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**THE INFLUENCE OF COMPLEMENTARY PRACTICES AND
SPIRITUALITY ON BRITISH DESIGN 1930 – 2005**

Susan T. North-Bates

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of
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THE INFLUENCE OF COMPLEMENTARY PRACTICES AND SPIRITUALITY ON BRITISH DESIGN 1930-2005

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the nature and role of spiritually-influenced approaches to design in Britain in the period 1930–2005. The role of spiritual factors in design is considered as a complement to the predominance of the Modernist rationalist-functional discourse prevalent in much twentieth century design history writing and theories of design. Non-rational and spiritual facets of Modernism in this period are also examined.

The influence of ‘alternative’ lifestyles, the New Age movement, ecology, holism, complementary and alternative medical practices, and spirituality on design is presented as a complementary paradigm to the predominance of Modernism. The origins and development of these influences are explored in relation to design and material culture.

In order to reveal a body of relevant exemplars, the particular areas selected for detailed examination are the domestic environment, gardens and landscape design, and the influence of Complementary and Alternative Medicine on the design of therapeutic environments.

This material, arising from practices of consumption as well as those of designing, challenges some of the established methods of design history and to deal with this, insights from the academic disciplines of Archaeology and Pagan Studies, relating to Shamanic concepts of the object, are explored as useful adjuncts to Postmodernism and other approaches in theorising complementary and alternative design practices.

The research demonstrates that during the period under consideration, what was once considered outlandish has now become part of the mainstream and has affected contemporary design practice, material culture and consumption. The pluralism of contemporary design ideologies and methods presents a complement to, and a transformation of the Modernist hegemony in design practice and writing. This study contributes to a more complete historical picture of British design in the twentieth century and indicates that the predominance of a Modernist interpretation of design and its history is both insufficient and inadequate to understand the rich texture and complexity of the design history of this period.

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CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT

During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification.

The material included in this dissertation has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

The programme of independent research for this thesis has consisted of seven years part-time study, supervision tutorials at Sheffield Hallam University and attendance at relevant research conferences.

Susan T. North-Bates,

August 2007.

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In this one bowl there is rice from a thousand households. Ryokan (1758-1831)

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PART I: INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT AND METHODS

INTRODUCTION

The Rationale for the Research

This thesis demonstrates that the spiritual dimension in design and material culture in twentieth century Britain, as well as resonating with various spiritual and New Age movements, has influenced the mainstream of design and that generally this is not acknowledged in the established narrative of design history. One of the major issues confronting the design historian who wishes to explore British complementary and spiritual approaches to design history and material culture in the twentieth century, is that the canon of design history has for the most part concentrated on the personalities, products and activities of the Modernist movement. This focus has emphasised Modernism to the extent that it has become the predominant discourse in design history and thus all other discourses are required to be positioned in relation to it. Alternative theories, approaches and perspectives which originate from non-rationalist, anti-rationalist, independent, spiritual or New Age positions have been omitted or at best glossed over in most of the key texts and published research.

In the majority of important twentieth century English language publications by such founding authors of design history as Pevsner, Gloag, Bertram and Banham, and in design history writing generally, twentieth century design has been presented as a predominantly Modernist activity, a discourse of exclusion, based on a materialist functionalist approach. Jonathan M. Woodham's (1997) *Twentieth Century Design*, described on the book jacket as 'an investigative foray into the broader picture of twentieth century design' has only three pages on 'green design' and includes nothing on design influenced by spirituality, the New Age movement and alternative and complementary approaches, although these influences were increasingly evident in

British material culture and the international design scene from the 1970s onwards (Papanek 1975).

Evaluating alternative, complementary and spiritual approaches to design in the latter part of the twentieth century remains relatively uninvestigated since Modernism remains the predominant perspective through which design and its history during the period 1930–2005 has been and, for the most part, is still being presented. Any assumption, from the established literature, of a modernist hegemony, is weakened by the additional dimension of British design culture revealed in this thesis. I am using the term ‘hegemony’ as defined by the social theorist Antonio Gramsci (1832-1937) as a sense of a moral and intellectual leadership that demonstrates a collective capacity to become the leading force of a ‘social will’ cemented by an ‘organic ideology’ (Bocock 1993:7).

In discussing this research with academics in the field of design history this concept of a Modernist hegemony has been expressed as a kind of exclusion that has privileged the ‘rational’ at the expense of the ‘irrational’ and religious and spiritual aspects in design, resulting in the marginalization or dismissal of large areas of design practice and thought. The success of Modernism was a consequence of the institutions that society has constructed around it. These include books, journals, museums, exhibitions, education, the market, organizations and the whole cultural infrastructure. Modernism has been described as an atheist hegemonic discourse (Salomonsen 2004:47), and any intellectual discussion of spirituality has been derided by many critical commentators as a flight from modernity (Ezzy 2004:116).

Designers present themselves as rational since their audience expects this but they acknowledge other factors in operation as they work. My contention is that design, in any of its forms, such as architecture, product design, interior design, or landscape and garden design, is not a completely rational process, as suggested by some proponents of Modernism, e.g. Bertram, Gloag, Read, and that less rational issues, including spirituality, affect design. As design involves the concrete, finite particulars of this world and has an impact on us all, the questions arise of how spirituality affects design, given that some designers will have a spiritual practice or outlook, and how the reception of design might be modified by those consumers who are concerned with spiritual issues or other alternative attitudes.

With the rise of Postmodernism from the 1970s onwards, a predilection for ornament and a denial of utility, as exemplified by the work of the Memphis group, was evident in visual and material culture, along with a shift of emphasis from production and consumption to a demand for experience. Many design historians writing in the later twentieth century still considered objects subservient to experience and had not kept up with designers who wanted to create and design experience *via* the object, an outlook which has links with spirituality, for example, in shamanistic practices that focus on direct experience but may use objects and environments to engender that experience (Price 2001).

Spirituality was discussed increasingly, albeit in an unstructured way, in late twentieth century popular culture as evidenced in newspaper and magazine articles and in the broadcast media. When design concerned with spiritual ideas has been examined, it has often been devalued, marginalised and gendered as feminine. This thesis argues that alternative and New Age spirituality, and thinking from ecology and complementary medicine have affected British popular design and material culture in the period 1930–

2005 and can be said to have affected 'high' design in some measure too. 'High' design can be defined as the products of architecture, and industrial and other forms of design practice, privileged by connection with the Modernist historical perspective and the cultural institutions of British society (Cowdell 2002).

The evidence in this thesis comes from observation of alternative, spiritual and New Age influences in popular culture, advertising and consumption, complementary medicines and their material culture, and discussion in critical writings, periodicals and popular magazines, newspapers, and the broadcast media. I illustrate the wide range of design practices and design writing in Britain, complementary and parallel to Modernism, by concentrating on the areas of domestic interiors and gardens, attitudes to the wider environment and green issues, and complementary medical practice and its accompanying paraphernalia. These areas have been selected for investigation because they affect the majority of people in the course of everyday life. The theoretical and historical material is supported and augmented by information and insights from the formal interviews conducted with academics and professionals, and the informal interviews conducted with practitioners of alternative lifestyles and spirituality, which evidence attitudes to spiritual issues in design and consumption, and instances of individual practice.

In this thesis I examine the influence of complementary practices and spirituality on design practice and thinking on British design and material culture 1930–2005, with a concentration on the period from 1960–2005 when these influences contributed increasingly to the mainstream. The core discipline of the thesis is design history, but the nature of the research has demanded an interdisciplinary approach which incorporates insights from religious studies, including the emergent discipline of pagan

studies and its key idea of multiplicity (Blain, Ezzy and Harvey 2004: vii), archaeology, sociology in relation to social ethnography and theories and practice of consumption, and health studies. The periodisation, by commencing in 1930, encompasses the professionalisation of design, backed by government support and perpetuated in design education (Naylor 1992:289), the growing acceptance by designers and architects of Modernism in Britain since the 1930s and its predominance in post World War II architecture and design, and the emergence and growth of alternative programmes of theory and practice from the 1960s onwards.

In this thesis my use of the terms, 'alternative' 'complementary' and 'spiritual' represents perspectives on design and material culture other than Modernism. Markets for these alternative ideas and their products have long existed and continue to do so. The main alternative approaches considered are spirituality (as differentiated from religion), holism, and green and ecological design. The last category has been researched widely in relation to materials and their impact on environmental audit. In this thesis, green and environmental issues are not considered *per se*, but are discussed as informing a wider movement. I examine broad ideas and concepts associated with green design, but not the technical details of its actual practice.

Religion, Spirituality and Design

The differentiation between religion and spirituality is necessary in order to clarify the parameters of the present investigation. The term 'religion' is very much a western concept, based on eighteenth century Enlightenment thinking which encouraged the individual to apply the tests of reason to all branches of enquiry. Religion was seen increasingly as a widespread, if not universal, human activity, of which the various religions, including Christianity, were examples. Many names given to religious

traditions, e.g. Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism and Taoism, are European inventions dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They are labels applied for the convenience of Europeans and are not translations of concepts found within those traditions (Beckerlegge1998:32).

Because the term ‘religion’ is used to include many kinds of beliefs and practices across cultures and through time, establishing the boundary of religion has proved to be difficult. Different definitions of religion used by academics in the field of religious studies tend to fall into two main types. Substantive definitions are concerned with what a particular religion *is*, describing distinguishing characteristics of belief or practice. Functional definitions concentrate on what these beliefs and practices *do* for the individual and the social group and on the needs they fulfil – bonding, identity, comfort and security (Beckerlegge1998:32). Functional tends to imply ‘functionalist’ so one may think of functional definitions as very narrow, whilst simultaneously trying to be very inclusive.

Broader conceptual definitions are also available. Religion has been defined as a ‘system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggles with the ultimate problems of human life’ (Yinger 1970:7). However this definition is so broad that it could also be a definition of design practice, and highlights the problem of what is a religion and what is not. It could be argued that in the 1980s and 1990s design and the acquisition of designer products seemed to be a ‘religion’ for certain strata of British society.

Ninian Smart, a specialist in the study of world religions, suggested a seven dimensional model of religion (Smart1989:7). He listed the following dimensions: practical or

ritual, doctrinal or philosophical, narrative or mythic, experiential or emotional, ethical or legal, organizational or social, and material or artistic. He later added an eighth dimension, political and economic (Smart 1996: 10-11) This is a flexible model, sensitive to diversity and does not attempt to define religion in terms of one characteristic belief or practice. Smart acknowledges that secular ideologies and world views such as Marxism, scientific humanism, existentialism and nationalism also exhibit the dimensions suggested in his model of religion. He remarks that

various systems of ideas and practices, whether religious or not, are competitors and mutual blenders, and can thus be said to play in the same league. They all help to express the various ways in which human beings conceive of themselves and the world (Smart 1989:25).

Smart's 'dimensions' have been much criticised as attempts to categorise and classify religion without really addressing the question as to just what it is one is looking at (Bowie 2000:25). Steve Bruce, a leading sociologist of religion, gives a more substantive or experiential definition;

Religion...consists of beliefs, actions and institutions which assume the existence of supernatural entities with powers of action, or impersonal powers or processes possessed of a moral purpose (Bruce1995: ix).

A dimensional model of religion is likely to prove inadequate when taken by itself. When used in combination a substantive definition of religion and a dimensional model of religion are likely to be far more helpful than broader functional definitions when it comes to testing for a boundary between religion and other things which are said to resemble a religion, e.g. football supporting, Transcendental Meditation, and secular ideologies including design (Beckerlegge1998:38).

The American anthropologist Clifford Geertz takes a symbolist approach to religion, focusing on what religions represent.

Religion is (1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivation in (people) by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic (Geertz 1993:90).

As these definitions indicate it is difficult to define ‘religion’, and it is equally difficult to describe ‘spirituality’. People of any religion or none may describe themselves as having a spirituality, though it seems to be the latter who define themselves as being ‘spiritual’ as opposed to ‘religious’, a term which may have negative or overly authoritarian connotations for some. Walter Wink, the American liberation theologian, defined spirituality as the *interiority* of a person, an institution, a nation or anything. This interiority shapes the flow of *power*, which needs to be named, unmasked and engaged in any given situation (McIntosh 2002:119, his italics). The American Unitarian minister and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) remarked ‘How wild and mysterious our position as individuals to the Universe!’ (Whicher 1960:61) and throughout this thesis the term spirituality is used to refer to an active, personal and considered approach to one’s relationship with the universe which affects behaviour, including both material and ideological consumption, and may or may not include a metaphysical premise or transcendent ideal.

The American writer, psychotherapist and former Roman Catholic monk Thomas Moore concurs with the eminent psychologist and co-founder of psychoanalysis C. G. Jung (1875-1961) that a spiritual life of some kind is absolutely necessary for psychological health. He discusses how spirituality might become part of everyday life, ‘an inner priesthood and a personal religion’ (Moore 1992: xi). He considers this implies some kind of ‘reconciliatory practice, but with the salvational fantasy given up for self-knowledge, self-acceptance and self-cultivation’ (Moore 1992: xiii).

Moore argues that spirituality demands attention, mindfulness, regularity and that *objects focus our spirituality* (my italics) (Moore 1992:211). He provides a critique of modernism in general via his concept of 'psychological modernism' which he defines as an uncritical acceptance of the values of the modern world.

It includes blind faith in technology, inordinate attachment to material gadgets and conveniences, uncritical acceptance of the march of scientific progress, devotion to the electronic media and a lifestyle dictated to by advertising (Moore 1992:206).

He contends that the modernist syndrome also tends to literalise everything that it touches, resulting in the conception that education should be about skills and information, not about depth of feeling and imagination (Moore 1992:208).

Spirituality and spiritual practice, in his opinion, emphasise the importance of rituals and so keep one 'in imagination and out of literalism' (Moore 1992:225). In relation to objects focusing spirituality he remarks

When traditional cultures carve elaborate faces and bodies on their chairs and tools they acknowledge the soul in ordinary things...when we stamp out our mass made products with functionality blazoned on them but with no sign of imagination, we are denying ritual a role in ordinary affairs (Moore 1992:226).

He defines 'spirituality' in the broadest sense to be an aspect of any attempt to approach or attend to the invisible factors in life and to transcend the personal, concrete, finite particulars of this world (Moore 1992:232).

Much has been written on spirituality and art (Kandinsky *et al*) but little consideration has been given to the relationship between spirituality and design (Papanek 1995). In a design context, spirituality has been used to imply a desire to express a harmonious and effective relationship with universal principles, an aim which may be seen as distinct

from that of functionalism in the purely modernist sense. An appreciation of harmony and balance within the product has also been understood as a factor in 'good' design.

A concern with the spiritual was expressed by many pre-twentieth century western designers. The early eighteenth century Neo-Palladians, Burlington, Colen Campbell and Robert Morris saw correct proportions not just as objective rules that expressed a finite beauty but as a manifestation of cosmic and ultimately spiritual laws (Cruickshank 1990:134). These ideas represent a continuation of classical Greek concepts of 'universal laws' of beauty, mediated by Renaissance scholarship and its interest in *studia humanitatis* (Rundle 1999:223). The Modernist discourse related more easily to the notion of correct proportion, which contributed to the Modernist strand in engineering and related aesthetics, whereas the Postmodernist discourse moved away from this to an emphasis on contextualisation (Bertens 1995:54).

The decline in organised religion and the fragmentation of orthodoxy in the last half of the twentieth century has been balanced by a rise in personal religion and spirituality. In Britain a predominantly paternalistic Christian society has given way to a more egalitarian and multi-faceted one that appears disparate and reflects a variety of interests. Design, moreover, is still presented, for the most part, as a coherent, rational and iterative process, its products and ideologies imposed on an homogenous nation of willing consumers by an expert elite, the designers, some of whom are celebrities in their own right. A clear cultural hegemony is less obvious in mainstream British society, but the majority of designers and design historians still present design as a rational, heroic and predominantly male activity. This attitude is exemplified in the choice of title of Pevsner's (1936) *Pioneers of the Modern Movement*, which continues to be

regarded as a major design history text today and perpetuates a canon organised around personalities rather than processes.

The idea of holism has gained ground in many disciplines in the late twentieth century. The word holism is derived from the Classical Greek word *holos* meaning whole. The neo-logism holon was coined in an attempt to understand how systems act as wholes whilst still being part of yet greater wholes. Each holon has two opposite tendencies; an integrative tendency to function as part of a greater whole, and a self-assertive tendency to preserve its individual autonomy. There must be harmony between integration and self-assertion that makes the whole system flexible and open to change (Hoffman, 1988:14).

The theory of holism can be seen in action in the development of holistic and complementary medicine, in which the needs of the individual or a particular bodily organ are considered in the context of the greater whole in which they exist, and in the relationship between them. Holistic ideas can also be applied to design in its various contexts, including the design of systems in business and education (Brown 2005).

Having set out above the main areas and themes that investigated in the research in order to develop an understanding of the spiritual dimension in twentieth century design, the remainder of the introduction provides an overview of the structure of the thesis.

The Arrangement and Content of the Chapters of the Thesis.

Chapter One presents the aims, context and methodology of the research, and a discussion and explanation of the fieldwork undertaken, including the selection of those taking part in formal, and informal interviews.

The main body of the thesis is arranged in three further parts: Part II provides, by reference to modernism, the contextualization for the later discussion of design issues relating to alternative and spiritual discourses; Part III gives an overview of the history of alternative lifestyles and spirituality in Britain and their relationship to design outcomes in order to provide a framework for an alternative design history: and Part IV investigates alternative frameworks for design practice, and evaluates potential approaches to theorising complementary practices and spirituality in relation to design.

In Part II Contextualization, Chapter Two argues that the privileging of the Modernist discourse in design history results in an incomplete representation of British design and design practice 1930–2005. The predominance of the Modernist discourse in design history writing and criticism generally, and in the design of the 1930s and 1940s, is adamant in its insistence on design as a rational process and promulgates an accompanying denigration of ornament and decoration, following on from Moravian architect and designer Adolph Loos' (1870-1933) seminal essay *Ornament and Crime* (1908) in which he demanded the abandonment and rejection of all decoration and ornament in architecture and design. The predominance of the International Style of Modernist architecture and most examples of design as a process during this period have emphasised the importance of a functional aesthetic. However as the chapter demonstrates there were many different forms of Modernism and many different readings of it. The cool reception afforded to International Modernism by the British

public during this period evidences the artificiality of the notion of a modernist hegemony that is prevalent in much design history writing and historiography.

Chapter Three argues that although the British design establishment was keen to promote Modernist design as a rational approach at the expense of other discourses of design, non-rational and spiritual issues still managed to permeate Modernism, and are evidenced in the three key design texts selected for investigation. These texts represent a particular strand in the design historiography of modernism; they are by respected British design authors of the period 1930-1950, who were addressing their comments specifically to the general reader with the intention of promoting Modernist design as good taste, as design *for* the people, not design *by* the people. An appeal to the assumed spiritual values of Modernism is evident in these texts, thus belying the claims that Modernist design was a purely rationalist-functionalist activity.

Chapter Four argues that despite the rational façade of the Modernist discourse, spiritual influences on design were evidenced in the products and practices of British Modernism 1950–1970, and the failure of Modernism in social housing in particular, allowed for other approaches to design which were interested in complementary and spiritual values. The research investigates the attempt after World War II to develop a particularly British ‘modern’ style in design as opposed to a strict adherence to the tenets of the International Style of Modernism. The relation of design and spirituality is explored by reference to selected examples of British architecture of the 1950s and 1960s. The chapter ends with a discussion of the erosion of the Modernist hegemony in architecture and design, inculcated by its perceived failures both functionally and socially.

Part III, A Framework for an Alternative Design History, investigates the parallel and complementary discourses to institutional Modernism and 'high design' developments. In the light of the earlier contextualization, Chapter Five and Chapter Six establish the framework for an alternative design history which is tracked through the following chapters and augmented by material from the fieldwork interviews.

Chapter Five argues that the alternative, Pagan and New Age movements in Britain are more than a synthesis of traditional beliefs and practices, and a developing vogue for ethnic imports of various kinds. As related by both commentators and interview subjects in this research, complementary practices and spirituality are an outward expression of an inner conviction regarding one's relationship with nature and a putative higher order, a world view which impacts on lifestyle, consumption and attitude on a daily basis. The ideas underpinning the discourses of complementary and spiritual practices need to be made available to design historians to provide a basis for the critical evaluation of alternative influences on design and material culture, therefore an overview of the origins of the New Age movement in Britain and the diversity of extant alternative perspectives and philosophies, including Paganism, during the period 1930-1960 is presented in this chapter. Both Modernism and the alternative and New Age movements can be seen as essentially utopian programmes, but it is more difficult to map the latter academically in that their eclectic, pluralist and egalitarian nature results in a more protean discourse that evades the usual design history structures of the narrative of clearly defined 'progress' and the family tree.

Chapter Six argues that the alternative, Pagan and New Age movements gradually entered mainstream British culture from the 1960s onwards and influenced design, resulting in the development of a 'spiritual style' which although eclectic and syncretist,

maintained its own visual coherence and can be evidenced in the material culture of the period. The chapter examines the further development of extant alternative ideas and concepts, combined with the influence of the counter-cultural movements, personal growth programmes and transpersonal psychology from the USA and Europe, are examined within a British context of post-war regeneration, cultural eclecticism, diversity and pluralism, which increasingly came to characterize late twentieth century design. Over the last decade an apparent polarity between contemporary materialism and contemporary spirituality has led to accusations of a 'supermarket or pick-and-mix spirituality' alongside critiques of consumerist design and consumption. This is discussed as relating to issues of global ecological and spiritual concern highlighted by Paganism and the New Age movements. The philosophical perspectives afforded by spiritual traditions including animism, Druidry, Heathenry and Wicca gained from ethnographic field work carried out in these communities (Wallis 2003) offer different concepts of 'nature', 'Nature' and 'persons' which in turn become part of the cultural apparatus of meaning that their practitioners bring to design issues and design practice.

Part IV, Alternative Frameworks for Design Practice, investigates how alternative and spiritual influences were evidenced in particular aspects of media, design and material culture available to the majority of individuals in British society in the latter part of the twentieth century and in the beginning of the twenty-first.

Chapter Seven argues that existing theoretical approaches from disciplines closely related to design history can assist in providing a framework for proposing an alternative design history that does not need to map directly onto other histories because its own connections are sufficient. Ideas from spatial syntax, garden design and

landscape studies, and evidence-based design for healthcare environments were proposed as useful adjuncts to design history and theories of design.

Chapter Eight argues that the growing acceptance of complementary and spiritual perspectives and Complementary and Alternative Medicine into mainstream culture was evidenced in the British media. By investigating how the media situated and contextualised these perspectives, it is possible to map and analyse the influence of these approaches on popular design and material culture. The genre of the make-over show is particularly relevant in this respect. The visions of alternative, complementary and spiritual design as disseminated in the institutions of the broadcast and print media provide a measure of what is popular and common in public life. Media editors' knowledge can be seen to be sourced from and validated by market forces and the cultural *zeitgeist*, resulting in a feedback loop, the success or otherwise of editorial policy. Journalists reflect taste and also develop it, thereby manufacturing demand for, and consumption of, new design ideologies, products and services.

Chapter Nine argues that the growth of individual expression, the diversified market place, and eclectic markets, in concert with the growth of alternative spiritual philosophies and practices, led to an appropriation of a wide spectrum of influences which synthesised into an alternative discourse that has meaningful consequences for design, and is evidenced in material culture. The chapter analyses shared themes in alternative and spiritual design in the domestic environment, gardens and the landscape, and in the growth of interest in holistic health and complementary therapies and their effects on design and material culture, including evidence based design of hospitals and healing environments.

Based on the research in the framework for an alternative design history and the alternative frameworks for design practice, Chapter Ten argues that a synthesis of theoretical approaches to complementary practices and spirituality in design and material culture, by referencing postmodern theory and other critical discourses, may elucidate alternative and complementary design practices and products. The problems of applying postmodern theory to the issues under consideration suggests insights from the study of shamanic concepts regarding the significance and usage of objects, including ritual structures and spaces, may provide a useful schema for theorising, evaluating and critiquing alternative and New Age encounters with design, its practice and consumption.

The Conclusion argues that British design history pertaining to the twentieth century needs reconsidering to include the alternative, Pagan, New Age and complementary values, otherwise the picture is at best incomplete and at worst misleading. Modernism may have been the predominant discourse in intellectual circles but the majority of British design and material culture has ignored it. By considering the ideas presented in the thesis as a matrix, a unification of the perception of all these diverse aspects of British design and material culture 1930-2005 is possible. Notions of the alternative and the orthodox are not necessarily polarised but are rather themselves complementary and interwoven into the mainstream, incorporating multiculturalism and a searching for roots and individual identity with a will-to-meaning in contemporary post-post or hyper-modern society. The contribution to knowledge of the research is stated, along with an indication of the limitations of the present study, and suggested directions for future research by the author and others, based on the material presented in this thesis.

CHAPTER ONE

THE AIMS, CONTEXT AND METHODS OF THE RESEARCH

The Aims of the Research

My research aims to indicate how complementary and spiritual influences have become part of the mainstream debate during the period under consideration, as evidenced in the popular media and material culture, including products of the industrial market. The thesis identifies and elucidates these complementary and spiritual factors and indicates how they are ever more accessible to designers and consumers alike.

The interest in alternative and spiritual design philosophies in the latter part of the twentieth century could be dismissed as simply new phases in fashionable taste. While fashion has played some part, the ‘alternatives’ were becoming ever more visible and accessible, although British institutional design culture, presided over by the Design Council, RIBA, the Design Museum, public galleries, and history of design publishing, for the most part has ignored or excluded these trends. From the 1990s onwards the rise of the experience culture in design and designing tended to render design practice more difficult to analyse using the established methods of the design historian, who normally employs as two main paradigms of change, the notion of progress and the family tree (Cowdell 2002).

In order to undertake this work I have set out to fill in gaps in the design historiography where spiritual issues are currently overlooked, to examine how spiritual and material concepts interact in different areas of designing, and to explore how that interaction reveals itself in artefacts and environments. To my initial aims I have added consideration of issues of consumption and general societal attitudes.

The Context of the Research

A question asked by self-reflexive social ethnographers concerns how one's identity may be situated in relationship to the people and issues one has researched and written about. This also begs the question as to why a researcher is attracted to a particular topic (Pike 2004:106). This thesis arises from my interest in synthesising areas of knowledge and experience gained from my hybrid practice as an artist, an art and design historian, and a complementary medical practitioner. My original academic disciplines were Archaeology and Biblical Studies. I then carried out postgraduate research for an M. Phil. in Ancient Near Eastern Studies on the Ugaritic literature of Bronze Age Syria. Archaeology constructs narratives from the objects and remains of material culture of past societies, so it was a short step from this to the study of fine art and art and design history which has very similar concerns. After a B. A. in Fine Art and the History of Art and Design, I began a career as an associate lecturer in Art and Design History. In parallel to this I developed an interest in complementary medicine, and I now practice part-time within the disciplines of Craniosacral Therapy, Aromatherapy bodywork and massage, Shiatsu and Traditional Oriental Medicine.

For the greater part of the twentieth century the orthodoxy of modernism has dominated the discourse of art and design practice, theory and history, and Western scientific medicine has been privileged over other medical traditions. I am also aware that spirituality, complementary medicine and the domestic spheres of home and garden are domains usually gendered feminine whereas Modernist functionalist rationalism, the western bio-medical hegemony, and 'high' design are usually gendered masculine. Although gender issues are not a major theme within this thesis they are addressed where they emerge.

The main argument underpinning the research is that the western intellectual tradition deconstructs, takes things apart in order to understand them, in contrast to the holistic attitude that looks for connections and considers the functioning of the whole. For the most part academic discourse employs theories of construction and deconstruction and subjects the right hemisphere brain functions of creativity and kinaesthetic knowledge to the dominance of the left hemisphere brain functions of logic and linear analysis that are so privileged in western society. 'Nomadic' or non-linear thought processes have to comply with accepted structures of logical progression, though this may not best serve them (Deleuze and Guattari 1996), especially in relation to designing (Gedenryd 1998).

My Ph.D. research is an attempt to reconcile these approaches in relation to twentieth century design history and practices and is at the same time a personal journey in attempting to synthesise the various aspects of my working life and spiritual interests. Complementary and alternative medicine and the human-centred design disciplines both express an interest in helping individuals cope with the problems of everyday life and the impact of various environments on the quality of life. From observing therapy clients, students, friends, colleagues and myself, alongside my academic engagement with design I became interested in how our spiritual and material worlds act mutually upon each other.

The feminist design historian Pat Kirkham remarked in relation to gender that

The ways in which our mental and material worlds interact is as intriguing as ever ...Objects are amongst the strongest bearers of meaning in our society (Attfield and Kirkham1996:6).

Objects give information about our values and identities. We buy things for what they mean to us as much as for their direct functional value. An object is experienced and interpreted as well as used. However objects do not communicate in isolation, but

together with other things. As Baudrillard remarked, the consumer society needs its objects in order to be, and the relationship of the individual to the object is strictly magical, bewitched and manipulatory (Baudrillard 1998:47,114). The user may develop a sense of trust and affection for particular products through the symbolic attributes that are associated with those objects and functionality may be one of the factors that create this bond.

Consumers have an ability to associate with some of their possessions and not others, to regard some in a purely functional way and others as more symbolic or indicative of their identity; thus the meanings that different products have for us in themselves help to create the kind of relations we have with them (Szmigin 2003:60).

According to Ezio Manzini, director of Domus Academy, Milan, and a proponent of the 'slow design' movement (www.slowdesign.org/slowtheory.html), products should be considered as

...creations produced by our spiritual sensibilities and by our practical abilities. Creatures that, once they have been produced, exist and have lives of their own. Creatures, however, that need us as much as we need them (www.design.philips.com20.10.2002).

This animistic attitude is unusual in modern western thought, however it is an approach that this thesis argues is important in the relationship between spirituality and design and in the erosion of the Modernist hegemony.

Manufacturers could learn that in an enchanted world good function is only one of many qualities a product must have. Once every tool from a simple drill brace to a manual typewriter had animation in its design...animal images transform an object from pure function to fantasy. One day I hope to see little feet on my computer (Moore 1996:12).

The Methods of the Research

In order to clarify the relationship between the design history and fieldwork components of the thesis, this section provides a full discussion of the methods employed in the

research, including the nature and status of the field work. The material will be discussed under the following sub-headings:

- a. an explanation of the theoretical perspectives justifying the methodology chosen
- b. issues relevant to the choice of methodology, including the advantages and disadvantages of the methods adopted
- c. the decisions that were undertaken in determining how the work would be done
- d. the field work actually undertaken
- e. an account of who was interviewed, how and why they were chosen
- f. the nature of the interviews undertaken (including justification of the informal approach taken)

a. an explanation of the theoretical perspectives justifying the methodology chosen

The methodology of the research has been informed by my experience as an academic specialising in design history in conjunction with my position as an insider researcher within both the practice of holistic and complementary medicine, and the contemporary practice of spirituality, in particular neo-paganism of the Druidic tradition and neo-shamanism. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the research the methodology is, of necessity, a combined one.

The predominant methodology is that of the academic discipline of design history, criticising and evaluating primary, secondary and tertiary sources. In attending to contemporaneous design writing, and in criticism and historiography, the basic concern of the design historian is the material culture of human societies, how this changes through time, and what inferences may be drawn regarding ideology and social mores. As in any branch of historical study reference is made to the particular and the unique as well as to general trends and tendencies. Selection and interpretation of exemplars,

written and other sources, and their criticism requires a minimisation of the subjective element to produce a scholarly interpretation. In the practice of design historiography an examination of both the deliberate message of the sources under consideration and the unintentional evidence they contain, the 'witting and unwitting testimony', is crucial (Marwick 1986:19, 43).

In considering twentieth century design, the reception, dissemination and evidencing of design practices and products via the contemporary media and advertising is an important adjunct to the examination of the products themselves, whether they be buildings, craft or mass produced objects, or other material culture. Thus the methodology also relies on the shared aspects of media studies and design history theory and practice.

I have also used insights from postmodern theory in relation to material culture and consumption, from the academic study of shamanic societies and practices and the emerging field of pagan studies. The social ethnography aspects of pagan studies provide useful theory and methodology in regard to field work in a fluid and contested field (Blain 2002) (Greenwood 2000) (Harvey 1997) (Wallis 2003) and these have aided me in carrying out and analysing fieldwork in a culture of which I am both a participant and an observer.

Insider research inevitably involves subjectivity and reflexivity, and its methodologies of participant observation acknowledge that objectivity is only possible through the locale of the self in that all knowledge is self-situated (Okely 1992). This approach is useful in investigating the use and reception of design in relation to spirituality, in that the strength of participant observation is the access it provides to lived experiences

which incorporate but transcend language. Having a particularly relevant position as a practitioner in design history, contemporary spirituality and complementary medicine, I have access to a combination of cultures, information and insights which may be denied to other researchers, thus providing a view on aspects of design history that are not part of the established canon. The main features of the combined methodology employed in this thesis are derived from the disciplines of design history and social ethnography, and the particulars of their usage are expanded upon below.

b. issues relevant to the choice of methodology, including advantages and disadvantages of the methods adopted

An interdisciplinary topic implies a combined methodology. The advantage of such an approach is that it can be tailored to the specific situation; the disadvantage is that it may be experimental and so not fit into the paradigms of existing accepted academic methodologies. In addition a combined methodology presents a challenge in ensuring consistency between its constituent elements.

The interviews were undertaken to evidence actual instances of, and attitudes towards, alternative and New Age design practices in order to support and enhance the alternative design history investigated in this thesis. Therefore alongside the accepted techniques of the history disciplines as outlined above, I have used a methodology derived from social ethnography perspectives on identities, boundaries and contested values (Cohen 2000) and combined this with insights from auto-ethnography (Ellis 2004) (Reed-Danahay 1997) as my research has taken place in my usual daily environments and practices. The advantage is that I know the territory, the protagonists and their attitudes and affiliations.

The qualitative character of social and cultural boundaries shows how they are implicated in the formation, articulation, management and valorization of collective identities. Super imposed on the objective markers between groups are cognitive constructions which, because they are cultural in nature, need to be seen as matters of consciousness. As a consequence, access to and understanding of them by outsiders may be profoundly problematical (Cohen 2000:2).

The disadvantage is that I am trying to be objective about a culture in which I participate. The position of the insider-researcher using participant observation techniques is often deemed controversial in anthropological and social ethnographic debates (Amid 2000) (Blain, Ezzy and Harvey 2004) but as Kate Fox, Co-Director of the Social Issues Research Centre, Oxford, who makes extensive use of this methodology in her research, has remarked

while participant-observation has its limits, this rather uneasy combination of involvement and detachment is still the best method we have for exploring the complexities of human cultures, so it will have to do (Fox 2004:4).

In my experience of investigating very personal and sensitive subject matter relating to spiritual belief and practices that mainstream society and the major religions might still consider deviant, participant observation is the most useful method for eliciting honest and unedited responses. The exploration of how individuals involved in contemporary spirituality see their relationship between their home and spiritual practice, and how their personal taste and spiritual affiliation is influenced by and reflected in their material consumption are areas that require the researcher to be alert to, and considerate of, nuances that an outsider might miss. In addition the researcher needs to show respect and empathy for the respondents, their self-identity and chosen communities, and to be seen to value their contributions if a meaningful dialogue is to take place.

It is clear that identity (however inexplicit), boundary (however elusive and nebulous) and authenticity (however contested and contestable) are matters in which people invest huge value... The

purpose (and genius) of anthropological ethnography is surely that it takes people seriously: it attempts to reveal complexity, not gratuitously but because people and the lives they create, and the social and cultural conditions within which they create them are enormously complex (Cohen 2000:6).

With regard to the auto-ethnographic component of the research I employed a methodology based on the participant observation technique in the experience of the self, in which critical autobiography is a key issue (Ellis 2004). The advantage of sandwiching personal memories (autobiography) between critical theories is that it is possible to give uninterrupted primary data a meaningful context (Okely 1992). Working with journals, memoirs, and diaries it is possible to change experiences and fix them to one primary interpretation and so apply personal experience to larger socio-cultural phenomena. The autobiographical becomes the cultural (Ellis 2004:40,117). By exploring a particular life, I hope to understand a way of life. My concerns are not dissimilar to those of anthropologists working in cultures alien to them: immersion in the day to day reality of the culture is essential to perceive the grounded reality of cultural practice. Perhaps participant immersion is needed more than participant observation to acquire as complete an understanding as possible.

c. the decisions that were undertaken in determining how the work would be done

In order to synthesise the primary and secondary historiographical research, which included formal interviews with fellow academics, with the qualitative fieldwork undertaken with respondents to informal interviews, a framework had to be provided to locate the observations made in the two strands of the research. From the outset the main consideration in mapping complementary and spiritual design attitudes and practices has been how to situate the work in relation to accepted discourses in design history.

As observed above the majority of twentieth century design history writing and criticism has engaged with the influence of the International Style of modernism and its various manifestations which have been seen as a predominant discourse. Initially it was decided to investigate complementary and spiritual design as a challenge to the perceived modernist hegemony and present it as an oppositional or parallel discourse to modernism. However as the research progressed it was evident that complementary and spiritual influences on design in Britain in the period under consideration comprise a discrete discourse resulting in outcomes that relate less obviously to the paradigms of progress and the family tree commonly used in design history analysis than does modernist design. Therefore the later focus of the research moved to the informal interviews and the representation of spiritually influenced design in the media in order to provide a matrix of information in which to locate the discussion and subsequent ground work in providing a theoretical basis which might be developed by design historians wishing to investigate this relatively new field.

d. the field work actually undertaken

The field work incorporated in this thesis has been carried out as part of my daily life in South and West Yorkshire, and Derbyshire, whether as an academic, therapist or contemporary neo-pagan. I have conducted formal interviews with the full knowledge and consent of the named respondents where the academic nature and purpose of the research was made clear. These are augmented by informal interviews with 49 anonymised respondents interested in or practising contemporary spirituality. The full list of the seven respondents to formal interviews and the 49 respondents to informal interviews is given in Appendix One.

In the informal interviews I was open about what I was researching and what kind of notes I was taking, but in practice found that a conversational format, rather than posing a list of set questions, produced more spontaneous, less 'edited' responses concerning the perceived relationship between design and spirituality in the minds of the interviewees, especially in alternative cultural groups where academics are deemed suspect. Such conversations were written up in fieldwork notes as soon as convenient. All photographs taken in the course of the research were done with the full knowledge and permission of the owners of the objects.

e. an account of who was interviewed how and why they were chosen

In accordance with SHU ethical research procedures the 49 respondents to the semi-formal and informal interviews have retained their anonymity ([shu.ac.uk/research/downloads/ethics policy 2004/pdf](http://shu.ac.uk/research/downloads/ethics%20policy%202004/pdf)). The initial idea of referring to each participant by a number was rejected as too confusing and depersonalising. Also the sex of the respondents was important in considering some of the topics (e.g. attitude to design of health care environments) so the decision was made to ask each person for a pseudonym. Appendix One gives the list of respondents to informal interviews in the order of first contact, and includes the pseudonym, age group, occupation, the self-defined religious or spiritual affiliation, nationality, and the area of residence of each individual at the time of the interviews.

The first five respondents Caradoc, Nemetona, Dilwyn, Dryad and Elanor were known to me as friends and colleagues and they can be considered the opportunity sample in that I piloted the preliminary interview questions and topics with them in order to find out if the research would be viable. When I decided to continue they put me in contact with other individuals and this snowball sampling continued through out the research

period. I augmented this sample with the addition of other respondents, some of whom were therapy clients from my own or other colleagues' practices. Other respondents were found by what I might describe as 'serendipity' or 'synchronicity' sampling, in that our paths crossed without any prior planning e.g. Bruce the Taoist electrician who arrived at random to deal with an electrical emergency at my house.

Initial research produced a majority of female respondents, so effort was made to increase the number of male respondents to give balance. Typically, in my experience of alternative spirituality and complementary medical practice, there are more women than men involved in these activities; therefore I decided that the final number of 18 male respondents to 31 female respondents was acceptable. When information or comment from interviews is used in the text the pseudonyms of the relevant individuals is referenced in brackets after the information given.

I recognised early on that to get deep and insightful information, and to become readily embedded in the appropriate community, I would have to be a central focus of the relevant community and that my sampling would effectively therefore be governed by those people with whom I could make natural contact. This methodology of the researcher as central agency in constructing the field of research is an accepted practice in contemporary social anthropology and social ethnography (Amit 2000) (Pink 2000) (Wulff 2000).

f. the nature of the interviews undertaken (including justification of the informal approach taken)

Social ethnographer Virginia Caputo remarked that there is an instability to the ground that marks doing 'anthropology' at home because it requires a constant shifting of

positionings between situations, people, identities and perspectives (Caputo in Amit 2000:11). In order to minimise this tendency I decided on a specific framework of topics to be discussed in the informal interviews. These related to perceived connections between design and spirituality, the nature and appearance of products of alternative design, and each respondent's consumption of such items. I also allowed for each respondent to make their own contribution to the range of topics discussed in order to elicit information of which I had not been previously aware.

The open-endedness and the social nature of ethnography makes it fundamentally *ad hoc*, sense making as the poetics of the possible and negotiated, equal measures of serendipity and deliberate enterprise. Where, when, how and whom we encounter can never be subject to our control. To over-determine field work practices is to therefore to undermine the very strength of ethnography, the way in which it deliberately leaves openings for unanticipated discoveries and directions (Amit 2000:16, 17).

Appendix Two gives a list of the questions asked and the topics discussed in the informal interviews. If I had framed the informal interviews with an academic preface respondents would have edited their answers and moderated their feelings. I had no desire to bias the outcome of the discussions by overstating my own position either as an academic or as a practitioner of a particular branch of contemporary spirituality.

Concluding Comments

The combined methodology employed in this thesis reflects and relates to the content of the research in that it is a combination of design history and social ethnography. The methodological approaches join in providing an insight into complementary and spiritual issues affecting the practice and reception of design in that many of the design issues discussed in this research cannot be clearly demonstrated through artefacts. For example, a building or object can occasion an experience in its user that draws upon intuitive qualities and subliminal qualities of mind (Lacan 1988:43) and bring about a

sense of serenity and oneness with the universe in the mind of the beholder. The somatization or embodiment of experience is relevant here as the experience of design comes via all the senses, not just sight, and the other senses in design are often undervalued. This thesis does not attempt to demonstrate an absolute linear progression in the range of concepts, buildings and objects under discussion, but rather presents a matrix of ideas and usages that interconnect and impinge upon one another in a variety of ways. A thematic, rather than a chronological, arrangement seemed preferable initially. However, in practice the thematic sequence often intersects with the chronological, resulting in a hybrid structure to the research. Chapters Two to Four are chronological, Chapters Five and Six are thematic, and Chapters Seven to Nine on alternative frameworks for design practice, intertwine chronology and theme as necessary. The approaches may be various and eclectic but the use of sources, methods and analysis strives to be consistent.

PART II: CONTEXTUALIZATION

CHAPTER TWO

THE PREDOMINANCE OF THE MODERNIST DISCOURSE IN TWENTIETH CENTURY DESIGN AND DESIGN HISTORY

Introduction and the Argument of the Chapter

This chapter provides working definitions of key design history concepts used in this thesis and discusses of the nature of the design process, the role of the designer and the relationship between design and consumption in modern society. The investigation then moves to consider the predominance of the Modernist discourse in design history writing in order to provide a contextualisation for the later chapters of the research. A brief examination of attitudes to Modernist design in Britain in the 1930s completes this chapter, although the nature of the available primary and secondary sources results in a bias towards English examples.

The argument of the chapter proposes that the privileging of the Modernist discourse in design history results in an incomplete representation of British design and design practice in the period under consideration. The majority of twentieth century design history texts produced before the 1970s were written from the point of view of the Modernists and their sympathisers, the ‘victors’ in the design debate between ‘modernists’ and ‘traditionalists’, which in effect marginalised other kinds of design.

Key Concepts in the Modernist Discourse in Design History and its Critique

The word 'design' is derived from the Latin *de-signare*, meaning to mark down, to draw the outline of something, to plan, to contrive a scheme, to fashion a pattern, to calculate the dimensions of a building, to purpose (OED). In the twentieth century it has come to

stand for a process from the original conception, through the plan and manufacture, to the finished object (Bertram 1938:12).

Historiography is the academic study of the writing of history, its forms, biases, the issues by which it is influenced and its mode of address to its intended readership. Design historiography is the study of writings about design and design history, and is usually, though not exclusively, the preserve of design historians, rather than the general, educated reader.

The use of the terms modern, modernity and modernism in design history writing require particular attention. The adjective 'modern' has two major meanings. The first and general one describes what is up-to-date, contemporary or of the present age, and is therefore, defined directly in relation to the life time of the person using the term. In this sense 'modern' is a descriptive and relatively neutral term. The second meaning, utilised in this thesis and in art and design history writing, derives from the fact that the period which has been considered the contemporary age for most of the twentieth century has retained the label 'modern' even after we have defined ourselves as having moved to a subsequent contemporary age, as is indicated by the use of the term 'post-modern' to describe the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. This phenomenon indicates the power of the ideas encapsulated in the concept of 'modernism', acknowledging the fundamental changes which have taken place in the history of the West over the last 150 to 200 years. These changes can be seen to include political developments in both practice and theory (such as the French Revolution and Marxism), industrialisation, scientific advances and new forms in the visual arts, architecture and design (Ferne 1995:349). In art and design history writing the two meanings of the word 'modern' are sometimes distinguished by

the use of lower and upper case initial letters, so that modern means ‘up-to-date’ and ‘Modern’ describes the period or style.

The term ‘modernity’ is used in art and design history to describe a definite era, a period of time starting around 1780 and finishing around 1970, but a more precise periodization is the subject of much debate. The period of modernity is characterised by ideas such as progress, improvement and development, a lack of constraints and an orientation to the future, and saw the start of industrialisation, the movement of population to the cities, and a belief in science, in both intellectual and popular thought, as the solution to all problems besetting the human condition (Fisher and North-Bates: 2001).

The impact of science and technology from the Industrial Revolution onwards and the Enlightenment faith in reason and science, culminated in the early twentieth century belief that technology was essentially beneficial to society. The amelioration principle, the roles of technology and the concepts of progress as an ideology all became cultural givens (Sklair 1970). Inevitably this view informed many of the cultural products of early twentieth century modernism which should be understood in the context of increasing urbanisation.

Cities began as market places fortified against attack and were thus focuses of power and wealth, and the forcing houses of culture. In eighteenth century Enlightenment thought the city was depicted as the locus of achievement, where arts, pleasure and industry came together to produce civilization, but by the nineteenth century it came to be seen as a site of vice (Grayling 2004:30). Urban industrialisation was blamed for producing slums, poverty, drunkenness, violence, immorality and dislocation from the assumed health and independence of rural life.

Rural life enthrals people in long rhythms not of time but of recurrence, whereas city life relentlessly pushes people into the future, demanding of them quick thinking and quicker reflexes. Urban existence constitutes a different dimension of human experience, and almost every type of material and intellectual progress is owed to it, as is almost every type of spiritual regress (Grayling 2004:30).

The city was therefore decried but some commentators, like the French poet Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) and other *fin de siècle* decadents celebrated the anonymity and rootlessness of city life and found their inspiration there (Scarfe 1986). The city became an obvious focus of modernity and could be considered a prime illustration of the extent to which change is an integral dimension of the modern experience (Cowdell 2002:2).

In twentieth century thought and criticism modernity itself came to be considered as a constant condition of change (Berman 1982). Because of a wish to define modernity as a philosophical concept in its own right independent from the 'Modern' period from which it derives, many writers prefer to use the lower case initial for all meanings of the word (Ferne 1995:349).

'Modernism' is a term borrowed from post World War II art criticism to lump together a set of ideas and practices regarding the aesthetic control of space and surface, structural rationalism and social utility (Benton 2006:7). It is employed by art and design historians to refer to art and design produced as a reaction to the conditions of modernity. The actual term 'Modernism' itself only seems to have gained currency in the 1960s when it superseded references to the 'modern movement in art and architecture'. Modernism can be thought of as a tendency in art and design that began around 1880. In the late nineteenth century modernism had a social agenda - its practitioners wanted to improve society and challenge the establishment and engage with social and political change. From the early twentieth century modernism was pre-occupied with form and the idea of

abstraction, which sets visual and aesthetic experience above narrative, illusion, decoration or moral effect. Early twentieth century modernism stressed the importance of the creative individual's independence from society, and designers rejected the use of features from earlier styles and designed in terms of 'abstract' form, which resulted in the aesthetic and symbolic aspects of the movement being underplayed (Woodham 1997:241).

The design historian's use of the term 'Modernism' came to be employed as a way of anchoring the 'modern' in some sort of historical, stylistic, recognisable formulae that resulted in a period of twentieth century design during which the term itself became defined by a particular canon of rules and principles. This was illustrated by the International Style in architecture whose protagonists made social assumptions, in a rather paternalist way, about a rational approach to design and living (Cowdell 2002). The strongly Utopian element within Modernism, which resulted in a rather dictatorial stance, led to its position as a predominant discourse in twentieth century design, and this has been criticised at length by Richard Wolin in (1992) *The Terms of Cultural Criticism*.

Functionalism can be defined as the idea that objects made to be used should be simple, honest and direct, that is, they should be well adapted to their purpose, devoid of ornament, standardised, machine made and reasonably priced. Most importantly they should also be expressive of their structure and materials, a notion which has defined the course of 'progressive' design since the beginning of the twentieth century. This aesthetic has become synonymous with what is modern, and its antitheses – ambiguity, ornamentation, individuality, and complexity - with what is postmodern (Bertens 1995).

Functionalism was not originally allied to style, material or context, and its purist criteria have been applied over the last century and a half to vastly different types of objects. Historically, however, they have been directed most often toward items made for use in the home, where the dangers of excessive ornamentation, flamboyance, and individuality were more likely to be lurking (Marcus 1995:9).

The functionalist argument carried so much weight, because divorced from art historical development, Modernist architecture was meant to be timeless and valid in the encounter between purpose and material. It seemed to guarantee that architecture was now orientated towards viewpoints that were constant and lay within the nature of man or the characteristics of materials (Pehnt 1965:17). This association with functionalism has done much to reinforce the perceptions of critics who have portrayed modernism as dehumanising (Benton 1990:41-53).

Design, as it was understood for most of the twentieth century, required modernity. The concept of design and designers as constituting a separate area of activity within material production is a recent invention. Virtually all design in the twentieth century has existed in some kind of relationship to industry, which itself is considered a product of modernity, though archaeologists and medievalists might not agree with this assessment. Medieval scholar and social historian Jean Gimpel (1975) argued that Europe in the Middle Ages experienced the first true Industrial Revolution, in some ways more significant than the popularly accepted turning point in the nineteenth century.

Therefore, as a working generalisation, the factors which identify an object as a piece of modern design would include the suitability of the form for its intended function, the truth to the qualities of the materials used, aesthetic qualities of line and volume, surfaces devoid or sparing of decoration and ornament and the method of the object's production (Fisher and North-Bates 2001).

The Design Process, Design Practice and the Role of the Designer

In pre-modern societies design is considered, by Western writers, to be a collective, unselfconscious process which develops and progresses by evolution and trial and error. People learn how to build and make objects by copying existing methods and forms in an informal way, without the aid of formulated rules. However, there are often unspoken rules which can be used in a rigid way; traditional approaches to materials and forms may be based on religious or mythological attitudes resulting in a firmly set tradition which is strongly resistant to change.

The modern process of design is usually represented by designers and design historians as being self-conscious, and the existence of design education *per se* is an indicator of self conscious doing.

(The designer's) self conscious recognition of his individuality has a deep effect on the process of form-making. Each form is seen as the work of a single man and its success is his achievement only. Self-consciousness brings with it the desire to break loose, the taste for individual expression, the escape from tradition and taboo, the will to self determination (Alexander 1962:23).

The difficulty is that in modern design one person or, more usually, a small group of people is expected to achieve, in a few hours, what once took centuries of adaptation and development. Contemporary designers usually work in teams as no one person can have sufficient expertise in all areas of new product development. Computer-aided design is now a dominant way of working and networked computers, in principle, allow for collaboration with many designers over a wide geographical area. The design process involves iteration, going over a problem time and time again until the crucial difficulties are solved.

Although the majority of modern design practice is essentially a collaborative practice, the tradition of authorship still privileges the individual. Modern ideas also emphasise the individual, and thus the designer is often seen as a solitary male genius, sometimes unappreciated by his contemporaries but ultimately valued by posterity. This idea originated in late nineteenth century Romanticism, but continued to be promulgated in texts such as Pevsner's (1936) *Pioneers of the Modern Movement*, reprinted in 1950 by the Museum of Modern Art, New York as *Pioneers of Modern Design: From William Morris to Walter Gropius*, and is still perpetuated by celebrity designers today.

It could be argued that the modern concept of 'genius' is used as a marketing strategy by designers. When consumers purchase a designer-name product they are buying into 'mythic' power as well as material status. A designer's name on a product makes it more culturally valuable as well as more expensive. An iconic piece of late twentieth century product design is Philippe Starck's *Juicy Salif* lemon squeezer, originally produced by Alessi in 1990, and the subject of much debate concerning its functionality. Its status as a design icon turned art object was emphasised by Alessi's production of a gold plated limited edition in 2000 to celebrate the millennium. Purchasers were advised that the lemon squeezer should not be used but was best cared for by displaying it on one's bookshelves (Alessi 2002:85).

Designers claim to value and to respond to the opinion of end-users but in actuality because of the economic and organisational constraints affecting modern production methods, the options available to the designer on behalf of the consumer are very limited. Designers also have to understand cultures other than their own in the global market place. By consciously adopting a participant/observer position designers now find themselves in the role of ethnographer, and design theorists are concerned with an

ethnography of technology, considering it a 'total' social phenomenon, simultaneously material, social and symbolic (Pfaffenberger 1988).

We all make things and use some form of the design process, but design professionals and educators would argue that it does not make us all designers; to be a designer requires a design education (interview with design educator Frederick M. Brown 04.10.2005). The modernist approach to design and design history has tended to marginalise democratic, collaborative and anonymous design and non-genius driven or non-fashion related design such as civil and mechanical engineering, medical design and ecological design.

Western modernist, capitalist culture has a fascination with the new, which is seen as oppositional to the conventional, the traditional and the past. Novelty has been presented as having value in itself and the development of twentieth century modernism has placed a premium on the new. The nature of consumerism has created a constant demand for new products and new product development, encouraging 'built-in obsolescence' and having scant regard for environmental concerns. Technology has had a major impact on the production forms and content of cultural products. It has also contributed to a vast development of information about cultural products, contributing to the 'value added' dimension of design and, at the same time, has consolidated certain ways of interpreting it. The channels of communication through which design and culture are mediated are also responsible for confirming 'popular' perceptions of design which have become institutionalised through such media. This is examined further in Chapter Three in relation to Modernist design in Britain 1930-1950, and in Chapter Seven in relation to the influence of complementary practices and spirituality on contemporary British design.

The Modernist Hegemony: Modernism as the Predominant Discourse in Twentieth Century Design and Design History

It has been widely assumed that the history of twentieth century design is the history of the modern or of modernism. This attitude has privileged forms of design which were considered 'advanced', innovative or *avant-garde* at the expense of 'popular', 'conservative' and even 'mainstream' design. This kind of historical representation was not effectively challenged until the rise of post modernism in the 1970s (Bertens 1995) (Storey 1993) and still dominates representations of twentieth century design history. It has resulted in an emphasis on the role of 'innovative' individuals whose historical importance has been seen in terms of the extent to which they pioneered new developments. This approach has created a partial and polemical interpretation of twentieth century design history which has, for the most part, excluded that which has not been recognised as 'modern' (Attfield 1997: 268).

In design history the term International Style or International Modernism is used to describe the modernism that came out of the Bauhaus in Germany and Le Corbusier's studio in France, in the 1920s, and which was first promoted under that label by the Museum of Modern Art in New York, in such exhibitions as (1932) *Modern Architecture International Exhibition*, (1934) *Machine Art*, and (1938) *Bauhaus 1919-1928*, thus causing the International Style, also known as Modernism with an initial upper case, to become the standard bearer of modern design (Wilson 2004:137).

The central text of modern design was seen to be Le Corbusier's (1923) *Vers Une Architecture* in which he set out the principles which were to govern modern design and architecture for virtually most of the twentieth century. Le Corbusier's five points of modern style in relation to domestic architecture were the use of pilotis to raise the

building from the ground, the provision of a roof garden allowed by the flat roof, the freedom of the interior plan and of the facades permitted by the frame structure since neither internal nor external walls had to be structural, and the use of strip windows to fill interiors with light (Wilkinson 2000:171-2). He remarked on 'buffoons who believe in decorative art' (Hapgood 1992:156) and his interiors and furniture designs were similar to those of the Bauhaus, rejecting the decorative in favour of the functional (Gibbs 1999:161). However Le Corbusier's interest in non-rational and spiritual approaches to design, exemplified by his use of concepts from Alchemy in his development of the Modulor system of proportions, were glossed over by those who wished to emphasise the rationality of the modernist movement (Frampton 2001:23).

