

by Alanna Hartzok
Education Director

Bioregionalism is an emerging new perspective from which to view North America and the rest of the Planet as well. Instead of the usual boundaries separating huge nations and tiny nations, huge states and tiny states, areas are defined by natural formations and contours of the earth itself - the mountains, rivers, watersheds, and deserts. The lifeforms of these regions have had their unique identities formed and imprinted by the particular work of nature herself. Even in a culturally homogenous nation like the USA, dialects and customs, diet and culture vary from region to region. The bioregional map on this page was created by asking people throughout the land a simple question: "Where do you live?"

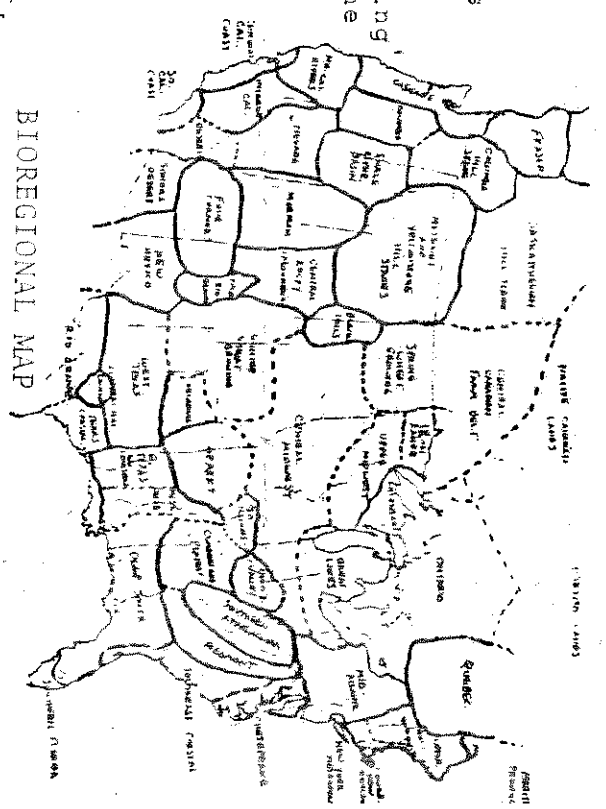
Bioregional identity can be on different scales. One might identify oneself as being from Appalachia on the larger scale and the Cumberland Valley on the smaller. The significant perceptual shift is that one becomes eco, or whole earth conscious, rather than ego, or nation state conscious. The eco-logical, unified earth consciousness that perceives the patterns and harmonies of naturally contoured bioregions is a quantum leap from the ego-separative, linear way of conceiving the world that stakes out straight line boundaries like so many squares on a chess board.

Ecological consciousness seeks to integrate the human kingdom with the other kingdoms of nature and sees the human purpose and responsibility as that of caretaker of the earth. Ego centered consciousness fights and squabbles over these lines of merely human demarcation and seeks to conquer, exploit and dominate the life forms therein, including the more unitive, earth centered peoples, the traditional and natives throughout the world.

A bioregional form of governance has emerged over the last few years in the Ozarks, a very distinctive region currently composed of parts of five different states. The coordinator of the Ozark Area Community Congress (OACC), David Haenke refers to the work of a bioregional congress as "ultra green" politics. This is their task as he sees it:

Green politics is the process whereby the actual political process gets in line with and reinvested with earth power, the trans-human forces that actually run the planet. We are taking the human center out of politics here, and putting human beings as a species back into perspective - one species cooperating with others under the paradigm of natural bioregional law.

OACC has been meeting for four years and involves representatives from nearly 200 organizations. More than a network, the congress is patterned along lines similar to the ancient Iroquois Confederacy and maintains 12 standing committees, including education, health, energy, and economics. Consensus resolutions developed in the committees become the constitution which is then activated both inside and outside of the established political structures. OACC sees its task as building a bioregion run under ecological law, or a biopolitical unit run according to the politics of ecology. More than simply



environmental defense, political ecology is defined as "sustainability under ecological law." As a Congress, it serves to empower individuals and organizations who are working to attain a sane and harmonious way of life.

