Photoweek Northwest Ice Lake, Eagle Cap Wilderness photos & texts by Cliff Crego XI.15.2010

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October Morning at Ice Lake, Eagle Cap Wilderness . . . On the road in the American Northwest.

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October Morning at Ice Lake, Eagle Cap Wilderness . . . On the road in the American Northwest.

WAR ON WASTE

The Earth supplies enough for all our wants and needs, but not for all our wars and waste.

MORNING MOON

Beauty fades, the old decays, the rock-face remains unmoved.

How I hold onto the waning moon while the immensity of young summer rises.

The dark world of roots remains a mystery to me; I have no stash like a pocket gopher buried beneath ten feet of winter snow. What do I know of the water that flows beneath the well? Or the source of but a single thought?

Walking to the side of a busy road, I see a lost leather glove driven flat and dirty, the abandoned body of some spiritual something already reborn someplace else?

That is what they say: Beauty fades, the old decays, the rock-face remains unmoved,

O mood of morning moon now lost to my solstice star.

WAVEWASH

The sound of the night waves of an alpine lake washes against the dark detritus of my mind, smoothing all the rough surfaces, soothing all the sharp fractures cut by desire and loss, polishing them into something more like the hard, finely-grained granite that glaciers leave behind.

BACKCOUNTRY

When you first enter the backcountry, a mountain is a mountain, a lake a lake, and a tree a tree. But then something may happen, perhaps after crossing a pass, or climbing an especially difficult ridge or peak, suddenly, a mountain is no longer a mountain, a lake no longer a lake, and a tree no longer a tree. What we might call home—being rooted in a world of culture which is itself rooted and inseparable from the natural world in which it rests—is the center where we bring the circle round. Then, the mountain is once again a mountain, a lake once again a lake, and a tree once again a tree. *Beautiful* is the circle.

> XI.23.2010 Wallowa Lake



<u>Gravesite, Old Chief</u> <u>Joseph, Wallowa Lake</u>



A quartet of leaves ...



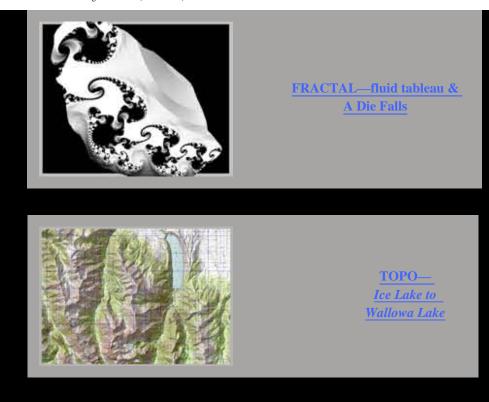
<u>WHISKEY</u> <u>A quartet of long-line</u> sonnets...



SUN CHARGE & ENERGY iPOD



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GRAVESITE, OLD CHIEF JOSEPH—looking Southeast towards Signal Peak, (so-called "Mt. Howard")

Hinmaton-Yalakit (Young Chief Joseph) "I blame my young men and I blame the white men. I blame General Howard for not giving my people the time to get their stock away from the Wallowa. It is still our land. It may never be our home, but my father sleeps there, and I love it as I love my mother."

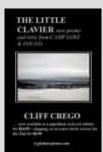
[from the transcript of SACRED JOURNEY OF THE NEZ PERCE, a coproduction of Idaho PublicTelevision and Montana Public Television]

NAMES AS THE FIRST POETRY OF PLACE

Nomen est omen (Name is omen)

In a remarkably and in my view insensitive and inappropriate act of naming, the distant, rounded, massive mountain in the background of the Old Chief Joseph gravesite is known today as Mt. Howard. General Oliver O. Howard, the calvary officer, was I have been told the arch nemesis of Tiwí-Tegis (the preferred Nimiipuu name of Chief Joseph), and later responsible for driving the young Chief Joseph—his real name was Hinmaton-Yalaktit or "Thunder Rolling Down the Mountain"-and his people from their land of winding waters. In a ruthless battle of pursuit that a more enlightened contemporary ethics would undoubtedly consider an act of wholesale genocide, the Nez Perce were conveniently eliminated from the Wallowas. I have read that the first European American name for the mountain under discussion was Signal Peak. In my opinion-and I have of course little right to speak on such matters but feel moved to do so nonetheless-this is a very much superior name. It might in a small way signal a new spirit in European American and Native American relations. And it might be a way of beginning a new Signal Peak tradition of building natural or artificial signal fires to mark special events and times of the year, like the Swiss do atop the highest peaks on August the 1st throughout the Alps to mark the birth of their confederation.

Place names are more than just words on a map. They are in the deepest sense, I feel, the first and primary poetry of place. One should teach them to the young with pride, and if that cannot be the case, the young should know the story of why, or better yet, they should be changed.



Guest commentary, by *Diane Mallickan*, of the Nez Perce Tribe, Spalding Center, Lapwai, Idaho...

"Thank you Cliff for asking my opinion. Two things come to me today and by the way, you sound like me,—"*the so-called Howards Peak*." That's the only way I know to coin it also. But very important. I used to say for years how illegal the Louisiana Purchase was and nobody would listen but when the **LCBC** (*Lewis &Clark Bicentennial Commemoration*) took place and it was clarified by attorneys' then people listened. The only difference was this. I said it was illegal because the land owners were not present. They say now it only gave the U.S. rights to explore the area. But even then when they left the Rockies they were outside of that area.

Anyway, I see our people coming full circle. What happened for many decades after the 1877 War, was that Joseph and his people were seen as wrong, the trouble makers and so on. It was not safe or sane to speak of him in most parts of the U.S. It wasn't until after the 1960's that all that changed. It actually took the revisionist history to see that whole campaign in another light. That's when *Josephy's* book, *The Nez Perce and the Opening of the Northwest* came out. And then in 1977 another social dynamics took place as it was the 100 year anniversary of the war. Since then much as changed. Our native religious ways were able to come out of the closet.

P/P Photoweek: Gravesite, Old Chief Joseph (XI.11.2010)

We no longer had to meet in secrecy! The first official, or actual Longhouse started in 1976 I guess.

So when I see the markers left by native people, some of them *Nimiipuu* and others aren't, nonetheless, it is a good feeling because they are free to do so. As you probably know, Indian people did not put any of the statues up on the two gravesites. It was white people. In the old days, you only marked them so that travelers could avoid those places in order to not disturb them on their journey. There were no cemeteries as we know them today, only individual burials.

So now we live with all these changes to the landscape even our graves but we must go on. At least these graves can no longer be dug up as they once were. But again, I see us coming full circle, and when we can grieve together over our loss-—land and people—then we are closer to becoming one people again. We were divided by that war also and the treaties that preceded the war. I am looking forward to the healing of our people which is yet to come. But until that day arrives, I see that Chief Joseph was misunderstood by his own people perhaps more than anyone else. He died still not being understood."

posted XI.21.2010

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MOUNTAIN MAPLE, new leaves! (Acer glabrum)—June the 22nd, just after spring snowmelt, at 1400 m. . . .

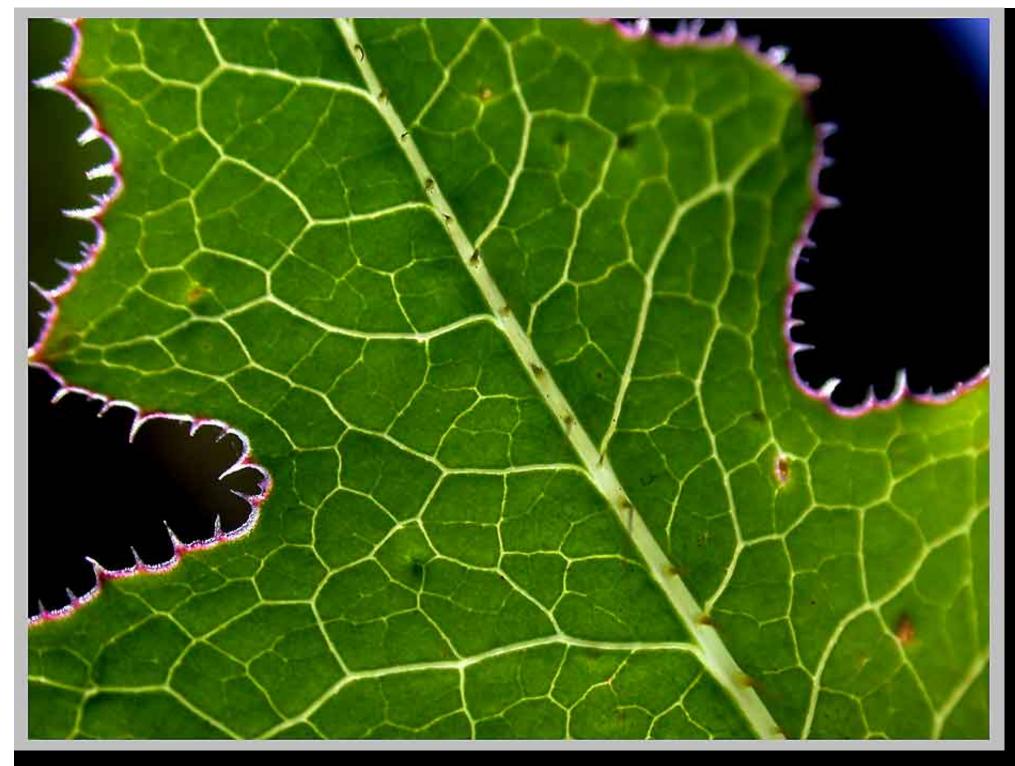
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On the road in the American Northwest.

A QUARTET OF LEAVES

(i)

How shall we learn the measure of leaves? How shall we learn to count the myriad shades of green, the miles of conduits in their veins, the infinite coastlines of their perimeters? This image of turning light into the energy of life. Pure magic! Pure Art!