Writers and critics championed modernism as a rational approach to architecture, design and manufacture. Reginald Blomfield's 'This Modernismus' interview with Eric Newton, a broadcast radio discussion on 25 February 1935, included in R. S. Lambert's (1938:135-144) *Art in England*, is an early illustration of 'the debate' which has continued from the 1930s to the present day in both academic and popular discussion. By the mid 1930s the rationalists seemed to have won the theoretical arguments, although manufacturers and consumers were slow to follow their lead, and were thus considered by the establishment to need some encouragement in embracing Modernist principles. J.M. Richards' article 'Towards a rational aesthetic' in the industrial design special issue of *Architects' Review* (vol. 78, Dec 1935) examined the characteristics of modern design in the light of the machine aesthetic and included an illustrated catalogue of 'what well designed objects of everyday use are available on the market today' (Coulson 1979:65).

Design historians consider the most influential text that argued for the superiority of the International Style to be Pevsner's (1936) *Pioneers of the Modern Movement* which

presented an heroic approach to Modernism. For several decades following the publication of this seminal text, accounts of twentieth century design were dominated by investigations into the Modern Movement and its antecedents in the design reform movement of the nineteenth century. The reasons for this are historically and ideologically complex, and design historian Jonathan Woodham suggests that they derive from the widespread, ready availability for historical analysis of the considerable legacy of the modernists' output (Woodham 1997:29). The survival of Modernist design in terms of both design production and the written word is evidenced in the collections of many leading museums, art libraries and archives throughout the Western industrialised world.

Modernism inherited many attitudes from the *Avant-garde* (Poggioli 1968) including that of a constant antagonism towards tradition and established convention. The anti-conventional becomes a convention in itself, which may be exactly how Modernism as distinct from Modernity, managed to establish itself. It is necessary to emphasise the time it takes for 'advanced' ideas to filter through to mainstream consciousness. More popular, less 'highbrow' publications and products are often the vanguard of the process. This is an important consideration in the argument of the later chapters of the thesis which investigate the representation of complementary practices and spiritual influences on design in the popular media. Early expressions of a humorist critique, exemplified in the following rhyme

The talent of JEANNERET (CORBUSIER),
Many architects tried to abuse away
Growling: "Houses like planned blocks
With bits off a band-box –
A style that can only amuse a day" (Gordon and Bateman 1944:59)

lost their edge as a tacit acceptance of modernism ensured the new hegemony.

The effective institutionalisation of Modernist ideas after World War II, supported by the strong economic arguments in favour of the immediate benefits of Modernist style architecture in rapid and cheap post-war reconstruction, confirmed the Modernist hegemony in design and design history.

The situation became clear four or five years after the end of the Second World War. Around 1950, Olympus was unanimous and the gods distributed their gifts... International Style, Functionalist Rationalism or whatever they were called were of equal importance to the 1950s (Pehnt 1963:21-22).

As 'modern' in its original sense of 'contemporary' and 'new' became increasingly associated with Modernism, this led to an industry of exegesis by art and design historians (Harrison 1994:18). By the late 1940s and the 1950s, a post-war optimism and the hope of building a better world, exemplified by the United Kingdom's Welfare State, offered a fertile soil in which Modernism could root and by the 1960s Modernism had achieved an institutionalised and hegemonic presence. Modernist ideas and practices were increasingly evident in educational curricula and in design education in particular (Cunliffe-Charlesworth 1991) (Naylor 1999).

The 'triumph' of modernism ensured an interpretation of twentieth century art and design history that privileged Modernism over everything else. In 1945 Modernism emerged as 'the state religion in most countries where it flourished for 20 years before collapsing into the wit, scepticism and agnosticism of postmodernism' (Benton 2006:7). The majority of design history writing continued to present the idea of the unchallenged superiority of International Modernism in both aesthetic and moral terms, until postmodern critiques from the 1970s onwards.

By 1984 Suzi Gablik could start her book *Has Modernism Failed?* with the sentence 'Modernism – the term that has been used to describe the art and culture of the past hundred years is coming to an end' (Gablik 1984:11). In his postmodern obituary to Modernism John Storey noted a celebration amongst critics of a new pluralism following the supposed collapse of the distinction between high and popular culture.

It is a sensibility in revolt against a normalizing function of modernism; its rebellion is an attack on modernism's official status as the high culture of the modern capitalist world. What these critics oppose is not so much the project of modernism as its canonization in the museum and the academy. Their work contains a lament for the scandalous and Bohemian power of modernism, its ability to shock and disgust the middle class. Instead of outraging from the critical margins of bourgeois society... (Modernism) has not only lost the ability to shock and disturb, it has become, central, classical: in a word - canonized. Modernist culture has become bourgeois culture. Its subversive power has been drained by the academy and the museum. It is now the canon against which an *avant-garde* must struggle (Storey 1993:155).

Late twentieth century design historiography demonstrated that, although various design movements across Britain, Europe and the USA in the first decades of the twentieth century were committed to such basic International Style tenets as simplicity, use of industrial materials and functionality, they differed in their prioritization of these. Paul Greenhalgh's *Modernism in Design* (1990), a series of case studies of modernist design practices in Europe and the USA, established 'an awareness of the many modernisms in design', whilst Martin Eidelberg's *Designed for Delight* (1997) provided a thematic look at the tropes in twentieth century design that had been dismissed from the modernist canon, such as ornament and craft, which constitute 'the secret history of modernism' (Eidelberg 1997:17).

Kristina Wilson, in *Liveable Modernism* (2004), proposes a compromise between the International Style and the needs of consumers in the Depression Years, and evidences

this by an examination of domestic design of that period. She demonstrates that inter war modernist design incorporated other practices such as the selected use of craft skills and of whimsical, appealing, ornamental motifs (Wilson, 2004:4). She considers examples that share an interest in formal experimentation, a willingness to engage popular ideas about comfort and familiarity, and a commitment to affordability. Wilson sees these design products as epitomising an overlapping of modernity with modernism, an attempt to integrate the emotional world of consumers with the effects of efficient design (Wilson: 2004:135).

In relation to the assumed association between modernism and rationalism and moral purpose, Wilson makes the interesting observation that in Hollywood films of the 1930s modernism was depicted as a sign of individualism; modernist interiors signified rebelliousness and the instrument through which characters could defy existing social conventions in a liberating but risqué manner. Modernist design was depicted as the chosen style of 'fallen women' or otherwise immoral characters, the style of sin, another version of social non-conformity.

Thus even when cloaked with immoral associations, depression era movies cast modernism as a sign of uniqueness, defiance and self-fulfilment (Wilson 2004:116).

At the end of the twentieth century design history debates about modernism continued unabated for, as Woodham observed 'despite the wide range of material already published in the field, modernism is still an area about which there is still much to research' (Woodham 1997:241).

Modernism and Design in Britain in the 1930s

British architects and designers had been slow to catch on to International Modernism, but when Le Corbusier's *Vers Une Architecture* was published in English in 1927 under

the title *Towards a New Architecture*, his dramatically presented ideas about an ideal modern architecture and its relation to modern life received a wider audience. This book was for many people the first and exciting statement of the idea of machine age architecture (Richards 1953:172).

By the 1930s these ideas were gradually being put into practice, an early example being Joseph Emberton's *Royal Corinthian Yacht Club* building at Burnham-on-Crouch (1931). Other major initiatives on the British design scene such as the foundation of the Society of Industrial Artists (1930) and Government initiatives via Board of Trade investigations and the Gorrell Committee into design education (1931) brought the tenets of modern design into prominence (Cunliffe-Charlesworth 1991:207). For the majority of British architects and designers in the 1930s the representation of modern design as rational functionalism laid claim to be the dominant modern direction. This was promulgated in such exhibitions as the Design in Industries Association *British Industrial Art in Relation to the Home* at Dorland Hall in 1933, its accompanying exhibitions of modern homes held in Manchester and Welwyn Garden City, and the BBC series of radio talks *Design in Modern Life* (1933), all of which were paternalistic in their tone, imposing modern design and architecture as 'healthy for the masses' (Holder 1990:123). In 1934 the Council for Art and Industry was established by the Board of Trade under the chairmanship of design patron, theorist and exemplar of design management Frank Pick (1878-1941) who had been instrumental in the redesign of the London Underground and its corporate identity in the 1920s and 1930s. The Council's remit was to encourage good, i.e. 'modern' design, 'especially in relation to manufacturers' (Coulson 1979:11).

The joint Royal Society of Arts and Royal Academy exhibition of 1935, entitled *British Art in Industry*, confidently asserted that 'the whole world could be planned', and planned

along modernist lines. The exhibition promoted British goods but had a predominantly middle-class outlook with many of the goods on display being crafted objects rather than the results of mass production (Dowling 1935). The proponents of Modernism were more concerned that people spend money on 'good design' rather than surface decoration. The Royal Institute of British Architects *Exhibition of Everyday Things* in 1936 continued the modernist propaganda, and in 1937 Anthony Bertram gave a series of 12 radio talks entitled *Design in Everyday Things*, concurrent with DIA travelling exhibitions, in which he advocated that people, i.e. the lower classes, should live functionally and be educated in 'how to live in terms of design' (Bertram: 1938). The democratization of design was *for* the people, not *by* the people. Bertram's talks and his book *Design* which was based on them are examined in more detail in Chapter Three.

In the 1930s there was much interest in design relating to daily life and this was reflected in popular magazines and newspaper articles, 'the way we live now' being a frequent theme. There was a change in the way in which the home was used, one factor being the lack of domestic servants to service upper and middle class homes, causing the kitchen to receive more attention as the core of the modern house, rather than the drawing room as in pre First World War attitudes (Forty 1986:114). The understanding of the concept of 'home' underwent modification. It was no longer a stronghold of beauty and moral virtue as in Victorian times, now it was a source of physical welfare and health which also reflected on the nation's health. This ideology was summed up in a *Daily Express* article 'The Home of Today' published in 1935.

The home is by far the most important institution in the lives of the British people. It is the centre of interest, not only in the immediate family life, but equally in the wider hustling world of trade and commerce, for its influence is far reaching and all-embracing. For the average British man and woman, each day begins and ends in the family centre. The influence of a happy harmonious home is therefore a national asset... The powerful influence of a well-run home is

therefore a matter of national importance and must be recognised and encouraged as such. Never before has there been such a demand for well-built, scientifically planned houses (Forty 1986:115).

Although the International Modernist style of architecture had pretensions to providing rational and healthful buildings, Le Corbusier's much quoted dictum of 'the house as a machine for living' began to be wrongly interpreted by critics as expressing a cold indifference to the provision of human shelter, especially when applied to 'social housing' projects (Byars 1994:321). By the 1930s the first suspicions began to be voiced that buildings were being designed in such a way as to look good in photographs rather than in actuality. Le Corbusier always carefully controlled images of his work as many leading architects do today, and he also employed the technique of photo montage to imply the realization of works that were still only hypothetical, or on occasion to depict the buildings of others as though they were his own.

His realized buildings were invariably published as Purist set-pieces, pristine, empty, luminous spaces, removed from the quotidian contaminations of domesticity and the inevitable depredations of time, depicted without the furnishings of the occupant and often enhanced by certain objects that implied the elective affinities of Purism – a trilby hat casually placed on a hall table, a clay figure posed on a window sill, an electric fan, a coffee pot, a jug and a fish, these last four being posed together like a still life on the table in an otherwise deserted kitchen (Frampton 2001:33) (Illus. 1).

Architectural photography became a discipline in its own right and was often as important as the architecture itself. Monochrome, with its depth and contrast was, and still is, the favourite medium for the majority of architectural photographers. Famous modernist buildings on the Continent were familiar through photographs, as the vast majority of British architects and the general public had never seen the actual buildings themselves (Pearman: 2004:23)

It is often claimed that the International Style swept Britain. However in reality it was acceptable only to a limited group of people, very often drawn from the same *avant-garde* section of society whose predecessors had patronised the Arts and Crafts Movement (Gore 1991:170). The few early British clients used Modernist architecture not to provide healthy homes and factories for the workers but to create amusing, modern private houses, as it seemed that the British could only accept Modernism as an exotic foreign style, a little like eighteenth century attitudes to Chinoiserie or Classicism (Cruickshank 2002:231-2). In popular culture Modernist design became the butt for humour, John Betjeman's (1933) *Ghastly Good Taste* being a typical example.

The first house in England built in the International Style, *New Ways*, 508, Wellingborough Road, Northampton, was designed by German architect Peter Behrens in 1926 for the engineer and industrialist W. J. Basset-Lowke, who had previously commissioned C. R. Mackintosh in 1916 to remodel his house at 78 Derngate, Northampton (Byars 1994:53, 547). *New Ways* was a single block, white-walled, flat-roofed, oblong-widowed, hard-edged and clean-lined, the epitome of International Modernism. For reasons of local supply, brick was used for the construction not concrete, taking the cost of the building to £2,500, exclusive of heating and lighting, proving that modernism did not come cheaply (Sturgis 2003:9).

The ultimate example of early British Modernist domestic architecture for a typical, upper middle class client was *High and Over*, Amersham, Bucks. built in 1929 by Amyas Connell, Ward and Lucas for Bernard Ashmole, a Professor of Classical Archaeology and a former director of the British School in Rome. The house is an abstract play of forms of walls, floors and roofs, organised on an unusual Y shaped plan. By incorporating an open air sleeping deck it epitomises modernist ideas about health, discussed below. Like

New Ways its structure is a compromise, being a concrete frame with brick infill, rendered white, rather than a totally concrete building as favoured by hard-line Modernists (Wilkinson 2000:171).

Maxwell Fry's *Sun House*, Hampstead (1935) exemplifies British usage of Le Corbusier's five principles of domestic architecture outlined earlier in this chapter. The flat-roofed house is raised above its garage and has ribbons of windows on the main façade (Wilkinson 2000:172). The influential Highgate, London, blocks of flats *Highpoint 1* (1934) and *Highpoint 2* (1938), designed by Berthold Lubetkin and his *Tecton* architectural practice (founded 1932), were intended to demonstrate not only the benefits of collective living but the aesthetic, social, and political philosophy of Modernism which their designer sought to bring to the British public (Cruickshank 2002:228). However Modernist architecture continued to be viewed in Britain as not only essentially foreign and artistically suspect, but also largely irrelevant and functionally inappropriate in the damp, cold British climate. In addition the machine-like and industrial appearance was considered ugly and the democracy of its design and detail was politically worrying in its anti-hierarchical, classless appearance (Cruickshank 2002:231).

Although the British public were resistant to Modernist homes they were happier with Modernist factories in the Industrial Modern style. Engineer Owen Williams designed Britain's first office and factory complex, the *D10 Building* (1933), for Boots the Chemist in Nottingham. The primarily concrete and glass structure was well received by both architectural critics and the Boots' employees who worked there. The iconic *De La Warr Pavilion* (1935-6), a multi-purpose leisure centre at Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex, by Erich Mendelsohn and Serge Chermayeff, was considered to relate to British taste in that

its long, low lines and the emphasis on horizontals were reminiscent of the design of country houses by Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944) and his peers (Wilkinson 2000:173) (Illus. 2). The outbreak of World War II allowed no time for architects and designers to establish any continuity in the development of the International Style in Britain. Even after the war it never regained the necessary momentum 'to break down the resistance of a people conditioned by endemic nostalgia' (Gore 1991:170).

In a sixty year period, only a minute proportion of clients commissioned houses in the International Style, and of these the best are often the ones that architects designed for themselves, such as Serge Chermayeff's house, *Bentley Wood*, at Halland in Sussex, designed in 1934, but not built until 1938 because of problems with the planning authorities (Illus. 3). Although of an all-timber construction, *Bentley Wood* became an icon of pre-World War II Modernism as the house and garden were seen as a unified concept. Landscape architect Christopher Tunnard used a precise cast-concrete paving to give a grid perspective based on the house and the screening beyond, with a Henry Moore sculpture, *Recumbent Figure*, as a focal point for all the horizontals, 'a mediator between a modern house and ageless land' (Brookes 2002:74).

In Britain only some 300 Modernist homes were built in this period, mostly in suburbs where they were architectural misfits and their original owners were often suspected of communism or nudism or both (Calloway 1991:449). Because of the lack of commissions and planning difficulties, many continental architects including Gropius and Chermayeff left for America. Amongst English architects, Oliver Hill, one of the few Modernist architects whose work was promoted by *Country Life* magazine, found sympathetic and rich patrons (Holder 190:135). Others provided modern interiors within vernacular shells for patrons who were not wholly committed to the International Style. In many such

cases the client's wish to incorporate antique furniture in their new rooms presented a problem that was never satisfactorily solved by architects and interior designers (Gore 1991:171). Most built-in furniture was painted white and its rounded corners and strong horizontal emphasis showed the Thirties preoccupation with 'stream line modern' which was associated with the excitement of speed and aerodynamics. Precisely because the International Style eschewed decoration in general and ornament in particular, it had little appeal for the very rich and fashionable, although Syrie Maugham's 'chill chic' interiors, based on her design philosophy of 'Elimination is one of the secrets of interior decoration.', were highly regarded (Gibbs 1999:165). Maugham's extensive use of mirrors and walls, upholstery, curtains and furniture in various tones of white, provided a suitably modern and stylish setting for her chic and wealthy clients (Gore 1991:175).

The attachment of the British, and the English in particular, to the concept of the garden and the picturesque (Pevsner 1955:163-180), resulted in the cooler reception that Modernist garden design has experienced in Britain, which parallels that given to Modernist architecture. Whilst Modernist gardens of straight lines, rectangular pools, concrete and steel were produced for Modernist houses in Germany or California in the 1920s and 1930s, in Britain they were considered to have no appeal and the ideal of the rural idyll, epitomised in cottage garden styles, continued to persist even in urban environments (Uglow 2004:266). Christopher Tunnard's (1938) *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* was one of the few responses to the challenge for imaginative Modernist gardens, his part axial, part asymmetrical design of 1938 for St Anne's Hill, Chertsey, is a good example of his work (Brown 2001) (Uglow 2004:269).

The genre of the roof garden developed as a consequence of the accessibility of the flat roofs of Modernist buildings, and was successfully exploited by many department stores.

An early British example was Marjory Allen's roof garden for Selfridges' Oxford Street store in London (1930) a series of design essays on themes including scent, roses and the cottage garden, hardly representative of Modernist garden design (Griffiths 2000:123).

In contrast to the Modernist opposition to decoration many decorative artists enjoyed successful careers in 1930's Britain. Martin Battersby revived the art of the *trompe l'oeil* mural, though its appeal appeared to be sporadic. Mary Adshead received commissions for murals for churches and social settings, the latter in the 'Amusing Style', a term coined by art historian Christopher Reed to describe their cheerful colours and fantastical or exotic subjects (Powers 2005:25). Magazines such as *Vogue* and *House and Garden* featured each new aspect of fashionable decoration, whereas books published by Margaret Jourdain and Albert Richardson and regular articles by Christopher Hussey and Arthur Oswald in *Country Life* brought a new and scholarly approach to domestic architecture and furnishing. This latter approach was directed mainly to the country house as these houses provided a vast source of relevant information and a glimpse into what many regarded as an ideal way of life in glamorous surroundings (Gore 1991:179).

The above examples support Woodham's observation that although modernist design in Britain has received considerable attention from design historians its true significance, as opposed to the wider patterns of production and consumption, has been overvalued (Woodham 1997:60).

Modernism and Health

It could be argued that the flawed essence of Modernism generally is the pursuit of certain 'truth' and thus the power over others and the world, which this certain truth would ensure. Much of the post-Enlightenment pursuit of knowledge in the west has the

dual purpose of certainty and power; as result of this, scientific knowledge becomes the basis for special authority and status in western culture. Those who lack this scientific knowledge base are deemed to have little authority, spurious authority or no authority. Knowledge and authority are closely linked and knowledge is frequently gendered, hence power and authority are gendered (Heath 2004:3). In the twentieth century Western orthodox biomedical culture became locked into the 'certainty-power' seduction, and Modernist thinking also participated in this, resulting in interesting implications in the area of design and health.

In the 1930s, cleanliness and hygiene were equated with progress and civilization, and such attitudes to health became part of the modernist doctrine, which sought to eliminate chaos in matters of design. Modernist architecture was concerned with cleanliness, order, clarity and coherence and in making viable a new kind of architecture that embodied these qualities. Notions of hygiene were linked to whiteness and the use of materials such as glass (Frampton 2001:200).

Hospitals became key proving grounds for radical modernism, because their public and humanitarian agenda of health and efficiency perfectly suited the ideals of the Modernist movement. The motifs of modernism, clean, unadorned surfaces, rational planning, generous natural light and ventilation, and a predominance of white in room schemes and furnishings, rapidly became the aspirational norm. More than any other influence the architects of modernism were fascinated by the sanatorium, a building type dedicated solely to the healing power of place. The *Paimio Tuberculosis Sanatorium*, Finland (1929 - 1933), by Alvar Aalto (1898 – 1976), being a prime example (Watkin 1986:541). An important British example of this radical approach is Berthold Lubetkin's *Finsbury Health Centre* in London. Built in 1938, under the slogan 'nothing is too good for

ordinary people', this much admired experiment in light, space and radical architecture for health made a great impact on one of London's poorest boroughs in the difficult inter-war years (Risebero 1992:107) and is still functioning today.

A prevalent idea during the early Modernist period was that good architecture would bring about health, physically and morally, which in Modernist thinking was associated with the vision of the New Man, the metaphor of the body as a machine for living in. Le Corbusier's conception of the body modular in the modular house epitomises this notion. Morality and health were synonymous in modernist thought, with Le Corbusier going as far as to say that health was a moral imperative. The influence of his friend Dr Pierre Winter, a fascist medic, is attributed to many of Le Corbusier's ideas on design and health, and there is evidence that the architect combined these with his own interpretations of concepts from the esoteric tradition of Alchemy in producing his designs (Frampton 2001:203).

Through his designs, Le Corbusier endeavoured to make a proper environment for the modern city by eradicating dirt, disorder and Expressionist architecture, surgically removing those factors he considered useless or morally diseased. This attitude percolated through to other modernist architects and designers, causing architectural critic Charles Jencks to comment that

The deep metaphor of Modernism is the operating theatre, the hospital, a place where the difficulties of daily life would be expunged, fumigated out (Charles Jencks in *Hidden Hands*: 3. Channel 4, 1999).

In Modernist ideology, the body was still a location of conflict, not a spiritual conflict of good and evil nor a conflict of balance between cosmic forces as it had been in pre-Enlightenment thinking, but a conflict between germs and the body's immune system.

Modernist design reflected the dominant allopathic medical paradigm and denied validity to other ways of thinking about the body and its relationship to its environment.

The Modernist body is no longer a spiritual, metaphysical realm and battle ground, but is an individual person trying to survive toxic, bacterial and viral invasion. Thus the predominant form of intervention in this Modernist model of the body is that of allopathy. There is a battle to be fought, and the body is still the location of that battle (Heath 2004:11).

The Modernist notion of the body as purely biological and the location of invasions by other forms of bodies such as viruses is at one end of a continuum of conceptualisation concerning health and design. The concepts of holism and Complementary and Alternative Medicine and their influence on design and material culture are discussed in Chapter Seven and Chapter Nine

Summary and Conclusion

Modernism was both a collection of formal styles that shared a similar ideology, a set of physical characteristics in a formal sense, such as structural rationalism and truth to materials, and for the majority of the twentieth century, a dominant force and influence. Such has been the power of Modernism's institutionalisation that it is still difficult to challenge the assumption that the history of art and design in the last century *is* the history of Modernism. The narrative of Modernism has been so well constructed that it excludes by omission alternative approaches, processes and products.

This chapter has demonstrated a wide range of attitudes to Modernist design amongst design professionals and the public in Britain during the 1930s and 1940s. This is at odds with the portrayal by the design establishment of modernism as a unified discourse and a rational and logical approach to the problems of design and social order. This attitude

will be examined in the next chapter by reference to three key texts from the period 1930-1950 which were intended for the education of the general reader. The texts display differing approaches within the orthodoxy of modernist design, and evidence some interest in spirituality and design, albeit tangentially.

CHAPTER THREE

FUNCTIONALIST AND ANTI-RATIONAL APPROACHES TO DESIGN IN BRITAIN 1930 – 1950

Introduction and the Argument of the Chapter

The predominance of the modernist discourse discussed in the previous chapter is illustrated here by a close examination of three texts by well-known and respected British design writers and broadcasters of the period who, in each of these works, were addressing the general reader. The aim of each of the writers is to increase understanding and appreciation of design issues by educating the public in the nature of good taste and the application of Modernist principles. The key author, Anthony Bertram spoke as an authority on ‘correct’ design and sought to indicate how the working classes should determine their lives *vis-à-vis* the consumption of appropriate design in the light of the challenges of Le Corbusier and the Modernist rejection of historicist re-interpretations such as the Tudoristic mock timber frame style of 1930s’ British domestic architecture. A contextualisation of these writings is provided by reference to other developments during the period under examination.

The argument of the chapter is that although the British design establishment was keen to promote Modernist design as a rational approach at the expense of other modes of design, non rational and spiritual issues still managed to permeate Modernism to some extent and are evidenced in the three key design texts selected for investigation.

Anthony Bertram and the Notion of ‘Correct Design’

Anthony Bertram was a critic, broadcaster and writer on art and architecture, whose outlook was pro-modernist and who had presented Le Corbusier’s ideas to the general British public in his 1935 book *The House, A Machine For Living In*. From October to

December 1937 at the prime broadcasting slot of 8.00p.m. to 8.30p.m. Bertram delivered a series of twelve weekly radio talks on *Design in Everyday Things*. These radio talks were accompanied by a series of articles in *The Listener* and a BBC booklet and were also tied to a weekend conference of the Design in Industries Association. Radio broadcasts were an ideal mass medium for Modernist propaganda as in 1932 there were an estimated 5 million licence holders representing a potential audience in excess of 24 million listeners (Holder 1990:124).

Bertram began the series with a general talk entitled 'What does the Public Want?' in which he outlined the results of his research amongst a self-selecting sample of correspondents with under £8.00 a week income (Holder 1990:135). The other broadcasts covered the topics 'What is a House?', 'Living Rooms and Kitchens', 'Bedrooms and Bathrooms', 'Heat, Light and Sound in the Home', 'Housing the Workers', 'Towards a Healthy Social Life', 'Our Streets', 'Public Buildings', 'Places of Work', 'Places of Pleasure' and a conclusion 'From Aeroplanes to Nutcrackers'. This influential series was published subsequently in book format in 1938 under the title *Design* and provides an insight into the design establishment's view of correct design, especially in relation to the home and built environment of the general public, who were regarded as in dire need of education in taste and design.

Bertram defines 'design' as standing for a process from the original conception, through the plan and manufacture, to the finished object and considers that a well-designed object must be honest in three ways:

It must confess the purpose for what it is constructed, the method by which it is constructed and the material of which it is constructed (Bertram 1938:130).

In accord with his fellow Modernists Bertram has no time for traditional styles of design or historicist re-interpretations, such as the Tudoristic beloved by speculative builders of suburban houses, and states 'We must kill by ridicule the absurd 'ye olde worlde' cult that has affected British design with dishonesty' (Bertram 1938:19). He also condemns the idea that designers should look to nature for inspiration, since in his opinion 'art involves the idea of human creation of a thing made by man and there is no reason on earth why it should look remotely like a natural object' (Bertram 1934:14).

Sensitive to criticism of the Modernist design dictum 'fitness for purpose' Bertram denies that this implies '... a monotonous, materialist utilitarianism. Part of the purpose of some buildings is to create in the spectator or user a state of awe' (Bertram 1938:40). On how this is to be achieved he is less explicit although he remarks, in relation to modern hospital design, that old institutional atmospheres had been replaced by 'pleasing design which had a definite psychological benefit to the patients' (1938:44), however his statement is not supported by evidence or statistics.

The element of control in Bertram's attitude is evident from his comments on the 'Tudoristic' disorder of the high street in most British towns, by which he means the black and white decorative mock timber framing so beloved of the Victorian craft revival architects, and the multiplicity of revivalist styles, which he considers the price of individualism brought about by the general public's lack of design education.

Until we have a unified understanding of design, a return to the mindful character of great periods like the eighteenth or twelfth centuries, but not a copy of theirs, we shall continue to find good work only here and there, and bad work nearly everywhere (Bertram 1938:45).

This return to order, brought about by Modernism, would benefit especially places of work such as factories, schools and offices since, in Bertram's opinion, the twentieth

century 'is the first century to provide real architecture for work' by 'stimulating, health-giving design' (Bertram 1938:47). Again he gives no detail of how this is to be achieved, nor does he delineate how any particular qualities may be embodied. In discussing the 278 pit head baths built or under construction by the Miners' Welfare Committee in 1937, Bertram claimed they were:

... a perfect example of architecture being a skin fitted around a social activity... (the architects of the Miners' Welfare Committee) wanted to provide as it were a spiritual bath as well, so that the beauty of the buildings is in fact part of their function. (Bertram 1938:49) (Illus. 4).

Bertram does not indicate how he defines 'spiritual' nor discuss the precise details of how this 'spirituality' in design is brought about, but it is interesting that Bertram includes 'spirituality' as a constituent of function and does not consider it irrational to do so. He singles out the baths at Cardowan Colliery in Lanarkshire as an exemplar of this kind of good design, which will affect not only the miners themselves but their friends and families and cause them 'to carry ideas back to their homes of civilized, orderly, beautiful and suitable design' (Bertram 1938:51).

The great importance of design education for the masses is stressed throughout Bertram's writing. This can be delivered by educating the public through the design of cinemas, pubs and dance halls 'to get over their objections to modernist design that it is too like a hospital' (Bertram 1938:52). He bemoans the predominance of the Rococo as the style of pleasure in twentieth century popular design and the expectation that 'pleasure palaces' should still be ornate, 'a sort of architectural whoopee', but remarks that 'we are vulgar in a new way, the modernistic. We produce orgies of super Cubism-deluxe' (Bertram 1938:54).

In his opinion, the antidote to this is buildings such as the De La Warr Pavilion at Bexhill, 'one of the most satisfactory English examples of a building that is true to itself'. This is contrasted with the typical English pub which is 'simply rank bogus Tudor' and the 'supreme form of escape'. He considers the vital question of the influence of escape into the past as a major and detrimental factor in all British design (Bertram 1938:59).

With regard to domestic design and interiors Bertram takes issue with those who take Le Corbusier's famous dictum 'a house is a machine for living in' to imply no home comforts (Bertram 1938:60). He decries 'tradition' epitomised by the 'abominable Tudoristic villa of the Bypass road claiming that 'those of use who advocate twentieth century houses for twentieth century people are the real traditionalists' and is appalled by the stubbornness of the British public in clinging to vernacular styles, claiming 'we can never develop a sound, living tradition in house design while we are hampered by (this) irrelevant sentimentality' (Bertram 1938:62). However Bertram was in the minority with this attitude and it was with glee that his contemporary anti-modernist sympathisers noted that Mme Jeanneret was so distressed by her husband Le Corbusier's insistence on the Modernist interior design fad for a bidet in their bedroom that she had knitted a cover for the offending item, one small triumph of craft over the machine aesthetic, and one which would have been approved of by the majority of the British public (Charles Jencks in *Hidden Hands: a different history of Modernism* (1999) Episode 3, C4 Television).

Bertram considered that 'a completely satisfactory house and its furniture must be made to measure, fitted round the social habits of the family, like a suit around a body' (Bertram 1938:67). Consideration is not given to how changes in the family might render their environment unsatisfactory, though Bertram does recognise some

democratisation of design in that 'designing a room is the one art all but the poorest can practice, the only way in which we can all try to express ourselves' as long as the design expressed is Modernist and not 'traditionalist' and 'irrelevantly sentimental'. People cannot have the taste they want, but the taste an expert deems good for them (Bertram 1938:69). On the design of interiors Bertram proves the ancient lineage of the 1990's clear-the-clutter brigade, by quoting the nineteenth century architect and theorist W.R. Lethaby 'A room, like a garden can only be kept in order by continual weeding' (Bertram 1938:75).

Bertram himself advocates light, preferably white, plain walls, and insists the beauty of woods and textiles should be undisturbed by clutter (Bertram 1938:71, Plate 45). To this end, furniture should be built in. In the kitchen 'open dressers are barbarians' and Bertram denounces great height in furniture, especially in the bedrooms, as wrong, making the following telling comment which suggests Modernists were not so self-confident and rational after all.

I suppose the Victorians were so sure of themselves that they could stand up to their wardrobes. But we have not sufficient self-importance ... The modern world makes us feel small enough, without any help from our wardrobes (Bertram 1938:77).

Those who can stand up to their wardrobes may find Bertram's comments on modern heating interesting in relation to his other attitudes on Modernism and interior design in that the sentimentality he has disparaged elsewhere creeps into his analysis.

One can no more imagine a real English mother knitting by a stove than one can imagine a cricket on an electric heater ... The tradition of the open hearth is largely sentiment today ...but still the sentiment remains and there is no earthly reason why it should not be satisfied as a sentiment ... the open fire should be regarded not as a source of heat but as a decoration, with immense psychological value (Bertram 1938:82-83).

However Bertram and his fellow Modernists, following Loos (1908), dismissed decoration and ornament as unnecessary and unsophisticated and, at worst, a crime. Likewise decorative artist Martin Battersby quoted an anonymous 1930's British Art and Industry Official as saying 'a fondness for ornament is no more readily acknowledged by refined persons than a fondness for gin' which provoked Battersby's riposte that 'refined persons were unashamed in their preference for ornament as in their fondness for gin' and they wanted 'an original and even slightly outrageous decor' (Battersby 1971:166). Battersby considered decoration to be an integral part of design, but the persistence of decoration and ornament in British design was seen by Bertram and others as evidence of the conservative and suspicious nature of the British public, who feared the destruction of familiarity (Bertram 1938:103). This conservatism was especially evident in interior design despite such publications as Derek Patmore's books (1936) *I Decorate My Home* and (1936) *Modern Furnishing and Design* which both presented Modernist design schemes and solutions for the more modest domestic interior.

The Council for Art and Industry, founded in 1934 by the Board of Trade to study the training and employment of designers in industry, now also took on the remit of educating the general consumer. To this end the Council held at the Building Centre in 1937, *The Working Class Home*, an exhibition of furniture and equipment for working class homes, which promoted nationalist, modernist design for the domestic environment. This Government supported exhibition was further publicised by the accompanying catalogue *The Working Class Home: Its Furnishings and Equipment* published by HMSO at the reasonably modest price of one shilling, which nevertheless was probably beyond the reach of most working class families at that time (Coulson 1979:11). In a similar paternalistic vein the selectors for the National Register of

Industrial Art Designers, established in 1937, to maintain and improve the standard of design, warned that 'adapters and copyists need not apply', a direct indication that only modernist design would suffice (Bertram 1938:112).

In his conclusion to *Design* Bertram claimed he was convinced that

out of the chaos of a hundred years, in all its aspects from towns to teapots, a way is being found towards a new and better era of rational and beautiful twentieth century design (Bertram 1938:112).

This conviction may not have been as solid as Bertram suggests, as in a footnote to page 112 he exhorts the reader 'If you are a consumer, you can also help. Insist on good design. Worry your local retailers.'

Design in Britain during World War II

With the outbreak of the World War II it could be assumed that retailers and the general public had more to worry about than design debates, but in spite of the deprivations of war, interest in design was sustained in journals, reviews and even exhibitions. The *Exhibition of Modern British Crafts* held in New York in 1942, organised by the British Council as part of war time propaganda, was a British government attempt to ensure social cohesion via nostalgia and to gain American support for the 'old country'. Design was considered part of the war effort. The Utility Scheme, the evolution of a series of standards and specifications to make the most of war-time and post-war shortages came into effect from 1941 and ended in 1953 (Byars 1994:561). Under the direction of a committee set up by the Board of Trade Utility schemes were evolved for many industries, though those for furniture and clothing are best known in design history writing. The furniture maker and designer Gordon Russell, who had final approval of designs for the range of Utility furniture, looked for inspiration to Britain's craft heritage rather than International Modernism *per se* (Coulson 1979:67).

Another government body, the Colour, Design and Style Centre, established in Manchester in 1942 by Sir Raymond Streat, Chairman of the Cotton Board, was the first design centre in the world dedicated to one particular industry. It became famous for its innovative approach, including international market research, scholarships for students and exhibitions, as Sir Raymond realised the industry would have to redirect itself after the war. The Centre attracted a number of former Bauhaus teachers and students, including Margaret Leischner and Marrienne Straub, who introduced a Modernist influence to British textiles (Weltge 1993:127).

J. M. Richards and the Future of Modern Architecture

A major popular design history text of the 1940s was J.M. Richards' *An Introduction to Modern Architecture* (1940, revised 1953). By modern architecture Richards meant

the new kind of architecture that is growing up with this (twentieth) century as this century's own contribution to the art of architecture (Richards 1953:16).

As an apologia for Modernism, Richards' book acknowledged the uphill struggle in getting the style accepted by the British public. Richards acknowledged that the 'man in the street' would be bewildered by modern architecture and that the concept of functionalism or 'fitness for purpose' would sound 'sensible if rather inhuman' to him. The modern style was something he would suspect 'simply because he is naturally conservative' and he would hold the idea that 'the people who are responsible for the new architecture are cranks, foreigners, revolutionaries or other kinds of people that he disapproves of' (Richards 1953:9).

Richards says that his book is simply trying to enlarge understanding

... by describing to people who do not pretend to know anything about architecture, how these new buildings come to look as they do, why they are different for other reasons than the sake of being

different and why their designers believe them to be the forerunners of a new architecture of the future (Richards 1953:11).

It is obvious that Modernism is a serious and intellectual matter in Richards' eyes as he laments 'the vulgarisers who joined up with the movement only in order to cash in' (Richards 1953:11). In this category he places 'all the makers of jazz modern shop fronts in chromium plate and glass, all the purveyors of smart angular furniture and all the builders of nasty 'modernistic' villas' (Richards 1953:11) and concurring with Bertram, Richards derides architectural referencing to past styles, being highly critical of 'houses that look like miniature castles, petrol stations that look like medieval barns and department stores that look like the palaces of Renaissance bishops' (Richards 1953:33). He explains why modern architecture looks the way it does because of the materials used and the factory production of the parts of a building, rather than their execution in the hands of an individual workman. Prefabrication and the effect on design of the specialisation of labour is 'one reason why architecture can never be the same again' (Richards 1953:33).

In regard to the future development of modern architecture Richards prophesies that the next stage

will be towards its humanisation, possibly through the greater use of *natural* materials such as wood and stone, and materials such as brick which mellow with time, and certainly through the evolution of shapes and textures that will produce a richer and more sympathetic character than that which derives from the frigid forms of geometry (Richards 1953:60).

This seems to indicate that he acknowledges Modernist architecture can be seen as unsympathetic and frigid, but he considers it will become 'more apparent that a new architecture based on scientific progress would satisfy modern needs, both practical and spiritual' (Richards 1953:61). However, like Bertram, he does not identify exactly how

modern architecture might fulfil spiritual needs, but by making some kind of appeal to them, he can justify the theories and practice of modern architecture to a suspicious and unconvinced general public.

Richards names as the leading Modernist architects working in England, Wells Coates, Maxwell Fry, Owen Williams, Joseph Emberton, T.S. Tait, Connell, Ward and Lucas, Lubetkin and F.R.S. Yorke (Richards 1953:85). In the 1930s England for a time became the leading light of Modern architecture, helped by the presence of several eminent refugee architects from Nazi Germany, including Walter Gropius, Erich Mendelsohn and Marcel Breuer. At first private houses constituted a very large proportion of the total number of modern buildings in Britain and in Richards' opinion the identification of Modern architecture in the early days almost exclusively with houses was not to its advantage (Richards 1953:96).

Just as Modern architecture began to be applied to larger public schemes, such as the Ladbroke Grove working class housing schemes of 1936 by E. Maxwell Fry (Illus. 5) and Atkinson, James and Wirryns, and S. Tait's work for the 1938 Glasgow Exhibition, the outbreak of war in 1939 put a stop to all civilian building. The war effort redirected resources away from architecture and the fear of increased anti-Semitism in Britain and of a possible Nazi invasion led many of the émigré continental Modernist architects to move to the USA. Richards also blames the slow acceptance of Modern architecture in Britain on 'the traditional conservatism of various Government authorities which did not encourage modernist architecture' (Richards 1953:96).

Considering Modern architecture after World War II, Richards sees it as being 'renationalised' and proposes a *regional* rather than a national or international modern architecture:

...a permanently international architecture would not even be produced by literal functionalism ... the geographical boundaries are the important ones (Richards 1953:104).

The positive aspects of Modern architecture in Britain according to Richards were that architecture had been 'brought into a close relationship with social needs as never before' and that the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act enabled building and land use to be 'controlled and planned in advance in the public interest' (Richards 1953:114). He cites new towns such as Harlow, planned by Frederick Gibberd, and Hatfield planned by L. Brett, as the best examples of the work brought about by the 1946 Act, and 'school building generally' (Richards 1953:117). However in Richards' opinion

Britain's experience of Modern architecture since the War has been a mixture of disappointment and fulfilment ...national economic circumstances limited the building programme to housing, schools and factories, the three most essential kinds...and too much emphasis had been placed on cheapness as to altogether inhibit the architect's free exercise of his art (Richards 1953:113).

The emphasis on cheapness, resulting in substandard modernist design was the main factor in the erosion of the Modernist hegemony, discussed later in this chapter.

John Gloag and *The English Tradition in Design*

As part of the renationalisation of Europe after the Second World War texts such as John Gloag's (1947), *The English Tradition in Design* contributed to the debates around Modernism which was still perceived negatively by the majority of the British public. Gloag had already written (1934) *Design and Modern Life* and (1935) *Industrial Art Explained*. This latter book had virtually coincided with Herbert Read's (1934) *Art and Industry* and had contributed to the design debates leading to the 1935 Royal Academy

exhibition *British Arts in Industry*. Gloag was the author responsible for (1944), *The Englishman's Castle* and so would appear to be well qualified to attempt a synthesis of Modernism with traditional British design values.

In contrast to the texts by Bertram and Richards discussed above, even the actual presentation of *The English Tradition in Design* itself suggests it is aimed at a slightly different audience. Both Bertram's and Richards' books were part of the Penguin Pelican Book series and were published in the standard Pelican paperback format of a turquoise blue and white cover, using san-serif typography, modernist graphics and the Pelican logo. Gloag's book was published as part of the King Penguin series, presented in hardback, with a printed cover design of fuchsia flowers and leaves in saxe-blue and lime green on a beige woven textural background, with a printed title plate in white san-serif capitals on a black ground, which recalls the tradition of applied title plates in traditional craft book binding (Illus. 6). The cover design was by William Grimmond from a textile design created by Eva Crofts for Donald Brothers, Dundee and exemplifies a marriage of craft and industry which Gloag champions in the book's contents.

As previously discussed Gloag had written widely on architecture and industrial design, but now turned his attention to the factors which he considered definitive for English design:

the deep affectionate sympathy for materials, that sense of apt selection and gay orderliness in the forms of embellishment which are inseparable ingredients of the English tradition of design (Gloag 1947:8).

Gloag considers the English tradition 'severely qualified' by imported fashions from the mid-sixteenth century onwards, but maintains that 'in the country the English tradition

of design persisted', preserving 'that basic English characteristic, commonsense, which demanded stability and delighted in good workmanship' (Gloag 1947:16). Gloag also claimed that the English had 'a national appreciation of good proportion' which determined the nature and placement of ornament, and was derived from eighteenth century classic systems of design. In his opinion this had been virtually destroyed by the Industrial Revolution and by the Victorians 'who had mistaken ornament for design and comfort for civilisation', and who had been misled by the Romantic Movement, itself inimical to good design, and by Ruskin, who had promoted Gothic forms (Gloag 1947:23). Gloag was in favour of William Morris and his realisation that 'the only hope for England and its skilled and patient people lay in restoring respect for well made things' (Gloag 1947:24).

Gloag noted that the craftsman could also be a designer and re-emphasised the importance of the knowledge of materials, which Morris had considered the 'wellspring of English skill' (Gloag 1947:25). Gloag cites furniture maker and founder of the Cotswolds Arts and Crafts movement Ernest Gimson (1864-1919) as an outstanding example of the artist-craftsman, on account of his return to seventeenth century English styles in his furniture design. Gimson had refused to join the Design in Industries Association because he did not wish his furniture to be made by machine (Byars 1994:215), but Gloag glosses over this.

In relation to industrial design and 'the possibility of designing things properly for production by machinery' Gloag again emphasises the understanding and appreciation of materials and quotes W.R. Lethaby's pronouncement of 1890 - 'the easy contempt we feel for iron is the direct result of our unworthy treatment of it' (Gloag 1947:29). The

truth to materials of the English tradition in design is, in Gloag's opinion, comparable to the truth to materials of Modernist design and is legitimised by it.

As far as a national idiom in English design can be discerned, Gloag refers to J.M. Richards' article 'Black and White' in the *Architectural Review* of November 1937:166, which sees this idiom as:

one that gets its architectural effect through its disposition of contrasted areas of black and white applied to the surface of an object ... its origin being nautical, from bathing huts, buoys, capstans, lighthouses, black gun ports on white hulls of sailing ships, sign posts, belisha beacons (Richards in Gloag 1947: 31).

The Victorian black and white re-invention of the dreaded Tudoristic mock timber framing of buildings is not considered part of this idiom. Gloag argues that between 1900 and 1914 this 'national idiom' forced its way through again because of 'a national capacity for dealing with problems in a compact and orderly way', a trait responsible, in his opinion, for the setting up of such bodies as the Design in Industries Association in 1915 and the British Institute of Industrial Art in 1920 (Gloag 1947:32). In the contemporary interpretation of English tradition Gloag observes three aspects from the 1920s onwards - 'the genius for apt use of materials, the capacity to evolve tidy forms, and to invent gay finishes'. He identifies as exemplars of this tradition R.W. Symonds and the brothers Gordon and R.D. Russell in furniture, and Wells Coates, Frederick Gibberd and Maxwell Fry in architecture (Gloag 1947:35).

Gloag concludes that the real English genius for design

'was masked by a false 'Olde England', a shoddy and flimsy of taste which still persists. The real English tradition in design is alight and alive today all about us ... the spirit of England resides: exuberant and vivid as ever; different in execution but changeless in character (Gloag 1947:36).

Gloag never actually defines the English tradition. Although couched in rationalist terms, his view point is quite romantic, similar in attitude to Powell-Pressburger films of the 1940s such as *A Canterbury Tale*, a yearning for the past and a need to see its continuation in a hostile present and an uncertain future. His discussion skirts around intangible spiritual values, but does not address them directly. *The English Tradition in Design* is an interesting contrast to Richards' *Introduction to Modern Architecture* - Gloag is a romantic rationalist whereas Richards openly acknowledges spiritual values and qualities in design though he does not fully explore them.

Post World War II Interior Design in Britain

In the post-war period the interior design world was becoming increasingly professionalised, and required the designer to have technical knowledge as well as creativity and flair. Despite the introduction of modern materials and Modernist style the English tradition in interior design remained uppermost. The most influential interior design establishment was that of Sybil Colefax and John Fowler who had been in partnership since 1938 and whose 'country house' (Illus. 7) look proved to be the most important and long lasting style of twentieth century decoration in Britain and the USA (Gibbs 1999:164,183,199). Colefax and Fowler remains a leading interior design practice and its signature style is still influential at the beginning of the twenty-first century, with many reworkings of its blend of comfort and elegance, often described as 'humble elegance' (Byam Shaw 2003:104).

The height of John Fowler's career was in the 1950s and 1960s; he proposed extreme comfort, which should never give the appearance of luxury, and a proper sense of scale, where over scaling is not merely preferable to under scaling but is sometimes desirable. For every commission he undertook careful research with painstaking attention to

architectural detail and utilised 'his unrivalled sense and fearless use of colour' (Gore 1991:181). Fowler retired in 1969 but continued as the National Trust's advisor on decoration until his death in 1977. Many of his heritage colour formulations are still available in National Trust and Farrow and Ball paint ranges. The growth of the National Trust and the steady increase since World War II in the number of stately homes and country houses open to the public made it possible for large numbers of people to gain an insight into the decorative styles of the past, and also to perpetuate the Colefax and Fowler country house style.

Summary and Conclusion

As evidenced in the texts investigated in this chapter and despite the best efforts of the British design establishment, design writers, critics and educators, throughout the twentieth century British consumers aspired to a *metissage* of Modernism, Revivalism and other influences, including those that this thesis designates as complementary and spiritual and which will be explored in later chapters. Focussing on the later Modernist period in Britain the next chapter explores how a selection of British designers from 1955 to 1970 developed differing approaches to Modernism, not all of them based on rationalist functionalist principles.

CHAPTER FOUR

BRITISH MODERNIST DESIGN AND SPIRITUALITY 1950 – 1970

Introduction and the Argument of the Chapter

In the immediate post World War II period reconstruction was the most pressing need and Modernism was overtaken by Utility. However British architects and designers still wanted a style that was both effective and morally correct and they stuck resolutely to Modernism, with its tenets of truth to materials and the demands of function as a fitting style for an industrial society (Wilkinson 2000:179). British design moved further away from a strict interpretation of International Modernism and expanded on J.M. Richards' challenge to evolve a national or regional style of modernism suited to British consumption. This chapter examines a selection of these attempts.

The argument of the chapter is that despite the rational façade of the Modernist discourse spiritual influences on design were evidenced in the products and practices of British Modernism 1950-1970. The failure of Modernism in social housing in particular allowed for other approaches to design which were interested in complementary and spiritual issues.

The Festival of Britain 1951 and the Invention of a British Modernist Style

The major design event of the 1950s in Britain was the 1951 London *Festival of Britain*, the buildings and displays exemplifying the struggle between Modernism and tradition in British design and culture and evidencing an uneasy compromise between the two.

Richards commenting on the Festival in 1953, remarked that:

The result, lively and colourful, provided a tonic that English architecture badly needed, and proved to the public, who had hitherto seen modern architecture only in a more or less utilitarian guise, that it was also capable of richness and fantasy (Richards 1953:118).

Sir Roy Strong, looking back on the Festival in 1976, wrote that it has 'attempted to reconstitute a future' based on a new secular mythology which set out to tell 'one continuous interwoven story ... of British contributions to world civilization in the arts of the people' not of its Empire, but of its Commonwealth, a necessary post-war re-invention (Banham 1976:8).

Design historian Adrian Forty, writing in 1976, considered the Festival to have been a celebration of the achievements of the Labour Government, fiercely nationalistic and anti-imperialist, implying that Britain was recovering from the economic disaster of the Second World War, when in fact the real shakiness of Britain's economy was beginning to be recognised (Forty in Banham 1976:26). However the Festival of Britain was seen by Strong to have

purveyed a remarkably consistent, stylistic statement, not an original one, but derivative from Scandinavian, Italian and Bauhaus modernist design and Mies Van der Rohe. The whole presented a flight of surrealist fantasy, as the *lifestyle* of the new technological age (Banham 1976:9).

The deliberate selection and combination of this type of architecture and decoration as the outward expression of the Welfare State was to have important repercussions. The Festival was a rare instance in modern times of the British Government setting out to promote a style. The Festival epitomised for a whole generation what was popularly accepted as modern:

braced legs, indoor plants, colour-rinsed concrete, Lilly-of-the-valley splays of light bulbs, aluminium lattices, Cotswold type walling with picture windows, flying staircases, blond wood, the thorn, the spike, the molecule: all became the Festival style (Feaver in Banham 1976:54).

Strong criticised the Festival Style as something conceived from the outset as a:

classless style for the masses, for the council flat, for the terrace, and semi-detached house. Even more it was a style of decoration which, in flushing off doors and chipping away Victorian and Edwardian decorative excrescences, could be superimposed on to the interiors of the decayed suburbs of our nineteenth century cities (Banham 1976:9).

Reyner Banham exploded the British establishment myth that the festival created a style that was new, 'valuably English' and influential, especially on popular taste. This, he claims, was propaganda from the Council of Industrial Design and the editors of *Architectural Review*. Critics of the style called it 'flimsy and effeminate' and it met with a good deal of resistance. In Banham's view, even if it is accepted that Festival architecture was not revolutionary, the fact that architects were able to impose it on the public after the festival *was* revolutionary (Banham 1976:193).

Sir Misha Black, one of the organisers of the Festival, said in 1975 that the Festival had

proved that Modern Architecture with a capital M was in fact acceptable ...after the South Bank they realised in fact that this kind of architecture was common currency, that people accepted the South Bank without cavil. And it released a flood of the worst kind of bastardized modern architecture which the country had ever seen and from which we have been suffering ever since (Banham 1976:12).

In the 1950s and 1960s Britain faced a demand for cheap, rapidly constructed buildings, especially houses, and architects and clients alike used Modernist design as a way of building quickly. However materials such as concrete and steel were used without the necessary care, planning and attention to detail that made good Modernist building successful. Many of the resulting buildings were considered dehumanising by their users and a style that was meant to be popular ended up despised by the people it was supposed to serve.

Modernism and the Garden

It was not until the 1950s that any 'modern' movement in garden design took place in Britain, starting with the landscaping and bold, architectural foliage of the gardens for the Festival of Britain, although the overall effect was conservative rather than radical. Peter Shephard, one of the Festival's garden designers, produced a book entitled *Modern Gardens* (1953) that articulated his principles. However Brenda Colvin and Sylvia Crowe were the key figures in British modern garden design in the 1950s. They were more concerned with natural landscape shapes rather than straight lines or futuristic brutalism, the hallmarks of their styles being bare grass with the occasional tree. Colvin and Crowe worked on such public sites as power stations, reservoirs, old slag heaps at coal mines, unifying powerful modern forms of buildings with old landscapes. Crowe also worked on new towns, including Harlowe and Basildon and her book *Garden Design* (1958) introduced the post-war British public to classic garden design principles.

British Modernist garden and landscape designers kept returning to the Picturesque using the straight lines of modern architecture as a frame to make pictures of the garden, in a way reminiscent of eighteenth century tourists and garden planners (Uglow 2004:269).

Marjory Allen and Susan Jellicoe's *The New Small Garden* (1958) attempted to bring modern ideas to the suburban garden, but the majority of the British public resisted such influences.

In 1956, Geoffrey Jellicoe designed a roof garden for Harveys department store, Guilford, based on the first images of the earth as seen from space by the new orbiting satellites. He covered the roof of the store with a mirror of water that both represented and reflected the sky. The astronomical theme was continued by constellations of

stepping stones, fountains like shooting stars and islands of vegetation to simulate the smooth, amoeba-like outlines of nebulae (Griffiths 2000:123).

In public gardens Modernist design was in more evidence. Geoffrey Jellicoe's 1964 landscape for the Kennedy Memorial at Runnymede could be considered to epitomise the understated nature of British modernist garden design. In a woodland garden of refuge, the visitor is lead uphill via a winding path of granite setts to the commemorative stone itself, an allegorical journey, 'an immensely powerful exposition of the garden of death' (Brown 1999:opposite 303).

In the 1960s, the concept of the garden centre was introduced to Britain from the USA and the sale of mature plants in containers along side a huge range of gardening paraphernalia created new groups of consumers. The invention of the peat bag systems for growing plants, the most famous though not the earliest being Fison's *GroBag* launched in 1974, allowed high-rise flat dwellers to garden on their balconies (Griffiths 2000:157).

John Brookes' *The Room Outside* (1969), updated in 1985 as *The Small Garden* became the most influential gardening book of the period. Brookes' designs combined the practical and the aesthetic and were proportionate to the structure and rooms of the house for which they were intended, employing a grid system that could be applied to any size of garden. Brookes' planting schemes encouraged the use of ground cover and the mass planting of low growing plants, Juniper *Blue Carpet* being a particular favourite, and he also advocated the reinstatement of the vegetable plot near to the kitchen door. His style of garden design continued into the 1970s, when 17 million households (two thirds of the population of Britain) had gardens (BBC 2 *Gardens*

through Time 07.12.2004). By the late 1970s any modernist influences on gardens and garden design were declining as the trend for a return to historical garden styles, Victoriana in particular, took hold.

Spirituality in British Architecture in the 1950s and 1960s

Architect and Lecturer Emeritus of the School of Architecture, University of Nottingham, Terry Bestwick, began practising in the 1950s. His work includes the stands at Trent Bridge Cricket Ground, the Woollaton Hall Industrial Museum extension, several Methodist churches in Nottinghamshire, and domestic and new build houses in Norfolk. In discussing the excitement in architectural circles in the 1950s and 1960s, Bestwick said that in his experience of architectural practice, education and training the contemporary debate was not concentrated solely on Modernist form and function, and rationalism (Interviews and conversations with the author, April 2004, May 2005).

Although there was much excitement and interest in new opportunities, fundamental thought was being given to 'the design of schools and houses which worked'. There was also an exploration of how concepts such as spirituality could affect architecture. These ideas were discussed and employed in architectural practice and training but were never overtly included in architectural educational syllabuses. As ever, architecture relied on commission and patronage and what clients wanted and could afford which led to unemotional building, especially in relationship to landscape. The client-architect relationship was also important and there was much secrecy about the agenda of either or both parties, especially where spiritual and emotional factors were concerned, but they were extant and being discussed. Bestwick had been involved in public and private

commissions where these factors had been explicit from the beginning, but he declined to specify particular instances on the grounds of client confidentiality.

