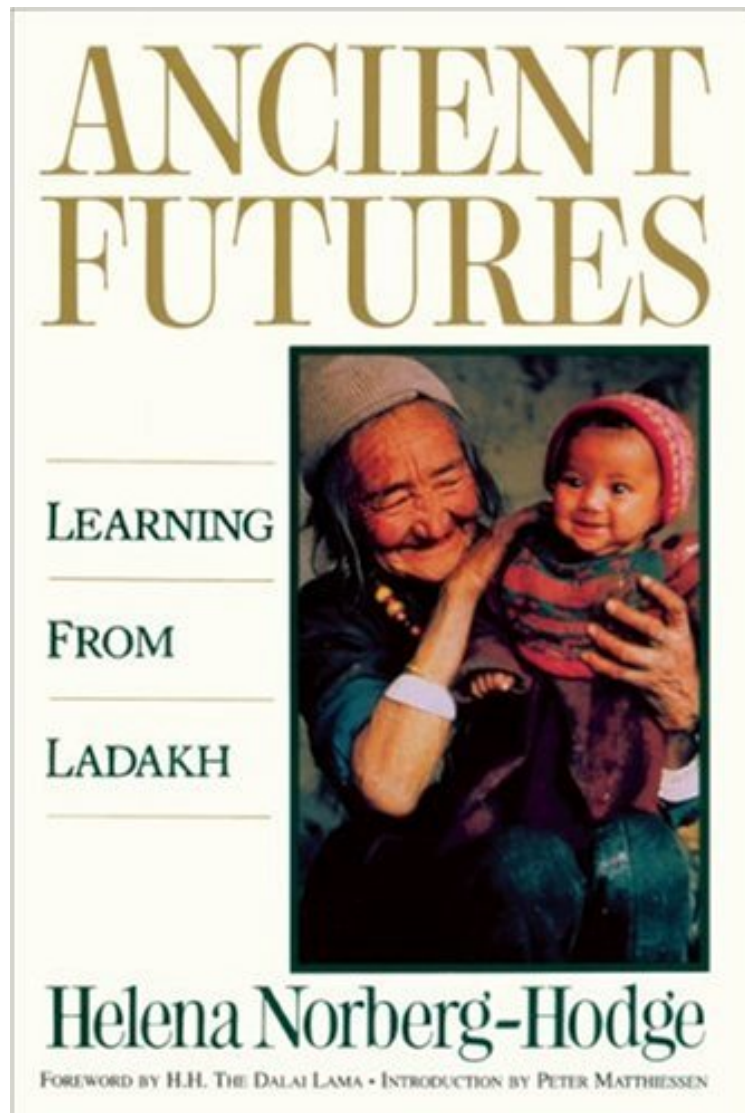


(Free read ebook) Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh

Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh

Helena Norberg-Hodge

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The swiftly evolving socioeconomic life of Ladakh, whose people struggle to balance growth and technology with cultural values, offers crucial lessons in sustainable development. This gripping portrait of the western Himalayan land known as Little Tibet moves from the authors first visit to idyllic, nonindustrial Ladakh in 1974 to the present, tracking profound changes as the region was opened to foreign tourists, Western goods and technologies, and pressures for economic growth. These changes in turn brought generational conflict, unemployment, inflation, environmental damage, and threats to the traditional way of life. Appalled by these negative impacts, the author helped establish the Ladakh Project (later renamed the International Society for Ecology and Culture) to seek sustainable solutions that preserve cultural integrity and environmental health, while addressing the Ladakhis hunger for modernization. This model undertaking effectively combines educational programs for all social levels with the design, demonstration, and promotion of appropriate technologies such as solar heating and small-scale hydro power. Examining how modernization changes the way people live and think, Norberg-Hodge challenges us to redefine our concepts of development and progress. Above all, *Ancient Futures* stresses the need to carry traditional wisdom into the future our urgent task as a global community.

From Library Journal Norberg-Hodge first went to Ladakh in 1975 and has spent six months there every year since. This slim volume is her soapbox to air her views of how Ladakh should be. Part 1 is the romantic, idealized Shangri-la where everyone is happy and contented. Then she portrays Ladakh after the tourist invasions and economic development. Next is a tirade against multinational corporations that are responsible for all the world's problems (strange, since India banned most international companies 20 years ago). Finally, Norberg-Hodge describes her work in establishing local organizations to introduce local-level, low-capital inputs. A popular and sensitive introduction to Ladakh is needed, but this is not it. Not recommended. - Donald Clay Johnson, Univ. of Minnesota Lib., Minneapolis Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. "The celebration here of traditional Ladakhi life induces exhilaration but also sadness, as if some half-remembered paradise known in another life had now been lost. So evocative is it that I felt -- I'm not sure what -- homesickness?" Peter Matthiessen, from the Introduction "Though full of stories and photographs of the Ladakhi way of life. [*Ancient Futures*] is much more than a travelogue; it is . . . an ecologue The Western industrial 'monoculture' that has infected and endangers the rich ancient culture of Ladakhi is the one that is endangering us, its progenitors, as well. A book that must be heeded." Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Nation* "A sensitive, thought-provoking account." *New York off Books* "An indispensable book for people who are trying to protect rural life." Wendell Berry "Everyone who cares about the future of this planet, about their children's future, and about the deterioration in the quality of life in our own society, should read [this book]." *The Guardian* (England) -- From the Back Cover "The celebration here of traditional Ladakhi life induces exhilaration but also sadness, as if some half-remembered paradise known in another life had now been lost. So evocative is it that I felt -- I'm not sure what -- homesickness?" Peter Matthiessen, from the Introduction "Though full of stories and photographs of the Ladakhi way of life. [*Ancient Futures*] is much more than a travelogue; it is . . . an ecologue The Western industrial 'monoculture' that has infected and endangers the rich ancient culture of Ladakhi is the one that is endangering us, its progenitors, as well. A book that must be heeded." Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Nation* "A sensitive, thought-provoking account." *New York off Books* "An indispensable book for people who are trying to protect rural life." Wendell Berry "Everyone who cares about the future of this planet, about their children's future, and about the deterioration in the quality of life in our own society, should read [this book]." *The Guardian* (England)