

superior to some other group.

Racism and patriarchy are the recruitment tools for the legions of enforcers: the soldiers, police, judges, bureaucrats and officials who protect institutions of power. Patriarchy, racism, homophobia, discrimination against Arabs and Muslims, anti-Semitism, ageism and all forms of prejudice keep our eyes trained downward, looking at those we see as beneath us, instead of looking upward and seeing clearly how we are being manipulated.

We need strong feminist voices to cry out that there is no hierarchy of human value, that every child must be cherished, that we claim common ground with women, children, and men around the world.

Oil is the lifeblood, and the military is the ultimate enforcer of economic policies which disenfranchise the poor and undercut the livelihoods of working people around the globe, consolidating wealth and power in fewer and fewer hands, devouring the family farm, the vibrant neighborhood, the old growth forest and the last remaining wilderness, eroding the soil, poisoning the atmosphere, disrupting the earth's climate and threatening every life support system of the planet. The global corporate capitalist system also exalts toughness and ruthless competition,

and exhibits utter disdain for caring, compassion, and nurturing values. Women staff the *maquiladoras* and the sweatshops that produce the cheap goods of the global economy. The vast majority of the world's poor are women and children. A feminist voice for peace must identify and address the root causes of war. "Peace" cannot be separated from justice, including economic justice. And real security can only come when we weave a new global web of mutual aid and support.

We need women's actions, to make these larger connections, to assert that compassion is not weakness and brutality is not strength, to dramatize our support for nurturing and life affirming values. And ultimately, we need women and men both to join our voices and roar like a mother tiger in defense of our interconnectedness with all of life, the true ground of peace.

Information on upcoming women's actions can be found on <http://www.codepink4peace.org> or <http://www.unitedforpeace.org>.

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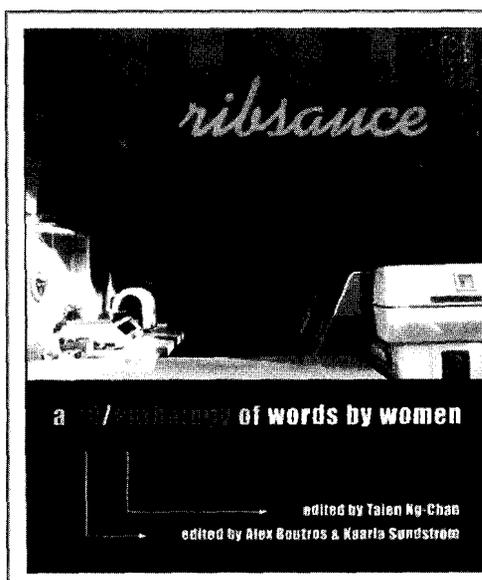
Starhawk, committed global justice activist and organizer is the author of nine books, including The Spiral Dance, The Fifth Sacred Thing, and the new Webs of Power: Notes from the Global Uprising. She is a veteran of progressive movements, from anti-war to anti-nukes, is a highly influential voice in the revival of earth-based spirituality and Goddess religion, and has brought many innovative techniques of spirituality and magic to her political work.

MARIE JANICK BELLEAU

L'essentiel

Du pain, de l'amour
Un toit dans la nature
Que voilà la vie

Marie Janick Belleau's poetry appears earlier in this volume.



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VIVIAN HANSEN

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in soft mulch and quicksilver river
ripples of moon as you dip your paddle
Grace slips over your skin
like warm cloud

brushes her fingers against your cheek
floats in the updraft palm of hand that holds
the hawk
in time and space
your spirit joins hers in flight

Grace whispers that you may abide here in
this valley for awhile
Grace is an alpine cabin
of forgiveness and refuge
from your own error

you don't have to live miserably

Grace feeds you 7-grain bread
and warm milk from her breasts
covers you with sweet down
until you're healed, and banded with her
circle

Grace is wilderness lost, like a false paradise
Grace joins you on journey, when the
loneliness of our flight
touches down
on the bone of her outstretched arms

Vivian Hansen lives in Calgary, Alberta. Her first collection of poetry, Leylines of My Flesh, was published in 2002 (Touchwood Press).

KATHY ASHBY

White Silence

During mellow reveries while trudging
through the snow,
each snowshoe must lift, push and pump
from the heart,
a clear mind can analyse, assemble, collect
and compile
with intensity of some philosopher similar
to that of Diderot
the excellent whispered thoughts of Dante,
Swift,
Voltaire and Rousseau.

Perchance to find embedded an image of
artistic display,
like frozen doily designs around a wet icy
pool
framed by otter's slide patterns; nature
saturates deep inside.
If exhausted by quest and nothing left to
say
miles far off, watching evening shadows
begin their lengths
ideas by Pythagoras, Descartes, Pascal and
Pope enlighten the way.

