them into the fight. In this particular case ... some of the officers just escaped, others were killed on the

spot by their men; the guns were immediately turned round and now dominated the street in the opposite direction. Things did not happen everywhere ... in this relatively peaceful manner. At many points fierce fighting was needed before the soldiers left their officers; but that was always the end of the story.¹⁴

As for the countryside

(On 19 July, a)fter supper I and my neighbours went out to the street for some fresh air. At about 11 o'clock ... a rumour reached us that the army had risen against the Republic ... The following day ... *CNT* members gathered at the Union's cafe and exchanged information and impressions as we followed the news on the radio. At 10 o'clock, Radio Barcelona announced that the army had risen ... At one o'clock (the) radio ... confirmed the news and gave details of the resistance of the workers in ... the rest of Spain, especially ... in Barcelona. ... There was no doubt now.

The Civil Guard (*Guardia Civil*) must have received orders to remain in the barracks. ... The *CNT* members met at the headquarters of the Agricultural Union with the Left Republicans who had the majority of members in the Union. The creation of a Revolutionary Committee was suggested with four members, two from each organisation.

The local fascists came out (on)to the streets without noticing that the ... Guards were not there with them. They probably felt that they were masters of the situation and that the Guards would come to their aid if necessary. Our lights went out at midnight. Someone had broken the transformer and the town was in darkness. ... (However, next day, the Civil Guard withdrew to a nearby town and abandoned the village).

On (27 July) ... members of the *CNT* decided to try to create something new and humane, to organise an agricultural collective ... We held a meeting to determine how the idea should be presented to the people. ... We agreed to call a public assembly ... through the ... Labour Union at 9 (pm) in the Plaza Mayor. ... At the appointed hour, the Plaza was filled with people. ... I was chosen to be chairman of this historic assembly. ... I explained the goals we had in mind, an Agricultural Collective where all would have the same obligations and the same rights and benefits. ... After I finished we made it clear that what we want to do is not the idea or programme of one man or group. Everyone is invited to offer their suggestions and opinions. ...

When the agenda was completed I stated: All citizens who ... wish to join the new organisation can do so freely today, tomorrow or when they wish. The doors will be open to all who wish to join. The Administrative Council will be elected by majority vote at the first General Assembly. All members will participate in drawing up the rules ... under which the Collective will function.

Although ... members of the *CNT* have an outline of what can be done, the collaboration of all members is essential. ...

Two hundred and fifty families joined the collective, about half the population of the Municipality.¹⁵

Three kinds of collective were established. In Barcelona, many of the activities needed to run a modern industrial city were collectivised, including mass transport (railways, buses and trams), public utilities (gas, water, electricity), bakeries, slaughter houses, construction, textiles, mechanical engineering and the health service, but also theatres, cinemas, hotels and guesthouses, hairdressers, and even beauty parlours. First priority was to organise the acquisition and distribution of food for 1.2 million people. Market gardens in the districts around the city were therefore integrated into the food industry collective.

Collectives were run by technical and administrative committees elected from among the relevant workforce, for a fixed term and on rotation, and for no extra reward. Committee business was transacted outside working hours. Private urban transport companies were integrated, and fares lowered by 50%. Working hours were reduced (though probably not as far as they could have been in peacetime), and wages equalised by raising lower rates, and reducing higher. Children, the sick, retired people and wounded militia travelled free.

Similar changes were introduced in the utilities, and the docks. In the textile industry, employing 250,000 workers, hours were reduced from 60 to 40 per week, and wages raised and 'equalised'. Some industries were redirected to the war effort, so that engineering factories produced armaments, and car plants and railway workshops ambulances and armoured cars. In the health service, 8,000 workers, including doctors, nurses, midwives, dentists, pharmacists and radiologists joined the collectives. Doctors received higher pay, and worked shorter hours, but many carried on 'overtime' for no wages. Treatment was free, and paid for by the collective, or the *Generalidad* (the Catalan Government).

In an echo of the 'banded workshops' of *News from Nowhere*, the woodworkers' union of Barcelona integrated all of the small workshops in the city into Confederated Workshops (*Talleres Confederales*), but in this case not so much in order to save energy as better to maximise production and technical development, and to 'obtain maximum benefits from machines and efficient hard work'.¹⁶ They also incorporated the entire process of production into their collective, from forestry in the countryside to timber treatment and milling, to manufacture and distribution of finished goods.

Other urban collectives were established in Alcoy (the second city of

Alicante province). As well as the same services as in Barcelona, a textile industry employing 6,500 people was collectivised, as was making of paper and cardboard. In the north of Spain, in the ports of Gijón (Asturias) and Laredo (Santander province), the entire fishing industry, from catching at sea to canning, drying and marketing of fish, was also run by collectives.

In the Levante,¹⁷ a regional federation of five provinces containing 1.65 million people established 340 rural collectives, rising to 900 by 1938. The region contains 78% of the most fertile land in Spain, much of which was used for rice cultivation, and growing oranges, both on a commercial basis. Fifty per cent of the Spanish orange crop was produced, 70% of which was sold abroad at collectivised agencies, mainly in France. Agricultural collectives also grew other fruit, vegetables, vines, olives, rice and raised livestock, while industrial sections produced wine, spirits, preserves, olive oil and sugar. Administrative commissions acquired machinery, fertilisers, insecticides and seeds.¹⁸

Most urban collectives, and the rural collectives of the Levante, took over the running of industries and commercial agriculture already well integrated into the world market. Further south (in Andalucía), and in the dry interior (Castile and especially Aragón), collectives were established in which subsistence agriculture was more important (although in many cases a substantial surplus was produced). As these much more closely resemble the kind of self-reliant community advocated by many ecocentric environmentalists,¹⁹ I intend to devote more space to discussing this third type of collective.

The separation into conflicting zones which took place in July 1936 reflects a much older division of the country into 'leftist Spain' of small tenant farmers and sharecroppers (the north and east), and 'rightist' Spain (the centre and south); a region of medium sized farms and large landed estates (*latifundia*). Over a few weeks during the summer of 1936, ca 5.5 million hectares of land, mainly in the interior parts of 'leftist Spain', but also the south, worked by more than three million people, were organised into between 1200 and 2000 collectives, by the people who worked them. Land was confiscated, along with livestock, buildings, equipment, fertilisers and stored harvests, all of which became the property of the collective. All rents, debts and mortgages were abolished, and in some cases money.²⁰

In many collectives, everyone was apparently free to join, or not; no formalities were required. In others, peasants joined out of self-preservation, or were forced to do so.²¹ Those who joined brought their land and assets, but those who had nothing to contribute were also admitted, with the same rights and duties. Collectivisation was therefore perhaps more popular with landless labourers than with small land-holders. Those who refused to join

(‘individualists’) were often respected, but allowed to retain only that amount of land which they and their family could work without the use of wage labour, which was strictly forbidden.²² As in the cities, the first priority was food, in this case the harvest, which was imminent.

Work was organised in groups of 10-15. Each elected its own delegate to the local Administration Commission, which met after hours to schedule work for the following day. Delegates had no special work or other privileges: everyone worked according to their physical capacity. Days lost to illness were counted as work days. Working age was 14-60 years, but some older people chose to continue. Working hours were long – 12-14 hours per day, or basically ‘dawn to dusk’, six days per week: labour was short because many young men were at the Front. Morrisians may be interested to read that the 40% of the workforce formerly engaged ‘socially useless activity’ – e.g. servants, shopkeepers – was ‘now directed to useful projects for the benefit of all’, and that there was never any shortage of volunteers for unpleasant tasks such as ‘nighttime irrigation’. Such duties, along with more agreeable work, were rotated around work groups.²³

Collectives were organised into Districts, whose committees collected data on consumption and production which were reported to the Regional Federation. The idea was that shortages in one locality could be alleviated by transfer of goods, services, or even labour, from other collectives. Decision making in this federal polity was ‘fiercely democratic’,²⁴ however, and the General Assembly of each Collective, made up of all its members, regarded itself as the sovereign body.

Goods produced locally were distributed free when in surplus, but rationed when scarce. Pregnant women, children, disabled and retired people and the sick were given priority. Olive oil, potatoes, wheat, wine and green vegetables were thus often freely available, depending on locality. Milk was generally in short supply, as dairy cattle were scarce. Each family also possessed a plot of its own which it used to rear pigs, chickens or rabbits. Committees collected data on whether a surplus or a deficit existed, in order to estimate local need.²⁵ All production and consumption was very carefully recorded.

Goods were stored on local warehouses, often the now redundant church. Surpluses were taken to District or Regional distribution centres. Commodities not produced locally were acquired either by barter, both with other collectives or with non-collectivised communities, or paid for with money earned either via previous transactions, or obtained when local banks were ‘closed’ after 19 July. For external transactions, state currency (the *peseta*) was still needed, but the Peasant Federations of the Levante, and of Aragón, established their own banks for trade with the towns. In Catalonia, the finances of all collectivised industrial plants and industries were deposited with the Central Labour Bank

in Barcelona. However, these were not capitalist banks, and charged no interest except a 1% administration fee. Credit was given, but not in cash.²⁶

Some collectives attempted to abolish money altogether, and at first ran a free system for supplying essential goods. Others abolished *the use of state currency*, and issued their own money for internal use. Many employed an alternative system, involving coupons, vouchers, workers' cards, consumer cards or account booklets, points systems, but these were used in order to calculate need, not 'work done' (i.e. goods were not 'earned' but supplied as to need). Clothing was allocated via a voucher system, but housing was often free.

Later, the 'family wage' assigned according to family size was widely introduced. Even under a voucher system, it had been difficult to calculate precise need except using *pesetas*. The exact wage 'paid' to each family was set by individual collectives, however, according to local 'prices', and so varied widely. In some collectives the 'family wage' was paid (or vouchers allocated) equally to 'all workers' both men and women; in others it was paid 'per couple', or women were paid less than men. Children were paid smaller amounts according to age. In a few collectives, delegates (already expected to conduct committee business 'after hours') were paid *less* than the norm, in case they 'got above themselves'.

Women appear to have been treated as economic equals in about half of the agrarian collectives, but not in the rest, on the principle that they rarely lived alone. But they still were not social equals; in many collectives 'respectable' women did not go to the communal café. Married women – 'detained by household chores' – were not generally obliged to work in the fields, except at harvest time, when everyone was needed. There were no more servants or house maids, as such work had been abolished. Single women worked in collective workshops, or in distribution cooperatives. In some collectives, certain women did the washing (for everyone), and cooked for the single men. Pregnant women were given 'special consideration'.²⁷ Two perhaps isolated observations may indicate that for some women at least, roles had not changed substantially.

'It is eleven o'clock in the morning. The gong sounds ... It is to remind the women to prepare the midday meal'.

'When needed, as for urgent agricultural work, ... women may be required to work, and do the work assigned to them. Rigorous control shall be applied to (ensure) that they contribute their productive efforts to the Community'.²⁸

Martha Ackelsberg reports that in some Aragón collectives, those who kept the villages going day-to-day, and were the first village delegates, were the

women, because many men were away with the flocks. Although these were the exception, Ackelsberg concludes that, generally, although the 'double duty' of work and home continued, at the same time, the lives of many women were changed markedly as a result of extraordinary new opportunities. Degrees of freedom increased dramatically, and Spanish working class women began to act autonomously for the first time. This effect was much more pronounced in the cities than in the countryside, however.²⁹

III

Whatever kind of society the Collectives may or may not have been, they were not 'static'. As soon as collectivisation took place, all kinds of initiatives were embarked upon, including radical improvements in health care and education, both of which became free to all. Some doctors and pharmacists joined the collective as ordinary members; others held rightist ideas. Medicines were obtained by purchase from 'outside', or by exchange of goods with urban populations. Now that treatment was free, people visited the doctor or the hospital much more than before.

All collectives either vastly improved, or in most cases established schools. Illiteracy rates in the Spanish countryside before July 1936 were apparently 70%. Teachers were sought by appeals to urban collectives, or by return of those who had managed to acquire a college education. They received food, clothes etc from the collective; salaries were sometimes paid by the Republican government. Many parents wished to establish 'Ferrer Schools' (*Escuelas Modernas*), named after Francisco Ferrer y Guardia (1859-1909), a pioneer of modern coeducation free of religious dogma and 'moral or material punishment'.³⁰ There were also evening classes for adults, kindergartens, and especially schools of arts and crafts, often in located abandoned churches, convents or barracks. Such buildings were also used as libraries – often the special responsibility of the Libertarian Youth (*Federación Iberica de Juventudes Libertarias*) – museums, theatres, and cinemas, often the first ones ever to operate in these communities. There were also numerous communal cafés, cultural centres and even public baths. New roads were built, and the telephone network expanded.

Beyond these very important initiatives were many others in agriculture and industry, including new communal pastures and arable fields, flour mills, irrigation projects, water purification plants, an aluminium smelter, chemical works, coal mines, metal works and foundries, and factories producing noodles and spaghetti, sausages, and shoes. Several collectives set up experimental farms in order to breed and raise crops and livestock according

to modern methods, using synthetic fertilisers, modern equipment and machinery. The Regional Federation of the Levante established the University of Moncada which ran courses in animal husbandry, agronomy and arboriculture, and which was open to all members of the National Federation of Peasants. At Muniesa (Aragón), Saturnino Carod, leader of a *CNT* militia column but by birth an Aragóense peasant, developed an 'agro-town' whose purpose was to reverse rural depopulation, providing schools, theatres, cinemas and libraries, but also housing for livestock, a meat-cannery, and a sweet factory based on local honey production. The local flour mill was renovated, and its waste products used as livestock fodder.

IV

It is probably unwise to draw too many firm conclusions about the collectives of the Spanish revolution on the basis of such a limited survey. Instead, I will make some tentative comparisons with *News from Nowhere*, in order to judge whether there are any significant parallels between the two societies – one fictional, one real, of course – or not (Table 1). In terms of economy, there are indeed some similarities, both being based on 'local production for local need', with any surplus exchanged by collectives for goods and services they themselves could not produce. They were also obliged to operate during war time, however, so that it was also necessary to send supplies to the cities, and to the Front.³¹ In *Nowhere*, war has been abolished, and much food is grown in the cities themselves, but there must surely also have been some brought in from the countryside, although not by 'country people'.

In terms of polity, in *Nowhere* the local *folk mote* is the sovereign arena for decision making, and Morris describes a complex process whereby the consent of the minority is obtained, in order to avoid 'the tyranny of the majority'. In the Spanish collectives, the local General Assembly was also sovereign, and approved all decisions made by its Administrative and Technical Committees, but on the basis of simple majority voting. Local collectives were federated to District and Regional Committees, which arranged for coordination of exchange of supplies and even labour. In outline, this structure might seem to resemble the over-bureaucratic 'Divlab' of Ursula Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*, – for example in their role in introduction of the 'family wage' – against which it was eventually necessary to rebel.³² However, even in this matter, local collectives remained free to set their own wage levels and prices, so some degree of autonomy was retained.

According to Martin Delveaux, a 'Federation of Independent Communities' – 'a system of free communities living in harmonious federation with each

Table 1 – Tentative Comparison between *News from Nowhere* and Spanish Collectivisation

	News from Nowhere	Spanish Collectives
Timescale	150–200 years	1936–1939
Economy	‘Local production for local need’ Egalitarian exchange Surplus brought into cities	‘Local production for local need’ Egalitarian exchange Surplus (if any) exchanged Supplies sent to war effort
Polity	Federation of Independent Communities Local <i>folk mote</i> Decisions by consent of the minority	Federal structure of Local, Dis- trict and Regional Committees General assembly of local collective sovereign Majority voting
Society	Egalitarian, unstratified Women still largely con- fined to traditional roles?	Nominally egalitarian, unstratified Women often still con- fined to traditional roles
Work	‘Useful’, i.e. pleasurable Emphasis on self-expression Incentive to work the pleasure of creation	‘Useful’, i.e. ‘useless’ work abolished Incentive to work the pros- perity of the collective
Money	None	Abolition attempted, but eventually replaced only for internal purposes
Formal education	None Learning based on practical experience	Widespread expansion of all kinds of education
Science	None?	Strong emphasis on applied scienc- es in order to increase efficiency of production especially in agriculture

Technology	Widespread revival of 'sustainable' medieval production techniques	New technologies seen as liberating from drudgery and poverty
Innovation	Invention or adoption of techniques in order to meet 'local need', and also promote increased self-expression?	New agricultural and industrial techniques favoured and sought after Also techniques of management and accounting in devolved structures
Modernity	Rejected	Embraced, but 'adapted for purpose'

other, managing their own affairs by the free consent of their members' – also exists in Nowhere, 'operating production for local use, supplemented as necessary by transfers of essential materials and products not available everywhere between regions'. It may also have been a mechanism for identifying local shortages of labour, for as Old Hammond tells Guest, 'we have helped to populate other countries - where we were wanted and *were called for*'. What was also in operation was a 'Federation of Combined Workmen' which like the *CNT* (and *UGT*) played a significant part in 'How the Change came'.³³

Both Nowhere and the collectives are nominally unstratified, egalitarian societies. In Aragón, professionals such as doctors and teachers possessed the same rights and duties as other members of the collective, and received the same rations, although not in Barcelona, where doctors were given special conditions. Having referred to the question of women's role in Nowhere elsewhere in this volume,³⁴ and above in the collectives, it does seem that in both societies, and by modern standards, that more than a vestige of their traditional roles remained. However, as Murray Bookchin also suggests, men were also transformed by what many collectivists referred to as *la idea*.

From the age of thirteen, when I first joined the CNT, I held the belief that ... to live healthily, ... a man must live soberly ... I'd gone to work hardly knowing how to read or write, I'd rebelled when I saw the injustices done to the workers, especially the women. I'd joined the dyers union, as it then was, and made friends with anarcho-syndicalists, vegetarians, nudists. ... I never smoked, I never touched alcohol, I spent my life working and studying with my *compañera*;

I had the opportunity of becoming a ... foreman, but I always refused. I lived by my work ... I was an anarchist, but for all that, I abhor violence. I was always opposed to ... pre-war attempts ... to make the revolution by violent means. ... I believed that the revolution had to spring from the proletariat as a whole ...³⁵

As we know, in Nowhere, work has become pleasurable, and a vehicle for self-expression – a condition on which Morris insisted, and which, as I have written elsewhere, contributes greatly to the ‘green’ dimension of his thought.³⁶ Opportunities for self-expression via pleasurable tasks has replaced the prospect of starvation as the main incentive to labour. In the Spanish collectives, there was still much laborious work to be done, but, as explained, strenuous efforts were made to eliminate ‘useless’ work, and there was no shortage of volunteers for unpleasant tasks, which were rotated. The incentive to work therefore lay in promoting the coherence and prosperity of the collective, and the satisfaction of a job well done in the interests of all.