P/P Photoweek: A QUARTET OF LEAVES (XI.9.2010)

PRICKLY LETTUCE, skyview! (Lactuca serriola) with characteristic white veins, and fine prickly spines—June the 23nd at 1050 m. . . . L. serriola is a native of Europe which grows as a wayside weed in N. America. In Europe, it has a long history as both a vegetable it is the closest relative of garden lettuce, depsite its more bitter taste—and can be used both raw and cooked. The bitterness is caused by an abundance of milky sap. Use by the Greeks dates back to before the time of *Socrates* (5th century Bce.) to *Pythagoras*, calling it *Eunuch*. This was because of its reported ability to cause urination and relieve an excess of *Eros* (sexual desire).

(ii)

With one's back to the Sun, we see the leaf's texture, its movement in the wind, its inner structure and pattern. Backlit, the leaf suddenly comes alive, like the music of a poem one finally remembers to read out loud.



P/P Photoweek: A QUARTET OF LEAVES (XI.9.2010)

WESTERN HAWKWEED, skyview! (Hieracium albertinum) with characteristic wooly and basal rosette—July 2nd, 2200 m. . . . H. albertinum is a native of the Wallowas and Western North America. It shouldn't be confused with the other invasive introduced Hawkweeds (from Europe), which spread aggressively by wandering underground root systems. There is some concern that, like loud commercial easily drowns out acoustic classical music, the non-native relatives from the old country are pushing out Western Hawkweed a beautifully adapted alpine plant by any standard—from its native home.

(iii)

Strength in flexibility, we see the leaf dance back and forth in even a gentle breeze. Always a kind of vibration, much like a string, it moves about some unseen center, some invisible mean, growing new strength in the calm pauses of night, and windless days, the quiet unseen moments of Nature's fine repose.



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SERVICE BERRY or Juneberry or Saskatoon Berry (Amelanchier alnifolia) with characteristic serrated leave margins beginning about halfway up—July 15nd, 1450 m.... A. Alnifolia is a native of the Wallowas andWestern North America. The berries (pomes, like little apples)

pictured here about half ripe. Come September, however, they easily compete with be better-known Huckleberry in both sweetness and flavor. One of the essential ingredients of Native American *pemmican*, a high energy food containing fat, lean meat, and berries. (iv)

O sweet sostenuto . . . Given the ratio of a leaf's surface to its circumference, one might figure out the aerodynamics of its trembling in the wind. Each pattern of movement for each species of plant is as unique and unmistakable as the sound of the indivual voices in a chorus of friends.

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P/P Photoweek: WHISKEY-long-line sonnet (X.4.2010)



COMPOSITION IN WHISKEY... (special thanks to my good friend, Bert Rogers, for allowing me to make this photo at *Annie's Liquor Store*, in Eagle Valley, Richland, Oregon.) **On the road in the American Northwest.**

WHISKEY—a long-line sonnet

He could see everything he ever dreamed of Inside a fresh, new bottle: The young, handsome Rodeo cowboy, or shooting Geronimo on a Hollywood Set, or taking care of the last ferocious bear above town.

He always set out *two* glasses before breaking Open a new bottle. One for solitude; Two to spit at. You can't *steal* inside heaven in hell; One must *buy* it, One bottle, at a time. The fate of clear crystal.

Inside the bottle he sees a world more real than The squalor around him. He pours two more glasses, Puts his boots up on the table, and spins the chamber

One last time. He likes the sound. Well-oiled. He stands, Kicks the door open, and throws the last bottle into the air, Shooting it before it smahes to the ground. He always misses.

| listen to / download <u>WHISKEY mp3</u> [2.2 Mb] | [Windows: r click; Mac: opt + click] |

V.6.2010 Thompson Meadows, Eagle Cap Wilderness



FIREBIRD a long-line <u>sonnet</u>



WAYFARER a long-line sonnet



ABOUT ANOTHER QUARTET OF LONG-LINE SONNETS

Here are four pieces from a new series of what I'm calling *long-line sonnets*. This is a new variation on an old form: four stanzas of 4 + 4 + 3 + 3 lines, without end-rhymes, and only with a rough step or syllable count—as in a dance—of ± 12 steps per line or phrase. As always, what is primary for me is the movement of the sound itself, as a kind of music. Very much secondary is how a poem is written down or notated on the page. Indeed, the notation is simply a kind of elementary score, no more and no less, just as if it were intended for flute or voice, or keyboard.

The series is unified firstly from within by what I sense as a similar sonorous sound, with the long-line phrases all being based on the breath just as a good singer might do. In addition, there's much attention given to what I think of as related *species of resonance*. The latter replaces happily, in my view—the somewhat rigid and outmoded emphasis on the mechanical patterns of similarity we call "rhyme." More on this later.

Second, for me personally, the series is held together by its European cultural theme. In a word, what interests m here is what I sense as a kind of rough-hewn spiritual excellence:---. a kind of miraculous clear mountain quartz of the soul just after its opaque gray-green clay is washed off. And this, regardless of where it manifests, whether it be a a magnificent cathedral, a defiant old poet on top of an appallingly hubristic dam in the French-speaking Alps, or simply in the care and skill with which a mountain farmer builds his piles of well-composted cow shit. Indeed, this is what moves me to compose and work on them in the first place:—a kind of *Heimweh* or homesickness for a part of me that is much more European than North American. Part of that is my past. After all, I've lived in different European countries, especially the lowlands of Holland, and the higcountry of the Alps and Switzerland, the better part of my adult life. But this is not the Europe of tourist buses and famous attractions known to many speakers of English. It is a far lesser travelled, and yet much more vibrantly alive "old country" which exists in its own, indeed ancient, and to my way of thinking still relevant time-space.

In this view, real beauty does not grow old.

The beauty and power of Bach, or of John Dowland, is in this sense timeless. And there is a part of Bach, for example, a depth of feeling and resonance, that I think we miss entirely in America. The latter must—and I offer this only as a conjecture—have something to do with the beauty of the German language itself, as well as the organic power of the German highland countryside out of which its sound and rhythms emerged. The English spoken in North America is, to my ear at least, still far too young to have developed anything like this kind of profound realtionship between sound, and meaning, and love of the living, pulsing land.



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NIGHTFIRE at Ice Lake, Eagle Cap Wilderness . . . On the road in the American Northwest.

FIREBIRD—a long-line sonnet

As in the middle of a calm ocean energies are said To converge out of nowhere in one immense wave, So in the Paris of 1910 the Arts surged in a floodtide, Washing away 100 years of Wagnerian excess.

Gone are the rotund teutonic gods. *Gone* are the Thick velvet sitting-room chords, the cadences of a clavary In hot pursuit. *Here* is new balance, a dangerous balance Of clear, cold stars looking upon pure passonate earth.

New beginnings. Empathy studies a panther in a cage. Dancers catch the rhythms of Africa in their feet, And the mystery of Russian folksong takes center stage.

Raw, naked movement, flashes, flares of orchestral élan,

Shooting sparks that are seen about fires on distant planets. For angels know: *meaning travels faster than light!*

> [upon seeing a recording of Igor Stravinsky conduct his Firebird Suite with the London Symphony, c. 1964)

| listen to / download <u>FIREBIRD mp3</u> [2 Mb] | [Windows: r click; Mac: opt + click] |

> X.19.2010 Ice Lake, The North Wallowas

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FALL GLACIER / WAYFARER—the Alps ... On the road in the American Northwest.

SONGS OF A WAYFARER—a long-line sonnet

On a way—a dark and misty way—stands a Linden tree. It is the first day of Fall, but its leaves are still green. The crown of the tree fills its space with a thousand Rivulets and rills shading off into the limitless morning gray.

It is the first day of Fall, and a young man stops To rest under the tree. He has been here before, But the way and mist and day seem darker than in the past. He takes a small wooden flute to play the great Linden a song,

A song both happy and sad, both bright and dark. No name Do we have for this round of thirds that is Nature's way, No name do we have for the sounds of fresh Spring,

Or the bare ground of frozen Winter. And so we must sing, Must sing ourselves back into the wholeness of the World. It is the first day of Fall: O such sadness, such joy.

> [upon hearing Gustav Mahler's Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen, 4th movement, Die Zwei Blauen Augen Von Meinem Schatz, sung by Dietrich-Fischer Dieskau, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Rafael Kubelik, conducting]

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| listen to the 4th movement of Mahler Songs of a Wayfarer [9.8 Mb] }

go to another quartet of sonnets [with intto & rcordings }]

IX.23.2010 Marias Pass, above West Glacier, Montana, after an early Fall storm

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DIPPER at Ice Lake, Eagle Cap Wilderness . . . On the road in the American Northwest.

SPIRIT THRUSH—a long-line sonnet

Poor Francis made two great mistakes: after stripping naked In the open air of the public square, liberating himself from Patriarcal dominion, he then sought false refuge under The corrupt Cardinal's cloak; Then there was this mistaken

Sermon to the birds. Poverty *is* simplicity *is* wealth, yes, *Is* listening. But witness the Spirit Thrush. Unlike the So boastful Robin, we never see him, still, we are enchanted By his space: dark evergreen, cold, clear-flowing water.

Nothing in excess, his music floats like a morning mist Over an alpine lake. When song is mostly silence, we guess That angels are near. But with two tones in perfect mistuned

Unison, we can be sure of the divine. Poor Francis was right. Yes, The world is our family: brother Sun, sister Moon. But this sound From another space:—far beyond the line we draw around Time.

> [for the Naked Poetry artist among avian maetros, the Varied Thrush (Ixoreus naevius). I call them Spirit Thrushes for the etherial quaitly of their music, made all the more so by being rarely seen)

| listen to / download <u>SPIRIT THRUSH mp3</u> [2 Mb] | [Windows: r click; Mac: opt + click] |

> VII.1.2010 Thompson Meadows, South Wallowas



SUN CHARGE & ENERGY iPOD. Eagle Cap Wilderness... On the road in the American Northwest.

ENERGY iPod

Sine sole sileo (Without sun I am silent)

Imagine a handy little device you could put in your pocket, one that condenses and stores, instead of an entire *library's* worth of information, an entire *household's* worth of kilowatts. Energy solely from the Sun. Is this possible? Why not? If the whole of Shakespeare can be condensed to the head of a pin, so might the whole of Tesla or Einstein.

The only thing missing, it seems to me, is a clear perception of necessity, of the ethical imperative of a change of direction. Once we see with absolute clarity that the current fossil fuel path is taking us straight into a new dark age of shortages, pollution, climate chaos, and resource wars, we will see that we have no alternative but to resolutely change course, and follow the way of the Sun. What could be more beautiful than that?