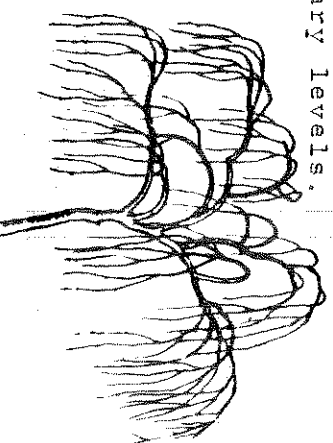
While OACC has not yet developed a clear land tenure and tax policy, we can see a prototype of the path lying ahead in the work of the Appalachian Alliance with its

excellent six state study, Who Owns Appalachia? and who pays (and doesn't pay) the taxes. Awareness of the inequities highlighted in this report has led to various grassroots land and tax reform efforts, notably the Kentucky Fair Tax Coalition, documented in a recent CBS Bill Moyers special. As people become more conscious of the economic forces operating in their various regions, more attention inevitably will be paid to the vital issues of who owns the earth.

The old egocentric attitudes have been mirrored for many centuries now in our institutionalized land tenure system. The right to secure possession of the products of one's labor has for past ages been extended to include exclusive possessory control by the individual to the earth itself, with land under or misutilized while millions starve for lack of access. The consequent maldistribution of material wealth has jeopardized our political democracy more than any other factor. Few can conceive how the accumulated wealth of the Rockefeller family can exceed the sum total of all that can be claimed by poor whites and non-whites in the whole country. This excessive wealth and the resultant control over politicians and the political process has made it impossible for the US government to respond to the needs and desires of the people.

The United States is unwilling to cooperate on the international level as well. To many globally aware people, the recent performance by the US at the United Nations has been a great embarrassment. While 117 nations voted for the Law of the Seas, thus affirming that the deep sea minerals belong equally to all, the US was one of only 4 votes against it. With 111 nations voting to end nuclear testing, only the US voted no. While Reagan may be the most blatant evidence that something is deeply wrong with our democracy, it is difficult to feel hope that any other president will meet the challenge of the present crises as long as the underlying economic structures remain intact. And it is even more difficult to imagine that the needed fundamental restructuring of our economic system will occur without the transformation of the United States as a national entity.

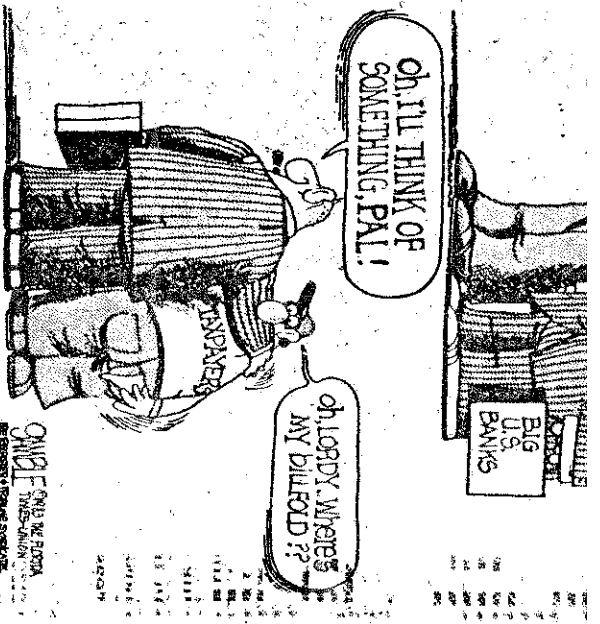
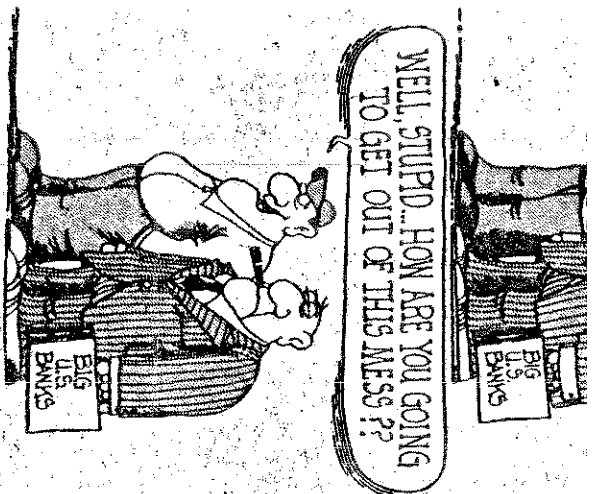
Signs that the nation state as currently recognized has served its term are most clear among the bioregionally identified groups that are springing up throughout North America and the rest of the world. Global bio regional consciousness is a great aid in dissolving our artificially constructed nation-state identifications. A much deeper, more authentic identity extends from the family to community to bio regional to planetary levels.