Perhaps one of the greatest differences between Nowhere and the Spanish collectives is in the matter of education. In Nowhere there are no schools, and only a few universities, promoting the art of knowledge, and not the art of commerce. Instead there is a great emphasis on practical learning, which Morris was confident would allow children to learn reading and mathematics, and even become multi-lingual. But in the collectives, there was great emphasis upon formal schooling, not only for children, but for adults, in the form of evening classes, guest lectures and other cultural sessions. As mentioned, for the collectivists, reducing illiteracy was a major project.

For some, one aspect of Nowhere which renders it ‘static’ is that there is no science.³⁷ In contrast, collectivisation led to establishment of a number of experimental stations designed to improve agriculture using modern methods, Saturnino Carod’s ‘agro-town’, the technical University of Moncada, and similar innovations in industry and management. Thus there was science in the collectives, but somewhat ironically, the activity it most resembled was the kind of highly applied science advocated by that old enemy of Nature, Francis Bacon – intended for the improvement of ‘the Mechanical Arts’.³⁸

New technologies were embraced not in order to make work pleasurable – which they may have, of course – but mainly to improve efficiency and productivity, and because they were seen as liberating from drudgery and poverty. Collectivisation therefore involved widespread innovation in a number of fields, and the collectives, although short lived, were not ‘static’. Neither, in my opinion, is Nowhere, where there has not only been great revival of craft skills and the decorative arts, but also of more ‘sustainable’ techniques of land management such as coppicing, pollarding, and multi-

cropping (fruit trees growing amongst the corn). Similar techniques were applied in one of the Levante collectives.³⁹ Beyond revival of past practises, however, there surely must have been innovation, in order to meet the principle of ‘local production for local need’, and to promote increased individual self-expression.

V

While the ‘leading passion’ of William Morris’s life was ‘hatred of modern civilisation’,⁴⁰ the Spanish collectivists were undoubtedly modernisers, and modernists in their outlook, and wished only to obtain what they saw as the benefits of modern civilisation – telephones, tractors, schools, health care – for themselves, and especially for their children. In this sense, there would appear to be few, if any similarities between *News from Nowhere* and the agrarian collectives of Aragón, and yet intuitively I feel that there are lessons of great value to be learned from both.

Over the next decades, we will be faced with a choice – between continued but unsustainable growth and ‘progress’ on a finite planet, or finding ways of living on it sustainably, but without resorting to the kind of *dystopia* which far too many greens still envisage; hence the importance of the ideas whose implications Morris explored so exquisitely in *News from Nowhere*. In contrast, the collectives of the Spanish Republic serve as a *practical* model of how a well-nigh sustainable society was organised at short notice, and by ordinary people themselves, and in the temporary absence of much in the way of a central authority (although they did possess the benefit of fossil fuel oil, which we may not). Thus although there are important differences of *practise* between Nowhere and Republican Spain – some of which might have disappeared given sufficient passage of time – there are sufficient similarities of *principle* to make the latter a highly valuable practical example.

If he did not believe in the model he set out in *News from Nowhere* – a work whose strength ‘rests on the totality and perfection of its vision’⁴¹ – why did William Morris, probably one of the busiest people who ever lived, spend about a year of his life writing it; first as a serial for *Commonweal*, and then turning it into a book? And did not Jane Morris describe it to Scawen Blunt as ‘a picture of what he (Morris) considers *likely to take place* later on, when Socialism shall have taken deeper roots’?⁴²

As already indicated, *News from Nowhere* is, for me, both an example of what earlier writers, notably E.P. Thompson, regarded as socialist aspiration (‘desire’) and of what a truly sustainable society must eventually be like; the expression of (ecological) ‘necessity’. Therefore, the kind of utopia it must be,

for me, is a ‘thermodynamic’ utopia – one which obeys the laws of physics (which as we all know, ‘canna be denied’),⁴³ and which is therefore emphatically not static. Although William Morris did not ‘predict’ collectivisation, his pre-figuring of the likely ecological future was extremely accurate. What he did set out to explore was what might happen if we made one simple but devastating change – devastating for capitalism, that is – the abolition of the profit motive. And what he found was that the salvation of the world does not lie solely, as Henry David Thoreau thought, in ‘Wildness’, but in ‘local production for local need’.

NOTES

1. Saturnino Carod, anarchist militia column leader, as quoted in Ronald Fraser, *Blood of Spain. The experience of Civil War, 1936-1939*, London: Penguin, p. 366.
2. Peter Faulkner, *Against the Age: an Introduction to William Morris*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980, p. 134; Roger Coleman, ‘Design and Technology in Nowhere’, *Journal of the William Morris Society*, IX, 1991, pp. 28-39 (p. 28). Afterwards *JWMS*; Ashton Nichols, ‘The Legacy of Blake and Shelley in Morris’s *News from Nowhere*’, *JWMS*, X, 1994, pp. 20-27 (p. 20); James Redmond, ed, *William Morris, News from Nowhere*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970, p. xviii (Afterwards *NfN*).
3. Northrop Frye in Ady Mineo, ‘Beyond the Law of the Father: the “New Woman” in *News from Nowhere*’, in Peter Faulkner & Peter Preston, *William Morris. Centenary Essays*, Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1996, pp. 200-206 (p. 200); Tony Pinkney, ‘Kinetic Utopias. H.G. Wells’s *A Modern Utopia* and *News from Nowhere*’, *JWMS*, XVI, 2005, pp. 49-55; Ady Mineo, ‘Eros unbound: sexual identities in *News from Nowhere*’, *JWMS*, IX, 1992, pp. 8-14 (p. 8); Christopher Hampton, ‘The Feast’s beginning: *News from Nowhere* and the utopian tradition’, in Stephen Coleman & Patrick O’Sullivan, *William Morris & News from Nowhere. A vision for our time*, Hartland, Devon, UK: Green Books, p. 44; A. L. Morton, *The English Utopia*, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1952, p. 164.
4. Krishnan Kumar, ‘*News from Nowhere*: the renewal of utopia’, *History of Political Thought*, 14, 1993, p. 143; Peter Marshall, *Nature’s Web. Rethinking our place on Earth*, London: Cassell, p. 314; David Pepper, *Modern Environmentalism. An introduction*, London: Routledge, 1996, p. 215; Krishnan Kumar, in Martin Delveaux, ‘From Pastoral Arcadia to Stable-State Mini-Cities: Morris’s *News from Nowhere* and Callenbach’s *Ecotopia*’, *JWMS*, XIV, 2000, pp. 75-81 (p. 76). For yet more characterisations of *News from Nowhere*

- (if any are still needed) see Ruth Kinna, 'The relevance of Morris's utopia', *The European Legacy*, 9, 2004, pp. 739-750; an article I found immensely enlightening. (Afterwards Kinna)
5. J. W Mackail, *The Life of William Morris*, 2 vols, London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1899, vol. 2, p. 256; Maurice Hewlett, review, *National Review*, August 1891, xvii, pp. 818-827 (In Peter Faulkner, *William Morris: the critical heritage*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973, pp. 343-353 (p. 345); Barbara Gribble, 'William Morris's *News from Nowhere*. A vision impaired', *JWMS*, VI, 3, 1985, pp. 16-22 (p. 16, my emphasis).
 6. Asa Briggs, ed, *William Morris. Selected writings and designs*, London: Pelican, 309 pp (p. 18); E.P. Thompson, *William Morris. Romantic to Revolutionary*, New York: Pantheon Books, 829 pp. (p. 693). (Afterwards E.P. Thompson); Paul Thompson, *The Work of William Morris*, Oxford: Oxford University Press (new edition), 1993, 318 pp. (p. 178); Fiona MacCarthy, *William Morris. A life for our time*, London: Faber & Faber, 1994, 780 pp. (p. 587).
 7. G.D.H. Cole, ed, *William Morris. Stories in Prose, Stories in Verse, Shorter Poems, Lectures and Essays*, New York: Random House, 1944 (first edition 1934), 671 pp. (pp. xvi-xvii)
 8. Stephen Coleman, 'How matters are managed: human nature and utopia', in Stephen Coleman & Patrick O'Sullivan, *William Morris & News from Nowhere. A vision for our time*, Hartland, Devon, UK: Green Books, pp. 75-89 (p. 77).
 9. Tony Pinkney, 'Versions of ecotopia in News from Nowhere', in Phillippa Bennett & Rosie Miles, eds, *William Morris in the Twentieth Century*, Oxford & Bern: Peter Lang AG, pp. 93-106. (Afterwards Pinkney, Ecotopia). See also Postscript to the second edition of E.P. Thompson (pp. 763-819).
 10. All as quoted by Kinna, pp. 739-742.
 11. Although not quite the sense in which Thompson used it; E.P. Thompson, pp. 717-730.
 12. In compiling this account, I have avoided secondary sources, and used only contemporary accounts, or later descriptions by people who experienced collectivisation first hand. As there is no space to give specific citations, all I can do is indicate that my sources were:- Agustín Souchy Bauer, *With the Peasants of Aragón. Libertarian Communism in the liberated areas*, Sanday, Orkney: Cienfuegos Press, 1982, 145 pp. (Afterwards Souchy); Sam Dolgoff, *Anarchist Collectives. Workers' Self-management in the Spanish revolution, 1936-1939*, New York: Free Line Editions, 1974, 195 pp. (Afterwards Dolgoff); Ronald Fraser, *The Blood of Spain. The experience of Civil war in Spain, 1936-1939*, London: Penguin, 1981, 628 pp. (Afterwards Fraser); Gaston Leval, *Collectives in the Spanish Revolution*, London: Freedom Press, 1975, 368 pp.;

- George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia. And Looking Back on the Spanish War*, London: Penguin, 1966, 247 pp.; José Peirats, *Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution*, London: Freedom Press, 1990, 388 pp. (afterwards Peirats); Vernon Richards, ed, *Spain 1936-1939. Social Revolution and Counter-Revolution. Selections from the anarchist fortnightly Spain and the World*, London: Freedom Press, 1990, 269 pp. Detailed citations below.
13. Gerald Brenan, *The Spanish Labyrinth: an account of the social and political background of the Civil War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943, 384 pp.
 14. Franz Borkenau, *The Spanish Cockpit. An eyewitness account of the political and social conflicts of the Spanish Civil War*, London: Faber & Faber, 1937, pp. 84-85. *Asalto* = member of the Assault Guard (*Guardia de Asalto*; Republican urban riot police). For a more graphic, and probably more typical account, see Ralph Bates, 'Compañero Sagasta burns a church', *Left Review*, 13 October 1936. As in Valentine Cunningham, ed, *Spanish Front. Writers on the Civil War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986, pp. III-III2.
 15. Victor Blanco; Participant account of beginnings of collectivisation in Alcampel, Aragón, July 1936; Souchy, pp. 129-142.
 16. Souchy, 'Workers' self-management in industry', in Dolgoff, p. 82.
 17. The eastern part of Spain, including Valencia and Murcia provinces.
 18. Gaston Leval in Dolgoff, pp. 122-126.
 19. Tim O'Riordan, *Environmentalism*, London: Pion Press (second edition), 1981, pp. 7-11.
 20. Dolgoff, p. 71; Stanley Payne, *The Spanish Revolution*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1970, pp. 240-241; Peirats, pp. 131, 135, 139.
 21. As many readers probably already appreciate, few subjects are still more contentious in left-wing circles, even seventy five years on, than the events, or otherwise, of the Spanish Civil War: and a serious problem of writing about any aspect of the War is that so many accounts seek to justify a particular ideological position. Thus, some writers state that most collectivisation was 'forced', others that it was entirely voluntary, while others give more mixed accounts. Favourable reports of collectivisation are mostly by writers who are or were anarchists of some kind, whereas negative accounts are by non-anarchists, or those opposed to anarchist ideas. I have tried to avoid this kind of ideological infighting, but that may, of course, have undermined the value of my account.
 22. Fraser, pp. 370-371; Peirats, p. 139.
 23. Gaston Leval & Alardo Prats, 'The Collectivisation in Graus', in Dolgoff, p. 140; Peirats, p. 140; Gaston Leval, 'The Collective in Mas de las Matas', in Dolgoff, p. 161.
 24. Peirats, p. 146.

25. Souchy, pp. 139-140.
26. 'Money and Exchange'; in Dolgoff, pp. 70-76.
27. Gaston Leval, 'The characteristics of the libertarian collectives', in Dolgoff, p. 167; Peirats, p. 141; Peirats in Dolgoff, p. 114.
28. Souchy, p. 70; Gaston Leval, 'The Collective in Binefar', in Dolgoff, p. 147.
29. Martha Ackelsberg, *Free Women of Spain. Anarchism and the struggle for the emancipation of women*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991, pp. 97-109; Fraser, pp. 285-291.
30. Murray Bookchin, *The Spanish Anarchists. The heroic years, 1868-1936*, New York: Free Life Editions, 1977, pp. 129-131. (Afterwards Bookchin)
31. Opponents of collectivisation maintain that preoccupation with utopian schemes was one of the main causes of defeat of the Republic.
32. Ursula Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, London: Panther, 1975, 319 pp; See also Pinkney, Ecotopia, p. 103.
33. 'The Dawn of a New Epoch', 1886, in *Signs of Change*, London: Reeves & Turner, 1888. As in <http://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1888/signs/index.htm>; Martin Delveaux, '“O me! O me! How I love the earth”: William Morris's *News from Nowhere* and the birth of sustainable society', *Contemporary Justice Review*, 8, 2005, p. 141; Adam Buick, 'A market by the way – the economics of Nowhere', in Stephen Coleman & Patrick O'Sullivan, eds, *William Morris & News from Nowhere. A vision for our time*, Hartland, Devon: Green Books, pp. 151-168; *NfN*, p. 62, my italics, Chapter XVII, pp. 87-111.
34. Patrick O'Sullivan, 'Morris the Red, Morris the Green: a partial review', *JWMS*, this volume, pp. 22-38
35. Andreu Capdevila, CNT textile worker, later (reluctantly) member of the Economics Council of Catalonia; Fraser, p. 215. See also Bookchin, pp. 55-59, p. 91.
36. Patrick O'Sullivan, 'The ending of the journey: William Morris, News from Nowhere and ecology', in Stephen Coleman & Patrick O'Sullivan, eds, *William Morris & News from Nowhere. A vision for our time*, Hartland, Devon, UK: Green Books, 1990, pp. 169-182; *NfN*, pp. 77-84.
37. Pinkney, Ecotopia, p. 98.
38. Francis Bacon, *The Novum Organum*, 1620, (Peter Urbach & John Gibson, transl.), London: Open Court, 1994, 364 pp.
39. Gaston Leval, 'Collectivisation in Carcagente', in Dolgoff, p. 153.
40. 'How I became a socialist', *Justice*, 16 June, 1894. In Clive Wilmer, ed, *William Morris. News from Nowhere and other writings*, Penguin Classics, 1993, pp. 377-383.
41. Kinna, p. 740.
42. Longer (ca 20 months) if we believe the story about it being provoked by

Morris's reading Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*. Nicholas Salmon with Derek Wall, *The William Morris Chronology*, Bristol: Thoemmes Press, pp. 216-235; Jane Morris to Wilfred Scawen Blunt, 11 February 1890, *ibid.*, p. 225. (My emphasis).

43. Described many years ago by Barry Commoner (*The Closing Circle. Nature, Man and technology*, New York: Alfred Knopf, 1971, pp. 33-48) as

(1) Everything is connected to everything else

(2) You can never throw anything away

(3) Nature knows best

(4) There is no such thing as a free lunch

Of these, the first two are the Laws of Conservation of Energy and of Matter; the first also represents the First Law of Thermodynamics, and the fourth the Second Law. Only the third is in any way contentious.

William Morris: An Annotated Bibliography 2008-2009

David and Sheila Latham

This bibliography is the fifteenth instalment of a biennial feature of *The Journal*. We give each original entry a brief annotation meant to describe its subject rather than evaluate its argument. Although we exclude book reviews, we include reviews of exhibitions as a record of temporal events.

We have arranged the bibliography into six subject categories appended by an author index. Part I includes new editions, reprints, and translations of Morris's own publications, arranged alphabetically by title. Part II lists books, pamphlets, articles, exhibition catalogues, and dissertations about Morris, arranged alphabetically by author within each of the following five categories:

General	3 - 32
Literature	33 - 53
Decorative Arts	54 - 107
Book Design	108 - 118
Politics	119 - 140

The General category includes biographical surveys and miscellaneous details as well as studies which bridge two or more subjects. The Author Index provides an alphabetical order as an alternative means for searching through the 138 items of the bibliography. Though we still believe that each of Morris's interests is best understood in the context of his whole life's work, we hope that the subject categories and author index will save the impatient specialist from having to browse through descriptions of woven tapestries in search of critiques of 'The Haystack in the Floods'.

With the rising costs of inter-library loan services and personal travel, we would appreciate receiving copies of publications. They can be sent to us at 42 Belmont Street, Toronto, Ontario M5R 1P8, or by e-mail attachment to dlatham@yorku.ca

PART I: WORKS BY MORRIS

1. *Our Country Right or Wrong: A Critical Edition*. Ed. Florence Boos. London: William Morris Society, 2008, 95 pp.
Reprinted from the *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies*, ns 14 (Spring 2005): 15–56, this edition adds twelve illustrations. Dated 30 January 1880, Morris's anti-war talk was intended for 'Liberal critics of Benjamin Disraeli's foreign policy,' and remains relevant with 'Morris's mordant remarks about Britain's "preemptive" imperialist wars'. Includes critical and textual annotations, and a full introduction, 'Dystopian Violence: William Morris and the Nineteenth-Century Peace Movement' (annotated in our 2004-2005 bibliography).
2. *Useful Work v. Useless Toil*. Penguin Great Ideas Series Three, No. 51. London: Penguin, 2008, 112 pp.
Three of Morris's lectures – 'Useful Work v. Useless Toil' (1885), 'The Lesser Arts' (1879), and 'Gothic Architecture' (1893) – and one of his articles – 'How I Became a Socialist' (1894) – are reprinted.

PART II: PUBLICATIONS ABOUT MORRIS

General

3. Bennett, Phillipa, *The Last Romances and the Kelmscott Press*, London: William Morris Society, 2009, 40 pp.
Of the two last ventures of Morris's life, his prose romances ran contrary to the fashion of fiction, while his printing went against the fashion of commercial book-production. Both ventures exemplify Morris's effort to revitalise the sense of 'wonder', as he demonstrates how the everyday details of life are just as wonderful as the strange enchantments of supernatural visions.
4. Billen, Andrew, 'Rock'n'roll Swindler', *The Times* [London], 13 October 2009: 36.
Malcolm McLaren recalls his management of the Sex Pistols, explaining that 'Punk was really the product of William Morris', whose work inspired McLaren to be creative at art college.

