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post-industrial context, the miserable failure of this material and excessively rational mode, which bases its triumph on the separation of culture from production, is apparent.

The position presented in this paper is that one can go beyond the industrial mode and become increasingly aware of models which work to mobilise, enable, and empower human resources and link them to the conduct of the affairs of life. This is becoming more apparent with the creation and maintenance of the environment, where the emphasis is placed on regeneration and not strict accumulation. It is in this context that I am arguing that certain cultural mechanisms can be used to help integrate the production of the environment with the culture of the local community. My argument and hypothesis rests on a three-fold observation:

- Culture has been and will continue to be the prime mechanism for the sustenance of a healthy environment and maintenance of vital community life. It is culture which has helped scores of communities, throughout the ages and until recently, to establish their identities, express their needs, and manage their resources in the most creative way possible. This vital function of culture has been integral to the creation and maintenance of the physical environment around the world.

- While rituals in general might appear to be the cultural mechanism to link community to the creation and sustenance of life, a particular class of rituals and ceremonies has arisen around certain buildings and productive operations in which the technical act of building or production is integrated with the symbolic and social dimension of the culture. It is this class of ritual which appears to link and address acts of building and landscaping to the social and cultural life of the community. This can be seen in archetypal form in the classical example of the Trobriand gardens in the South Pacific, as beautifully described by Malinowski, where the ritual acts of gardening amount to a blueprint for the planning and maintenance of all the compo-



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nents of the gardens and the environment of the community. These rituals act as mirrors of the productive acts, establishing the mindset of the community for future actions. The case of Yemen is extremely illustrative as well. Marvellous towns were built in the highlands, maintained, and transformed over centuries into terraced gardens. Land, water, and the natural elements become the prime domain of this ritual operation, which may be called the regenerative process of building.

· For scores of communities, building ceremonies and rituals serve as mechanisms through which the order of the community is identified and expressed in the production of the environment. From roof construction among the Berbers in the Atlas Mountains in Morocco, community gardening in Niger, barn raising in rural America, land subdivision in Mexico, and house decoration in Nubia, the creative energy of the people is released and community resources and skills regenerated. It is these ceremonies and rituals that kept the vital relation of the community with the environment intact and sustained. On the other hand, institutional mechanisms such as building liens and regulations, environmental measures and other regulatory mechanisms, while helping to maintain the environment or to keep it within