Content with day's search for more frontier
space to unfold
and turning to follow the trail home
using steady quiet rhythm of working body
parts
a state of white silent meditation—the only
goal
whether under grey skies, sunshine or
moonlit night
simply clinging to the process nurtures and
heals the solitary soul.

Kathy Ashby is an award-winning hot glass artist since the early 1970s, who now lives and works in the wilderness of Muskoka, Ontario with her husband and son. She has been extensively published, notably as a guest columnist in the Toronto Star Arts

A U.S. Feminist's Response

GENEVIEVE VAUGHAN

Cet article demande au Nord de se libérer du régime capitaliste et patriarcal du libre-échange en faveur d'un retour à l'avant-marché et à une économie locale basée sur les besoins comblés sur-le-champ. L'auteure assure que l'économie du don, la qualité des femmes soignantes sont des moyens qui peuvent nous épargner la menace de nouveaux holocaustes et génocides.

As the U.S. bombs are falling on Afghanistan in reprisal against the terrorist attacks we need to understand what is happening to us and what is being done about it in our name. These acute problems of terrorism and reprisal come from a tangled web of distorted interactions that are usually hidden from the public eye or subjected to the misinterpretations of business or government propaganda. We need to bring this web to light if we want to understand the causes of the attack upon us and the probable results of our reprisals. What could cause a desperation great enough to seem to justify the terrorist attacks against the twin towers? Why did such an attack seem to the terrorists to be a solution?

The web of the world in which we live is made of multiple interconnections. Everything, people say, is connected to everything else. We can turn the present negative situation to positive if we can begin to understand the hidden connections. We need to know "how is what is happening connected to me?" As a beneficiary of the free market society, what have U.S. and corporate policies done towards other countries that has benefited me and hurt them? How is what is happening now connected with the global market and in turn with such issues as intellectual property rights, life form patenting, bio piracy and genetic engineering?

It seems to us that in the U.S. that as a country we have such a high level of life because we deserve it. Perhaps, though, this is just a surface perception that hides something we would rather not see. Beneath the surface there is a transfer of wealth going on from the poor countries to the rich countries, in accord with the transfers of wealth that have always taken place from the poor to the rich. In

There is a veil caused by belief in the reality and justice of our system which we wear, a veil which does not allow us to see the horrible effects of our political and economic policies.

order to understand this statement and not just reject it out of hand we need a perspective which does not arouse the same defences that have kept us blind until now. The following is an attempt to provide that perspective.

The problems we are now facing are due to a psychosis that infects not only our enemies but also ourselves. It is a disease by which some human beings are driven toward dominance as a part of their socialization and away from the care giving nurturing basis of our/their humanity. We socialize people in this way and base many of our institutions on these patterns.

This disease is not a necessary evil but is due to the misconception about

human nature and gender. That name of this disease is "patriarchy." The dominance of the Taliban upon women is analogous to the dominance of Northern countries and corporations upon people and nations of the South. Though the faces of the Afghan women are covered, and we cannot see them, all of Afghanistan has been covered to us until now by our own veil, by our government's secrecy, by lack of media coverage, by distance, or simply because it was beneath our interest given that our attention has been occupied with ads for the next consumer item. Whatever the reason, Afghanistan has been veiled to us until now. The continued bombing attacks of the U.S. against Iraq have also been behind the veil. Much of the damage done by the globalization of the economy has also been hidden, though activists have tried to educate people of the North.

There is a veil caused by belief in the reality and justice of *our* system which *we* wear, a veil which does not allow us to see the horrible effects of our political and economic policies. As we hope that the women of Afghanistan may be freed from their veils, we must also be willing to be freed from our own. There are none so blind as those who will not see and we have learned to will not to see. It is patriarchy that imposes the veils in both cases so that the power of domination over an individual woman or over the minds of a nation will not be threatened.

In order to understand this analogy let us look at

to September 11th Calling for a Gift-Economy

patriarchy as a social pattern not coming from biology but from a *social interpretation* of biological differences. When the boy child is born he spends his early days in close contact with his nurturing mother. However, at a certain point, he recognizes that his gender assignment places him in another category that actually has no pre-established characteristics except that it is opposite to hers, and therefore appears to be the opposite of nurturing. The traditional mother then takes care of her male children preferentially, treating them as superior because they are different from her and non-nurturing. The message that is sent to males in this way creates a pattern of drive towards non-nurturing dominance which is later extended to institutions and whole societies. These patterns remain in the big picture even when they are practiced by women or when individual men try to put themselves back in contact with their original nurturing identities.

Pre-market and indigenous economies relied on gift-giving, the direct satisfaction of needs, which is an extension of the mothering way. Gift-giving creates community and communication while we exchange, which is giving-in-order-to-receive an equivalent, is ego-oriented, using the satisfaction of others' needs only as a means to satisfy one's own needs.