5. Bloor, Michael, 'James Leatham's Eye-Witness Account of William Morris's 1888 Visit to Aberdeen', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Winter 2008): 22-34.
Extracts from a chapter of Leatham's memoirs, published in his own *Gateway*, 333 (May 1941), on 'William Morris', capture Morris's personality, genius, generosity, and careful sensitivity to others.

6. Byatt, A.S., *The Children's Book*, London: Chatto & Windus, 2009, 617 pp.
Following four Victorian families from 1895 to 1920, the novel makes many references to Morris, with one of the characters, Prosper Cain, knowing Morris as a friend.

7. Christmas, Jane, 'The Hidden Treasures of William Morris: A Little-known Gallery in a London Suburb Showcases Masterpieces by the Arts and Crafts Pioneer'. *The Globe and Mail* [Toronto], 26 December 2009: T5.
The William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow is seeing an upswing in visitors to its exhibitions of Morris's works and words, including the *Woodpecker* tapestry, and the patterned textile designs (many of which Collections Officer Careen Kremer suggests exhibit an Eastern influence).

8. Conrad, Christofer & Annabel Zettel, eds, *Edward Burne-Jones: The Earthly Paradise*, Ostfildern, Germany: Hatie Cantz Verlag, 2009, 231 pp.
The catalogue of the Edward Burne-Jones exhibition at the Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, October 2009-February 2010, and at the Kunstmuseum, Bern, March-July 2010. See individual entries below for Conrad #65, Fröhlich #73, Wippermann #30 and #107, and Zettel #31.

9. Cowan, Yuri, 'William Morris and Medieval Material Culture'. Diss., University of Toronto, 2008.
Library manuscripts and the Early English Text Society inspired Morris to study the common artefacts of everyday medieval life, as he creatively adapted such ordinary information for his poetry, lectures, and book production.

10. Darling, L. Bruce & Masuyo Tokita Darling, *Zusetsu uiriamu morisu: Viku-toiacho o koeta kyojin*, Tokyo: kawade Shobo Shinsha, 2008, 217 pp.
This illustrated study of Morris presents him as the greatest of Victorian giants.

11. *Desperate Romantics*, Dirs Paul Gay & Diarmuid Lawrence, BBC TV, six episodes, 21 July-25 August 2009.
Written by Peter Bowker & Franny Moyle, this dreadful adaptation of

Moyle's 2009 book presents the Pre-Raphaelites as a puerile clique of fraternity lads. Dyfrid Morris acts in the role of William Morris.

12. Elletson, Helen, *A History of Kelmscott House*, London: William Morris Society, 2009, 64 pp.
This well-illustrated popular history presents views of the house, coach house, and property over a period of more than two centuries, and identifies residents from the late 1780s to the present. The largest section describes how the Morris family came to rent Kelmscott House from 1879 to 1898, and provides photographs and descriptions of the exterior architecture and garden, with more detail on the decor and furnishings of the interior drawing and dining rooms, study, and Morris's bedroom.
13. Faulkner, Peter, 'William Morris at Kelmscott', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 17 (Summer 2008): 5-32.
Morris's letters, articles in *Commonweal*, *News from Nowhere*, and May Morris's memories refute recent cynics who suggest that Morris 'idealised country life,' as if he were naively unaware of agricultural conditions at Kelmscott.
14. ——. 'A "desert in solitude & an Eden in beauty": Rossetti at Kelmscott', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 17 (Summer 2008): 35-64.
Rossetti's letters, poems, and paintings reveal the appreciation he shared with Morris for the natural environment of Kelmscott, and help document his relationship with Jane Morris during his tenancy at Kelmscott Manor.
15. Fortunati, Vita, 'William Morris's Houses and the Shaping of Aesthetic Socialism', In *Writers' Houses and the Making of Memory*, Ed, Harald Hendrix, Milton Park, Abingdon: Routledge, 2008, pp. 163-73.
Red House and Kelmscott Manor express the communal life of Morris's utopian socialism, with Red House integrating the ideals of work and leisure, tradition and innovation, and idyllic privacy and public hospitality, while Kelmscott Manor was 'a harbour of refuge'.
16. Hickey, Elizabeth, *The Wayward Muse*, London: Simon & Schuster, 2008, 304 pp.
The novel imagines the life of Jane Burden, from her poor family to her sitting for Dante Rossetti, her marrying Morris, and her long affair with Rossetti.

17. Hoagwood, Terence, 'The Art of Printing and "The Land of Lies": *The Story of the Glittering Plain*', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Winter 2008): 8-21.
While the narrative of Morris's romance explores the illusion of images, dreams, and lies, Morris's technique of printing the Kelmscott edition demonstrates the plight of delusion, as the woodcut initials are not always authentic but were often printed from electrotypes.
18. Latham, David & Sheila Latham, 'William Morris: An Annotated Bibliography 2006-2007', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Winter 2009): 64-92.
Of the 144 items annotated, one is a publication by Morris, forty four are general publications about him, forty deal with his literature, twenty nine his decorative arts, eleven his book design, and nineteen his politics.
19. ——. 'William Morris: An Annotated Bibliography 2004-2005', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 17 (Summer 2008): 81-112.
Of the 173 items annotated, fifteen are publications by Morris, forty three are general publications about him, thirty eight concern his literature, fifty two his decorative arts, eleven his book design, and fourteen his politics.
20. Mayer, Jed, 'William Morris and the Greening of Science', *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies*, ns 17 (Fall 2008): 56-76.
Morris created decorative designs as an ecological mediation 'between nature and culture that is a radical alternative' to scientific specialisation, as shown by comparisons of his *Trellis* and *Strawberry Thief* designs with Ernst Haeckel's biological illustrations of art forms in nature.
21. McCarthy, Michael. 'Don't mention the Restoration! Prince quits heritage body in censorship row', *The Independent* [London], 13 July 2009: 2-3.
Prince Charles resigned as patron of the 'world's oldest environment campaigning group' after the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings rejected a passage he wrote about the its approval of modern materials too often being cited 'to justify unsatisfactory alterations and ugly additions'.
22. Mercer, Olive, & Jane Evans, 'The Glazed Screen at Red House', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 17 (Summer 2008): 33-51.
Charles Holme, publisher of *The Studio*, purchased Red House in 1889 and invited visitors, including Georgiana Burne-Jones, John Lane, Richard LeGallienne, Arthur Liberty, May Morris, Mary Newill, Baillie Scott,

- Hiromichi Shugio, Aymer Valance, and Gleeson White, to engrave their signatures on the glass panes of a double door.
23. Mitchinson, John, 'Idle Idol: William Morris', *The Idler*, 41 (Summer 2008): 88-101. Rpt as *On the Visionary Work and Revolutionary Life of an Idle Idol: William Morris*, Rochdale, Lancashire: Bracketpress, 2008, 14 pp. A breezy overview of Morris's inspirational life: 'Despite being a bit of a nut-case', he is 'someone you'd like to spend an evening with in a pub'. Printed in the facsimile style of a Kelmscott Press book.
24. Moyle, Franny, *Desperate Romantics: The Private Lives of the Pre-Raphaelites*, London: John Murray, 2009, 340 pp. The popular biographical story of the Pre-Raphaelites focuses on the painful love affairs of the Ruskin-Effie Gray-Millais triangle, and the Rossetti-Siddal-Burden-Morris entanglements.
25. Murray, Ciaran, 'Byzantium and the Mandala', *Disorientalism: Asian Subversions, Irish Visions*, Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan. Series 5, Vol.1, Tokyo, Japan: Asiatic Society of Japan, 2009: 87-108. Morris's influence on W.B. Yeats was pervasive, from the sadness of love in *Sigurd the Volsung* and the eroticism of the prose romances, to the joyful vision of Byzantium as 'a living centre of the arts', the ideal union of east and west, north and south.
26. Pan, Yi Shu, *Mo lis si: xian dai she ji de xian qu zhe*, Taipei, Taiwan: Yi shu jia chu ban, 2008, 207 pp. A biography of Morris.
27. Rager, Andrea Wolk, "'Smite this Sleeping World Awake": Edward Burne-Jones and *The Legend of the Briar Rose*', *Victorian Studies*, 51 (Spring 2008): 438-50. Burne-Jones's *Briar Rose* series and Morris's poem 'For the Briar Rose' represent an artistic collaboration which is at once a dream vision and an expression of shared values in decorative art, environmentalism, and social egalitarianism.
28. Sedykh, É. V, *Vzaimodeistvie iskusstv v literaturnykh proizvedeniiakh Uiliama Morrisa*, St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg Institute Vneshneékonomicheskikh Sviazei, 2008, 124 pp. Morris's literature and his decorative arts are discussed as integrally related.

29. Smith, Alice Mary, *Two Overtures: The Masque of Pandora (1878) and Jason, or The Argonauts and the Sirens (1879)*, Ed Ian Graham-Jones, Middleton, Wisconsin: A-R Editions, 2007, 153 pp.
Smith's overture based on Morris's poem *The Life and Death of Jason* is structured as a classical sonata for full orchestra. Graham-Jones introduces Smith's music, cites contemporary reviews of its performance, and prints and annotates the score.
30. Wippermann, Katharina, 'Ned and Topsy: The Biographies of Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris', In *Edward Burne-Jones: The Earthly Paradise*. Ed Christofer Conrad & Annabel Zettel, Ostfildern, Germany: Hatie Cantz Verlag, 2009, pp. 205-13.
Side-by-side biographies in two columns compare each year of the parallel lives of the two friends.
31. Zettel, Annabel, 'A Feast of Storytelling: Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris', In *Edward Burne-Jones: The Earthly Paradise*, Ed Christofer Conrad & Annabel Zettel, Ostfildern, Germany: Hatie Cantz Verlag, 2009, pp. 27-39.
Most of Burne-Jones's art arose from his shared interest with Morris in literature and the Arts and Crafts, as shown in a discussion of *The Earthly Paradise* and the Kelmscott *Chaucer*.
32. Zon, Bennett, 'Loathsome London: Ruskin, Morris, and Henry Davey's History of English Music', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 37 (September 2009): 359-75.
In his 1895 study, Henry Davey hopes that Ruskin's and Morris's views of art may someday extend their influence on English composers to offset the prosaic decline of English traditional music which accompanied Enclosure and urbanisation.

Literature

33. Balasopoulos, Antonis, 'Ghosts of the Future: Marxism, Deconstruction, and the Afterlife of Utopia', *Theory and Event*, 12.3 (2009): online.
Both *News from Nowhere* and Bellamy's *Looking Backward* depict a comradeship between ghosts in a future haunted by the past.
34. Doroholschi, Claudia Ioana, 'William Morris's *Child Christopher and Goldilind the Fair*: Medievalism and the Anti-Naturalism of the 1890s', *B.A.S.*:

- British and American Studies*, 14 (2008): 129-37.
 Morris's *Child Christopher* romance exemplifies an ornamental and archaic style of prose which revives a lost medieval age and replaces the mimetic focus of Victorian realism with the Art Nouveau focus on a *fin de siècle* aesthetics of pleasure.
35. Faulkner, Peter, 'Morris and Tennyson', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Summer 2009): 15-51.
 Morris read Tennyson's early poems with perceptive insight, was compared with him by reviewers for forty years, defended him as a great lyricist, and gently mocked his conservatism in *The Tables Turned*.
36. —, 'The Briar Rose', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Winter 2009): 56-63.
 A careful reading of Morris's poem 'For the Briar Rose' illustrates the relation of its four quatrains with Burne-Jones's series of four canvases *The Legend of the Briar Rose* (1890). 'Another for the Briar Rose' shows Morris returning for another sophisticated response to this Sleeping Beauty theme.
37. Fontana, Ernest, 'Pre-Raphaelite Martyrdoms', *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies*, ns 18 (Spring 2009): 81-94.
 Morris's 'Story of Dorothea' is briefly compared with Swinburne's treatment of the martyr in 'St. Dorothy', Burne-Jones's in *St. Theophilus and the Angel*, and Christina Rossetti's in 'Rival, A Shadow of St Dorothea'.
38. Frith, Richard, 'The Defence of Yseult: Swinburne's *Queen Yseult* and William Morris', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Winter 2008): 85-95.
 Swinburne's early friendship with Morris inspired his six cantos on 'Queen Yseult,' as he imitated Morris's 'Blanche', 'Twas in Church on Palm Sunday', and especially 'The Defence of Guenevere' with its emphasis on a woman's perspective, courtly love, medieval paganism, and anti-Christian eroticism.
39. Helsing, Elizabeth K, *Poetry and the Pre-Raphaelite Arts: Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Morris*, New Haven: Yale UP, 2008, 352 pp.
 In the early poetry of *The Defence of Guenevere*, Morris contrasts vivid colours in order to signal sudden shifts of thought and emotion. In his later work, such as the 'Cupid and Psyche' tale from *The Earthly Paradise*, he modulates subtle hues in order to suggest gradual awakenings, as he was creating a reflective poetry consistent with his decorative and typographical patterns and designs for wall and page.

40. Kightley, Michael R, 'Racial Anglo-Saxonisms: From Scholarship to Fiction in England, 1850-1960'. Diss., University of Western Ontario, 2009. Of the three main currents of Old English scholarship, Morris is the focus of 'the mid to late nineteenth-century translation of Old English poems', the gatekeeper of 'discourses that arose around medieval representations of race'.
41. Laurent, Béatrice, 'Landscapes of Nowhere', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Summer 2009): 52-64.
In *News from Nowhere*, Morris presents densely allegorical word-paintings of landscapes which are both politicised and moralised; some are 'mirror holding depictions' of capitalist degradation and others 'lamp holding visions of a bright and libertarian future'.
42. Le Bourgeois, John, 'Reply to Peter Faulkner's Review of *Art and Forbidden Fruit*', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 17 (Summer 2008): 113-16.
As biographers, Faulkner and Jack Lindsay are inconsistent when they interpret Morris's sonnet 'Near but Far Away' as Georgiana Burne-Jones addressing Morris as 'Brother,' but 'The Three Flowers' as Emma addressing Morris as 'brother'.
43. Park, Ji-Hyae, 'Revising British Aestheticism: Critics, Audiences, and the Problem of Aesthetic Education'. Diss., University of Michigan, 2008.
While Ruskin presumed that his audience shared his taste, Morris sought ways to establish a common ground, experimenting with a variety of modes before and during his editorship of *Commonweal*.
44. Péteri, Éva, 'William Morris's "A King's Lesson": a Hungarian perspective', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Winter 2009): 48-55.
Charles Dickens's brief article 'The Golden Age of Hungary' is not Morris's only source for 'A King's Lesson'. Morris's exhibits parallels with German translations of János Garay's Hungarian poem, emphasising the king as a pre-revolutionary with socialist values.
45. Pinkney, Tony, 'Morisu no yūtopia o 'nihonka' suru' ['Japanesing Morris's Utopia'], Trans Yasuo Kawabata. *Eigo Seinen/Rising Generation*, 154 (March 2009): 682-86.
Rutherford Alcock sent Morris a copy of his book on *Art and Art Industries in Japan* (1878), which leads Pinkney to consider *News from Nowhere* as a kind of Japanese Noh play.

46. —, 'News from Nowhere as Séance Fiction', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Winter 2009): 29-47.
 In order to achieve the collective perspective of Morris's utopian society, we should read *News from Nowhere* as a séance summoning forth Guest from the Victorian past to help heal the rift between mind and body, intellect and sensuality, past and present, as Guest enables Ellen to understand that she must reintegrate balance in Nowhere.
47. Sasso, Eleonora, 'Tennyson, Morris and the Guinevere Complex', *Tennyson Research Bulletin*, 9 (November 2009): 271-79.
 In 'The Defence of Guenevere', 'King Arthur's Tomb', and 'Sir Galahad, A Christmas Mystery,' Morris, like the young Tennyson, presents characters whose boundaries of the sensual body are interdependent with those of the natural earth.
48. Shires, Linda M., *Perspectives: Modes of Viewing and Knowing in Nineteenth-Century England*, Columbus: Ohio State UP, 2009, pp. 27-35.
 Inviting us to view a cathedral as a bible to be read, Morris's 'Shadow of Amiens' essay experiments with an optical vision similar to the dislocated, decapitated vision in his poem 'The Haystack in the Floods'.
49. Sutherland, John, '1000 novels everyone must read.' *The Guardian* [Manchester], 22 January 2009: 9.
 Of the thousand most important novels to read, Morris's *News from Nowhere* is included in the 'science fiction & fantasy' genre section.
50. Tucker, Herbert, *Epic: Britain's Heroic Muse, 1790-1910*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008, pp. 507-526, 533.
 After passing references to 'The Pilgrims of Hope' as a 'hip-pocket epic on the march toward utopia', and to the 'anthological mode of *The Earthly Paradise*', Tucker focuses on *Sigurd the Volsung* as a major epic which repudiates the ethos of *The Earthly Paradise*, and demonstrates how Morris dwells in the middle as his arena of tale-telling.
51. Večko, Matic, 'William Morris and the Critical Utopia of High Fantasy', *Acta Neophilologica*, 42, 1-2 (2009): 45-55, 210-11.
 Not seen. Includes a discussion of *The Wood Beyond the World* and *The Well at the World's End*.
52. Ward, Megan, 'William Morris's Conditional Moment', *Erudit: Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net*, 53 (February 2009): online.

‘By constructing an historiography of the conditional moment, “The Defence of Guenevere” tells us not only what we can learn from the past or that the past is part of the present, but also insists that there is a cultural urgency and a political effect in what and how we choose to memorialise’.

53. Willis, Elizabeth, ‘The Poetics of Affinity: Niedecker, Morris, and the Art of Work’, *Radical Vernacular: Lorine Niedecker and the Poetics of Place*, Ed Elizabeth Willis, Iowa City: U of Iowa Press, 2008, pp. 223-46.
In her poem about Morris, ‘His Carpets Flowered’, Lorine Niedecker demonstrates her theory that poetry is a collective composition, as she draws on Morris’s letters, his biography, and Yeats’s *Autobiographies* to compose a poem which insists ‘that art and labor are inseparably bound’.