SNOW COCKTAIL

Zinc from China,

Cadmium from Japan.

Atrazine from the Basel.

Mercury from Seattle,

Lead from Detroit.

Snow cocktail of the High Wallowas,

pure spring water mixed with crushed snow,

these drifts that linger into the lazy heat of July.

Clear. Cool. Refreshing.

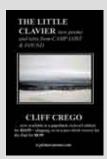
I drink to your health, friend.

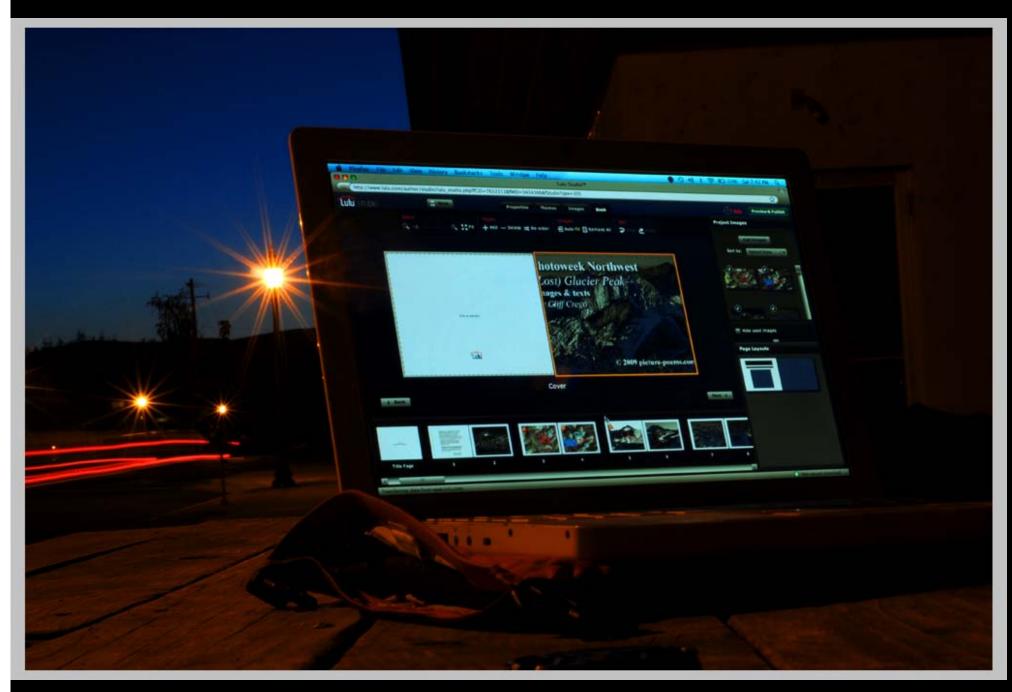
For better or worse, we're in this together,

married to the oneness of the world.

VIII.21.2009, Camp Lost & Found, Eagle Cap Wilderness

[from pages 230-233 of THE LITTLE CLAVIER [PDF 110 MB]





WI-FI by NIGHT. South Wallowas **On the road in the American Northwest.**

ON THE NECESSITY OF ONE FREE WORLD-WIDE WEB

Just as economies move goods, and roads move traffic, the Internet's function is essentially to simply freely move bits.

"Freely" is a key word here. Freedom of flow, in my view, can be achieved and safe-guarded only by the democratic, open and transparent structure of public works. Public roads are perhaps the best example. Notice that around the world we hardly need add the epithet public, because roads are by now almost by definition, 'public.' My contention here is that public roads would serve as a good model for the Internet and the World-wide Web as well. Why? Because the Internet, just like roads, has already become far too important a resource to let it be controlled and determined merely by the short-sighted and highly fragmentary vision of commercial self-interest.

Imagine for a moment a patchwork of roads and highways broken up into arbitrary pieces, all designed, owned and managed by different individuals, families and clans, with gateways and check points that require that you stop your vehicle and pay a fee for right-of-passage. Indeed, in the not-that-distant past, roads in many parts of the American Northwest started out in just this way. The problem with this kind of wild-west model of development is that, while it may function well at first to get things started, in the long-term it lacks real social intelligence which comes with accountability and spirited, open debate. It will therefore eventually reveal itself to be the bottleneck of economic development and community well-being that it really is.

Why? Just imagine for moment that I build a bridge across a stream that is difficult to ford. And say that this bridge cost me about \$10,000 to built. Now, I charge 10 cents to cross, a fair price I think, and an average of about 100 people cross each day. So in less than three years time I've recouped my initial investment, and can look forward to both an increase of traffic and perhaps a measured yearly addition to the fee I charge as well. I have a monopoly, because I have the only way to gain access to the other side of the river. You might say I have a pretty good business model. The only flaw is that, when seen from the wider social context, the model is unambiguously bad for everybody else. So, in an open society based on democratic discourse, very quickly, the community will decide I'm sure that it should take responsibility for the bridge and purchase it from me, drop the charge, and finance its maintenance

with public money.

After having biked so far more than five thousand kilometers all around the Northwest of the US the past two years, I can say without hesitation that the state of the Internet is as far as I'm concerned a complete mess. Connections are slow. Connections are hard to find. Connections are expensive when you do find them, and even when paying a relatively high price, they are unreliable. In sum, I would say—and I am by no means an expert here but simply amazed that it is not the top priority issue that it deserves to be—the development of the infrastructure for the Internet has been left to what is essentially the private road paradigm sketched above, with all its inevitable random profiteering, helter-skelter, confused and outdated infrastructures, and ultimately, nearly universal enduser frustration.

In other words, there is a total lack of vision.

What is remarkable is that this lack of vision is entirely at the social and political levels, and not at all in terms of the science of the Internet's technical infrastructure itself. Here, the Internet sparkles brilliantly on all its sides with the robust simplicity and foresight of well-designed open source protocols, and their nearly miraculous decentralized physical embodiment as servers, routers, and an increasingly rich polyphony of Internet-enabled portable devices.

So why, we might ask, are things in such a state of disarray at the social and political levels? I would say because of a chaotic confusion of meanings. The basic question is, "What's the Internet good for?" Shifting from our internet-as-road analogy for the moment to the image of the internet-as-pipe, we might then ask the question, "What flows through it?" Clearly, for some, it is cash. For others, it is enter-tainment, not that different from TV. For others, it is communication, not that different from the telephone. Or others might say more generally it is information, not that different from radio or print journalism, or what you might find on the shelves of your public library. One pipe; many different contents. Many different contents; many different meanings. What they all have in common, however, is that they are social, cultural networks based on the free flow of bits of data. Where they differ is again, what the network is for, who controls it, and who pays for it.

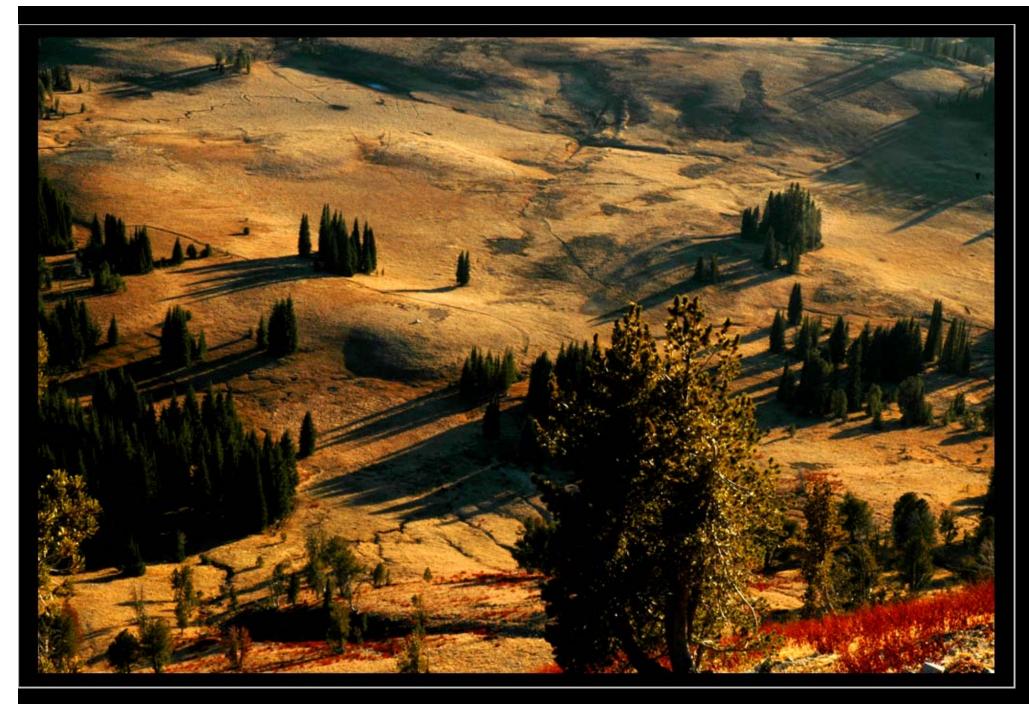
My own view is that in a highly abstract, subtle, and yet at the same time completely earth-bound, physical and tactile way, the culture has become the network, and in a reciprocal manner, the network has become a central and key manifestation of the culture. In other words, it is vastly more than the mere sum of its parts, vastly more than just television, or radio, or motion pictures, or telephone. And yet these are still the predominant controlling models used to grasp the network's nature. In the view being sketched here, with the Web's great and still largely unsounded cultural promise becoming potentially locked down in traffic jams behind a motley assortment of unnecessarily blocked gateways and toll bridges, none of these seem adequate.

Far better would be to have one adventurous and creative city, or small nation anywhere in the world demonstrate to the rest of us the extraordinary cultural benefits of realizing maximum achievable bandwidth (say, 1 or so Gb . . .) combined with universal free access. I would guess that the rest of the world will stumble over itself to imitate their success. After all, a good third or more of the world's resources are presently squandered on the highly questionable ends of war and its weaponry. It might prove much more effective to shift and enlighten our paradigm, and focus not on weaponry, but, as R. Buckminster Fuller used to say in his charming and inimitable way—livingry. Livingry, yes. Not a bad image for a network that links us all together, and thereby both celebrates and protects, the rich diversity of the wide and wonderful interwoven web of the world.