Consequently, our consciousness, and our institutional structures as mirror, can break through the nation state identity both ways - centralizing to the planetary level through appropriate functions (global resource agency, world court, peacekeeping, for instance) and decentralizing to the bio regional and local levels. Political power and decision making, aided by proper use of mass media and communications must be coordinated throughout the various levels. Taxation policy, and human rights need to be based firmly on the equal birthright of all to the earth itself.

Ralph Borsodi, a global philosopher, proposed that the various functions on the different levels be clearly defined and funded from an appropriate source. He proposed that local communities collect the value, or ground rent, of the surface lands, bio regions be funded by subsurface mineral values, and global functions by a portion of the first two, plus the deep sea resources and whatever materials might be used from outer space.

What maintains the nation states in their present form, outside of our identification with them, is our material support through the various tax systems. We feed the nation state with out labor, four months out of each year in the USA. While many millions will now march for peace, write letters for peace, and pitch in at local non-profit peace centers, how many are really ready to cut the cord and refuse



BIOREGIONALISM CONT.

Our federal tax system is no longer effectively supporting the welfare of the people on any level. Our constitutional rights have been eroded decade after decade until it is often hard to distinguish the power of the president from that of a dictator. Of what real use is a pledge of allegiance to the centralized power structure in

Washington DC with its ever increasing numbers of miserable and impoverished citizens? A respect for and determined commitment to values of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, freedom of worship and expression, production and exchange is one thing. Blind adherence to fossilized political structures quite another. Why, for instance, should those on the West Coast have any more affinity to the European colonized North Atlantic Coast than to the Asiatic Pacific Rim?

We need to affirm basic human rights-economic and political - throughout the world and to support those institutional structures which are working to restore and extend those rights. To assert that any of these human rights rests with the continued existence of any particular nation state (i.e., political, individual rights with the USA, or economic, social rights with the USSR) is quite simply, a neanderthalian world view.

Equally archaic is a position that equates a particular nation state with either the devil himself or God's kingdom on earth. Immature people who have not recognized

the complexity of life project all good or all bad onto the super-power conflict, thereby fueling the fires of alienation and separation. A better way is to affirm the common dimensions, needs, and aspirations of the human experience throughout the world.

The new world view would encompass and transcend the highest values of both right and left. It would affirm political and economic rights as complementary, valuing the earth as the common heritage of all while acknowledging individual rights to the products of one's labor on this earth.

Georgist economic proposals clearly touch this point of synthesis. How else to explain that it has been both praised and condemned by forces on both the right and left, that Einstein, Churchill, Tolstoy and Sun Yat Sen all promoted it with vigour? How else to explain how informed people in the worlds of business, labor, public finance, and environmental protection have all affirmed the value of this approach in reaching their goals?

The Georgist economic philosophy is simply an extension to all of the earth's land and resources of the basic principle of common heritage already affirmed by most of the global community in its endorsement of the Law of the Sea Covenant. As such, it is an appropriate ideological tool for building the emerging new world order on a fair and firm foundation.



THE GLOBAL BRAIN:

SPECULATIONS ON THE EVOLUTIONARY LEAP TO PLANETARY CONSCIOUSNESS

Author: Peter Russell

Publisher: J.P. Tarcher, L.A.

1983

A book review by Americ Azevedo

Twelve years ago I was teaching a class in "Mysticism and Science" at San Francisco State University. Those were the end days of the anti-Vietnam protests. There was a sense of disillusionment on the part of my students. One of them exclaimed: *We have to change ourselves before we can change the world!*

She was suggesting that meditation and spiritual work would ultimately transform our politics and economics. Our institutions will not change at the roots unless we as people change our basic outlook. I spent well over seven years unpacking the meaning of this teaching from my student.

