

## END OF LA

I live in NY but think of LA. I want an end to LA. I want LA replaced by aerial cities. NY would also get replaced--afterwards.

Ghat is a city in Libya. It's in the mountains in the middle of the Sahara. It has a lot of cave art made for hunters and gatherers. But herders and farmers came along and wiped out the artists and drove in flocks of their chosen seed. They drove away the wild animals and divided lands into lots and got down on the ground and let their creatures graze bare the rest: the Sahara became a desert.

Going back to Ghat, back to the desert, we come down from the high ridges to the salt flats that collect descending waters and we punch out big holes so that waters can stay fresh. We set up small cones as upright caves to shelter the underground animals now subdued by desert hardlife. Then we send in airplanes with city droppings.

Milan has 3 million people and is an art center. The waters it spills end up in the same ocean as waters from Ghat used to do. There's a lot of crap in Milan now, but we can reduce it to hydrocarbons and ammonia and then pipe it off to a single-cell protein plant and let microorganisms grow on the solution. Then the microorganisms cluster around follicles, break into the simplest helices, and coalesce as feathers. It's a kind of art: we paint the microorganisms on their cell walls and the paintings transmit messages from one cell to another until they all agree that it's time to make feathers.

Airplanes fly from the big cities to drop the feathers upon salt flats with their freshwater puddles and cool, dark caves beneath which an underground stirs. They drop the feathers at moist areas between Milan and Ghat, then fly to Lake Chad. Or they fly from the Niger Delta through Ghat to the Sinai and the Caspian Sea. They follow the paths of paths of migrating birds. They spread a mesh of nutrients over the desert. If they drop on the Sinai as it slopes to the Mediterranean, or the Dead Sea bowl, they help the Palestinians.

As the feathers settle, the underground gains strength. Successions of greater creatures consume lesser, then are themselves consumed, until the large flying and running animals we know well are dispersing what was in feathers to the uplands. Savanna forms. Waters flow fast and clean, and at the ocean, far downstream, appears a wealth of fish and seaweeds so thick that ships can scarcely pass. Any society could live well on that wealth--in nutrients, in raw materials, especially in the clean-burning fuels from degraded seaweeds.

PETER FEND

From out of the seas rise pipelines, aqueduct highways, and the vertebrae series bearing up in cantilevers the slopes and discs upon which entire populations rest. Below these bridging backbones flourish wild animals and plants. Among mountain ridges, the linear megastructures flow within level wedge-cut niches on the slopes. Whether coursing above flatlands or traversing mountainsides, society behaves as if humans had never descended from their trees or high caves. We gaze down across terrain pitched, even if slightly, to the sea. The polity is conceived as an amphitheater. From Ghat and Milan the view descends down respective valleys to a common sea, a common center. In a theater of Greeks, Anatolians, Palestinians and Catalanians, the Italians achieve position in that sovereign terrain they always wanted: a Mediterranean sea state.

LA gets what it always wanted as well: independence in the world. LA discovers its basin as part of a long piece of ocean bottom jutting up from Pacific waters. It discovers that it doesn't belong to the US. It discovers that it cannot survive as an earth-smothering sprawl of concrete roads and rooted buildings smothered in turn by the combustion of geological deposits. It cannot survive by squatting on the ground and using what is dug from the ground. It cannot survive in the Neolithic mold. So it scuttles itself and breaks away. It levels its buildings, shatters its pavements, cuts off its oil supplies, joins the Baja in a joint harvest offshore, and heads for the hills. Everybody always wanted to live in the hills anyway. Or at least among the elevated freeways. Now they do it. What's beneath, in the LA Basin, becomes home range for the deer and the antelope, while above, on the natural or artificial ridges, the humans look on fields upon waving green fields--on what used to be LA.