> [Note: Net neutrality, or the principle that all bits that move through the Internet should move in an inherently unbiased way at equal speed, is from this perspective as vitally important as it is in fact secondary. The primary problem, in my view, is ownership, and who has a right to set limits, and how and why these limits are set. Like roads and water, the infrastructure of the Internet and Web should be publicly owned common ground for the simple reason that we shall all come to rely and depend on it to an ever-greater, and at present largely unforeseen and extra

> > VIII.21.2009, Camp Lost & Found, Eagle Cap Wilderness

s[from pages 262-265 of THE LITTLE CLAVIER [PDF 110 MB]

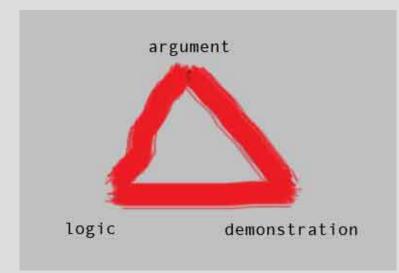


Little Eagle Meadows, view from above (my tent is the tiny speck, center image), one of the most beautiful Whitebark Pine communities in the Northwest. (notice the autumn coda of *Alpine Fleecefower* rusty-red!) Eagle Cap Wilderness . . .

On the road in the American Northwest.

THREE DIMENSIONS OF A NEW WAY OF DOING PHILOSOPHY

In the new Philosophy, ideas are triangulated in a composite view of *argument*, *logic* and *demonstration*:



Argument scans the field of a problem, looking at the best of different, alternative points of view;

Logic looks for inconsistencies and contradictions, both within and between them;

Demonstration goes beyond mere discourse and actually physically builds the house, performs the string quartet, sends the ship to the Moon and back.

Essential, is that we must insist on having all three, *argument, logic* and *demonstration*. Everything else is wholly incomplete.

ON SUSTAINABILITY

(0) Sustainability is movement without contradiction, without conflict, without waste;

(1) Sustainability is Network is Community is Friendship;

(2) Sustainability is when natural law and cultural convention fit together like the shape of a well-crafted violin fits the laws of acoustics, of its spruce and maple woods, as well as the physical movements of the performer. Sustainability is therefore a state of dynamic, creative, and sometimes even generative chaotic, harmony;

(3) Sustainability is when the structures and norms of cultural convention adapt continuously to the exigencies of natural limit; Limit gives rise to the formative context; Art happens when the artifact reflects this formative context on all its sides, in all its myriad details.

(4) Sustainability is what we become aware of with the dire shortages of crisis; Contradiction is what we become aware of in the sudden surprise of total collapse; Freedom is what we become aware of when the Inquisitor knocks at the door.

CREATIVITY?

Creativity is a state of high energy, a kind of superconductivity of the mind, a mind without 'friction,' a mind undivided, without contradiction.

QUESTIONS?

(i)

Most insects cannot see red, yet hummingbirds attune to it instantly. Remarkably, humans are evidently the only species that in a similar way attunes to rhythmic pulse. Why? Even our closest and dearest household pets do not tap their feet to our music.



ROCKY MOUNTAIN FRONT—looking West, South of Augusta, Montana. **On the road in the American Northwest.**

ON THE LOSS OF RHYTHM

The body of contemporary Western culture is but half a body, divided or cut off at the waist, centered not in the heart, or solar plexus, but in the eyes. Sitting at the controls is this halfbody's activity of choice. In front of the TV, the computer, or steering wheel of a car.

But what of the poor feet? They might tell us that one cannot think clearly about much of anything—especially dance, or music, or poetry—without living a life deeply grounded in the slow, measured cadence of walking.

Witness the automobile: so utterly without rhythm; it simply wishes to continue without interruption on its smooth, mechanical trajectory . . . And so, our sense of rhythm, of movements of all kinds large and small, is quickly falling by the wayside, conditioned deeply by machines like the automobile, and atrophying like muscles or organs we no longer need or use.

And so, we get bored. Bored for lack of rhythm. Indeed, boredom has become a key feature of this culture of the halfbody, a state which we seek to escape remarkably by more sitting in front of ever-more sophisticated controls.

THOUGHT EXPERIMENTS OF THE COMPASSIONATE MIND

A key feature of the compassionate mind is evidently its need to move freely with the unseen relational resonances implicit in every produced or used artifact, every thought, every action. The apple may indeed be superficially beautiful, but to ask how, where and by whom it was grown, is a quintessentially spiritual question.

For the student of any age, the key thought experiment is: begin with the end, or manufactured object, and then unravel it into its many simpler constituent threads or parts, thereby going back in time and space like a movie playing backwards. Imagine all the objects in a room returning to their ultimate earth-bound source in this way. And then, run the movie in your mind's eye fast-forward until all the objects converge again into their motionless, present form. What parts of the movement are necessarily so? What parts are wasteful? What parts cause harm? Which objects do you now see as necessary? Which do you see as wasteful?

It is the beginning of a much wider circle of ethical awareness.

FREEDOM & LIMITS

Highways exist to move traffic, As Internets exist to move bits, And Economies to move goods.

All three are paths of movement, of exchange, of communication. And with all three, freedom flourishes only when it is strictly limited by universal, clear, unambiguous laws.

Without clear limits, the worst and most brutish of our natural tendencies shall come to rule the many roads that run between us.

THE WONDER OF WALKING

In the mountains, one may go up a *climber*, but always comes down a *pilgrim*.

RETRONYMS?

Retronyms? With every step we take away from the wisdom of Nature's way, the more difficult it becomes to clearly see what we have lost or left behind. Acoustic guitar, organic tomato, and—as a possible future, n a t u r a l human being. Once the crucial sensitivity threshold is crossed and we can only with difficulty distinguish the artificial, industrial mimics from their originals, what then? Imagine sitting at a restaurant table, and a guy asks, *"Hey, the girl at the end of the bar, is she...?"*

NOTATION & THE KNOWN

To really hear, or listen, is to forget for a moment the notation-

whether it be words and letters, numbers and equations, or the notes of a musical score—we use to think about things when we write them down.

In this way, perception is unconditioned by the fetters of the past, and therefore open to the energy of new insight. It is a great art to be free for a moment, as a kind of meditation, of all measure, of all art.

[from pages 96 — 99 of THE LITTLE CLAVIER [PDF 110 MB]



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P/P Photoweek: CLIMATE CHANGE in the High Wallowas
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CLIMATE CHANGE in the High Wallowas—former Benson Glacier —now the Benson Icefield—northside of Glacier Peak, seen from the summit of Eagle Cap, VIII.18.2009. Eagle Cap Wilderness . . .

On the road in the American Northwest.

KNOW YOUR MOUNTAIN CLIMATE FACTS

With *Climate Change*, ice world-wide is disappearing at an ever-accelerating rate. If Lewis & Clark would have entered the Wallowas just 200 years ago, they would have seen small glaciers and ice fields in all the high cirques and hanging valleys. Since the end the Little Ice Age (c. 1850), these ice fields have all but vanished. Over the same period:

(1) the average temperature has increased by, in round numbers, 1 c.;

(2) snowpack has decreased by 50%, begins to build about three weeks later, and melts three weeks earlier;

(3) and most importantly, atmospheric CO2 has risen by 30% from 250 to over 390 ppmv.

Because CO2—a greenhouse gas—holds warmth, this is like the Earth putting on an ever-thicker down jacket. And because CO2 remains in the atmosphere more than 100 years, even if all emissions were to stop today, we're already committed to unprecedented human-caused climate change on a scale never before witnessed. This is not some hypothetical future, but happening *right here, right now.*

In the Northwest, the tendency to watch is that of *drier* winters and *hotter* summers.

By 2020, the **Benson Icefield**, pictured above, like the once giant Ponderosas and Doug-firs of eastside forests, telling relics of a different climate, will most likely have vanished into the thin air of unrecorded history.



Watch the *Photoweek Northwest* slideshow I did in August of 2009 called, <u>(Lost) Glacier Peak.</u> [requires QuickTime]

| download slideshow (36.3.Mb) |

| view / download as <u>PDF</u> (56.9 Mb) | (90 larger, medium resolution, black & white images |

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FRACTAL—fluid tableau

FRACTALS AS PATTERNS OF RHYTHMIC MOVEMENT

Fractals are the discovery of the convivial and brilliant French mathematician, *Benoit Mandelbrot.* Mandelbrot noticed already when he was a young student that he had a unique ability to solve equations by visualizing them in his mind's eye. Later, this gift became essential in his quest for a new geometry, one not based on the simple squares and triangles of Euclidian textbooks, but a geometry that would more accurately describe the complex forms of nature like the serpentine flowforms of rivers and coastlines, the ragged edges of ridgelines, or the pattens we see pass by everyday in the heavens above. Indeed, he is constantly reminding us that "clouds are not spheres." Whereas the details of the formal mathematics upon which fractals are based are for me I'm afraid something like a horizon I'm strongly drawn to but which retreats as I try to come near, I greatly enjoy looking at them as a kind of meditation on form. I experience fractals like I do all natural form, not as static shapes, but rather as complex composites of rhythmic movements. In other words, I experience them as a kind of abstract music.

The three key generative principles of fractals are amazingly simple. In my own words, they are:

- (1) self-similar patterns;
- (2) manifested at differences of scale;

(3) by means of an, in theory, infinite number of rhythmic repetitions or iterative movements.

Music indeed! Any composer, or photographer, or poet would do well I think to study seriously Mandelbrot's work. And, of course, because of the in principle unlimited number of steps involved in their generation, we can make good use of the largely untapped processing power of the now ubiquitous home computer to make them visible to us.

That is, or we can just step outside and study the great and wonderful symphony of the shapes of flowers, of ice crystals, or of the clouds overhead!

(All of the left-facing pages of the 21 chapter headings of **THE LITTLE CLAVIER** feature black and white fractal patterns especially generated for this collection of poems and texts.)