Twelve years later I had the pleasure of spending some time with Peter Russell, whose book GLOBAL BRAIN expresses the impact of our inner work on outer conditions. Peter takes a wide perspective on the evolution of life on this planet and notes that life itself has already gone through several crises where it would have ceased to exist without some dramatic development. Of the current phase he writes:

Humanity appears to be rapidly approaching the breaking point. And there are two possible outcomes: breakdown or breakthrough.

Readers of Henry George may well be pleased with Russell's view on population. He notes that ten billion

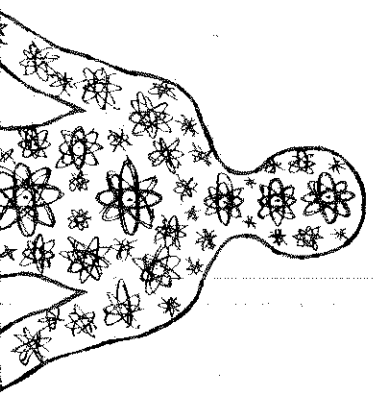
Russell uses the now popular word "synergy" which connotes the idea of "many components naturally and spontaneously functioning together in harmony with the whole."

This does not mean that such (high synergy) societies are full of do-gooders desperately trying to help each other; rather, they are societies in which the social and psychological structures are such that the activities of the individual are naturally in tune with the needs of others and the needs of the group.

I sense that Henry George's solution of taxing the ground rent is a deep systemic shift that would promote this synergic state.

Peter Russell sees that both the capitalist and communist systems are such that "the personal reality still is one of 'I' am 'in here' and the world is 'out there', of an 'I versus you' mentality. Essentially this is the problem of the self failing to identify with the long term interests of society and the earth - even at the risk that everything may fall apart. A society of more enlightened people will be able to drop this 'I versus you' perspective. This is what spiritual work such as meditation is designed to do.

Russell's work is a tonic for the "me and you, us and them" form of thinking and being. The individual's ego drive for control of the earth and the nation-state drive for dominion simply have to go. The kind of thinking that is expressed in THE GLOBAL BRAIN is the metaphysical background to which PROGRESS AND POVERTY functions as a physical foreground. As such, it may indicate that the time is ripening towards a profound recognition of Henry George's basic insights.



installment was that current inequities in the political structures of industrial societies must be dealt with first for two reasons: (1) existing economic inequities are inherent to existing political structures, and (2) existing political structures are legalizing inequities far beyond the economic ones, including political inequities of such magnitude that in many cases there is no solution short of very radical change.

This installment deals with the kind of economic considerations which should be given in such political restructuring. It proceeds in the form of a series of friendly amendments to Henry George principles.

★ The value of land and other resources is not, as George assumes, all generated by "the community." Much of this value is natural value generated by Nature; and some by specific identifiable individuals, often in the face of community resistance. And the full human value of a natural resource is not adequately measured in the market place. The market place valuation often ignores, or under-values, values, which include value to future generations.

★ The most basic value of land and other natural resources is that generated by Nature. For instance, one of the most valuable, because indispensable, resources for us is water. Yet it only has market value in dollars and cents insofar as it becomes scarce. Similarly with other natural resources.

It is of course true that heavy human use of a natural resource, human pollution of it, and human population increase is what usually generates any scarcity that may exist at any time in a given region. But neither "the community" nor any individual should be rewarded for generating market value by way of generating scarcity! Quite the reverse. The fact that a natural resource increases in market value doesn't necessarily entitle those responsible to be rewarded. In some cases it may be much more appropriate to penalize them, namely, when they create scarcity.

★ It is of course also true that individual and community effort does often enhance the value of a natural resource. In such cases reward should be given to those responsible for the enhancement, whether individuals or "the community",

between natural resources and their use. (b) those which are naturally diminished in value with use. The price of such non-renewable resources should not be determined by market value, however; rather, by the cost of generating their equivalent for future generations. Insofar as no equivalent can be generated, absolute limits should be placed on their use.