In Bestwick's opinion, the spiritual factor in architecture could be and should be approached by the sound architectural practice of channelling people into and through a building, organising and guiding their experience of what, in the 1950s, was called the 'whoosh' effect, evoked by volumetric interest, drama and impact. The handling of the space and light, which Bestwick considers the main spiritual elements, affect mood and response, but acoustics, often purely practical, the distance at which one person can hear another unamplified, are also important but often neglected. Bestwick's comment that all the senses should be affected by experiencing a building links with current archaeological research into shamanic practice in the megalithic monuments of the British Isles, which will be explored *in passim* in Chapter Nine (Watson 2001:178-192). He cites as a pertinent example of design for all the senses the 1956-7 *Woodside Junior School*, Amersham, Bucks, by David and Mary Medd and Clive Wooster. The school was the first to be built in the 'rationalized traditional' method of construction, which incorporated traditional British building materials and Modernist design. The building is designed on a semi-open plan with its vision of progression as a developmental space, sculpturally, ideally and spiritually in relation to the pupils moving through their education (Saint 1987:155-6) (Illus. 8).

Bestwick considers the Fibonacci series, the Golden Mean and proportions derived from them to be the basis of all good architecture since they evoke an instinctive response in humans. Such systems of proportion are especially important in the case of healing environments. The patients' responses to the space will depend on how long they are there, but some response will be immediate. In the actual design process, it is necessary

to balance the requirements of the staff, the people who are there all the time, with those of the patients and visitors whose experience will be more acute and transitory. A more detailed discussion of these aspects, along with evidence-based design in relation to healing environments, will be explored in Chapter Eight.

In Bestwick's experience, any spatial organisational system must be functional and logical in design at the outset. This then leads to embellishment followed by formal decoration, mode and style expressed through systems of proportion. Appropriate responses to a building should enhance the appreciation of its users, who can be told what they are in the building for, just by use of space, light and other design elements. Good architects use deliberate employment of the above factors to produce the desired responses.

In relation to the domestic architecture of the 1950s and 1960s Bestwick explained that the proportions of social housing were often constrained by sizes of furniture - for example, the size of a bedroom was determined by the size of a standard double bed. Architects used the Parker Morris standards in formulating their designs, considering how furniture should be placed in a room. In Bestwick's experience the unquestioning use of grid systems led to a lack of cohesion in post-war building and an anarchical approach to architecture - the 'what do you want? I can build it' approach. The overall unity of a design was often lost or sacrificed, which did not tend to happen in traditional forms of modular housing such as the Neolithic Skara Brae in Orkney or in African compounds.

Many of the churches Bestwick designed for the Methodists in the 1960s were based on these compounds, as non-conformist church liturgy generally tends to be more

egalitarian than its Roman Catholic or Church of England counterparts. In addition to the main space for worship, there was a need for areas for social activity, refreshments, Sunday school and youth club, craft activities, toilets and cloakrooms, storage and so on.

If a church is to do its job it must be designed around the activities of worship it is built to protect. It should do nothing to restrict these activities, least of all to form or restrict these activities into its own patterns...People eating and sleeping should govern the shape of a house: machines and people the shape of a factory: God and people communicating, the shape of a church. A building should be built around its functions and not interfere with them, but it can be positive and expressive by emphasising shapes and forms (Bestwick 1967:615).

In the instance of the *Bridgeway Hall Methodist Church*, situated on a corner plot between two main roads in the Meadows district of Nottingham, a huge cross was erected first and Bestwick's church design was created around it, so the whole building process as well as the design was symbolic. If the church ever has to be demolished then the cross will be the last element of the building left standing. Brick walls built at a multiplicity of shallow angles with narrow windows to the full height of the building allow glimpses of the altar but not of the congregation when viewed from either of the main roads (Illus. 9).

Bestwick's work should be seen in the context of the significant increase in church building of all denominations in England in the 1960s, with variations on the Modernist style used to varying degrees of success. The Roman Catholic Metropolitan *Cathedral of Christ the King* in Liverpool, designed by Frederick Gibberd and Partners was described as a cathedral for the space age not only on account of its appearance but also because of the materials used, mainly steel supplied by United Steels of Sheffield, and the method of its construction. In this and other instances Modernism was seen as the

appropriate style for expressing contemporary spirituality, as evidenced by the article 'How to build a cathedral for the space age' in *The Daily Mail* (09.04.1967).

In conclusion, Bestwick is of the opinion that 'spirituality comes out of function and is a part of function'. By considering the potentiality of materials a sense of appropriateness and order can be given. However 'notions of delight' in building are often negated by compromise resulting from financial and logistical difficulties and that fact that 'patronage can be the despoiler of ideas' (Bestwick, interview 20.04.2004).

The most influential and controversial architects of the period 1950–1970 were Alison and Peter Smithson. In architectural practice from 1950, the Smithsons lead the younger generation of British architects towards the Brutalist style of Modernism (Byars 1994:519). Their crusading zeal to build schools, workplaces and homes for a progressive, more meritocratic post-war society combined with a determination to define a new approach to modernist architecture which would exploit the low cost and pragmatism of mass produced materials and prefabricated, modular construction attracted both acclaim and scathing derision.

The Smithsons' prize-winning design for *Hunstanton Secondary Modern School*, Norfolk (1950–1954) (Illus. 10) was criticised as 'an arbitrary, individualistic essay in the Miesian tradition' and their brutalist use of materials exacerbated noise-levels and was considered to ignore the needs of the children for whom it was built (Saint 1987:185). The school was described by one teacher who had worked there for 34 years as a depressing environment 'more suited to being a prison than a school' (www.designmuseum.org/design/index.php?id=72,02-04-2005).

The 1956 *Ideal Home Exhibition* featured the Smithsons' radical design for *The House of the Future*, a vision in moulded plastic, reliant on technology, with a couple relaxing in what seemed to ultra modern underwear. A more serious exposition of their ideas about the home and the built environment was presented in their book *Ordinariness and Light* (1970), an extended exploration of their theories and work from 1952, in which not only their aesthetic but their political and emotional concerns are made clear. The general theme of the book is the necessity for the invention of an architecture structured by the notions of association. The Smithsons argued that the form of the city and the town must correspond to contemporary human needs via better systems of physical communication and new 'form-concepts' through which society could recognise and realise its new self. These 'form-concepts' included blocks of buildings with walk ways, 'the streets in the sky' concept, which invited much initial acclaim, and later criticism, in examples such as Lewis Womersley's (1961) *Park Hill Flats*, Sheffield. The Smithson's notion of ordering required a committed participation by society at large, which was not forth coming in practice.

Following Peter Smithson's death in March 2003 a re-evaluation of the couple's work took place, resulting the Design Museum's touring exhibition *The Smithsons – From the House of the Future to the House of Today*, (06 December 2003 onwards). One of their buildings which attracted much comment in relation to its supposed spiritual qualities was *Solar Pavilion* (1958), originally known as *Upper Lawn Pavilion*, in Wiltshire. A new two-storey pavilion in wood and glass was superimposed on parts of a derelict stone cottage, an illustration of the Smithsons' 'as found' theory, where instead of their earlier modernist pursuit of gleaming newness, the architects reused and reinvented the existing elements (Illus. 11).

(Solar Pavilion) is intended to be read as a symbolic habitat embracing what (the Smithsons) considered basic human needs - a piece of ground, a view of the sky, privacy, the presence of nature. Solar Pavilion embodies such thinking about the fundamentals that nourish not just man's physical but spiritual needs (Withers 2003:70).

However the Smithsons' more Brutalist schemes could be seen to deny their inhabitants' needs, day in, day out, of the very elements this couple demanded of their weekend retreat. They were accused of being more interested with satisfying their personal design sense than achieving a humanist, functionalist architecture (Saint 1987:186), and this criticism came to be applied to much Modernist architecture as its shortcomings, especially in social housing, became increasingly evident in the late 1960s.

The Erosion of the Modernist Design Hegemony in Design Practice

By the late 1960s a growing campaign of criticism of modern architecture was well underway. A typical reaction came from the *Architectural Review* which published a special edition in November 1967 entitled 'Housing and the Environment'. The magazine criticised a number of celebrated public housing schemes, including Avenham Street, Preston and Park Hill, Sheffield, stating that

...housing since the war has been a failure. It has failed chiefly because it has been isolated from the other aspects of community building; administratively, financially and technically it has become divorced from its true context – the real community (in Risebero 1992:15).

The reason for the dominance of Modernist architecture in the design of social housing was due to considerations of finance and cost of production. The deceptive simplicity of the Modernist style was exploited by many local authorities to produce social and council housing that was cheap and easy to build. The short comings of such buildings, especially in inner city environments, were soon evident and there is evidence to

suggest that this was understood from the outset and was part of the attitude to social housing in Britain. The assumption by the main political parties was that for most people owning one's home was a basic and natural desire and that council housing was for the poor, therefore the standard could be skimped (Benwell Community Project Final Report Series No.4, 1978:2.).

A particular case in point was the estate of council flats and maisonettes in Noble Street and Norwich Place, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Built between 1956 and 1960 there were 19 tenement blocks of three and five storey height in Noble Street, and five five-storey blocks at Norwich Place, which because of bad design soon fell into disrepair and decay and were subject to vandalism by some of the 2,000 frustrated and anguished residents. The anonymous authors of the Benwell Community Project Final Report Series No.4 (1978) *Slums on the Drawing Board* described the flats as purpose built slums, created by political and official will, not the result of accident (Benwell Community Project Final Report Series No.4, 1978:4). The council flats were purpose built to standards as low as possible which resulted in high maintenance costs of £73,000 per annum in 1974. The residents asked for demolition and total rehousing but the Council couldn't afford to knock down the flats as the cost of new housing or modernisation and refurbishment was prohibitive (Benwell Community Project Final Report Series No.4, 1978:11,12,14,37).

The Benwell example was by no means an isolated one. The general criticism of modern architecture at the end of the 1960s had its origins in real, material contradictions and the practical struggles and constraints they gave rise to, and the debate continued for the rest of the twentieth century. From the standpoint of the architectural historian, Bill Risebero cites as particularly influential examples the fire at

the *Summerland* leisure complex in the Isle of Man in 1973, which caused a great number of fatalities; the collapse of the system-built flats at *Ronan Point*, Canning Town, London in 1968, following a gas explosion; protests over motorway proposals, tenants' campaigns, rent strikes and squatters.

Few architectural critics – in strong contrast to their counterparts of the forties – spoke of any structural change in society, but there was no lack of short-term proposals to make the present system more workable: low-rise instead of high-rise; traditional instead of industrialised building: brick rather than concrete (Risebero 1992:15).

After the collapse of *Ronan Point*, the tenants of the Canning Town estate had to fight a long campaign for rehousing and the demolition of the remaining tower blocks, which at last came down in 1991 (Risebero 1991:70).

Architects began to realise that the dogma of one true style of architecture which would do for any building in any situation had to be left behind. The number of differing styles that emerged between the 1970s and the end of the twentieth century, all involved the rejection of the purist ethos of Modernism and a deeper consideration of how buildings would actually be used. Many of them entailed a searching look at the past and how we relate to it, an issue that Modernism had left behind (Wilkinson 2000:180).

Modernism and Health

It could be argued that the flawed essence of Modernism generally is the pursuit of certain 'truth' and thus the power over others and the world, which this certain truth would ensure. Much of the post-Enlightenment pursuit of knowledge in the west has the dual purpose of certainty and power; as result of this, scientific knowledge becomes the basis for special authority and status in western culture. Those who lack this scientific knowledge base are deemed to have little authority, spurious authority or no authority. Knowledge and authority are closely linked and knowledge is frequently

gendered, hence power and authority are gendered (Heath 2004:3). Western orthodox biomedical culture has become locked into the 'certainty-power' seduction. Modernist thinking could also be seen to participate in this 'certainty-power' seduction and this has interesting implications in the area of design and health.

In the 1930s, cleanliness and hygiene had been equated with progress and civilization, and such attitudes to health became part of the modernist doctrine, which sought to eliminate chaos in matters of design. Modernist architecture was concerned with cleanliness, order, clarity and coherence and in making viable a new kind of architecture that embodied these qualities. Notions of hygiene were linked to whiteness and the use of materials such as glass (Frampton 2001:200).

Hospitals became key proving grounds for radical modernism, because their public and humanitarian agenda of health and efficiency perfectly suited the ideals of the Modernist movement. The motifs of modernism, clean, unadorned surfaces, rational planning, generous natural light and ventilation, and a predominance of white in room schemes and furnishings rapidly became the aspirational norm. More than any other influence the architects of modernism were fascinated by the sanatorium, a building type dedicated solely to the healing power of place. The *Paimio Tuberculosis Sanatorium*, Finland (1929 - 1933), by Alvar Aalto (1898 – 1976), being a prime example (Watkin 1986:541). An important British example of this radical approach is Berthold Lubetkin's *Finsbury Health Centre* in London. Built in 1938, under the slogan 'nothing is too good for ordinary people', this much admired experiment in light, space and radical architecture for health made a great impact on one of London's poorest boroughs in the difficult inter-war years (Risebero 1992:107) and is still functioning today.

A prevalent idea during the early Modernist period was that good architecture would bring about health, physically and morally, which in Modernist thinking was associated with the vision of the New Man, the metaphor of the body as a machine for living in. Le Corbusier's conception of the body modular in the modular house epitomises this notion. Morality and health were synonymous in modernist thought, with Le Corbusier going as far as to say that health was a moral imperative. The influence of his friend Dr Pierre Winter, a fascist medic, is attributed to many of Le Corbusier's ideas on design and health, and there is evidence that the architect combined these with his own interpretations of concepts from the esoteric tradition of Alchemy in producing his designs (Frampton 2001:203).

Through his designs, Le Corbusier endeavoured to make a proper environment for the modern city by eradicating dirt, disorder and Expressionist architecture, surgically removing those factors he considered useless or morally diseased. This attitude percolated through to other modernist architects and designers, causing architectural critic Charles Jencks to comment that

The deep metaphor of Modernism is the operating theatre, the hospital, a place where the difficulties of daily life would be expunged, fumigated out (Charles Jencks in *Hidden Hands*: 3. Channel 4, 1999).

In Modernist ideology, the body was still a location of conflict, not a spiritual conflict of good and evil nor a conflict of balance between cosmic forces as it had been in pre-Enlightenment thinking, but a conflict between germs and the body's immune system. Modernist design reflected the dominant allopathic medical paradigm and denied validity to other ways of thinking about the body and its relationship to its environment.

The Modernist body is no longer a spiritual, metaphysical realm and battle ground, but is an individual person trying to survive toxic, bacterial and viral invasion. Thus the predominant form of intervention in this Modernist model of the body is that of allopathy. There is a battle to be fought, and the body is still the location of that battle (Heath 2004:11).

The Modernist notion of the body as purely biological and the location of invasions by other forms of bodies such as viruses is at one end of a continuum of conceptualisation concerning health and design.

Concluding Comments

From Modernism to Post-Modernism, through High Tech to Post-Postmodernism and the current *melange* of styles and approaches., design and design history writing has, in general, remained in thrall to an increasingly suspect hegemony of ‘rationalism’ although this was beginning to break down from the 1970s.

Having established the contextualization for the alternative design history and paradigms the main subject matter of the thesis will now be investigated. The next chapter provides an overview of the challenges to scientific and modernist rationalism which have been extant in design and general British society since the 1930s but have been largely ignored in academic design history writing and design history education. In particular the contributions of alternative lifestyles, Paganism and the New Age Movement in Britain and the concepts and practice of Holism and Ecology will be discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

**ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES, PAGANISM AND THE ORIGINS OF THE
NEW AGE MOVEMENT IN BRITAIN**

Introduction and the Argument of the Chapter

Following the examination of the dominance of the Modernist discourse in mainstream design history, this chapter and the following chapter are concerned with establishing an alternative framework for design history by providing a contextualization and chronology of the main ideas and institutions of the discourse of alternative lifestyles, Paganism and the New Age movement in Britain during the period 1930-2005. These areas tend to overlap and influence one another, but it is possible to discern major themes common to all of them and so allow them to be presented as alternative and complementary discourses to Modernism in British design and society in this period. There is a greater difficulty in identifying the practical outcomes for design in this chapter, chiefly because by comparison the Modernist canon and its legacy are so much easier to illustrate.

The argument of the chapter is that the alternative and New Age movement is more than a synthesis of traditional practices and beliefs and a developing vogue for ethnic imports of various kinds. As related by both commentators and the interview subjects for this research it is an outward expression of an inner conviction regarding one's relationship with nature and a putative higher order, a world view which impacts on lifestyle, consumption and attitude on a daily basis. The ideas underpinning the alternative and complementary discourses need to be made accessible to design historians in order to provide a general picture of their influence on design and material culture.

In this thesis, the term ‘material culture’ is defined as the entire spectrum of products and objects, from high design to popular manufacture, including craft and anonymous design, which is generally deemed available or accessible, either potentially or ideologically, to members of a particular, given society. This definition may vary from the uses of the term ‘material culture’ in disciplines such as archaeology and anthropology but accords with the broader, ‘undisciplinary’ approach of *The Journal of Material Culture*. The structure of this chapter will tend to the chronological approach rather than the thematic, so as to allow a clearer picture of the development of alternative stances to the rise of Modernism to emerge. Supporting evidence from the informal interviews is indicated by respondents’ pseudonyms, in the order in which they appear in Appendix One, given in brackets after the particular topic or comment.

The Alternative and New Age Movement in Britain

The alternative and New Age movement is often presented as an American phenomenon imported into Britain as part of the counter culture of the 1960s (Drury 2004) (Marwick 2000). Academic enquiry into a comprehensive history of the alternative and New Age in Britain had been somewhat restricted until the 1990s (Bloom 1991, Heelas 1996). Recent research has concentrated on the religious and ethnographic aspects rather than the design and material culture of alternative and New Age groups (Blain 2002) (Blain *et al.* 2004) (Harvey 1997) (Wallis 2003). The influence of eastern mysticism, paganism, spiritualism, and alternative lifestyles, including complementary and alternative medicine and holistic health, and experimental communities can be considered important factors in the development of the alternative and New Age movement in Britain (Akhtar and Humphries 1999).

The notion of the New Age is not a recent concept, but rather a conflation of occultism, mysticism and speculation about the Age of Aquarius and the possibility of a new world order. The artist, poet and mystic William Blake (1757-1827) is credited with being the first English writer to employ the term New Age in the sense of its current usage (Raine1975:ix) and he continues to be an influence on contemporary alternative, Pagan and New Age writing, art and thought (Harvey 1997) (Caradoc, Nemetona, Dilwyn, Murdo, Ceridwen, Freya, Heather, Charles, Evan). The popularity of the alternative and New Age movement in contemporary culture cannot be attributed to any single factor such as anti-industrialism or anti-capitalism, or to the demise of non-Newtonian science as a belief system. The alternative and New Age movement is not just a youth movement but appeals to people of all ages and backgrounds, and its tenets may be held in tandem with traditional religious beliefs (Dryad, Murdo, Jasmine, Marianne, Helena, Indira, Nekko, Dana, Layla).

In Britain, the early alternative and New Age movement had its origins in the survivals of paganism and witchcraft, the revival of Druidry in the eighteenth century, and the interest in eastern religions in the nineteenth century. Functionaries of the British Empire and their families stationed in India and the Far East returned home to Britain having assimilated ideas and inspirations from Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. Foremost among the pioneers of the New Age were the wives of expatriates (Carr-Gomm 2003).

The most influential movement that introduced eastern mystical traditions to Britain was Theosophy. The Russian mystic Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891) formed the Theosophical Society in 1875 in New York, and was one of the first to popularise in the West the Hindu doctrine of reincarnation. By the early twentieth

century, the mystical ideals of theosophy had gained a foothold in British middle class society, with a special appeal for women and young people. The Theosophical Society magazine *The New Age*, which by its very title allowed for a conflation of eastern and western spirituality with ideas of a new age derived from Blake's writings, spread these ideas to a wider audience (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:12).

Another branch of New Age activity centred around the Western Mystery Tradition, which had its origins in Gnosticism, Classical and Renaissance Hermeticism, and Alchemy. To these strands were added insights from Jewish Qabala of the Spanish Diaspora, the Tarot and the practices of occult ritual magic schools such as The Golden Dawn (Matthews 1986:1-4).

The original concept of the New Age is derived from astrology. 'The Great Year', of about 25,800 years, is the time taken by the Poles of the Earth's axis to complete an entire circle around the Pole of the Ecliptic, the Sun's apparent course through the heavens as seen from the Earth (Fig. 1). The point referred to by astronomers as the 'vernal equinox' and by astrologers as '0° Aries' is seen each year from the Earth as slightly in advance of its position in the previous year against the background of the constellations. Hipparchus, the Greek astronomer active c.160-145 B.C. at both Rhodes and Alexandria, discovered this phenomenon, known as the 'precession of the equinoxes', in 134 BC. The 'Great Year' is divided into twelve 'great months'. These are the periods of time when the equinox is judged as being against the background of each in turn of the twelve constellations that appear to be roughly positioned around the ecliptic. These periods cannot be calculated exactly, because the constellations tend to interlock, but are of about 2,000 years each (Hone 1986:277). The Age of Aquarius was generally considered to begin about 2000 AD, although by astronomical computation a

date of 2740 AD was arrived at (Hone 1986:279). Each age is said to have a different quality, the New Age of Aquarius being concerned with freedom, equality and a new world order based on communication and spiritual values which will affect humanity as a whole (Jenkins 1987:184).

The Age of Aquarius was first proclaimed in 1904 by occultist Aleister Crowley , but Madame Blavatsky and the Theosophists chose a starting date of 1911 on the basis of the words of Lord Maitreya, the Supreme Master, as dictated by Krishnamurti, their then world teacher. The Theosophical Society, international in scope and appeal, had proclaimed Jiddhu Krishnamurti as an *avatar* or incarnation of divinity, and a channel for the wisdom of Maitreya, the last incarnation of the Buddha. Krishnamurti became the first Indian *guru* or teacher to attract a cult following in Britain, as well as in Germany and Holland during the 1920s. His books and lectures brought theosophical ideas to a large audience, until he renounced his association with the Society on 3 August 1929 (Drury 2004:142). In 1931, the theosophist and founder of the Arcane School, Alice Bailey, announced that she had received spiritual confirmation, via her ascended master Djwhal Khul the Tibetan, that the Age of Aquarius had begun (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:148).

In this atmosphere of expectation, a great many alternative and mystical philosophies flourished. Anthroposophy, a new spiritual movement founded in Germany and Switzerland in 1912 by Theosophist Rudolph Steiner (1861-1925), became popular in Britain. In addition to teaching the concept of reincarnation and the soul's progress by the learning of lessons from one life to the next, Steiner developed a new, holistic view of education, which saw colour, art, music, literature and dance as having a vital role to play in children's moral and spiritual development. Steiner's Waldorf Schools,

privately funded by the parents of the children who attended, were established in Britain to teach a method of education which aimed to develop a 'unity of mind, body and spirit', decades before that phrase became a fashionable slogan of late twentieth century alternative movements (Day 1990:9, 27, 160).

The British Buddhist Society was founded in 1907, and by the late 1920s had established a temple in Chiswick where followers could meditate. Christmas Humphreys, a leading London barrister, was the major figure in the early development of British Buddhism. After the loss of his brother in World War I, the Buddhist notion of rebirth satisfied Humphreys' search for religious truth and he promulgated this idea to others affected by the trauma of the war. At first British Buddhism was a middle class, intellectual pursuit with only a few hundred centres, rather than the fashionable, spiritual quest for a new consciousness that it became from the 1960s onwards (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:14) (Pearl, Galahad, Nekko).

Another 1930's phenomenon was the popular, but short lived, Mazdaznan movement which combined elements from ancient Zoroastrianism with those of the Indian Parsees, holding that what is commonly construed as reality is no more than a veil obscuring a higher and more authentic existence (Whitford 1986:53). Mazdaznan was the creation of a German-American typographer, Dr Otoman Zar-Adusht Ha'nish who taught a variant of the ancient Persian religion of Zoroastrianism, which advocated a system of special breath control, diet, fasting and enemas, exercises based on yoga, and prayer to achieve self-development and spiritual purity. Singing and humming were also included, and abstention from meat and alcohol was required from all followers. Ha'nish travelled around Britain in the early 1930s, addressing packed public meetings. Dryad and James remember their respective parents saying they had gone to

Mazdaznan meetings, as the cult was particularly popular in West Yorkshire, especially in Halifax, Huddersfield, Ilkley, Todmorden and Hebden Bridge, areas still well known today for their alternative lifestyle credentials, as evidenced by the list of respondents in Appendix One. At Dr. Ha'nish's death in 1936 there were 52 Mazdaznan centres in Britain, although they died out within a few years (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:13).

On the continent Mazdaznan had adherents such as Swiss painter and Bauhaus teacher Johannes Itten, who wore severe monk-like dress of his own design, shaved his head and adopted a vegetarian diet. Despondent about the First World War and its aftermath, a failure of the social order that he regarded as an indictment of Christianity, he turned to Eastern thought and practices hoping to 'find a new foundation for a true, humanitarian way of life' (Rotzler 1978:32). Itten believed in the intrinsic creativity of each individual and made it his mission to teach the 'whole person', to awaken students to their own potentialities, not only intellectually and artistically but physically as well, and so his classes began with a centring process of meditation and breathing exercises. Itten's conviction that colour is a science that conveys deep spiritual and emotional qualities and is related to harmonization in music (Weltge 1998:56), has influenced the teaching of design in Britain, Europe and the USA, and his theory of seasonal colour personalities in particular, is frequently used in holistic design (Cullen and Warrender 2004:8,20,68).

The Health Movement, Alternative Therapies and Lifestyles

One of the most significant aspects of the early alternative and New Age movements in Britain was the expansion and promotion of the so-called 'alternative' therapies. Many of these therapies were in effect ancient or traditional medical practices that had been gradually marginalised or persecuted by physicians and the development of chemical,

drug based medicine from the sixteenth century onwards (Griggs 1997:39). Medical herbalism, probably the oldest of the ‘alternative’ therapies, became the first to organise itself under a governing body, the National Institute of Medical Herbalists, founded in 1864 (www.nimh.org.uk 15.04.2005). Other therapies such as osteopathy, chiropractice, homoeopathy, dowsing, Dr. Bach's Flower Remedies and the Alexander Technique became better known in Britain from 1930 (Murdo, Edith, Jasmine). The unifying idea behind most of these therapies was to treat the patient as a whole, not merely to alleviate presenting physical symptoms. This holistic approach to health considered emotional, intellectual and social factors in addition to the ‘presenting’ aspects of the diseases themselves (Hoffman 1983:12) and is discussed in more detail later in this thesis.

The Society of Herbalists was founded in 1927 by botanist Hilda Leyel, who ran a clinic and shop at the society’s head quarters, Culpeper House, Bruton Street, London. The shop was the first in a chain of Culpeper stores, named after Nicholas Culpeper (1616-1654) herbalist and author of *The English Physitian* (1652), now known as *Culpeper’s Herbal*. The Nature Cure Clinic opened in London in 1928, and set the trend for many other alternative health practices from the 1930s onwards. Run by a vegetarian and animal rights campaigner, Gaylord Hauser, the clinic offered vegetarian foods, massage, homoeopathy and acupuncture. The theory was that, with plenty of fresh air exercise and relaxation, nature will cure and preserve health (Griggs 1997: 260).

In the 1930s, British Naturism also became popular alongside the growing interest in ‘nature cures’. In concert with modernist architects and planners, orthodox medical practitioners announced that sunlight and fresh air could control tuberculosis, rickets

and rheumatism, diseases rampant in the city slums. New Age pioneers celebrated the body, rejecting the traditional, Christian and restrictive notion of the body as being something to be ashamed of and covered up (Turner 1984).

The Naturist movement was in essence German-inspired and was part of a growing awareness of physical culture that included sun and sea-bathing, long hikes in the country and organised physical exercise. These were celebrated by 1930s magazines such as *Health and Efficiency*, *Health and Strength*, *Health for All*, and *Healthy Life*, and organisations like the League of Health and Beauty, that was recorded as having 160,000 members in Britain by 1939 (Turner 1984). Sun societies of Naturists sprang up all over Britain, noticeably in sun-challenged Northern England, the sun societies of Leeds, Hull, Preston and Holmfirth being particularly active (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:96).

The pacifist movement also had associations with naturism (Graves and Hodge 1985: 273-280). *Spielplatz*, a utopian pacifist-naturist community near St Albans, Hertfordshire, was set up in 1930 as the first British naturist community with full-time residents, having the attractions of a woodland setting, swimming pool, clubhouse and other facilities. Part-time residents included Ross Nichols, later Chief of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids, and Gerald Gardner, the originator of the modern witchcraft or Wicca movement, since for those interested in alternative religions and beliefs this return to nature had an additional spiritual meaning (Carr-Gomm 2002:9).

Vegetarianism is often a major part of any New Age lifestyle, although it has a long history as a dietary option connected with religious and ethical beliefs and has generally been regarded with suspicion by mainstream orthodoxy as discussed in Colin Spencer's

(1993) *The Heretics' Feast: A History of Vegetarianism*. Of the 49 respondents to informal interviews, 23 were vegetarian and one was vegan because of their spiritual beliefs.

In the East, vegetarianism was associated with Hinduism and Buddhism. In Britain it had links with radical alternative groups like the Quakers and the animal rights movement. The term vegetarian came into the English language with the founding of the Vegetarian Society in 1847 to promote the benefits of a non-meat diet. However it took almost fifty years before Britain's first health food store opened in Birmingham in 1898, selling products such as nut butter, banana meal, vegetable soup tablets and walnut ketchup (Spencer1993:93). Vegetarians were marginalised and regularly lampooned as cranks, a term of abuse neatly turned around by David Canter, the founder in 1961 of the famous *Cranks* vegetarian restaurant (Canter *et al.*1982), the design of which is discussed in the following chapter of this thesis.

Organic farming started in Britain in the late 1920s, in some part due to the demand for raw foods and nourishing whole foods generated by the burgeoning health food shops. Rudolph Steiner considered that modern intensive methods of farming overlooked the important spiritual aspects of the living world (Finn 2005:45). He became an influential figure in organic farming and in the 1920s developed the spiritual and scientific theory of Biodynamic farming and gardening which took into account the influence of the Moon and the planets on seed germination and plant growth (Endres and Schad 1997). Steiner abandoned the use of chemical fertilisers and promoted respect for animals as fellow sentient beings, considering the interrelation between animals and the land as the key factor in agricultural and ecological well-being. He suggested treating farm animals with homoeopathic remedies and considered a whole

farm or garden to be a complete living organism that should be nurtured accordingly (Finn 2005) (www.biodynamic.org.uk 15-02-2005).

Communitarian Living and Experimental Communities

Communitarian living was another aspect of the back to the land movements of the first half of the twentieth century. British radical land movements have had a long history. Utopian communities can be traced back to at least the 1640s with the Levellers and the Ranters, and Gerrard Winstanley and the Diggers at St. George's Hill in Surrey, and subsequently forward through the Quakers, Moravians and Transcendentalists, the Arts and Crafts Movement of the nineteenth Century and the Tolstoyan communes of the 1890s (McIntosh 2002:92). The libertarian Whiteway Colony in Gloucestershire was founded by anarchists from London who, in 1898, wished to set up a commune, self-sufficient and independent from state and society. They set up the Cotswolds Co-operative Handicrafts to sell sandals, boots, leatherwork and furniture (Thacker 1993). Whiteway, though much changed, is still extant at the time of writing.

Back-to-the-land communes and experiments in free love were actually more prevalent in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s than in the 'permissive' 1960s (Campbell and Brennan 1995:7). Examples were the Cokelers at Loxwood, Sussex, the Plumstead Peculiars in Kent and the Abode of Love, Somerset. A group of Christian anarchists, the Brotherhood Church, defied the local council and set up a commune at Stapleton, near Pontefract. During the Depression of the 1930s, the Quakers' Land Settlement Movement resettled unemployed families from the cities on communally owned farmland in Gloucestershire, Northumberland and Wiltshire. Nazi persecution in Germany caused the Bruderhof community, based on radical ideas of the sixteenth Anabaptists, to emigrate and set up a commune in Ashton Keynes in the Cotswolds in

1936, however subsequent anti-German feeling in Britain caused them to move to Paraguay in 1941 (Campbell and Brennan 1995:19).

In art and design circles the best known British arts and crafts community is the Guild of St. Joseph and St. Dominic, Ditchling, Sussex, founded in 1920 by Eric Gill, Douglas Pepler and Desmond Chute, and extant in its original form until 1989. The Guild played a major role in the development of arts and crafts in the twentieth century, having an international influence on typography, letter-cutting, calligraphy and weaving, and promoted links with arts and crafts practitioners in Japan. In the British arts and crafts world Ditchling has a special resonance – ‘a kind of refuge, a panacea, a ruralist revival of Edwardian free thinkers’ (MacCarthy 1989:84).

The driving force in the Ditchling Guild was Eric Gill (1882-1940), artist-craftsman, letter cutter, sculptor, wood engraver and typographer, who had converted to Catholicism in 1913. The constitution of the Guild made clear from the outset that it was

A society of Catholic craftsmen who wish to make the Catholic faith the rule, not only of their life, but of their workmanship and to that end to live and work in association in order that mutual aid may strengthen individual effort.

The Rules of the Guild specified that

Members shall be (a) Practising Catholics, (b) Earn their living by creative manual work, (c) Owners of their tools and of their work

(www.ericgill.org.uk/guild/the-guild-of-st-joseph-and-st-dominic-1920-1989

11.03.2007). The Catholic origins of the Guild had a marked influence on its daily work and products, with many of the members specialising in producing liturgical and devotional items for use in Catholic churches.

The extent to which the Ditchling Community may have influenced subsequent alternative initiatives is debatable. Of the 49 respondents to informal interview only those with an art and design background (Nemetona, Jasmine, Curtis, Faith, Poppy) had heard of Ditchling whereas all respondents were familiar with the spiritual and ecological community at Findhorn, Scotland, discussed in the next chapter. Gill's emphasis on 'integration', which he considered must begin with domesticity 'the cell of good living in the chaos of our world', and his objection to what he saw as damaging divisions in society, the rupture between work and leisure, craftsmanship and industry, art and religion, flesh and spirit (MacCarthy 1989: vii) would be of interest to many New Agers and contemporary Pagans. The Dominican idea that industrially based capitalism is untrue to the nature of man and the dedicated and comprehensive effort of the Ditchling Guild to revive and live by pre-industrial values (MacCarthy 1989:134) confirm that community's ideological opposition to Modernism in many respects. Even in its heyday Ditchling was considered an exception in the art and design world on account of its Catholicism.

The Ditchling community differed from other arts and crafts communities which were in the main agnostic, fired by principles of humanism and democracy, artistic integrity, qualitative standards and a rather woolly sort of Art Workers Guild nationalism. Catholicism suffused life and work at Ditchling (MacCarthy 1989:140).

In addition to the emphasis on Catholicism at Ditchling, Eric Gill's 'cult of masculinity, his whole sanctimonious, self-regarding, Victorian *pater familias* outlook' (MacCarthy1989: xiii), not to mention his alleged paedophilia and bestiality, would not appeal to many practitioners of alternative spirituality.

Centres of New Age Activity in Britain

As the interest in alternative lifestyles grew, certain locations started developing as New Age centres. Alfred Watkins' (1925) *The Old Straight Track* introduced the idea

of ley-lines, ancient straight track ways aligned with either the sun or the path of a star. Watkins had observed that throughout Britain, ancient earthworks and sacred sites, beacon hills, churches, mounds and similar edifices seemed to be geographically organised in straight lines, which formed a network across the entire country. The purpose of this proposed system remained a mystery, and Watkins' book caused violent controversy in archaeological circles (Michell 1977:51). However, walking clubs, including The Old Straight Track Club, organised walks along these ley-lines, so as to experience their power. The town of Glastonbury in Somerset, with its ancient religious associations, both pagan and Christian, was considered to have alleged mystical powers caused by a confluence of ley-lines. The most important, the St. Michael ley-line was considered to pass through Mont St Michel in France and St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall, before going through Glastonbury Tor (Bord and Bord 1974:184).

Glastonbury became a focus for new age activities and pilgrimages and it is still the premier 'alternative' site in Britain. All 49 respondents to informal interview had visited Glastonbury on at least one occasion, specifically for some spiritual purpose, whether a pilgrimage, a retreat, for healing, or to attend a course on alternative and New Age topics. The first Glastonbury Festival was organised by the composer Rutland Boughton in the 1920s, fifty years before the Glastonbury Pop Festivals of Worthy Farm were thought about, and spiritual tourism to the town increased after the publication of Western Mystery Tradition Occultist Dion Fortune's (1934) *Glastonbury: Avalon of the Heart*, which became a classic of British New Age travel writing and attracted many visitors to 'the holiest erthe in Englande' (Fortune 1934:11). New Age communities began to centre on earlier focuses of alternative lifestyle and

spirituality such as Lewes, East Grinstead, Totnes, Taunton, Hebden Bridge and Todmorden (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:97).

Astrology

The rise of interest in astrology in the 1930s is often attributed to the uncertainty of the Depression and inter-war years, however the restructuring and redefining of astrological traditions and of the purpose of astrology itself, which went on at this time, is a more likely factor. In Britain, the United States and the German-speaking countries a reassessment of astrology followed the developments made in the discipline of psychology. In particular astrologers were interested in Jung's comments that 'astrology represents the summation of all the psychological knowledge of antiquity', and in his use of astrology in the analysis of some of his patients, based on his observation that the natal horoscope symbolised the psychological drives and motivation of the person (Arroyo 1975:33).

American writer, philosopher and artist Dane Rudhyar's book *The Astrology of Personality* (1936) became a key text of this new approach, which he called Humanistic Astrology. Since the Renaissance the most traditional forms of Western astrology assumed that the astrologer was serving as a fortune teller, and that the natal horoscope or birth chart, drawn up for the individual's time, place and date of birth, revealed the circumstances that one would encounter in life and that these circumstances *in the outer world* were predictable and for the most part unalterable (Garin 1990). The emphasis in twentieth century psychological astrology was on constructive use of the natal energies of the individual's *inner world* as symbolised by the birth chart, so that their most positive expression could be realised (Arroyo 1975: xiii). This new approach encouraged many to study astrology seriously, and astrology clubs sprang up all over

Britain, the best known of these amateur groups being the Libra Club which met in Baker Street, London. A mass audience for astrology had been gained in 1930 when R.H. Naylor was invited by the *Sunday Express* to draw up the natal horoscope of the newly born Princess Margaret Rose. This was such a success with the readership that Naylor went on to write regular columns that were copied by other newspapers (Parker and Parker 1983:97).

The Occult, Alternative Lifestyles, and the Establishment during World War II

The establishment also used astrology for its own ends. The British government appointed Louis de Wohl as astrologer to the War Office, his duties being to analyse Hitler's birth chart to ascertain his psychological traits and weaknesses, and to find clues as to how he might run the war (Parker and Parker 1983:113). From 1938 Cecil Williamson, founder of the Witchcraft Research Centre, was commissioned by MI6 to monitor any dangers presented by Nazi occultists and astrologers. Williamson visited Germany, compiling a list of over 2,000 top-ranking officials, and during the Second World War he was based at Wavendon Towers, near Bletchley, where he ran a propaganda radio station which broadcast to U-Boats, using astrology and the predictions of Nostradamus, which were widely known in Germany, to unsettle the crews (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:48, 52). These measures were in some part a response to possible threats posed by the Tattva department (*tattva* being the Sanskrit word for subtle power of the universe) set up by Hitler to investigate the potential uses of occult powers (Valiente 1975:14).

Other non-official alternative or occult activity during the Second World War involved various covens up and down Britain fighting a psychic war against the Germans. Paddy

Slade, an hereditary witch, recounted how, in September 1940, a dozen witches went onto the beach on the tip of Kent.

As the tide was ebbing we threw what we call 'Go Away Powder' into the tide with such invocations as 'You can't come', 'Go away, bugger off' over and over again. And the invasion never happened (Slade 1997:46).

Olivia Robertson, founder of the Fellowship of Isis, an international new-pagan organisation dedicated to promoting the Goddess and recognised by the World Parliament of Religions, was also active in this campaign.

Dion Fortune, and all witches, black magicians, white magicians, pink magicians, were all united in saving this island in the magical Battle of Britain. The silent minute sprang, we all prayed at nine o'clock when Big Ben struck. We felt we were using occult powers to fight somebody who was using occult powers against us. (Robertson 1975:89).

Spiritualism increased in popularity during this time, as people were worried about their loved ones in the armed forces, and with those coming to terms with bereavement. In the latter years of the war there was an outbreak of prosecutions of spiritualist mediums under the Witchcraft Acts of 1753, on the grounds that trance speaking and clairvoyance were forms of conjuration. Mediums were arrested after plain-clothes policemen infiltrated their meetings and séances. State intervention was deemed necessary because mediums claimed they could contact the spirits of dead servicemen and thereby ran the risk of breaking the Official Secrets Act. By 1944 the spiritualist newspaper *Psychic News* claimed there were approximately 1,000 spiritualist churches and one million spiritualists in Britain (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:73).

The White Eagle Lodge, founded in 1936, was an offshoot of Spiritualism and based its work on the teachings of White Eagle, the spirit guide of medium Grace Cooke (Hayward: 1986:2). Lodge members distributed posters showing 'the cross of light' all over London during the Blitz. Although unexceptional from a graphic design

perspective, the posters became extremely popular and were displayed in the London Underground and in bomb shelters as they gained a reputation for supposedly helping to protect those sheltering by 'concentrating the power of thought and calling on eternal light' (Hayward 1986:17) (Illus.12).

Vegetarianism became more respectable during wartime when, because of meat rationing, the meat free diet finally came into its own. The Government 'Dig for Victory' campaign encouraged people to turn their gardens over to food production and use meat free recipes in cooking. Farming was a reserved occupation, so communes became a legitimate part of the war effort and the war itself led to a growth in alternative back-to-the-land movements and communities (Griffiths 2000:89). Conscientious objectors were registered as agricultural labourers. The Peace Pledge Union, the main pacifist organisation in Britain, urged supporters to bear witness to a higher order of morality by joining co-operative communities that might act as seedbeds for a new civilization. From March 1941 onwards the Union's newspaper *The Peace Pledge News* began publishing a monthly supplement devoted to life in alternative communities (Campbell and Brennan 1995:78).

In March 1941 the Vegetable Drugs Committee was set up to encourage the growth of medicinal herbs and plants to produce medicines that could be used in military and civilian hospitals. As part of the war effort private individuals were also encouraged to grow medical herbs, which were collected and dried at centres organised by the Women's Institute (Griffiths 2000:91). After the war the interest in natural methods of food production continued to increase, leading in 1946 to the foundation of the Soil Association to promote organic gardening and farming (Griffiths 2000:101).

Witchcraft, the Goddess and Feminism in 1950's Britain

By the late 1940s British society had become more multi-cultural due to immigration from the former colonies, gradually bringing about more religious, spiritual and cultural diversity. This was slow to spread at first, but was noticeable by the 1960s (Phillips and Phillips 1998:12). However during the 1950s there were shifts within 'traditional' British culture itself. As discussed previously, the official post war line had been to boost national morale by an emphasis on design and nation, intended to encourage consumer confidence in British goods at home and abroad, exemplified by the 1946 exhibition *Britain Can Make It*. A redrawing of Britain's international role as a peacekeeper went alongside concerns about the Nuclear Age. The government organised *The Festival of Britain* in 1951 promoted British invention and industry, as well as 'Atoms for Peace' and presented Britain as a modern, rational, industrialised nation (Banham 1976).

In contrast to this establishment evaluation of the nature of post-war Britain, the Repeal of the Witchcraft Acts in 1951, rather than being merely the cleaning away of obsolete and archaic legislation, caused lurid, sensational reports in tabloid newspapers, which claimed that witchcraft was still flourishing in Britain, and was responsible for satanic abuse, wild naked orgies in the woods and the desecration of graves. However most of the witches in Britain followed the tradition of white healing magic and many of these also had orthodox Christian or other beliefs as well, witchcraft being a practice rather than a religion (Green 1991:18).

Although witchcraft had ceased to be a capital offence in Britain in 1736, it had remained illegal. Following the Repeal, many adherents were now happy to be open about their practice and the growth and visibility of pagan, alternative and new

religious movements increased rapidly (Valiente1975:10). The Repeal also allowed spiritual healers of all religious and spiritual persuasions to practice openly, and in 1955 the National Federation of Spiritual Healers was founded to encourage and to teach this form of spiritual therapy. The NFSH provided its members with a code of conduct, and made available to the public a list of registered healers (Pullar1988:17). The NFSH continues to be an influential and respected organization within alternative circles and its healers are allowed to practice in NHS hospitals at the discretion of medical consultants. Of the 49 respondents to informal interview 15 had undergone training with the NFSH (Caradoc, Nemetona, Dilwyn, Dryad, Elanor, Murdo, Ceridwen, Angelica, Heather, Charles, Pearl, Indira, Brid, Dana, Harold).

The growth of witchcraft was part of extraordinary revival of paganism in Britain during the post war period, which also saw the parallel growth of Druidry. Most wiccans were women, often with feminist ideals, who were attracted by the notion of working with nature and conceptualising divinity as the Goddess (Matthews 1998:262).

Gerald Gardner, a retired Civil Servant is credited with rescuing and reinventing witchcraft during the 1940s and 1950s, though some in the craft today would dispute this (Green 2001:10). He founded a goddess religion that purported to preserve the remnants of traditional village witchcraft and offered a spiritual path of the Old Religion to a new and wider audience. In 1954 Gardner published *Witchcraft Today*, the first account of modern wicca, as revised witchcraft came to be known, followed by *The Meaning of Witchcraft* in 1959, with the intention that witchcraft should reclaim its place as an authentic, Nature-based spiritual tradition (Drury 2003:169).

Gardner borrowed from a number of sources including folklore, magic and Masonic rituals, and added a major sexual element. Numerous covens sprang up under his guidance, causing moral panic in the popular press, because of the deep fear of the new sexual freedoms of the time. By the mid 1960s there were more than 100 known covens in Britain (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:41). Most converts were middle class women in the creative arts, academia and the professions. Doreen Valiente, Britain's most influential high priestess, was responsible for shaping much of modern witchcraft and creating its ritual invocations and incantations (Valiente 2000). The emphasis on 'the Goddess', Mother Earth, and the reverence for the reproductive cycle were all seen as empowering for women and brought wicca into the realm of the women's movement.

Patricia Crowther, the High Priestess of the Sheffield Coven, is of the opinion.

The witches were pioneers, really, of women's liberation because, for anything to happen on the physical plane, you have to acknowledge it first on a spiritual level and of course by that time [1960s] the goddess was being acknowledged on the spiritual level. So women began to assert their position in life (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:67).

The 1950s had seen the post-war re-emphasis of women's role within the home, and to many women who were opposed to this re-assertion of patriarchy, goddess religions provided a welcome alternative to orthodox conventional beliefs. The publication in English of Jung's work on myth and archetype introduced to a wider British audience the concept of the Great Mother, with transcendental status as an eternal archetype, independent from and predating and influencing human society (Goodison 1998:8).

As a result of their research into the early alternative and New Age movements in Britain, social historians Akhtar and Humphries expressed the view that the most constant feature of early New Age Britain had been its reversal of the balance of power between the sexes, allowing

women to exercise spiritual power at a time when the idea of women priests was ridiculed. It celebrated qualities regarded as female, like instinct, imagination and feeling above established values of patriarchy and masculinity. Its empowerment of women was reflected in the fact that the majority of those who embraced New Age and alternative beliefs during the first half of the [twentieth] century were women (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:9).

This is in marked contrast to the Modernist discourse which can be considered to promulgate masculine values and an heroic outlook, which is reflected in its design and material culture (Attfield and Kirkham 1996) (Benton 2006) (Pevsner 1936) (Reed 1996).

Summary and Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, the alternative, Pagan and New Age movements in Britain have had a long and multi-faceted history. Alternative, Pagan and New Age ideologies and attitudes concerning the relationship and responsibilities of humans to the natural world were beginning to formulate a challenge the consensual reality of Modernism and the modern world-view, the powerful sources that construct social reality and act as the drivers of fashion and therefore design (McIntosh 2002:105). By the end of the 1950s Britain had a flourishing alternatives scene, offering a wide choice of spiritual perspectives, therapies and life styles. These were to receive further impetus and possibilities for development and diversification with the arrival of influences from American hippie and counter culture in the 1960s. In addition to this, the concerns of environmentalism and ecology and the concept of Holism brought an extra dimension to alternative debates and practices in the later twentieth century in Britain, which will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

PAGANISM, THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT, HOLISM AND ECOLOGY IN BRITAIN 1960 – 2005

Introduction and the Argument of the Chapter

This chapter considers the incorporation of counter-cultural ideas, often American influenced, with the extant British alternative movements in the 1960s and their development into parallel discourses to that of Modernism in the latter part of the twentieth century. An overview of these developments is presented under three main themes; paganism and New Age spirituality, holism and holistic therapies, and ecology and ecological design.

The argument of the chapter is that complementary practices and spirituality, including the alternative, Pagan and New Age movements in Britain gradually entered mainstream culture from the 1960s onwards and influenced design, resulting in the development of a ‘spiritual style’ which although eclectic and syncretist maintained its own visual coherence, which can be evidenced in the material culture of the period.

In 1960s’ Britain there was a more marked division between mainstream culture and counter-culture, the latter being defined as a series of movements and shifts in ideas and behaviours (Marwick, 2000:16). The main aspects of 1960s counter culture in both Britain and the USA are considered to be: youth culture and trend setting by young people; black civil rights and student activism including mass protests against imperialism, particularly the Vietnam War; the beginnings of contemporary environmentalism and accompanying criticisms of the ‘technocratic society’; the serious appreciation of mass culture and the blending of elite and popular culture in the arts; the triumph of popular music based on Afro-American models; and the seeking of

inspiration in religious and cultural matters from the East with its concomitant challenges to Enlightenment rationality. In addition Marwick considers the 'general audacity and frankness in books and in the media and in ordinary behaviour' to be an important factor, along side the new feminism, gay liberation and drug culture and 'dropping out' (Marwick 2000:17). The succession of youth cultural styles from the 1960s onwards can also be seen as symbolic forms of resistance to mainstream culture, 'spectacular symptoms of a wider and more generally submerged dissent which characterized the whole post-war period' (Hebdige 1979:80).

As a constituent part of this generally submerged dissent the alternative, Pagan and New Age movements can be considered as a broad spectrum encompassing a range of other subcultures within it. These subcultures are linked by the desire of their members for a personal and meaningful relationship with the Universe in which we find ourselves existing, but one that is independent of the strictures of organised religion and is respectful of the natural environment.

New Religious Movements and Spirituality in the 1960s and 1970s

Counter movements in religion in the 1960s continued the search for meaning and personal fulfilment that had been seen in Britain in the first half of the century. The concepts of 'enlightenment' and 'expansion of consciousness' were particularly important, as this implied direct personal knowledge rather than belief. New religious movements were categorised by religious studies academics as accommodating, rejecting or affirming the world (Wallis 1984:6).

Eastern religions appealed to middle-class youth because they reflected many of their aspirations and concerns, in particular a search for individual meaning and personal

enlightenment, which appeared to be very different to Christian church dogma that required belief and obedience. Mysticism, considered absent from conventional Western religion, seemed more prevalent in eastern religions, which offered a transcendental experience similar to that which psychedelic drugs could provide (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:14) (Drury 2004:137).

In 1967 the Beatles announced they were devotees of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Spiritual Regeneration Movement (SRM), causing many of their fans to explore Hinduism in some form for the first time. The Maharishi offered the world a meditation technique, Transcendental Meditation that, he said, would bring personal fulfilment, spiritual transcendence and world peace. *Science*, the prestigious journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, published an article on 27 March 1970 reporting that Transcendental Meditation had a specific impact on such body functions as oxygen consumption, heart rate, skin resistance and EEG measurements. During meditation oxygen consumption and heart rate decreased, and this could have positive benefits for health (Drury 2004:137). This scientific endorsement attracted many hitherto sceptics to try TM for themselves.

After enjoying a few years of fashionable acclaim the SRM disbanded, but the technique of Transcendental Meditation continues to attract practitioners from all religious and spiritual persuasions to this day (Caradoc, Elanor, Murdo, Angelica, Heather, Charles, Pearl, Indira, Jenna). Although the Beatles and others prominent in the public eye soon lost interest in the Maharishi after his return to India in 1968, their public devotion to his teachings had enabled him to spread his ideas to an extensive and generally uncritical youth audience who were the consumers of popular culture (Drury 2004:138).

By the 1970s there was a host of eastern inspired religions flourishing in Britain attracting the allegiance of large numbers of young people. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, otherwise known as the Hare Krishna movement, was popularised by George Harrison's 1969 hit single based on the Hare Krishna mantra, in which devotees or *sanyassins* chanted the name of God continuously so as to receive enlightenment. Groups of these devotees were to be seen in most British cities, chanting and handing out religious tracts. The Elan Vital or Divine Light Mission Osho International of Bagwan Shree Rajneesh recruited widely and caused consternation in the established churches because of its promotion of free love, bordering on promiscuity (Drury 2004:140). Amongst the middle classes the Nichiren Shoshu off shoot of Japanese Buddhism attracted many adherents including fashion designer Jeff Banks and public relations 'guru' Lynne Franks (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:14) (Wallis 1984:6).

The British public were presented with a range of faiths and practices to explore, rather than the traditionally predominant Christian religion. Issues of personal space, sociological perspectives and boundaries influenced religious persuasion and spiritual practice. Zen Buddhism became popular as a spiritual practice and as a design statement. Alan Watts, English author and philosopher was a major western proponent of Zen Buddhism and Taoism whose writings reached a popular audience (Watts 1948, 1975) (Caradoc, Murdo, Heather, Charles, Pearl, Mr.Jing, Galahad, Bruce). Architects and designers were interested in the simple, pared down, functional qualities of Zen objects and interiors as they accorded with many of the tenets of Modernism and the increasing fashion for minimalism (Paul 2000) (Tidbury 1999:16). However, the boom in Kung Fu and other martial arts in the 1970s, caused in part by the television series *Kung Fu* starring David Carradine, introduced many in Britain and the USA to Buddhist

and Taoist concepts and oriental energetic medicine theory for the first time (Nemetona, Dilwyn, James, Curtis, Pearl, Brid, Jeremy, Marmaduke, Mr Jing, Harold, Bruce).

Robert M. Prisig's (1974) *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* explored the complementary nature of technical and creative thinking. Extracts from this influential novel were used in design education to stimulate industrial and product design students to broaden their approach to problem solving (Frederick M. Brown to the author 10.10.2005). Prisig's work was also used in educating civil engineers regarding the share values of objects and the relevance of static and dynamic qualities in design (Andy Mitchell to the author 09.02.1999).

Academic interest in the western esoteric traditions was stimulated by Christine Hartley's (1968) *The Western Mystery Tradition*. Hartley was a member of one of the leading esoteric schools and her book was probably the first since the Renaissance that dealt with the Western Mysteries separately from those of the east (Matthews 1986:1). However for many general readers their first introduction to western esotericism was inspired by fantasy fiction such as J. R. R. Tolkein's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and the 1950-1956 *Narnia* series of children's books by C. S. Lewis (Harvey 1997:181) (Nemetona, Dilwyn, James, Gillian, Helena, Curtis, Robin, Francesca, Faith, Jeremy). In the opinion of Pagan Studies academic Graham Harvey, fantasy fiction exerts a major influence on the alternatives scene in that it counters the rationality of modernity which 'denigrates the wisdoms (*sic*) of the body and subjectivity'.

(Fantasy fiction) doesn't offer facts for consideration but truths to inspire or beauty to appreciate, and this subverts the dominance of the Modernist idea that every thing is given, set and bounded (Harvey 1997:182).

The White Eagle Lodge, based at Liss, Hants. was one of the few western esoteric orders to afford a purpose built temple and healing centre. The architect for the complex was Elidir Davies, whose previous design experience included two theatre buildings in London. The temple, an uneasy stylistic blend of Modernism and the Nazi architecture of Albert Speer, its façade emblazoned with an Egyptian winged solar disc, was dedicated on 9 June 1974 and is still relatively unchanged today (Hayward 1986:51) (Illus.13).

The Goddess Movement and Feminist Spirituality

Further developments in feminist spirituality were brought about by new approaches in archaeology. The first of Marija Gimbutas' publications on prehistoric European religion and cultures *The Gods and Goddesses of Old Europe* (1974) caught the attention of many in the women's movement. American sculptor Merlin Stone's *When God was a Woman*, published in Britain under the less controversial title *The Paradise Papers: the Suppression of Women's Rites* (1976) attracted a more popular audience to the concept of a Mother Goddess predating the patriarchal religions. In the 1980s the emergence of cognitive, contextual and feminist archaeological approaches created renewed interest in the ritual and symbolic world. The Goddess movement was seen to have revitalised the Judaeo-Christian tradition as a whole by drawing attention to forgotten material within it, which reflected positive symbols of women and important roles played by them, especially before St. Augustine (AD 354-430) definitively equated women with sin. The movement's emphasis on honouring the physical – the female body and its functions, and the earth – reawakened an aspect of Christian thought which is more respectful towards the natural world and more in tune with ecological awareness (Goodison 1998:12) (Dryad, Jasmine, Marianne, Helena, Elizabeth, Heather, Dana).

Although the work of Gimbutas is now considered outdated and some what inaccurate it can be credited with inculcating an important discussion within contemporary spirituality. The controversy about the Goddess movements symbolised a wider clash of ideas in society:

Where archaeology meets the Goddess is where science meets religion and where mind meets body: they are not expected to brush shoulders comfortably in our society (Goodison 1998:19).