Decorative Arts

54. Aaltonen, Gaynor, *The History of Architecture: Iconic Buildings throughout the Ages*, London: Acturus, 2008, pp. 183-84.
Red House is an icon for Arts and Crafts house-building design, as Morris ‘proved that “less” could definitely be “more”’.
55. Arscott, Caroline, *William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones*, New Haven: Yale UP for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2008, 259 pp.
Alternating chapters on Morris and Burne-Jones consider the latter’s artistic responses to Morris’s patterns, the relative strengths of pictorial and decorative arts, and metaphorically a theory that both artists referenced ‘the body’ through their art, comparing Burne-Jones’s surface epidermal approach to painting with Morris’s thick, multi-faceted dermal system of pattern design.
56. Barter, Judith A., ed, *Apostles of Beauty: Arts and Crafts from Britain to Chicago*, Chicago and New Haven: Art Institute of Chicago and Yale UP, 2009, 208 pp.
The catalogue of the November 2009-January 2010 exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago, ‘showcasing Arts and Crafts works drawn from the collections in the Chicago area’, includes Morris & Co. textiles and furniture. See Roberts #96 and Ruud #98.
57. Betjemann, Peter, ‘Craft and the Limits of Skill: Handicrafts Revivalism and the Problem of Technique’, *Journal of Design History*, 21 (June 2008): 183-93.

In Morris's vision of handicraft, the creative processes of painting and decorative carving freed the craft worker from the need to focus on formal precision or technical execution which would result in an easily reproducible (or machine-made) object.

58. Blakesley, Rosalind P, '“The Venerable Artist's Fiery Speeches Ringing in my Soul”: The Artistic Impact of William Morris and his Circle in Nineteenth-Century Russia', *Internationalism and the Arts in Britain and Europe at the Fin de Siècle*, Ed Grace Brookingham, Oxford and Bern: Peter Lang, 2009, pp. 79-105.
Abramtsevo and Talashkino were two Russian Arts and Crafts colonies influenced by Morris, though their handcrafted furniture and embroidery owed more to philanthropists interested in traditional peasant art rather than socialist ideals.
59. Braesel, Michaela, 'Bilderzählung und englische Möbel um 1860', *Münchener Jahrbuch der Bildenden Kunst*, 58 (2007): 209-38.
Red House served Morris as a workshop where he developed designs for furniture and furnishings from illuminated manuscripts depicting furniture, vessels, costumes, colours, and gardens from the Middle Ages.
60. —, 'Das “Red House” als “Minneburg”', *Münchener Jahrbuch der Bildenden Kunst*, 60 (2009): 115-38.
Conceptualising Red House as a 'castle of love', Morris celebrated his love for Jane with decorations which included a series of embroidered portraits of Chaucerian women as great lovers who represent the loved one and love itself.
61. Brennan-Smith, Scott, 'Knight and Lady as One: The Reclamation of the “Feminine” in William Morris's Decorative Arts Designs', *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies*, 5 (Spring 2009): online.
A neo-Freudian interpretation of Morris's activities and interests which argues that Morris possessed a masculine self (demonstrated through his business, building preservation, and political interests) and a feminine (demonstrated through his literature, decorative arts, and printing).
62. Brittain-Catlin, Timothy, 'Masters of Arts', *World of Interiors*, 28 (June 2008): 132-39.
The Old Hall of Queens' College, Cambridge was re-decorated by Morris, G.F. Bodley, Madox Brown, Burne-Jones, John Hardman, Rossetti, and Webb, and remains one of the university's banquet halls.

63. Burroughs, Katrina, 'Victorian Values: The homespun beauty of Arts and Crafts is inspiring a New Wave of Designers', *The Sunday Times* [London], 14 June 2009: 26, 27.
 Russell Pinch won the Grand Designs furniture award for an Arts and Crafts style desk influenced by Morris, whose still-popular work is featured at the annual Arts and Crafts selling exhibition at Liberty's.
64. Casselman, Karen Diadick, 'Women in Colour: Perceptions of Professionalism in Natural Dyeing during the Arts and Crafts Period', *Textile History*, 39 (May 2008): 16-44.
 Accounts of Morris's influence on the use of natural dyes should not overlook advocates such as Millicent, Duchess of Sutherland, and the many cottage industry and professional artisan dyers such as Alice Hart and Elizabeth Pepper who worked with natural dyes long before, during, and after the period of Morris's experiments and the 1893 publication of his essay 'On Dyeing'.
65. Conrad, Christofer, 'The Quest of the Sangreal and Religious Themes', *Edward Burne-Jones: The Earthly Paradise*, Ed Christofer Conrad & Annabel Zettel, Ostfildern, Germany: Hatie Cantz Verlag, 2009, pp. 157-77.
 Burne-Jones and Morris worked closely together on tapestries and stained glass, but sometimes with contrasting styles.
66. Cormack, Peter. *An Exhibition of Morris & Company's Stained Glass for the Chapel of Cheadle Royal Hospital: An Illustrated Catalogue*. London: Haslam & Whiteway, 2008, 49 pp.
 The catalogue of the exhibition of Morris & Co. windows at the Olympia International Fine Arts and Antiques Fair, 5-15 June 2008, features six windows completed for Cheadle Royal Hospital between 1906 and 1915; one designed by Morris (of two minstrel angels, one playing a dulcimer and the other a pair of pipes), four by Burne-Jones, and one by Dearle. (The windows were subsequently purchased by the Stockport Story Museum).
67. — —, Wendy Kaplan, & Hioaki Kimura, *Arts and Crafts Movement in UK and USA*, Tokyo: Goto Syoin, 2008, 143 pp.
 Catalogue of the exhibition of the Arts and Crafts movement in Britain and America exhibition held at the Kushiro Art Museum in Hokkaido, 21 June-31 August 2008; the Museum of Modern Art in Saitama, 13 September-3 November 2008; and the Shiodome Museum in Tokyo, 8 November 2009-18 January 2009.

68. Crisp, Denise Gonzales, 'Discourse This! Designers and Alternative Critical Writing', *Design and Culture*, 1 (March 2009): 105-20.
Morris, W.A. Dwiggin, Putch Tu, and Bruce Sterling are four 'design-wrights' who have turned to fiction for developing rhetorical strategies unavailable in the customary expository prose of critical design-writing.
69. Eden, Alice, 'Robert Anning Bell (1863-1933) and the Mosaics in the Houses of Parliament', *British Art Journal*, 10 (Winter 2009): 22-31.
In his interest in symbolism and truth to one's materials, Bell's work on the Houses of Parliament mosaics exhibits the influence of Morris, who urged mosaic craft-workers against imitating oil paintings.
70. Edquist, Harriet, *Pioneers of Modernism: The Arts and Crafts in Australia*, Carlton, Victoria: Miegunyah Press and Melbourne UP, 2008, pp. 130-32, 139-41, 144, 148.
Robert and Joanne Barr Smith filled their Adelaide-area homes with Morris & Co. furnishings, Robert Haddon designed a painted sideboard in Perth, and Robin and Mary Dods pursued Morris's collaborative ideals in Brisbane.
71. Eisenman, Stephen, & Corrinne Granof, eds, *Design in the Age of Darwin: From William Morris to Frank Lloyd Wright*. Evanston, Illinois: Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, 2008, 140 pp.
The catalogue of the May-August 2008 exhibition at the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University, Illinois, features designs by Morris, C.R. Ashbee, Christopher Dresser, Louis Sullivan, C.F.A. Voysey, and Frank Lloyd Wright. Eisenman's introduction divides Darwin's influence on two groups: formalists, such as Dresser and Voysey, who reject Darwin's theory in their search for the permanent prototypes of intelligent design, and the materialist functionalists, such as Morris and Ashbee, who accept mutability as an environmental factor which reforms both society and aesthetics.
72. Euler, Laura, 'Sing a Song in Stitches: British Arts and Crafts Embroidery', *Style 1900: Antiques & Interiors*, 22 (Spring 2009): 62-69.
Morris and his daughter May revived English needlework, replacing more formal-counted thread-work with naturalistic forms rendered in shaded stitching of silk and wool on linen.
73. Fröhlich, Fabian, 'The Perseus Series', In *Edward Burne-Jones: The Earthly Paradise*, Ed Christofer Conrad & Annabel Zettel, Ostfildern, Germany:

Hatie Cantz Verlag, 2009, pp. 103-35

Burne-Jones planned a Perseus sequence based on Morris's 'The Doom of King Acrisius' tale from *The Earthly Paradise* for a frieze in the drawing room of Arthur Balfour's home,

74. Gantz, Carroll, 'A Look Back: Early Design Entrepreneurs'. *Innovation* [Dulles, Virginia], 29 (Summer 2009): 9-11.
Morris, Christopher Dresser, and the Americans Ellsworth Woodward, Louis Tiffany, and Gustav Stickley are introduced as early design entrepreneurs from the Arts and Crafts movement.
75. Gerber, Anna, 'Design and Sustainability: Part 2', *Creative Review*, 28 (December 2008): 30-33.
Morris's holistic philosophy of design, emphasising that materials and the production process are interdependent, presents a model for today's designers.
76. Gladwell, Colin, 'Rock Star collections. Whole lotta Burne-Jones', *Daily Telegraph* [London], 5 February 2008: 28.
Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin, and Gary Kemp of Spandau Ballet, are selling their Pre-Raphaelite collections at Sotheby's in March.
77. Grimley, Terry, 'Rare Wallpaper Designs Bought', *Birmingham Post*, 16 June 2009: 24.
The Victoria and Albert Museum purchased two of Morris's original designs for wallpaper – an early design for the 1862 *Fruit*, with olive branches instead of the sprays of oranges and peaches, and a design for the 1880 *Poppy* – both inscribed by Morris with his instructions for production.
78. Hill, Michele, *William Morris in Applique: Six Stunning Projects and over Forty Individual Designs*, Edwardstown, South Australia: Country Bumpkin, 2009, 120 pp.
Written for an audience of quilters and embroiderers, this well-illustrated instructional book presents coloured diagrams, photographs, full-size templates, and tear-out pattern sheets for six applique projects, including one based on the *Bird* tapestry, and another on the embroidered hangings for the bed at Kelmscott Manor.
79. Hirukawa, Hisayasu, 'PRB to Morisu: Ichi bijutsu kōgeika no shōzō', *Eigo Seinen/Rising Generation*, 154 (July 2008): 206-09.
Not seen.

80. ———, ‘Kako no ō ni shite mirai no ō no nemuri, midori ni tsutsumareta sono shōrakuen: ‘Āsā-ō no kikan’ ni yosete’, *Eigo Seinen/Rising Generation*, 154 (March 2009): 678-81.
Not seen.
81. Hoare, Rose, ‘Floxy Lady’, *Sunday Star-Times* [Auckland], 9 August 2009: 9.
Hayley King is the artist who calls herself Flox, whose whirling and ornate stencils, murals, and wallpapers are influenced by Morris.
82. Ireland, Jeannie, *History of Interior Design*, New York: Fairchild, 2009, pp. 487-92.
Short summaries of the ‘Arts and Crafts Movement’ and ‘Arts and Crafts Interiors’ consider the role and contributions of Morris, Red House, and Morris & Co.
83. Jarman, Baird, ‘Design in the Age of Darwin: From William Morris to Frank Lloyd Wright’, *Journal of Modern Craft*, 2 (July 2009): 221-24.
Review of the May-August 2008 exhibition at the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University, Illinois, curated by Stephen F. Eisenman & Corinne Granof. Features Darwin’s influence on Morris, C.R. Ashbee, Christopher Dresser, Louis Sullivan, C.F.A. Voysey, and Frank Lloyd Wright.
84. Kamp, Nicola, ‘The Arts and Crafts Garden’, *City Woman* [London, Ontario], 4 (May-June 2009): 40-41.
Morris’s eight garden design principles were far-sighted, absorbed by other designers, and remain relevant and practised today.
85. Leonard, Anne, ‘Internationalist in Spite of Themselves: The Case of Belgium’, In *Internationalism and the Arts in Britain and Europe at the Fin de Siècle*, Ed Grace Brookingham, Oxford and Bern: Peter Lang, 2009, pp. 225-46.
Fernand Khnopff praised the Kelmscott Press, Henry Van de Velde extended Morris’s ideals and activism from its British roots to an internationalist movement, and Morris in turn acknowledged ‘intelligent’ Belgian interest in British decorative arts.
86. Linden, Martha, ‘Christmas Stamps a Window on Religion’, *Belfast Telegraph*, 3 November 2009: 12.

The impact of the Pre-Raphaelites is celebrated with Christmas postage-stamps featuring stained glass designed by Morris, Burne-Jones, and Henry Holiday.

87. Little, Carl, 'Marjorie Simon: The Future of the Floral', *Ornament*, 32.2 (2008): 42-47.
Some of the American jewellery designer's flower brooches are modelled after Morris's wallpaper patterns.
88. 'The Manchester Indian: Thomas Wardle and Manchester', *Embroidery*, 60 (November-December 2009): 48-49.
Review of the August 2009-August 2010 exhibition of 'The Manchester Indian: Thomas Wardle and Manchester', at the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester, features Thomas Wardle & Co.'s dyed fabrics, including many designed by Morris.
89. McAlpine, Alistair, 'Tight at the Museum', *World of Interiors*, 28 (April 2008): 252.
The Victoria and Albert Museum has renovated three masterpieces of Victorian dining room-decoration from the 1860s: Morris's Arts and Crafts panelled room, James Gamble's Classical Revival room, and Edward Poynter's Dutch-style blue-tiled room.
90. Meiers, Sarah Helen, 'The Green Dining Room: The Experience of an Arts and Crafts Interior', Diss., Queen's University [Kingston, Ontario], 2008.
An early example of the decorative schemes of the Morris firm, the Green Dining Room is compared with the two adjoining dining rooms at the South Kensington Museum, one designed by James Gamble and the other by Edward Poynter.
91. Parissen, Steven, 'Mammon Confronted: Arts and Crafts Design Reform', *Interiors: The Home Since 1700*. London: Laurence King, 2009, pp. 153-75.
Morris's influence on design reform, with his reactions against commercially produced designs, drab colours, and mass production, is considered within the context of Owen Jones's *Grammar of Ornament* (1856) and later designs by Charles Eastlake and Arthur Silver.
92. Parry, Linda, *V & A Pattern: William Morris and Morris & Co.*, London: V & A Publishing, 2009, 80 pp.
A brief introduction tells about Morris creating blocks of colour rather than series of lines, as his patterns evoke the joys of the fields and hedgerow plants

of the English countryside. The seventy one colour-illustrations of Morris's designs for chintz and wallpaper are also available as JPEG images on the compact disk included with this pocket-sized book.

93. Petts, Jeffrey, 'Good Work and Aesthetic Education: William Morris, the Arts and Crafts Movement, and Beyond', *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 42 (Spring 2008): 30-45.
Discussions of art theory and aesthetic education should not overlook Morris, who espoused a philosophy of 'art as good work' with audiences capable of the aesthetic experience, and whose ideals could be used to improve our society with everyday aesthetics.

94. *Popular Woodworking's Arts & Crafts Furniture Projects*, Cincinnati: Popular Woodworking Books, 2008, 207 pp.
Included among the twenty five Arts and Crafts furniture designs are instructions for building a Morris chair and an all-weather Morris chair for the garden.

95. Pritchard, Frances, 'The Manchester Indian', *Hali: The International Magazine of Antique Carpet and Textile Art*, 160 (Summer 2009): 104-05.
Review of four exhibitions on Thomas Wardle's textile dyeing, including his collaboration with Morris: 'The Manchester Indian: Thomas Wardle and India', August 2009-August 2010, at the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester; 'Dye, Print, Stitch: The Textiles of Thomas and Elizabeth Wardle', July-September 2009, at the Macclesfield Silk Museum; 'Wardle, The Man', July-August, at the Nicholson Institute, Leek; and 'Experiments in Colour: Thomas Wardle, William Morris and the Textiles of India', October-December 2009, at the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, London.

96. Roberts, Ellen E., 'The Spell of Japan Was upon Them: Japonism and the Arts and Crafts Movement'. In *Apostles of Beauty: Arts and Crafts from Britain to Chicago*, Ed Judith A. Barter, Chicago and New Haven: Art Institute of Chicago and Yale UP, 2009, pp. 45-82.
Only a few of Morris's textile designs, such as *Peacock and Dragon*, drew on traditions in Islamic, Indian, and Chinese art, and Morris believed that the Japanese lacked architectural and decorative instincts.

97. 'Ronnie Wood Launches Fashion Line', *Premier Showbiz*, 27 October 2009: np.
The Rolling Stones member 'found it inspiring' to create fashion designs for

the prestigious Liberty's, which 'worked with amazing talents such as William Morris'.

98. Ruud, Brandon K. '“To Promote and to Extend the Principles Established by Morris”': Elbert Hubbard, Gustav Stickley, and the Redefinition of American Arts and Crafts', In *Apostles of Beauty: Arts and Crafts from Britain to Chicago*, Ed Judith A. Barter, Chicago and New Haven: Art Institute of Chicago and Yale UP, 2009, pp. 83-118.

Morris influenced Elbert Hubbard and his Roycrofters Arts and Crafts community and Roycroft Press in East Aurora, New York, and Gustav Stickley and his furniture and *Craftsman* magazine in Eastwood, New York.

99. *Seikatsu to geijutsu – atsu & kurafutsu ten [Life and Arts and Crafts: From William Morris to Mingei]*. Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 2009, 258 pp. Catalogue of the exhibition held at the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Art, January-April 2009, and at the Aichi Prefectural Museum, June-August 2009, is divided into three sections: first, the early Arts and Crafts movement with the Pre-Raphaelites in England; second, its spread to continental Europe, especially in Germany; and third, the Mingei movement in Japan forty years after the English movement.

100. Shales, Ezra, 'Technophilic Craft', *American Craft*, 68 (April-May 2008): 78-80.

Modern ceramicists remain steeped in Morris's handicraft ideology but they need to adapt to the manufacturing methods of the twenty-first century.

101. Sims, Kathleen O'Neill, 'The Attainment: The “Doubled Troubled” Conclusion of William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones's “Holy Grail” Series', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 17 (Summer 2008): 52-64.

The central tapestry of the 'Holy Grail' series (1891-95) at Stanmore Hall illustrates the tension between Morris's egalitarian vision of equal-sized figures in a collective society which finds the closure of communal redemption within cyclical time, and Burne-Jones's melancholy vision of individual desire suffering the unfulfilled quest on the precipice of a mystical, timeless spirit.

102. Spuybroek, Lars, 'Figure-Configuration Taxonomies', *Research & Design: The Architecture of Variation*, Ed Lars Spuybroek, London: Thames & Hudson, 2009, pp. 60-67.

Eight of Morris's textiles and wallpaper designs are accompanied by an S-line graph which illustrates the basic structure of each pattern.