★ Those natural resources which can be utilized without depleting their value should be rented out at full market value (assuming appropriate ecological and ethical controls on the market). This stipulation must be made in the political structure governing economic activities. Rents must not be determined by majority vote, such as in Fairhope, Alabama. For renting at less than market value invites profiteering through sub-leasing.

★ I suggest that 50% of all market rental income from a given natural resource be attributed to that generated by Nature and such value should be distributed equally to all persons on earth. The other 50% should not go to governments except as it can be shown that a particular government has generated it. Government should not be considered identical with "the community." Government administration and services should be paid for by those who have freely agreed to pay for them, presumably because they value them.

★ The rewards and penalties in connection with diminishing or enhancing the value natural resources should be determined by some governing body which serves as trustee, and not owner, of the earth's resources. Thus, state ownership is no improvement over individual ownership. Resources must be held in trust, for the continuing benefit of all creatures.

★ As society becomes increasingly technological productivity results ever more from capital and less from human labor. If everyone receives a fair share of rental income from natural resources and a fair share of his/her part in any enhancement of natural values, than all people become capitalists. No one has to earn all income from labor. Then everyone benefits from automation!

SOME FRIENDLY DISAGREEMENTS TO ANDERSEN'S FRIENDLY AMENDMENTS

by Alanna Hartzok

I think Mr. Andersen is trying to put Georgist economics together with the environmental ethic in a way that I find rather unsatisfying. George was primarily focused on ending the most abusive form of human injustice -the denial of rights to the earth itself. The upliftment in human consciousness and values that would be amplified as a result would then help end abuses on other levels including the environmental. It is difficult to have a broader concern when personal survival itself is at stake.

I find Al's discussion on natural value as opposed to market value to be unnecessary. One aspect of nature is not inherently more valuable than another. Value lies in the human being as valuer. Outside of human use value, there is no inherent difference between a valley of gold, a mountain of coal, or a hill of beans. To say that some of this value is generated by specific individuals is a misuse of terms -humans can create capital value individually but not ground rent as the classical economists defined it. Proper assessing practices are the key here.

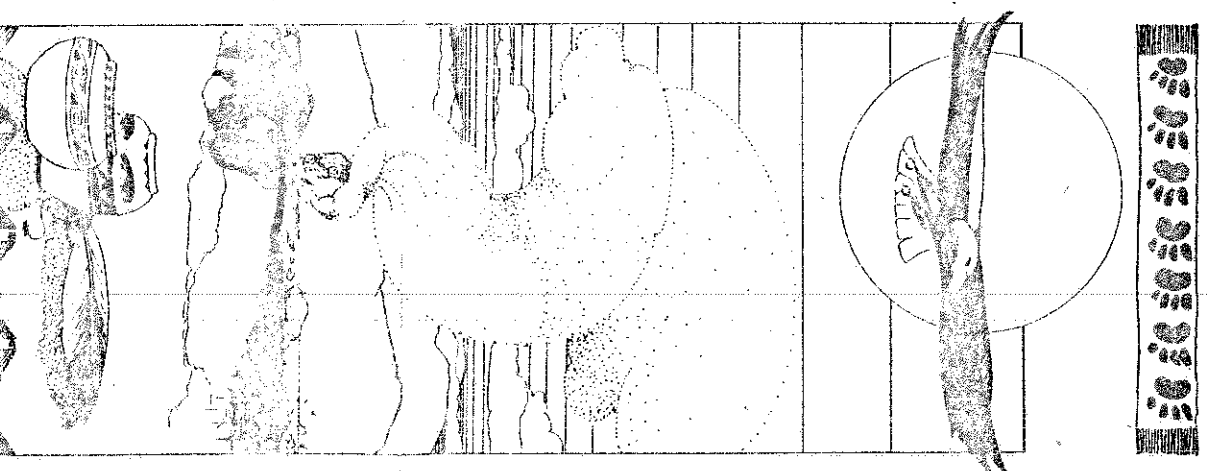
A primary reason why our form of development has often exploited the natural world is probably related to the unjust distribution of that which is produced. As slaves and rent-racked tenants become exhausted so do the soils they work. Given basic economic justice however, I see no problem with penalizing polluters with a heavier user-fee/land rental cost.