A more radical approach to feminist spirituality was exemplified by the work of the American Jewish theologian and Wiccan, Miriam Simos, better known as Starhawk. In her (1982) *Dreaming The Dark: Magic, Sex and Politics* Starhawk claimed that the words that sound acceptable, rational, scientific and intellectually rigorous are comfortable in modern society precisely because they are the language of estrangement from the natural and spiritual world and from the female perspective. She described magic as the 'psychology/technology of immanence, of the understanding that everything is connected' thus linking spirituality with holism (Starhawk1982:13).

British Neo-Paganisms in the 1980s and 1990s

In the 1980s the continued rise of the Green movement and environmentalism created another basis for new spirituality. Wicca, Druidry and other Pagan movements concerned with a resacralization of the natural world, expanded in numbers of adherents and became the major influence on the general outlook of the New Age movement (Drury 2003:162,169). Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis of the earth as a self-regulating entity, discussed later in this chapter, was further popularised as it was seen as empathetic to and supportive of Paganism.

Paganism can be defined as a feeling for the sacred that is non-monotheistic, based on a relationship rather than revelation and scripture and often includes an immanent

dimension for landforms, plants and animals. Pagans consider their spiritual practice to be an 'affirmation of interactive and polymorphic sacred relationships by individuals or community with the tangible, sentient and non-empirical' (Blain *et al.* 2004:ii). Britain's megalithic sites continue to be a focus for reconstructed Pagan rituals and popular archaeological publications, such as rock star Julian Cope's (1998) *The Modern Antiquarian: a pre-millennial odyssey through megalithic Britain*, inspire many individuals to explore Paganism (Freya, Francesca, Emma, Faith, Topaz, Dana, Evan).

Shamanic practices are a major constituent of much contemporary British Paganism. The shamanic revival was inspired by the research into the spiritual techniques of primal societies by writers including Mircea Eliade (1986) *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, and Carlos Castaneda's the *Teachings of Don Juan* series of books which recount his training into Native Mexican Yaqui ways of knowledge (Castaneda 1970,1971,1974,1976,1993). Michael Harner's (1980) *The Way of the Shaman* presented his work with the Jivaro and the Conibo in the Amazon jungle and his distillation of a shaman's work and the states of consciousness experienced thereby. From this Harner developed and taught workshops in 'core shamanism' for westerners, which were influential in inspiring the reconstruction and recreation of the lost western shamanic traditions, including the practice of 'journeying', entering trance states to solve problems and receive healing (Rutherford 1996:86). Other developments included the 'urban shamanism' of American dancer and shamanic practitioner Gabrielle Roth outlined in her (1989) book *Maps to Ecstasy* and her (1993) video *The Wave: Ecstatic Dance for Body and Soul* which uses the five rhythms of trance dancing; flowing, staccato, chaos, lyrical and stillness, to achieve a shift in consciousness. *Wave* dance evenings continue to be held in New Age venues all over Britain and are often the first

contact many British people make with some form of shamanic practice (Elanor, Robin, Emma, Brid, Katrina, Mr. Jing, Galahad, Boris, Topaz, Wind Horse).

Modern western society almost completely ignores ritual and rites of passage, as well as many of the calendar and seasonal festivals. The growth of neo-paganism and neo-shamanism during the 1990s can be seen to assist in a re-enchantment of life, by concentrating on the importance of the seasonal markers and 'milestones' in life (Harvey 1997:196). Cyberspace is a liminal zone in which normal rules and social constructions are suspended, allowing brief explorations of other ways of being (Fox 2004:276), and the growth of the Internet allowed the curious, as well as isolated solo practitioners to exchange ideas with like minded people and participate in on-line rituals with out fear of repercussions. Many technopagans use the Internet to announce seasonal rites, workshops and conferences and to provide information on pagan rites of passage such as child blessings, handfastings (weddings), and rites of departure (funerals) (www.paganfed.org 24.05.2005) (Nemetona, James, Gillian, Ceridwen, Curtis, Angelica, Freya, Marmaduke, Katrina, Alchemilla, Topaz, Gwladys). Cyberspace has been described as the first mass Pagan gathering place since ancient times (Drury 2003:229).

The three most popular expressions of contemporary Paganism in Britain by number of adherents are: Wicca, mainly women across all social groupings; Druidry, mainly the educated middle classes, including academics such as Professor Ronald Hutton of Bristol University, a member of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids, which is often derided as 'paganism for cardigan wearers' (Nemetona to author 12.03.2002); and Heathenry, based on Germanic, Scandinavian and Runic traditions and literature. In the 1980s Heathenry was often seen as very male-oriented and working class and was

accused, with occasional justification, of anti-gay and neo-fascist tendencies (Price 2001:223). Now it is described as 'the religion with homework' attracting increasing numbers of women and academics (Jenny Blain to author 09.06.2006) (Freya, Katrina). All three major Paganisms in Britain have some claim on a foundation in shamanic practice and one of the attractions of shamanism for many contemporary practitioners is the link between social action and spirituality.

The function of the shaman or bard is to step outside of consensus reality, observe the psychodynamics of the individual or social discourse, and then step back to protest for change (McIntosh 2002:21).

Additional Influences on British New Age Spirituality 1980 - 2005

In Britain Islam has, for the most part, been represented as a monolithic, homogenous religious tradition but one of its mystical movements, Sufism, is gaining converts from the white British community. (Sheffield Sufi Centre information sheet 2003, www.uksufi.co.uk 15.03.2005) Sufi texts such as the poetry of Rumi, Rabia and Al-Kabir and the books of Idries Shah (1964) *The Sufis* and (1968) *The Way of the Sufi* are easily available and have fed into the British New Age movement (Baldock 2004:73) (Nemetona, Dryad, Elanor, Angelica, Winnie, Topaz, Layla). The concept of the state of *uns*, literally 'intimacy', explained as the discovery of the unity of life and diversity of forms, has many parallels with holistic thinking and New Age mysticism (Arasteh 1990:76).

The Jewish esoteric tradition of the Kabbalah, the Tree of Life symbolising the stages of divine emanation, has also received much attention amongst New Agers in Britain from the 1980s onwards, in particular the version taught by the Kabbalah Centre of Jerusalem, founded by Rav Berg, which has many celebrity followers, the pop singer Madonna being the most well-known (Berg 2004) (Caradoc, Nemetona, Dryad,

Ceridwen, Boris, Gwladys). Kabbalah is a tradition that makes an explicit link between design and spirituality, and places design, as a separate, distinct activity from art, on the ninth sphere of the Tree of Life, the sphere of *Yesod*, the Foundation, on which all the creativity of the real world is based and brought into form (Berenson-Perkins 2001:51) (Fig. 2).

From the 1980s Tibetan refugees from the Chinese occupation of Tibet began to enter Britain in increasing numbers. The fourteenth Dalai Lama lectured extensively around the world, promoting compassion and world peace, his example and warm personality attracting many to Tibetan Buddhism, which became the fastest growing religious group in Britain by the end of the 1980s (www.statistics.gov.uk 17.04.2005). The Tibet Foundation, founded in London in 1985, is a charity which works towards creating greater awareness of all aspects of Tibetan culture and the needs of the Tibetan people. It has become a major focus for Tibetan Buddhists in Britain and for the practice of Tibetan medicine, providing clinic days at venues across Britain for patients from all communities (Tibet Foundation Newsletters). In May 1999 the Dalai Lama presided over the dedication and inauguration of *Samten Kyil* the Tibetan Peace Garden next to the Imperial War Museum in London. The event was attended by many British establishment figures as well as Buddhists, both monks and lay practitioners. Foundation Newsletter May 1999). Such a visible presence as *Samten Kyil* at a major site in the capital city would have seemed unattainable to the few hundred British Buddhists in the 1930s. The design of the garden is more fully discussed later in this thesis.

From the end of the 1990s British interest in the Tibetan shamanic tradition of Bon, a precursor of Tibetan Buddhism, and its medical practice, increased due to the work of

Christopher Hansard at the Eden Medical Centre, Chelsea, London (Hansard 2001, 2003) (Nemetona, Pearl). Within Christianity, the rediscovery of pre-Augustinian Celtic Christianity with its gentle mysticism and reverence for the natural world attracted those of a liberal New Age approach who did not wish to forego their Christian faith. The Scottish island of Iona regained its popularity as a pilgrimage site, and pagans at Glastonbury in Somerset made room for the New Age Christians (Dryad, Jasmine, Marianne, Helena, Elizabeth, Dana).

As the twentieth century drew to a close many of the religions and groups that had been considered 'alternative' at its outset had become closer to the 'mainstream'. In the 2001 census 41 million people (72%) declared themselves Christians, 8.75 million (15%) stated they had no religion, 1.6 million (2.7%) were Muslim, 0.5 million (1%) were Hindu, 336,000 (0.6%) were Sikh, followed by 267,000 (0.5%) Jewish people and 150,000 (0.3%) Buddhists. Under the heading of any other religion came 160,000 people (0.3%); comprising 32,000 Spiritualists, 31,000 Pagans, 15,000 Jainists, 7,000 Wiccans, 5,000 Rastafarians, 5,000 Baha'i and 4,000 Zoroastrians. Practising Heathens were not included with the religious groups since, in the semantics of the producers of the census, 'heathen' was considered to be an indication of no religion, rather than a spirituality in its own right. The 'no religion' group included people who ticked none at the religion question, plus those who wrote agnostic, atheist, heathen, other, and 390,000 who claimed to be Jedi Knights, the fictional esoteric order from the *Star Wars* films of George Lucas (www.statistics.gov.uk 11.10.2004).

However these statistics need to be used carefully for, as social researcher Kate Fox pointed out, in surveys 88% of English people tick the Christian denomination, but only 15% of these attend church services; most English people are not now christened, about

half are married in church, yet nearly all of them want a Christian funeral, and the Church of England is seen as the 'default option' rather than being a religious affiliation (Fox 2004:353). The respondents to informal interviews carried out in the research for this thesis who declared themselves Christian in the 2001 census have expressed religious viewpoints and participated in spiritual ritual practice that would confound most traditional Christian theologians (Dryad, Murdo, Jasmine, Marianne, Helena, Elizabeth, Heather, Dana). The New Age syncretist or 'pick and mix' attitude to religious and spiritual labels can be summed up as follows:

The issue is not that anyone of these mindsets is necessarily wrong and another is invariably right. The point is to grasp that each represents a different facet in the totality of knowing (McIntosh 2002:207).

Holism and Holistic Health

The concept of holism became increasingly prevalent in many disciplines, including design, supported by discoveries in the new physics and other sciences. Claims for the unity of all phenomena, long promulgated by mystics and occultists as well as ecologists, were at last taken seriously by the scientific establishment. Fritjof Capra's (1975) *The Tao of Physics* explored the parallels between the New Physics and eastern mysticism, and devoted a whole chapter to a discussion of the unity of all things. Capra demonstrates how the pronouncements of modern atomic and quantum physicists closely resemble the teachings of Eastern mystics on the nature of the universe. In allowing one discourse to speak to another he compares statements such as

An elementary particle is not an independently existing unanalyzable entity. It is in essence a set of relationships that reach outward to other things (Stapp 1971 in Capra 1975:151).

and

The world thus appears as a complicated tissue of events, in which connections of different kinds alternate or overlap or combine and

thereby determine the texture of the whole (Heisenberg1963 in Capra1975:151).

with the world view of teachings of Tantric Buddhism

The Buddhist does not believe in an independent or separately existing external world, into whose dynamic forces he could insert himself. The external world and his inner world are for him only two sides of the same fabric, in which the threads of all forces and of all events, of all forms of consciousness and their objects are woven into an inseparable net of endless, mutually conditioned relations (Lama Anagarika Govinda in Capra1975:155).

A major influence on holistic thinking in Britain has been *Resurgence* Magazine, founded in 1966 under the editorship of former Jain monk Satish Kumar. *Resurgence* published articles which combined insights from ecology, spirituality and holism with the arts, and politics, and provided a more thoughtful and intellectual critique of contemporary mainstream culture.

A whole range of physical and spiritual modalities of holistic health therapies flourished from the 1960s onwards. Theo Gimbel's Hygeia studios in Gloucestershire became a meeting place for practitioners of all alternative therapeutic disciplines but in particular for his colour therapy using coloured light (Gimbel 1980). Gimbel's work remains highly influential in complementary therapy circles, and his students, including author and colour therapist, and founder of the Holistic Design Institute, Suzi Chiazzari have extended the range and scope of his work. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Eight.

The fastest growing physical therapy of the 1980s was aromatherapy, the medical use of plant essential oils administered in appropriate combination and dilution via the skin, either in combination with therapeutic massage or with topical application. In 1985 The

International Federation of Aromatherapists was founded in London, to ensure appropriate standards in training and practice (www.ifaroma.org 06.07.2005).

Many of the Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) disciplines began to self-regulate in the 1990s as they prepared to face pressure from the orthodox medical establishment because of the huge increase in people using CAM. The complementary, rather than the alternative, nature of traditional and New Age medical disciplines to orthodox, allopathic medicine was emphasised as part of the initiative to increase patient choice in the management of the presenting illness or disease. Interest in traditional medical systems as diverse as shamanic healing, Australian Aboriginal medicine, the Ayurvedic medicine of India (Godagama 1997) (Govinda 2002), and Tibetan Ayurveda (Sachs 1995), Bon (Hansard 2001) and Arabic Unani Tibb (Chishti 1990) began to increase as training courses and practitioners sprang up in the major cities. Reiki, a form of spiritual and energetic healing developed originally in Japan by Dr Mikao Usui (1865–1926) became the fastest growing therapy in Britain and the USA by the end of the twentieth century (Lubeck et al.2001:32).

Ecology, Related Concerns and Ecological Design

The term ‘ecology’ was first coined in 1869 by German zoologist and naturalist Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919), who realised the importance of studying the links between all living things. Thus ecology originally referred to the study of inter-relationships among plants, animals and the environment (Moore 1996:41). In 1935 the English botanist Arthur Tansley devised the concept of the eco-system, the particular inter-dependent relationship of organisms in a specific location. These two ideas became very influential in alternative circles and by the 1960s ecology had become a word full of emotion, indicating the impact of human culture on the natural world. It was, and is, often used

morally, implying that an ecologist had an ethical concern for all living creatures and for the earth as a living 'system' (Moore 1996:41).

Ecological and communitarian living began to rise in popularity again in the 1960s. The first and most successful of this second wave of New Age communities was Findhorn near Forres in north-east Scotland, founded by Dorothy Maclean and Peter and Eileen Caddy in 1962 to provide an alternative, holistic and sustainable model for living. Here they grew giant vegetables on the arid, sandy soil of an old caravan site, using no artificial fertilisers. They believed the garden grew because guidance from God enabled them to communicate with nature spirits, which they called *devas*, from the Sanskrit word meaning 'shining being'. Others who wished to practice organic gardening soon joined them to share in the spiritual way of life established there (Akhtar and Humphries 1999:119). The Findhorn Foundation was set up by the community in 1972 and is one of the largest holistic communities in the world. It also boasts one of Britain's most progressive eco-villages which provides a focal point for some of the cutting edge developments in the sustainable building sector, including Findhorn's own architectural practice, *Affordable TM*, run by Greig and Kathleen Munro, which utilises Scottish larch and other vernacular materials (Ednie 2005:57) (Illus. 14).

Interest in organic gardening and farming continued from developments originating in the home production of food as part of the war effort. In 1954 Laurence Hills founded The Henry Doubleday Research Association, (HDRA) named after an early pioneer of organic gardening and herbalism. The HDRA carries out research and experimentation in organic gardening and farming methods and techniques and in 1986 opened The National Centre for Organic Gardening at Ryton on Dunsmore near Coventry. From this

centre HDRA operates the Heritage Seed Library, which sends out to members 40,000 packets of seed a year to ensure the survival of rare and traditional plant varieties (Uglow 2004:282).

The ecology movement worldwide was helped by the space race between USA and the USSR. Many objected to the huge costs involved, considering the money could have been better spent on Earth, but it was the realisation of the fragility of our planet in the immensity of space, brought home to a wider public by images from the moon shots and the comments of the astronauts themselves, which influenced public opinion. In articulating the concept of Home Earth and the concomitant environmental and ecological implications, James Irwin, Apollo 15 pilot, was explicit:

Space travel has given us a new appreciation for the Earth. We realise that the Earth is special. We realise that the Earth is the only natural home ... that we know of and that we had better protect it (Brueton 1991:242).

The images of the Earth rising above the horizon of the moon's surface and of the Earth floating against the blackness of space were used on posters, greeting cards and in many other ways, and the expression 'Spaceship Earth' became common currency. However this image has been critiqued as 'an ambiguous modern icon' and many Pagan and New Age groups tend to avoid it because of its connotations of scientism rather than the earth as a *locus* for relationship with all living creatures (Harvey 1997: 131).

James Lovelock, a British scientist, who had worked at NASA perfecting non-stick and heat resistant coatings for the outside of space craft, went on, in association with microbiologist Lynn Margulis, to formulate one of the most influential ecological theories of the late twentieth century. In 1979 Lovelock published his hypothesis that

the Earth is a self-regulating entity, that the actual planet itself is alive and self-sustaining, and that if the effects of human beings on the environment threaten Earth then it will rebalance itself by creating conditions that might destroy the human species in order to preserve everything else. The 'robust' Gaia theory states that life, or the biosphere, regulates or maintains the climate and the atmospheric composition at an optimum for itself (Lovelock 1979). This idea came to be known as the Gaia hypothesis, named after the ancient Greek earth goddess, and met with much criticism in scientific circles because of its pantheistic overtones, the precise reason why New Agers and many ecologists found it attractive. In 1991 Lovelock presented the 'modest' Gaia theory in which the Earth is seen as a single physiological system, an entity that is alive at least to the extent that, like other living organisms, its chemistry and temperature are self-regulated at a state favourable for life (Lovelock 1991).

In April 1980 the Vatican declared St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) to be the patron saint of ecologists, and many modern Christians drew up a simple rule of life for themselves based on his *Regula Primitiva* adapted by him in 1221 for the Secular Testiaries who wished to adopt his ideals as far as has compatible with a normal mode of life (Frayling 1995:86,107) (Livingstone 1988:199). This also influenced the American based Simple Abundance movement with their motto 'Live simply so others may simply live' (Breathnach, 1995: unpaginated). The ideals of Simple Abundance were easily accommodated within a wide range of New Age and liberal Christian beliefs in Britain (Elizabeth, Heather, Indira, Old Bill, Mrs. Old Bill, Alchemilla).

'Downshifting' or 'downsizing', a simplification of one's lifestyle, also received attention in the popular press with many articles published as a reaction to the materialism of the 'yuppie' 1980s. The most common reason people gave for

downshifting was that they wanted more time, less stress and more balance in life (Schor 1998:114). This reaction to conspicuous consumption is still a display, a reflection of the need to distinguish oneself from others, a distinction by doing, consuming the right thing (Szmigin 2003:134). Downsizing also implies an ethical judgement on the capitalist system and its perceived shortcomings (Jachcel 2001) and requires a moral commitment which represents commercialized culture as of little worth, morally bad with damaging effects on the environment and those people in developing countries who have to work to support the western life style (Schor 1998).

The 'dark green' and deep ecology movements became more vociferous (Drengson and Inone 1995), and Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS) using a notional currency rather than real money were introduced to Britain in the 1980s from Canada, where the idea had been developed by academic David Weston to help small isolated communities. There are around 400 LETS schemes currently operating in Britain (www.letslink.org 10.11.2005).

Permaculture, the permanent agriculture movement started by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in Australia in 1978, which designs ethical and sustainable systems based on observation of local environments, was introduced into Britain in 1982. Graham Bell's (1994) *The Permaculture Garden* was the first book to adapt Permaculture design for the British climate. The most extreme manifestation of dark green sensibilities are the Freegans, whose passion for recycling and resourcefulness extends to trying to live their whole lives from what other people throw out (Sheffield LETS newsletter May 2005). Publications such as *Ethical Consumer* magazine cater for those who wish to make informed choices in their shopping. Ethnic fashions and consumer items, often sourced by charities and campaigning organisations such as Oxfam, Greenpeace and the Fair

Trade Movement, and sold via mail order catalogues have brought a host of cultures and design influences to the attention of the British public. Retailers, exemplified by Anita Roddick's *Body Shop* chain of cosmetics stores, support fair trade with indigenous cultures, and oppose animal testing, selling cruelty-free items whenever possible because this is good business as well as morally and ethically desirable (Dilwyn, James, Gillian, Harold). All the respondents to informal interviews said they made strenuous efforts to consume ecological, ethically produced, and fair trade products and food, and considered this a major part of their spiritual practice.

The 1960s spiritual revival was reflected in many aspects of natural building. One of the first visionaries to bring sacred ecology into architecture was Paolo Soleri, who proposed his 'arcology,' a combination of ancient influences, environmentalism and sustainable architecture (Pearson 1989: 33). His city Arcosanti in the Arizona desert is a thriving community today and has influenced many British ecological architects and designers. Keith Crichton proposed a return to sacred geometry and the creation of spiritual symbolism for the home by using geomancy, the western equivalent of oriental spatial organisation systems such as Feng Shui, and astrological traditions to orientate his modern, sacred architecture buildings to solstice and equinox sun positions (Pearson 1989:33).

Environmental concerns encouraged the development of design and architecture that literally did not cost the earth. Architect Arthur Quarmby built his own earth- sheltered house *Underhill* in the Derbyshire Peak District National Park in the late 1960s. It is a combination of vernacular materials, innovative architecture and energy saving design, with a large arched living space and a circular swimming pool lit by an overhead dome which fills the house with sunlight and reflections (Illus.15).

Influential books in the early eco-design movement were: Victor Papanek's (1971) *Design for the Real World* in which he demonstrated how design could reduce pollution, overcrowding, starvation, obsolescence and other modern ills and considered it a moral obligation of the designer to produce environmentally responsible design rather than fetish objects for a wasteful society; Ernst Schumacher's (1973) *Small is Beautiful* which called for a rethinking of corporate global economics; and Laurence Kahn's (1973) *Shelter* which illustrated a comprehensive range of traditional, vernacular and hand-built houses from a variety of cultures.

In the 1970s specialists in green architecture Brenda and Robert Vale published *The Autonomous House* a manifesto providing 'sensible suggestions for building homes that do not pollute the earth or squander or its resources'. This manifesto was seen as a significant move towards green architecture. In the 1990s the Vales built an environmentally friendly four-bedroom house in Southwell, Notts. They produced an autonomous house that fitted in with the local vernacular style, easy to maintain and self sufficient in energy terms, producing energy from the sun and drinking water from the rain (Vale 2002).

In the 1980s there were increasing reports of 'sick building syndrome' where workers in modern offices, schools and public buildings complained of recurrent symptoms including headaches, fatigue, irritation to the eyes and nose, dry throat, general loss of concentration and nausea. This malaise was attributed to indoor pollutants, fluorescent lighting, hot, dry air, the build up of positive ions and the lack of individual control of environments and was seen as a result of Modernist design, the use of synthetic materials and air conditioning in sealed environments (Pearson 1989: 52). In response to this the Ecological Design Association was formed in 1989, and officially launched

in February 1991 by architect and author, David Pearson, in order to encourage a wider appreciation of environmental issues amongst the design professions. He pointed out that:

there are many and multiplying initiatives in ecological design, but they are fragmented by discipline, country and language, and have long been on the fringes, often lacking information and publicity. The new rise in ecological awareness, green consumerism and health consciousness can only be sustained if there are responsible services and tested products to meet the demand ... (EDA Directory 1998: introduction unpaginated).

The EDA encourages education and training, professional standards, responsible services, independent product testing and project evaluation. The EDA directory lists individuals and companies interested or involved with the production of ecological design in architecture, building, interior design, landscape design, product design, graphics and other related interests (EDA Directory 1998).

Eco-feminist groups, inspired by Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis, emphasised that personal healing was an important aspect of housing (Venolia 1988). One of the 'fashion fads' of the 1990s was Feng Shui, the Chinese art of placement, which influences architecture, interior design and the organisation of public and commercial spaces. It was also taught in Further and Higher and Adult Education, but by the turn of the millennium its popularity was beginning to decline. Today it remains the preserve of New Agers, oriental medicine practitioners, Taoists and the older Chinese community. Other spatial organisation systems such as Hindu Vastu Shastra, Tibetan Mewas, shamanic traditions and new outgrowths and hybrids such as Celtic Feng Shui were also used in environmental and New Age design. These will be considered in Chapter Nine.

The New Age in Mainstream Education and Business

Mainstream education and business began to absorb influences from the complementary and spiritual outlooks and movements. Jung's work on archetypes and his acknowledgement of astrology as a useful tool in psychotherapy, combined with holistic and environmental insights into the natural world gave further impetus to the growth of interest in serious astrology in Britain that had started in the 1930s. The Astrological Association of Great Britain was formed at 7.22 p.m., 21st June 1958 by John Adday, Ray Firebrace and other astrologers from the Astrological Lodge of London, with the main purpose of bringing astrology out of the fringe and into society's mainstream. Adday contributed both philosophical understanding and a commitment to statistical and mathematical research, and combined these with influences from depth psychology so that astrology was seen as a means to character analysis and an aid to counselling and therapy. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the Astrological Association pursued this triple track programme, encouraging philosophical and psychological understanding, and scientific research. The first conference on astrological research, presided over by Charles Harvey, was held at London University's Institute of Psychiatry in 1979, indicating that astrology was beginning to be taken seriously in academic circles (www.astrologer/A.A.net 24.06.2005).

In the opinion of psychologist and astrological counsellor Stephen Arroyo, astrology became increasingly popular from the 1960s because

Western culture no longer has any viable mythology to sustain it. Myth always serves as a vitalising force in any culture by showing man's relationship to a larger, more universal reality. People have always needed a pattern of order to guide their collective lives and to infuse their individual experience with meaning. In this sense, astrology comprises within itself an entire mythical framework (Arroyo 1975:xvi).

American academic and mythographer Joseph Campbell stated there are three essential functions to myth: to elicit a sense of awe, to render a cosmology and to initiate the individual into the realities of his own psyche (Campbell 1960). In Arroyo's opinion the proper use of astrology fulfilled all these three functions and provided a vital and practical mythology for late twentieth century life (Arroyo 1975: xvi). Campbell's work on myth has been highly influential amongst British alternative and New Age practitioners (all 49 respondents to informal interviews had read some of his work) and academic interest in psychological astrology is exemplified by the Sophia Project, which is pressing for the creation of a chair in Astrology in a British university (www.astrologer/A.A.net 11.12.05).

Alternative approaches to modernist thought and scientific materialism are gradually becoming more recognised by mainstream education and research, although not without controversy. Arthur and Cynthia Koestler provided in their wills for the establishment of an endowed Chair in Parapsychology at a British university to further objective scientific research into:

... the capacity attributed to certain individuals to interact with their environment by means other than the recognised physical and motor channels (Moebius.psy.ed.ac.uk 13.06.2005)

Following the Koestler's deaths in 1983 the Chair was awarded to Edinburgh University, Robert Morris being the first professor of the Koestler Parapsychology Unit until his death in August 2004 (ibid). Many universities now offer Complementary and Alternative Medicine degree courses and medical schools offer an elective in CAM to phase 3A (fourth year) medical students.

New business initiatives, exemplified by Lynne Franks' SEED programme (the acronym standing for Sustainable Enterprise and Empowerment Dynamics) employ

metaphors of gardening, ecology and growth. Franks uses meditation and New Age techniques to evolve a more spiritual and value-led philosophy to enterprise, business and entrepreneurship (Franks 2000:26). Spirituality in the workplace has also become an important issue (Darwin et al. 2002:83-85). Buckingham University offers a degree in holistic business and holism in business and business education is considered a vital factor in developing enterprise, employability and entrepreneurship (Brown 2005).

The 'Common Features' of British New Age Design and Material Culture

The cliché of alternative and New Age design certainly in relation to whole foods, vegetarianism and sustainable lifestyles was clearly exemplified in the visual identity of *Cranks* vegetarian restaurant, opened on 21 June 1961 at 22 Carnaby Street, London. The proprietor David Canter created a 50 seater restaurant where every item of food and furnishing expressed the same values 'simple natural materials used in a direct and craftsmanly way' (Canter 1985:9). The quality of the materials used in the food preparation was matched in the surroundings.

Now familiar, but then revolutionary to most people's eyes was the use of handthrown stoneware pottery, solid natural coloured oak tables, heather brown quarry tiles, woven basket lampshades and hand-woven seat covers, among the white painted brick arches of the bakeshop we had toiled to convert with a borrowed £50 (Canter1985:9).

The pottery was produced by Ray Finch and the Winchcombe Pottery (Illus.16), the calligraphy and graphics by Donald Jackson, the wood engraved illustrations by John Lawrence, and the overall interior design by David Ransom (Canter1985:7). This house style continued for another 21 years in other *Cranks* off shoots, as did the waitresses' uniform of blue floral dresses, and influenced wholefood restaurants and health food stores for the next 40 years.

In terms of alternative and New Age decorative themes symbols from astrology, Wicca, western magical traditions, depictions of megalithic monuments and other sacred sites in Britain, Celtic interlacing patterns, runes, the Green Man and Woman, alchemical motifs, dragons, unicorns and other mythological beasts, Native American imagery including 'power animals', vie for space with dolphins and environmental subjects, angels and a panoply of other spiritual beings. Crystals and a variety of healing paraphernalia as well as influences from Indian and Oriental cultures are also evident as the contents of any New Age shop will testify (Illus.17). Although this is a huge range of subject matter, by its placement and combination New Age decorative design manages to maintain some kind of recognisable visual and stylistic coherence. The majority of respondents to informal interviews, when asked how they recognised New Age design replied "Well, you sort of know somehow". The interior of the New Age venue *Beach Blanket Babylon Restaurant*, London designed by Tony Weller in 1992 exemplifies this eclecticism (Illus.18). Weller's décor combines influences from Catalan Art Nouveau architect and designer Antonio Gaudi (1852-1926) and with imagery from Druidry, Runic traditions and astrology, yet to anyone familiar with New Age design it is immediately recognisable as such.

The links between Art Nouveau and New Age design are also evident in the work of the illustrator and graphic designer Will Worthington. He uses the interesting combination of egg tempera and computer aided design as his chosen mediums and cites the PreRaphaelites and Art Nouveau artists, especially the Scottish nineteenth century painter John Duncan, as inspirations in his work. Worthington combines these influences with rigorous research into Celtic and British history, archaeology and landscapes. He creates type-faces from historical influences by hand drawing characters then transforming them via a font programme (Carr-Gomm with Worthington

2004:192). His illustrations for the Druid Craft Tarot (2004) are typical of his work (Illus.19).

The influence of Zen design on many New Age interiors and products is also a major theme (Paul 2000) (Tidbury 1999). Zen design or 'style' has much in common with Minimalism, as exemplified in the work of British architect John Pawson, which has been a major influence on architecture and interior design in the 1990s and can be seen as an attempt to evolve a spiritual aesthetic independent from ethnic or stylistic references, rather than a complete return to Modernism (Crewe 2004) (Lyttleton 1997) (Pawson 1996).

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has sought to demonstrate the development and extent of complementary practices and spirituality, including the alternative, New Age and Holistic movements in Britain 1960–2005. British popular culture in this period has shown an openness to design from a wide variety of spiritual and cultural traditions. How much actual understanding of these other cultures has taken place, as opposed to superficial appropriation of attractive elements, is open to debate. Fashionable crazes undoubtedly have had some influence, notably Feng Shui, but some individuals influenced by these ideas for the first time have stuck with them and made them part of their lives, rather than discard them ready for the next craze.

There seems to be no single clearly defined theoretical basis or rationale for the 'alternative' in British culture. The British New Age and alternative scene is protean by nature. Application of post-modernist theory to this area will be discussed in Chapter Nine. What is clear is that the British New Age and alternative scene in the last 40 years

of the twentieth century developed from an amorphous subculture into an increasingly mainstream worldview that embraces people of any religious and political outlook, or none, and permeates all levels of British society.

One of the most obvious indicators of the alternative, complementary, Pagan and New Age movements' transition from alternative to mainstream culture can be evidenced by the availability and volume of published material on spirituality and holistic concerns. No serious bookseller is without a prominent section on 'Mind, Body, Spirit,' whereas 20 years ago similar subject matter would have been categorised as Occult and shelved at the back of the shop, a possible source of minor embarrassment to retailer and consumer alike. Still in print are seminal New Age texts from the 1960s and 1970s including alternative favourites such as the *Whole Earth Catalogue* and Kahn's *Shelter*, alongside self help material and recent best sellers such as Julian Cope's (1998) *The Modern Antiquarian: a pre millennial odyssey through megalithic Britain* which epitomised the Pagan and New Age spiritual approaches to ancient sites. Alternative and New Age publications continue to proliferate – books, magazines, periodicals, divination kits, as well as other ephemera and media broadcasts. The 'alternative' is now part of the mainstream.

In Chapters Two to Four of this thesis the orthodox approach to design history and design historiography has been examined in relation to the dominance of the modernist discourse and its promulgation. Chapter Five and this present chapter have provided some mapping of the alternative movements in British design and society and identified some of their institutions in order to provide a framework for an alternative design history. These chapters are of necessity an overview, given the broad, amorphous and ever changing nature of the British Alternative and New Age scene. However when

evaluating alternative, complementary and New Age influences on design and material culture we are still dealing with consumerism and consumption, the social context of the relationship of the consumer to the product and personal attitudes to lifestyle and aspiration. Part IV of the thesis will address such concerns in relation to objects, designers and programmes of design by reference to three key areas of alternative design activity during the period 1950-2005: homes and the domestic environment; gardens and outdoor leisure activities; and. holistic health and complementary therapies and their influence on material culture.

**CHAPTER SEVEN: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR INVESTIGATING
ALTERNATIVE DESIGN PRACTICE**

Introduction and Argument of the Chapter

The three areas of investigation in this part of the thesis; homes, gardens and the landscape, and health, have been selected because they affect every one to a greater or lesser extent. There is a fundamental problem in demonstrating the design and material culture of subgroups and subcultures that are financially constrained and therefore less likely to commission design work, and that are in addition often opposed to, or dismissive of, materialism and consumption, and so by examining areas of design which are pertinent to everyone there is a better opportunity to minimise this difficulty.

The principle argument of this final part of the thesis chapter is that alternative and New Age design influences in homes and gardens, in attitudes to the landscape and its use in leisure, and in healthcare environments are more a matrix of interlinked ideas and practices rather than distinct styles and products attributable to named designers and capable of being presented as a distinct linear progression as in the history of Modernism, written as a history of the 'styles' and formal ones at that, of the different 'pioneers' (Pevsner 1936/1960) and their buildings or products. In New Age and contemporary neo-pagan culture the home and garden are used as a spiritual and often ritual loci and the increasing awareness of alternative and complementary discourses are being expressed in the design of public and private health care environments. Changes in popular concepts of health and wellbeing generally parallel developments in consumption outlined in relation to the home and garden. Health care and wellbeing programmes are being designed by individuals to suit their own needs either in opposition or in complement to existing orthodox biomedical provision.

The argument of this chapter is that existing theoretical approaches from disciplines closely related to design history assist in providing a framework which proposes an alternative design history that does not need to map directly onto other histories because its own connections are sufficient.

Rationale for the Choice of the Three Areas of Investigation

Place making and the experience of place are common to all people to some degree. As Bertram remarked:

Designing a room is the one art all but the poorest can practice, the only way in which we can all express ourselves (Bertram 1938:69).

Homes and gardens are those places over which we have some personal control no matter how restricted. In contemporary western society and patterns of consumption the home is increasingly part of our extended selves (Belk 1988:145). Gardens can be described as the ideal mode of place making and interaction with the living, organic and changing component of the natural world (Dixon Hunt 2000:11). New Age spirituality and attitudes to health are concerned with creating supportive and healthful places in which to live, work and be healed that are in harmony with the ecological needs of the planet and take into account the whole person. Therefore it can be assumed that spiritual, holistic and environmental concerns are embedded in each of the chosen themes and also link them in a matrix of ideology, design and material culture.

In *Poetry, Language and Thought* (1971), the philosopher Martin Heidegger lamented that environment and dwelling had lost their meaning in modern western society, thereby ignoring the deep rooted relationship between human beings and their surroundings 'The real dwelling plight lies in this, that mortals ever search anew for the nature of dwelling, that they must ever learn to dwell' (Heidegger 1971:161).

Heidegger refers to the alienation between the 'natural' and 'the built' and to the loss of the sense of wonder at nature that seems prevalent in modern urban life. Critics have considered Modernist architecture and design to have been inimical to the qualities of domesticity and in some cases to have actively suppressed them (Reed 1996). The attempts of New Age and alternative designers and mainstream design in the late twentieth century to overcome this alienation and to restore the connection with natural surroundings is the subject of Chapter Nine.

In much design history writing, the garden and the landscape are aspects of design that have often been considered adjuncts to, rather than integral aspects or extensions of, buildings and architecture. This is in some measure due to the Modernist twentieth century 'canon' of architecture and the historical understanding that all the arts (and design) are united in building. The latter idea has a long history but in twentieth century Modernism it appears to underlie developments from the Vienna Workshops and Secession of the late nineteenth century, exemplified in the work of designers from Otto Wagner (1841-1918) to Josef Hoffmann (1870-1956), and continued at the Bauhaus under its director Walter Gropius (1883-1969).

Health care also involves place making, within hospitals, and other healing environments. Recent design initiatives have addressed the reconciliation of technological health care with human needs of patients and workers, and thinking about healthcare architecture has responded to the challenge of evidence (Rust 2007). Increased use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) in Britain in the late twentieth century resulted in its wide availability within both private and NHS sectors, and holistic and alternative medical ideas became evident in design and material culture, inspiring individuals to create their own healing spaces in their homes and gardens (all

49 respondents to informal interviews). Appendix Three defines the medical paradigms of conventional medicine, CAM and Holistic Health, and indicates the extent of CAM in Britain along with a rationale for patient choice of CAM.

The Material Culture of Homes and Houses

After many years of relative neglect, the material culture of homes and houses is being reconsidered as a unified field of study, incorporating disciplines as diverse as anthropology, architecture, cultural studies, geography, medicine, public health, psychology and sociology (Hanson 1998:55). This interdisciplinary approach in academia has similarities with attitudes to the home in Holistic and New Age circles in that the home has layers of meaning which can impinge on one's physical, mental and spiritual well being (Pearson 1989).

Professor Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson of University College, London, in *The Social Logic of Space* (1984) investigated both vernacular and cross-cultural examples of domestic interiors to explain how space might, in principle, be shaped to carry cultural information in its form and organisation and how the content reflected the variety of spatial behaviours which societies exhibit. Hanson's later work, *Decoding Homes and Houses* (1998), investigated the ways in which people's dwellings embody and express cultural and lifestyle preferences. The dwelling is the 'original' building historically and a 'universal' building today. Nearly everyone has some kind of place to live in and modifies it according to culture and status as well as personal preference.

Wherever we look in the ethnographic record, the evidence suggests that, even at its most simple, human shelter is already complex and imbued with a sense of purpose which French prehistorian Leroi Gourhan has referred to as the 'domestication' of space and time' (Hanson 1998:5).

The inhabitant of a closed space, such as a house, has privileged rights of access and control of that space, and orders its boundaries. Every building can be considered a domain of knowledge, in the sense that it is a certain ordering of boundaries, which together constitute a social interface between inhabitants and visitors (Hanson 1998:6).

In contemporary western society, very few people have the opportunity to design the architectural structure and spatial disposition of rooms in their own homes. They have to acquiesce to, or modify a structure and style already imposed upon them by speculative-built houses which embody the developer's notions of contemporary popular values. Thus the house can be considered to be an expression not just of how individuals and families choose to live their own everyday lives, but a reflection of the constitution of society at large. Hanson's research suggests that size and spatial subdivision of people's houses, the development of more complex and differentiated space configurations – whether this is accomplished conceptually by allocating activities to different zones within a space, or physically by partitioning the interior into separate rooms, or by a mixture of both - and the degree of sophistication in the pattern of connectivity, access and spatial integration which obtains among them, may be a direct indication of society's level of socio-political complexity. Increased social complexity produces increased segmentation and partitioning within the home (Hanson 1998:47).

Over the past decade or so, homes and gardens have been increasingly been seen as refuges from the modern world and, especially in alternative circles, as spiritual and healing environments. In 2000, Britons spent approximately £30 billion on home improvements and the average amount expended on a property was £50,000 (Hall 2000:109). Over-improving property seems to be a rampant British disease, and a

somewhat extravagant one in view of the fact that the average first-time house owner moves house after only five to seven years (Hall 2000:108). Consumption has always been an indicator of status and identity, but other values influence patterns of acquisition, therefore it is arguable that attitudes to design, spirituality and consumption are linked in the period under consideration.

Gardens: Theoretical, Philosophical and Cultural Considerations.

Gardening is an ideological as well as a practical enterprise, which reflects intellectual, social and artistic currents. There are clearly many kinds of gardens, from the utilitarian flower gardens and vegetable gardens, public gardens such as parks, winter gardens and peace gardens, to aristocratic gardens demonstrating wealth and power, to identify but a few categories. An alternative or New Age garden could be considered to include influences from any of the above genres, but a major underlying concept, irrespective of the eventual design, would be that of working in harmony with nature and showing a respect for the environment and the assumed spiritual basis of the Universe. An 'essential' definition of an alternative New Age or garden would be impossible to achieve, given that such gardens are not unified by a set of essential properties or list of necessary conditions, but rather rely on shared attitudes or general themes, a much looser set of relationships. The creation of a garden is a 'place-making' activity, which involves the inclusion of natural materials that are to some extent beyond the control of the designer and results in the melding of nature and culture. As an act of 'milieu' a site exists both as a physical object and as a place experienced by a subject (Dixon Hunt 2000:15). In New Age and spiritual gardens it is the experience that is of paramount importance.

All Indo-European and Slavic languages derive their words for gardens from roots that

signify enclosure (Dixon Hunt 2000:19) (Uglow 2004:3). The notions of enclosure and boundaries, whether actual or implied, are important, along with distinguishing elements of what is inside and what is outside, and the organisation and colonisation of interior space (East 2003:1). The place-making element of a garden, the actual setting out of territory, raises important questions about what, exactly, the garden is being marked out from, what is outside its boundary, either physically or metaphorically. It also provides a basis for analysing meaning in any garden, since each garden has a basis of intentionality no matter how slight, which separates it from nature 'in the raw'.

In garden design history theory a useful approach to gardens is to consider them as expressions of the 'third nature', the pinnacle of a hierarchy of intervention in the natural world, which is also a way of *organising* human experiences (Dixon Hunt 2000:51). The Roman philosopher and statesman Cicero (104-43 BC) in his *De Natura Deorum* described two 'natures'. The first or primal nature is the unmediated natural world or wilderness, the unknown, wherein is located the mysterious or numinous, the divine will and power of nature (Latin *numen*), the sense of the indwelling spirit of the place. The second or alternative nature is created within the first nature brought about by human intervention and the taming of the wilderness by planting crops and trees. Such organisation or even control of the natural world is vital for establishing human social experience and culture. Urban developments are also within the zone of second nature, as places where humans have made over the environment for purposes of survival and habitation. Territory is important in both these aspects of second nature (East 2003:3).

The Italian humanists Bartolomeo Taegio, writing in 1559, and Jacopo Bonfadio in 1541, independently coined the same term for gardens, 'a third nature', explained as the

privileging of place and a sense of site as an important part of human experience, within both the first and second natures (Dixon Hunt 2000:31). The term 'third nature', used to describe villa gardens where the myths of antiquity were revised and reinterpreted by Renaissance scholars, thus placed garden design within classical traditions of cultural history and explanation. Cultivating the land was equated with cultivating the mind, the Ciceronian concept of *cultus*. The garden remained enclosed and became, by definition, a place set apart from its cultivated rural surroundings and wild nature (Pizzoni 1997:39).

The human intervention characteristic of 'third nature' is that which goes beyond what is required by the necessities or practice of agriculture or urban settlement. (East 2003:3). This may involve the specific intention of the creator and or the consumer of the garden, some elaboration of formal ingredients above functional needs, and perhaps some conjunction of metaphysical experience with physical forms and the wish to make a site beautiful, or convey other meanings (Dixon Hunt 200:62). Third nature as exemplified by the garden is the strongest contrast to the 'otherness' of wild nature.

Gardening intervenes in, controls and re-orders the natural world and is for the majority of urban dwellers their main contact with nature. For people of the Judaeo-Christian and Muslim traditions the biblical narrative of the Garden of Eden in *Genesis* 2 and 3 binds together inextricably notions of spirituality, the divine and the garden, and this has affected the development of secular gardens in many cultures. The ancient Persian word *pairidaeza*, meaning enclosure, was applied to both royal hunting parks and to walled gardens for produce and ornamental plants. In the Old Testament this became *pardes*, in Classical and New Testament Greek it was *paradeisos*, and is related to the English word 'park' (Uglow 2004:3). Thus the concepts of garden, paradise and the

fields of heaven, free from the depredations of time and death, are etymologically linked in western culture. In addition a garden is often the result of a complex materialising of sacred space and rituals. By deliberate and physical intervention on some specific site a *genius loci*, a spirit of the place is either recognised or created. Both recognition and creation involve a subject though the former supposes an independent *a priori* subject (Dixon Hunt 2000:63).

Classical and Humanist theories concerning the purpose and ideology of gardens remained relatively unchallenged until the British Empiricist philosopher John Locke (1632-1704), declared that all knowledge of the world must rest on sensory awareness (East 2003:3). This concept of the mind as an instrument for inductive reasoning and a theatre for personal experience, rather than as a receptacle for revealed truth and immutable law, arguably helped change the character of landscape design in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The garden was no longer a stage for the display of power alone, or merely an arena of social interaction, but a place for solitary or companionable reflection and contemplation. Empiricist conceptions of landscape delighted in wilderness, irregularity and unexpected details, representing how one comes to know Nature and thereby one's own nature. These themes are strongly apparent in many New Age and neo-pagan ideas of experiencing nature directly both in the landscape and the garden, and are also similar to the ideas of the Zen garden, increasingly popular in Britain in the late twentieth century (Harte 2002:8).

In the twentieth century, the domestic garden became a space for open air living as well as an arena for stylistic experimentation, which offered an opportunity for self-expression, creation and recreation, and a reflection of current social and spiritual values.

Gardens serve the purpose of the people who make them. They are part of the lifestyle which everyone creates – part of the myth which people build up around themselves. A garden is a social statement and a declaration of the owner's taste (Quest-Ritson 2001:258).

Thus a garden may also declare the owner's spiritual attitudes and aspirations, and that general trends in New Age spirituality and alternative lifestyles are expressed in both private and public gardens.

Architecture, Healing Environments and Design for Healthcare

There is nothing new in the notion of architecture as an adjunct to healing. The link between spirituality, health and architecture can be found in the earliest civilizations and is articulated in early Vedic texts, including *The Upanishads*, the basis of Ayurvedic medicine, written down about 1500 B.C. (Govinda 2002:9). From the sixth century A.D. western foundling and leper hospitals were attached to churches and monastic settlements, and in later western culture hospitals have played an important role in defining a city, in expressing the philanthropy of royalty, clergy and wealthy patrons, and in using art, architecture and design to inspire the sick and ease the transition of the dying; the *Greenwich Royal Naval Hospital* (1696-1716) by Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723) is a typical exemplar of this (Watkin 1986:291).

Nineteenth century hospital design was heavily influenced by the reforms of Florence Nightingale, brought about by the requirements of Crimean War nursing practices where large numbers of patients were attended to by a small number of over-stretched staff. The 1855 military hospital at Renkioi was designed by the engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel, and was prefabricated in Britain and transported to the Crimea in five ships. Nightingale was so impressed with the design and ventilation of the hospital that it influenced her subsequent ideas about hospital design, and the 36 bed Nightingale

ward, which allowed for visibility and ease of response, continued to be the basis for hospital design well into the twentieth century (Heathcote 2005) (Rust 2007).

The late twentieth century attitude to mainstream design for health began to incorporate concepts and practices hitherto considered alternative or complementary to the modernist discourse in healthcare. This was for a number of reasons, including consumer pressure, government attempts to reduce expenditure on drugs and staffing, and the growing body of evidence based research which supported the efficacy of various strands of complementary medicine and recognised the importance in the therapeutic environment of natural daylight, acoustics and materials in improving patient experiences and recovery times.

In the USA the Center for Health Design embarked on an ambitious project to review and promote research that provides an evidence base for design interventions. The first review discovered 84 useful rigorous studies (Rubin *et al.* 1998), the second review, led by a team of designers, found 600 clinical trials being used to investigate the effects of design interventions, a dramatic advance indicating the growing interest in this issue (Ulrich *et al.* 2004). This latter review led by Roger Ulrich of the University of Texas indicated that better air quality, lighting, lower noise levels, and single bed rooms with access to nature reduce stress and pain and improve recovery times, hospital gardens for patients and staff reduce stress and heighten satisfaction with care, and works of art can improve or worsen stress and other outcomes depending on their subject matter (Ulrich *et al.* 2004: 5, 10, 21, 22, 23).

The leading expert on evidence based design expert in Britain, Bryan Lawson, Professor of Architecture at the University of Sheffield, has developed a set of guiding principles

for designing healthcare environments. Lawson has distilled his principles from UK studies of clinical evidence that parallel those of the Center for Health Design to provide advice that is straightforward and recognisable to practising architects, but can be backed up with evidence when persuading clients of the thinking behind a new design. These are not exceptional ideas in themselves, since most people would recognise them as good practice, but the significance of Lawson's scheme is that he taken a great deal of specific scientific evidence from clinical trials and used it to underpin a set of general principles that might be used in any healthcare building.

Lawson's six principles are: community, privacy and dignity; views of the outside world; contact with nature; spatial legibility; comfort and control; and homeliness. It is up to the designers to make the principles work for the actual conditions they find in each new project. He and his colleagues at the University of Sheffield have developed a number of tools to support architects and designers in evaluating building designs. These form part of the resources provided by the UK Department of Health's *OnDesign* (sic) web portal ([http:// design.dh.gov.uk/](http://design.dh.gov.uk/) last accessed 28.06.07).

Lawson considers a move to smaller hospitals, with 100% single bedrooms, pleasant environments, natural daylight, low noise levels and an ambience more like that of a spa, with CAM therapies available, is the way forward for Britain's hospital provision, as it would be cost effective and less stressful on the staff as well as the patients (Lawson 2005).

Expanding on Lawson's six general principles, architect Richard Mazuch of Nightingale Associates has set out on an ambitious programme of research intended to provide very specific design solutions with the idea that an environmental 'prescription' can be

identified for each clinical problem and tailored for each individual patient. His approach to creating and managing sensory environments was inspired by the way that leading companies in hospitality and retail industries were using sensory effects to influence their customers (Mazuch 2003). Mazuch describes his approach as ‘emotional engineering’ partly to infer to the potential but also to acknowledge the risks, using colour, aromas and lighting in much the same way that holistic therapists do. His idea of prescribing an environment for each patient echoes the CAM mantra of ‘treat the patient not the disease’. Indeed it would appear that Lawson and Mazuch have come to similar conclusions about the relationship of the patient to the environment that CAM therapies hold self-evident, but have arrived by different routes.

Holistic Health and CAM

Health is defined by the World Health Organisation as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity (Blum and Loughan 1995:3). A general discussion of the concept of holism was outlined in Chapter Five. The explanation given by David Hoffmann in his seminal *The Holistic Herbal: A Herbal celebrating the wholeness of life* (1988) is one recommended to trainee therapists by the International Federation of Aromatherapists amongst other CAM organisations (IFA Licentiate Diploma Course 1988).

The holistic concept in therapy work relies on the interconnectedness and dynamic interaction of all the parts in the whole person – the physical, emotional and mental bodies as well as ‘the enlivening presence’ often referred to as ‘the soul’. The medical practitioner’s view should then further expand to see the wholeness of the patient as part of a greater whole – the person’s group, humanity and the entire planet, as all these work together in an integrated system.

In healing we must take the whole being of the patient into our awareness, including the context of their life. We ask our patients to look at how to make their environment, habits and activities life supporting and by doing this we contribute to a change of consciousness (Hoffmann 1988:12).

Hoffmann's thought is influenced by Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis of the Earth as a complex entity (1979), and by theoretical physicist David Bohm's theory of the 'implicate' or 'enfolded' structure of the universe (1980). This theory envisages reality as a dynamic web of relationships that cannot be comprehended unless consciousness is an integral part of the Universe. Hoffmann considers that the correlation and interdependence of mind and matter is not a causal relationship but one of 'mutually enfolded projections of a higher reality which are neither matter nor consciousness' (Hoffmann 1988:14). As a natural corollary of this interdependence of mind and matter, health is, in his opinion, the expression of 'integrated being' that a person embodies.

The word healing has its roots in the Greek word 'holos' ... that has given us 'whole' and 'holistic'. Healing is the expression of wholeness, health is wholeness. The emotions, the thought-life and spiritual flow are as important to health as is the state of organs and tissues within the body (Hoffmann 1988:19).

Hoffmann distinguishes four branches of healing modalities; body work, medicine, including diet, psycho-therapies and spiritual integration. His diagrammatic representation of their interrelationship echoes Jung's mandala of the four functions of the unified self. He places these modalities into the wider life of the individual and considers that health, healing and wholeness are dependent on and affect every facet of one's existence.

We are what we eat, but also what we breathe, what we think, what we say, what we see. So whilst all of what has been said concerns our inner lives, the interaction with the environment we choose to live in is just as important ...Consciously choose the people with whom you share your life and work. Do your home, workplace and

recreational space reflect to you joy and positivity? If not, then change it or yourself. This may be very difficult, but then, that is what healing is about, transforming ourselves and our world (Hoffmann 1988:22).

The concept of healing as a transformative process affecting both the individual and the environment has influenced ideas of health and design and in accord with other New Age and alternative movements has restored to the individual some measure of control in these areas. CAM practitioners promote the idea of the patient as an informed consumer wishing to participate on an equal footing with the therapist in designing a programme of healthcare and wellbeing suited to their individual lifestyle and requirements, rather than as a passive recipient of an orthodox medical intervention over which they have little control. The notions of prevention of illness and the ongoing maintenance of wellbeing now take precedence over that of 'getting fixed' when something goes wrong. For many people, healthcare is now increasingly seen as a lifestyle choice that reflects one's taste and identity in the same way that the design of one's home, garden and clothes does.

Summary and Conclusion

By examining existing theoretical and practical approaches from disciplines closely allied to design history, this chapter has indicated particular current academic research on placemaking which may be utilised to investigate complementary and spiritual influences in the areas of homes, gardens and landscape, and healthcare environments. The concepts and research discussed above assist in providing a framework for an alternative design history that does not need to map directly onto other design histories, such as the predominant Modernist discourse, because its own connections are sufficient.

CHAPTER EIGHT

REPRESENTATIONS OF ALTERNATIVE DESIGN AND COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE IN THE BRITISH MEDIA 1950-2005

Introduction and the Argument of the Chapter

The design historian uses exemplars from the broadcast and print media to evidence trends and changes in popular culture. In media studies the category or frame of 'media' is taken to include such institutions as publishing, radio, television, cinema, newspapers, journals, publicity, advertising and the Internet, since, as channels of information and interpretation about phenomena and events, they are likely, in various ways, to influence conceptions of material culture. Chapter Three demonstrated how the media were used to advance the institutionalisation of the Modernist discourse in Britain in the 1930s. There is still a modernist hegemony in the consensual reality of the serious media (McIntosh 2002:105, 140) but the popular media is open to a wider range of topics. Non-published and non-literary sources are of use to the design historian in tracking the groundswell of attitudes to complementary practices and spirituality in design even if these are not accepted by the establishment. In this chapter the mainstream acceptance of alternative design and Complementary and Alternative Medicine is evidenced by reference to its representation in the popular media.

The argument of the chapter is that alternative design perspectives and CAM were entering the mainstream in the period under consideration and early indicators of their acceptance were evidenced by references in popular culture including the media. By investigating how the British media situated and contextualised the alternative and complementary perspectives it is possible to map and analyse the influence of these approaches on popular design and material culture.

Home and the Media: The Do-It-Yourself Revolution and the Home Make-over Show

Television Do-It-Yourself programmes began in the 1950s when Barry Bucknell became television's first DIY presenter and expert in the BBC's *About the House* (1957). He followed this successful series with *Do-It-Yourself* (1958) which attracted seven million viewers, and *Bucknell's House* (1962) a weekly programme in which he 'modernised' a Victorian terraced house in Ealing by ripping out or covering over original period features, replacing them with flush panel doors and other contemporary design solutions.

Modern was the keyword and hardboard was its tool... 'Doing a Bucknell' became a national catchphrase amongst DIYers (Akhtar and Humphries 2001:121).

Bucknell then moved to Independent Television for ABC TV's *The ABC of Do –It – Yourself* (1966). By the mid 1960s it was clear that DIY was not a passing craze, but a part of the fabric of British life, encouraged by articles in Sunday supplements and glossy magazines. What had begun as an economic necessity of post-war recovery had become a national pastime. Bucknell's obituary in the *Daily Telegraph* (22.02.2003) acknowledged his contribution in spawning the entire DIY industry and converting the British into a nation obsessed with DIY.