Exchange has the advantage for the patriarchal identity that it is not nurturing, not like the mother. Indeed the values of capitalism are those of the drive towards accumulation and domination that are similar to the values of the patriarchal non-nurturing gender model. The market economy is based on exchange, but there are many (veiled) gifts that are given to it. Women's free labour in the home is a gift to the market that would add some 40 percent to the GNP in the U.S., more in some other countries if it were calculated in money. Profit itself is a gift given by the worker to the capitalist, a gift of all the added value her/his work produces beyond the value of the salary. Nature and cultures of the past also provide many gifts to people in the present whose needs have been until now freely satisfied by their use. Air and water, public spaces, the stories of

Differences in levels of life caused by the artificial creation of scarcity make gift-giving difficult and impose the power of the few over the many, within countries or between hemispheres.

their grandmothers, kind words, love and knowledge of all kinds has been passed down through the generations to nurture the people of the past and future.

Now, however, the patterns of patriarchal dominance have created a situation in which the many are made to give their gifts to the few. Differences in levels of life caused by the artificial creation of scarcity make gift-giving difficult and impose the power of the few over the many, whether this is within countries or between countries or between hemispheres. Like terrorist cells, the global market is multicentric and difficult to pin down. It creates a situation in which poor people are made to nurture it to their

detriment and to the depletion of the human and natural resources of their countries—behind the veil of beneficence created by the minimal betterment of the lives of a few workers within a context that has been drastically depleted due to previous exploitation.

With the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the patriarchy of the Middle East has challenged the patriarchy of the U.S. and its allies. The U.S. has retaliated in kind. Both patriarchies seek dominance and consider themselves defenders of humanity. All of this is madness. The majority of people are not patriarchal. At least one half of humanity, the female half, does not deeply share the values of dominance because we are still brought up as gift givers. Moreover, many men have been able to disentangle themselves from the false agenda of their non-nurturing identity. Even though women are adaptable and can carry out any agenda, we are usually able to maintain the gift-based perspective and the values that go with it at the same time that we are doing market exchange.

The challenge is to put the gift values ahead of the exchange values. Many things people do in our lives are made in the image of exchange. Dialogue is seen as an exchange, justice is seen as an equation of crime and punishment and the payment of crime through punishment. Retaliation against a wrong done is seen as a "just" exchange, appropriate to the market economy and vali-

dated by the market paradigm. Thus it is not strange that the strike-and-retaliation exchange mode is the way our U.S. patriarchy is dealing with the terrorist crisis. If we do not find another way based on the acknowledgement of needs and their direct satisfaction through free giving, which includes an ending of the exploitation and of military atrocities unseen behind the veil of misinformation and ignorance, and we will not be able to solve these problems.

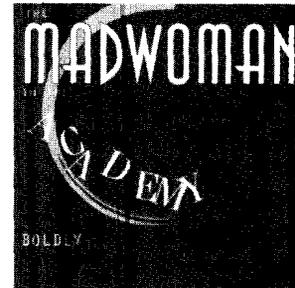
The global market itself is famished for ever-new commodities that provide a large profit (gift) margin because they are new. The extension of commodification to species, which turns them into the property of Northern companies and is backed by the laws of the North, allows the domination of the exchange mode of the North upon gift modes of the South. Species of plants, traditional knowledge which grew up from cultures' farming husbandry over the centuries, and even the free genetic inheritance of humans, animals, and plants, passed down from millions of generations, are being turned in the property of the few, made into market commodities, no longer available for the free nurturing of human life.

It is this patriarchal capitalist market we must see at last for what it is, liberating ourselves as citizens of the North from the veils that have covered our eyes. The values of the gift economy, the caring ways of women, are what can save us from the threat of new holocausts and genocides committed against us or *by* us, by our governments and businesses in our names. We in the U.S. are a giving people as demonstrated by the outpouring of help and compassion that was tendered toward the victims of the World Trade Center attacks.

Now we need to turn our gaze outside our country, liberate our compassion and its values by turning towards the people who are on the other side of our veils. *Let women and men dismantle patriarchy now! Let a woman-led gift economy and culture begin!*

Genevieve Vaughan was born in Texas in 1939. She lived in Italy from 1963 to 1983 where she developed a theory of gift giving as the fundamental human theme, based on women, as opposed to economies based on exchange and the market. She returned to Texas in 1983 and started an all-woman activist foundation, the Foundation for a Compassionate Society, which had a life of 11 years, closing in 1998 though some of the projects still exist: Stonehaven Ranch, a woman-run retreat centre near San Marcos, Texas, FIRE: Feminist International Radio Endeavor (www.fire.co.cr), and a temple to the goddess Sekhmet near the nuclear test site in Nevada. Her book, For-Giving: A Feminist Criticism of Exchange, can be read online at www.for-giving.com, and hard copies can also be ordered there.

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