103. Szczerki, Andrzej, 'The Arts and Crafts Movement, Internationalism and Vernacular Revival in Central Europe c.1900', In *Internationalism and the Arts in Britain and Europe at the Fin de Siècle*, Ed Grace Brockingham, Oxford and Bern: Peter Lang, 2009, pp. 107-31.
Morris inspired Polish and Hungarian artists and architects to revive their cultural heritage, leading to Arts and Crafts colonies such as Gödöllő, Hungary.
104. Tannier, Albert M, '*Windows Are Architecture: William Morris, Viollet-le-Duc, and the Artistic Journey of Charles J. Connick*', Brookline, Massachusetts: Charles J. Connick Stained Glass Foundation, 2009, 41 pp.
Morris influenced the Arts and Crafts style of the American stained-glass artist Charles J. Connick.
105. Van der Post, Lucia, 'Cult Object: William Morris Wallpaper', *The Times* [London], 17 October 2009: 65.
Until 1985 the *Willow Boughs* wallpaper was produced only as a hand-block print, but now Sanderson sells 1800 rolls of machine-printed wallpaper and 3000 m of fabric annually.
106. Winterson, Jeanette, 'Will Lights Ever Go on in the Gasworks? Jeanette Winterson Battles Bats and Bureaucracy in the Latest Instalment of her Restoration Drama', *The Times* [London], 11 September 2009: 4.
As a member of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, and as the owner of a Victorian industrial building next door to her home, Winterson honours the three 'R's of restoration: respect, restraint, and repair.
107. Wippermann, Katharina, 'The Cupid and Psyche Series for 1 Palace Green', In *Edward Burne-Jones: The Earthly Paradise*, Ed Christofer Conrad & Annabel Zettel, Ostfildern, Germany: Hatie Cantz Verlag, 2009, pp. 85-95.
At George Howard's request when commissioning Morris & Co. to decorate his dining room, Burne-Jones adapted his proposed illustrations for a projected edition of *The Earthly Paradise* poem to complete a frieze with an elaborate cycle based on Morris's 'Story of Cupid and Psyche'.

Book Design

108. Amert, Kay, 'Stanley Morison's Aldine Hypothesis Revisited', *Design Issues*, 24 (Spring 2008): 53-71.
A comparison of Aldine and Jenson-derived types shows that, instead of copying Jenson for his Kelmscott types, Morris redrew a related roman type used by Jacobus Rubens.
109. Baker, Jeff, 'Baker's Hot Sheet', *The Oregonian* [Portland, Or.], 14 November 2008: online.
Review of the November 2008-January 2009 book exhibition, 'Gems of the Private Press Movement: Kelmscott, Ashendene, Doves, Golden Cockerel', at the Collins Gallery of the Multnomah County Central Library, with books from the John Wilson special collections.
110. Bradbury, Sue, 'Words as Well as Music', *Book Collector*, 57 (Spring 2008): 44-51.
Charles Ede founded the Folio Society sixty years ago, inspired by his teenage passion for Morris and the Kelmscott Press.
111. Campbell-Johnson, Rachel, 'History Lit from Within: I turned it into a Palace', *The Times* [London], 28 October 2008.
Review of the November 2008-March 2009 exhibition 'I Turned it into a Palace' at the Fitzwilliam Museum, celebrating Sidney Cockerell's directorship of the Fitzwilliam (1908-37) which included Kelmscott books.
112. Carlin, Jane A., & Cindy B. Damschroder, 'Beautiful and Useful: The Book as a Learning Object', *College and Research Libraries News*, 70 (March 2009): 168-71, 183.
Students enrolled in a University of Cincinnati honours seminar entitled 'William Morris and His World' examined Kelmscott Press books and essays by Morris in the context of Arts-and-Crafts social issues and our twenty-first-century digital world.
113. Chaucer, Geoffrey, *The Kelmscott Chaucer*, London: Folio Society, 2008, 568 pp.
This new printing of the Folio Society's 2002 limited edition of a facsimile of the 1896 Kelmscott edition is unlimited and bound in buckram.
114. Davis, Annie S., 'The Kelmscott "Chaucer": William Morris's Quest for the Medieval Reader', Diss., Baylor University, 2009.

The density of Morris's frames, ornamentation, and decorated letters for the Kelmscott *Chaucer* reflects the medieval hermeneutic of *lectio divina*, while Burne-Jones's illustrations emphasise the modern aspects of *l'art pour l'art*.

115. Ferry, Emma, 'Lucy Faulkner and the "ghastly grin": Re-working the title page illustration to *Goblin Market*', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Winter 2008): 65-84.
Lucy Faulkner's work for Morris & Co., combined with her completion of a woodblock engraving of 'Cupid Leaving Psyche', contributed to the development of her skill as an engraver for the second edition of *Goblin Market*.
116. Miller, Elizabeth Carolyn, 'William Morris, Print Culture, and the Politics of Aestheticism.' *Modernism/Modernity*, 15 (September 2008): 477-502.
With his focus in *Commonweal* on the morning after the revolution and with the Kelmscott Press on the post-capitalist mode of production, Morris's two print ventures 'construct themselves in relation to mainstream print in the same way that Utopia constructs itself in relation to present-day reality'.
117. Peterson, William S, 'A Census of the Kelmscott *Chaucer*', *Matrix*, 28 (Summer 2009): 150-53.
As William and Sylvia Peterson search for the locations of the 425 copies of the Kelmscott *Chaucer*, most have been found in libraries in the U.S., Britain, and Japan, but the privately owned copies are elusive.
118. Street, Neal, 'The Designer as Impresario', *Book Collector*, 57 (Spring 2008): 53-57.
After discovering Morris and Kelmscott Press books as a schoolboy, Charles Ede met Christopher Sandford, owner of the Golden Cockerel Press, and was determined to found the Folio Society.

Politics

119. Boddy, Trevor, 'The Conundrums of Architecture Criticism', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 69 (February 2009): 9, 95-96.
Jane Jacobs and others inherited from Morris 'the idea of architecture critic as activist'.
120. Brown, Carl, 'Walthamstow: A Celebration of William Morris Hall', *East London and West Essex Guardian*, 11 December 2009: 1.

The Morris Hall, built in 1909 as a socialist and trade-union hall funded by workers, was a ‘hotbed of left-wing politics’ with famous speakers, its own choir and Socialist Sunday School, the William Morris Brass Band for street marches, and the William Morris Orchestra for concerts and dances.

121. Carnochan, W.B., ‘Utopia and Punishment’, In *Bausteine zu einer Ethik des Strafen: Philosophische, juristische und literaturwissenschaftliche Perspektiven*, Ed, Hans-Helmuth Gander, Monika Fludernik & Hans-Jörg Albrecht, Würzburg, Germany: Ergon, 2008, pp. 251-63. Not seen. Includes a discussion of More’s *Utopia*, Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, and *News from Nowhere*.
122. Chase, Karen, ‘The Politics and Personality of Age at the Fin de Siècle’, In *The Victorians and Old Age*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009, pp. 232-50.
The indeterminate age of Morris’s utopian characters in *News from Nowhere* is discussed in relation to Charles Booth’s campaign for the Old Age Pensions Act, as Victorians sought to define what ‘healthy old age might look like – physically, socially, economically, politically’ – and to predict the cost of supporting the elderly.
123. Collette, Carolyn P., ‘“Faire Emelye”: Medievalism and the Moral Courage of Emily Wilding Davison’, *The Chaucer Review*, 42.3 (2008): 223-43.
The committed suffragette Emily Davison was influenced by Morris’s socialism, from his fashion of dress to his visionary *Dream of John Ball* and *News from Nowhere*.
124. Cuadra, Fernando Marcelo de la, ‘William Morris y los orígenes del socialismo ecológico: Apuntes sobre su novela utópica “Noticiias de Ninguna Parte”’, *Especulo: Revista de Estudios Literarios*, 42 (July-October 2009): online.
After a discussion of the concept of utopia, Morris is examined as a forerunner of ecological socialism, with *News from Nowhere* inspiring environmentalists in our new century.
125. Davis, Laurence, ‘Morris, Wilde, and Le Guin on Art, Work, and Utopia’, *Utopian Studies*, 20.2 (2009): 213-48.
A comparison of Morris’s socialist philosophy expressed in lectures and in *News from Nowhere* with that of Oscar Wilde’s in his essay *The Soul of Man under Socialism*, and of Ursula Le Guin in her novel *The Dispossessed*, concludes that the most desirable and plausible option for society is a form of libertarian socialism which allows for artistic autonomy and the infusion of art into everyday labour and social life.

126. Edwards, Sarah, 'Co-Operation and Co-Authorship: Automatic Writing, Socialism and Gender in Late Victorian and Edwardian Birmingham', *Women's Writing*, 15 (December 2008): 371-89.
Influenced by the cultural ideals of Morris and Robert Blatchford, as well as their involvement with the Birmingham Municipal School of Art, members of the Holden family of Birmingham wrote and produced texts which supported the concept of a socialist state.
127. Fitzpatrick, Tony, 'The Resourceful Past: William Morris, Socialist Romanticism and the Early Fiction of H.G. Wells', *Wellsian: The Journal of the H.G. Wells Society*, 32 (2009): 36-53.
Wells appeared to support Morris's 'scepticism towards scientism' in his early works, but later turned his support in favour of anti-Morrisian science-orientated socialists.
128. Juan-Navarro, Santiago, 'The Anarchist City of America: Libertarian Urban Utopias in the New World'. *Atenea*, 29 (June 2009): 91-112.
A brief overview of utopian literature and the central ideas of Morris's *News from Nowhere* is followed by a detailed analysis of the anarchist narrative published in 1914 by Argentine anarchist Pierre Quiroule.
129. Kimura, Ryuta, *Kuso to kagaku no odan to shite no yutopia: uiriamu morisu no shiso*, Kyoto: Koyo Shobo, 2008, 195 pp.
The title identifies the subject as utopia being a union of fantasy and science: the philosophy of William Morris.
130. Leighton, Denys P., ed, *Lives of Victorian Political Figures, Part IV: Volume 2: Thomas Hill Green and William Morris*, Gen. Ed Nancy LoPatin-Lummis, London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009. 3 vols, 1360 pp.
The extracts from political commentary by Morris's contemporaries include material by J.W. Mackail, Emma Lazarus, F.W.H. Myers, Oscar Triggs, Edward Carpenter, Edward Aveling, Peter Kropotkin, R.B. Cunninghame Graham, S.G. Hobson, and Bruce Glasier.
131. Mahamdallie, Hassan, *Crossing the River of Fire: The Socialism of William Morris*, London: Redwords, 2008, 128 pp.
Morris's commitment as a radical revolutionist is traced from his early activism to his Marxism, his formation of the Socialist League, and his steadfast anti-Parliament stance. His environmentalist campaigns were prophetic, but his impatience with less revolutionary labour movements may have weakened the cause.

132. O'Sullivan, Patrick. 'Editorial – Fears and Hopes', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Winter 2008): 3-7.
 As the globalisation of trade is threatening the sustainability of our environment, we find hope in Morris advising each of us to do our part as a community responsibly 'making labour fruitful'.
133. ———, 'Editorial – Science under Plutocracy', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Summer 2009): 3-14.
 In contrast to Darwin's popular legacy, evolution is not necessarily progressive, selfishness is not inherently genetic, and competition is less vital than cooperation.
134. Parham, John, 'The Poverty of Ecocritical Theory: E.P. Thompson and the British Perspective', *New Formations: A Journal of Culture/Theory/Politics*, 64 (March 2008): 25-36.
 Thompson's research on Morris provides a model for us to practise an alternative tradition of romantically engaged ecocriticism, a specifically British version of 'environmental justice' which promotes a 'love of place'.
135. Ramos-Gorostiza, José Luis, 'Socio-economic Utopianism in Spain at the End of the Nineteenth Century: *La Nueva Utopía* by Ricardo Mella', *Utopian Studies*, 20.1 (2009): 5-19.
 The 1890 novel by Spanish anarchist Mella is compared with *News from Nowhere*, Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1889), and Theodor Hertzka's *Freiland* (1890), but its celebration of mechanical progress, technological change, and modern industrialised cities renders it similar to *Freiland*, but anathema to *News from Nowhere*.
136. Spencer, David A., 'Work in Utopia: Pro-Work Sentiments in the Writings of Four Critics of Classical Economists', *European Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, 16 (March 2009): 97-122.
 Charles Fourier, Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin, and Morris are compared as four different theorists who challenged the classical economists' belief that work is a painful means to a rewarding end, with Morris, who argued that work will be creative and pleasurable under a socialist order, revealed as the most radical.
137. Steer, Philip, 'National Pasts and Imperial Futures: Temporality, Economics, and Empire in William Morris's *News from Nowhere* (1890) and Julius Vogel's *Anno Domini 2000* (1889)', *Utopian Studies*, 19.1 (2008): 49-72.

While Morris's metropolitan *News from Nowhere* shares a common interest in gender equality with New Zealander Vogel's colonial Utopia, the two differ in their representations of imperial government, international trade, and the environment.

138. Sutinen, Ville-Juhani, & Timo Hännikäinen, *Utopiasocialistit*, Turko, Finland: Savukeidas, 2009, 211 pp.
Morris is one of fourteen socialists discussed, from Jean Maslier (1664-1733) to Karl Kautsky (1854-1938).
139. Taylor, Rosemary, 'The City of Dreadful Delight': William Morris in the East End of London', *Journal of William Morris Studies*, 18 (Winter 2009): 9-28.
A broad survey of Morris's efforts to reach 'East Enders' reveals his frustrations but also a successful strike in 1888 against conditions in a match factory; an appended 1884-1890 chronology lists his fifty documented talks at East End sites from Toynbee Hall to Victoria Park.
140. Vaninskaya, Anna, 'My mother, drunk or sober': G.K. Chesterton and Patriotic Anti-imperialism', *History of European Ideas*, 34 (December 2008): 535-47.
Chesterton's populist patriotism was surprisingly influenced by socialist ideologies, first by Morris's anti-imperialist rhetoric and then by E.B. Bax's internationalism.

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Reviews

Edited by Peter Faulkner

Florence S. Boos, *Socialist Aesthetics and The Shadows of Amiens*, London: The William Morris Society, 2011, 64 pp., twenty three black & white illustrations, pbk, £6. ISBN: 9780903283298.

As a devotee of the early or ‘First Morris’ I have always found ‘The Shadows of Amiens’ quite different from the stories and poems in *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*. It has the feeling of a student assignment, and Morris laboured over it: as he wrote in a letter to Cornell Price,

it has cost me more trouble than anything I have written yet; I ground at it the other night from nine o'clock till half-past four a.m., when the lamp went out, and I had to creep upstairs to bed through the great dark house like a thief.

It was part of an ambitious programme to write about several of the churches of Northern France. He had seen these with Burne-Jones on their 1855 trip through Normandy.

In this booklet Florence Boos presents her wide-ranging Kelmscott Lecture of 24 November 2007, accompanied by copious illustrations. The lecture brings out the centrality of Morris’s essay to any discussion of the importance of architecture in his philosophy, and in particular to his feeling that buildings possess a life of their own. She begins with Morris during the 1870s, and describes the foundation of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. In this project and in his later lectures and essays, you find four principles: pleasure in labour, simplicity in life, the value of craft and architecture and their links to history, and the need to live in harmony with nature. She then outlines her main thesis: ‘All these ideals and principles, I will argue, were adumbrated and prefigured ... in Morris’s early writings’.

The main source of these ideals was of course Ruskin, and it is important to note that *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) was based on that writer’s earlier journey through Northern France. In particular, Boos quotes a passage from ‘The Lamp of Memory’:

... there are but two strong conquerors of the forgetfulness of men, Poetry and Architecture; and the latter in some sort includes the former, and is mightier in its reality; it is well to have, not only what men have thought and felt, but what their hands have handled, and their strength wrought, and their eyes beheld, all the days of their life.

If Morris believed this, it would inevitably lead to a hatred of restoration and the foundation of the SPAB.

In discussing 'The Shadows of Amiens', Boos praises Morris for following Ruskin's example and taking us on a guided tour of the cathedral. This praise must also be given to the many photographs, especially the new ones by Boos, with which the lecture is illustrated. She admires Morris's 'camera-eye survey', but it is at this point I must quarrel with her intention in this phrase. It was not Morris's camera-eye at all. Boos never mentions that throughout 'The Shadows of Amiens' Morris bewails his inability to remember the detail of the cathedral, and admits that he is using photographs as he writes (he calls them 'my photographs' but they were presumably purchased in France). Morris wrote

... the external sculpture I am describing as well as I can from such photographs as I have; and these, as everybody knows, though very distinct and faithful, when they show anything at all, yet, in some places, where the shadows are deep, show simply nothing. They tell me, too, nothing whatever of the colour of the building; in fact, their brown and yellow is as unlike as possible to the grey of Amiens.

Like Ruskin before him, Morris relied on the new art of photography, and there are at least nine references to photographs in the text of his essay. It is to be regretted that Boos fails to mention this. Generally speaking, Boos feels that Morris's responses are 'interpretive rather than historical'; he tells us how much he loves the cathedral and the freedom of its builders, but does not understand the guild and the class-system which limited their freedom.

Boos concludes her discussion of 'The Shadows of Amiens' by announcing the assumptions which underlay Morris's early work:

a near mystical-exultation in the presence of beauty;
 an anagogic view of religious imagery as an evocation of human solidarity;
 a sense of intense obligation to bear witness to natural and created forms of
 beauty;
 and finally, a faith in cathedrals as living presences. . . .

She goes on to show, in the remainder of her lecture, how these 'modes' reappear in later works, culminating in the final section of *A Dream of John Ball*, where the narrator, or Morris if you like, converses with the 'hedg-

priest' John Ball in a medieval church. Ball's religious beliefs allow him to look for an afterlife; Morris replies that 'though I die and end, yet mankind yet liveth'.

And, of course, the imagery of 'The Shadows of Amiens' lived on in the work of Morris's followers. Included in the description of the cathedral are several references to the state of the spire at the time of Morris's visit, for example:

But from the hot Place Royale here with its stunted pollard acacias, and statue of some one, I know not whom, but some citizen of Amiens I suppose, you can see nothing but the graceful spire; it is of wood covered over with lead, and was built quite at the end of the flamboyant times. Once it was gilt all over, and used to shine out there, getting duller and duller, as the bad years grew worse and worse; but the gold is all gone now; when it finally disappeared I know not ...

Whenever I read this there is only one thing that comes to mind: this is the germ of Oscar Wilde's story of 'The Happy Prince'. Morris's essay was a stimulus to the creativity of others, and the idea of the cathedral lived on in the European imagination, re-appearing in literature, art and music.

John Purkis

Lavinia Greenlaw, ed, *Questions of Travel: William Morris in Iceland*, London: Notting Hill Editions, 2011, 193 pp., two b & w illustrations, hbk, £10. ISBN 9781907903182.