Below is a what I call a *fractal mirror poem.* Music and poetry have become so utterly fragmented from each other in classical Western culture, that I suppose many will have difficulty understanding my passion for new form. Let me just mention, as an aside—and as a challenge that this is an extremely difficult style to master. Don't take my word for it. Try it! And remember, like a leaf whose structure first comes to life when we hold it up to the sun, the poem must be heard like music, read aloud:

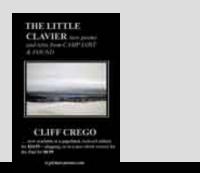
A Die Falls

A die falls.	Isn't it strange?
The sharp sound of plastic and wood	Randomness repeated does
meeting the	not look like
table's hard	accident.
surface.	Rather,
Unpredictable,	it gives one a sense
each event isolated by	of an intelligence near by.
a lack	Is that
of relationship,	what they had in mind
not tied to a past. The die has	in laying the two sides of a
no purpose, no direction,	split marble slab, one next to the
just steps in a disconnected chain,	other, the intricate weave of
each moment unaware of the	the dragon veins, left the reverse of
next.	right?
Though thought cannot for-	These patterns in two's
see which number will face up as	bring us somehow closer to home.
the die comes to rest,	The die comes to rest
it does see pattern,	on a '3'
a shape to the movement.	but we need a '2' since one of
The dance as a whole has order,	any thing makes no difference,
perhaps not	makes no place
the design of a governing mind,	for our butterfly, waiting so
but predictable all the	patiently till now, to spread its

same. wi

wings.

[from pages 96 — 99 of THE LITTLE CLAVIER [PDF 110 MB]





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TOPO—overview of the area of the North Wallowas from Wallowa Lake to Ice Lake featured in this set of photos (blue lines = sq. k)... **On the road in the American Northwest.**



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TOPO—detail of the spectacular area around Ice Lake (blue lines = sq. k)... On the road in the American Northwest.

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TWIN PEAKS, June aspect, North Wallowas . . . On the road in the American Northwest.



TWIN PEAKS, view south to MATTERHORN, June aspect, North Wallowas . . .

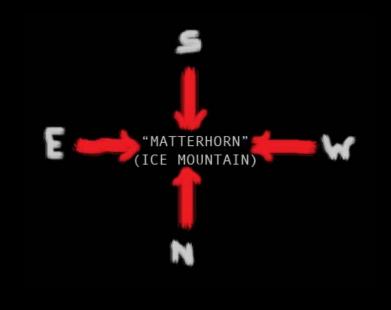


Ice Mountain (the so-called "Matterhorn"), Westface—nearly a 1000 m of beautifully vertical *Martin Bridge Formation, with its striking granite-gray to snow-white banded* limestones & marbles.

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P/P Photoweek: Ice Mounain / Matterhorn (XI.15.2010)
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(view into Hurricane Valley) . . . Click on the *view compass* below to 'circumambulate' and see the Matterhorn, or Ice Mountain, from different vantage points:



SIX MINIATURES . . .

CIRCULAR DECEPTION

We shape the world and the world shapes us.

In an ironic twist of meaning, present Western culture, which is arguably the most fragmented, *a*-rhythmic, and linear of all historical world societies, now uses an "it's cyclical" argument to explain away most every crisis thrown at it. The collapse of the economy? *"It's cyclical."* The collapse of icefields? *"It's cyclical."* Climate change, species extinction or, indeed, perhaps the collapse of the entire biosphere? *"It's cyclical!"* This reply is repeated over and over again like an old-fashioned vinyl record stuck in a scratchy groove. On the surface, the idea is that something has happened before, and now it is just happening again. Therefore, what's the problem? But deeper, the cyclical reply is really a thinly-veiled deceptive cover, an excuse so that we may in good conscience continue our remarkably *non*-cyclical straight-line lifestyle of destruction indefinitely into the future. Meanwhile, evidence to the contrary—of human-caused, profound and catastrophic disruptions of countless natural cycles—piles up around us like so many broken beer bottles and stray dogs in towns filled with people too drunk to care, or who are about to move someplace else.

Let us hope for the best.

TEXTURE OF THE WORLD—

on the watercourse way

The way of force and outward mechanical power always run in a straight line.

For it, the way of water and the meadow meander is just a waste of time.

NATURAL STRENGTH?

2 points, *a stick;* 3 points, *a system.*

UNLEARNING THE OLD

We shape the world and the world shapes us.

Learning the new is simpler than unlearning the old. To learn the right things, at the right time, and in the right way, is the intention which naturally not only takes its seat at the head of the class; it may be compelled to leave the school altogether for the freedom of the open field.

RHYTHM & TEMPO

Rhythm comes from walking; *Tempo* comes from the heartbeat.

CONCLUSIONS & QUESTIONS

Conclusions fight; *Questions* ask.

XI.23.2010 Wallowa Lake



Dipper falls



Stonepine dieback?

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P/P Photoweek: Ice Mounain / Matterhorn (XI.15.2010)







<u>FIRSTLIGHT &</u> <u>TREELINE</u>



HARVEST MOONat Ice Lake

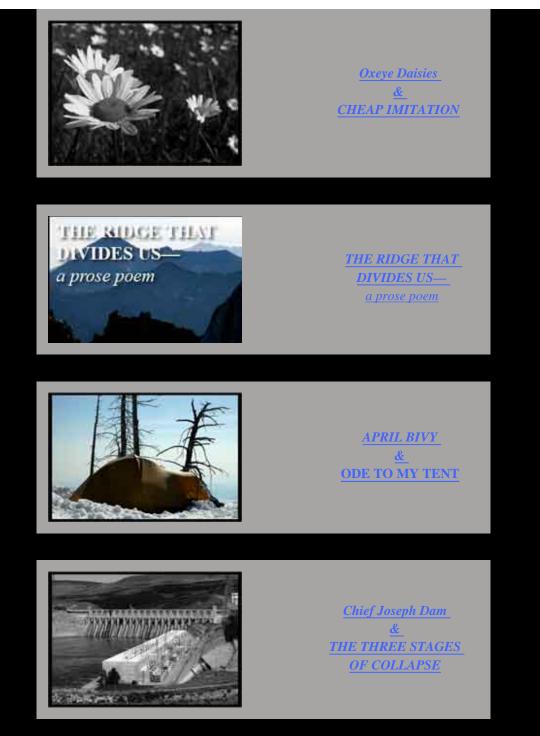


 Mt. Goat on Copia Peak

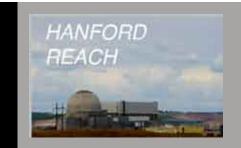
 &

 FOR WANT OF SINGLE

 VOTE



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HANFORD REACH



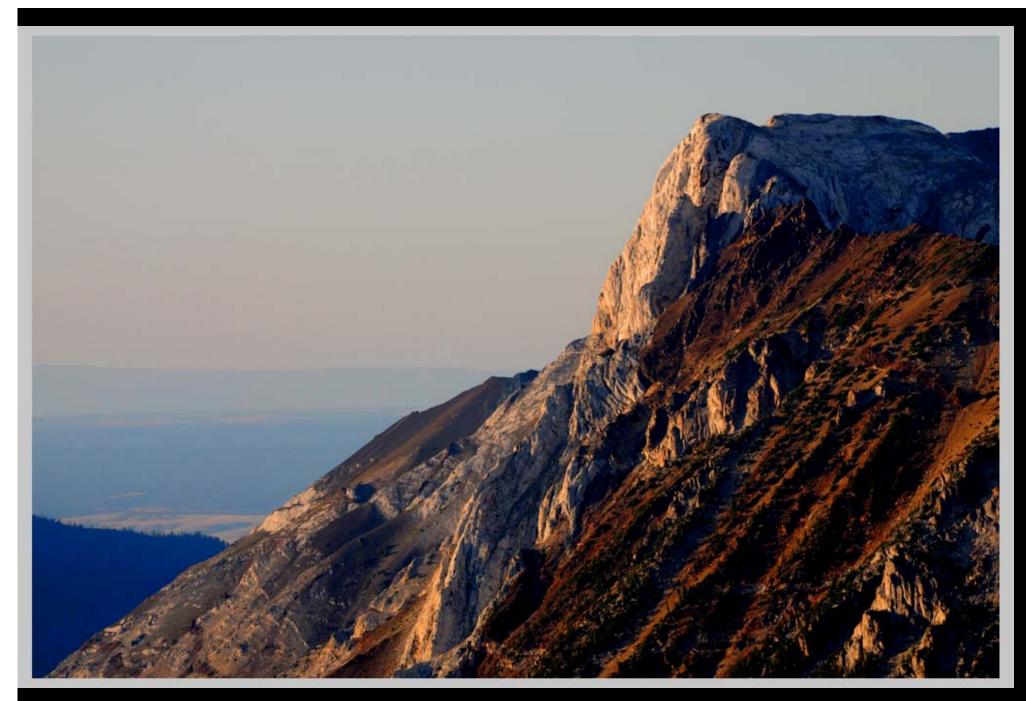
ETHICAL IMPERATIVES <u>±</u> <u>a meditation</u>



KNOW YOUR POISONS! TORDON, unsafe at any dose | pdf 64 k |

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"MATTERHORN," seen from south (Eagle Cap). Eagle Cap Wilderness . . . On the road in the American Northwest.





MATTERHORN, view west from Ice Lake . . .

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DIPPER FALLS—July the 24th, 2010, just below Krag Peak Basin, Eagle Caps . . . **On the road in the American Northwest.**

LOVE & WATER

We shape the world and the world shapes us.

There may well indeed be another planet in the Universe with high mountains and streams of pure, fast-flowing water, but we do not know that for a fact.

There may also be other beings in the Universe capable of Love and Compassion, but also that we do not know for a fact.

Love is like water: wherever it is there in abundance, life flourishes; And water is like love: wherever it is wasted, polluted, blocked or dammed, we abuse not just Earth's defining essence, but also somehow our own.

LOVE RESONANCE

We shape the world and the world shapes us.

See the electronic keyboard—the synthesizer—with its brittle octaves made of wired concrete, and its complete lack of sympathetic resonance.

I say to you, when similar sounds no longer spontaneously vibrate together, when like sounds no longer reflect one another, no longer mirror each other's energies, upon which instrument shall we play our songs of love? Upon which instrument shall we teach our children the principles of Nature's way?