Although always a popular media topic, DIY and home make-over programmes came to dominate the television schedules in the 1990s, and their success shows no signs of abating. There is a conflict between attitudes to the home as a refuge and to the home as an arena for self-expression and status, and these programmes reflect social trends as well as instigate them. The most successful make-over show was BBC's *Changing Rooms* in which two teams of friends or relatives swapped house keys and redecorated a

room in each other's houses, aided by professional interior designers. Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen, a designer who appeared on the first episode in 1996, is now a national institution, adored and reviled in equal measure for his outlandish, opulent design schemes (purple being his signature colour), his over-use of medium density fibre board (MDF), his *faux* camp manner and foppish dress sense. The fourteenth series broadcast in September 2003, was now presented by Llewelyn-Bowen, who was determined to give proceedings a 'sexier' image (*Radio Times* 13.09.2003). *Changing Rooms*, in his opinion 'helped to establish a design democracy which is something I am very passionate about. Good design is not just for the upper crust' (Llewelyn-Bowen quoted in *Homes & Antiques*, Aug. 2003:129). It is unquestionable that Llewelyn-Bowen has popularised design with the British public, but whether his work is representative of good design is a matter of debate.

Although *Changing Rooms* and its BBC stable mate *Homefront* (1999-2003), again featuring Llewelyn-Bowen with designer Linda Barker and garden designer Diarmuid Gavin, whose interest in historical and spiritual aspects of gardens is not always evidenced in his startling and playful contemporary designs, presented the populist attitude to interior design, issues such as Feng Shui (the Chinese art of placement), the design of meditation rooms, colour therapy and bedrooms as sanctuaries had been discussed in several programmes, indicating the general public's awareness, if not understanding, of alternative and New Age and Holistic issues.

The Feng Shui boom began in Britain in the mid 1980s and had peaked by 2000, although it is still of interest to New Age and Holistic groups, practitioners of Chinese and Oriental medicine, and ecological architects and designers. In 1998 William Spear the director of *Feng Shui International Network* (FSNI) stated there were more than 92

books available in English with the words Feng Shui in the title, and that half of them had been published since 1996 (Spear 1998:2). In 1997 the FSNI won the *Sword of Excellence* from the Institute of Public Relations for its media campaign to create awareness of Feng Shui in Britain (Spear 1998:2).

The rapidly growing acceptance of the topic in Britain, Europe and the USA encouraged English Feng Shui master Stephen Skinner to publish *Feng Shui for Modern Living*, the world's first colour magazine on that topic. Endorsed by Lillian Too, Harvard MBA, internationally famous and influential Feng Shui practitioner and best-selling author, the first issue went on sale on 10 February 1998, the 14th day of the Chinese Year of the Tiger, a time considered auspicious for daring new business ventures. The magazine proved so popular that the launch issue was reprinted in April 1998 (*FSML* Vol 1, No 1:3).

Apart from the Chinese pictograms for Feng Shui, meaning literally wind and water, the covers of the early issues were virtually indistinguishable from those of other middle of the road interiors magazines, but by issue 8 *FSML* had re-branded itself as a more glamorous publication, aimed mainly at an affluent female readership. Contents included readers' letters, a Feng Shui problem page, news from the international Feng Shui community and an explanation of Feng Shui basics for new readers. The main articles were on celebrities' homes, business premises, Chinese and Taoist culture for Western readers, Nine Star Qi astrology and horoscopes. Book reviews, course listings and general advertisements ended each edition with the last page always devoted to a cut-out-and-keep *pa kua* mandala so the readers could begin to Feng Shui their own homes (Fig.3).

By the beginning of the twenty-first century more serious television programmes about domestic design were in evidence. Lawrence Llewelyn-Bowen moved from presenting popular makeover series such as *Homefront Inside Out* (BBC2 2000), and *Fantasy Rooms* (BBC2 2001), to series such as *Taste* (BBC2 2002) which gave a general history of western design styles, and *Design Rules* (BBC2, July-August 2003), which explored the elements of interior design, discussing space, light, colour, pattern, texture, balance and order, as well as optics, psychology and personality. Despite a confessed preference for English Baroque, he acknowledged that his style is basically an historical eclecticism.

I believe one of the most potent design rules is to remember that the thing about creative imagination is that so often you're not designing anything new. It's more a question of recycling, in your own way, an existing recipe with exciting new ingredients (*Homes & Antiques*, Aug. 2003:219).

In the *Design Rules* (2003) book that accompanied the series of the same name, Llewelyn-Bowen stated that his work drew from

scientifically proven facts, design theory and from alternative therapies and beliefs. They all help to build up a picture of what we're dealing with, of how our houses actually work (Llewelyn-Bowen 2003:7).

Llewelyn-Bowen incorporates insights from colour therapy and acknowledges a debt to Feng Shui in his designs (Llewelyn-Bowen 2003:67), considering, along with 1930's modernists, that maximum contact with daylight helps nourish and protect us. Britons spent on average 75 – 90% of their time indoors, far more than in the past (Pearson 1989:99).

Our homes, as a result, have taken on the essential role of providing spiritual nourishment, offering, privacy, peace, stability and protection and comfort away from the whirlwind of demands placed on us by the outside world. We need healing domestic spaces that

allow us to recharge and reconnect with our personal needs, so that we can continue to function productively in everything we do (Llewelyn-Bowen 2003:114).

The Feng Shui concept of clearing clutter is also one Llewellyn-Bowen utilises. The home is seen as a reflection of its owner, and if it is cluttered and chaotic, it indicates the person's life may be unbalanced, stifled and lacking in energy (Caradoc, Nemetona, Dryad, Nekko, Bruce). However he makes it clear he is 'not from the school that recommends sparse, colourless minimalism which in my view is equivalent to living in a soulless box' (Llewellyn-Bowen 2003:67).

Linda Barker, interior design consultant, writer and journalist, also appeared in *Changing Rooms*. Her interior designs usually rely on bright colour schemes, but she confessed that at home she preferred a natural palette of beiges, whites, creams and browns to produce an interior that is 'uncluttered serene and Zen-like' and which 'values the spiritual as well as the material'. She acknowledged that she was sympathetic to Feng Shui principles and used them in her designs (Barker 1999:23). In 2002 Barker presented a television series entitled *Heaven and Earth: Divine Designs* (BBC1, 2002) in which she examined how the various world religions had impacted on the design of the home in their respective geographical spheres of influence. This series responded to the interest in ethnic and spiritual design in Britain by explaining the underlying influences in the design of other cultures and then suggesting how these could be appropriated for use in contemporary interior decoration.

American trend expert Faith Popcorn predicted that the interior design cult of 'cocooning', which started in the 1980s, would dominate late twentieth and early twenty-first century design. She defines 'cocooning' as the...

impulse to go inside when it just gets too tough and scary outside...(it) is about insulation and avoidance, peace and protection, cosiness and control – a sort of hyper-nesting (Popcorn 1991:25).

This impulse to 'hyper-nest' is seen in contemporary British attitudes to the home too, with many people, not just those involved with the New Age movement, considering their home as a healing refuge that provides physical and spiritual protection from the incessant demands of ordinary life. In addition the 1990s and recent years have seen a tendency for the British to socialise more at home, inviting friends round rather than going out for the evening, which may explain why they spend so much time and money investing in their homes compared to their continental counterparts (Hall 2000:109) (Llewelyn-Bowen 2003:143).

The Alternative Home Make-over Show

The reality of British housing is far from the designer ideal given that 80 percent of the British population of 60 million, at the time of writing, live in small, often badly lit spaces, built between the middle of the nineteenth century and the present day, with 25% of homes dating from before 1919 (www.statistics.gov.org 14.05.2005). More directly related to New Age and Holistic issues in populist interior design is Channel 5's *Housebusters*, produced by *World of Wonder* and publicised as 'the alternative make-over show'. In this programme, home owners troubled by feelings of unease, 'negative energy' or general domestic unhappiness have their home examined by three alternative experts who suggest decorative and practical changes. The home owners then decide whose advice to follow; the television company helps them make the necessary changes and visits them a few weeks later to see if any improvements have occurred.

In a Special Edition broadcast on 9 May 2003, a couple with one child, living in a Wimbledon Victorian terraced villa, sought help with their problems, including sleepless nights, the father's redundancy, relationship issues and cold, unwelcoming areas in parts of the house. The experts, psychic Michelle Knight, Feng Shui practitioner Paul Derby and 'Holistic Home expert' Jane Alexander, gave their verdicts and the family chose Knight to work on their home.

Knight's techniques included 'energetic space clearing' using Frankincense, which is generally accorded attributes of relaxing the nervous system, acting as an antidepressant and 'has profound psychological and spiritual benefits long recognised by religious and spiritual traditions the world over' (Mojay 1996:75). She also 'smudged' the house using small bundles of burning sage, a native North American space clearing technique. She advised that the young daughter, who could not sleep and kept interrupting her parents' nights, should change bedrooms and sleep in the existing spare room, and the daughter's former room become a meditation room for the mother. Using astrological horoscope data for the entire family, Knight changed the colour schemes to colours traditionally beneficial for the family's sun signs. Thus a previously neutral, predominately white interior was transformed into a blue hallway, an orange sitting room, a yellow meditation room, a lavender master bedroom and a pink bedroom with a mural of a guardian angel figure for the little girl. Clutter was also cleared from the attic and hallway. The family declared themselves delighted with the result and claimed beneficial changes had taken place in their lives in the subsequent weeks after the makeover (Channel 5, 09.05.03).

No structural work or major outlay on new furniture or fittings was involved in Knight's scheme, one of the reasons New Age design is so difficult to quantify in many

instances. Instead, she paid attention to how the family used the interior and rearranged room usage and furniture accordingly, and used colour therapy analysis and traditional colour associations from astrology to change the colour scheme. Her techniques were a mixture of Feng Shui, colour therapy and space clearing from Native North American traditions and her approach exemplifies the appropriation and syncretism prevalent in many New Age practices including design.

The British Obsession with the Home

The scheduling on Lifestyle Channel and UK TV Style is predominantly home make-over shows, which further underlines the British obsession with houses, home improvements and property values. The number of glossy periodical magazines concerned with the home has rapidly expanded, due in part to the increasing number of single woman households, women usually being considered to be more concerned with interior design and redecoration than men. Fifty percent of British women now live on their own and often regard it as an empowering experience, despite the negative impact on their disposable income generally (Womack 2005:6).

Titles such as *BBC Homes and Antiques*, and *Period Living*, exemplify the rise of interest in heritage, *Country Homes and Interiors*, *Country Life*, and *Country Living* amongst others cater to the English obsession for the rural idyll, *Homes and Gardens*, *House and Garden*, *Ideal Home* and *House Beautiful* appeal to the mainstream. *Elle Décor* and *Wallpaper* target the younger, trendier, design aware market. *The World of Interiors* aspires to bridge the gap between commercial interior design and the intellectual study of interiors and their history as discussed in scholarly journals such as *The Journal of Design History*.

Publications such as *Build It*, *Selfbuild* and *Homebuilding and Renovating*, which claims to be Britain's best selling self-build magazine, cater for the growing numbers of Britons who aspire to build their own houses. An influential television series in this regard is lighting and interior designer Kevin McCloud's *Grand Designs* (Channel 4 1999-2005) and its spin-off books *Grand Designs: building your dream home* (McCloud 1999) and the monthly magazine *Grand Designs* with its strap line 'Dream homes for the real world'. McCloud is critical of conventional speculative build housing developments, estates that offer little in the way of excellence in craftsmanship and good ergonomic design.

There is a contained explosion happening in the building industry, of ordinary people who feel that it is about time that houses were designed and built for the individuals who occupy them and built with a sense of how we live today (McCloud 1999:7)

The self-builders featured in the *Grand Designs* programmes shared a sense of commitment and a belief that what they were doing was the start of a new part of their lives. McCloud made the interesting observation that in some cases the individuals concerned seemed to have undergone some kind of religious or spiritual conversion, in that what they were building was not only a new house, but also a whole new world for themselves (McCloud 1999:9).

The houses constructed during the series not only represented better homes for their inhabitants, but also provided potential models for general housebuilding in the future. Brighton based Hedgehog Housing Co-op's ten wooden houses based on the self-build post and beam system developed by architect Walter Segal in the 1960s (Broome 1995) and the various eco-homes featured in the programmes are good examples of this. These are designs that would have been dismissed as eccentric twenty years ago, however

advances in technology and changing cultural views of how architecture should serve the needs of its users have brought these approaches to the verge of the mainstream.

Popular Gardening Magazines.

In Britain popular gardening magazines have a history dating back to the early nineteenth century and their contents can be considered to reflect general social and cultural developments (Quest-Ritson 20001:254). As the twentieth century progressed there was an expansion of publishing and literature dedicated to gardens and gardening. The Royal Horticultural Society, founded in 1861, produced a monthly *Journal*, which in 1975 changed its name to *The Garden* and was developed as a means of attracting new members to the Society in response to the rising interest in gardening amongst all social classes (Griffiths 2000:159).

Many new gardening magazines entered the market in the 1980s and 1990s aimed at a wide range of different interests and abilities. Whereas *Practical Gardening* and *Garden Answers* were mostly concerned with the techniques of cultivation, a number of lifestyle magazines catered for the socially aspirational. Of these, *Gardens Illustrated* was generally regarded as the most distinguished and stylish in terms of journalism and photography (Quest-Ritson 2001:255). The *BBC Gardener's World Magazine*, launched in 1991, provides a mixture of practical advice, ideas and inspiration, its main contributors being the current gardening presenters from BBC television and radio. *Country Life* and *Country Living* continued to be popular amongst those who were interested in gardens, but not necessarily the practice of gardening. In the 1990s the interest in both gardens and gardening escalated with the popular media dubbing gardening 'the new sex' or 'the new rock and roll' (Gavin 2001:15), although, *New*

Eden, a magazine aimed at the young and 'proving that gardening is the new rock and roll' closed in 2000, one year after its launch (Griffiths 2000:209).

By the turn of the twenty-first century, a great number of specialist titles had come into being, including *Organic Gardening*, *Plant Talk*, and *The Water Garden*, so that every conceivable garden interest seemed to be catered for in magazines, newspaper columns and supplements, or specialist publications. In 2001 the Society of Garden Designers, the only professional garden design organisation in the United Kingdom, launched *Garden Design Journal* for a readership from the industry itself and others with a serious interest in garden and landscape design (www.sgd.org.uk 20.09.2005). The journal is published by the Landscape Design Trust whose mission is to advance understanding and awareness of the landscape for the benefit of the environment and the community (www.landscape.co.uk 20.09.2005). This appreciation of the relationship of the garden to the wider landscape and the environment in general is typical of the way in which New Age and spiritual principles have influenced mainstream culture.

Gardens, Gardening and the Broadcast Media.

The first BBC radio broadcasts on gardening were made in 1923 by Marion Cran, a novelist and gardener, whose titles included *The Garden of Ignorance: The Experiences of a Woman in a Garden* and its sequel *The Garden of Experience*. From the 1930s and until his death in 1943, C. M. Middleton, a county horticulture adviser for Surrey, was the BBC's garden broadcaster. Although his presentation style was very formal, Middleton's weekday radio programme *In Your Garden* which concentrated on giving practical advice to on how to be a better gardener, acquired a huge following and set the tone for subsequent broadcasting until the 1970s (Quest-Ritson 2001:256).

A Mass Observation Survey, taken immediately after World War II, revealed that 80% of Britons, when asked how they wanted to live, wanted a house and garden. The garden was seen as a symbol of space and the freedom to do what one liked, although the actual practice of gardening was not high on the list of priorities of many of those interviewed (Brown 1999:260). In response to this interest, in 1947 the BBC revived a radio programme, *Gardener's Question Time*, the first version of which had been broadcast in 1940 with the message that 'potatoes and onions were munitions of war as surely as shells and bullets' (Brown 1999:263). *Gardener's Question Time*, with its unchanging format of a panel of experts at a local gardening club answering members' queries, has remained popular ever since and the programme continues to attract large audiences of approximately 1.3 million listeners each week (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2000/06/21/nsow21.xml> 17.05.2005) The panel of experts now includes experts on wildlife or organic gardening, such as Bob Flowerdew, reflecting ecological concerns and the changing priorities in British gardening.

The introduction of colour television, on BBC2, 1 July 1967, gave a great boost to gardening programmes such as *Gardener's World*, presented by Percy Thrower. The emphasis in this programme was on the beauty of plants, flowers, and gardens rather than the hard work involved in gardening. In terms of alternative attitudes to gardening probably the most popular and unexpected source of information was the BBC television situation comedy series, *The Good Life*, first broadcast in 1971. The programme ran for 30 episodes and has subsequently become a national institution, being frequently been repeated, the last showing at the time of writing was in November 2005. In this programme the Goods, Tom (Richard Briars) and Barbara (Felicity Kendal), were a couple still more or less enmeshed in traditional, stereotypical gender

roles. As a result of Tom's 40th birthday, mid-life crisis decision to abandon his career as a 'nine to five' city-based draughtsman (which could be read as a rejection of the icon of the designer), the Goods developed a suburban, self-sufficient lifestyle. This was the first time alternative ways of living had been presented, albeit humorously, to a nationwide, primetime television audience.

The programme used, as a premise, the principles espoused in Scott and Helen Nearing's book *Living the Good Life: How to live Sanely and Simply in Troubled World*. Originally published in hardback in 1954 in the USA, sales were slow but in 1970 a paperback edition became a worldwide best seller, often described as a twentieth century equivalent of Thoreau's (1854) *Walden*. Thoreau's autobiographical account of his experiment in solitary living was in part satire, in part an attack on modernity, and a general critique of commercialisation which became a seminal text for the environmental movement and seekers after alternative lifestyles (Fender 1997: xv). In *Living the Good Life* the Nearings explained how they left New York City in 1932 at the height of the Great Depression and lived a completely self-sufficient lifestyle in the Green Mountains of Vermont. The book became required reading for alienated 'baby boomers', communitarians and those interested in an alternative lifestyle (Breathnach 1995, unpaginated). This book, its sequel *Continuing the Good Life: Half a Century of Homesteading* (1979) and Helen Nearing's subsequent publications *Simple Food for the Good Life; an Alternative Cook Book* (1980) and *Loving and leaving the Good Life* (1992) remain in print at the time of writing.

The humour in *The Good Life* arose from the attempts of the Goods to modify their Surbiton suburban house and garden to the requirements of self-sufficiency despite the horror and mystification of their upper middle class neighbours, the Leadbetters.

Although played for laughs, *The Good Life* contained much practical information and raised pertinent questions about the nature of consumption in modern life. The contrast between the Good's open-mindedness and increasing capability in self sufficiency, and the Leadbetters' virtually unquestioning reliance on the modern world and its modes of consumption encouraged viewers to examine their own values in a non-threatening manner. The episode in which the Leadbetters are unable to celebrate Christmas because for them it usually comes in a van and Harrods have forgotten to deliver it, whereas the Goods have made everything themselves (Christmas special, 26 December 1977), is a case in point.

The Good Life's contribution to the 1970s quiet revolution of a back-to-the-land movement was examined in an episode of *Britain's Best Sitcom* broadcast on BBC2, 31 January 2004. Many of *The Good Life* viewers had been encouraged to turn their backs on the consumer society and lead 'the good life' for themselves. One contributor to the programme argued that *The Good Life* had started a political movement in Britain, urging people to leave behind global multi-nationalism and concluded by asking 'who engineered more social change, Bob Dylan or Tom Good?' (All 49 respondents to informal interview had seen *The Good Life* and considered it a positive, if idealistic, representation of alternative lifestyles.)

The costumes of Tom and Barbara Good helped perpetuate the stereotype of the alternative community as dressed in awful hand-knitted jumpers and baggy work-wear of indeterminate colour, a kind of 'self-sufficient chic'. However the fiction of *The Good Life* is undermined by the fact that council regulations in Surbiton, then as now, forbade the keeping of pigs, goats and other livestock in suburbia (BBC2 30.01.2004).

At the end of the twentieth century the books and television series of Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall were very popular with the armchair smallholder and others in love with the idea of the English rural idyll. The series of *River Cottage* (Channel 4, 1999-2005) and the associated cookery books, were aimed at the middle classes who could not or would not emulate *The Good Life* but wanted to improve food quality generally and support organisations such as Compassion in World Farming (www.ciwf.org 01.09.2005).

Fearnley-Whittingstall said his life at River Cottage was not a serious attempt at self-sufficiency as he does not make a living as a real smallholder, but rather it represented a major and very real change in his lifestyle and one that could be adapted by more people.

The River Cottage Cookbook was written with a strong awareness that our current food production leaves a lot to be desired. Most of the meat we eat comes from industrially farmed animals who lead miserable lives and are fed on inappropriate diets. It is neither as tasty nor as healthy as it should be. Many of the fruit and vegetables we consume are the products of intensive agriculture that pollutes the land we live on and leaves unnecessary residues on and in the produce. I don't like that and I know more and more people who feel the same way. This book is aimed at helping those who care about such issues make more informed choices. It's political because if there's enough of us we can start to change the way things are done (Fearnley-Whittingstall 2001:10).

Fearnley-Whittingstall encourages each household to consider where it stands on the food acquisition continuum, one pole being complete reliance on industrial food retailers, the other being complete self sufficiency. The use of wild food as at least a small part of our diet is also considered important by Fearnley-Whittingstall and his courses at River Cottage promote a better understanding about the nature and origins of what we eat and challenge the most basic assumptions about where our food comes from (www.rivercottage.net 01.09.2005).

Programmes such as *The Good Life* and *River Cottage* have encouraged alternative attitudes to conventional lifestyles and consumption in that they have inspired people to design their own lifestyles incorporating elements from self-sufficiency to the extent to which is comfortable for each individual (All 49 respondents to informal interview claimed to have become more self-sufficient and to have used ideas gained from such television shows).

The Garden Make-over Show

Histories of gardens, gardens abroad, royal gardens and series on the histories of particular species, for example the rose, were typical of television gardening scheduling throughout the 1980s and up until the late 1990s, when garden make-over shows took the potential of garden programmes to the new levels of popular appeal (Quest-Ritson 2001:256). The influence of the television make-over show on gardening in general was to create a desire for instant effects and impact, using large mature plants grown in containers, and often imported from specialist growers in Italy. Initially garden make-overs were only for the affluent as they were expensive, but the point of them was that they promised instant gratification and were contemporary statements of wealth and status.

The garden make-over show also broke the dominance of the classical National Trust garden style, begun in 1948 when the Trust acquired Laurence Johnston's Hidcote Manor Garden, Gloucestershire, its first garden with no important house attached, which led to the emulation of aristocratic culture and taste in garden design, paralleling the English Country House interiors style popularised by Colefax and Fowler. The National Trust set the standards for lesser mortals to follow via the designs of its Gardens

Advisor, Graham Thomas, whose style of gardening had its roots in the firmly structured designs of the Arts and Crafts movement and the romantic Edwardian planting schemes of Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932) at Munstead Wood (Gavin 2001:38). (Quest-Ritson 2001:247).

Gardening presenter Alan Titchmarsh attained celebrity status with the popularity of *Ground Force*, first broadcast in 1997, which launched a whole new genre of gardening programme (Griffiths 2000:203). In *Ground Force* Titchmarsh, builder Tommy Walsh, responsible for the hard landscaping and water feature expert Charlie Dimmock transformed a garden at the instigation of the owner's relatives or friends whilst the owner was away for the weekend. The time constraints on the design, the execution of the garden and the anticipated reaction of the returning owner made for interesting television, if not for interesting garden design, which tended to become as formulaic as did each programme itself. The typical *Groundforce* garden comprised mainly hard landscaping such as a patio and decking, a water feature and low maintenance planting schemes concentrating on dramatic and varied foliage (Illus.20).

The use of decking as a substitute for lawns and patios, championed in *Ground Force*, caused the sales of decking at B&Q, the DIY and garden superstore chain, to rise from £5,000 in 1997 at the programme's inception, to £9 million in 2000 (Amos 2003:6). From 1997 onwards a spate of garden makeover programmes followed using everything from paving, gravel, decking, and water features, to steel, glass and paint to improve the garden, whilst plants seemed to take a back seat.

The *enfant terrible* of this type of makeover was Diarmuid Gavin who, despite a traditional gardening education at The National Botanic Gardens in Dublin from 1985 to 1988, shocked television viewers in programmes such as *Homefront in the Garden* with his inventive and some times bizarre designs. His suburban gardens have included outdoor television and film projection areas, multi-coloured lighting in dance floor type patios, space pods, outdoor baths and spas, hi-tech garden houses, suspended lawns, water slides, cages and tree top walkways, as well as influences from the Land Art movement of the 1970s (Gavin 2001).

Gavin's increasing popularity has bestowed respectability on his career and he has won silver medals for show gardens at the internationally renowned R.H.S Chelsea Flower Show. His 2004 design for a vibrant family garden, sponsored by the National Lottery, was dominated by 5,000 multi-coloured enamelled steel balls, influenced by the 1951 Festival of Britain style combined with Damien Hirst's spot paintings (Gavin 2004:56). The 2005 garden was a gentler offering that reflected contemporary and spiritual attitudes to the use of the home environment. A curving bank of lawned earth contained a number of concrete pods, each of which was used for a particular function, including a home office, a meditation or relaxation room, and a living space. The planting surrounding the earth bank was meant to evoke a sea of lavender plants with 'floating' plant spheres. The whole show garden had been planted out by Irish amateur gardener volunteers selected on a Radio-Telefís Éireann programme under the supervision of Gavin and his professional project manager, which accords with his passion for the democratisation of gardening and garden design (BBC2 R.H.S Chelsea Flower Show coverage 24.05.2005).

Gavin considers that the desire to create a garden is an innate human trait that stems from the two basic considerations of food production and aesthetic gratification but, since the 1990s, there has been a risk that gardens might become mere fashion accessories (Gavin 2001:15). The popularity of garden design and gardening in the late twentieth century was, in Gavin's opinion, due to the increase in home and garden ownership, coupled with more leisure time and disposable income, which created a desire for the new and unique. In addition, ideas gleaned from foreign travel and programmes on lifestyles in warmer climates have led the British to rethink how they use their outdoor spaces. Contemporary architecture, with houses having smaller interior spaces and larger windows, has emphasised the role of the garden as a living space.

The use of glass, along with the demise of the net curtains, means we now view our plots all year round. We have begun to use our gardens all year round in one way or another (Gavin 2001:16).

The idea of the garden as a room outside, promulgated by the influential 1960s garden designer John Brookes (Brookes 1969), was taken in a more adventurous way in Gavin's 1990's BBC television programme *Homefront in the Garden*, a spin off from the interior design show *Homefront*. The ethos of the programme was to take interior design outside, but this time using new colours, and materials such as concrete, metals and resins, not used traditionally in the garden, and to combine them with enthusiasm and invention. Gavin responded to the criticism that that garden makeover shows did not give a realistic vision of gardening with plants, by claiming that they reflected exactly what had been common practice in the landscape industry for a long time (Gavin 200:118).

At the end of the twentieth century the influence of television gardening programmes reflecting the lifestyles and interests of their presenters had resulted in four main groups or schools of thought in contemporary British planting. The first was the classic style of lush, densely planted borders with distinct colour schemes such as silver foliage with white or pastel flowers, or vibrant scarlets combined with smoky purples, which perpetuates the influence of Gertrude Jekyll on garden design (Griffiths 2000:31).

The second and more popular style derived from gardener and plantswoman Beth Chatto's gravel garden at Elmstead Market, Essex, begun in 1992. This garden introduced a new look heavily reliant on ornamental grasses, smaller bulbs, alpine and low growing herbs, which was suitable for the low rainfall of the early to mid 1990s. The style was also attractive to amateur gardeners as it promised low maintenance and was suitable for smaller gardens (Brown 1999:302), and can be seen to have influenced the *Groundforce* make-over type of garden.

The third style of drifts or waves of grass and perennial planting suitable for larger gardens, was championed in the main by Dan Pearson, landscape and garden designer and presenter of thoughtful, more cerebral gardening programmes such as *The Garden with Dan Pearson: A Year at Home Farm* (BBC2, 2001). Pearson's work is characterised by a bold painterly use of forms, texture and colour in plantings. He states he is interested in the creation of distinct site specific environments informed by an intuitive response to the sense of space and by working with nature rather than trying to dominate it (www.danpearsonstudio.com). Pearson's attitude accords with New Age

and alternative approaches to gardens and landscape and many of his gardens are intended to provide beautiful surroundings for inspiration and contemplation.

The fourth group is that of Zen-influenced minimalist planting and design and its contemplative spiritual associations, which has evolved into the stereotype of a 'spiritual style' and exemplifies alternative and spiritual influences on mainstream British culture.

In 2004 the historian Jenny Uglow, having researched the representation of gardening in the popular media, listed the main garden styles in Britain as: Classic Minimalist using such materials as steel and slate; the Mystic, incorporating Zen, Feng Shui, and sacred geometry; the New Romantic with meadows and purple grasses; the Britain in Bloomer with floral clocks and hanging baskets; the Exoticist recreating rainforest or wild marginal landscapes; the Advanced Exoticist concerned with Japanese or Islamic influences; the Green, environmental and wildlife garden; and the Classy Formalist which involves high maintenance features, including topiary and par-terres (Uglow 2004:302).

This variety evidences the use of alternative, New Age and ecological approaches as part of the mainstream in British garden design. Garden design historians appear to be much more aware of these alternative influences and willing to take them seriously than their counterparts in other branches of design history.

Complementary and Alternative Medicine and the Media

The popular press regularly runs articles on CAM developments and most major newspapers and periodicals have a CAM advice column, the Barefoot Doctor's page in the Observer Magazine being a typical example. For the more interested consumer, publications including *Positive Health*, founded 1994, *Positive Living*, *What Doctors Don't Tell You*, and the various in-house magazines of the health food industry, sold in stores such as Holland and Barrett are also available. The influence of CAM and alternative lifestyles can be seen in the range of organic and bio-dynamic food, healthfood, and drinks, including herbal teas and detox-diet products available in major British supermarkets. *Waitrose Food Illustrated* magazine devoted an entire issue, entitled 'Pure and Simple' to promoting the organic, health foods and whole foods available in its stores (*Waitrose Food Illustrated* 2005 January).

The rise of the health spa, offering beauty treatments and complementary therapy alongside gym and exercise facilities, as well as the interest in holistic holidays, evidences the extent to which CAM has become part of mainstream British culture. In 2002 research carried out by T. N. S. Global for Virgin Money ascertained that 'stressed' women treated themselves to health perks to the extent of £ 670 million, paid for by credit card. The investigation into this trend, dubbed by the media as 'spiritual spending', revealed that 75% of the women interviewed used massage, Yoga, manicures or spa breaks to relax (<http://uk.virginmoney.com/newscentre/pressreleases/2003/stressed-out-women-spark-670-million-boom-in-spiritual-spending.html>).

Summary and Conclusion

The exemplars discussed in this chapter have demonstrated that alternative design perspectives and CAM were entering the mainstream in the period under consideration and that early indicators of their acceptance were evidenced by references in popular culture including the media. By investigating how the British media situated and contextualised the alternative and complementary perspectives it is clear that there has been another shift in the way the British see and use their homes and that much of this is due to alternative, complementary and New Age influences. From the Victorian attitude of the home as a stronghold of beauty and moral virtue, through the 1930s Modernist propaganda of the home as a source of physical welfare and health which reflected on and influenced the health of the entire nation, the attitude in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries is one of the home as a refuge and sanctuary from the increasingly aggressive demands of daily life. Television shows such as *Housebusters* evidence how the alternative has become mainstream and how other kinds of function than Modernist-Rationalist often take precedence in domestic design. The alternative and New Age movements' appropriation of concepts and practices from many cultures in order to create something new is also illustrated in these instances. These perceptions have also extended to the garden, both private and public, and to the natural environment and healthcare. The next chapter investigates the major themes evident in complementary and spiritual attitudes to design practice in these three areas.

CHAPTER NINE

ALTERNATIVE DESIGN AND SPIRITUALITY IN HOMES, GARDENS AND HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENTS

Introduction and the Argument of the Chapter

In investigating alternative design and spirituality in homes, gardens, and healthcare environments major themes can be identified: the influence of alternative and New Age philosophies concerning the home, its purpose and spiritual significance; the use of Feng Shui and other traditional spatial organisation systems in the disposition and decoration of interiors; the use of the domestic environment as a *locus* for ritual and spiritual practice; holistic and ecological concerns regarding the home environment; the appropriation of orientalism in alternative and spiritual garden design; ecology, spirituality and rites of passage in the landscape; holistic conceptualisations of therapeutic environments; and the influence of Complementary and Alternative Medicine on design and material culture.

The investigation of these themes evidences the argument of this chapter that the growth of individual expression, the diversified marketplace and eclectic markets, in concert with the growth of alternative, complementary, New Age and spiritual philosophies and practices, led to an appropriation of eclectic influences which synthesised into an alternative discourse for design. This alternative discourse has meaningful consequences in the three selected areas of the domestic environment, gardens and landscape, and in healthcare and healing environments, and has influenced commercial products and material culture.

Alternative and New Age Philosophies Concerning the Home Environment

A major influence on alternative and New Age thought about houses and spirituality is French philosopher Gaston Bachelard's (1957) *La Poetique de l'espace* in which he proposes that the mysteries of the Universe are revealed in reverie, dream, imagination and poetics. The role of reverie in aesthetics continues to be debated by writers such as John Armstrong (2000:60-80), but Bachelard has been the main influence on alternative writers and practitioners as diverse as leading colour therapist and interior designer Suzy Chiazzari (1998) and internationally respected Feng Shui writer and practitioner Eva Wong (1996).

In *La Poetique de l'espace* Bachelard considers the symbolism and philosophy of the house, from the cellar to the attic, and sees it as a microcosm of the Universe which corresponds with the mystical axiom 'as above, so below'. He examines simple images of 'a happy space' (Bachelard 1957:17), stating that the house can be taken as 'an instrument of analysis for the human soul' (Bachelard 1957:19), an aspect which many New Agers have been keen to pick up on and develop further. Bachelard analyses animal dwellings, nests and shells in relation to human homes and their meanings, as he considers 'home' is a major concept in the human psyche in that 'All really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of Home.' (Bachelard 1957:21). Bachelard acknowledges its spiritual aspects and its importance in actuality and fantasy:

We experience the house in its reality and virtually in thought and in dreams. An entire past comes to dwell in dreams in a new house ...
If we were to ask the most precious benefit of the house, we would say that the house shelters dreaming, and protects the dreamer and allows us to dream in peace. (Bachelard 1957:25, 26)

A recurrent theme in alternative writings is the detrimental effect on well being of the alienation between the 'natural' and the 'built', and the loss of the sense of wonder in

the last half of twentieth century. Geographers and ecologists Seaman and Magerauer in their (1985) *Dwelling, Place and Environment*, considered there to be a

... need to conceive the environment as a network of potential places capable of inviting and sustaining a complex of physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual interactions (Seaman and Magerauer 1985:221).

They also remarked on the intrusion of many contemporary buildings into their respective landscapes and revived the 1930's criticism of Modernist architecture as being built to be photographed rather than used.

It will no longer be quite so ridiculous to think of buildings as narcissistic- as self absorbed images for ever performing for the camera without giving much aid or comfort to the inhabitants (Seaman and Magerauer 1985:221)

American architect Christopher Alexander's books, (1977) *A Pattern Language* and (1979) *Timeless Ways of Building*, are often quoted by mainstream as well as New Age and ecological designers (Pearson 1989) (Wong 1996), as his works provide an 'extra-rational' thinking in relation to architecture, acknowledging as important, factors other than the purely rational or functional. He proposes that people themselves are the best designers and that traditional designs are the 'archetypal words' in a timeless language of building that modern society must relearn (Pearson 1989:185).

Alexander's basically ecological orientation to architecture considers the shapes of buildings, the design of ceilings and windows in relation to the immediate environment. He stated that 'people are by nature phototropic – they move toward light and when stationary, they orient themselves toward the light' (Alexander 1977:645) and thus recommended that buildings should not have long dark corridors and that windows and skylights would make passageways more comfortable and inviting. Alexander also warns against ceilings that slope or have irregular surfaces and he is particularly

dismissive of high-rise buildings with sharp and pointed features, thereby damming most western urban architecture.

High buildings make people crazy. High buildings have no genuine advantages, except in speculative gains for banks and landowners. They are not cheaper, and they do not create open space, they make life difficult for children, they are expensive to maintain; they wreck the open spaces near them, and they damage light and air and views (Alexander 1997:115).

Eva Wong, writer and practitioner of Taoism and Feng Shui remarked that she was fascinated by the similarities between the Feng Shui of external and internal environments and Alexander's vision of environmental planning and architectural design (Wong 1996:252). From the mid 1980s Feng Shui became a major influence on British New Age thinking on design and the maintenance of healthful environments and will now be examined in some detail.

Feng Shui, Other Traditional Spatial Organisation Systems and Their Influence on Western Design in the Late Twentieth Century

Feng Shui, meaning Wind and Water, the Chinese art of arranging one's life in harmony with the forces of the Universe is a practice dating back at least 7,000 years. It combines art and science, being creative, intuitive, and rooted in sensitivity to nature, and its practice uses diagnostic equipment, mathematical formulae, and specialised terminology (Lam 1995:14). The nine areas of study within Chinese geomancy are: cosmology; astrology; topography; land form Feng Shui; relationships; health and healing; classical Feng Shui (subdivided into the disciplines of Compass School, Luo pan, Lo Shu, Flying Star, Four Pillars and Eight Lucky stems); personal psychological and spiritual development; and professional development (Simons 1996) (Too 1996).

As an art of placement, Feng Shui could be described as the environmental equivalent of acupuncture, that is, directing energies in the landscape and in buildings in the most

beneficial manner possible. Feng Shui developed alongside Taoism and shares with it the concepts of *Chi* or all-pervading universal energy, yin-yang theory, the Five Elements of Water, Wood, Fire, Earth and Metal, and the observation of the natural world. Originally Feng Shui was taught by lineage, master to apprentice, and was considered one of the divinational arts along with magic, healing and techniques to increase longevity. With the unification of China in 960AD, Feng Shui's precepts became codified into two branches of geomancy – yin concerned with burial sites, yang devoted to house sites and the requirements of living. It is this latter branch that is commonly called Feng Shui today (Spear 1995:26) (Wong 1996:31).

The geomantic compass, the *Lo-p'an*, or 'everything bowl', was developed during the Tang Dynasty (618-960AD) to aid Feng Shui calculations. Simplified versions of this are on sale in the west to aid non-Chinese practitioners. In the west Feng Shui is usually seen as practical art, rather than as a spiritual discipline concerned with virtue and compassion, and based on the commentaries of the *I Ching* or *Book of Changes* (North-Bates 1998). There is a wealth of written material in classical Chinese on Feng Shui; over 50 books on the subject were composed in the Sung dynasty (960-1129 AD) alone, when Feng Shui became a systematic science, but most of these are not available to westerners (Wong 1996:34).

Stephen Skinner's (1976) *The Living Earth Manual of Feng Shui* claimed to be the first British book on the subject in the twentieth century (*FSML* Vol I No1:3). Most western practitioners gain their knowledge of Feng Shui from books in English or from courses and workshops with a Chinese teacher or other expert. In Feng Shui practice today there are three main schools. The Landform School deals with the contours of physical landscapes, the shapes and sizes of landscape features, the disposition of watercourses,

and their relationship with a dwelling, and therefore is less used by westerners who usually do not have a choice in the siting of their houses. The Compass School (first textual reference 220 B.C.) is more suited to urban dwellers as it uses techniques to harmonise existing buildings with their inhabitants and their requirements. The Compass School uses the eight trigrams of the *I Ching*, the *pau kua* overlay (Fig.3), the *lo shu* magic square (Fig.4), and always orients the career or Water sector *K'an* of the Later Heaven Circle, which represents change and movement, to magnetic North (Wong 1996:56).

The Black Hat Sect Tantric Buddhist School, developed in the USA by Thomas Lin Yun in 1986, uses a greatly simplified system produced for the American market, where the career or Water sector is always placed over the entrance to a building or a room, whether it is actually in the North or not. Black Hat Feng Shui has received much criticism and antipathy in Feng Shui publications (*FSML Vol I No8* Nov1998:6) with accusations of 'dumbing down' and subverting traditional Feng Shui. Adherents of Master Linn's system claim that although simple it is effective, and it is used widely in Britain (Rossbach 1998:13).

A recently developed form of Feng Shui is American practitioner William Spear's Intuitive Feng Shui, which name he trademarked to the ire of many in the Feng Shui community. In 1992 Spear became the first honorary president of the International Feng Shui Society, with its headquarters in London, not in Hong Kong as might have been expected. His book *Feng Shui Made Easy* (1999) gives beginners a practical introduction to the subject and emphasises the spiritual aspects which are often missing in other western publications (Nemetona, Dyad, Faith, Mr Jing, Nekko, Bruce).

There are a number of Feng Shui spin-offs such as 'space clearing', which combines Feng Shui with Native American concepts (Linn 1996). By using fragments of information from traditional British myths and legends, such as the idea from Welsh folklore that a complete house should have nine component parts (Carr-Gomm, Carr-Gomm and Worthington 2004:84), Celtic Feng Shui tries to reconstruct ancient western spatial systems and geomantic practices (Caradoc, Dilwyn, Gwladys, Dana). Shamanic Feng Shui incorporates space clearing with reconstructed ritual practices (Rhodri, Wind Horse). However, in most western appropriations of Feng Shui the space element is emphasised over the time element, which is complicated by the Chinese Lunar calendar, with its three eras of 60 years, nine cycles of nine 20 year segments and 24 seasonal markers, and most westerners simply cannot be bothered with it (North-Bates 1998:4). To have one's home 'Feng Shui-ed' is not a once and for all event, but an ongoing process which needs revision every Chinese New Year in late January or early February, when the direction of the negative energy or *sha chi* is said to change (Lam 1995:31). Further revisions are required when extensions to the building are constructed and when the composition of the family changes.

For most British users of Feng Shui design in the home, the activity centred around the use of colour according to the compass direction, the placement of 'cures' and the clearing of clutter. Feng Shui colour associations are based on the cycle of the Five Elements, a concept shared with Oriental medicine (Beresford-Cooke 1995:81). The Water Element corresponds to black and dark blue, Wood to light blues and green, Fire to reds and purples, Earth to yellows and beiges, and Metal to white, grey, silver and gold. For example, a red and white colour scheme corresponding to Fire (red), which destroys Metal (white), would be considered to be made more propitious and healthful by the addition of Earth (yellow) that mitigates the destructive combination. Such

colour schemes could be easily effected with normal household paints, but enterprising manufacturers including Homebase with its *Sanctuary* range added so-called Feng Shui colours to their existing colour cards or produced whole new colour cards and formulations in new ranges.

The 'cures' are means by which the effects of negative energies may be mitigated in Feng Shui practice. The cures placed to regulate the flow of *Chi* are; mirrors, crystals both natural or man-made, lights, wind chimes, plants, water- often as indoor fountains or fish tanks, mobiles, and heavy objects such as boulders, sculptures and stones. By the end of the 1990s a wide range of wind chimes, mobiles and crystals were available to western practitioners who began to display Chinese coins, water fountains, dragon-headed turtle figurines, three-legged toad gods, guardian sculptures, bamboo flutes, harmony balls, *pa kua* mirrors, money plants, and other Feng Shui paraphernalia which looked out of place in traditional or contemporary British houses.

The main Feng Shui concept, seized upon by practitioners, the media and the general public alike, was that of clearing clutter (Kingston 1998). The idea that a cluttered environment impedes the healthy flow of energy in an environment, which in turn will affect the health and prosperity of its inhabitants, had its roots in Taoist and Buddhist concepts of 'attachment' (Simons 1996:95). Willingness to let go of things, situations, and people, is considered to empower and enlighten, hence the emphasis in Feng Shui in clearing clutter to maintain well being. (All 49 respondents had used some aspect of Feng Shui in their homes, the techniques for clearing clutter being the most popular.)

Change-blindness experiments prove that people do not pay much attention to their surroundings, just using the information that is needed for the task in hand (Llewelyn-

Bowen 2003:126). Familiar elements are 'edited' from one's vision when entering a room, thus freeing up the brain to assimilate new visual stimuli and increasing one's memories and comprehension of the world. Feng Shui theory supports this but with the following proviso.

We can only hold nine pieces of information consciously but the unconscious picks up the rest so that we know and feel everything that is going on so that your own space is triggering you all the time and also those who visit your house (Sifu Simon Wong, Feng Shui Master and teacher; personal communication, London, 02.01.1998).

Therefore a cluttered environment can add to stress to an individual's life on a subconscious level. In many oriental countries, domestic displays of favourite items are changed from season to season, adjusting the appropriateness of their content to the time of year, thus keeping the visual system stimulated, rather than allowing it to adapt to the familiar (Paul 2000).

The western appropriation of Feng Shui resulted in a simplification of many of its principles. Designs influenced by Feng Shui can be found in material culture as diverse as cards and candles and even Christmas crackers as well as in the many books, magazines and Feng Shui Kits. In British popular culture Feng Shui has become a by-word for anything New Age and 'weird' and is parodied in advertisements and the press. Affectionate and humorous comments, such as illustrator Chris Riddell's (1997) *Feng Shui for Cats* and (1997) *Feng Shui for Dogs*, abounded as well more satirical parodies, such as Rohan Candappa's (1999) *Little Book of Wrong Shui; How to Drastically Improve Your Life by Basically Moving Stuff Around. Honest.*

Other cultures have spatial organisations similar to Feng Shui. The Tibetan *mewas* meaning 'blemish' or 'birthmark' are derived from a system of astrology found in Tibet,

China, Japan, and which is intimated in the Vedic astrology of India (Sachs1995:153). This system has become popular with British practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism and Bon (Pearl). There are nine *mewas*, one's personal *mewa* being calculated on the time of birth, and each has symbolic associations as well as colours, directions and an element or transformation phase indicating particular physical, psychological and spiritual predispositions which must be taken account of when one designs and organises one's living space, meditation space, and lives one's life (Sachs 1995:154).

In Thailand, *hong shui* incorporates practical elements relevant to the Thai climate, such as roof shape design, the stilt construction of houses, the organisation of daily tasks and the placement of beds according to a compass system (Heywood 2003:50). In Vietnam, this system is known as *phong thuy*. In the west, these are seldom used outside immigrant communities, but the Vedic system of *Vastuvidya* or *Vastu Shastra* has been steadily increasing in popularity among westerners since the late 1990s (Pleasant 1998:91). Interestingly, for a country with a longstanding Indian immigrant community, British adherents have been introduced to the system by publications from America, with British Asian authors following on the back of this trend (Cox 2002:xviii) (Nemetona, Angelica, Indira, Layla).

According to the *Vedas*, each individual has four purposes in life: *karma*, emotional and sensual pleasure without causing pain; *artha*, materialistic wishes and actions that make everyday life more enjoyable; *dharma*, doing one's duty to self, family and society; and *moksha*, one's needs for spiritual growth and journey towards enlightenment. Everyday life is an essential ingredient in achieving *moksha* and therefore the house plays an important role in attaining one's goal and purpose in life (Whelan 2002:6).

Vastu shastra sets out the appropriate designs and dimensions for all sorts of buildings from temples to houses for all strata of society so every person could live in true harmony with nature and the cosmic forces. Environmental and climatic differences were taken into account in a sub-continent as vast as India, but the fundamental principles were always maintained with the aim of creating a comfortable home which would bestow peace of mind on its inhabitants (Whelan 2002:7). Like *Feng Shui*, *Vastu* uses the idea of harnessing positive energy, or *prana*, and reducing negative energy, but it is centred on a belief that there is a divine relationship between the house as a living entity and the people who reside there as its companions. The house is an extension of its owner and a dwelling of the gods, so a positive environment will keep the gods happy and enhance the beneficial future of its residents (Whelan 2002:10).

In *vastu* practice, the *vastu purusha mandala* (Fig.5) is imposed over the ground plan of the house, the purusha's head always being aligned to the north east, and so the North East sector or room in the house is said to be the proper place for worship (Whelan 2002:41). Once a house has been organised according to *vastu* principles, with the heavy tall furniture and objects placed in the South and West to capture the beneficial *prana* flowing from the North and East, it need not be revised annually as in Compass School Feng Shui. Herein seems to lie its appeal for western non-Asian practitioners. You can *vastu* your house and forget about it (Cox 2002:46) (Angelica).

The Domestic Environment as a *Locus* for Ritual

The idea of the domestic shrine is a very ancient one in many cultures but had died out in Protestant countries since the Reformation. Laura Cerwinske's (1998) *In a Spiritual Style: Home as Sanctuary* assembled a selection of photographs of contemporary western home altars and sanctuaries. Most of them were the work of the woman of the

house. Cerwinske acknowledges that 'spiritual style' is, by its necessity, diverse in decoration, and encompasses every world religion as well as non-traditional spiritual practices.

Rooms designed in a Spiritual Style are meant to evaluate the spirit. Often they are filled with meditative light, exalted imagery, soothing colour or reflective finishes. They are enriched with symbolism and personal content. They provoke curiosity and stimulate insight. They offer comfort and reassurance. They enhance power... a room designed in a Spiritual Style primarily expresses its owner's relationship with divinity. It takes the most mystical of subjects... and gives it a place in the home (Cerwinske 1998:6).

The home altars seen by the author in the course of the research for this thesis include photographs of family and pets, living and deceased, natural objects, and a combination of 'sacred objects' from several traditions (Illus.21). The altars' locations were as diverse as shelves, bookcases, window cills and pianos. However, to those not 'in the know' they would appear as a display of decorative items, not as a functioning altars or shrines. One of the most interesting examples seen by the author was a Wiccan altar, made from a hanging clear plastic organiser for shoes, each pocket filled with appropriately significant items, and the whole thing hung on the back of a cupboard door which could be closed when not in use, so keeping the item out of the sight of unsympathetic observers. Unfortunately, but understandably, its owner would not allow it to be photographed.

Other items used in alternative and New Age spiritual practices and now common in many homes are crystals, wind chimes, incense burners, aromatherapy oil infusers, indoor water fountains, and candles – especially in 'votive' holders. These are available from alternative and New Age shops (James, Gillian) and also from major chain stores including John Lewis and Debenhams. Popular, acceptable New Age iconography applied to many objects includes angels, Celtic interlacing designs, Native American

‘power animals’ such as eagles, bears and wolves, environmentally endangered species such as dolphins and whales, astrological and alchemical sigils, and mystical symbols, so reflecting the all-embracing nature of New Age outlooks on design, which renders them more difficult to analyse than Modernist practices and exemplars.

The ecological architect David Pearson expressed the need for contemplative gardens in modern cities, encouraging westerners to see their gardens as spiritual landscapes in the way that eastern cultures have done (Pearson 1989:249). As well as a place of contemplation the garden can be a locus for ritual and many urban Pagans are using their gardens for celebrations of the eight Pagan festivals of the year; the Solstices and Equinoxes and the Cross-Quarter Festivals of Imbolc, Beltaine, Lammas and Samhain, and other spiritual activity, by incorporating appropriate features into their design (Mitchell 2000) (Restell-Orr 2000) (Nemetona, Dryad, Elanor, Murdo, Antoinette, Jasmine, Freya, Brid, Rhodri, Old Bill, Alchemilla, Gwladys).

Keith Mitchell’s (2000) *The Garden Sanctuary: Creating Outdoor Space to Soothe the Soul* argues that many archetypal symbols lie deep in our subconscious and that incorporating them into the garden can help us concentrate and focus (Mitchell 2000:104). He suggests the use of circles, yin-yang symbols, imagery of the Tree of Life and the Green Man as appropriate starting points. He critiques post-modern life as being characterised by artificiality and the suppression of nature, and blames population movement and urbanisation for creating spiritual introverts. To resolve this dilemma he advises allowing the garden to act as a metaphor for our own lives from birth to death and using the cycle of the eight festivals as a basis for design, ritual activities and meditation and planting. He incorporates insights from colour therapy, chakra healing,

medical herbalism and aromatherapy in his garden designs, but states the most important factor is that of correct intention with regard to the individual plot (Mitchell 2000: 114). In common with mainstream garden designers such as Monty Don (1997) Mitchell stresses the importance of feeding all the senses to enhance our health and attitudes, rather than allowing the dominance of the visual in garden design. As 'spiritual inspirational styles' he suggests forest gardens, Arabic, Persian, Zen, Feng Shui, Native American and pagan influences (Mitchell 2000:32, 76-103). Alternative and New Age garden design parallels that in houses and interiors as a modification of what already exists by combining symbolism and influences from many cultures and ideologies, since their owners often do not have the financial where-with-all to completely redesign them.

Holistic and Ecological Approaches to the Home Environment

A seminal text in the design of ecological houses and homes is David Pearson's (1989) *The Natural House Book: creating a healthy, harmonious and ecologically sound home*, which continues to be a best seller (All 49 respondents to informal interview were familiar with this book). Pearson, an architect-planner, has worked in inner city and new town housing and in the Gaia movement, which considers the Earth as a living and conscious entity. He is director of eco and health consultancy Gaia Environments, a founding member of Building Biology England, and was chair of the Ecological Design Association until 2002. He is thus well placed to advise on the ecological aspects of a building but also advantages a spiritual dimension.

The idea that a home should be a place of comfort and healing, informs the whole of *The Natural Housebook*. In accord with Christopher Alexander, Pearson refers to many differing traditional cultures in learning to balance the demands of ecology and health in

creating a natural house integrated with the natural systems around it. Pearson criticises architects of the modern movement such as Gropius (1882-1969), Le Corbusier (1887-1965) and Mies Van der Rohe (1886-1969) for re-directing mainstream architecture into radically opposite paths from those of the past, using the new architectural vocabulary and new materials with deliberate disregard for local conditions. Despite its claim to be aware of health issues in the design of light airy spaces, Pearson dismisses the modern movement as 'ecologically philistine' in rejecting concepts and methods from habitual building; the craft of materials, the understanding of climate and adaption to the site, the sense of place and locality, as well as spiritual links of home, family and community.

Had it been Frank Lloyd Wright rather than Le Corbusier, who had become the model for our age, our cities and homes would have developed in a very different direction over the past 50 years. Today at last there are signs of reawakening to the needs of communities and the natural environment (Pearson 1989:21).

In his own design work, Pearson is much influenced by *baubiologie* or building biology, an approach influenced by the humanitarian philosophy and romantic love of the natural world espoused by the German writer Goethe (1749-1832), and by Steiner's holistic health approach. *Baubiologie* was developed in the German speaking countries as a response to the disenchantment with the lack of vision of much post war building, and the prevalent green awareness and concern with regard to chemical pollution from synthetic building materials.

As a wholly new concept in architecture, Baubiologie combines a scientific approach with a holistic view of the relationship between people, their physical, biological and spiritual needs, and buildings. The house is considered to be an organism and its fabric to be a third skin for its inhabitants (the second skin being their clothes), and fulfils essential living functions protecting, insulating, breathing absorbing, evaporating,

regulating and communicating. The fabric and materials of buildings, their services, acoustics, colour and scent should interact harmoniously with the inhabitants and the environment (Pearson 1989:26) (McCloud 1999:148) (www.baubiologie-regional.de/lehmbau 09.12.05).

Given that the majority of people have no control over the design and build of their homes or the environment in which they are situated, Pearson developed the concept of the Gaian House (Illus.22) which could be a new build, but more importantly could be the gradual adaptation of an older one (Pearson 1989:41). Suggested approaches include colour therapy, Feng Shui and a return to the use of anthropomorphic or zoomorphic models in conceptualising the home, perhaps dividing it into male and female parts or using complementary forces of opposites such as sky and earth, sun and moon, dark and light, fire and water in its design and decoration. At the centre of the home should be a place of power and worship – the shrine, hearth or granary - and every part of the house can be given extended symbolism, the roof equating to the heavens, a door being a mouth to another world, the windows as eyes of perception, and water features being representative of female procreation (Pearson 1989:32).

European paganism and geomancy, Native American shamanism, solar geometry and spatial systems such as Vastuvidya and Feng Shui, are also influences on orienting homes and the use of rooms that Pearson considers useful in holistic design (Pearson 1989:33). He advocates the creation of spaces in the home for quiet and spiritual retreat. 'Even the most secular of homes may have its quiet garden or corner, its object of beauty honouring this fundamental need' (Pearson 1989:36). With regard to personal space, Pearson remarks that our homes should be reflections of ourselves and provides this critique of modern, consumer society.

But the whole conformity of the modern consumer society acts against this. We are bombarded with advertising images of 'successful' lifestyles and fashionable surroundings and encouraged to buy this image for ourselves in mass produced goods and luxuries. When we are then disappointed and ill at ease with our houses, we frequently remodel their interiors and this dissatisfaction fuels our over consuming society. Instead the house should grow and reflect the increased richness of our experience reminding us of our history and friends, our loves and interests, our own unique identity (Pearson 1989:39).

On the practical level, *The Natural House Book* allows the reader to identify sources of pollution within the home, such as petro-chemical paint, formaldehyde, combustion hydrocarbons and electromagnetic radiation and to take steps to minimise them. There is also much useful information on minimising waste and reducing energy consumption in the standard build home (Pearson 1989:42-60). The final section of *The Natural House Book* is concerned with a room-by-room analysis of the house with the addition of two more unusual categories; health exercise and meditation spaces and the sanctuary, a space for environmentally sensitive persons prone to allergies (Pearson 1989:241).

The three themes of natural architecture explored in *The Natural House Book*, ecology, health factors and spiritual awareness, evoked an enormous and enthusiastic response, leading Pearson to found the Ecological Design Association and to join Gaia International, a group of eco-architects from 12 countries, committed to substantiate design of the built environment. (Pearson 2000:148) His ideas are further developed in (2000) *Earth to Spirit: In search of natural architecture*, which examines other kinds of buildings, as well as houses, from many cultures. Architect and sculptor Christopher Day is also concerned with how our surroundings affect us physically and spiritually, how they contribute to stress and general malaise or to balance and well being. Day's architectural practice is informed by Anthroposophical principles developed by Steiner,

and considers that a building's design should begin with and develop organically from the requirements of its users and of the geographical place. In his influential book *Places of the Soul: Architecture and Environmental Design as a Healing Art* (1990), Day explores how architecture might have a health-giving intent, especially in relation to the design of homes and schools, which he considers particularly important given the influence on children of their surroundings (Day 1990:7). As well as private homes Day's buildings include Steiner schools and Christian retreat centres in Wales which combine vernacular architecture with Anthroposophical principles (Illus.23).