The Journals he kept during his visits to Iceland are essential reading for students of Morris. After working through them you can begin to see how 'the idle singer of an empty day' was transformed by this tremendous experience; he became a different person, working hard at everything he gave his mind to and living beyond the self. He now showed deep concern for the future of humanity. The dreamy Middle Ages he had received from poets such as Tennyson were replaced by a different past. Medieval Iceland was not inhabited by softies.

When I first discovered the Journals I was amazed at the difference between the plain style of the writing and what I had seen of Morris's work previously. I read very slowly, looking up all the saga references, and followed every step of the way on the detailed maps provided in the *Collected Works*. This way of reading provided the sense of sheer slog which the journey must have entailed for somebody like Morris, with no previous experience of this kind of travel. It must also have given him a total break from the stresses of his personal life

at that time. He learned new skills; he managed to ride his diminutive pony. Best of all, he was the expedition's cook.

The Journals have been reprinted twice during the last fifty years. I assume that they are now out of print, so I was pleased to see a new edition. This seems a very small book, and since every right-hand page has a blank facing page you would think that they had been drastically shortened. But in fact it gives us a very fair selection, including slightly more than half of the 1871 Journal; the 1873 continuation has been omitted. The book is extremely well laid out and printed in Germany. There is a nice hard cover, which will enable it to survive in the traveller's pocket.

So far, so good, but I cannot conceal the negative aspects. Notting Hill Editions have produced a series of similarly shaped books, all of which are 'devoted to the best in essayistic nonfiction writing'. If the series is an exploration of the idea of the essay, it is a welcome and timely adventure. The other titles are more recognisable as essays, and this is the only travel book.

The editor, Lavinia Greenlaw, gives us a short introduction, but her remarks are often quite at variance with the text before her. For example: 'There is surprisingly little said about the sagas in the journal'. This is quite absurd; the whole point of the journey was to visit the scenes where the saga heroes are supposed to have lived. Every day Morris explains what they are looking for and what they have found. It is only when the others want to visit the tourist sights like the geysers, that he is diverted from his purpose. Later she tells us that: 'His few observations about Icelandic society are made in passing and largely without insight'. I suppose it depends on how you read the text. Consider the famous passage referring to Olaf Peacock (6 August 1871) in which Morris carefully compares the past and the present society of Iceland, and concludes:

Yet it is an awful place: set aside the hope that the unseen sea gives you here, and the strange threatening change of the blue spiky mountains beyond the firth, and the rest seems emptiness and nothing else: a piece of turf under your feet, and the sky overhead, that's all; whatever solace your life is to have here must come out of yourself or these old stories, not over hopeful themselves.

The editor says that it showed him a way to live, and of course this is true. But she seems to me to have failed to understand the general application. How little the Icelanders have compared to people in England. But isn't this what human life really amounts to? Morris has insights, which are, as the poet says, 'too deep for tears'.

In fact this is a most extraordinary piece of editing. I assumed that every left-hand page was blank and thought this was aesthetic. Then I noticed that

one or two pages carried a few words in red and black; printing in two colours must have cost something. Apparently, these are the editor's notes. But they are not what we mean by that; they are very short comments on the nature of travel. Yet Morris's text is not of much interest for such a project; she would have done better with a jollier travel book, such as Hilaire Belloc's *The Path to Rome*. The points selected are of a most general nature, with constant reference to 'you'. This may be a general 'you' or she may be addressing Morris the author, who apparently needs to buck up and pay attention.

For example, on page 189, near the end, Morris complains about the weather on the voyage home; 'my feet were often much higher than my head' because of the rough sea. When they pass Orkney there is at last an even keel; her only note on the whole page is to quote 'a quite even keel' in red and then offer her own platitude in black: 'Going home you don't look about you, only ahead'. If these comments are directed to Morris, I hope he will improve his work! If to us, they are a poor man's version of *Scouting for Boys*.

John Purkis

Anna Vaninskaya, *William Morris and the Idea of Community: Romance, History and Propaganda, 1880-1914*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010, 256 pp., hbk, £65. ISBN 9780748641499.

Anna Vaninskaya's study of late Victorian literature and socialist politics revolves around three important ironies which she identifies in the idea of community. Each touches on the relationship between past and present. First is the use of commercial mass publishing in order to popularise apparently primitive modes of storytelling; second, the deployment of scientific analysis to the study of tribal society; and third, the fascination of the medieval guild community for revolutionary socialists. William Morris is an ideal vehicle for the interrogation of these ironies, not just because literature history and politics are in fact interrelated, but because his approach to the world was based on precisely this understanding.

As the discussion gets under way, the first of these ironies exposes a harder tension or contradiction. In a rich discussion of Morris's late romances and New Romance, Vaninskaya shows how much Morris's work owed to this genre, which was then beginning to find a growing market. Through illuminating comparisons with writers such as Rider Haggard, she carefully distinguishes the democratic and collective politics informing Morris's idea of community from the mainstream, in which community spelt muscular individualism, but shows how his plots, settings, themes, rhetoric and sources were all framed by a familiarity with and absorption in these wider cultural

currents. In revealing quite how much Morris was a man of his time, Vaninskaya demonstrates an impressive command of Victorian literature, scholarly debates about it, and of its publishing history and conventions. She glides effortlessly between debates, her prose beautiful and the analysis insightful. Interpreting the position Morris occupied through an analysis of capitalist development, her frame is one of exploitation: storytellers seeking their fortunes through commercial success, sneering at penny dreadfuls while using ever more sophisticated systems of distribution and marketing in order to ensure that their heroic tales were delivered to a mass audience.

Was Morris like them? In answering this question, Vaninskaya notes the criticisms which he fielded from enemies and sympathisers alike, about the incompatibility of his business interests and his socialism, and his failure to re-structure his own company. She also discusses the 'clichéd' charge that his inability to produce art that working people could afford was hypocritical and she presents Morris's response – that he was determined to use his financial clout in order to sweep commerce clean away. (pp. 4, 45-7, 202) Nevertheless, the irony, to which Morris was apparently blind, was that his commercially produced romances proved more powerful instruments to spread his idea of community than either the cheap propaganda of *Commonweal* or the high-end Kelmscott books on which he lavished his attention towards the end of his life. (p. 48) And behind it lies a paradox. Morris emerges as a kind of divided self: a New Romancer on the one hand and a craftsman on the other. In one guise he embraced commerce, in the other he turned to art in protest against it. Since he 'theorised ... art as an expression of social and economic conditions' (p. 47) both activities were problematical. If the first looked hypocritical, the second was futile. Morris was not in the same position as the New Romancers, but his 'crusade to restore artistic craftsmanship' (p. 47) represented an attempt to escape from modernity, though he was mired in it. This critique seems to rest on an idea of removal not so different from the clichéd one which Vaninskaya resists. Whereas the first demands that Morris remove himself from the grubby practices of the present to prove (sometimes mockingly) his commitment to socialism, hers points to his inability to escape fully from the past.

Vaninskaya examines the second and third ironies in the concept of community by probing Morris's application of modern scholarship. His attraction to ideas of Germania and the Teutonic myths explored by Victorian historians was one part of this, and established an idea of the past which Morris idealised in his romances and theorised in his politics. The other stemmed from his attraction to contemporary theories of social evolution which both presupposed the existence of a primitive condition and, having laid bare its character, plotted its re-emergence in the future. The irony, then,

is that modern analysis pointed Morris towards his medieval idea of community and that science – in the form of evolutionary theory – heightened his sense of its revolutionary re-constitution.

In exploring this aspect of community, Vaninskaya again moves expertly between the literatures and convincingly highlights the similarities of socialist and orthodox academic practice. Turning to the socialists, she finds an identity between Morris, Bax and Engels. All appear ‘scientific socialists’ – Morris the conscious utopian who gave substance to their overtly anti-utopian ideas. (p. 87) This is not an unusual treatment of the relationship but it is difficult to square with the criticisms Bax levelled at Marx and Engels in his discussions of materialist history and socialist evolution. And insofar as the Morris-Bax relation is concerned, it suggests that their well known policy differences were just that – they had no deeper philosophical root.

The bracketing of Morris and Bax is based on part on their collaboration in *Socialism from the Root Up*, but is perhaps more reliant on the broader cultural setting in which Vaninskaya locates them. It is as if the similarities between socialist and mainstream practice, the shared interest in the revival of the mark and the proprietary and legislative practices of ‘primitive’ tribes, (p. 94) trumps the possibility of significant disagreement. Their relationship is not her main concern, but the risk of the approach is not just that it detracts from Morris’s originality as a socialist, but that it also tends towards a conception of community which fails to discriminate between different understandings of federalism and fellowship, the sociological and ethical components of the concept which Vaninskaya identifies in a brilliantly contextualised discussion of *A Dream of John Ball*.

The final section of the book examines the ways in which ideas of community were expressed during the early twentieth century. Morris drops from view, and the analysis moves to a discussion of Tressell, Wells, Blatchford, and others. Here, Vaninskaya challenges two myths: that the idea of community was lost in the battle between ‘communal’ and ‘statist’ groups, and/or that it declined as the early, utopian and radical socialism of the period of the revival gave way to bureaucratic social democracy. Vaninskaya’s discussion of context and the methodological problems which it raises is impressive, and in debunking these myths she rightly highlights the fluidity of socialism, the interrelatedness of different groups and individuals and the shifting grounds on which ideas of community found root. What gets lost, though, is the sense in which Morris and others also operated in an ideological context, marked by growing sectarianism. How, for example, should we treat Morris’s late, uncompromising rejection of anarchism towards the end of his life?

The issue of context is not, then, reflected back in the choices made for this

section, or on the way in which the earlier sections of the book are framed or, in particular, on the treatment of modernity it proposes. At the beginning of the book, Vaninskaya describes socialism as the most radical and forward-looking movement – which it might well have been – but in a way which suggests it represented a break with the past. To cast socialism in this manner suggests that history is being looked at through a particular lens and that Morris's thought can be interpreted the light of this understanding. The assumption informing this reading is made clear when Vaninskaya argues in the Introduction that Morris's literary and political efforts were designed to 'remove him from capitalist modernity'. (p. 5) Yet it is not clear that Morris thought that modernity presented a problem in the way that she suggests, or that his poetic shifts between past and future were not all understood by him to be aspects of his present.

The questions which Vaninskaya's book wrestles with and provokes are enormous and her resolution is optimistic and forceful. In opening with a discussion of the prose romances and working back through Morris's socialist thought, she also raises the profile of this late work and gives it an importance, as a mature rendering of his work which most have overlooked. In taking the story forward after his death, she not only charts a history of an idea but points to its still possible realisation in our present.

Ruth Kinna

Yisrael Levin, ed, *A. C. Swinburne and the Singing Word*, Farnham, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010, 190 pp. Hbk, £55.00. ISBN 97807546 69968.

As Yisrael Levin disarmingly remarks in his introduction to this volume, 'one may claim there is something counterintuitive, perhaps even self-defeating, in dedicating a collection of essays to Swinburne's later work'. (p. 1) Swinburne occupies a slightly ambiguous place in literary studies: most scholars acknowledge him as an important figure, yet he remains also a marginal one, remembered, most often, for the scandalous impact of his early works, and in particular of *Poems and Ballads* (1866). His later works – those written in the three decades following his 'rescue' from alcoholism by his friend Theodore Watts-Dunton, and his ensconcement at The Pines, Putney, as the latter's housemate – have often been dismissed out of hand as diffuse, repetitive, and over-literary, a case of 'arrested development' as Douglas Bush put it in 1963. The last forty years have seen a trickle of eloquent defences of Swinburne by prominent North American critics including Jerome McGann and Antony H. Harrison, and most of these have pointed out that the late poetry, while

demanding and uneven, is in fact crucial to a just estimate of his achievement. Yet these voices seem to have had little impact on the general scholarly consensus. So this book, by taking the problematic later work as its sole stated object of study, seeks to tackle the critical impasse head-on.

I should say at this point that I am by no means a disinterested commentator on this subject: I fully share the view informing the volume that Swinburne is one of the greatest of all Victorian poets, and (no doubt like some of Levin's contributors) I have had the experience of being stared at incredulously at academic conferences for stating this opinion. I therefore approached this book with real anticipation, expecting a triumphant vindication of the mature Swinburne's genius. I have to say that, despite its many strengths, I was slightly disappointed. Its main shortcoming is in fact hinted at in the Afterword by David G. Riede, whose brilliant *Swinburne: A Study of Romantic Mythmaking* (1979) first identified in his later work a fully developed nature myth worthy of comparison with those of Wordsworth or Shelley. What is needed, he says, is simply more 'rigorous engagement with the difficult late work', (p. 171) and ultimately, there is not quite enough of this in Levin's volume. To say this is to imply no necessary negative comment on the calibre of the contributors.

The major problem, I think, is that it is very difficult even to begin to engage rigorously with the later Swinburne within the confines of an article or book chapter. Not only is the late work very voluminous (he published ten volumes of verse between 1879 and his death in 1909), it is also formally complex, intellectually demanding, and extremely patchy in quality, with (what is worst of all) the 'bad' poems and the 'good' poems often looking very alike – frequently deploying the same subject matter, vocabulary, verse forms, and prosodic techniques. All of this means that Swinburne requires a considerable investment of time, energy, and patience to study, and a comparably large amount of space to explicate. There can be no doubt that such difficulties have contributed to the continuing neglect of the mature Swinburne, leading many scholars to engage in what Margot K. Louis has called 'short swallow-flights of criticism over the surface of Swinburne studies' (quoted, p. 169) rather than sound the depths. No such superficiality is to be found here; yet one senses that some contributors (including experienced Swinburneans such as Catherine Maxwell and Rikky Rooksby) have opted for manageable topics, rather than embark on the daunting prospect of attempting, within the space of twenty pages, to provide close readings of long, difficult poems virtually unread for a century and more.

Three chapters in particular do seek to rise to this challenge, however. Most strikingly, Stephanie Kuduk Weiner's study of 'Knowledge and Sense Experience in Swinburne's Late Poetry' addresses the central charge brought

against Swinburne by T. S. Eliot, the critic who contributed most fully to the poet's loss of reputation in the early twentieth century: that he was concerned with sound rather than sense, that for him meaning was merely 'the hallucination of meaning'. Kuduk Weiner, by a patient discussion of several poems (some known to previous criticism, others not) shows how Swinburne uses poetry to explore 'the relation between sense and knowledge'. (p. 12) His descriptive 'late nature poems', often dismissed as simple word-painting, 'investigate the quality of the knowledge to be gained by attending to the experience of the real world', while the sound-driven poems (Eliot's real *bête noir*) are programmatically concerned with the kind of insight which can be gained from the sensuous qualities of language itself. Weiner here seems to me to add a significant new dimension to our understanding of Swinburne as an 'aesthetic poet'.

Elsewhere, Levin's own chapter, 'Solar Erotica: Swinburne's Myth of Creation' examines how Swinburne's later poetry evolves a non-Christian myth of creation as an essentially erotic act between the elemental forces of nature. This myth is, without doubt, one of the great achievements of the mature Swinburne, seen above all in the monumental 'By the North Sea' (1880); though I am unsure as to how much Levin's reading adds to Riedel's much fuller analysis of three decades ago. Still, it is arguable that Swinburne's claims in this regard merit repetition to bring them to wider attention. John A. Walsh, editor of the Swinburne Project (a website interestingly comparable to the Morris Online Edition) uses the new methods of digital humanities scholarship to provide an 'analysis of the architectonic structures [of] Swinburne's compositions', (p. 29) focusing on his 1880 collection *Songs of the Springtides*. One cannot help thinking that Swinburne would have been amused by the thought of people using computers to analyse his poetry; yet, despite the obvious risks of reductionism in such an exercise, Walsh demonstrates how such techniques can help to uncover the complex 'conceptual networks' in Swinburne's writing, underscoring the meticulousness of his poetic craft, and giving the lie to Eliot's accusations of laziness.

Much of the remainder of the book comprises studies of Swinburne's influences and friendships – informative and enjoyable essays, but not the kind of thing likely to re-establish him in the front rank of Victorian poets. One of these chapters, however, will be of particular interest to Morrisians: Brian Burton's consideration of 'Swinburne and the North'. Swinburne was of partly Northumbrian descent, and often described himself as a 'borderer'. Such a love for the North is a significant point of affinity between him and Morris, as Swinburne himself liked to remark. (Morris seems to have been more diffident on this point). In his earlier years, Swinburne produced a series of versions and imitations of traditional border ballads, accentuating the

romantic and supernatural elements of the originals.

Rather as the Icelandic sagas were for Morris, the ballads were for Swinburne the achievement of a people closer to nature and unspoiled by the 'civilisation' represented by the South. Swinburne's most important Northumbrian-inspired work is *The Tale of Balen* (1896), his retelling of Malory's tale of 'Balin le Savage'. As personified in Balen, 'Northumberland is [...] portrayed as a unified whole with land, sea, and man comprising a single entity'; by contrast, 'the corrupt world of Camelot, the traditional symbol of English rule, national unity, and Christian virtue, is characterised as fundamentally evil'. (pp. 84, 83) Interestingly, though, Burton suggests that Swinburne's Northern vision is in important respects a conservative one, valorising Balen's 'fidelity to his family, his selfless devotion to duty, his adherence to personal notions of nobility and honour, and his sheer manliness'; *Balen* thus sits somewhere between the blatant nationalism of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* and the radical antinomianism of *The Defence of Guenevere*. (p. 84)

As a salutary counterpoint to Burton's work, Charlotte Ribeyrol's chapter on Swinburne and France considers the influence on the mature Swinburne of such figures as Baudelaire, Hugo, and indeed Villon (a medieval poet never to my knowledge mentioned by Morris). Such associations remind us what a self-consciously literary figure Swinburne was, and one can perhaps understand the feeling which led Morris once to characterise Swinburne's work as 'founded on literature, not on nature' – even if (as Cecil Y. Lang once commented) this seems an odd remark from the author of *The Life and Death of Jason* and *Sigurd the Volsung*.

There is, then, much of interest in this volume. What is lacking, however, is a really important chapter which would add materially to the rather small number of later works (most notably 'On the Cliffs', 'By the North Sea', 'A Nympholept', 'The Lake of Gaube', and *Tristram of Lyonesse*) which have been widely accepted among Swinburneans as being of major significance. It is sad to note, in closing, the death of Margot K. Louis, the intended co-editor of this volume and a devoted Swinburneian whose work exemplified the kind of detailed, patient close reading which Swinburne above all demands. Nevertheless, as Riede insists in his Afterword, Swinburne studies a century after his death appear to be in a better state of health than has been the case for some time. Perhaps (to employ Swinburne's favourite image of the changeful, changeless sea) the tide of criticism will one day flow back more decisively in his favour.