LOVE IS ROUND

Love wants to come round.

The performer who must sing.

who must play,

in a space without echoes

quickly cancels

all future

engagements.

HABIT OF PHOTOGRAPHY

When all the world begins to look like a photograph, it is time to put the cameras away.

[from pages 63 & 64 of THE LITTLE CLAVIER [PDF 110 MB]





Marker Stonepine—Whitebark Pine, dying (Pinus albicaulis) This is a color

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& form to learn. The sad rusty-red of sick stonepines stands out on high slopes and ridges at a distance of more than 1000 meters. I use them as crosscountry guideposts, hence, the epithet "marker." *Eagle Cap Wilderness*...

Whitebark Pines are in trouble around the mountains of the Northwest. For me, they have become a *sentinel species* because they are not only the grandest and, in my view, most powerful of pines to reach the upper limits of treeline-even in death the sun-bleached white snags stand tall for centuries-but also, like wounded watchful elders, the Nestors of the high-country, they are sounding a message of warning.

In the Alps, a related species of stonepine, *Pinus cembra*, is an object of much veneration and folklore. Just the act of an old mountain farmer saying its name in dialect, *Arve*, seems to fill him with a kind of primeval religious awe. Indeed, it has for hundreds of years been the favored wood for carving, and remarkably, for works of Art which show when seen within the traditional European cultural categories both sacred and profane aspects, ie., both crucifixes & 'wildman' masks for mountain carnival, *Fastnacht*.

I mention this only because I am repeatedly reminded that no similar tradition, as far as I know, exists in North America. Perhaps that is why only a handful of dedicated scientific researchers seem to be listening seriously to what the Whitebarks are saying, and not the culture at large. For as always—and this is sad to say, and is of course only my own opinion—North American culture is largely indifferent, is largely uninformed by the spirit of its great mountains.

Perhaps that is why I feel somehow compelled to mark in image and word as many of the sick stonepines as possible that I meet along the way.

| see also: Whitebark Pines: Endangered Sentinel for a collection of more images |

WHITEBARK PINE—8 key ecological

features (after Charles G. Johnson)

(1) Of little commercial value for timber products.

(2) Distribution and abundance of the species dependent on Clark's nutcracker for seed dispersal.

(3) Fire resistant due to its severe site and scattered nature (fire discriminates against *subalpine firs* giving competitive advantage to the pine).

(4) Fire control lengthens intervals between sanitizing burns resulting in fire-prone stands due to increases in fir composition.

(5) Very susceptible to white pine blister rust and secondarily to mountain pine beetle after weakening by the rust.

(6) Besides Clark's nutcracker, woodpeckers, chickadees, nuthatches, finches, crossbills, grosbeaks and blue grouse use the seeds. Squirrels, chipmunks and bears use the caches.

(7) Blue grouse use needles and buds.

(8) Greatest value of the tree is for watershed protection.

data from Alpine and Subalpine Vegetation
of the Wallowa, Seven Devils and Blue Mountains
By Charles Grier Johnson Jr.
2004 USDA- Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region

Camp Lost & Found, Eagle Cap Wilderness, Oregon, IX.15.2008



Blue Mountain Buttercups (Ranunculus populago). Eagle Cap Wilderness. . .

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On the road in the American Northwest.

SOLITARY STARS

When actors become more important than the plot of the movie or play in which they perform, or soloists themselves more central than the movement of the concerto itself, both the drama and spiritual essence of each work will almost certainly be lost. This is the price we pay for the cult of worship of mere solitary stars.

MIND / BODY SPLIT

The greater the split between mind and body, the greater will be a culture's tendency both to denegrate physical labor, and, in order to supply the necessities of its nonphysical life-style, to become dependent on some form of slavery, whether the slavery of the whip, or that of the bare minimum of a survival wage.

MEMORY IS SPATIAL

Arrange the objects you use every day in a clear spatial array and you'll never have to think of where to find them. The hand simply moves to the left, or to the right, and picks up its writing pen. This should be a guiding principle of digital design.

> VII.4.2009, Muir (Crater) Lake, Eagle Cap Wilderness



CAIRN—above Ice Lake, marking the way to the summit of Ice Mountain. (so-called "Matterhorn")... On the road in the American Northwest.

BEGGING BOWL

Just as Science as we now know it has both a *bright* and a *dark* side, one which uses technical mastery for force and destruction, and the other which resonates closely with the source of intellignence and creativity itself, so too the Arts have both their bright and dark sides. Here, the Faustian bargin is made not so much with the captains of empire, but with those of commerce and entertainment. Even the Buddha must have a brand.

Everywhere, corruption breaks the selfless, spiritual connection with the whole. I thank the gods that humble monks still walk the world, refusing to touch or take money, and filling their begging bowls each day anew.

> after visiting the GARDEN OF 100 BUDDHAS, Arlee, Montana

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TOAD LOVE—July the 1st, just after spring snowmelt

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ETHICS FOR CHILDREN

(i) If it is ugly, it is not good. If it is not good, we have made a mistake. It's bad not to correct mistakes.

DR. BABBITT & THE FROGS (TOADS)

One fine morning, Dr. Babbitt went out to count all the dew drops in the world. He saw that there were many, many dew drops, all sparkling, all perfectly clear and round, on every new spring leaf and blade of grass. He knew this to be true, that there were many, many dew drops, and that the task of counting them would be formidable. But this only made him all more eager to begin his work. After all, the numbers would be huge, would be most certainly historic. At the same time, he also knew, "There cannot be infinitely many." And it was this matter of objective numerical limit that he very much wanted to settle once and for all. So he asked the Frogs to help. (Actually, they were Toads, but that was all the same to Dr. Babbitt once he stood corrected.) And so, the counting began. That is, until the Frogs, that is, the Toads, realised the futility. "But dear, dear Dr. Babbitt, there are far too many, many dew drops, and we are too few. And they are all disappearing in the Sun!"

And so, Dr. Babbitt decided to postpone his task for a while and give himself a bit of time to reconsider his approach to the matter. After all, he was already so excited by the great number of zeros and other sundry nothings he had collected that he figured that he could go back to sleep for the remainder of the day. "*Ah yes,*" he thought. "*This science of dew drops is such a tiring affair! Darn those Frogs, I mean, those Toads!*"



FIRSTLIGHT & TREELINE—October at Ice Lake . . . On the road in the American Northwest.

MUSIC & NATURE

after seeing Tous les matins du monde (1991) ("All the Mornings of the World")

We shape the world and the world shapes us.

There was a time when both Music and Nature—how we thought about them, what they meant to us—were trunk and branch of the same great tree of life. This was a time when all of music emerged out of a landscape made up of living presences, such as the voices of wind, of birds, or of wild, rushing water. Sound itself, with its many overtones orbiting around its ground tone like so many moons of some far away planet, served as a model of the Universe. This was a time when music was not relegated to some 2nd-hand, rude, industrial periphery of culture, but stood at its very center, its heart. with Instrument maker and forest, performer and composer and listener, all fitting together like the concentric rings of a revolving spring dance.

Music has not changed. It is we who have changed.

THOUGHT CONTROL

We shape the world, and the world shapes us.

*I*n North Korea, radios are built to receive only government-sanctioned frequencies.

In North America, this isn't necessary. The baseness of commercial radio and TV have long ago erased the capacity for critical and independent thought, so much so, that the fact of their loss has also been erased.

OLD & NEW ECONOMIES

The difference between the *Old* and *New* Economy is that the one says, *"Let your money work for you!"* While the other says, *"Let the Sun*

work for you!" Remarkably, this one difference will necessarily and in a forceful way help bring the world of Culture back in step with the world of Nature.

PROOF WITHOUT WORDS

In matters of Philosophy and Design, *demonstration* is everything. Once one stands atop the mountain they said could not be climbed, has played the piece they said could not be played, nothing more need be said.

MUSIC?

Music? The one thing humans do that makes the rest of Nature jealous.

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HARVEST MOON at Ice Lake, Eagle Cap Wilderness . . . On the road in the American Northwest.

LIMITS & NECESSITY

Once natural limits are clearly seen, there is unlimited potential.

If limits are *not* clearly seen, then failure and collapse are not only possible; they are both necessary and inevitable.

PRIMARY PROBLEMS

We are only truly together with others insofar as we are challenged by the same set of primary problems.

CERTAINTY

Around the next bend of a river, there's always the ever-present possibility of disaster. The only certainty you have is the far greater misfortune of quitting before you find out.

NIGHT FIRE & DIALOGUE

Just as going on a trek requires that you step out of your front door before you lock it shut, dialogue requires a kind of radical non-attachment to ideas. This is a kind of willingness to, without hesitation, empty one's rucksack full of cultural assumptions into the evening fire. Everything goes. There must be no holding back. A fire thus fed will generate more than enough light to see the circle of shared smiles as it comes alive with the possibility of sudden insight.

A JUDAS-GOAT PRESIDENT?

We shape the world and the world shapes us.

In the slaughter houses of old, herds of sheep were sometimes led to their fate unwittingly by following a solitary goat with a bell. The sheep will follow without complaint, without resistance. Looked at from a distance, we like to puff out with self-pride, thinking to ourselves, "How could they be so stupid?"

FUTURE FOOTPRINT

The Earth provides for more than enough for all our wants and needs, but not for all our wars and waste.

X.22.2010 Ice Lake, The North Wallowas

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Mt. Goat, summit of Cornucopia Peak, South Wallowas. Eagle Cap Wilderness . . . On the road in the American Northwest.

FRIENDSHIP

Friendship is a mirror which reflects spiritual essence, even when this essence is not yet fully physically manifest. Because such friendship is rooted in essence, it is timeless.

OPEN THOUGHTS

If you find yourself censoring your own thoughts, cutting short new ideas simply for fear of being attacked or ridiculed by government or family or friends, then you are most likely no longer living in a free and open society. That's bad.

THE GROUND OF SILENCE

Silence is the ground of musical sound; It is the motionless interval or source of the new breath, the new musical phrase.

MONEY SPEAKS TO POVERTY

The Crow said to the Squirrel, "When Money speaks to Poverty, have you noticed its tone of voice, the sort of questions it asks?" The Squirrel scratched at the dry dirt and exclaimed, "Money never listens; it doesn't have to. Poverty always does."