You say absolute limits should be placed on the use of non-renewable resources. What is an absolute limit? Who determines it? Who enforces it? Another way of looking at your concern for a transition to a renewable resource culture is this - if our economic system was really governed by the market place, capital would be flooding into the renewable resource markets by now. But as long as it is more profitable for the economic powers that be to expropriate the products of labor as reflected in increased land values, then the transition to a sustainable future will be

Your #7 statements on ownership show precisely the spirit of Henry George. Though he might not have used the word "trusteeship" in urging the collection of ground rent for the community, that was exactly the game he was setting up. Consequently, except for determining use rights, it did not matter who holds title on paper.

Your #8 worker/owner society would be the natural result of Georgist policies as he envisioned them, without any added complications.

So ends the friendly disagreements to the friendly amendments. Thank you Al Andersen for bringing such issues to debate. What do our readers think? Let us know!



most ready to hear them.

*** SF, BOSTON SCHOOLS ***
CO-SPONSOR BIOREGIONAL
CONGRESS

Along with some thirty other organizations, the Henry George Schools of San Francisco and Boston are co-sponsors of the First North American Bio regional Congress which will convene May 21 - 25 near Kansas City, Missouri. This will be the "first major convening of representatives of the continental Bioregionalist movement, to include the movements for political ecology/ green politics, deep ecology, and sustainability."

*** SCHUMACHER SOCIETY MEMBERS ***
BREAK BREAD WITH DIRECTORS

Several associates of the HGS joined special guests Bob Swann and Susan Witt of the E.F. Schumacher Society for dinner at the home of Bob Scrofani. They described their work with community land trusts and community development banking projects in the Southern Berkshires. They were in the Bay Area to conduct "Toward an Economy of Permanence", an intensive week long training session in new economic approaches co-sponsored by New College of California. Education Director Alanna Hartzok gave a morning presentation of Georgist economic philosophy to the group.

SCROFANI COMBATS ECONOMIC ILLITERACY
AT SOCIAL STUDIES STATE COUNCIL ***

Two workshops to dispel economic illiteracy in the classroom were presented to teachers attending the California Council of Social Studies meeting in Los Angeles recently. Bob Scrofani, HGS Director and History Department Chairman at Berkeley High School and Robert Vaughn, a former Chairman at Harbour High School, Santa Cruz presented two workshops dealing with the land question in history and basic economic principles.

Teachers in one workshop were presented a case study of Appalachia using the new tabloid developed by the School. Most were eager to receive copies of the "Land and Freedom" series prepared by Stan Rubenstein in New York. Follow-up activities are planned for the almost eighty teachers attending.

An excellent photographer from an early age, he developed slide presentations from the pictures he took on his many trips. Some of the places he visited were Nepal, South Africa, Peru and the Galapagos Islands.

Through speaking, writing, and personal contact he promoted the Georgist philosophy wherever he saw the opportunity.

Always cheerful and willing to help, Bob will be greatly missed.

*** A CHANGING OF THE GUARD ***

At the ripe old age of 35 I'll be "retiring" from the position of Education Director this month in order to take on some additional homework with the birth of my second child, expected in May.

Working with the School these past five years has been a greatly rewarding and creative experience. I feel most appreciative of the many friends and associates I've made through this work and for their encouragement and support when it was needed. Thank you!

Please put my home address on your mailing list:
44A Athens St., SF, CA 94112

*** Alanna Hartzok ***

Assuming the role of Education Director will be Dionne Marx, Ph.D. who has been long involved with teaching, consulting, publishing, and counseling in the areas of cultural evolution, education, and psycho-spiritual growth.

She is currently teaching at John F. Kennedy University and the Melia Foundation of Berkeley and is looking forward to integrating an enlightened perspective of economics within her work.

There are several openings now on our Board of Directors. Persons interested in contributing to the School in this way please call us at 864-1014.