Richard Frith

Karen Livingstone, *The Bookplates and Badges of C.F.A. Voysey, Architect and Designer of the Arts and Crafts Movement*, Woodbridge, Suffolk: Antique Collectors' Club in association with Crab Tree Farm Foundation, 2011, 248 pp, 149 coloured illustrations, Hbk, £25. ISBN 9781851496402.

I have always had a soft spot for Voysey, particularly because a well-known authority on architecture who came to stay, looked out of our window at the house opposite and said 'Undoubtedly Voysey'. Second, I have a framed postcard by Voysey of birds in a nest, inscribed 'There's no place like home'. I look at it every day and find it cheering. But maybe one can have too much of a good thing, I felt, as I picked up a volume almost entirely devoted to Voysey's bookplates.

This copiously illustrated survey contains one hundred and forty-eight reproductions of bookplates and other designs by Voysey. It is a well-made book and a joy to handle. For example, at the beginning, we are introduced to his work as an architect; also included are specimens of his designs for metalwork and wallpaper. He was essentially a practitioner of the Arts and Crafts movement, and his work is of its age, rather than for all time. He felt that his master was Pugin, and the portrayal of Voysey closely resembles the well-known portrait of Pugin as a medieval architect. So he regularly paid attention to the fittings of the houses he was engaged to build and the hinge shown at Figure 7 is a splendid example of something useful. He was a colleague of Mackmurdo and other members of the Century Guild, and this brings us to the 1890s, when bookplates were at their peak of popularity and became 'collectable'.

In fact, after many years of designing them for his family and friends, Voysey made a compilation of his own bookplates in 1932 and pasted them into an album, which found its way into the collection at Crab Tree Farm, near Chicago, Illinois. From this collection, and others in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the archives of the RIBA, Karen Livingstone has put together this authoritative study. The collection is unified in several ways, partly because Voysey designed and used his own set of letters and numerals, which is an interesting parallel to the fonts of type which William Morris originated. He also devised his own tightly controlled set of symbols: 'the love of God leads to the love of goodness, truth and beauty, and ultimately to the joy of symbolising these qualities in all design'. Unfortunately he was not gifted with the poetic vision of WB Yeats; Livingstone writes of his 'uncompromising certainty of belief' and it turns out to be a rather a trite revelation that he wishes to communicate. Does one need to be told that the heart symbolises love, and that the busy bee means work? However, there is considerable variety in the various kinds of tree he used to draw, and for the

animals and birds he would go sketching at the London Zoo. Livingstone quotes a commentator who said that ‘Voysey’s version of a particular bird was more like the bird it depicted than the actual bird itself’. This joke is worth savouring. The objects studied are reduced to their essentials. ‘To be simple’, said Voysey, ‘is the end, not the beginning of design’.

Such a devotion to small things offers its own rewards, and occasionally an unexpected insight informs the design. For example, the bookplate for Kathleen Müntzer shows a dark mountain in the distance, a galleon sailing past, and in the foreground a thick forest, and a spread of ‘creatures of the night’; these symbols are overridden by the sun rising over the mountain, its streaming rays bringing ‘glad day’ as in Blake’s work. The plate is inscribed in Latin LIBER LUCIS ORIGO and SINE LIBRIS TENEBRAE; ‘Without books there is darkness’. Had Voysey produced more designs like this one would have wished to give him unlimited praise; but many of them are, I feel, painfully cramped into the tiny rectangle provided for the function of the bookplate. As time went on, he began to incorporate a little rectangle at the bottom, in which the date of purchase could be entered.

Livingstone refers to Morris in passing; her account of Voysey’s attitude to him is worth quoting in full. ‘Although a reluctant admirer of Morris’s pattern designs, Voysey quite clearly wanted to distance himself from the great man and his ideals, partly because he did not approve of his socialist beliefs. The two men also differed in their approach to design: while Morris was a practising craftsman, Voysey understood technique and was a skilled designer but did not actually make anything himself’. This is a telling criticism. Nevertheless, Voysey was a great propagandist for the ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement, and was a member of the Art Workers Guild from its foundation, becoming Master in 1924. He was also a member of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, founded in 1887, and many similar organisations. In this way, by constant networking, he drove forward and monitored the progress of the movement for which Morris was had provided the impetus. Livingstone refers to his address book as a source to support her case. Voysey possessed less talent than Morris but he used it to the full, so that even in a collection of bookplates – obviously one of the Lesser Arts – you can find evidence of genius, even if, in the English way, it pursues a slightly dotty ideology.

John Purkis

Linda Parry & David Cathers, *Arts and Crafts Rugs for Craftsman Interiors*, London & New York: W.W. Norton in association with Crab Tree Farm, 2010, 168 pp., numerous colour illustrations, £33. ISBN 9780393733204.

The idea for this outstandingly attractive book came, we are told, from Dru Muskovin, who looked after the remarkable collection at Crab Tree Farm in Illinois. A quick glance at it certainly makes the reader feel that he or she would like to make a visit to the Farm, which is, we are told, a working farm located on Lake Bluff, Illinois, with five buildings designed in 1911, now displaying ‘collections of Arts and Crafts furniture and decorative arts in settings that have been created to reflect the aesthetics of the Arts and Crafts movement’. The large size of the pages allows for many lavish illustrations, often of rooms at Crab Tree, credited to Prographics of Rockford, Illinois, who deserve credit for their contribution to the book.

But this is not simply a book to look at. It also contains much illuminating scholarship, as we expect when we see that Linda Parry has contributed substantially to it. A brief, summarising Introduction begins with Gustav Stickley, who started work as a furniture designer and moved on to interior design, and then the publication, from October 1901, of his journal *The Craftsman*. The cover of the first issue is shown here, with the title of the main article, ‘William Morris. Some thoughts upon His life: work & influence’ (*sic*). Information is also given about the foundation of the Farm in 1905, and the rationale of the book is made explicit in the claim that ‘The rugs used in his [Stickley’s] Craftsman interiors are, arguably, the most understudied of all the decorative arts of the Arts and Crafts movement’. After the publication of this book, that is no longer the case.

The first chapter, by David Cathers and Diane Boucher, gives an account of Stickley and the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States which will be particularly useful to British readers perhaps knowing little about Stickley, who deserves to be better known here for his remarkable energy and creativity. The account stresses Stickley’s attentive reading of the leading ‘British practitioners of the Arts and Crafts’, Ruskin, Morris, Voysey and Baillie Scott, ‘who most transformed Stickley’s views of art, craft, and labor’. Stickley never produced rugs himself, but he saw them as essential for ‘elegant simplicity’ he was seeking to create in his customers’ homes and made recommendations for what he thought appropriate.

There are then four chapters by Linda Parry, on ‘The Rugs of William Morris’, ‘The Rugs of C.F.A. Voysey’, ‘Donegal Rugs of Ireland’ and ‘Dun Emer Rugs of Ireland’. She points out that Stickley never sold Morris’s rugs, but was deeply indebted to him for inspiration. She provides an illuminating account of Morris’s work in this field, showing him working with characteristic

determination to improve the quality of both design and production technique. Not only did he produce fine rugs, first at Hammersmith, then at Merton Abbey; he also inspired a renewed interest in machine-woven carpeting, which had previously been used only in corridors and bedrooms.

These cheaper products were commissioned from various manufacturers, and sold under the Morris name in the shop in Oxford Street. Although fewer than ten such carpets were put into production, we are told that their commercial success led to wider use of this form of floor covering and made Morris carpeting available 'to a number of clients who were unable to afford hand-knotted Hammersmiths'. It is good to be made aware of this in view of the frequent criticism of the expensiveness of the Company's products. There are no fewer than fifteen illustrations to this chapter, some of which show the machine-woven carpets, and others the better-known hand-knotted rugs and carpets. In particular the 'Little Tree' of c. 1880 and the 'Black Tree' of 1885/7 seemed to me to show Morris at his inventive best. The rug by Dearle, c.1890, shows that the spirit of Morris could be passed on; a version of this rug was owned by May, and is now at Kelmscott Manor.

Parry's other contributions show, as does the book overall, the expanding and inclusive nature of Stickley's interests. He met and talked to Voysey when on a visit to Britain in 1912. Unfortunately no record of the conversation exists, but their attitudes to decoration had much in common. Stickley praised Voysey for his provision for comfortable domestic life: his work was 'intimate rather than pompous'; the illustrations convincingly support this. The following two chapters take us beyond England, as Stickley found sources of inspiration for his desire to regenerate rural areas in the United States. Alexander Morton had revived the failing rug-making industry in southern Scotland from 1867, and later expanded the business to County Donegal. The colours used in these woollen 'Donegals' were unusual, as most had a green warp and used strong reds, oranges, pinks and purples. As the fourth chapter shows, activity in Ireland increased with the establishment by Evelyn Gleeson in 1902 of the Dun Emer Guild at Dundrum, near Dublin. Parry describes Gleeson as 'the ideal Arts and Crafts woman: independent, practical and talented', and shows how she incorporated Celtic knots and interlacings into her attractive designs.

The interesting story of the extension beyond Europe of the geographical areas from which the rugs derived is told in the following chapters. David Cathers writes about 'Rag Rugs', defined as 'a loom-woven textile with cotton or linen warps and wefts of old cloth cut into strips'. These were 'mostly homemade throughout the nineteenth century', and production of them was revived at its end. The American Fabric Rug Company produced a line of these products, with names evoking the Colonial heritage. Next Cathers

discusses ‘Scotch Rugs’, defined as ‘flat-woven, reversible wool rugs’, associated originally with Scotland but later produced and marketed in America. He then goes on to ‘Druggets of India’. He points out that a variety of Indian-made rugs, often designed in Britain, were imported into America in the early twentieth century; of these, a small percentage were druggets, a drugget being a ‘weft-faced, flat woven, reversible rug made with cotton warps and wool wefts and dyed with synthetic dyes’. Druggets are apparently the only Craftsman floor coverings to have survived; the simplicity of the designs clearly appealed to Stickley.

Diane Boucher begins her illuminating account of ‘Navajo Rugs of the Southwestern United States’ with reference back to the ways in which Romanticism introduced the idea of a country’s ‘promoting its identity through the arts’, seeking inspiration from ‘the historical and mythological past’. Since the Native Americans were the only indigenous people in North America, it made sense for the Arts and Crafts movement to look to them for a ‘national spirit in art’ – despite the unfortunate history of their treatment by successive generations of immigrants, of which Boucher says nothing. She quotes a Native American writing in 1914 about the peculiar value of Indian blankets ‘when used as a rug, portière, or couch cover in a Craftsman room’ – and the illustrations back this up.

We remain in America for the two brief chapters constituting the rest of the book, in which David Cathers writes about ‘Crex Grass Rugs of Minnesota’ and ‘Abnákee Rugs of New Hampshire’. A hard-wearing grass matting product called Crex was created by the American Grass Twine Company early in the twentieth century, and soon came to employ five hundred workers. The advertisement for it showing a Crex porch overlooking a rose-filled garden, ‘Typical of the Home of Many’ is very appealing. Cathers notes that the story of the Company ‘includes several familiar themes: American mechanical ingenuity and industrial production; the exploitation of natural resources, aggressive boosterism; and, eventually, the creation of a consumer product by a consistent, sophisticated nationwide advertising campaign’. We have certainly come a long way from Morris at this point.

Finally, the Abnákee Rug. This was a product created by Helen Albee of Pequaket, New Hampshire, deriving, we are told, from ‘the common “hooked rug” of New Hampshire’. Mrs Albee was a philanthropically-inclined lady who wanted to help the increasingly impoverished local farm wives, and was inspired partly by ideas from Ruskin and Morris to try to do so. Interestingly, the wives proved less responsive than she may have expected; in particular, they did not share her view of the ugliness of the hooked rugs made by them and placed on their farmhouse floors. She remarked with some asperity: ‘My simple conventionalized designs had not met with their approval. I did not

use bright colours; I wove no ... cats nor puppy dogs. I had not reached the standards of native taste'. But she persisted, and made some progress; if the women did not share her taste, they were pleased to have the employment that her good management produced. Albee is an interesting final example of the eclectic form taken by the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States, of which Stickley himself is an outstanding example.

There is a useful Bibliography, reminding us of the amount of sound research which has recently been done in these areas. The final illustration is a Donegal showcard of 1899 called 'Irish Camels', which shows wagon-loads of rugs made by Alexander Morton and Co. setting out on their journey from Ireland, with one bundle designated for New York. This makes an unexpected but effective conclusion to this attractive and informative book.

Peter Faulkner

Christopher Frayling, *On Craftsmanship: towards a new Bauhaus*, London: Oberon Books, 2011, 144 pp., Hbk, £9.99. ISBN 1849430721.

Christopher Frayling's *On Craftsmanship* is a collection of articles, reviews and lectures, which purports to take an 'unsentimental, hard-headed look at craftsmanship today' in order to understand its contemporary importance. The author presents his interest in the subject as rooted in his family history, his education and his thirty-six year working life at the Royal College of Art.

The first chapter discusses George Sturt's *The Wheelwright's Shop*; an influential early twentieth-century account of traditional craft. For Frayling, the main theme is 'a schoolmaster trying hard – sometimes embarrassingly hard – to understand exactly what a small group of craftspeople actually do'. (p. 24) The historical interest of Sturt's writing is enhanced by his admiration for William Morris and John Ruskin; he cited *Fors Clavigera* as a direct influence on his decision to leave teaching and take over the family wheelwright business. Frayling stresses that *The Wheelwright's Shop* needs to be understood in conjunction with Sturt's manuscript journal, which records his difficulties with the craftsmen, and how they learned the skills which, for the most part, eluded him.

Through a discussion of Sturt's work, the reader is introduced to the concepts of 'formal' and 'tacit' knowledge, both of which are central to recent thinking on craftsmanship. Frayling records Sturt's eventual disillusionment with both Ruskin and Morris, glossing Sturt's critique by describing Morris as 'the original champagne socialist', a somewhat flippant comment. (p.32) Despite this, he acknowledges that Sturt continued to be guided by Ruskin's critique of the educational system, and his struggle to understand the workers

encapsulates many of the contradictions and difficulties gathered together under the word 'craftsman'. Frayling concludes: 'Only when the schoolmaster had shed both his 'Ruskinian tendencies' *and* his tendency to rely on the reassuring categories of 'reasoned science' did he even begin to understand the work and society of the craftsmen, and did they begin to understand what he was attempting to do'. (p.49)

On Craftsmanship contains some interesting perspectives on the myths surrounding creative practise. A chapter entitled 'Skill – A Word to Start an Argument' discusses a number of nostalgic notions about craftsmanship which obscure the real significance of the subject. A pertinent example is the status of the studio potter during the craft revival of the later twentieth century. The potter 'sees himself as the inheritor of traditional skills', although craft pottery 'played a negligible part in the urban economy of Merrie England'. (p.65) In a similar way the spinning wheel was accepted as 'a key symbol of the domestic crafts' despite the fact that it is based upon a fifteenth-century device totally obsolete by the nineteenth century, even among the 'handicraft end of the trade'. (p.67)

As the Introduction admits, most of the chapters are old work 'tweaked for new publication', (p.20) and sadly this is evident to the reader. 'Forever Ambridge' is basically a review of Martin Wiener's *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit* (1981): this material is likely to appear dated for a contemporary audience. To make matters worse, Frayling seems to concur with Wiener's attitude about the Crystal Palace and its contents: Pugin's Medieval Court is caricatured as the 'a bizarre expression of its [the Crystal Palace's] cultural opposite'. (p.52) This is a missed opportunity and shows a very old-fashioned attitude towards Pugin which contradicts one of the themes of the book. Pugin's pragmatic engagement with industrialists such as Herbert Minton and John Hardman, and his ability to communicate to craftsmen on an individual level, are the qualities which made him such an effective designer and should have made his work a subject of positive interest for a book such as this.

To my mind the most interesting chapter is the last: 'The New Bauhaus', which reads like a lecture and feels more recent than most of the book. Frayling muses on the thoughts of his predecessor, Walter Crane, who in 1901 reorganised the curriculum of the Royal College of Art in order to adapt it to the new century. He moves on to discuss the Bauhaus, the legacy of which he summarises as: 'craft plus alternative philosophy, and the hope that industry might be listening; art meets design through making; the experimental workshop'. (p. 132)

So what shape does he think a contemporary Bauhaus might take? It would be an agency of professional education which reaches out into the

community ‘in a much more generous and informative way than is usual at present’. (p.136) It would be a research institute with ‘inclusive design, design for everyone, design which really *understands* users, and a lifestyle laboratory or digital playground which businesses, artists and designers will want to wire into’. (p.137) Finally, it would be a place for learning both the traditional skills necessary for becoming a professional artist and learning ‘*through*’ art and design: using art as a medium for teaching universal skills such as ‘problem-solving, making things, resourcefulness, independence of mind’. (p.139) In conclusion he returns to Ruskin’s counsel that art education should combine ‘the head, the heart and the hand’ and shows receptiveness to the values of the Arts and Crafts Movement which is somewhat absent in the rest of the text.

Much of this book is too dated really to deal with ‘craftsmanship today’ and the lack of information about the original context of the chapters makes it difficult to understand them as pieces of writing from the past. When, for example, did the interview with David Pye take place, and who were the audience? We might deduce the date to be about 1980, but should the reader really have to work this out? The absence of any notes, bibliography or even further reading is extremely frustrating, and makes following up quotations problematic, especially when the title is given incorrectly in the text, as in the case of Philip Steadman’s *The Evolution of Designs*. (p.98) At times the reader is likely to sense the absence of images which were probably included in the original publication or lecture. Despite some engaging and profound material, the themes which run through this book ultimately fail to unite the chapters into a convincing whole, and it is regrettable that it lacks the scholarly apparatus which might allow the reader to pursue its interesting aspects.

Jim Cheshire

Tony Pinkney, *William Morris: The Blog. Digital Reflections 2007-2011*, Lancaster: Kelmsgarth Press, 2011, 152pp., pbk, £12.95. ISBN 9780-956761309.

On the back of this lively book, Tony Pinkney makes the claim – referring to Morris’s ‘Notes on News’ items in *Commonweal* as a comparable body of work – that ‘If William Morris were alive today, he would certainly be blogging on all the literary, cultural and political issues that so absorbed him’. Pinkney is of course well known to Morrisians as the scholarly editor of the volume of interviews with Morris, planned by Nicholas Salmon and published as *We Met Morris* in 2005, and of the illuminating *William Morris in Oxford: The Campaigning Years 1879–1895* in 2007. As he acknowledges in his Introduction, subtitled ‘William Morris Unbound’, the blog form offers him the opportunity to proceed in a

less formal fashion, avoiding the tyranny of the footnote – but without being led into carelessness, for he is a consistently scrupulous scholar. What he can do is to comment on Morris-related topics as they occur to him in his formal or informal reading, without having to make his observations into part of a detailed argument. But there are, as he tells us, five themes and one text around which his thoughts circle: the text is *News from Nowhere*, and the themes are socialism, cultural theory, utopianism, neo-Victorianism (the bringing together of aspects of Victorian culture which remained undeveloped at the time), and what he terms Morris's 'quirkiness and prickliness'. Overall, Pinkney wants his readers to 'unbind' Morris from the shackles of stale assumptions and to bring him into the creative aspects of our thinking.