Artist and interior design Suzy Chiazzari specialised in creating healing and supportive interiors both for public buildings and for private homes and after retraining as a colour therapist she founded The Iris International School of Colour Therapy, known The Holistic Design Institute from 1992, which deals with all aspects of holistic and therapeutic design relating to interiors. The Institute runs courses, workshops and distance-learning programmes in colour counselling and healing, spiritual colour healing, colour healing for animals, 'vibrational medicine' including use of colour, gems and flower essences, nutritional healing using colour, colour aromatherapy, colour reflexology, colour acupuncture, healing gardens and colour therapeutics for interiors (Chiazzari 1998a). Chiazzari's popular book, *The Healing Home: Creating the perfect Place to live with Colour, Light Aroma and other natural elements* (1998a), discussed psychological attitudes to the home such as intention and purpose, the importance of daily, weekly, monthly and seasonal rituals, and the concept of honouring the house by giving it a name, as well as naming each room. Use of appropriate colours, fragrances and lighting for each room and its functions including a meditation room are explained as well as the impact on interiors of environmental factors such as pollution from

building materials, household chemicals and electro-magnetic energy fields around televisions, computers and other electrical equipment.

Chiazzari's *The Complete Book of Colour* (1998b), presented a comprehensive guide to the therapeutic uses and effects of colour. Published by Element of Shaftesbury, the hardback edition had a choice of different coloured dust jackets; green, bright yellow, mid-blue, and magenta. A bookshop assistant told the author that the blue jacketed books had sold first, according with the British preference for blue generally, over 50% of the people choosing it as their favourite colour. Used for healing, calming and pain-relief in colour therapy blue has psychological associations with a desire for peace and harmony (Chiazzari 1998b:192,196). The least popular colour choice, and hence remaindered, was magenta 'an elusive colour, dramatic and spiritual, but with practical overtones. The chronically depressed or introverted should avoid magenta in both dress and surroundings' (Chiazzari 1998b:113).

Chiazzari theorises that not all light vibrations taken in through the eyes are used for sight, that colour vibrations have other functions, nourishing people at deeper levels, and are absorbed through the skin and the aura. Her work is a further development of the theories of Johannes Itten (1888-1967), lecturer at the Bauhaus until 1923, and of Rudolph Steiner (1861-1925), the philosopher and educationalist, that suggested that the study of light is a spiritual science and has a profound effect mentally and physically (Chiazzari 1998c:12). Chiazzari criticized the use of colour in home makeover shows as 'irresponsible', given the effects of exposure to colour in one's environment over long periods. The ephemeral nature of colour often means that it is not considered as important in eco-friendly buildings as their materials and structure. With Pearson she advocates the use of paints made from natural earth or pigments and bound with natural

resins giving a microporous finish which allows the walls of a building to breathe and balance the exchange of moisture between the inside and outside. This provides a beneficial atmosphere for the inhabitants and allows the fabric of the building to retain its long-term structure. Organic emulsion paints, traditional distemper and milk casein thinned paints, all free from synthetic ingredients, have been available since the 1970s from suppliers such as Livos, Auro and Ecos (Hadfield and Sim 1998: 21).

The most fully developed natural system of garden design is Permaculture, based on the four principles of 'do-nothing-farming'; no cultivation, no fertilisers, no weeding and no pesticides, developed in Japan by Masanobu Fukuoka from 1940 onwards, which allow the rhythms and processes of nature to do the work. These ideas were developed by Tasmanian garden and landscape designers Bill Mollison and David Holmgren who in 1978 coined the term Permaculture (Permanent Agriculture) to describe a design approach that allows self-renewing and self-sustaining systems for food, water and energy in the landscape (Goldring 2000). Permaculture arrived in Britain in 1982, with the teaching of the first British Permaculture Design Course at Blencarn in the Lake District, given by Max Lindegger from Permaculture Nambour. At this course the British Permaculture Association came into being and has held annual convergences since then (Goldring 2000:362). The Permaculture Association, which combines a radical attitude to consumption and politics with a spiritual outlook, runs design courses and diplomas, and holds national and local events, as well as publishing its quarterly magazine *Permaculture Works*.

In Permaculture design every available space in the garden or landscape is used, and the design radiates out from the home, Zone Zero, the zone of maximum activity, to Zone

Five, the margins of the natural landscape, where the needs of wildlife and the natural vegetation take precedence over those of humans. Permaculture employs the concept of edible landscaping, producing an holistic balance of shelter, food and environment (Kourik 1986). Graham Bell produced *The Permaculture Garden* (1994) the first book on permaculture gardening for the British climate, including the idea that the sustainable house and garden are part of an overall system in which one blends into the other. Bell neatly reworked Le Corbusier's dictum 'A house is machine for living' to 'A house is a living machine' by demonstrating how one can practice permaculture without a garden (Bell 1990:93).

Permaculture is not a definable standard like organics, with its symbol, but a way of thinking, where nothing is mandatory and individuals may use as many or as few of its principles and ideas as fit their own situation (Goldring 2000:184).

Good Permaculture design does not necessarily have to look unusual or be innovative: its essence requires that careful observation and thought are put into the initial design, but the process of designing never really stops. Where as design is often seen as an active process in which the designer turns something unformed into the desired end-product, Permaculture emphasises the need for passive skills, where the designer is receptive to the land and to the people involved in it and the outcome itself is a process (Jennings 2005:41).

Ecology, Contemporary Spirituality and Rites of Passage in the Landscape

The trend in the late twentieth century for garden design to move closer to land art has been in sympathy with New Age, Pagan and environmental attitudes which have inspired many people to re-evaluate their relationship with the landscape and how they use it.

Humans need to do more than understand intellectually the workings of ecology and need to gain access also to a symbolic or spiritual level of meaning (Dixon Hunt 2000:223).

In popular culture interest in the spirituality of the landscape is in part attributable to artists including Andy Goldsworthy (b.1956), whose work expresses the constant process, evolution and changefulness at the heart of all landscape architecture, and Sue and Peter Hall whose eloquent incorporation of the entropy of organic materials with elegiac meaning and Pagan and New Age spirituality is exemplified by their *Mudmaid* sculpture at the Lost Gardens of Heligan (Illus.24).

The Sacred Grove Planting Programme of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids (OBOD), is an example of a spiritual and ecological landscape initiative. Begun in 1988 as part of OBOD's campaign for ecological responsibility, the programme offers support, advice and financial aid to those who wish to create new sacred spaces world-wide (Sanders *et al.* 2001). A grove, as associated with Druidic practice since classical times, comprises at least five trees planted in a circle, oval, horseshoe or cauldron shape with the entrance placed in the west. The trees may be endangered species or trees used in Druid spirituality such as the oak, holly, crab-apple and hazel, or the thirteen trees of the Celtic calendar but they must be ecologically appropriate to the immediate environment (Sanders *et al.* 2001:5). The Programme's aim is to provide a network of woodland sanctuaries, and OBOD maintains a register of all groves planted as part of the scheme. Many are in members' gardens but there are also groves in community projects, schools, public parks, peace sanctuaries and green burial grounds.

Pagan, New Age and alternative pilgrimages within the landscape are also important expressions of contemporary spirituality which link with designed environments from the megalithic to the post modern. The Chalice Well Garden near Glastonbury Tor has been the focus for meditation and healing pilgrimages since at least the late nineteenth century (Mitchell 2000:80). The garden incorporates many water features including a waveform watercourse based on bio-dynamic design principles to allow access to the chalybeate healing waters from the natural spring.

Artist, writer and film director Derek Jarman (1942-1994) in his last years whilst terminally ill with an AIDS-related condition, created an unspectacular but evocative garden at the archly named *Prospect Cottage*, which became a place of pilgrimage for the gay community and families and friends honouring loved ones who had died from AIDS related illnesses (Mitchell 2000:82). Amongst the wild flowers of the coast, sea lavender and grasses, on the inhospitable coastal pebble ridges at Dungeness between the nuclear power station and the lighthouses, Jarman constructed circles of stones, and makeshift sculptures from found objects and buckets on sticks (Illus.25). The garden implies sexual connotations with many of the shapes seeming to be deliberately penetrative, with holed stones threaded onto wooden sticks, and iron pillars piercing rings of pebbles or cork, although Jarman cited prehistoric megalithic structures as his main inspiration (Tuck 2003:224).

Stone circles and megalithic monuments offer a connection to the landscape that for many people has been lost. In the past the enduring link between people and the landscape was openly acknowledged in a subtle relationship in which health and abundance were both recognised and hoped for, an understanding which has been

eroded in the modern period by diminishing access to the land (Blain and Wallis 2007) (Tuck 2003:221). In garden design the whole notion of gardens that speak via symbols or messages carved on stone is evocative of the ancient past, a universally powerful memory considered to underlie the perennial fascination with sculpture in the garden (Brown 1999:311).

From 1967 the poet and artist Ian Hamilton Finlay (1925-2006) created a nine-acre garden, *Little Sparta*, at the edge of the moors at Stonypath in Lanarkshire. 'A monastic retreat made by poor members of an Order with their own hands' (Finlay in Brown 1999:311), the wild and windswept garden is constructed around a burn channelled to produce watercourses and pools. Sculpture-poems and inscriptions invite connections to the classical concept of Arcadia, to warfare and destruction, and to the ideals of Rousseau and the French Revolution. The entire garden can be seen as a celebration of metaphor and at the same time it meditates on the relation between nature and the spectator (Illus.26). Finlay is a special case in modern contemporary landscape architecture in that his radical invocation of basic devices from the pre-history and history of place-making made more of these traditions than most other designers as well as providing an exemplary opportunity to study the relationship of word and image in the process of garden making and garden dwelling (Dixon Hunt 2000:118). The making and experiencing of place are intimately allied in his work and therefore his garden can be considered empathetic to many New Age and environmental concerns. The Pagan or New Age consumer who is not willing to emulate Finlay's work to the same extent is now catered for in ritual and place-making endeavours by companies such as Time Circles founded in 2001 by sculptor and stone mason Dominic Roper, which produce to

commission megaliths, stone circles, holed stones, memorial and symbol stones to the customer's own specifications (www.timecircles.co.uk 28.04.2005).

In the latter part of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century there has been a growing trend towards more alternative styles of marriage ceremonies, including pagan, Wiccan and Druid handfastings, humanist services and eco-friendly celebrations, many of which are held in the landscape at ancient megalithic and sacred sites, in the countryside, and in gardens and parks (Gillian, Angelica, Topaz). In 2002, two-thirds of marriages were civil services without a conventional religious ceremony, and between 1997 and 2001, the number of non-religious weddings taking place in venues other than register offices increased by 30 percent (*Spirit and Destiny* June 2005:16). The Scottish Parliament recently declared that paganism does meet the definition of religious worship after nearly 2000 Scots described themselves as pagans in the 2001 census, and in 2004 a Wiccan wedding was recognised by the General Register Office for Scotland (www.paganfed.org 29.06.2005).

Ceremonies at the end of life have also been reclaimed from the major religions and the state. Individuals are designing their own funerals, inspired by the publications of the Natural Death Society, whose publication *The Natural Death Handbook* has been frequently updated since its first appearance in 1993. Green and woodland burials, whether Pagan or secular-humanist, have recently become a viable alternative to conventional funerals (Harvey in Carr-Gomm 2003:208 –222, www.humanism.org) (Alchemilla d.2007).

The Appropriation of Orientalism in Alternative and Spiritual Garden Design in Britain.

Feng Shui has not influenced British garden design to a similar extent as it has interiors. Interest in Chinese gardens in Britain has been eclipsed by that in Japanese and Zen gardens. However, the cosmological theories underlying Chinese garden design have been of interest to both academics and those involved in alternative therapeutics (Nemetona, Elanor, Murdo, Angelica, Mr Jing, Bruce). In Chinese traditional gardens, the act of enclosure is most often a means of emphasising the centre rather than the periphery and enclosures arrange space and time in Chinese culture rather than defining or setting boundaries (Hall and Ames 1998:176).

Wu fu, the five zone theory of world order prevalent during the Han dynasty (206BC-222AD) divided the world into five concentric and hierarchical zones or areas, with the Emperor and his administration at the centre, and the wild zone at the periphery, an idea surprisingly similar to the notions of plot organisation in Permaculture. The concept of this radical circle is applied to the usually square or rectangular plot of the Chinese garden, so that it too is characterised by the centredness rather than periphery, as being 'nested' is considered to be another form of being radical (Hall and Ames 1998:178).

The western notion of a mind-body dichotomy did not arise in Chinese thought, since both Taoism and Confucianism assume that all matter is animate; spirituality and life go hand in hand and pervade all things (Maciocia 1989:1). The continuity between humanity and the world in Chinese natural cosmology leads to the assumption that there is no final distinction between nature and human culture. The distinction between

organic and inorganic, nature and artifice, or the natural and the cultivated is not as important in Chinese culture as it is to Western culture.

Thus one may not think of the Chinese garden as an *imitation* of either the form (Plato) or the functioning (Aristotle) of nature. Neither should one hold, with Western romanticism that it is a *transformation* of nature. Certainly it cannot be viewed as Freudian aestheticians in the West would hold, as a *sublimation* of nature. the best we can say... is that the construction of a garden as a work of art involves the *education* of nature. And such education or cultivation maintains the continuity between nature and artifice (Hall and Ames 1998:179).

In Chinese cosmology, time is not derivative of matter but a fundamental aspect of it. Unlike western traditions that devalue time and change and pursue the timeless and eternal, Chinese tradition sees things as always transforming (*wu hua*), so a static Zen garden is not in accord with the classical Chinese garden tradition. In addition, the viewer is not a mere observer, but is always embedded in the garden and shares in its changes and transformations being part of an energetic relationship (Hall and Ames 1996:182) (Mr Jing, Galahad, Nekko).

This dynamic energetic relationship of human beings and their environment informs the Feng Shui garden, which is recognisable by lack of straight lines in paths or planting, an emphasis on the asymmetrical, and a gradual unfolding of the garden by limited sight lines, rather than one immediate overall view (Too 1998) (Wydra 1997). The architectural critic and theorist Charles Jencks, influenced by the research of his late wife Maggie Keswick, an expert on Chinese gardens and its tradition of seeing the landscape in animistic terms, and by his own interest in quantum physics and genetics, created the *Garden of Cosmic Speculation* at Portrack in the Scottish Borders. Based on Keswick's experiments in garden Feng Shui, *The Garden of Cosmic Speculation*, begun in 1989, has been hailed by some critics as a modern counterpart to the celebrated

eighteenth century landscape gardens at Stowe, near Buckingham (Uglove 2004:270) in that it is full of games and associations, but scientific and metaphysical rather than literary and political ones. Jencks landscaped thirty acres of the Keswicks' estate into shapes, earthworks and pools using contemporary sculpture in concrete and steel to reflect the undulating, jagged variety of nature and to offer metaphors to explore certain fundamental aspects of the universe, such as the composition of atoms and the structure of DNA, black holes (Illus.27), the evolution of the universe (Illus.28) and the garden of the 15 human senses (Jencks 2003).

Although *The Garden of Cosmic Speculation* has much in common with aristocratic gardening on the grand scale, it can also be considered a New Age garden in that it combines scientific theories and knowledge with a metaphysical interest with the individual's relationship to nature and the wider universe (Drury 2004).

Perhaps in the end neither man nor the universe is the measure of all things, but rather the convivial dialogue that comes from their interaction (Jencks 2003:248).

From the mid-1990s Jencks concentrated on landscape design. In 2002 at the Scottish Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh he created a landform garden and outdoor art gallery of swirling grassy mounds and pools, based on the rhythmic patterns of nature including the Henon Attractor and its self-similar curves that fold inwards. Earth, water and airflows generate waveforms that self-organize around certain attractor basins so there are natural affinities between this shape and the way the earth is moved and people walk (Jencks 2003:72).

Although oriental garden styles had had an influence on British gardens since the late eighteenth century, the fascination for Zen gardens as a distinct discipline arose in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1920 Bernard Leach (1887-1979) and Shoji Hamada (1894-1978) established their pottery in St Ives in Cornwall. Leach appropriated the Japanese concept of a potter's complete responsibility for all stages of creative activity and the unity of the results, and the St Ives art world became fascinated by Hamada's Zen beliefs and the ways in which they were expressed in his ceramics. His identification of the workplace and the self, and the relationship between the artist-craftsman's beliefs and creative oeuvre, inspired artist-gardeners to take an interest in Japanese, and particularly, Zen culture (Byars 1994:322). Bonsai trees, azalea hybrids and chrysanthemums became more readily available from garden nurseries throughout the 1930s. During World War II, Japanese garden philosophy along with German architectural modernism were quickly rejected as unpatriotic (Brown 1999:237) but since the 1970s interest in Zen gardens has revived, although this time the emphasis is on all aspects of Zen garden design, not just the visual and aesthetic ones.

Zen, a blend of spiritual traditions of Indian Buddhism and Chinese Taoism and Confucianism, finally arrived in Japan in the twelfth century (Paul 2000:17). The word 'Zen' can be translated as 'meditation' but it also refers to states of mind or practice that goes beyond subject or object (Paul 2000:23). Gardens that have been designed along Zen principles are therefore places where contemplation and meditation are encouraged as vital tools in the quest for self-knowledge, so Zen gardens are not designed to excite the senses as their western counterparts do but are designed to be soothing and reflective spaces that remain the same from year to year. (Mitchell 2000:94).

The Zen garden embodies Zen practices. Random intervals between stepping stones cause people to stop and think how to cross – a Zen ploy to make students concentrate on the here and now and empty their minds (Harte 2002:49). Bridges represent mankind's journey from earth to a spiritual paradise, stones and gravel represent mountains and water respectively. The concept of *Shakkei*, or 'borrowed scenery', in which distant views are framed by garden features, creates the optical illusion of greater space and is used by Zen Buddhists to contemplate the Buddha's observation that nothing has an inherent existence separate from the conditions that give rise to it (Harte 2002:60) (Mitchell 2000:94).

There are no rules in Zen gardens, just guiding principles, such as six parts beauty to four parts function, with balance as the key (Zen monk Maitreya to the author 12.04.2002), which may account for their popularity with westerners, but for Buddhists making a garden and working in it, are aspects of spiritual practice. The Buddhist term for truth and teachings, *dharma*, is also used for 'nature', and so working with nature in the garden is meditating on truth and putting the teachings into practice. Thus contemporary interest in Zen gardens goes beyond the appearance of the design itself to the underlying spiritual principles. The concept of non-injury to life considers deep digging of the soil to be overwhelmingly violent; the ornamental solution is raked sand or gravel, and the ethical alternative is compost-layered or no-dig cultivation. Buddhism requires that every task is performed with love and care, so that gardening in the Zen tradition is synonymous with spiritual practice (Brown 1999:307) (Harte 2002:8). For the western Zen practitioner who may be many miles from the nearest shrine or group of co-practitioners, gardening in the Zen manner, whether this is aesthetically evident or not to on lookers, is the practice of *dharma*.

In the Heian period (794-1185AD) principles from the Chinese geomantic art of Feng Shui were added to the Zen and Shinto concepts to produce the style of garden we would recognise as Zen today. Amida 'paradise islands', in either water or dry gravel streams, remind the onlooker that it is possible to break out of the endless cycle of rebirth and reside with the Buddha Amida, lord of light in the paradise garden known as the Western Pure Land (Harte 2002:9).

In Britain an excellent garden in the Amida tradition can be found at Pureland Relaxation and Meditation Centre and Japanese Garden, North Clifden, near Newark, Nottinghamshire. In 1973 Maitreya, a monk from Hamda, Nagoya, in Japan, came to England to teach Zen Buddhism and meditation, and in 1980 he began to create a Zen garden using native British trees and plants as well as traditional Japanese species on the flat two-acre field next door to the mediation centre (Illus 29). The garden contains grassy banks to represent mountain ranges, a large curving pond containing Koi carp, several bridges, stepping stones, meditation huts, shrines and a house for tea ceremonies. The garden is open to visitors as well as students of meditation and a full range of meditation classes, courses and tea ceremonies is available, as well as one-to-one tuition and advice on Zen practice. The Japanese tradition of viewing gardens by moonlight is also available at Pureland, as well as lantern-lit evening garden sessions (Pureland visitors brochure, visits from 1995 to date). The BBC religious programme *Songs of Praise* featured Pureland in a special edition about sacred gardens, a further indication of the eclecticism of contemporary spirituality (bbc.co.uk/religion/programmes/songsofpraise/documents/20010909.html).

The *Karesansui*, dry water garden of gravel or granite sand raked into patterns around groups of rocks, is probably the westerner's cliché of the Zen garden. Since the 1990s desk top versions of these gardens, such as *The Mini Zen Garden Kit* produced by Runnings Press, London, have been on sale in British gift catalogues and in major retailers including Waterstones Booksellers. The kits comprise sand in a little tray, with three pebbles and a miniature bamboo rake, and an instruction leaflet on appropriate meditative patterns, and are intended to lift the spirits of jaded and stressed business executives and other desk bound workers.

In Buddhist practice, the rocks placed in a sea of sand or gravel symbolise how each thought within a person's mind or heart should be balanced. Buddhists aspire to 'no-mind', a mind empty of the fixed categories and conditioned reactions of the limited everyday consciousness. This 'emptiness' is represented by the sand; the act of raking symbolises reunification, whereas that of sweeping symbolises removal, and both are essential to the everyday practice of Zen students (Harte 2002:21) (Thorp 2000:101).

The *Karesansui* garden was originally designed by priests, whose guiding principle of rejecting any superfluous elements has struck a chord with twentieth century minimalists. Karesansui gardens enable viewers to slow down their thinking and soothe their emotions, therefore the more time spent looking, the more one will receive, visually and spiritually, so many of these gardens were designed to be viewed from inside a nearby building, usually the abbot's dwelling, the *hojo* (Harte 2001:76) (Illus.30).

Zen garden 'style' can be accommodated to any space, large or small, and is meant to be viewed from inside all year round, which accords with many contemporary western requirements, especially amongst affluent, busy and trendy urbanites and the single. Garden writer and broadcaster Gay Search remarked that though the spiritual element of Zen gardens was appealing to the British public, she suspected the main reason for their popularity was more practical.

It is a pared down, low maintenance style of gardening in which hard landscaping plays a big part. It works extremely well in urban settings, especially in very small spaces (Search 2005:129) (Illus.31).

Whether Zen gardens are appreciated for their aesthetic or practical qualities their influence on popular British garden design in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century is undeniable.

One of the most important peace gardens and works of public art constructed in recent years is *Samten Kyil*, the Garden of Contemplation in the grounds of the Imperial War Museum, London. On 13 May 1999 the Dalai Lama opened *Samten Kyil* as a constant reminder of peace, harmony and non-violence, and a monument to the Tibetan people their unique culture and spiritual tradition, and their commitment to peace. At the centre of the garden is a representation of the *Kalachakra* mandala, the major Vajrayana Buddhist teaching of the Wheel of Time, associated with world peace and the vision of an enlightened society. The Portland stone sculptures in the garden, designed by British sculptor Hamish Horsley, chosen because of his ability to combine modern, abstract and organic forms, and executed by him in collaboration with Awang Dorjee, a celebrated Tibetan stonemason now living in exile in India, are western interpretations of traditional Vajrayana iconography. This conflation of styles was a deliberate decision to symbolise the meeting of East and West and the harmony that can be created between

different peoples through mutual respect and understanding (Tibet Foundation *Peace Garden Review* May 1999) (Illus. 32).

Horseley's elegant overall design for Samten Kyil has provided a blue print for other Vajrayana tradition gardens in Britain, in that it can be easily scaled up or down to suit plots of any size and his contemporary interpretation of Buddhist iconography can be emulated effectively in less expensive materials. British practitioners of Vajrayana Buddhism now have a visual expression of their own to inspire private and public gardens of contemplation, that are distinct from the dominant Zen style of spiritual design (Elanor, Pearl, Jenna).

Approaches to the Design of Therapeutic Environments

A main criticism of allopathic biomedical practice is that it has perpetuated elites and power structures to the detriment of patients, staff and other users. Foucault's (1994) *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* investigated the history of medical practice in institutions and the ways in which the environment conditioned the discourses that go on within it. Rose Rose, artist and Ayurvedic medical practitioner, conducted doctoral research into a visual investigation via digital technologies, of the doctor-patient relationship as evidenced through the doctor-patient interview. Amongst other issues, her research drew attention to the continuing ambivalence of the treatment of women within orthodox medicine, which has been historically patriarchal in structure (Rose 2002). Rose's impetus for research was the questioning of medical power relations through visual art practices. Her observations of the medical environment and the hierarchical structure under which doctor-patient interviews took place evidenced

the kinds of conditions and behaviours in which the patients were passive objects having things done to them by authoritarian experts.

Rose described the Interview Rooms and Waiting Area of the Sheffield Northern General Hospital Orthopaedic Department, purpose built in 1970, as being bland, claustrophobic, chaotic and overheated, contributing to higher tension levels in all parties (Rose 2002:37). The Clinic Rooms were faded, cramped and cluttered, with usually two to four NHS staff officiating in each one. The Waiting Areas were large, public thoroughfares overwhelmed by television noise and the manoeuvrings of patients and porters. Discussions of treatment took place in this area, so depriving patients of much of their privacy and dignity (Rose 2002: 42). These layouts and decorative schemes were still unchanged in February 2004 when the author was a patient in the same department, and stress levels were further exacerbated by harsh lighting schemes and a plethora of aggressively worded notices. There was little visible evidence or atmosphere to suggest that one was in a healing environment. As architectural writer and critic Edwin Heathcote remarked,

Hospitals are where we celebrate our most intimate and touching but also our most harrowing and emotional moments. They should be among the most important and profoundly symbolic spaces we inhabit yet instead they are largely the result of dim bureaucratic decisions, penny-pinching, unquestioning orthodoxy and, at best, average planning and architecture (Heathcote 2005:2).

In contrast CAM practitioners generally prefer a more relaxed and egalitarian framework, in which therapists and patients co-operate to bring about healing (Caradoc, Nemetona, Dryad, Ceridwen, Angelica, Heather, Pearl, Indira, Brid, Winnie, Topaz, Nekko). An alternative approach to the therapeutic environment which may be more beneficial to patients and staff alike is evidenced by the design of the purpose-built

Glasgow Homoeopathic Hospital opened 1999, replacing a smaller building in use since 1930. The architects Macmon were given a challenging brief – ‘create a place of beauty and healing’ (Hempel 1999: 16) and in response they designed an elegant L-shaped building on two sides of a communal garden (Illus. 33).

The key design themes of the Glasgow Homoeopathic Hospital are light, space and harmony. The building makes the best of natural daylight and all the patient rooms face outwards, with doors and windows looking onto the landscaped gardens, one of the design criteria being that people in the building should always be aware of the world outside. Regulations required the use of fluorescent lighting, but all the lighting tubes used in the building replicate natural light, are high frequency to avoid even the most subliminal vibration and have the ends of the light fittings screened to cut down on pollution.

The hospital is constructed from materials that are as natural and environmentally friendly as possible. The floors and blinds are wooden, the roof is zinc and so recyclable, real linoleum is used for floor covering, and chairs and sofas are made from cane or upholstered in leather. Decorative schemes employ colour palettes intended to promote a restful environment. The initial plan to utilise s-bends in corridors, intended to avoid the institutional feel of long straight corridors, had to be abandoned as it proved to be too expensive. Great attention to detail has been paid to design of small details, door handles, light fittings and the shape of the chairs. Stained glass is used for the patient bathroom windows and tiny red mosaic tiles decorate the basin splash backs. The rationale for the design of the building and the interior decorative schemes was to avoid all of the small but significant signs that make people think they are in an institution.

The building is intended to meet the physical and psychological needs of the patients and staff who use it, rather than forcing them to adapt, to suffer from its demands. The design of the building is part of the holistic healing process. The lead consultant physician, David Reilly, said his views on what was needed in the design of the new hospital came from his past experiences of working in hospitals that made people feel uncomfortable.

We wanted to avoid the subconscious triggers in the environment that induce anxiety. Most people in hospital feel intimidated. We have some very sick patients here, many previously viewed as hopeless cases and this is very demanding. Staff health is also a great priority (Hempel 1999:17).

The focal point of the hospital is the garden designed by Jane Kelly. The informal landscape of trees, shrubs, flowers and broad, meandering stone paths incorporates seating, sculpted earth mounds and curved, raised beds of blue bricks, and is protected by a 25 metre long living wall of willow (www.adhom.org.uk 18.06.2005). The garden is easily accessible from all of the patients' rooms via a wooden deck and provides a practical demonstration of the way that contact with nature can help people recover from illness more quickly (Lawson 2005) (Mazuch 2003) (Ulrich *et al.* 2004).

The care that the hospital offers is unique and is delivered in a setting that reflects and is part of the approach of integrating orthodox and complementary therapy, thus challenging the artificial divisions within medicine. The final cost per square metre of the Glasgow Homeopathic Hospital was no more than that of a conventional NHS hospital, although the money for the £2.2 million project was raised entirely from charity, the Homeopathic Trust donating £175,000 (www.adhom.org.uk 20.07.2004).

Very few of Britain's 40,000 CAM therapists work in environments that are specifically designed for the practice of their particular therapies (Hall, Sylvester and Doyle 2004: 9), therefore the spaces used as treatment rooms have to be modified as necessary. For some therapies this necessitates a minimum impact on what was originally, and often still is, a domestic environment.

The legal requirements for therapy rooms are a sink for hand washing, safe disposal of acupuncture needles and other 'sharps' and, since the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 came in to force in October 2004, disabled access for wheelchair and other physically challenged users, is recommended. Display of qualifications and practitioner insurance certificates is left to the discretion of the individual therapist. Some chose to have certificates displayed on the wall; often, in the case of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and other oriental therapies, in the southern sector of the room that represents fame and reputation, or the north, which represents career, health, healing and medicines (Brown 1998:99). Practitioners who, in accord with holistic principles, prefer to have a less authoritarian approach to their practice, have their qualification and insurance certificates in a folder which prospective patients may view on demand. In CAM centres, practitioners' qualifications are often on display in the reception area or hallway, so as to leave the treatment rooms as user-friendly and relaxing as possible, to differentiate them from conventional hospital settings.

The colour and decoration of therapy rooms are usually left to the discretion of the therapist, with pastel schemes and gentle subdued lighting predominating as most CAM therapies consider relaxation as an important component of a successful treatment. The style of the therapy room often reflects the underlying ethos and assumptions of the

therapeutic modality taking place there, as well as the personal taste of the therapist (Illus. 34). Theo Gimbel carried out extensive research into the use of colour in both pigment/hue and light. He recommended blue or turquoise wall colours for general therapy rooms as blue is considered to relax tensions and provide a feeling of space, calm and peace, whilst turquoise is regarded as fresh and cooling, providing a neutral non-dominating environment that is conducive to objectivity (Gimbel 1980: 60). Turquoise as both a gemstone and a colour is deemed in both western and oriental traditions to have healing properties. It is known as a 'universal colour', meaning that it appeals to everyone, and is therefore a popular choice for corporate identities and logos (Cullen and Warrender 2001: 26). Turquoise is also flattering to all skin colours (Wood 1984:48), an advantage in environments for bodywork therapy, which usually requires patients to undress, either partially or completely.

Many male patients attending CAM bodywork therapy for the first time are often sufficiently embarrassed by doing something still perceived in some quarters as possibly outlandish and potentially effeminate, without being treated in an environment that may appear to them as 'girly' (Nemetona, Dryad, Heather, Pearl, Winnie, Topaz, Nekko). Given that in western culture the association between massage and the sex industry is still prevalent, a boudoir atmosphere to the therapy room would do little to dispel this notion. Female therapists, of necessity, avoid modes of dress and surroundings that might connote anything other than a medically therapeutic environment (Nemetona, Dryad, Heather, Pearl, Winnie, Topaz, Nekko). Anecdotal evidence gained from the respondents to informal interview tends to suggest that female patients generally prefer a less clinical environment, and are comfortable in informal surroundings, whereas male patients prefer a more formal, professionalised environment.

Plants are kept to a minimum in the therapy room as these may affect patients with hay fever or other allergies. If the therapy room contains a computer, often spider plants (*chlorophytum elatum* var. *vittatum*), efficient absorbers of formaldehyde, one of the most prevalent indoor pollutants (Pearson 1989:245) are kept nearby. TCM therapists often have a jade plant (*crassula ovata*) in the southeast sector of the therapy room or by the front door of the practice premises to ensure prosperity and well-being, since in Chinese thought the thick water-laden leaves of this plant symbolise money and gold (Too 1998:112).

The majority of complementary therapy centres operate from converted larger houses or non-medical purpose built commercial premises such as shops. A typical example was Sheffield Natural Health Centre, founded in 1986 in a three storey Victorian terrace house that had previously been converted into retail premises with accommodation above. The Centre's original and subsequent design and decorative schemes evidence the changes in the popular perception of CAM over the last 30 years.

The original shop area was used for a patient reception area and practice office, with a windowless store for medical herbs. The rest of the rooms were therapy rooms, the kitchen was used as a therapist's social area, and the large second floor room was used for meetings, public talks and workshops. The exterior was painted dark green with pale grey detailing, reinforcing the association of green as a healing, balancing natural colour. The therapy rooms were decorated in various pale pastel shades, particularly creams, greens and blues. The majority of the therapists, including the author, practised a physical modality, such as massage, Aromatherapy, Osteopathy, Chiropractice, Acupuncture, and Alexander Technique, with a medical herbalist and iridologist, and two psychotherapists and counsellors also using the premises.

In 2000, the centre became a focus for psychotherapy training with dedicated teaching rooms for that purpose. The overall image of the premises changed from that of a rather earnest, alternative, faintly 'hippy' environment to a sleeker, trendy, mainstream design conscious one aimed at the affluent middle class urbanite. The shop front changed from dark green to fashionable off white neutrals with Perspex signage bearing mid green lettering in a sans-serif typeface. The windows were filled with partially 'sandblasted' obscured glass to give a chic minimalist look, reminiscent of loft apartment design. The tarmac forecourt was redesigned to provide disabled access, using natural stone flags incorporating a raised oval bed containing a small tree, five vertical stones graduated in size in a curve, with slate ground cover, referencing Zen *karesansui* gardens and attempts to connote peace and serenity on a main arterial road into Sheffield city centre (Illus. 35). In 2005 the forecourt's designer, stone artist Ian Boyle, also transformed the centre's back yard into a meditation garden incorporating slate sculpture, an interesting fusion of Zen design and Peak District vernacular dry stone walling.

Complementary and Alternative Medicine and its Influence on Orthodox Medical Environments

The holistic outlook of CAM parallels the increasing recognition by orthodox medical practice of the importance of the effects of design on health (Lawson 2005) (Mazuch 2003) (Ulrich *et al.* 2004). Examples include projects to install ambient lighting systems in the waiting areas of hospital Accident and Emergency departments, in order to reduce stress and aggression by promoting a more meditative and calming atmosphere (Byam Shaw 2005:30). Such systems would cost relatively little to install and would prove to be more cost effective than major architectural redesign and modification.

Architectural critic and landscape architect Charles Jencks, the widower of Chinese garden expert Maggie Keswick, set up in her memory non-clinical support centres for cancer patients and their families. The impetus for the centres came from Keswick's own experience in dealing with cancer and her awareness of the contrast between modern and post-modern methods of hospital practice. (Jencks 2003:134). Known as 'Maggie's Centres', these buildings are situated across Britain and Jencks has engaged leading architects to design them. The first Maggie's Centre in Edinburgh, by Richard Murphy with a brief to maintain a domestic atmosphere essential to a non-institutional building, designed the space so that patients 'can navigate through difficult territory in a peaceful and bright atmosphere' (Jencks 2003:136). Frank Gehry, architect of the *Guggenheim Museum*, Bilbao, has designed the Maggie's Centre in Dundee, Zaha Hadid the centre in Fife, Daniel Libeskind the one in Cambridge and Richard Rogers has begun the first Maggie's Centre in London. The Maggie's Centre for the Highlands in Inverness by Page Park (Illus. 36) is set in a landscape designed by Jencks of curving grassy banks reminiscent of ancient earthworks and typical of his *Garden of Cosmic Speculation*. Although these centres are not subject to the rigorous demands of large hospitals and are designed by 'trophy' architects of international repute, they still demonstrate what is possible given the necessary initiative and design awareness, and could be role models for Health Trusts constructing new super-hospitals under the Private Finance Initiative (Heathcote 2005: 2).

The (2005) Evelina Children's Hospital at London's Guys and St.Thomas's Hospital, designed by Hopkins Architects, is good example of what can be achieved by thoughtful use of holistic design principles. It is a visually interesting building surmounted by a glass roof over a spacious atrium. Children were consulted throughout the design

process on everything from the building and decoration to the design of the nurses' uniforms (Heathcote 2005: 2) (Rust 2007).

The Haven Trust Breast Care Centre, Fulham, London, designed according to Feng Shui principles creates an inspiring place where beneficial energies are intended to aid the healing process. The gates have been designed to welcome nature into the building with the front door corresponding to the shape of the aura which is assumed to surround all life-forms. A *Tree of Life* mural by Catherine Hills is situated in the relationship area of the entrance foyer and a water feature was incorporated on the advice of Feng Shui and Nine Star Ki master Takashi Yoshikawa (*FSML* April 2000:58).

Hospitals are also recognising the importance of gardens and landscaping in improving patient experience. In 2005 garden designer Dan Pearson, was commissioned to design three hospital gardens for separate establishments in London. Pearson remarked that he wondered if it was coincidence that these projects came up at the same time, or whether it was an example of a new awareness that gardens have the potential to heal.

Without wanting to sound too New Age, I have to admit I do believe that gardens should be feel-good spaces, and that feeling good is all part of the healing process (Pearson 2005: 3).

Pearson's interest in the connection between garden design and health care arose in 1997 after hearing a lecture by Californian garden designer Topher Delaney, who recounted how desperate she had felt after being diagnosed with cancer, wandering the hospital corridors feeling desolate, unable to go anywhere that gave her any comfort. Delaney recovered and from her work for American hospitals, Pearson has taken the idea of a predominantly green space that incorporates a variety of foliage shapes,

providing gentle rustling sounds, and a water feature, elements that the majority of patients said they preferred and found soothing.

In hospital gardens the sense of sound is considered more important than the visual aspects that tend to predominate in most garden design. Pearson produced comfortable, colourful, scented spaces that serve as calming retreats as well as stimulating the senses. Planting schemes incorporated tactile and scented plants such as thymes, lavenders and eglantine roses, with brightly coloured and luminous shades of flowers that last well in low light and are visible by the partially-sighted (Pearson 2005:3) Gardens designed by Claire Whitehouse for the visually-impaired have incorporated water features which bubble aromatherapy essential oils through the water to release appropriately stimulating or relaxing aromas, with planting schemes that are fragrant and tactile and can withstand large numbers of visitors touching them (Mitchell 2000:57).

The Influence of Complementary and Alternative Medicine on Design and Material Culture

The influence of CAM on design and material culture is in many ways an addition or extension to existing products and services rather than a fundamental rethinking but, nevertheless, indicates the consumer demand for items that embody holistic and complementary principles. Of all the CAM therapies Aromatherapy can be argued to have had the greatest general impact on popular awareness and consumption in that it deals for the most part with pleasant smells and a non-invasive treatment method. Chain stores, including the Body Shop, Boots, John Lewis and Marks and Spencers, retail essential oils and aromatherapy bath and cosmetic products, as well as associated paraphernalia such as essential oil burners and diffusers, and gadgets for self-massage.

The calming effects of Aromatherapy have been utilised in transport design; the Meridian “Aroma-trains” by well-known product designers Seymour and Powell, under development for Midland Mainline, spray travellers with relaxing essential oils as they get on board (www.seymourpowell.com/ 05.06.2005). This needs reconsidering as not everyone finds the same essential oils to be calming, and people with allergies may react adversely. Car users can employ the In-car aromatherapy diffusers produced by Essentially Oils Ltd, Chipping Norton, a healthier use of the dashboard cigarette lighter socket (*Essentially Oils Newsletter* 160, July 2005).

The massage couch evolved from a utilitarian object to a piece of furniture that would not look out of place in an elegant living room. Furniture craftsman Edward W. Crowther and osteopath Peter R. Loader produced the *Aureus* massage couch specifically for use in the home (*World of Interiors* March 2005:193) (www.aequum.com 29.03.2005) (Illus. 37). Promoted as the world’s finest massage couch and targeted at the affluent consumer rather than the serious therapist, the *Aureus* has a turned and polished wooden frame, with leather upholstery in a choice of colours, which may be suitable for manipulation therapies such as Osteopathy and Chiropractic but not therapies such as Aromatherapy and Ayurveda which use large quantities of essential and carrier oils that would soon cause staining and other damage. Early advertising campaigns for the Aureus emphasised the ergonomic and medical functions of the couch but these have been replaced by references to its elegant, sumptuous, alluring qualities and its suitability for use in the home spa or on one’s yacht (*World of Interiors* October 2005:332).

The Oriental therapies have influenced the use of futons (Japanese mattresses for Shiatsu therapy) in interior design, meditation stools and cushions, as well as incense

and candles. The Manchester Cushion Company, founded as specialist supplier to meditators, offers a range of meditation cushions, floor mats wooden stools, Japanese incense, Buddha statues, *malas* (Buddhist prayer beads) and Zen clothing, importing *Samue* suits, the traditional meditation wear of Zen monks (www.cushion.org.uk 15.12.2004) and has found itself selling to general interior design shops.

The popularity of the Indian disciplines of Yoga and Ayurveda is evidenced in the ranges of yoga wear, often produced with matching yoga mats, by sportswear companies, such as Decathlon, and mainstream retailers including Marks and Spencer, and ranges of shampoos and bath products formulated for the Ayurvedic temperaments of Fire, Air and Earth, by The Body Shop. Tibetan Ayurvedic beauty products are becoming increasingly available in Superdrug and Tesco (www.tibetbeauty.com 02.05.2005).

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that alternative and New Age spirituality has impacted on the design of the home environment as a *locus* for ritual and health care, and that holistic, spiritual and environmental considerations have become of increasing importance in the design and maintenance of houses. In parallel a garden represents a particular person's and a specific culture's historical perception of their relationship with the physical world in its fullest complexity. In the garden design of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century the main perceptions addressed in contemporary alternative gardens involve themes of sanctuary and ritual and expression in design styles evidences the predominance of oriental, especially Zen Buddhist influences, and the respect for the intrinsic sanctity of the natural world, even though this may not be

borne out in practice. Another important theme identified in the research has been the reclaiming of nature and the outdoors and the prehistoric landscape as part of ritual and spiritual practice, and the marking of rites of passage. These aspects of design practice link with the concepts and practices of holistic health and their manifestations in design.

In the twentieth century, CAM in Britain increased as an intrinsic part of alternatives and New Age spirituality and is increasingly part of mainstream and popular culture. CAM emphasises prophylactic health care and it is this aspect that has had most influence on popular awareness and consumption. In contrast to Modernist paradigms of health, the maintenance of one's individual health and well being is seen as being related to the health and wellbeing of the environment and the planet and is ultimately dependent upon it (Hoffman 1988). The influence of CAM on orthodox medicine has impacted on the design of healing environments and a shift in attitude to treating the patient not the disease. The awareness derived from traditional and ethnic systems of healing and ceremony that experience takes precedence over rational thought in patients' encounters with hospital environments is influencing the design of medical spaces (Mehl-Madrona 1997:277).

In Britain, the general public is aware of CAM to some degree whether individuals actually consult a therapist or not and, as demonstrated in this chapter, the influence of Holism and CAM concepts can be seen in British design and material culture generally, not just in medical environments. The realisation that therapeutic design is not just for ill people but can be employed in the home and work environments (Day 1990) (Pearson 1989 and 2000) and is crucial for one's general wellbeing is more commonly accepted.

The theories, information and exemplars discussed in this chapter demonstrate the increasing influence of alternative spiritual paradigms, holistic health and CAM on British design and material culture in recent years and comprise another strand in the challenge of alternative and complementary theories of design to the Modernist hegemony still prevalent in much contemporary design and design history writing. Alternative, spiritual and New Age design arises from a wide spectrum of heterogeneous influences that render it difficult to analyse in a clear, homogeneous way with an obvious and linear thematic development, in the manner approved of by design historians when dealing with the history of Modernism. Nevertheless any history of twentieth century design is inadequate and partial if it fails to give some consideration to these alternative and complementary expressions and influences.

In the next chapter, the discussion considers how the developments explored above might be theorised and elucidated by reference to Postmodern theory and other critical frameworks.

A PROPOSED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK; DESIGN, SPIRITUALITY, POSTMODERNISM AND BEYOND

Introduction and the Argument of the Chapter

Having examined alternative, New Age and spiritually influenced design in domestic, landscape, and healthcare environments, this chapter considers potential theoretical approaches to understanding the material discussed in the preceding chapters. Such wide-ranging and diverse subject matter does not fit comfortably into one overarching theoretical framework as Modernist design activity is presented as so doing. Indeed, it is a Modernist attitude to expect it to do so. However, to acknowledge that a topic is resistant to the application of one unifying theory is neither facile nor evasive. The philosopher Mary Midgley argues that life is too complicated for a simple solution or explanation, including those of science, and that academia has developed an obsession with 'product', including one-line explanations, rather than acknowledging the complexity of everything (Midgley 1992).

The argument of this chapter is that a synthesis of theoretical approaches to alternative and complementary responses to design and material culture, by referencing Postmodernism and other critical discourses, provides a potential framework for elucidating their influence and practices. The chapter suggests a theoretical underpinning to enable mapping the alternative, New Age and complementary developments that have begun to transform the Modernist hegemony in design and constructions of design history. Although a shared vocabulary is often lacking between academia and alternative and New Age concepts and concerns, there is enough common ground to allow a viable discussion.

Potential Theoretical Approaches to Complementary Practices and Spirituality in Relation to Design

Postmodernist theory is one possible way forward in analysing alternative and complementary practices, but it does not adequately explain the divergence between Modernism and alternative and complementary forms of expression utilised in design. A more useful approach might be to employ the classical idea of theory as contemplation, the deep scrutiny and understanding of praxis from within (Dixon Hunt 2000 xi) and allow a theory to emerge from the multiplicity of alternative and complementary ideologies and design practices.

Paganism, the New Age movement and contemporary spirituality are protean subjects, as evidenced in the preceding chapters, and evade absolute definition and quantification. Furthermore, the academic world is uncomfortable with anything that cannot be theorised.

Every topic has to be crushed under the heavy hand of directed, logical thought, what Jung called the monotheism of the conscious (Ryan 2002:63).

The problem is exacerbated by the active opposition of many people involved in alternative, Pagan and New Age movements and spirituality to the imposition of any kind of theory on their beliefs and practices. Their response to theory, as opposed to experiential knowledge, is summed up by Isaac Bonewitz, a leading and controversial North American writer and practitioner of neo-paganism, druidism, witchcraft and the occult:

Read carefully and beware of unverified assumptions. When in doubt, consult your nearest tree (Bonewitz in Carr-Gomm 2003:93).

The approach to the wide range of contemporary spiritual practices taken by the emergent academic discipline of pagan studies permits the examination of highly dynamic and mutable religious communities within a hyper modern society, and demonstrates the increasing religious pluralism of the present times. Pagan studies research is relevant to the problems and the material presented in this thesis as it engages head-on with the key idea of multiplicity and the challenges of doing liminal research in a fluid field (Blain *et al* 2004:ii, vii).

One main criticism of the majority of theories employed in art and design is that they are basically literary theories, superimposed on a quite different subject area, regardless of fit. Tzvedan Todorov, a world authority on narrative and cultural theory, when questioned about the role of theory in approaching this topic, agreed that structuralist, post-structuralist and postmodern theory has little to offer art, and in his opinion had virtually nothing to offer design. He thought art and design practitioners should be evolving their own theories independently of literary criticism. He maintained that design should have a moral purpose, being involved in the day to day realities of the world, and that it could also have a spiritual purpose, an idea proposed in some measure by esoteric Judaism, relating to the consideration of the Kabbalah and design. However, Todorov remained unsure how the spiritual purpose of an object could be made clear other than by the overt use of symbolism, or how it could be embodied in the actual design itself, and how this might be recognised by the general user (interview 26.06.2004 with the author).

Translating concepts and terminology from one discipline to another requires the use of labels to facilitate discussion. The historian Malcolm Bradbury, writing about the need for 'labels' in academic discourse remarked

(Labels) have always been both popular and unpopular with historians: popular because they define the obvious fact that there are seismic shifts in the process of history, the structure of culture, the nature of collective consciousness, and the aesthetics, styles and preoccupations of the arts: unpopular because they paste over fundamental differences and generate endless quarrels about what such terms may really said to define (Bradbury 1998:29).

However, when discussing alternative, New Age and CAM topics, each spiritual and therapeutic discipline has its own vocabulary and labels. Therefore to get an exact agreement on even shared concepts is very difficult. With this in mind, the author prefers the Classical Chinese idea of a definition as a starting point for discussion and examination, rather than as an immutable set of boundaries (Hall and Ames 1998:176).

This problem is further exacerbated by academia's perceived rejection of possible ontological dimensions other than those identified by scientific-materialism. However, other cultures have no difficulty with this: in Chinese thought, spirit and matter are but two states of a continuum with an infinite number of states of aggregation (Maciocia 1989:4). The existence of some kind of spiritual meaning underpinning observed phenomena is considered a 'given' by the majority of people engaged in Pagan, New Age and complementary activities. G. David Rose, psychologist, psychotherapist, researcher and practitioner of Native North American shamanism, in commenting on this dichotomy of world-views, humorously suggested that the title of this chapter should be 'Postmodernism and The Beyond', again underlining the vastly differing conceptualisations inherent in the issues under discussion. He also remarked that most writers on shamanism were observing the subject at a remove and had no direct experience of practising it themselves (interview with the author 25. 08. 2005).

This thesis has investigated issues of spirituality and design in modernism and the New Age and holistic movements so that oppositional and shared themes may be clarified.

Attempting to theorise this process necessitates some engagement with post modernist theory, though this falls short of providing a full explanation or understanding, hence the use of the phrase 'Postmodernism and Beyond' in the heading to this chapter. In order to begin the discussion the next section deals with possible links between postmodernist concepts and contemporary spirituality.

Postmodernism and Spirituality.

Modernism, as an international movement, has impacted upon art, design, architecture, literature and drama in its reaction to realism and naturalism. Since its apogee in the 1930s, its influence was dominant into the late twentieth century, being much concerned with the ambiguous nature of personal, social and historical perceptions of 'reality', and with creating a fundamental break with the past, in regard to both theory and the western cycle of aesthetic styles (Ferne 1995:16).

In contrast to the Modernist discourse, Postmodernism can be seen as an all-inclusive definition of the recent cultural epoch, from the 1970s onwards, typified by pluralism, a stylistic glut of parody and quotation, the disappearance of traditional cultural hierarchies and the randomisation of cultural production; in other words, anything and everything goes. Although it could easily be dismissed as an attempt to package chaos, Postmodernist theory suggests some perceived coherence in the period since World War Two, particularly in relation to the Cold War and the ideological divide between liberal welfare capitalism and state communism. Since the end of the Cold War period in 1989, there has been another paradigm shift in Western thought which has led to a reconsideration of the nature of culture and its institutions including the basis of gender, family and collective identity, the value of national icons and movements and the question of society's long term direction and prospects (Bradbury 1998:29).

Over the last 30 years, there have been two main areas of change, which at first seem oppositional, but can be interpreted as being in some ways complementary. In one direction there is the intensification of the sense of region, tribe and ethnicity at the expense of the nation state. In another direction, the individual is experiencing incorporation into the global system of supra-national communications via computers and the Internet. A defining factor of postmodern culture is the absorption of virtually all aspects of cultural life by multi-national capital, colonising Nature and the Unconscious, and reducing the partial independence that art and theory had been permitted in modern culture by earlier forms of capitalism. Commentators such as Jameson have criticised post modern theory for celebrating rather than critiquing these developments (Jameson 1984:570). In addition, Jameson argued that, in the era of late capitalism, it is no longer possible to perceive the social totality. As we are already immersed in the chaotic and disorganised flow of late capitalist society the only possible strategy is to map the social from within. Jameson suggested an 'aesthetic of cognitive mapping', which allows us to negotiate the crisis in both the social and the representational in the late twentieth century (Jameson 1984: 89).

In what sense cognitive mapping could actually be called an 'aesthetic' is a moot point but the notion of cognitive mapping could be useful in general terms as long as we recognise that an individual may navigate by several different maps at the same time or move between them in different areas of life. For example, in daily life the author moves between a Western rationalist- materialist map, a Traditional Chinese Medicine map and a neo-shamanic map of the phenomenon usually called reality, also known in Druidry as 'the apparent world', and also uses insights from Bon, Zen Buddhism and Sufism. The cognitive maps used by an individual will impact on attitudes to and consumption of material culture, as well as on social and moral behaviour.

As society is seen to be in chaotic flux, so is the individual, according to both modern and postmodern theory. The post-structuralist theory of the fluid and provisional nature of the subject, who must be seen as decentred, arises from the disciplines of radical semiotics, Lacanian psychoanalytic theory (Lacan 1988) and deconstructionism. Deleuze's (1977) notion of the 'nomadic subject' acknowledges the viewer's or reader's complex ability to engage with a text both from a position of identity, and in an encounter which also potentially changes that identity.

The nomadic subject is amoeba-like, struggling to win some space for itself in its local context. While its shape is always determined by its nomadic articulations, it always has a shape which is itself effective (Grossberg 1987:39).

The notion of 'nomadic subject' provides the necessary conception of viewers and readers as active producers of meaning in their engagement with texts, and can also be applied to consumers' and end-users' relationships to objects. In his essay 'Nomad thought', Deleuze sees the 'nomad' as someone who opposes centralised power (1977:148). Strictly speaking, this has little to do with the decentred subject, but more with the idea of displaced groups of people, able to contest authority from the outside. However it is relevant when considering the relationship of alternative and New Age approaches to dominant discourses in contemporary life and material culture.

In attempting to formulate a critical theory of postmodern architecture, the critic and historian Kenneth Frampton divided the protagonists of Postmodernity into Neo-Historicists and Neo-Situationists. The former considered the culture, ideology and stylistic apparatus of the modern avant-garde to have been discredited, arguing that

this ostensibly inhuman and radical discourse together with its style, should be abandoned, and that culture should return to tradition in every conceivable sense (Frampton 1988:63).

The latter, the Neo-Situationist postmodernists, welcomed the continuing escalation of modernisation as

an inevitable and fundamentally radical process; one which despite its predominantly utilitarian and positivistic character embraces a constantly varying and unstable mosaic and hence the latent, liberative conjunctions of the future (Frampton 1988:63).

Thus the Neo-Historicists were regarded by Frampton as conservative, schizophrenic and anti-modern, whereas the Neo-Situationists he considered to be more strictly post modern in that by rejecting the utopian legacy of the Enlightenment they proclaimed the end of grand narratives in all fields, including those of history and science. Frampton argued for a third approach which, without lapsing into sentimentality and primitivism, would resist the universal commodification of the modern world and in so doing, react against the further centralisation of power and control. In Frampton's opinion, the theoretical controversy ought to be focused on the way in which the human species conceives of its relationship to nature, including its own nature. Frampton argued in almost New Age and holistic terms for a new theoretical approach, which takes complementarity as a 'given'.

In this context one questions whether the future will perpetuate the occidental *end-game* of limitless wastage and pollution or whether new dimensions of ethical practice will arise out of a new found respect for the symbiotic limits of both being and cosmos. While nature is by definition dynamic rather than static, such a cultural symbiosis would imply an end of modernism *in se*, in as much as cultural ecology would become the basis for limiting the aporia of occidental reason. Seen in this light, critical theory would have to define itself in terms of an organic practice wherein the myth of progress would encounter its natural limit. In such a prospect, conflict (including cultural- political conflict) would have to find its resolution in maintaining a homoeostatic balance (Frampton 1988:65).

Therefore, it may be seen that an essential aspect of contemporary culture is its rapid consumption and evanescence, which could be interpreted as a symptom of a continuing struggle over basic worldviews. The rationalist view considers the Universe to be an objective entity, independent of human consciousness and governed by natural laws that can be observed, codified and explained by science. For the most part this latter view is the position of academia, whatever subject is being discussed. The oppositional stance is that the Universe is dynamic, un-centred and constantly emergent, in an ongoing process with all consciousnesses. The possibility of multiple and parallel universes which interact with this one is also considered. This is basically the holistic and New Age position, supported by insights from quantum physics (Bohm 1988, Capra 1975). The spiritual search is considered suspect and at best problematical and lacking in intellectual rigour in a post-structuralist, post-modern world that assumes that there is no absolute truth nor any grand narrative or meta-narrative, and this attitude limits the effectiveness of post modern theory when applied to alternative, Pagan and New Age culture and practices.