*** Newsletter Editors: ***

Alanna Hartzok, Education Director
Robert Scrofani, Executive Director

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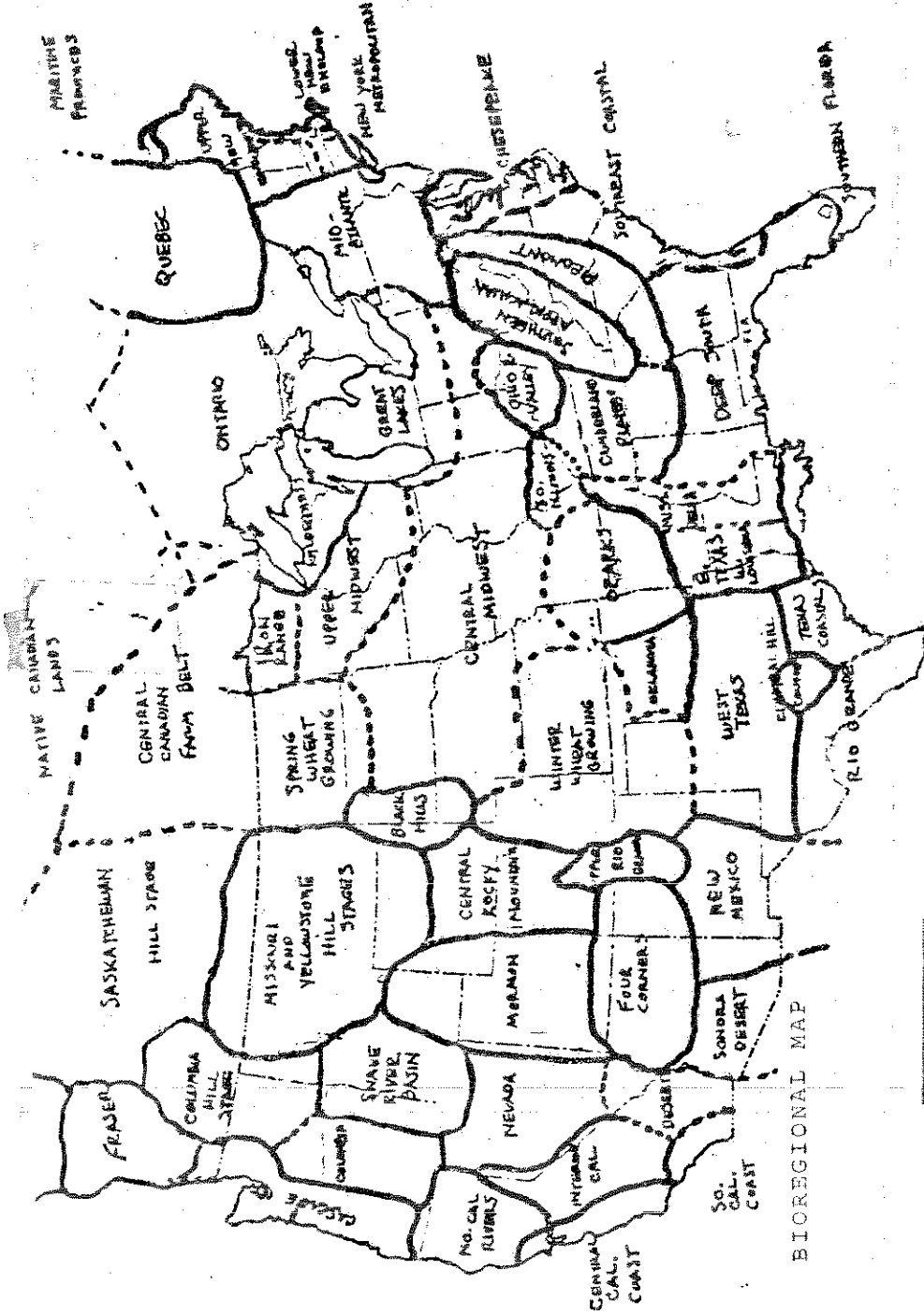
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Book Review: THE GLOBAL BRAIN
SPECIAL FEATURES: THE GLOBAL BRAIN
Georgist Economics

Mark Sullivan
227 Columbus Ave., #2E
NYC, NY 10023