Examples of this liberating approach can be found on almost every page. I was particularly struck by Pinkney's reflections on Utopianism as a form of thinking which should not be allowed to disappear in our bureaucratic culture. He shows the attitudes of respected figures such as Raymond Williams and Fredrick Jameson to the issue, and suggests that it would illuminate that tradition to read it in the light of our contemporary science-fiction of writers such as Ursula Le Guin. He urges the William Morris Society to take action on this, and on other matters too – the final section of the book offers 'Future Directions' for the use of the area at Kelmscott House above the coach house. Pinkney would like to see the setting up of a 'Utopian Studies Sub-Group' within the Society, to do justice to the significance of Morris's utopianism, the area in which 'the most enduring thrust of his work lies' But *News from Nowhere* is not over-praised – its inconsistencies are admitted, while Pinkney also wonders intelligently about the implications of Old Hammond's admission that he has been in some way disappointed by the progress of the society in which he is living. Those of us who remember with exasperation John Carey's dismissive comments about Morris in his 1999 *Faber Book of Utopias* – *News from Nowhere* is said to display 'in its inadequacies, the confusion and hypocrisy that have dogged the course of English Socialism' – will be surprised to find Carey, in a personal communication to Pinkney, airily remarking: 'You should not pay much attention to my views on WM. My main grudge against him is that he is so rude about Hammersmith Bridge, to which I fondly recall being taken to feed the seagulls when I was a child'. Pinkney fairly suggests that these words should be appended to any future edition of the anthology, but seems less indignant than I am at the blithe irresponsibility of Carey's response.

Pinkney is of the generation which felt the impact of the new ideas in literary criticism which were given the general name Theory during the 1970s. He is doubtful as to whether Morris studies have fully reflected that development. This may perhaps be because Morris was not one of the central figures in the Great Tradition – to use Leavis's term – which Theory often set out to criticise. This went along with a questioning of the claims of realism as a mode of repre-

sentation. Since Morris's writings were not in the realist mode – of which he was in fact highly critical – and he did not feature in the lists of canonical texts, there was less reason to focus on him.

Pinkney says little about two other elements in the recent critique of culture which have been influential – feminism, and the work inaugurated by Edward Said. Of the latter, we know that Morris was one of the very few Victorians who resisted the claims of British imperialism; but feminists were able to point out that, in *Nowhere*, women are shown in many of their traditional roles. On the other hand, as Pinkney points out more than once, Ellen is the most dynamic presence in Morris's utopia – none of the male figures can compete with her for the reader's interest. She may indeed represent the 'quirkiness and prickliness' which Pinkney sees in Morris and wants us to recognise in him. Our attention is also drawn to more recent developments in cultural studies, one of which is a 'theological turn'. Pinkney notes that *News from Nowhere* ends in Kelmscott Church, 'not at Kelmscott manor as we lazily assume'. I do not think that readers are as careless as this suggests, or are unaware of the fact that the church has been repossessed by the local people and turned into a social centre. Pinkney goes on to wonder why 'utopia should end thus at a sacred site', and predicts that future critics may reread the book and discover 'religious significances we had not previously picked up'. A reader of Philip Larkin's 'Church-Going' might recall the agnostic poet's admiring line, 'A serious house on serious earth it is'.

Of the unfinished Morris projects, as Pinkney sees them, perhaps the most interesting are his suggestions that an attempt be made to give a full account of Morris as a literary critic, and that a book of ballads should be compiled drawing on what is known about his taste in this area. I am more doubtful about two projects suggested in connection with *News from Nowhere*, the creation of a prequel and of a sequel. But of course if anyone bold enough to undertake either was to come along, we would all be intrigued by the resulting works. The Blog is most valuable in encouraging us to widen the range of activities that we might think of in relation to Morris, that most various of men. But I do not see myself taking up singlestick, or indeed fishing, however much Morris enjoyed these activities.

Some of the blogs are presented primarily to entertain. To me the prizewinner here was that for 21 January 2011 entitled 'Burne-Jones, Luddite'. In it Pinkney quotes from Penelope Fitzgerald's biography to the effect that the painter 'was often defeated by the simplest mechanical devices, even drawing-pins'. As Pinkney notes, 'The mind boggles. I sometimes struggle with the DVD recorder or with putting a new battery into my mobile phone or with the complexities of page set-out on the laptop - but drawing-pins ...?' Indeed, it would be nice to discover one of Burne-Jones's own cartons delineating such a scene. Thus there is entertainment as well as challenge for the student of Morris here, and one can only conclude with the hope that Pinkney will have the energy to continue his

blog into the future and to attract others to Morris in this way. Good luck too to the Kelmsgarth Press, which Pinkney and his wife Makiko Minow are launching with this book.

Peter Faulkner

Paul Farley & Michael Symmonds Roberts, *Edgelands: Journeys into England's true wilderness*, London: Jonathan Cape, 2011, 264 pp., pbk, £12.99. ISBN 9780224089029.

Owen Hatherley, *A guide to the new ruins of Great Britain*, Verso, 2011, 371 pp., pbk, £9.99. ISBN 139781844677009

'Edgelands' are those spaces where the veneer of civilisation peels away. They are the debatable spaces where city and countryside fray into each other; those most despised and ignored of landscapes which are part of our common experience. The late Colin Ward, along with various collaborators, researched and celebrated them in a series of books on plotlands, caravan sites, camping grounds, smallholdings, children's hiding places and allotments. While other countries contain desert, jungle or tundra, this is arguably, Britain's wilderness.

In the spirit of the times, I spent my summer holiday in England. I visited National Trust properties as diverse as Stowe, Tyntesfield and Farnborough House. All in their different way possess gardens to die for, temples, lakes and magnificent trees abound, in landscapes artfully designed in order to look 'natural'. But of course our countryside has been carefully shaped, not just in these particular gems, but over moorland, weald and downs by many hands, over generations. And between our intensively-managed urban and rural landscapes, has grown up a strange 'no-man's-land'. It is this that Farley & Symmonds Roberts examine, in twenty eight essays with titles such as 'landfill', 'sewage', 'mines', 'airports', 'containers', 'canals', 'masts', and 'pallets'. Nothing could be more different from those National Trust properties.

Both authors are poets, and poets have always been attracted by the overlooked, the telling detail, the captured moment. If parts of our managed countryside feel (deliberately) timeless, the edgelands feel anything but. Come back a year after your last visit, and the empty factory will have been demolished, a business park constructed, the waste ground cleared and landscaped with those artificial waterfalls which only work on weekdays: the 'new ruins' of Great Britain even. Overlooked as they are, these areas play an increasingly important role in conserving biodiversity. Think of the extent of motorway verges almost undisturbed by human hands for decades.

As a 'waste-management professional', I was particularly struck by the essay on landfill. I have never come across such an accurate evocation of 'the end of the road' for our consumerist society. 'Live landfill sites are an assault on the senses. Even from a distance you can hear the two-tone klaxons, the constant roar of diesel engines straining up a system of slopes and the gulls panicky and urgent. Then there is the smell: if you've been stuck behind a bin wagon in traffic on a hot day, then you have experienced its harsh contours, though nothing prepares you for the cloying relentless reek of household waste close up'.

Once they are full and capped, they become 'landfill-as-history'. The authors visit one outside Lancaster and report: 'Beneath our feet lie over fifty years worth of decomposing material, unknowable subterranean shiftings and settlings, slow collapses and fermentations. Grease and bones, paper and wood, glass, metals, solvents, rubber, dyes, fly ash, fat trap waste ... Here we can clearly see the fine veins of Christmas tree needles marking Januaries ... the gradual inundation of plastics and particleboard as we rise through the layers of years. Deep down at the lowest levels lie the peelings and scrapings of teatimes when Clement Atlee was Prime Minister'.

Being poets, and Farley having edited a 2007 edition of the work of John Clare, they manage to pepper the book with poetic references, even to landfill. Swordy Well in Northamptonshire is the remnant of an old quarry in an area of limestone grazing which Clare knew well: he grazed livestock there. It became a landfill site for a time, and like many former such sites is now enjoying an afterlife as a wildlife conservation area now known as Swaddywell Pit Nature Reserve. It is not entirely pretty. The authors record that in its lower reaches, 'the ground is iridescent with shiny discharges oozing from the earth'. Nevertheless the orchids Clare celebrated two hundred years ago 'are still evident, and in abundance, the meadowland where the tip was capped is carpeted today with bee and pyramidal varieties'.

When Clare was a young shepherd, Swordy Well was common land, but he grew up to see the landscape transformed, and his connections to it severed as Enclosure changed ancient boundaries and landmarks, diverted water courses, and grubbed up old trees and hedges. The eventual substitute for the enclosed common land was allotments for the displaced urban proletariat, another topic of this book. 'Allotments signal that you are now passing through the edgelands as emphatically as sewage works or a power station. They thrive on the fringes, the in between spaces, on land left over (or left behind) by the tides of building and industrial development in pockets behind houses or factories and in ribbons along the trackbed of railways'. Seen from the train they do indeed seem to hark back to that feudal, swineherd England, the subsistence strips which Clare grew up with. The utter antithesis of the

privatised shiny surfaces of the city you have just pulled out of, they flaunt their functionality, revealing an infrastructure of water butts and pipe work, plastic groundsheets and transposed carpets, sheds and greenhouses which, cobbled together from leftovers, look like a refugee camp from those fleeing the consumerism of the city.

This is where Owen Hatherley's book comes in. Before the recent crash, British cities were the laboratories of the new enterprise economy, glowing monuments to finance, property speculation and the service sector; New Labour heaven made flesh. Then reality rudely interrupted. In *A Guide to the new ruins of Great Britain*, Hatherley sets out to explore the wreckage, mapping the derelict Britain of the 2010s, and the buildings which epitomise an age of consumption and greed. The book's structure is similar to that of *Edgelands*, a series of discrete essays, this time about specific cities; Southampton, Milton Keynes, Manchester, Glasgow, Liverpool, Cambridge, and half a dozen others. Hatherley's point of departure is where Farley & Symmonds Roberts leave off. Near the end of the book he visits the Greenwich peninsula, home of the Dome, the defining monument to New Labour. Once, he writes, 'this place was a Blairite *tabula rasa* ... an area the size of a small town, freshly decontaminated and waiting to have all manner of ideas laid down upon it'. But instead of the green, inclusive, continental-style new city quarter promised at the beginning of regeneration of the area, he finds 'a transplant of America at its worst – gated communities, entertainment hangers and malls criss-crossed by carbon-spewing roads, a vision of a [British] future alienated, blankly consumerist, class ridden'.

But the crowning glory of these 'new ruins,' and the one which really gets Hatherley's goat, is Manchester. 'More than any other city in Britain, Manchester has become a flagship for urban regeneration and immaterial capitalism. What other cities have dabbled in with piecemeal ineptitude, Manchester has implemented with total efficiency'. The city has repositioned itself as a 'cold, rain-soaked Barcelona'. While acknowledging that there are some good buildings which have been absorbed into popular affection – the Beetham Tower, the Lowry, as demonstrated by newsagents selling postcards of them – his real complaint is the effort expended in turning the city from one of production to one of consumption. Regenerated cities, he argues, no longer produce any great pop music, or great art, let alone industrial product. What they do produce, is property developers. Or 'immaterial capitalism'.

For Hatherley, Manchester is the opposite of 'edgelands' – those parts of the city now demolished such as the Hulme Crescents which during the 1980s became the home for Manchester's young bohemians, art-house cinema, and soon-to-be-famous Factory Records and all. While city centre stores such as Selfridges and Harvey Nicholls may in time, like the Lowry Centre, become

monuments to their age, the huge half-finished housing development of New Islington already looks doomed. When the crash came, it consisted of 'one (apparently very hard to sell) Alsop block, two small closes of houses and a whole lot of verbiage'. But the promised self-build enclaves, high streets, parks, schools, and health centres were not built during the boom, and the creation of a low-rise suburbia in the heart of a huge city, surrounded by the levelled area of former social housing, sounds to me as if it possesses all the ingredients of an edgeland-in-the-making. Hatherley even reports that the detritus of regeneration 'street furniture' includes, 'a cuddly little fibreglass bear, two fibreglass birds and a hedge trimmed to resemble a dinosaur'.

If these books sound like a couple of dystopian visions shot through with poetical and polemical humour, as the gloomy inevitability of a post-industrial, post-globalised society (with the city as focus for consumption), collapses into the 'edgelands-as-badlands' of urban social disaffection and a consumer society turning in on itself, all is not lost. Both Hatherley and Farley & Symmonds Roberts find optimism in the bleakest of contexts. Hatherley contrasts the Dome and those gated communities on the Greenwich peninsula with the nearby Climate Camp of 2009, an attempt to carve out some independent oppositional space. Cynic that he can be, he remarks that 'What's intriguing about the Climate Camp is its interest both in protest and an actual proposition of another way of living. In a time when utopianism of any sort is thin on the ground other than as an object for nostalgia, this alone makes it worth taking seriously. Many in the camp are clear that [it] provides at least a potential model of a post carbon, post growth world'. The Camp also recognised the need for enormous structural changes, both in the wider of politics and everyday life and by implication in the way we design our lives. In one leaflet produced there, explaining why they chose that site, the campers list as number one, the tall buildings of Canary Wharf – monuments to the feral rich ('swinish rich?') to which their *ad hoc*, low-rise settlement is such an explicit alternative. Hatherley comments 'There is an instructive contrast between the good will, intelligence and participation in these marquees and the viciousness, atomisation and stupidity that occurs in the glass and steel blocks they look out on'.

Farley & Symmonds Roberts take allotments as their ground zero of practical utopianism. Noting that there is a long and honourable lineage of 'Digging for Victory' in the canons of sustainability, they see the allotments of the twenty-first century as more 'Dig for Planet Earth', whose objective is to turn over as much wasted or underused land as possible to the beauty and utility of growing fresh fruit and vegetables. Morrisians will empathise. The authors rightly globalise this phenomenon, pointing to the urban agriculture movement, stretching as it does from Detroit to Havana by way of 'Incredible

Edible Todmorden'. London's 'Capital Growth' initiative which plans 2,012 community growing projects up and running in the metropolis by the end of 2012, relies heavily on bringing edgelands back into productive use, right there in the midst of the 'new ruins'. Allotments, urban agriculture, climate camps, they all speak to a future where prosperity without growth is within reach. These books both chart the decline and fall of our current society in graphic detail and almost incidentally, record some of the green shoots of new growth.

Martin Stott

ERRATA, VOL. XIX, NO. 2

1. Contents – the Contents pages (pp. 1–2) of the last issue (Summer 2011) did not include page numbers.
2. Reviews – The list of reviews on p. 1 should have included the following as the first item

Phillippa Bennett & Rosie Miles, eds, *William Morris in the Twenty-First Century* (John Purkis)

The editor sincerely apologises to all concerned for these omissions.

Guidelines for Contributors

Contributions to the Journal are welcomed on all subjects relating to the life and works of William Morris. The Editor would be grateful if contributors could adhere the following guidelines when submitting articles and reviews:

1. Contributions should be in English, and word-processed or typed using 1.5 spacing, and printed on one side of A4 or 8.5 x 11 paper. They should be *ca* 5000 words in length, although shorter and longer pieces will also be considered.
2. Articles should ideally be produced in electronic form (e.g. as a Word.doc, or .rtf format). Please send your article as an email attachment to editor@williammorris-society.org.uk, or on a floppy disk or CD, and marked for the attention of the Editor, *JWMS*, to
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Please note that the views of individual contributors are not to be taken as those of the William Morris Society.

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Martin Crick was formerly a lecturer at Bretton Hall College, and is currently working for the Rugby Football League as elite coach programmes manager. He is author of *The History of the Social-Democratic Federation* (1994), , various articles on British Labour and Socialist History, and *The History of the William Morris Society 1955-2005*, forthcoming from the William Morris Society.

Peter Faulkner taught English at the University of Exeter until his retirement in 1998; he is a former editor of this *Journal* and Honorary Secretary of the Society.

Richard Frith is author of a Cambridge doctoral dissertation and several articles and reviews on Morris, Swinburne, and the Pre-Raphaelite circle. He is now ordained in the Church of England and is currently Assistant Curate of St Mary Magdalen, Oxford.

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Ruth Kinna teaches political theory at Loughborough University. Her book, *William Morris: The Art of Socialism* appeared in 2000, and she has since written widely on Morris. Her co-edited volume (*Anarchism and Utopianism*, 2009, with Laurence Davis) was recently published by the Manchester University Press.

David Latham is a Professor of English at York University, Toronto, and Sheila Latham is a Librarian at George Brown College. David is editor of *The Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* and his latest book is *Writing on the Image: Reading William Morris*, 2007. Sheila is editor of *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Canada*.

Bradley Macdonald teaches political theory at Colorado State University. Aside from having published articles and essays in journals and edited volumes, he is the author of *William Morris and the Aesthetic Constitution of Politics* (1999), and, most recently, *Performing Marx: Contemporary Negotiations of a Living Tradition* (2006).

Jan Marsh is President of the William Morris Society, and has published extensively on the Pre-Raphaelites. With Frank Sharp, she has edited the *Correspondence of Jane Morris*, forthcoming from Boydell & Brewer.

Jed Mayer is Assistant Professor of Victorian literature at SUNY-New Paltz; his current research focuses on the changing role of the non-human animals during the nineteenth century. His work has appeared in the journals *Victorian Studies*, *Nineteenth-Century Prose*, *Victorian Review*, the *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies*, and *Victorian Poetry*.

Patrick O'Sullivan taught Environmental Science at the University of Plymouth for more than thirty years, but singularly failed to save the world. He is now an independent writer and Editor of the *Journal of William Morris Studies*, and has recently been seeking to absolve Morris from certain criticisms regarding arsenic and wallpapers.

Tony Pinkney's work on Morris includes *William Morris and Oxford: The Campaigning Years, 1879-1895* (illuminati Books, 2007) and *William Morris: The Blog* (Kelmsgarth Press, 2011). His Morris-and-utopias blog continues at <http://williammorrisunbound.blogspot.com/> and he is now writing a sequel to *News from Nowhere*.

John Purkis joined the William Morris Society in 1960, and is a former Honorary Secretary. He was with the Open University from 1970, and is currently writing a memoir of his time in Finland during the 1950s.

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