Deconstructive postmodernism has been useful in validating the notion of the diversity of viewpoints. However, one of its main problems has been the undermining of meaning itself, in accordance with Lyotard's definition of postmodernism as incredulity to meta-narrative (Lyotard 1984). Too vigorous an application of this theoretical stance has resulted in a radical break with our will to meaning, by separating the signifier and the signified and by jettisoning the mythic basis operational in any society. The search for meaning has been a fundamental drive of human life, even if the meaning is that there is no meaning. This latter attitude of the meaninglessness of life can be critiqued as a pretentious idea and a modernist one to boot (Midgley 1992).

Whatever the larger issues, the necessity of evolving a personal meaning in one's individual life is crucial. Jung considered that the major problem besetting western culture was that we attempt to conduct society without a spiritual dimension, and he went so far as to state that the human being can endure anything but the state of meaninglessness (Pullar 1988:34). In relation to this problem as expressed in art theory, the critic Suzi Gablik in *The Re-enchantment of Art* called for

... a reconstructive post modernism, a will-to-meaning which promotes an aesthetic of interconnectedness, social responsibility, healing and ecological attunement, with the possible grand meta-narrative of saving the earth (Gablik 1995:26).

The aesthetic she suggests is equally applicable to design and it can be found in the outlook and practices of shamanic societies. Gablik's position is influenced by fieldwork she undertook with Joan Halifax, whose seminal book *Shaman, The Wounded Healer* (1982) introduced pictures of shamans and their art and material culture to many westerners for the first time.

A slightly different conception is articulated by Native American shaman, general medical practitioner and clinical psychologist Lewis Mehl-Madrona, who considers that the postmodern worldview has much in common with the shamanic view.

Few are happy living according to the postmodern stance of a world without absolute references. This position works for a shaman however because he is a rarity in the context of a traditional society...The shaman lives in a different world from his people – this is what gives him a clear vision of what to do for those who are stuck somewhere in their lives. The shaman specializes in finding meaning by venturing outside its borders into chaos and meaninglessness. We need either to return to the pre-modern beliefs of a meaningful world or adopt the way of the shaman and create meaning out of nothing. When a shaman finds a psychiatric patient who has no world, sees no meaning, the shaman says well, okay then, let's create a new world for you, one you can enjoy (Mehl-Madrona 1997:164).

In contemporary British spirituality shamanism has become a blanket term for any number of appropriations and syncretist practices (Harvey 1997:107). Much contemporary British shamanism derives from Native North American Lakota nation cultural practices combined with the various shamanisms of the circumpolar, non-Inuit native peoples (Wallis 2003). With the above *caveats* in mind the ways in which insights from shamanic attitudes and practices might inform contemporary design will now be explored..

Shamanism and Design: a Consideration of Useful Insights via the Concept of the Object.

The range of shamanistic societies is vast and disparate. The academic study of such cultures began in the early 1650s when an exiled dissident Russian priest, Father Avvakum, made detailed written observations of the nomadic Siberian Evenki reindeer herders and their spiritual and ritual practices. The Evenki used the term *saman* for special individuals who attained states of trance and ecstasy in order to mediate on behalf of the community with nature and the spiritual realms. Scholarly interest in this concept has generated a literature that is equally wide-ranging in theory and methodology (Price 2001:3).

It must be clearly stated that there is no definitive Pagan or New Age position on Shamanism. Indeed many pagan and neo-shamanic practitioners decry New Age approaches to shamanism as shallow and woolly spirituality (Harvey 1997:122). In this thesis, the discussion of shamanistic attitudes to the object will be confined to the varieties of shamanism practised in Britain as part of alternative and New Age culture. For the most part these variations are derived from Native North American cultural and

shamanic practices, with influences from the Finno-Ugric shamanism of Siberia and are often conflated with remnants of native British, Celtic and Anglo-Norse shamanism as reconstructed by academics and others involved in witchcraft, Wicca, Druidry, Heathenry and other neo-paganisms (Wallis 2003).

Shamanism is not a religion but rather a worldview system or a grammar of the mind, having many inter-correlations with ecology, economy and social structure. Shamanic folklore in shamanistic societies is partly collective knowledge shared by the clan, partly esoteric property known only by the shaman (Jordan 2001:87). Shamanism can also be described as a configuration of very specific values – a complex. This shamanic complex displays several basic elements, turning around the idea that the shaman must experience an ecstatic level of consciousness and be assisted by helper spirits. The central idea of shamanism is to establish a means of contact with the supernatural world by the ecstatic experiences of a professional and inspired intermediary (Jordan 2001:87).

Since the Enlightenment, the western view of what is real and true has been organised around the hegemony of a technological and materialist worldview. This has ignored or repudiated and excluded from its conception of reality any means and practices that are concerned with visionary energies. A reconstructive postmodern practice, as promulgated by Gablik (1995) and Moore (1996), where the aesthetics of interconnectedness, social responsibility and ecological sensitivity have a pivotal place in art and design and everyday life, would enable the embracing of shamanic principles to enrich both theoretical and practical design debates. The spiritual and environmental problems of western contemporary culture would also benefit, in that shamanism

provides a relevant outlook that could be easily incorporated into contemporary lifestyles.

It is not a matter of trying to imitate an archaic, cultural style so much as fostering psychic mobility – opening oneself up to a range of visionary experience in a culture whose mind set has made the very idea of other worlds unthinkable (Gablik 1995:46).

In this way, reconstructive post-modernism and shamanism can both be seen as seeking balance rather than perpetuating the habitual western dialectic of opposition and domination. Shamanism requires a return to the connection with intuitive knowing, used in conjunction with the ego or more rational self. In considering design in relation to insights from the concepts and practice of Shamanism, the concept of the object is a good starting point.

In the teaching of design and cultural studies an object can be considered to have four basic values. The use value relates to the suitability of the object for its intended function. The exchange value reflects its market worth as an asset. The symbolic value of the object reinforces kinship and relationship to social groupings. The sign value of an object represents the cultural taste and aspirations of its owner (Julier 2000:74). To these uses it is possible to add a fifth, the spiritual use of an object, which is more than a combination of symbolic and sign values. Spirituality as a part of the function of an object is difficult to evidence. Studies in spirituality and healing, and in complementary and alternative medicine and patient health, may provide some assistance here. For example, Lewis Mehl-Madrona encourages his patients to create sacred objects and draw their dream and trance journey experiences as part of their healing process (Mehl-Madrona 1997:225). Notions of the outer life reflecting the inner may relate to usage of particular objects as well as being exemplified in the surroundings of pagan and New Age groups and individuals.

People in shamanistic cultures consider that everything material, whether natural or made by humans, has a spiritual counterpart and that the Great Spirit is sleeping in all the named and nameless things. Furthermore, an artefact is considered to be a perfect reflection of the character and perceptions of its maker.

Nothing stands without reason. Things made deliberately are accurate mirrors of those who make them. Looked at properly an object will cry out to you. You can see a thousand things in action (Andrews 1981:126).

In a shamanic worldview, objects can also be categorised, in general, as follows. A 'power object' is thought of as possessing a centre of force that can be accessed by the shaman or other spiritually qualified person. A 'transition object' can be used by the shaman as a bridge from one world to another, by focusing on it to change his or her consciousness at will. It is considered that sensitive but untrained individuals may accidentally access this power but are unable to use it safely. Therefore both power objects and transition objects are guarded carefully and kept out of the way of the untrained and uninitiated (Andrews 1981:126). In addition, an object, whether handmade or commercially and industrially manufactured, may be considered to embody a particular spirit and be used as a means of communicating with that spirit. For example, a plastic toy model of a horse can be used shamanically to contact the spirit of Horse. It is debatable how much the shaman creates meaning within the object, rather the shaman 'listens' to information from the object (G. David Rose, interview with author 25.08.2005).

Objects, whether naturally occurring or designed, may be unlikely to be recognised as having any spiritual value by anyone unfamiliar with the specific spiritual practice involved. A pertinent example in this case is the portable medicine wheel carried by

contemporary practitioners of North American Native Shamanism (Nemetona, James, Heather, Rhodri, Wind Horse). The medicine wheel, perhaps more accurately, but clumsily, translated as the 'hoop of the vital force inherent in Nature', is a major concept in Native North American Lakota nation spiritual practice (Rutherford 2001:3). Symbolised as the encircled cross common to all ancient cultures, it is a representation of the Universe and also of the little universe of one's own personal reality.

Basically, the portable medicine wheel consists of five small pebbles and a square cloth in a little bag of either cloth or leather. The stones represent the cardinal directions, the usual colour correspondences being white for North, red for South, yellow for East, black for West, and green for the Centre. When in use the cloth is spread out on the ground, floor or tabletop and the stones are placed in the appropriate cardinal directions for that particular location. Only the intent of the user renders these objects as spiritual, and in shamanic work, intent is vital. The stones themselves are chosen in a particular way. The practitioner meditates on the intention of finding stones willing to work as part of a medicine wheel, and then goes out on a walk holding the specific intention in mind. Then one allows oneself to be drawn to a particular stone and to feel the consent of the stone in being collected for shamanic work. All five stones may be collected on one journey or it may take up to five separate journeys to find the appropriate individual exemplars. The experience of journeying to collect the stones is an integral part of the process and endows them with significance and meaning for the practitioner.

You need to do (shamanic work) in order to know it. Knowledge, realisation, illumination comes from the actual performance of this work (Meadows 2001:73).

As an object created by and relating to experiential knowledge, the medicine wheel can be described as a symbolic device for making connections at different levels of reality

(Meadows 2001:255). Its user could attach this same attitude or perception to any kind of object and environment deemed to have significance.

The fetishism of the designer object and the designer environment by the consumer seems to be working in the same way, as an attempt to make sense of oneself and one's place in society, if not in the wider Universe. It is difficult to understand fully the narrative attached to an object by its audience and the individual end user. For example, one respondent remarked that the iPod, because of its smooth, organic shape, reminded him of the folk stories of magic stones that could capture songs and sing them at will (Dilwyn). Whether this was in the mind of the design team during product development is debatable, but it does indicate that consumers make all kinds of associations with products irrespective of the designers' conscious and functional intentions. Designed objects can be the product of moral thought or speculative capitalism or both, and the challenge to the designer to decide whether to make money or to make sense is as relevant as ever (Papanek 1985). If an object can also somehow make spiritual sense to the user then so much the better in terms of both design and consumption, but how this can be designed into the object is a matter of conjecture. Power in a shamanic object comes from the material from which the object is made, the conditions under which it is made and the ways in which the object has been used since its creation (G. David Rose interview with author 25. 08. 2005).

The Materiality of the Shamanic World-view and its Relationship to Holistic Design.

Archaeology constructs narratives from objects and their stratigraphy, but with the understanding that the activity represented by the object is more important than the object itself. In western cultures, sight is the dominant sense and so the appearance of

an object often overrides other factors that may be more important functionally. Human activities are inherently multi-sensual as are encounters with place.

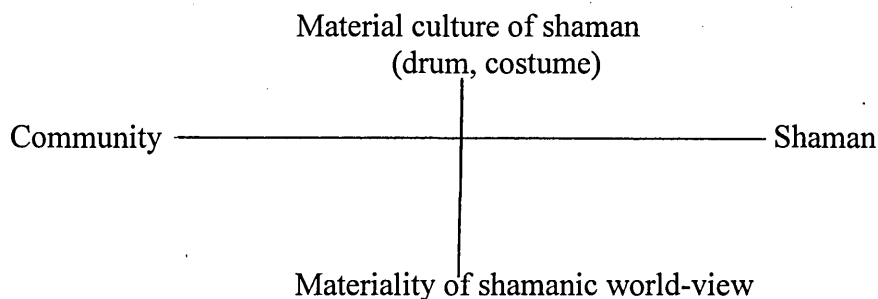
While it has been acknowledged that the sanctity of (ancient) monuments may in part be derived from the symbolic representation of cosmological and social principles of order, the multi-sensual nature of these experiences has tended to be under emphasised. The passage from one dimension to another may have been expressed through the *convergence* of unfamiliar sights, smells, tastes, textures and sounds (Watson 2001:188).

Holistic design restores the multi-sensual to design practice and consumption, and dissolves or blurs boundaries. The multi-sensual experience of design can be seen as having links with shamanic experience of objects and places, especially in relation to the shamanic practice of spiritual journeying.

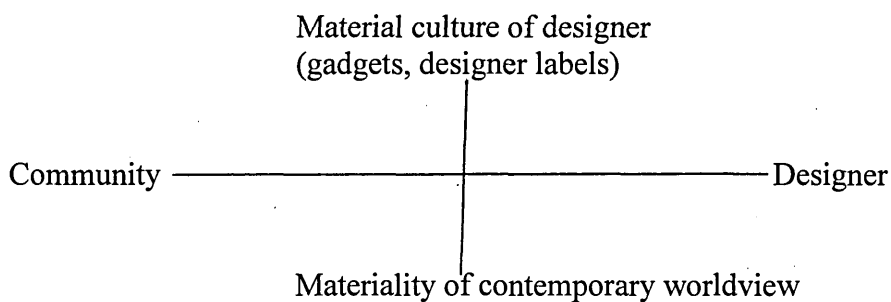
Fine artists and performance artists have been interested in shamanism and used many of its concepts in their practice, the German artist, ecologist, political activist and healer Joseph Beuys (1921-1986) being a prominent example (Buchloh 2001). Beuys regarded himself as a German Celt and, after a plane crash in World War II when he was rescued and cared for by nomadic Tartars, he incorporated shamanic ideas and practices into his artwork and performances (Demarco 2005:83). Shamanism has also been utilised in Process Oriented Psychology and in Jungian psychotherapy (Ryan 2002). Design's interest in shamanism is less overt, but the shamanic emphasis on multi-sensual experience and the intentional use of ritual objects has much to contribute to design practice and debates, especially in relation to the design of healing environments. Indeed, the rise of interest in shamanism in western societies coincided with experimentation with ways of altering states of consciousness – ways of seeing, experiencing and interacting with the world – and paralleled interest in therapies

alternative to the seemingly mechanical and impersonal medicine of rational science (Harvey 1997:110).

There are three sorts of shaman or shamanic practice among contemporary pagans: all three are healers or involve healing. The first helps heal people's relationship to themselves, the second helps heal people's relationship to one another, and the third helps the community to communicate with its relatives in the other-than-human world (Harvey 1997:118). Both designers and shamans can be considered mediators for their cultures in that they are specialists called in to solve particular problems on behalf of the community. They also utilise intuition, improvisation and chance within a specified practical and cultural structure. Specific understandings of the world are maintained by communities as forms of knowledge, which establish, through interactive social practices (praxis), relationships of power and authority between those who know. These socially constructed world-views are grounded in the essential materiality of the human world (Jordan 2001:88). Both shamans and designers are members of wider communities, thereby giving acts of shamanism and designing, and the ideological premise that facilitates and legitimates them, a wider material and embodied social dimension. The social and material contexts of shamanism are represented diagrammatically by Jordan (2001:88) as:



The social and material contexts of the designer can be represented in a similar way:



Few in contemporary society would wear shamanic ritual costume but the majority of us wear designer labels, a practice that can be seen as an attempt to appropriate the power and influence of the named, celebrity designer who can access knowledge and abilities denied to the rest of us. The shaman confronts spiritual emergencies, thereby attracting particular attention from anthropologists and ethnographers; the designer confronts design 'emergencies', thereby attracting attention from design historians; but in both shamanic and postmodern societies individuals and household groups within the wider community also have an important and active role to play in negotiating for their own general welfare. Alternative, Pagan, and New Age design allows the individual to negotiate with or circumvent the continuing influence of the Modernist discourse in much design and material culture. The subsequent commodification of shamanism and its material culture in affluent western societies has been severely critiqued in pagan studies writing (Harvey 1997) (Wallis 2003) but it has allowed for a more complete appreciation of the relationship between owner/user and object. For example the contents of the contemporary shamanic practitioner's 'medicine bag' in Illus. 38 are a combination of mass produced objects, purchased hand crafted items and individual pieces which took the practitioner many hours to make.

Eclecticism, Plurality, Identity and Consumption

Frederic Jameson identified pastiche and eclecticism as essentials of post-modern style in a wide range of artefacts and aesthetic production, a kind of compulsory pluralism of

styles (Wilson 1992:6). This pluralism can be seen as the post-modern end of the grand narrative, the end of the Enlightenment belief in continuous progress, evolution and the dominance of scientific rationality. The history of the world is no longer the single narrative of the history of western civilisation. Our contemporary culture of global mass media feeds us so much information that a massive cultural eclecticism is the only possible response. No 'story' has primacy over any other.

Coercive use of theory exemplifies the tendency of knowledge to be a means of domination: the more knowledge is 'totalised' the more it will create a prison house of information and theory from which there is no escape (Wilson 1992:7). It could be argued that post-modernism has fallen into this coercive trap too. Fragmentation of knowledge has led to such a bombardment of individual by both culture and information from multiple sources that it is impossible to convert the information into a meaningful whole. Thus the individual is considered to suffer from a fragmentation of identity.

Identity is always to some extent a fiction; psychoanalysis argues that the concept of identity is an ideology of false wholeness, a regression of unconscious impulses. Fragmentation can also be seen as a collective psychological way of relating to the post-modern world with a schizophrenic blankness, a loss of feeling, a 'hallucinatory euphoria' which refuses to be disturbed by an objectively disturbing reality – and so then refers to a split between thought and feeling, rationality and irrationality, objectivity and subjectivity. The fragmentation of individual and collective identities allows suppressed minorities and 'others' a chance to express themselves, assert, find or retrieve an identity in post-modern discussion. Identities in post-modern conditions become more flexible and 'float around' in a state of potential, if not actual change

(Bauman 1992). One of the ways of expressing changing identities is through consumption and consumerism. However, it should be emphasised that cultural consumption is to do with communication, texts and practices as much as it is about lifestyles, social distinctions and the articulation of identities (Storey 1999). In particular the consumption of alternative and New Age groups is concerned with the former factors, which are then grounded in the materiality of the object or environment, and the role of fashion in design appears to have less impact in these instances than in other areas.

The sociologist Michael Maffesoli argues that another fundamental change in society is underway, in which the assumed gradual progress towards civilization goes into reverse and where solitary individuals become assimilated into a huge network of amorphous but interlacing groups (Desmond 2003:19). The members of such groups are bound together by proximity and affectual sharing, a *connaisance* or feeling knowledge that involves a rejection of Modernist ideas. Maffesoli's analysis is directly applicable to the spirituality and consumption of those involved in the alternative and New Age movements. Feminist 'thealogy' and process spirituality conceptualises multiple peoples existing within the body of the Goddess which itself has sentience (Greenwood 2000). Heathenry envisages many interconnecting individuals who by their interactions become the pattern of the Wyrd, the threads that hold together the different levels of existence and shape the destiny of everyone and every thing (Blain 2002).

Consumerism, Personal Mythology and Spirituality

In western urban culture, the majority of people have not readily admitted to having an interest in spirituality or carrying out a spiritual practice, yet there would appear to be a need to fill the vacuum left by organised religion. In late twentieth century British society, the possession of a spiritual practice was an indication of social mobility, an alternative symbolic expression of cultural capital. There was a relationship between class and spirituality, with spiritual practice often being seen as a middle class activity, the privilege of the intellectual and politically correct (Harvey 1997). The perceived fluidity of spirituality could be seen as oppositional and even preferable to having a religion, which, as the etymology of the word 'religion' implies, binds one to a certain structure, group and an immutable set of beliefs.

In a nominally Christian, but presumed predominantly secular, British society, discussion of religion, spirituality and the creative spirit can be seen as somewhat embarrassing and a symptom of bourgeois dilettantism. In intellectual circles and in contemporary Paganism, 'New Agery' is often dismissed as apolitical and lacking in rigour, and the major world religions are considered as unremittingly patriarchal and reactionary in organisation and attitude. Alongside the critiques of organised religion, feminism has accommodated a small but important movement for whom female spirituality, centred on the concept of the goddess or goddesses, is the main inspiration (Robinson 2001:588).

Writing in the 1990s, sociologist Robert Boccock was of the opinion that the world religions could help in overcoming the ideology of consumerism and the socio-

economic practices associated with consumption, before the damage to the planet becomes too great to sustain civilised forms of living.

Religious discourses could...provide many people throughout the world with grounded reasons and motivational patterns for limiting their desires for consumer goods and experiences. They may well be an important resource, allied with environmentalism in developing a different attitude towards the world of nature (seeing it) as something to be cared for rather than ruthlessly exploited (Bocock 1993:119).

It has also been argued that dialogue between primal shamanic societies, Pagans and contemporary postmodern or hyper modern society might lead to radical changes in the consumerism of the west and turn even spirituality into a commodity (Harvey 1997:226).

Baudrillard considered the desire to moderate consumption or to establish a normalising network of needs as 'naïve and absurd moralism', since in his view consumption is an idealist practice; it is ideas that are being consumed, not objects (Baudrillard 1988:25). The practice of spirituality can be seen as a consumption of ideas and world-views oppositional to those of Modernism and rationalist-functionalism. It is tempting to see a relationship between spiritual affiliation and consumerism, especially in the idea of exercising spending power to change things for the better by shopping with more care and discernment, buying ecological and Fair Trade products (Smith 2005:10). There has been a growing concern by consumers with the process of production itself as an attribute of the product or service being purchased, a guarantee that certain production values have been followed. For example, Body Shop products appeal to three key values: non-exploitation of animals in product testing, payment of fair wages with provision of good working conditions in manufacture, and environmental responsibility

through recycled packaging (Szmigin 2003:159). Ethical consumerism is both intercultural and transcultural and has a definite 'feel good' factor to it.

Bourdieu maintained that goods are used symbolically as a means of reproducing the existing social order and establishing class relations. In his view objects function symbolically, as in expressing friendship, and also as dynamic elements of an extended self (Bourdieu 1984). From a spiritual view point one might consume differently as one's personality and belief systems change, and ultimately, from a Zen Buddhist and shamanic perspective, it is argued that one might realise through objects that there is no objective self, no objective reality.

Buddhist teachings, shamanic rituals and simply the process of ageing imply that your personal identity will soon disappear. The process of creating and dropping personal history leads to the discovery that you are neither this, nor that, but the awareness of it all. (Mindel 1993:32)

The erasure of personal history is a shamanic concept (Castaneda 1974:26ff., Rutherford 1996:48) intended to release the practitioner once and for all from the limits imposed by other people's perceptions of his or her character and past actions. In Western society, consumerism is used by the individual to recreate and reinvent oneself on a recurring basis, rather than to arrive at the ultimate freedom of the shaman. My contention is that people in western, urban, rationalist societies still understand, at a subliminal level, the shamanic concepts of 'power' objects and 'transition' objects. Consumers buy designer objects in order to access the creativity and power of the designer. They consume design and designer goods in order to experience a personality or consciousness shift within themselves. Shamanism predates Bourdieu's theories by

millennia in understanding that objects are dynamic and are used to extend the self metaphorically and spiritually.

The conception of the self has been heavily theorised and there is not space in this thesis to examine it other than in passing. The self has been seen as a somewhat amorphous phenomenon with self-identity as the result of a prolonged creation sustained by one's own reflexive actions and across one's own biography (Giddens 1991:52). Many of the choices an individual makes with regard to self-identity are done within a social context. The problem is that increasingly in contemporary society our social lives lack stability and thus things may hold a stability for us that people are no longer able to provide. It is argued that goods may help us cling onto identities which are frail and under threat, and facilitate communication when the ability to communicate with others would appear to have become less active (Szmigin 2003:140,142).

Our desire for consumption is further exacerbated by the fact that in western society we buy most things ready made, from houses to meals, and we actually make very little ourselves. Cultural capital is still gained in contemporary society by being able to afford the products of celebrated designers and craftspeople or, even better, to be able to commission an item from them, so fulfilling the criteria of 'conspicuousness', in that the labour of others is secured for oneself as consumer (Julier 2000:74). People in shamanistic societies consider that the power in an object comes, in the main, from the actual process of making. Objects for ritual use are deemed more effective if made by the practitioner. This idea is also prevalent in witchcraft (Green 2000:65) and Druidry (Restell-Orr 2000:66). This begs the question as to whether we, in contemporary

western society, would be better off spiritually by designing and making more things for ourselves.

The influence of media advertising and current trends and fashions are so strong that our own needs and preferences are suppressed. We have little time or inclination to create anything for ourselves, and loss of confidence in our own abilities to make and do things is also a loss of individual power (Pearson 1989:60).

However, as leading British witchcraft practitioner and writer Marion Green commented, many contemporary pagans prefer consumption to making.

We have our occult needs pandered to, with ready made robes, instant incense and preconsecrated ritual gear of all sorts, as well as books explaining spells in words of one syllable. Some modern covens have forgotten about the actual processes of crafting candles, sewing robes, baking ritual cakes, blending incenses – all this has been set aside in favour of shopping! (Green 2000:65).

It could be argued that there is a meeting point between the use and practice of spirituality to change one's life and the use of design and consumerism to change one's life. Neither is a complete replacement for the other, rather they are complementary expressions of the same drive to understand and improve one's life and circumstances. Reorganising one's personal history, editing and controlling reality are all shamanic and psychological attitudes to living. By changing the image or the personal environment of the participants, television make-over shows are invitations to experiment with personal history as well as to consume anew.

Summary and Conclusion

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the eclecticism and plurality of British society in general, and of the alternative, Pagan and New Age movement and

complementary practices in particular, although seemingly disparate and amorphous elements, effectively constituted a challenge to the Modernist hegemony as presented by the majority of design history writing and criticism. The attitude encapsulated in the spiritual and material practices, including design and consumption, of the British alternative, New Age and complementary movements can be summed up in Robert Venturi's comment on architecture:

I prefer richness of meaning to clarity of meaning: I prefer disorder bursting with vitality to obvious single mindedness: I accept the *non sequitur* and proclaim duality. But architecture founded on complexity and contradiction requires a special kind of commitment to the whole. It has to pursue the elusive unity of inclusion as opposed to the facile unity of exclusion. More is not less (Venturi quoted in Alessi 2002:81).

The idea of synthesising complexity and contradiction by commitment to the whole is a way forward in theorising the design and consumption of alternative, Pagan and New Age groups. The concepts of 'nature', 'Nature' and 'persons' are dealt with differently in spiritual and shamanic traditions such as animism, Heathenry, Druidry, and Wicca than in Modernism and rationalist materialism, and this in turn becomes part of the cultural apparatus of meaning that alternative practitioners bring to design issues.

Insights from the study and practice of shamanism can be used as a methodology for considering how people approach and use designed objects and attach meaning to them. The approach of the Shamanic concept of the object may offer a method by which to understand the designed object, not as an example of 'good' rational design fit for purpose but as something of significance that may be generated by the individual for reasons not necessarily determined by a Modernist 'rationale'. In other words Shamanism may offer a useful methodology with which to approach design but it is

essentially being offered in this thesis as an example of a potential analytical framework.

The presumed difficulty in mapping the alternative, Pagan, New Age and complementary developments that have begun to transform the Modernist hegemony in design and thought can be attributed to the modernist desire for one straight clear line of development and influence that engenders a reluctance to consider a fluid and multi dimensional field or matrix. In theorising alternative, Pagan, New Age and complementary design practices, the design historian's approach should be more than 'doing' postmodernism. This chapter proposes not mere pluralism, but a new theoretical approach of complementarity and an appreciation of the complex interconnections and above all, active relationships between people, objects, design, spirituality and the natural world. Design historians need a new 'grammar of the mind' when investigating alternative, Pagan, New Age, spiritual and holistic design and in this thesis the author has prepared some of the necessary ground work.

CONCLUSION

In investigating the influence of complementary practices and spirituality on British design 1930 to 2005 this thesis has explored issues and approaches that are often overlooked in mainstream design historiographical and critical discourse. The latter, for the most part, is still concerned with the moral and intellectual hegemony of Modernism. The complementary practices and spirituality addressed in this thesis, comprising anti-rational, alternative, Pagan, and New Age approaches to design and material culture, are certainly worthy of scholarly consideration and debate as they have contributed to the design and cultural milieu of Britain in the twentieth century and continue to do so in the early twenty-first century. To ignore this contribution results in an incomplete understanding and appreciation of the diversity of British design and material culture in the period under consideration.

The public in Britain now has a much greater familiarity with mysticism, mind and body therapies and the philosophy of health for the whole person, than was in evidence even fifty years ago. There is also an increasing openness to the introduction and acceptance of an alternative framing of design driven by ethical, ecological and holistic concerns and an awareness of the pressing needs to change attitudes to consumption and to encourage sustainability (Papanek 1995:53). It has taken some time for these holistic frameworks to emerge and make their impact, but they are now entering and impacting on mainstream British design practice and material culture. New directions in design and architecture do not occur accidentally but arise out of real changes in society, cultures and concepts.

Chapter One set out the aims, context and methods of the research, including an explanation of the field work undertaken in the formal and informal interviews.

In Part II Contextualization, Chapter Two argued that the privileging of the Modernist discourse in design history results in an incomplete representation of British design and design practice 1930 – 2005. The predominance of the Modernist discourse in design history writing and criticism was examined and key concepts in its critique were introduced. Although in much design history Modernism is frequently presented as a monolithic entity exemplified by the so-called International Style, it was demonstrated that there were many different forms of Modernism, including an indication of a spiritual aspect. In Britain Modernism received a cool welcome from the general public, although a limited avant-garde of architects and well-to-do private clients enthusiastically embraced it. The predominance of the modernist discourse in design debates has led to the notion of Modernism as an inherently social programme imposed by experts, the heroic exponents of design (Pevsner 1960). Thus Modernism could be seen as a forcing of choice, a tyranny of taste, and on occasion as a ‘religion’ espousing the ideas and preferences of Le Corbusier (Frampton 2001:6).

In design historiography and intellectual debate, the pronouncements of Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe have been treated as truth, not opinion, and any evidence that the so-called founding fathers of the Modern movement were also seen to be open to spiritual ideas has been glossed over or treated as an embarrassing aberration in an otherwise splendidly rational career. Such ‘aberrations’ include Itten’s spiritual approach to teaching and colour theory (Whitford 1984: 51-59), and Le Corbusier’s interest in Alchemy that is considered to have influenced a great deal of his architecture and his development of the Modulor system of proportions (Frampton 2001:203).

Any alternative or oppositional approaches to Modernism in design and design history either have been considered heresy, or ridiculed as lacking in intellect. As art historian Franz Schultze has remarked

Modernism is not for those who like messy lives. What do you do with people who prefer to live messy lives? (Schultze interviewed in *Hidden Hands 3* (1999) Channel 4)

For the most part, design historians have ignored such individuals and concentrated on the designers, products and developments of the Modernist movement that can be mapped in a logical, linear manner, constructed around a narrative of 'progress' and the 'family tree'. These two paradigms of change have always been attractive to art and design historians in that they are contiguous with the development of the particular academic disciplines of art history and design history, and that they are relatively simple to grasp by comparison with a combined and uneven development (such as that of alternative and spiritual design), which may be more realistic but is essentially more diverse and complex, and thus challenging to understanding and systemization.

Chapter Three argued that although the British design establishment was keen to promote Modernist design as a rational approach at the expense of other discourses of design, non-rational and spiritual issues still managed to permeate Modernism and are evidenced in the three key design texts selected for investigation. Functionalist and anti-rationalist approaches to design in Britain 1930 - 1950 and the establishment promulgation of Modernism as 'correct design' suitable for use by all classes of society were discussed, and the common assumption that Modernism has no spiritual reference points was challenged by examining the work of selected British designers and influential design writers and critics from this period, who expressed spiritual inclinations, albeit tangentially. The general reluctance of the British public to embrace Modernism,

particularly in the sphere of domestic design of homes and gardens was attributed to an 'endemic nostalgia' for traditional and vernacular design, and the distrust of new ideas.

Chapter Four argued that despite the rational façade of the Modernist discourse, spiritual influences on design were evidenced in the products and practices of British Modernism 1950 – 1970, and the failure of Modernism in social housing in particular, allowed for other approaches to design which were interested in complementary and spiritual values. Post World War II government attempts to create a British 'modern' style that was practically effective, morally correct and suitable for an industrial society were investigated. The relation of this style to design and spirituality was discussed by reference to selected examples of British architecture from the 1950s and 1960s. The British public's continuing resistance to the acceptance of Modernist design was ignored by the government and local authorities, who imposed the Modernist style as a cheap and efficient method of rapid post war reconstruction for social housing, schools and public buildings. The erosion of the Modernist hegemony from the 1970s onwards, exacerbated by the failure of many post war modernist buildings both technically and socially, was also examined. A style that was meant to be popular ended up despised by the people it was supposed to serve and many architects and designers began to search for viable alternatives to Modernism.

Having provided in Part II a contextualisation by reference to the predominant discourse of Modernism, against which to map the alternative and spiritual design developments, the research moved on in Part III of the thesis to establish a framework for an alternative design history. Modernism was essentially a social utopian programme and likewise the alternative and New Age movement has sought to change the world by emphasising the importance of personal choice. The alternative, Pagan, New Age and complementary

outlook is essentially eclectic, pluralist and egalitarian, resulting in a protean personal and global movement that is difficult to map academically, a feature which goes some way to explain the reluctance of the design history establishment to consider alternative design as a worthy discourse compared with Modernism. To provide the alternative historical framework the following two chapters of the thesis investigated the historical development and variety of complementary practices and spirituality in Britain 1930 - 2005 that have existed parallel to Modernism and have either ignored or challenged its hegemony.

Chapter Five argued that the alternative, Pagan and New Age movement is more than a synthesis of traditional beliefs and practices, and a developing vogue for ethnic imports of various kinds. As related by both commentators and interview subjects in this research, it is an outward expression of an inner conviction regarding one's relationship with nature and a putative higher order, a world view which impacts on lifestyle, consumption and attitude on a daily basis. The ideas underpinning complementary and spiritual discourses need to be made available to design historians to provide a basis for critical evaluation of their influences on design and material culture. By providing an overview of extant alternative lifestyles and Paganism, and the origins of the New Age movement in Britain 1930 - 1960, it was demonstrated that the so called 'alternative scene' in this country has a long and influential history in terms of ideology and ecological concerns, as well as impacting on material and popular culture. Paganism and New Age spirituality with their concern for the correct relationship between humans and the natural environment began to challenge the consensual reality of the Modernist materialist worldview.

Chapter Six argued that the alternative and New Age movement gradually entered mainstream British culture from the 1960s onwards and influenced design, resulting in

the development of a 'spiritual style' which although eclectic and syncretist, maintained its own visual coherence, and can be evidenced in the material culture of the period. The chapter examined influences, including the counter culture and the personal growth movements from the USA and elsewhere, on the British alternatives scene from 1960 to the present day. It was demonstrated that the Pagan revival and the New Age movement and concepts of holism restore a sense of the numinous to human experience, which the majority of interpretations of Modernism and the predominant materialist discourse have tried to discount.

The ineffable must be part of one's life; meaning and significance, no matter how indefinable or subtle, must be actively present in one's experience and expression...The form is irrelevant, the content and attitude crucial. Openness to the experience of soul and spirit is healing, and affirms wholeness of being. (Hoffmann1988:22)

Part IV, concerned with alternative frameworks in design practice, examined how alternative and spiritual influences were evidenced in particular aspects of media, design and material culture available to the majority of individuals in British society in the latter part of the twentieth century and in the beginning of the twenty-first. The alternative and New Age movement is concerned with thinking and choosing for oneself, hence accusations of supermarket or pick-and-mix spirituality. Spirituality, like religion, is always mediated and therefore works within and through particular modes of expression in design and material culture. As members of a generally financially constrained subculture, practitioners of alternative spirituality are less likely to commission design work, therefore the areas selected for investigation of alternative design practice were homes, gardens and the landscape, and health, as these affect everyone to a greater or lesser extent.

Chapter Seven argued that existing theoretical approaches from disciplines closely related to design history can assist in providing a framework for proposing an alternative design history that does not need to map directly onto other histories because its own connections are sufficient. Ideas from spatial syntax, garden design and landscape studies, and evidence based design for healthcare environments were proposed as useful adjuncts to design history and design theory.

Chapter Eight argued that the growing acceptance of alternative and spiritual perspectives and Complementary and Alternative Medicine into mainstream culture was evidenced in the British media. By investigating how the media situated and contextualised the alternative and complementary perspectives, it is possible to map and analyse the influence of these approaches on popular design and material culture. The genre of the make-over show is particularly relevant in this respect.

Chapter Nine argued that the growth of individual expression, the diversified market place, and eclectic markets, in concert with the growth of alternative spiritual philosophies and practices, led to an appropriation of a wide spectrum of influences which synthesise into an alternative discourse which has meaningful consequences for design and is evidenced in the material culture. This was examined in the spheres of domestic, landscape and healthcare environments.

The majority of British people have little choice in how their houses are designed and built, so the influence of alternative and spiritual design is limited to interior design, DIY, furnishings and accessories and to the implementation of spatial organisational systems such as Feng Shui and Vastu Shastra. When individuals do have a choice in the construction of their homes via self-build, more ecologically responsible approaches are

evident (McCloud 1999). Whereas Modernist architecture tries to get away from the earth, exemplified by buildings erected on pilotis, ecological architecture gets close to the earth, as in earth-sheltered houses. This has led ecological designers and architects to speculate that our built environments would look quite different if Le Corbusier had chosen a profession other than architecture, or if Lloyd Wright's style, born of the attitude that design is an organic whole, like a living organism, had become the predominant influence. Then, perhaps, buildings would be integral to their site, integral to their environment and integral to the life of their inhabitants (Pearson 1989:21). The chapter also noted that, in the late twentieth century, there was a shift in the way the British perceived and used their homes. The home is now seen by many as a refuge, spa and sanctuary from the increasingly aggressive demands of daily life, and may be used as locus for ritual, spiritual practice and meditation, in contrast to the expression of these needs in exoteric organised religion and its places of worship.

Philosophical concepts and spiritual approaches relevant to the design of British twentieth century and contemporary gardens, in both the public and private spheres, were examined. In particular the popularity and appropriation of the Zen garden for practical as well as meditative purposes was identified as an important influence. Charles Jencks' *Garden of Cosmic Speculation* was discussed as a major exemplar of the New Age practice of using gardens and garden design as a means of exploring the relationship between the individual, nature and contemporary scientific thinking and other ideologies.

Working with scientists, gardeners, craftsmen and friends we have designed elements that celebrate the discoveries of our time - such as DNA - while also questioning the reigning metaphors derived from them such as the selfish gene. A garden should not only present the new world view but also heighten our relationship to it through the senses (Jencks 2003:5).

The ecological and political aspects of organic gardening and deep green systems such as Permaculture design have led to changes in consumption and in general attitudes to the natural world and the environment. The practice of Pagan and New Age spiritualities has restored a ritual use to the landscape in the celebration of the annual cycle of pagan festivals and individual rites of passage such as weddings and funerals.

A consideration of the impact of complementary therapy on popular design and material culture demonstrated how its insights share common ground with evidence based design in the design of therapeutic environments.

Each of the three design frameworks considered in Chapter Nine has emphasised the importance of relationship and the idea that designed objects should be based more on real requirements, both tangible and intangible, which are more meaningful than an arbitrary, invented style. Ecological and holistic issues were also seen to be major concerns for both designers and consumers but the lack of any spiritual basis for design renders ethical and environmental considerations mere well intentioned after thoughts.

I firmly believe it is the intent of the designer as well as the intended use of the designed object that can yield spiritual value (Papanek 1995:53).

Building on the research investigating the alternative frameworks for design history and design practice, Chapter Ten argued that a synthesis of theoretical approaches to complementary practices and spirituality in design and material culture, by referencing Postmodern theory and other critical discourses, provides a potential framework for elucidating complementary and spiritually influenced design practices and products. The problems of applying Postmodern theory to the issues under consideration suggested insights from shamanistic attitudes to objects and material culture as a useful schema to

support theorising of alternative, Pagan and New Age encounters with design practice and consumption. Putative links between design, shamanism and consumption were also considered, with the benefits of a return to the craft aesthetic in personal life, whenever possible, as one way of reducing consumption detrimental to the ecological whole. Pagan and New Age approaches to the spiritual life extend beyond the familiar social context to the idea of the mythic self and towards the notion that every day life can encompass mythic and sacred realities (Drury 2004) (Moore 1996). This transpersonal approach may also provide a solution to the fragmentation of the individual and society, envisaged in Post-modern theory (Jameson 1984), and incorporate a will to meaning in contemporary society, as proposed by Gablick (1995).

As well as a political impact via ecology and personal development, the alternative, Pagan, and New Age movement demands a fundamental change in attitude in all aspects of contemporary life, including those of design and consumption by calling for a re-sacralization of the world (Harvey 1997). Contemporary design is increasingly reflecting these concerns in two main areas. Ecological design processes and products can address the green audit and encourage reduction, reuse and recycling in relation to consumption. Design based on spiritual principles can tend to our mythic needs in the things we surround ourselves with in everyday life. Objects can and do focus our spirituality (Moore 1992) and designers and consumers alike would benefit by addressing the possibilities this insight can bring. As philosopher A.C. Grayling has remarked we should

...accept the ambiguities, the openendedness of things, their givenness, their stubbornness (Grayling 2004:53).

British design history pertaining to the twentieth century needs reconsidering to include the complementary practices and spiritual values, otherwise the picture is at best

incomplete and at worst misleading. Modernism may have been the predominant discourse in intellectual circles but the majority of British popular design and material culture has ignored it. The functional aesthetic is just a part of design, not the whole, and Modernism is not completely rational and objective in its approach to design *per se*. Moreover, it is possible to have an interest in Modernism and the alternative paradigms of design at the same time and to use elements from each to inform scholarly and professional practices. Modernism may seek to exclude the alternatives but alternative design practices can and do appropriate and subvert Modernism. Materiality and spirituality are a continuum rather than a polarity and this can inform design in relation to process, practice and product.

This thesis is asking for a re-evaluation of what academia understands by design and design history, and the research has proposed approaches and frameworks to enable design historians to construct a new 'grammar of the mind'. The word 'design' is often used as though synonymous with product and industrial design as distinct from architecture, craft, anonymous and vernacular design etc., but these activities are in essence all the same thing, an attempt to render ideas and ideologies into usable, apprehensible, plastic form. Design can also be considered as the creation of systems, such as Permaculture, and the modification and transformation of lifestyles by practices and consumption. In the late twentieth century, individuals have designed their own lives and lifestyles via consumer choice, and this has extended to all manifestations of design not just rationalist-functionalism. Complementary and spiritual ideas and practices are now part of the mainstream and should be used to widen the debates in design history and theory. By considering different methods and aims within the practice of design, and wider concerns about the consumer's relation to design and consumption a more complete picture of British design 1930 - 2005 can be established.

Homes, gardens and the landscape and healthcare affect everyone. Their modification is a way for less affluent subcultures such as the alternative and New Age movements to assert themselves in the context of design and material culture. This is not just passive consumption or anti-consumption but a way of participating in design. This democratisation of design leads to problems in establishing boundaries for academic analysis, but just because complementary and spiritual practices in relation to design cannot be reduced to a logical and strictly chronological progression of ideas and products, this does not mean that they are not worthy of serious consideration in design discourse. The concept of a matrix of interdependent ideas and expressions and the synthesising approach of 'both...and' rather than 'either...or' is more helpful in this instance rather than that of a distinct linear mapping of developments.

The Contribution to Knowledge

The research has investigated a previously unexamined and unpublished area of design history in order to provide knowledge of the matrix of complementary and spiritual practices in Britain and in British design practice 1930 – 2005, and to suggest potential ways that academics might navigate that landscape.

The thesis has synthesised existing research with new information to produce a framework for an alternative British design history which contextualises complementary practices and spirituality in design in Britain 1930 to 2005 in relation to existing and accepted discourses in design history. The research has also provided a new mapping of the philosophies, texts and institutions of the alternative, Pagan and New Age movements to enable design historians to build on the work in this thesis.

No previous researcher in the disciplines of design history or pagan studies has carried out field work investigating how practitioners of contemporary alternative, Pagan and New Age spirituality regard their relationship with design and designed objects, and how their spirituality affects their consumption and reception of design. The interviews evidenced the attitudes to, and practice of, design and consumption by a community of practice in the British alternative spiritual milieu.

The research, by its cross disciplinary nature, has linked for the first time the disciplines of design history and pagan studies and adds to the contribution to knowledge in both areas.

The Limitations of the Research

The research only considers British design of the period in detail and concentrates the investigation on the British alternatives scene. There has not been space to consider craft and craft-based design or mainstream industrial design and related objects. The interviews illustrate alternative, Pagan, New Age attitudes and practices in a particular geographical area.

Recommendations for Future Research

In my own post-doctoral research I wish to do the following. In relation to the design history component of the thesis I would like to produce detailed matrix maps of alternative New Age, Pagan and spiritual design as a resource for use by other researchers and students. In order to relate the present research to an international context I intend to investigate the Italian slow design movement and its practices, processes and products in relation to spirituality. In order to offer practical insights to be used by designers, I hope to undertake collaborative work with design practitioners on how implications of the

Pagan and New Age quest for located spiritual meaning can be applied to design processes and products.

The research has generated a good deal of interest from Religious Studies and Pagan Studies academics with regard to how contemporary neo-pagans use design, and I am currently discussing a collaborative project with social ethnographer and Pagan Studies researcher Dr. Jenny Blain, who has already cited the research presented in this thesis in her book, Blain, J., and Wallis, R. J. (2007) *Sacred Sites, Contested Rites/Rights: Pagan Engagements with Archaeological Monuments* Eastbourne, Sussex Academic Press. Consideration of research into the anthropology of consciousness (R. J. Wallis 2003) would enable Chapter Ten on shamanism and conceptions of the object to be extended further and result in published papers.

Research which could be undertaken by others outside my academic specialism could include an investigation of the influence of spirituality in craft and mainstream industrial design, and a combined multi-sited ethnography and multi-sited design history could be developed with a view to enabling product designers to apply alternative and spiritual ideas to products and processes, as there is scope for this interdisciplinary work.

As the sociology of consumption in alternative and New Age practices goes beyond issues of taste, utility, symbolism and fetishism, sociologists may build on the material in this thesis to provide new paradigms of attitudes to consumption.

The influence of complementary practices and spirituality on British design 1930 to 2005 can be considered to have enabled a more holistic approach to design in its processes, practices and reception. I would like the ideas, definitions and exemplars presented and

explored in this thesis to be used as a resource by others who wish to widen design history debates. This thesis provides the necessary ground work for further research by inmapping some of the ideologies, institutions and practices of discourses alternative or complementary to the predominant discourse of Modernism prevalent in much design history writing. The thesis proposes not mere pluralism but a theoretical approach of complementarity and an appreciation of the complex interconnections and active relationships between people, objects, design, spirituality and the natural world, and encourages design historians to develop a new 'grammar of the mind' based upon the research here presented.

CHRONOLOGY

Introduction and rationale for the chronology

The rationale for the selection of events represented in the chronology is to provide a more complete picture of design activity in Britain 1930 –2005 and its influences than that provided in the majority of design history texts which concentrate almost solely on Modernism and its ideology and products.

The chronology could be considered symptomatic of the main problem investigated in the thesis itself in that the empirical material is a fair collection of data in support of the argument that histories of the period have generally excluded ideas and forms of design that have not been sanctioned by the dominant Modernist discourse, but its overall coherence is difficult to organise.

The placing of these wide-ranging and interlinked alternatives into an overall structure, with some kind of explanation and broad indications of categories or themes that can be used to do so, is problematic. The difficulties of doing so are the very reasons why it is not at all easy to challenge a representation of Modernism that has been constructed around a narrative of ‘progress’ and the family tree. These two paradigms of change have always been attractive to art and design historians because they are as old as the discipline of art and design history itself, and are relatively simple to grasp by comparison with an ‘uneven development’ which may be more realistic but is essentially more diverse and complicated to understand.

The purpose of the chronology is to incorporate particular instances of the alternative influences on British design in the period under consideration with bench marks of Modernism, including important publications and exhibitions, generally familiar to design historians. The chronology highlights the very themes that have been identified

in this thesis as characteristic concerns of 'alternative' design influences of the period: the influence of New Age ideas and ecological concerns; new concepts of living and the home; gardens, spirituality and relationships with Nature and the landscape; the influence of alternative concepts of health and medicine; and the growing influence of 'ethnic' design in an increasingly post-colonial and multi-cultural society.

These dimensions contain the most important characteristics of design alternatives to the Modernist tradition in that they are areas of design readily available to and employable by the vast majority of people in daily life. Furthermore design practice in these areas does not necessarily require high financial expenditure and is thus open to individuals and groups who might otherwise be excluded from Modernist design discourses.

1930

Society of Industrial Artists founded.

Architects including Rietveld, Wright and Aalto began to produce a form of modernism considered more in keeping with ecological principles than the International Style.

Memorandum on State-aided Art Education published by the Industrial Art Committee of the Federation for British Industry, recommends that regional colleges should be established and the Royal College of Art be reorganised. Design education is brought under further government control and Modernism becomes the dominant discourse.

Marjory Allen designs roof garden for Selfridges, Oxford Street.

The National Association of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners founded.

Interest in Japanese garden design increases, in some measure influenced by the collaboration of potters Shoji Hamada and Bernard Leach at St.Ives in the 1920s.

Spielplatz, St. Alban's, Herts. set up as Britain's first naturist community with full-time residents.

1931

Board of Trade appointed Committee on Art and Industry, under Lord Gorrell, to look into Design Education.

Registration of Architects Act.

BBC House designed by George Val Meyer and Eric Gill exemplifies the cautious British approach to Modernist architecture and its prohibition of decoration.

Le Corbusier's icon of Modernist architecture the *Villa Savoye* completed.

Hilda Lyle edited and published Maud Grieve's *A Modern Herbal*, which showed the full extent to which traditional plant lore had been investigated and confirmed by modern science.

Theosophist Alice Bailey, founder of the Arcane School announced that the Age of Aquarius had begun, and so influenced the various alternative spiritual movements in Britain in contemplating the idea of the New Age and its concomitant changes for humanity.

1932

MOMA, New York, hosts the influential *Modern Architecture International Exhibition*.

Association of Artists in Commerce founded.

Raymond McGrath, Wells Coates and Serge Chermayeff design interiors for the new BBC House.

Report on Art and Education, in particular industrial art exhibitions, published by the Gorrell committee.

Death of Gertrude Jekyll, the most influential English garden designer of the early twentieth century.

1933

British Industrial Art exhibition held at Dorland Hall in collaboration with DIA, in conjunction with DIA exhibitions of model homes held in Manchester and Welwyn Garden City and the BBC broadcast series of radio talks *Design in Modern Life*.

Interior designer Syrie Maugham produces monochrome interiors based on a fusion of Modernism and pared-down Art Deco for an affluent British and American clientele.

Painter and designer Martin Battersby revives the art of the trompe l'oeil mural in British interiors.

John Betjeman's *Ghastly Good Taste* exemplifies the increasing popular derision of Modernist design and architecture.

1934

MOMA, New York exhibition *Machine Art* influences British design.

Council for Art and Industry set up by Board of Trade, with Frank Pick as Chairman, to encourage good design, 'especially in relation to manufacturers' and publishes *Design and the Designer in Industry*.

Lewis Mumford's *Technics and Civilization* challenged current industrial methods without advocating a nostalgic return to primitive technology or handicraft production.

John Gloag's books *Design and Modern Life* and *Industrial Art Explained* introduced Modernist design to the general reader.

Geoffrey Home *Industrial Design and the Future*.

Herbert Read *Design and Industry*.

Painter Mary Adshead produces decorative murals in a 'romantic' modernist style for private and public commissions including theatres, department stores, schools and international exhibitions.

Occultist Dion Fortune's book *Glastonbury, Avalon of the Heart* increases interest in Glastonbury, Somerset, as a centre of New Age activity.

1935

25 February Reginald Blomfield debates issues of Modernism versus Traditionalism in design with Eric Newton in a BBC radio broadcast *This Modernismus*.

CAI publishes *Education for the Consumer*.

'Ecosystem' concept devised by English botanist Arthur Tansley.

Exhibition of British Art in Industry, joint R.A. and R.S.A., held at the Royal Academy, results in R.S.A. instituting the Royal Designers in Industry.

Daily Express Home of Today exhibition.

Walter Gropius *New Architecture and the Bauhaus*.

J.M.Richards *Towards a Rational Aesthetic*.

John de la Valette *The Conquest of Ugliness*.

Lubetkin's *Penguin Pool* for Regents Park Zoo, London. Also work for Dudley and Whipsnade Zoos.

Joseph Emberton designed *Simpsons* of Picadilly.

1935 – 1936 *Peter Jones* department store, Sloane Square, architect William Crabtree of Slater and Moberley.

1936

National Register of Industrial Artists and Designers instituted.

RIBA *The Exhibition of Everyday Things* sought to educate the working class consumer in accepting Modernist design in the home and everyday life.

The De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill, by architects Erich Mendelsohn and Serge Chermayeff is described by Anthony Bertram as a building true to itself as well as the tenets of International Modernism.

Lubetkin's *Elephant House*, Whipsnade Zoo.

Nikolaus Pevsner's hugely influential book *Pioneers of the Modern Movement* published and subsequently becomes a key text in design history and historiography.

Ladbroke Grove, London, working class housing scheme by Atkinson, James and Wirryns a major exemplar of the application of Modernist architecture to a public social housing scheme.

Gertrude Jekyll's collected articles published as *A Gardener's Testament*.

The peak of the *Mazdaznan* movement with 52 centres mainly in the north of England brings New Age ideas to a middle and working class audience.

Dane Rudhyar's *The Astrology of Personality* becomes a key text of humanistic and New Age astrology, which subsequently influences holistic design.

1937

The Pick Report on Design.

National Register of Industrial Art Designers set up.

Pevsner *An Enquiry into Industrial Art in England*.

Anthony Bertram's series of 12 BBC radio talks *Design in Everyday Things* introduces the notion of correct (i.e. Modernist) design to the general listener. Bertram cites the Cardonan Colliery Bath House, Lanarkshire, as an exemplar of good spiritual design.

CoAI Building Centre exhibition *The Working Class House* promoted nationalist, modernist design for the domestic environment and HMSO published the accompanying catalogue *The Working Class Home; its furnishings and equipment*.

Central School of Art and Design opens experimental workshop in Industrial Design.

Derry and Tom's department store, Kensington, opens its roof garden, designed by Ralph Hancock.

MARS group exhibition of Modern architecture at Burlington Galleries, London, was influential in promoting Modernist ideals to a wider audience.

The interior design partnership of Sybil Colefax and John Fowler established the Country House Look which dominated British and American interiors for the remainder of the century. John Fowler is appointed as the National Trust's advisor on decoration.

1938

MOMA, New York exhibition Bauhaus 1919-1928 introduces the work of the influential German design school to an international audience.

Anthony Bertram's *Design* reproduces his radio talks of 1938 in book format for the general reader.

Serge Chermayeff's Modernist house *Bentley Wood*, Halland, Sussex is considered an icon of the unified concept of house and garden design due to his collaboration with landscape architect Christopher Tunnard.

Tunnard's book *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* is one of the few British gardening publications to promote Modernist garden design.

S. Tait produces government approved modernist designs for the Glasgow *British Empire Exhibition*.

The Finsbury Health Centre, London by architect Berthold Lubetkin epitomises the British modernist approach to the design of health care environments.

1939

The Cultivation of Land Order instigates the ploughing of pasture and parks and recreation grounds for cereal and vegetable production as part of the war effort.

The League of Naturism, Health and Beauty claims 160,000 members.

1940

J.M.Richards' *An Introduction to Modern Architecture* is an apologia for Modernism, directed at 'the man in the street'.

British witches and occultists carry out a psychic war against the Germans and MI5 keeps Nazi occultists under surveillance.

1941

The Vegetable Drugs Committee set up to counter the acute lack of medicinal herbs in Britain and to reduce reliance on imported herbs and medicines in wartime.

The Government's *Dig for Victory* Campaign launched to encourage fruit and vegetable growing for home consumption as part of the war effort.

Farming is declared a reserved occupation and many conscientious objectors and communarians elect to work on the land. *The Peace Pledge News* publishes a monthly supplement dedicated to life in alternative communities.

1941 – 1953 The Board of Trade introduces the Utility Scheme, a series of standards and specifications to cope with wartime shortages. Utility design is a compromise between Modernism and traditional British craft design forms.

Masanobu Fukuoka develops 'do-nothing farming', the precursor of alternative agriculture no-dig systems and Permaculture.

1942

The exhibition of *Modern British Crafts*, in New York presents design as part of the war effort and integral to British morale.

Founding of the Colour, Design and Style Centre by Raymond Streat.

1943

R.S.A. Education Committee report on *Art and Design in the Post War System*.

E. Balfour's *The Living Soil* published which influences the British organic movement.

1944

Council of Industrial Design appointed by the Board of Trade.

The 1944 Education Act reforms Britain's education system and impacts on design education' privileging Modernism.

C.G.Jung's influential *Psychology and Alchemy* published. His work influences New Age thought and spirituality, including attitudes to design. Le Corbusier utilises some of the book's concepts in his later work.

John Gloag's *The Englishman's Castle* champions traditional British design values as part of wartime morale.

Psychic News claims there are 1000 Spiritualist Churches and 1million spiritualists in Britain.

The White Eagle Lodge (founded 1936) displays *Cross of Light* posters all over London during the Blitz.

British gardeners produce between two and three million tons of food this year as part of the war effort.

1946

Britain Can Make It Exhibition at V&A.

CoID publishes Robin Darwin's *The Training of the Industrial Designer*.

The Ministry of Education reorganises the art and design examination system, and introduces the National Diploma in Design.

The Soil Association is formed to promote organic gardening and farming.