LABYRINTH

We shape the world and the world shapes us.

The Minotaur terrorizing the labyrinth of the Internet is not just the commercialization of Eros into mere pornography, or the corruption of news into more entertainment. Nor is it the horror of the potential theft of one's identity, or even the threat of all-out cyberwar. No. The beast at the heart of the Web—devouring whole the minds of countless youths and maids—is the endless chain of clicked

upon distraction.

Clearly, the thread which leads out of this maze is not more technology, or the imposition of more blocks and controls. Certainly, it is something more like awareness, or the timeless practice of meditation. Here, there is observation of the fact of distraction. One simply looks both ways, both outwardly *(what)* and inwardly *(why)*, all at once, and one click at a time.

FOR WANT OF A SINGLE VOTE

For want of a single vote, the election was lost.

For want of an election, the democracy was lost.

For want of a democracy, freedom was lost.

For want of freedom, the republic was lost.

For want of a republic, the idea of a constitution was lost.

And all for the want of a single vote.

X.24.2010 Lake Camp North Wallowas



Oxeye Daisies, from Old English, dæges age—*day's eye*—because daisies open in the morning and close at night (*Leucanthmum vulgare*)—in a weedy meadow at 1450 m., South Wallowas

In North America, the Oxeye Daisy—I call them Goethe's Daisies—is an import from Europe and considered a weed. I know them from their native habitat in the Alps in high meadows, where they are seen as a sure sign of handcutting and little fertilizer.

My whole life centers and turns around flowers, and it must that this flower itself presents us with a beautifully clear center of centers. Perhaps this is why the Daisy makes its appearance in classical Poetry on many different occasions. I'm thinking of Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598), with its "Song of Spring" with which the play ends:

"When daisies pied and violets blue And lady-smocks all silver white And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue Do paint the meadows with delight The cuckoo then, on every tree, Mocks married men".

Goethe (1749-1832), who was a gifted observer of Nature and went on to pen a highly original book on the generation of form in plants, gave a daisy to Margueriet so that could determine Faust's love for her. This is the origin of the famous plucking of the white ray florets—in this composite, mostly female, by the way—one by one while reciting, *"He love me. He loves me not."*

I play with this in two of the pieces below:

CHEAP IMITATION

In the Arts, *technique* without *creativity* is like making love without real passion. The outer movements may look exactly the same, but we always sense some central essential something is utterly absent.

BY THE LIGHT OF A HARVEST MOON

She loves me. She loves me not.

She loves me not?

O gray day! Descending mist mixed with cold rain!

Grief turns to emptiness turns

to walking steeply up the side of an ice mountain.

Crossing the pass,

the past shuts like a door of a hut

you burn to the ground before leaving it in disgust for good.

O distance! O joy forgotten!

not of ending loss,

of ending pain,

but of bumping the head against the sharp-edged ridgeline

of what I thought—what I thought

I knew, for sure.

GOETHE'S DAISY

She loves me. She loves me not. She loves me? Yes. I count the rays

moving from center to center,

moving from bright morning Sun,

to pure white petals, to round happy yellow button of the oh-so-meager dryland daisy. The eye that sees closes the triangle, of centers, of rays, of the love that is sure to be. I count the rays. I count the ways of Sun, of flower, of the paths that led me to this lovely morning meadow. Was it chance? Was it necessity? Yes. I count the rays. I count the ways.

TO KNOW THE MOUNTAIN

To know the mountain, go to the mountain.

To know yourself, go to the mountain and climb the mountain.

To protect the mountain, go to the mountain to know yourself, and climb the mountain.



RIDGELINE—view of the South Wallowas to Needle Point, just West of Hidden Lake . . . On the road in the American Northwest.

THE PASS

The pass is clearly in view.

But the way: how impossibly confused.

RIDGE THAT DIVIDES US—a prose poem

You, who are all the fast-flowing streams I've ever chanced upon, all the unseen meadows, uncrossed passes of my dreams. I awake in the night to see your image projected before me, close enough to touch, yet somehow like a horizon forever retreating as I reach out into the empty darkness. I form the first syllable of your name, but the sound will not come, so I remain silent and mute. But certainly, you too must see the same face of the full harvest moon tonight, the same moon that will rise with tomorrow's tides and turning Earth. Perhaps it was a year ago, perhaps it was a *thousand* years ago—how should I know?—but what has the passage of time and seasons and years got to do with it, with what we sense as beautiful and true?

When we share the same path and the path is good then surely at some as yet unknown point our trajectories will cross and smile upon each other. Very far away, I see your faint outline. You are resting. By a spring. You drink deeply and are refreshed. Octave and unison, bittersweet of the larger and smaller thirds, sonorous unheard harmony of plucked and bowed strings, of sharp consonant and rounded feminine vowel. All these rise within me as a sure sign of you, you, beloved, as I look out upon the quiet land and see the light of the sun become again a star's single ray, hidden in a heartbeat by the lone ridge, the lone ridge that yet divides us.

WEALTH?

Wealth? When I have what I need to share what I love.

WITHOUT

A world without light or sound is thinkable,

but not a world without movement.

THE SOUND OF DISAPPEARING GLACIERS

The sound of disappearing glaciers is not the sound of raging torrents, or of thundering cascades.

It is the faint murmuring sound of a thousand rivulets and rills flowing ceaselessly, day and night, day and night. with each turn of the Earth:—

a thousand more.

X.22.2010 Ice Lake, The North Wallowas

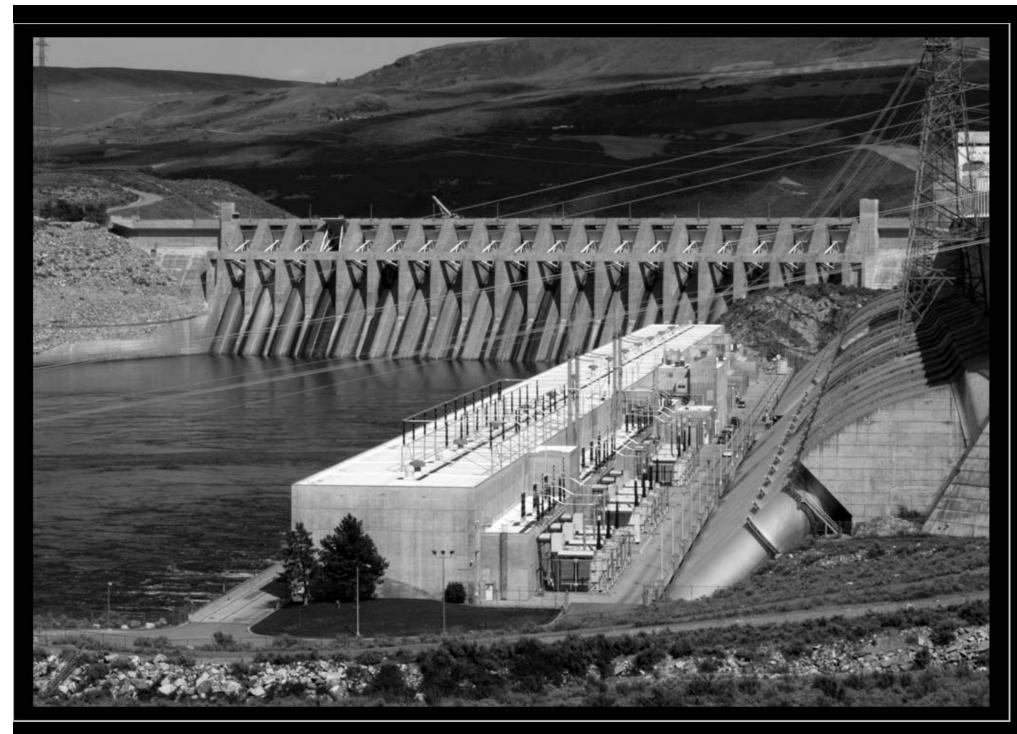


APRIL BIVY ATOP BLACK BUTTE, Central Cascades . . . On the road in the American Northwest.

ODE TO MY TENT

Outer skin of my own body, worn, cracked, sunburned, from exposure on three continents . . . O, shelter upon which I depend. In our happy salad days, we'd have a shiny new fly shipped from afar straight to our basecamp, Ah yes, but young love always goes the way of wrinkles and tears . . . Taped, spliced, torn, stiched, pieced together in the true knowledge that staying together is the real and pure nature of trust, the simple quintessence of security. Stormy nights, months of snow and sorrow, of fabric saturated beyond any reasonable limit, of waking up in a sleeping bag wetter than yesterday's tossed tea bag, yet always still together as one. Even mosquitoes and ants know the rules. I ask: Is the collapse, say, of great Nations, always due to the blatant and obvious excesses of wasteful war, or drought, or famine, or the hubris of emprie extended beyond the possible? Or do we sometimes go down simply by holding on too long to what we love, love, perhaps, too much? I know: When we love, we should let go. But how could I? And my friends who understand such things tell me I must get a new one. But where do old tents go when they die, I ask? Surely, not to mere sentiment, to mere memory. No, they must re-embody in some more subtle realm as pure geometry! That is what I tell myself. What better, what more noble fate, could the gods insure? Comforting thought for my old, old, steadfast friend.

> X.24.2010 Lake Camp North Wallowas



Chief Joseph Dam—the great million-dollar-a-day mistake! Columbia River watershed . . .

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On the road in the American Northwest.

CULTURE OF COLLAPSE

We shape the world and the world shapes us.

Like water, the energy that creates and sustains cultural excellence follows the free flow of meaning and intelligence. When dams block this free flow of meaning and intelligence, meaning and intelligence themselves will naturally and necessarily move to break the blocks.

This is the source of real revolution.

The key insight is that real revolution is of necessity non-violent. From the high peaks of cultural excellence, this is obvious, for far and wide across the dry canyonlands of mediocrity, one sees clearly that humanity's impulse to violence and use of force is the root cause of the dams themselves.

ALWAYS: It takes the healing gift of water to put out the fire. Not more fire.

THE BEST WE CAN BE

The best use of the land in both time and space can be seen only through the perspective of the whole.

The guiding principle of best use is that, at the end of the day, or a season, or a lifetime, what we leave behind is better, is richer, is more beautiful, than what we first found.