1947

Introduction of The Town and Country Planning Act to control and plan building and land use in advance in the public interest. Harlow New Town by F.Gibberd and Hatfield New Town by L.Brett are early examples of design carried out in accordance with the act.

Gardener's Question Time broadcast on BBC Radio Home Service.

John Gloag *The English Tradition in Design* published as an attempt to reconcile modernism and tradition in British design.

1948

Hidcote Manor Garden, Glouc., is the first garden to be taken over by the National Trust.

The Faculty of Astrological Studies is founded as a teaching and examining body to safeguard standards of astrological education and practice in Britain, with Charles E.O.Carter as its first principal. Its members include those interested in design based on astrological colour and spatial attributions.

1950

1950-1954 Alison and Peter Smithson produce and build their award –winning and controversial design for Hunstanton Secondary Modern School

1951

The Festival of Britain presents a British Modernist style as the way forward in British design

Repeal of the Witchcraft Act in England and Wales allows a more open practice of various paganisms and modes of spiritual and alternative healing.

1954

Gerald Gardner publishes *Witchcraft Today*, which emphasises the practice of spirituality in relation to the natural world and influences the development of modern witchcraft, known as Wicca.

Laurence Hills founds the Henry Doubleday Research Association (HDRA) to carry out experimentation in organic gardening methods and techniques.

1955

National Federation of Spiritual Healers founded and promotes modalities of holistic healing to a wider audience.

1956

Geoffrey Jellicoe designs a roof garden for Harvey's department store, Guildford, based on images of the earth seen from space.

1957

Gaston Bachelard's *La poetique de l'espace* is published. His ideas influence New Age and alternative design principles in relation to the home.

Barry Bucknell becomes the first television DIY presenter in the BBC *About the House* series.

1958

The Smithsons' *Solar Pavilion* combines their 'as found' theory of architecture with spiritual qualities in design.

The Astrological Society of Great Britain is founded at 7.22 p.m. on 21 June, the Summer Solstice, so providing a suitable natal chart for the society's intended educational activities, including a consideration of astrological principles in design.

Barry Bucknell's *Do It Yourself* television series attracts 7 million viewers and spawns a national obsession.

Sylvia Crowe's *Garden Design* evolves a modernist British approach to garden design that incorporates the use of natural landscape shapes.

Margery Allen and Susan Jellicoe's book *The New Small Garden* presents modernist design for the suburban garden.

1959

Gerald Gardner's book *The Meaning of Witchcraft* caters to the expanding serious interest in witchcraft and its practices.

1960

Pevsner's (1936) *Pioneers of the Modern Movement* reprinted as *Pioneers of Modern Design: from Morris to Gropius*.

Miles Hadfield's *Gardening in Britain* draws interest to garden history, a subject increasing in stature over the next four decades.

Designer David Hicks creates contemporary interiors as an alternative to the various predominant historical styles.

Architect Walter Segal develops a self-build post and beam system for affordable and ecological housing.

1961

Lewis Womersley's *Park Hill Flats*, Sheffield, utilises the concept of 'streets in the sky' social housing, to great critical acclaim.

David Canter founded *Cranks Restaurant*, Covent Garden, London, which introduced vegetarian, wholefood cookery to a wider audience and by its interior design provided an enduring visual cliché of alternative and healthfood environments.

1962

Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* alerted the world to the dangers of pollution and the harmful effects of DDT and other pesticides on wild life and the environment and encourages environmental design strategies.

Dorothy McClean and Peter and Eileen Caddy under the slogan 'one garden can save a world' set up the Findhorn Community at Forres in Scotland.

Garden centres arrive in Britain from USA, the first being Waterer's at Bagshot and Twyford, and Bygraves at St.Albans. Europe's largest supermarket FineFare at Tolworth, Surrey, opened and included a garden centre, so setting a trend for other retailers.

Barry Bucknell's television series *Bucknell's House* involves the makeover of a Victorian terraced house into a contemporary Modernist home.

1964

Geoffrey Jellicoe's *Kennedy Memorial Garden*, Runnymede, epitomises the understated nature of British modern garden design.

1965

Intermediate Technology Development Group founded – tools and equipment to be small, simple, capital saving and non-violent.

The Garden History Society founded

1966

Resurgence magazine founded, under the editorship of Satish Kumar, and popularises the concept of holism in relation to health, ecology, politics and design.

The national obsession with DIY is further increased by Barry Bucknell's *The ABC of Do-It-Yourself* series for ABC TV.

1967

The Roman Catholic Cathedral of Christ the King, Liverpool, by F.Gibberd and Partners presents Modernism as an appropriate style for expressing contemporary Christian spirituality.

The Bridgeway Hall Methodist Church, Nottingham, by architect Terry Bestwick exemplifies the conflation of Modernism and spirituality and social outreach requirements in 1960s church design.

The Beatles declare themselves devotees of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi thus encouraging many young people to explore Hinduism for themselves and also causing Indian design, culture and religious iconography to become fashionable.

1st July sees colour television broadcasting in Britain for the first time. This increases the popularity of gardening programmes such as *Gardener's World* now the plant varieties can be seen in colour

The November 'Housing and the Environment' special edition of *Architectural Review* criticised modernist architecture for failing technically and socially.

1968

The collapse of the *Ronan Point* tower block, London, after a gas explosion, provokes further public condemnation of modernist architecture.

1969

John Brookes' influential garden design book *The Room Outside* published, which revolutionised the way the British used the garden.

The Hare Krishna movement gains numerous British devotees and is seen protelysing in major towns and cities.

1970

The Smithsons present a summation of their architectural theories and work from 1952 to 1970 in their book *Ordinariness and Light*.

Scott and Helen Nearing's best selling book *Living the Good Life* becomes the classic text on self-sufficiency in Britain and the USA.

Renewed interest in Zen garden design amongst British gardeners.

The Pagan Federation, an umbrella organization for Britain's pagans is founded.

1971

Alexander Pike's *Autonomous House* built at Cambridge.

1972

Victor Papanek's seminal book on ethical and ecological design *Design for the Real World* published.

The Findhorn Foundation Eco-Village is created from the Findhorn Community and becomes the largest holistic community in the world.

1973

The Energy Crisis caused a rethinking of attitudes to consumption and the environment, and encouraged the wider use of sustainable design.

1974

Robert M. Prisig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* explores the contrasts between technical and creative thinking and is used as a text in British design education.

E. F. Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* is published, encouraging the philosophy of self-sufficiency.

W. R. Lethaby's (1891) *Architecture, Mysticism and Myth* reprinted by the Architectural Press.

Fisons launched the *Grow Bag*, the most famous, but not the first, of the peat bag systems for growing plants, which encouraged many to try gardening in limited spaces such as the balconies of high-rise flats.

1975

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) came into force, though it was not ratified by the United Kingdom until 1976. CITES changed attitudes and practices in many areas, especially horticulture and garden design.

The self-sufficiency situation comedy *The Good Life* first broadcast by BBC television. Many individuals were inspired to attempt some measure of self-sufficient living.

Centre for Alternative Technology, Machynlleth, Wales founded by Gerard Morgan-Grenville – popularised 'soft' energy and recycling systems.

Fritjof Capra's best-selling book *The Tao of Physics* explores the connections between Eastern mysticism and modern physics and becomes a seminal text of the New Age movement.

P. Tompkins and C. Bird publish their findings on consciousness in plants in *The Secret Life of Plants*, which causes much rethinking about mankind's attitudes to and use of plants and the nature of consciousness in general.

Theo Gimbel founded the Hygeia Studios for research into colour therapy and psychology. His work has greatly influenced alternative and New Age design in relation to interiors and healing environments.

1976

The International Council for Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) conference *Design for Need*, held in London, covered alternative technology, design for the Third World, and environmental issues.

Founding of the Tradescant Trust by Rosemary and John Nicholson who campaigned to turn St Mary-at-Lambeth, London, burial place of plant collectors the Tradescants, into the Museum of Garden History.

Stephen Skinner claimed his *The Living Earth Manual of Feng Shui* was the first British book on the topic in the twentieth century.

1977

The publication of Christopher Alexander's book *A Pattern Language* influences the work of alternative and ecological designers.

The Design History Society founded.

Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids refounded and its campaign for ecological responsibility and the Sacred Grove Planting programme are inaugurated, reflecting contemporary attitudes to spirituality in relation to design and the landscape.

Academic interest in ecology increases. D. Worster's *Nature's Economy; A History of Ecological Ideas* published.

The National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens is founded.

Death of John Fowler. David Mlinaric succeeds him as the National Trust's advisor on decoration.

1978

Bill Mollinson and David Holmgren invent Permaculture (Permanent Agriculture), the development of self-sustaining systems for food, water and energy in the landscape.

1979

James Lovelock's hugely influential book *Gaia: A New Look at Life* on Earth is published to widespread popular interest, and becomes a major factor in New Age and ecological thinking.

Christopher Alexander's book *Timeless Ways of Building* examines traditional building practices world wide as a preferable alternative to modernism.

Gardener's World first broadcast on BBC television.

The first conference on astrological research is held at London University's Institute of Psychiatry, evidencing increasing academic interest in astrology as a discipline in its own right.

1980

The Vatican declares St. Francis of Assisi to be the patron saint of ecologists.

NSALG petition Secretary of State for the Environment, Michael Heseltine regarding the level of provision for allotments.

Pureland Buddhist Meditation Garden, North Clifden, Notts., begun.

1981

Marilyn Ferguson's book *The Aquarian Conspiracy: Personal and Social Transformation in the 1980s* introduces New Age ideas to a wider audience.

The Society of Garden Designers founded.

1982

Permaculture design comes to Britain with the first teaching of the Permaculture Design Course at Blencarn in the Lake District. The British Permaculture Association is founded.

1983

Arthur and Cynthia Koestler endow a Chair of Parapsychology at Edinburgh University.

The British Earth Sheltering Association is set up to encourage the design and construction of earth sheltered building.

David Hoffman's *The Holistic Herbal* is published and becomes a major text for complementary medical therapists.

1985

Tibet Foundation is set up in London to further the understanding of Tibetan Buddhism and culture and introduces Tibetan spiritual practices and medicine to a wider British audience. Tibetan Buddhism becomes the fastest growing religious group in Britain by the late 1980s.

1986

DDT banned in Britain, causing many to reconsider farming and horticultural methods and adopt an organic approach.

HDRA opened the National Centre for Organic Gardening at Ryton on Dunsmore, near Coventry.

Thomas Lin develops the Black Hat Sect Tantric Buddhist School of Feng Shui in order to teach a simplified version of classical Chinese geomantic practices to a western audience in Britain and the USA.

1987

Worldwide celebrations for the Harmonic Convergence of 16/17th August. The deep ecology movement was concerned with encouraging changes of a personal direction, which involved a reduction in consumption

1988

J.Lovelock's *Ages of Gaia* further expounds his theory of the Earth as a living and intelligent system, which influences the further growth of sustainable design.

Architects for Peace encourage proposals for peace gardens and parks in Britain to increase understanding of the personal spirit and differing cultures.

1989

David Pearson's *The Natural House Book* brings ecological concerns to the home environment by giving practical advice on holistic design for the general reader.

The Ecological Design Association is formed to promote green design and provide a register of all designers working in eco-design in Britain. The EDA is officially launched in 1991.

J. McCormick *The Global Environmental Movement: Reclaiming Paradise* published.

Charles Jencks' *Garden of Cosmic Speculation* begun.

1990

Philippe Starck's *Juicy Salif Lemon Squeezer* produced by Alessi exemplifies an iconic product design by a celebrity designer and it becomes the company's 'most famous mystery object'.

Graham Bell's *The Permaculture Garden* is the first book on Permaculture design for the British climate.

1991

The Ecological Design Association UK launched in February.

The BBC publishes monthly gardening magazine *Gardener's World*.

Film maker Derek Jarman publishes *Modern Nature* about his garden at Prospect Cottage and coming to terms with dying from AIDS. It was acclaimed as one of the most poignant gardening diaries ever written, and turned his garden into a focus for contemporary pilgrimage.

1992

Rio Earth Summit – Agenda 21 commitment to sustainable development to which Great Britain is a signatory, giving further impetus to ecological design initiatives.

The Holistic Design Institute is founded by colour therapist Suzy Chiazzari.

1993

New edition of Beth Chatto's book *The Dry Garden* (1978) introduces the gravel garden to a wider British public aware of the implications of climate change after several years of low rainfall.

The first publication of *The Natural Death Handbook* advocates green and woodland burials as ecological alternatives to current funerary practices.

1996

1996-2004 the BBC television series *Changing Rooms* revamps the make-over programme format and incorporates alternative and New Age ideas into popular interior design.

The first of the Maggie's Centres for non-clinical support of cancer patients and their families opens in Edinburgh, designed by Richard Murphy. Conceived by Charles Jencks as a memorial to his wife Maggie Keswick, there are now 12 other centres across Britain. They combine the best of modernist and holistic therapeutical design by internationally known architects.

1997

Jonathan M. Woodham's *Twentieth Century Design* published. His work perpetuates the Modernist hegemony in design history and omits alternative approaches and theories in the design of the period.

The garden makeover show becomes a staple of television schedules as the BBC launches *Ground Force*, presented by Alan Titchmarsh. Sales of decking increase dramatically as the British public adopt this feature of the programme's typical style.

1998

February *Feng Shui for Modern Living*, published in London, was the first edition of a regularly printed monthly magazine on Feng Shui any where in the world.

Charles Jencks' *Garden of Cosmic Speculation* opened to the public on specific days.

RHS Wisley's *Garden of the Senses* opened.

The Ayurvedic spatial system of Vastu Shastra becomes increasingly popular in New Age design circles.

1999

The Glasgow Homoeopathic Hospital, an exemplar of holistic purpose built design for health, opens in January.

Opening of the Earth Centre, Doncaster, which attempts to increase awareness of environmental problems and the need for sustainable design.

Hugh Fearnley-Wittingstall's Channel 4 television series *River Cottage* updates ideas on self-sufficiency.

May. Tibetan Peace Garden (Samten Kyil) opened by the Dalai Lama in the grounds of the Imperial War Museum, London. Includes sculptures by Hamish Horsley and Awang Dorjee.

The Millennium Seed bank set up at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Wakehurst Place to safeguard the existence of rare plants and varieties.

Designer Kevin McCloud presents *Grand Designs* series for Channel 4 television which promotes self-build and a fusion of contemporary modernism and alternative and ecological design.

2000

Alessi produce a gold-plated limited edition of Starck's *Juicy Salif Lemon Squeezer* to celebrate the millennium and emphasise to consumers that it is only for ornamental purposes not practical use.

The Eden Project, Cornwall, by architect Nicholas Grimshaw , creates a contemporary Modernist ecological design style.

The National Botanic Garden of Wales, at Middleton Hall, Camarthenshire, opened. Architect Norman Foster claimed at the opening ceremony that 'The Midwife of Modernism was Botany'.

Public relations entrepreneur and meditator Lynne Franks launches the Sustainable Enterprise and Empowerment Dynamics (SEED) programme to help women in enterprise and publishes *The SEED Hand book: the Feminine way to Create Business* on International Women's Day, 8 March 2000.

2001

The Garden Design Journal is launched by the Society of Garden Designers for those with a serious interest in garden and landscape design.

2002

The number of households in Britain overtook the number of available homes for the first time since records began.

Designer Linda Barker presents the BBC television series *Heaven and Earth: Divine Designs* examining how religion and spirituality impact on domestic design.

2003

Channel 5 television broadcasts *Housebusters*, promoted as the alternative make-over show, in which homeowners consult a variety of New Age and holistic experts in order to solve their domestic and personal problems by the use of design.

2004

The Earth Centre, Doncaster closes, because of low visitor attendance.

October. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 comes into force, making disabled access to all public places and commercial premises mandatory.

2005

Pevsner's *Pioneers of Modern Design* reprinted by Yale University Press in a new 'coffee table' format with additional photographic illustrations confirms the contemporary persistence of the Modernist discourse in design history publishing.

Fifty percent of British women now live on their own and are major consumers of interior design products, and are generally more open to alternative design influences than their male counterparts.

Evelina Children's Hospital at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital, London, designed according to holistic design principles, opens.

Earthship Brighton, a low carbon solar home and community centre opens to the public. The first major earthship to be built in Europe, it is created using waste car tyres and provides a new type of sustainable building.

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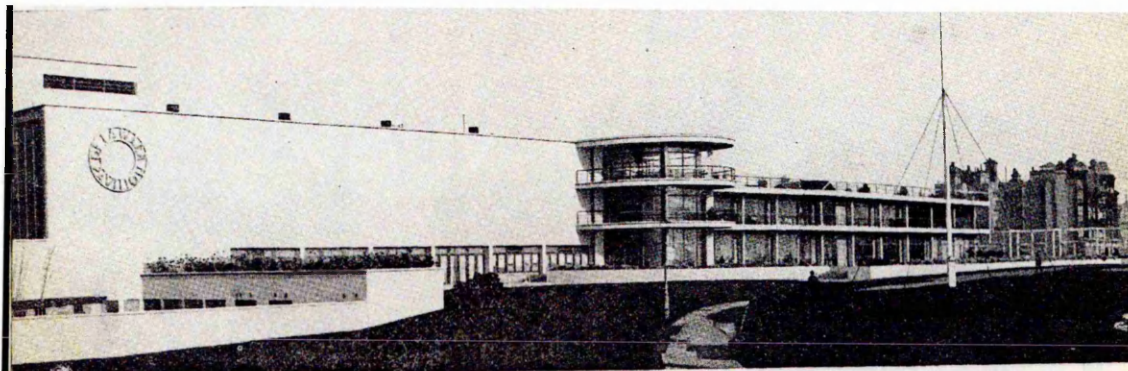
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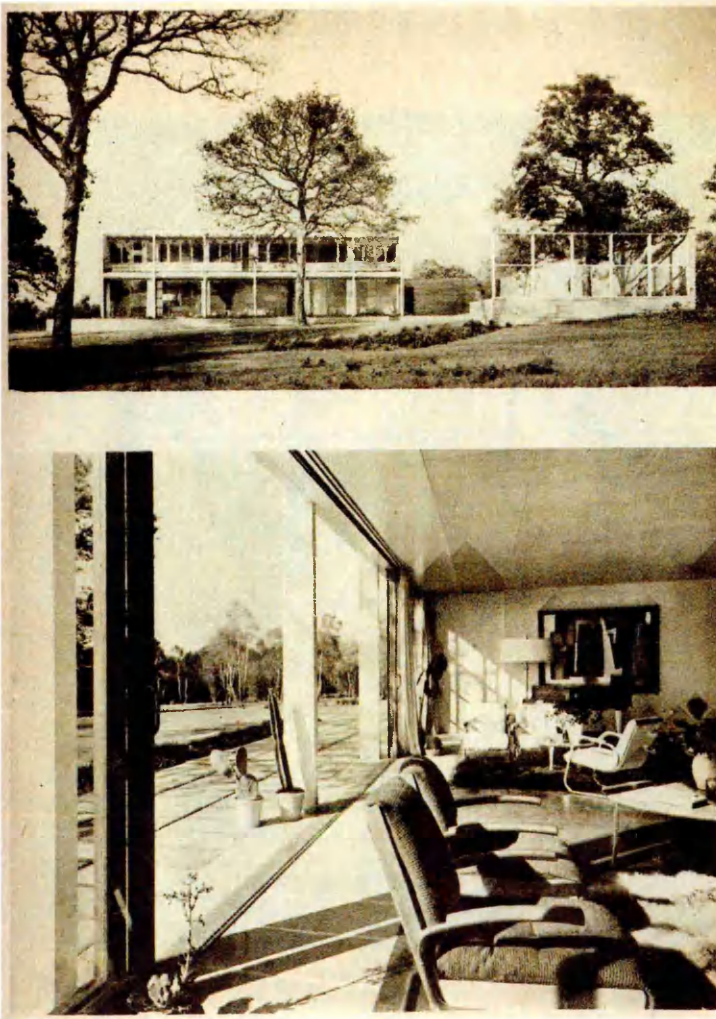
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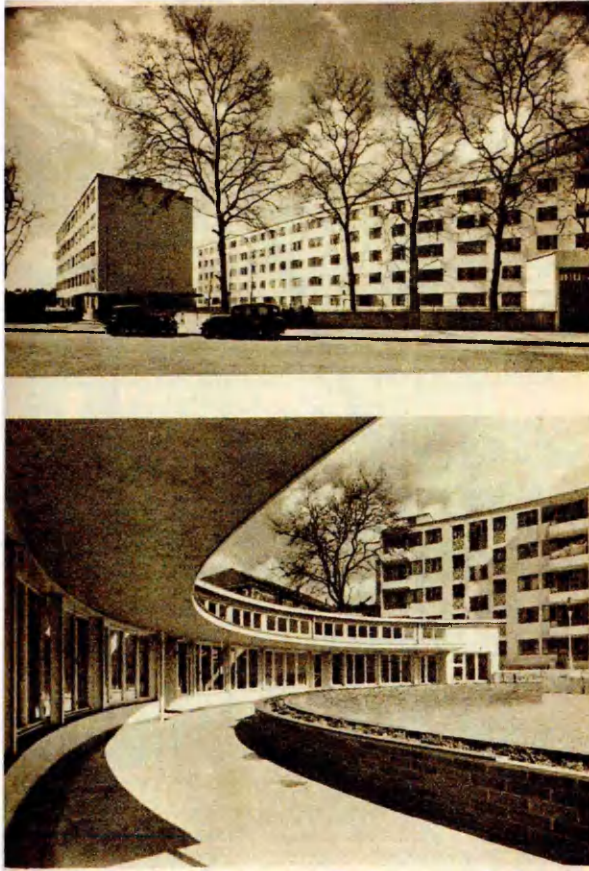
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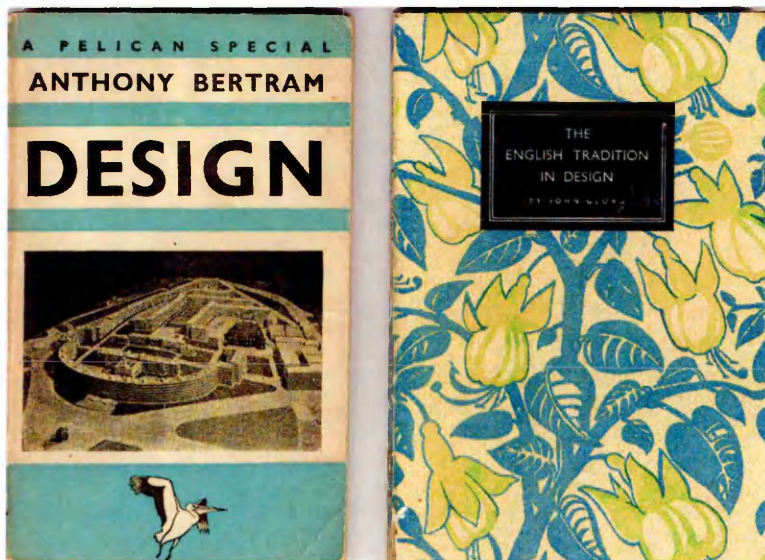
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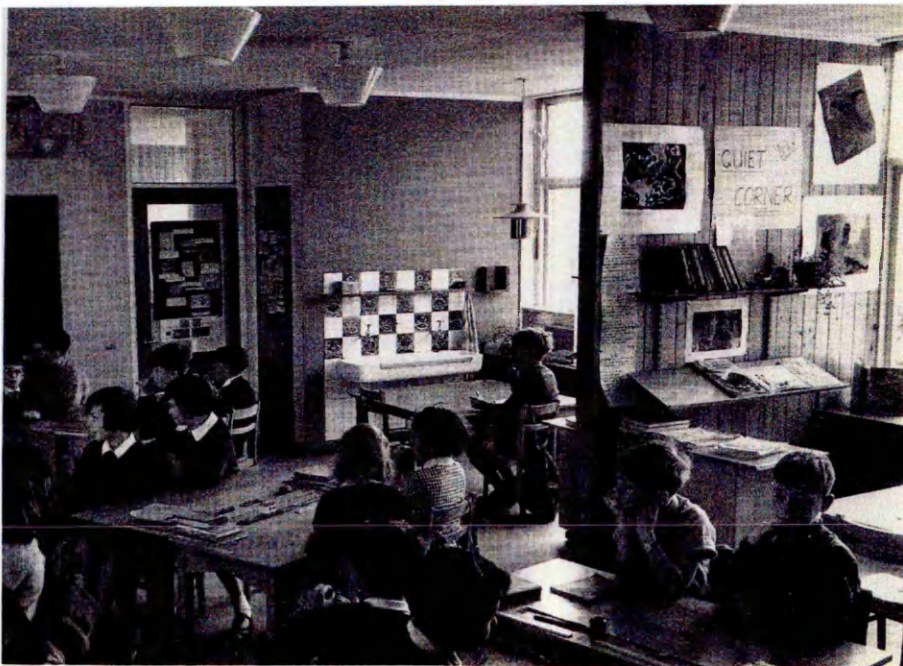
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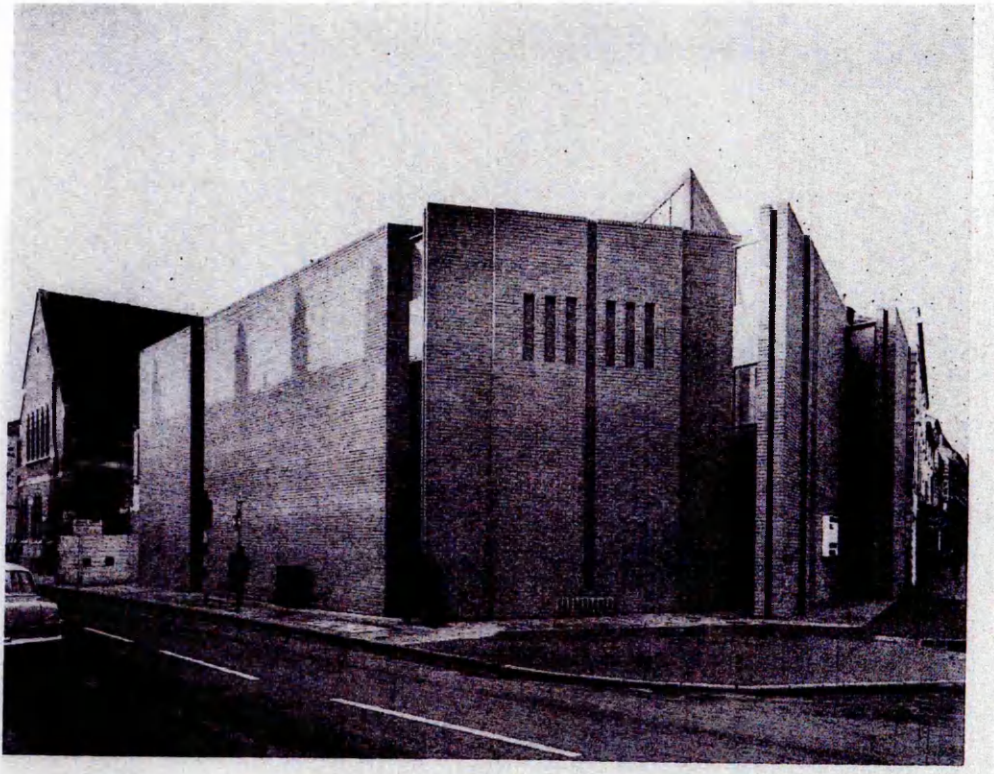
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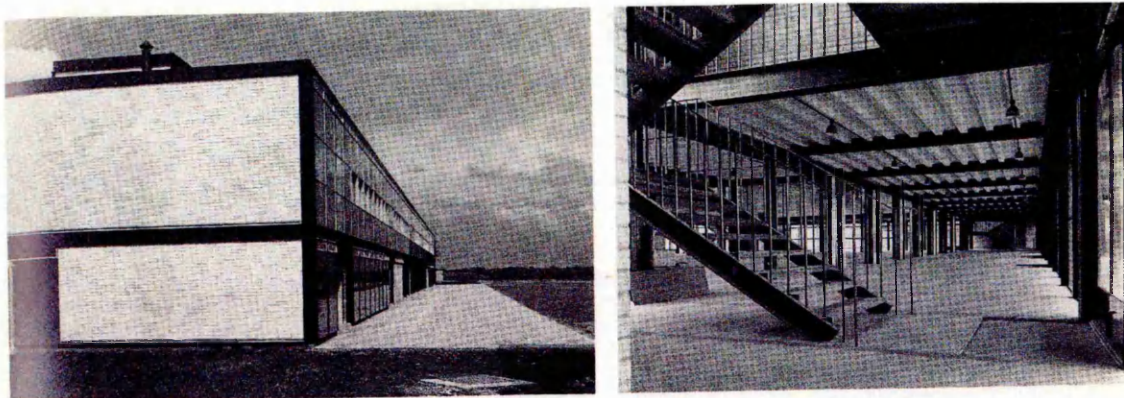
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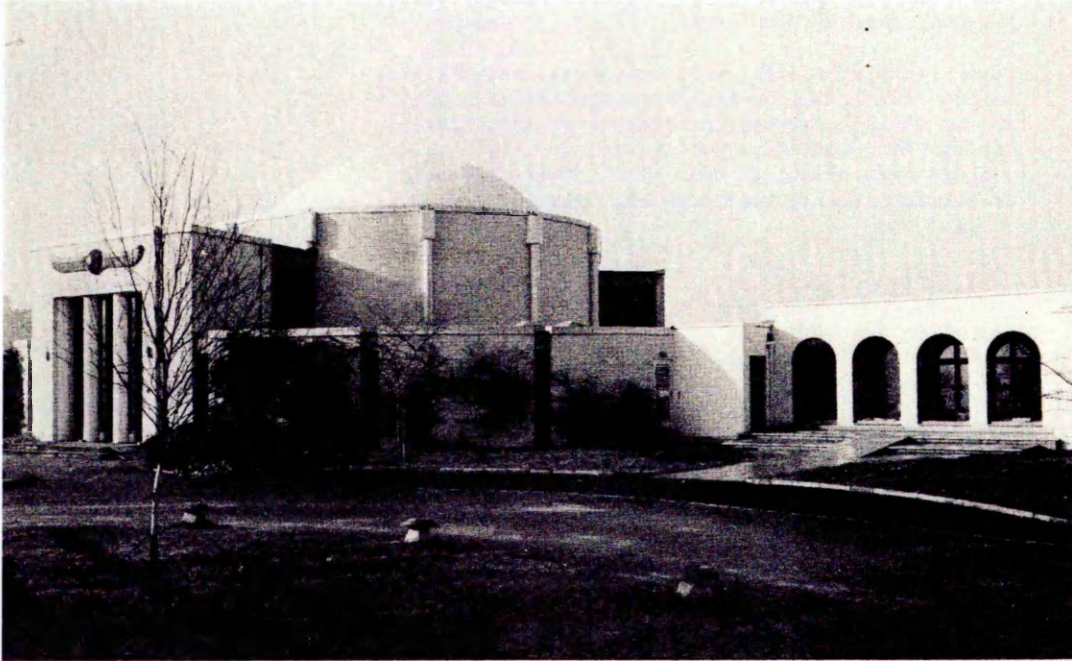
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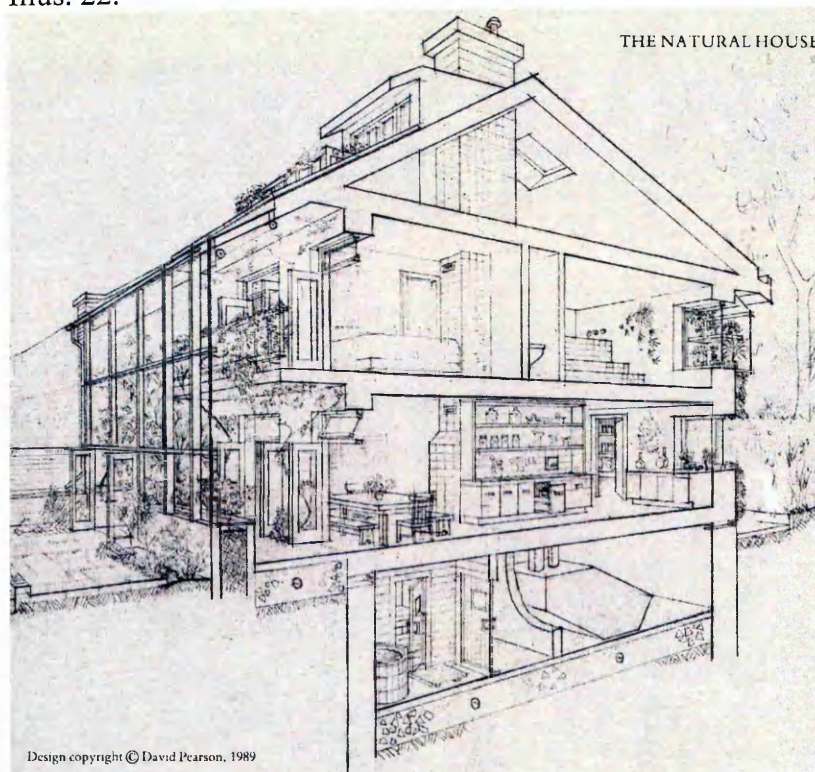
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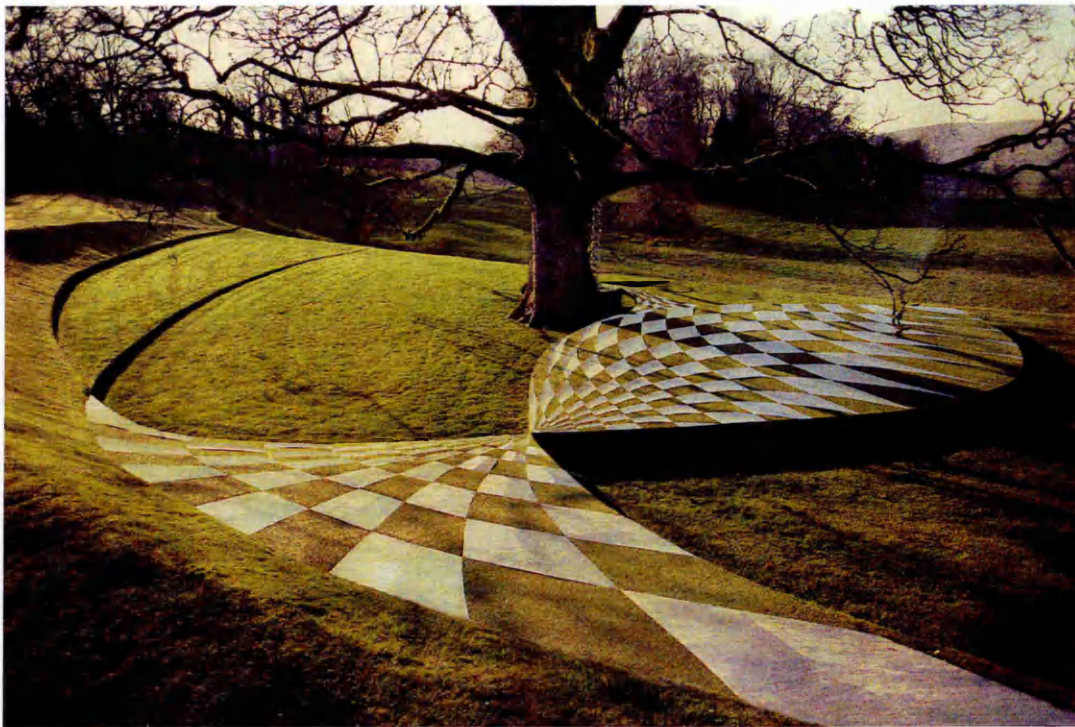
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Illus. 32.



Hamish Horseley with Awang Dorjee Samtyen Kyil, *The Tibetan Peace Garden 1999*, adjacent to the Imperial War Museum, London. Photograph Tibet Foundation 1999.



Macmon Architects *Glasgow Homoeopathic Hospital* 1999 exterior and interior views, montage from hospital website www.adhom.org.uk 2006.

Illus. 34.



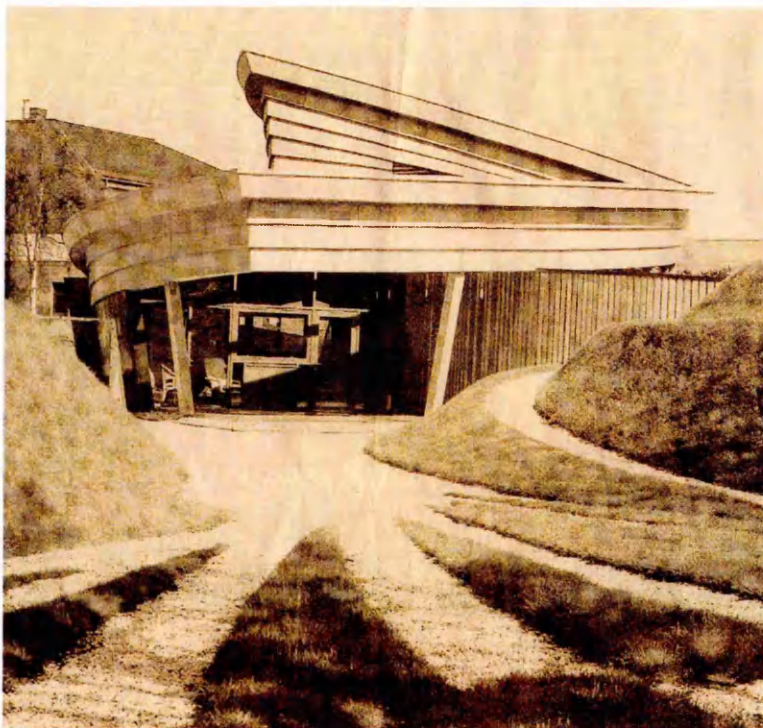
Oriental Medical Therapy Room, the Way of Wu, Covent Garden, London in *Feng Shui for Modern Living* No.24, April 2000: 58.

Illus. 35.



Sheffield Natural Health Centre shop front and forecourt 2003
Photograph S. North-Bates 2003.

Illus. 36.



Page Park Maggie's Centre, Inverness 2004 in Heathcote, E. Where architecture meets healing Financial Times Weekend 26/27 November 2005: w2.

Illus. 37.



Edward W. Crowther and Peter R. Loader *Aureus massage couch* 2005 in *World of Interiors* Vol.25 No.3 March 2005: 193.

Illus. 38.



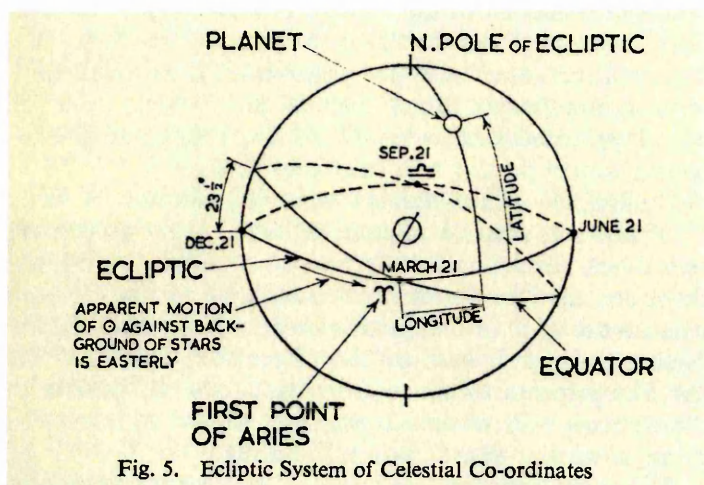
Neo-shamanic practitioner's paraphernalia, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire 2005.
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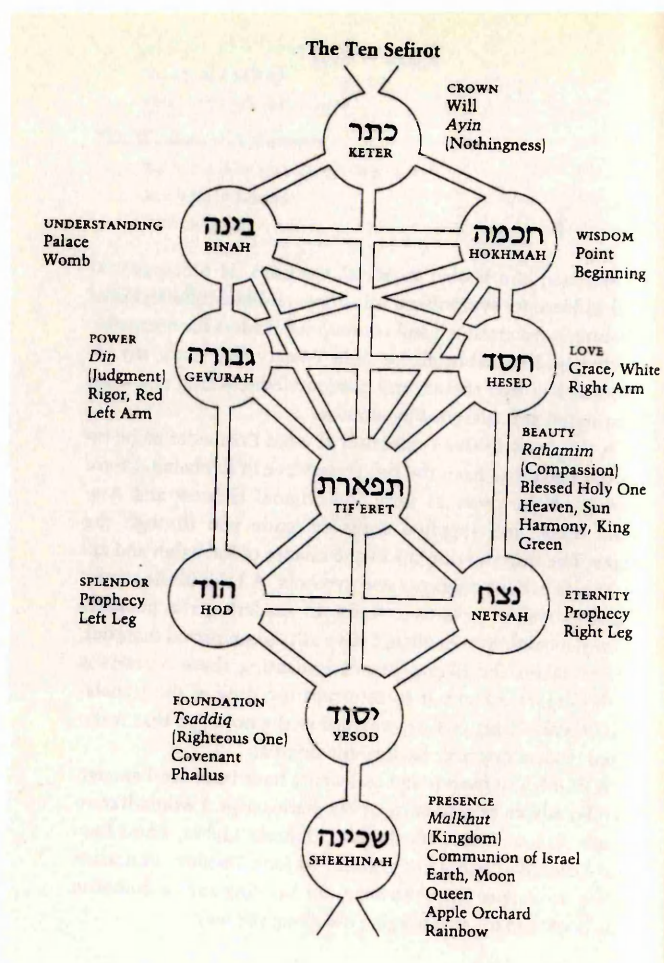
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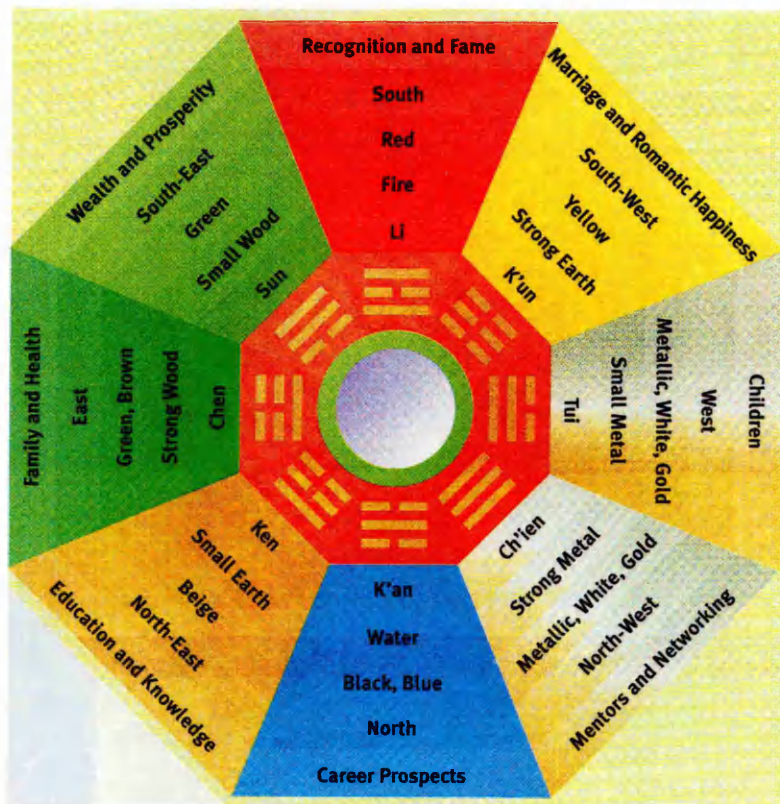
The Ecliptic System of Celestial Co-ordinates
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Fig. 2.



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Fig. 3.



The Feng Shui Ba Gua Template from *Feng Shui for Modern Living* No 24, April (2000): 88.

Fig. 4.

Wealth Blessings Abundance <div>4</div>	Fame Self-expression <div>9</div>	Relationships Marriage <div>2</div>
Family Ancestors Heritage <div>3</div>	Health <div>5</div>	Offspring Children Projects <div>7</div>
Inner Knowledge Self-realization <div>8</div>	Career Path in Life <div>1</div>	Helpful People Angels <div>6</div>

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Fig. 5.



The Vastu purusha mandala with Vedic Deities from Whelan, B. (2002) *Vastu in 10 simple lessons*: 34.

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APPENDIX ONE

LIST OF RESPONDENTS TO FORMAL AND INFORMAL INTERVIEWS

RESPONDENTS TO FORMAL INTERVIEW

Bestwick, Terry, architect and retired academic, 15.04.2004 and 23.05.2005.

Brown, Frederick, designer and academic, 04.10.2005 and 10.10.2005.

Maitreya, Zen Buddhist monk and gardener 12.04.2002.

Mitchell, Andy, ecological designer and civil engineer 09.02.1999.

Rose, G. David, psychologist, psychotherapist and researcher in shamanism 25.08.2005.

Todorov, Tzvedan, philosopher and academic 26.06.2004.

Wong, Simon, Feng Shui Master and teacher 02.01.1998.

RESPONDENTS TO INFORMAL INTERVIEWS

The respondents to informal interview are numbered according to order of first contact, although many contributed to the research on more than one occasion, and several (indicated *) made ongoing contributions during the seven year research period 1999-2006.

Each respondent is identified by a pseudonym (chosen by themselves and appropriate to their sex), their age group, and their respective occupations, their self-defined spiritual or religious affiliation, nationality, and district of residence.

1. Caradoc, 60s, retired naval officer, spiritual healing, British, S.Yorks.
2. Nemetona, 40s, artist and therapist, Druid craft, British, N. E. Derbys.*
3. Dilwyn, 40s, businessman, spiritual seeker, Welsh, S. Yorks.*
4. Dryad, 60s, bodywork therapist, New Age Christian, English, W. Yorks.*
5. Elanor, late 50s, yoga teacher, pantheist, English, W. Yorks.*
6. James, early 50s, New Age retailer, pagan, British, W. Yorks.
7. Gillian, 40s, New Age retailer and alternative wedding planner, Wiccan, British, W. Yorks.
8. Murdo, early 80s, retired physicist, Presbyterian, Scots, Derbyshire.*
9. Ceridwen, 50s, practice nurse, Druid, English, W. Yorks.
10. Edith, 70s, classical musician, agnostic, English, Derbyshire.*
11. Antoinette, 70s, language teacher, astrologer, French, S. Yorks.*

12. Jasmine, 70s, artist and actress, open-minded Catholic, English, S. Yorks.
13. Marianne, 40s, teacher, practising Church of England, English, S. Yorks.
14. Helena, early 20s, geologist, gay Christian, English, S. Yorks.
15. Curtis, late 40s, fashion industry professional, queer Wiccan, British, S. Yorks.*
16. Angelica, 50s, medical herbalist, eco-pagan, English, S. Yorks.*
17. Robin, 30s, housing officer, spiritually open-minded, English, S. Yorks.*
18. Elizabeth, early 50s, academic, New Age Christian, English, S. Yorks.*
19. Freya, 40s, academic, Heathen, English, W. Yorks.*
20. Heather, 50s, psychotherapist, Quaker, American, S. Yorks
21. Charles, 60s, retired surgeon, humanist agnostic, English, S. Yorks.
22. Francesca, 20s, NHS junior doctor, spiritually inclined, English, S. Yorks.
23. Pearl, 60s, reflexologist and retired nurse, Tibetan Bon, English, W. Yorks.*
24. Emma, 20s, postgraduate research student, New Age, English, S. Yorks.
25. Indira, 60s, homoeopath and G.P., Christian-Hindu, Anglo-Indian, S. Yorks.
26. Brid, 50s, homoeopath, holistic spirituality, Irish, S. Yorks.*
27. Faith, late teens, textiles student, holistic New Age, English, S. Yorks.
28. Rhodri, 50s, naturopath, shamanic practitioner, English, Derbyshire.*
29. Jeremy, 50s, town planner, holistic eco-spirituality, English, Derbyshire.
30. Old Bill, 60s, retired police officer, holistic spirituality, English, W. Yorks.*
31. Mrs Old Bill, 40s, police officer, creative spirituality, English, W. Yorks.*
32. Marmaduke, 50s, dog-trainer, armchair pagan, English, W. Yorks.
33. Poppy, 50s, architect, holistic spirituality, English, N. E. Derbys.*
34. Winnie, 50s, physical therapist, New Age, English, S. Yorks.*
35. Jenna, mid 50s, medical administrator, yogic spirituality, English, S. Yorks.*
36. Katrina, 30s, civil servant, Heathen, English, W. Yorks.
37. Alchemilla, 50s, gardener, pagan, English, N. E. Derbys.*
38. Mr. Jing, 40s, acupuncturist, Taoist, Scots, S. Yorks.*
39. Galahad, 20s, shiatsu practitioner, Zen Buddhist, English, S. Yorks.
40. Boris, 50s, therapist and teacher, holistic spirituality, English, S. Yorks.
41. Topaz, 30s, body worker and dancer, New Age, English, W. Yorks.
42. Wind Horse (m), 40s, physiotherapist, shaman, British, W. Yorks.
43. Nekko (f), 40s, oriental medical practitioner, Buddhist/Shinto, Anglo-Japanese, W. Yorks.*
44. Gwladys, 50s, administrator, Druid, Welsh, W. Yorks.*

45. Dana, 40s, educational advisor, Celtic Christian, Irish, Derbyshire.*
46. Harold, 50s, businessman, spiritual outlook, English, W. Yorks.
47. Evan, 20s, computer engineer, eco-spirituality, English, W. Yorks.
48. Layla, 30s, housewife and mother, mystical Islam, British-Indian, W. Yorks.
49. Bruce, 30s, electrician, Taoist, English, S. Yorks.

APPENDIX TWO

LIST OF QUESTIONS AND TOPICS DISCUSSED WITH RESPONDENTS IN FIELDWORK

How do you define / situate your spirituality?

What kind of spiritual practice do you have?

Which teachers, commentators, books, magazines, media programmes, organizations and places have influenced and inspired your spirituality?

Have any designers influenced your approach to spirituality?

In what ways do you think there is a relationship between design and spirituality?

How do you recognise design informed by complementary practices and spirituality?

How do you recognise New Age design? Are they the same? If not how are they different?

Do you consider you have a different relationship with objects which embody spiritual principles in design than with objects which do not?

How does your spirituality affect your consumption e.g. Choice of materials, style, green issues, ethics, other factors?

How has your spiritual practice informed/ changed your attitudes to and your use of home and garden, and the landscape?

How is your spirituality reflected in the design and contents of your home and garden?

Do you use every day objects in your ritual and spiritual practice?

Do you have a particular place or room in the home in which to practice your spirituality? If so how have you arranged it and why?

Do you have a home or garden shrine or altar? If so, how have you arranged it and why?

How has your spirituality influenced your attitude to healthcare options and issues?

If you are a CAM practitioner have you designed or organised your therapy room according to any particular spiritual principles arising from the principles and practice of your therapy? What other considerations have you taken into account?

Are there any other topics or observations you would like to add?

APPENDIX THREE

COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE IN BRITAIN

The Paradigms of Conventional Medicine, Complementary and Alternative Medicine, and Holistic Health

Conventional medicine can be defined as

... the officially sanctioned medical system of modern western societies which: enjoys the approval, co-operation and protection of the country's legal system and other supporting social institutions: government licensing and regulatory boards, third party licensing systems, preferred access to federal and private research moneys, high prestige and social status and their concomitant benefits, including professional associations with influential reputations for authority (Jütte 2001:14-15).

In addition, conventional western medicine is for the most part reliant on administering synthetic, pharmaceutical drugs, using an allopathic approach to the cure of symptoms by inducing opposite physiological reactions and is heavily reliant on medical technology (Bartram 1998: xii).

Non-conventional medicine can therefore be defined as referring to a heterogeneous set of therapeutical practices that are offered as 'alternative' or 'complementary' to conventional medicine. For the sake of clarity, the distinction between medicine and surgery must be noted, as it is often confused by critics of Complementary and Alternative Medicine. Medicine is the healing and prevention of disease by practices and remedies other than surgical treatment. Surgery is the cure of disease or injury by the intervention of manual operation. Complementary and Alternative Medicine is based on the holistic premise that the patient should be treated as an individual rather than by responding only to the presenting problem or symptoms as in the allopathic approach of conventional medicine.

In popular thinking, Complementary and Alternative Medicine (abbreviated in medical literature as CAM) is often lumped together with a wide variety of New Age attitudes and practices, whether there are any relevant connections between them or not. For example Cranio-Sacral Therapy is a physical bodywork modality allied to osteopathy and biomechanics. Its treatment protocols do not employ spiritual healing or require a belief in these things, neither does it deny them (Upledger and Vredevoogd 1983) but, as a CAM therapy, Cranio-Sacral Therapy is often categorised alongside diverse practices such as crystal therapy and spiritual healing which have no direct relation to it.

Concepts of holistic health and many of the so-called Complementary and Alternative Medical therapies have a long history. As discussed in Chapter Four, many CAM treatment modalities are ancient, some predating western synthetic-drug-based medicine by thousands of years. These methods of diagnosis and treatment have continued side by side with western conventional medicine and bio-medical orthodoxy, and are often used in conjunction with it, hence the preferred term 'complementary' rather than 'alternative' medicine. The term 'ethnic medicine' is used by orthodox medical writers to describe the medical practices of other societies, such as Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), thus perpetuating notions of 'otherness' and maintaining the western bio-medical hegemony.

The Extent of CAM in Britain.

It is difficult to quantify the number of CAM therapies available to the general public as new modalities seem to be springing up everyday. The British Complementary Medicine Association website lists more than fifty CAM therapies (www.bcma.co.uk 06.07.2005) and this is by no means a definitive list. There is very little homogeneity in

these therapies, which range across body work, spiritual healing and counselling modalities. Vastly differing philosophies, worldviews and the meanings of life are implicit and explicit in their theory and practice. There are also very different notions of what constitutes health, classifications of disease symptoms and treatment. Traditional Chinese Medicine, with its allied therapies such as Acupuncture and Shiatsu, is a case in point. Different health and disease taxonomies produce different therapeutic approaches. The therapies available can be categorised into three main classes; state regulated, self-regulated by a governing body, and alternative and mystical therapies carried out by individual practitioners not answerable to a governing body. Many individual therapists are qualified in a number of different therapies and use them as either discreet modalities, or, more usually, combine them to suit the presenting requirements of the patient. This diversity could be seen as properly reflecting the complexity of the human condition, although critics of CAM see it as simply more confusion (Heath 2004:6).

The use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine in the UK is increasing, becoming much more widely available both within the private and N.H.S. sectors. About 10 million people in Britain use some sort of CAM and about half of them see therapists. Amongst people with cancer the use of CAM rises by a third. Overall, in 2004 the nation spent £1.6 billion on CAM treatments, some of them supplied by GPs (Sylvester and Hall 2004:3).

The most widely accepted CAM therapies, as demonstrated by their inclusion in medical insurance policies and N.H.S. access, are the so called 'big-five' state regulated modalities, listed in order of descending popularity as Osteopathy, Chiropractice, Acupuncture, Homeopathy and Medical Herbalism. In 1995, 39% of GP practices

offered access to complementary therapies, whereas in 2004, 49% of family doctors did so (Hall, Sylvester and Doyle 2004: 9).

The demand for CAM treatments is buoyant, opinion polls in 2004 showing that 75% of British people would like complementary medicine to be paid for by the state (Sylvester 2004: 8). The present Labour Government has decided to make it easier for people to see therapists via their GPs. This accords with current policy on reducing expenditure on pharmaceutical drugs and extending patient choice, whilst placing responsibility with the GPs rather than the Government. Whilst family doctors were and continue to be in short supply, there were 40,000 registered and insured CAM practitioners in Britain compared with 36,000 GPs (Hall, Sylvester and Doyle 2004: 9) and an increase in the use of complementary medicine practitioners could take pressure away from over-stretched GPs.

A Rationale for Patient Choice of Complementary Therapy.

In the autumn of 2002 Wellforce Complementary Medicine Service, based at the Homeopathy and Complementary Medicine Centre, Sheffield, (and its therapists, including the present author), in conjunction with Maria Jones, a then fifth year medical student at the University of Sheffield Medical School, conducted research into the reasons why patients chose to attend a complementary medicine centre.

The principal reasons given for using complementary medicine were centred on concerns over the adverse effects of conventional treatments and no satisfactory relief of symptoms (73%). Patients choosing CAM tended to have a holistic view of health and illness (72%), and they considered they had more control of their healing process when using complementary medicine (63%). Patients chose to use a CAM centre because of

the availability and range of therapies on offer (75%) and the ability to use different therapies in the same venue (67%).

Other significant information to emerge from the research was that the majority of patients (67%) were female, of middle age (the mean age of patients was 42.6 years with a range of 6 months to 65 years) and from the middle classes. The mean number of annual GP consultations made by users of the centre was 4.2, being slightly lower than the mean for the general population of 4.5 consultations annually, (Royal College of GPs *RCGP Information Sheet GP workload* 2001:3). 42% of the patients had discussed complementary medicine with their GP, and 20% had been recommended by another healthcare professional. The problems most frequently consulted for were musculo skeletal problems (24%), mental and behavioural disorders including anxiety and depression (19%) and problems of the nervous system (13%), which reflected the range of bodywork, counselling and homoeopathic medical services available at the centre (Relton and Jones 2002:1).

In addition to using CAM to combat stress, many people turn to complementary therapies because of concerns about the dominance of the pharmaceutical industry, its perceived ethical shortcomings, and the side-effects of its products (Boseley 2004: 4).

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