THE THREE STAGES OF COLLAPSE

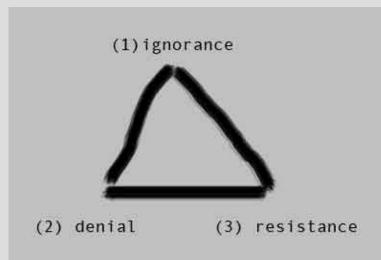
The root cause of all collapse is contradiction.

A contradiction is a fact, not a theory.

If I put 100 cows on a pasture, but the nature of the pasture itself-

the weave of grasses and forbs, the depth and texture of soil, the available sunlight and water—says it will support only 10, we have a contradiction.

When confronted with the fact of contradiction which is the cause of collapse, first there is *ignorance* of the fact, then *denial*, then *resistance*.



I may at first not know the nature of the pasture very well, so I make the essentially innocent mistake of turning out too many cows. But if I am for whatever reason attached or committed to my idea of 100 cows—say, I need the cash they will bring me, or I desire to have more cattle than my neighbor—I will tend strongly to deny that I am mistaken. This denial will harden into resistance once others begin calling attention—bringing into the public commons the fact of my mistake. Then this stage of resistance will tend strongly to *do the wrong thing twice over*, so instead of 100 cows I now will show that I am right with 200.

Contradiction literally means 'contra-diction,' to 'speak against,' as when two realities speak against each other, or when two theories speak against each other, or when two facts speak against each other.

Harmony is the opposite of contradiction. Its root meaning is 'fitting together.' Harmony is the essence of adaptation. Obviously, adaptation is the opposite of collapse. Nature as a whole, when seen and experienced as a symphony of dynamic, flowing movement, is always necessarily harmonious, because these movements will tend strongly either to fit or adapt together, or perish.

Because contradiction is the very essence of waste—waste of energy, essentially—the economy of Nature's watercourse way necessarily will move to resolve contradiction.

The only single exception to this in the whole of Nature is humankind. And for one simple reason. Because we are tragically unaware of the confused formative movement of consciousness itself which leads, when faced with simple facts, to stubborn denial, and to rigid, selfdestructive, resistance.

The greatest of ethical imperatives, therefore, is to by means of becoming in an enlightened way aware of awareness itself, heal or resolve the confusion of consciousness. And the contrary also follows, that the greatest sin is to knowingly exacerbate, or manipulate, or conceal the confusion—and the resulting denial and resistance for reasons of power and self-interest.

> X.24.2010 Lake Camp Eagle Cap Wilderness

NEW: To view / purchase different sized prints of this week's images



HANFORD REACH (photo made from a speeding car, a nervous Dave Clemens

at the wheel!) Image from one of the most highly contaminated sites in the world. Plutonium, named for the god of Hell, for more than 60,000 bombs was produced here. On the Columbia . . .

On the road in the American Northwest.

HANFORD REACH

Reaching for the sky, we fell straight to the bottom of hell.

How far down can we go? Only angels can tell.

MORNING RIVER

False shimmer of the morning reservoir, make-believe tinsel for real river gold.

Only love moves mountains, only love removes dams.

DIRECTION OF ATTENTION

With *corruption*, follow the money; With *wholeness*, follow the water.

Earth's future? Watch the trajectories cross.

WASTE OF GOOD

We shape the world and the world shapes us.

Good people do bad things when forced to think and move within inherently false

and contradictory systems.

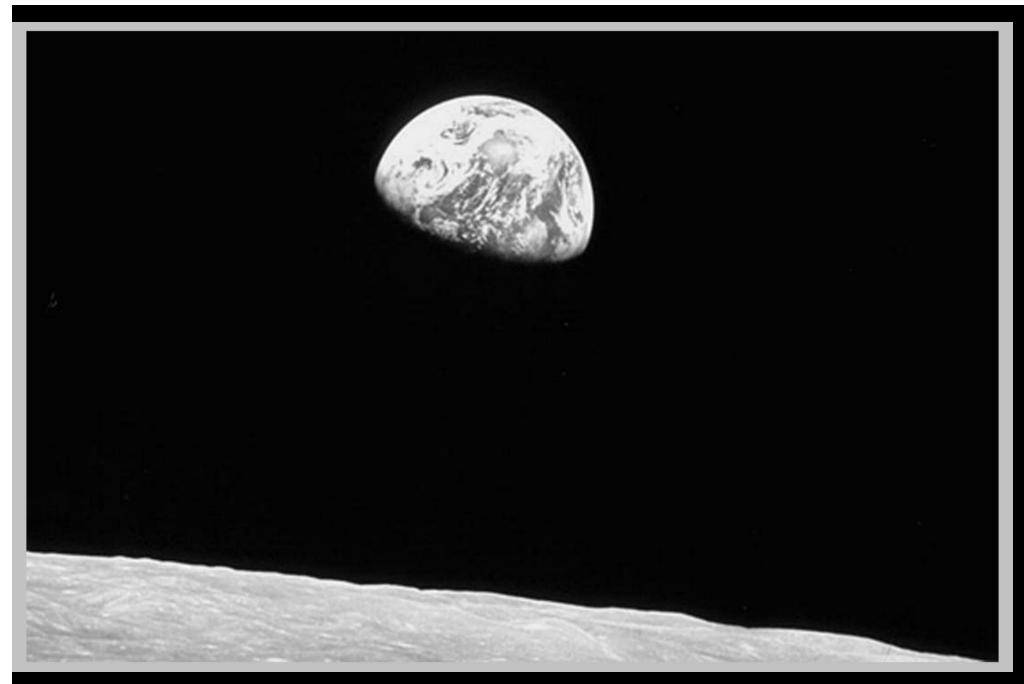
The task of philosophy is to, without forcing, pause the disharmonious movement, and then step back to reconsider the inconsistencies, possible wrong turns, mistakes of direction.

> X.22.2010 Ice Lake, The North Wallowas

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Earthrise. Eagle Cap Wilderness. . . On the road in the American Northwest.

ETHICAL IMPERATIVES—a meditation on Earthrise

The first imperative of ethics, it seems to me, is that ethics itself should not be thought of as belonging primarily to what is now considered religion, but rather as a primary dimension of all human activity. 'Primary' means that it is the *first* aspect to be considered in all action and decision making, and *not the last*.

All action resonates in *space* and *time*. Sometimes only a second or two, sometimes for centuries; Sometimes only a few centimeters out from my own body. sometimes perhaps to infinity.

Outwardly, this is ethical *consequence*; inwardly, it is ethical *conscience*.

The key feature of this complementary inner and outer movement of consequence and conscience is the breadth of the circle of awareness and responsibility. The great leap of consciousness brought home in the historic Apollo 8 Earthrise photograph made by astronaut *William Anders* in 1968—perhaps the most important image of our time—is that it shows to the mind of compassion with granite-like clarity that the necessary breadth of this circle of awareness and responsibility begins and ends with the whole of the living Earth, and not with the largely arbitrary, conflicting fragments like current nations states.

Necessity is a thing of great philosophic beauty. This is so because necessity awakens, and in a most powerful way brings together, the very best of our intellectual and spiritual energies, both individually and collectively. Just as the wild proposal of the poet-politician that we must go to the Moon not because it is easy, but because it is difficult, crystallized and brought together an entire generation of creativity, we need now to see that the dual imperatives of the new millennium are ending waste and war. Waste, because it in one word summarizes where the conventions of Culture are out of step with the laws of Nature. Eliminate waste, and you solve the problems of pollution, renewable energy, corrupt agricultural practices and climate change all at once. And War, because of its destructive insanity-and it is insanity because the entire Earth is now at stake—of contemporary weapons technology stands before us as the central fact of our time:-that it is no longer a question of violence or non-violence, as Dr. King suggested also about forty years ago, but rather of non-violence or non-existence. Seen from this larger perspective, it becomes clear perhaps that War and Waste are essentially two sides of but one problem.

For who would not say that, from the perspective of the Moon, waste is indeed humanity's total war on Nature, and that, in turn, war is not

humanity's total waste of its own spiritual essence and promise?

VIII.21.2009, Camp Lost & Found, Eagle Cap Wilderness

[from pages 428-429 of THE LITTLE CLAVIER [PDF 110 MB]





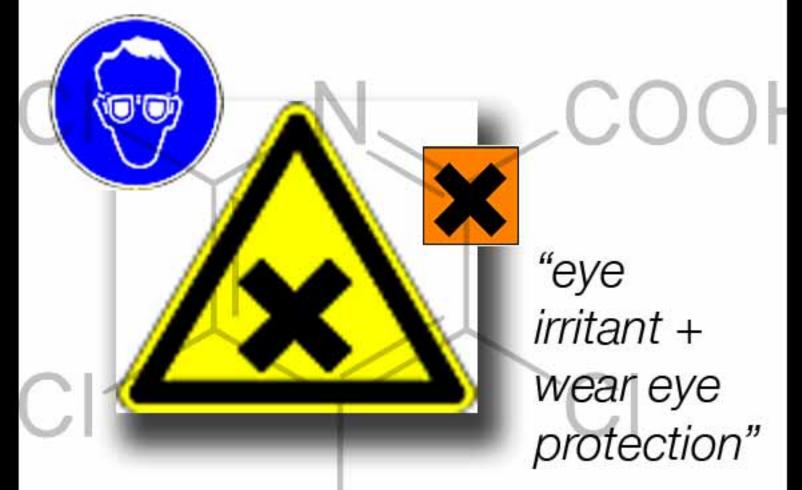
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AGENT WHITE picloram or "Tordon"



Developed by DOW CHEMICAL in 1964 for use in chemical vegetation warfare in Vietnam. When mixed with 2,4-D, it was called "Agent White." Picloram does not adhere to soil, and therefore is now a widely-found contaminant of groundwater. Smells like chlorine. Above 500 ppb (EPA), may cause liver damage. A persistent herbicide for the control of broad-leaved weeds on non-crop and utility areas. Picloram is contaminated with the carcinogen hexachlorobenzene. [source: de.wiki, EPA, & NCAP]



October Morning at Ice Lake, Eagle Cap Wilderness . . . On the road in the American Northwest.