

My Anti-Cull Philosophy

Julian Langer

26/6/2021

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A Crow Calling

Yesterday I felt fury, after reading reports regarding government plans to extend the culling of badgers on this island in the North Sea, for several years. I felt a hateful rage, which embodies a far less likeable aspect of my personality than those aspects most people would likely wish to encounter.

After having been involved in anti-cull rebellion since 2015 and living in North Devon, frequently seeing dead badgers by the side of the road, I have come to experience a deep personal sense of care for these beautiful creatures. Finding a sett with healthy looking entry points brings an experience of joy to me, which would undoubtedly be considered bizarre to most members of this culture. I experienced this joy yesterday when I visited the sett that I was regularly checking during the 2020 cull season and will be checking regularly this year too. It is a huge sett and had all the signs of being active with badger life coming in and out, living as they do, despite the pesticidal, specicidal machinery attempting to negate their living presence. I do not mind sharing here that I did a small dance at the sight of these stunningly gorgeous holes in the ground – probably looking utterly ridiculous to the birds, squirrels and trees who shared the space with me in that moment. When I got back to my house my wife asked me how the sett was looking and I was so pleased to tell her, going on to say that I am probably going to write something about the cull (again).

This morning I saw more reports on the government plans to extend the cull for several years – possibly even longer than I had read yesterday. I was hit with a deep feeling of sadness and an experience of despair that hit me in the centre of my chest, sitting there like a crow calling out so often as to render forgetting its presence impossible.

I had in mind other activities to engage in today, but the crow's calling persisted in my chest, leaving me with the awareness that a primal and immediate aspect of my Being was communicating to my conscious awareness that now another activity was more desirable. Listening to this visceral, instinctual voice within my body, I decided that I would put off those other activities and begin writing this piece.

The most difficult part of writing anything for me is the space that comes before the writing of the first sentence. There is an intense cosmological quality to starting to write something for me, which is frankly absurd and stupid, but is undeniably the truth of my experience. Because it is an absurd activity, as I know that writing this is not going to stop cull-culture or save badgers from mass-extinction-machinery, but yet I feel this intense experience of existential responsibility regarding whether or not to choose to write about this matter and how I write about it. I have decided though that I will embrace the absurdity of the act and write about badgers and the cull, but how now to do it? Do I write an inspirational call to action, reminiscent of revolutionary rhetoric? Perhaps I will attempt to write a very logical assessment of why the cull makes no rational sense, with a moral case against the practice, detailing aspects of animal cruelty? Maybe I will write an open letter to my MP and publish it in the hopes that it might encourage others to do so, possibly motivating the politician to appeal in parliament for the end of the culling? I mean, fucking hell, how do I go about putting the caw of this crow and the beauty of those holes in the earth, into words for someone to read and maybe decide to rebel against cull-culture?

The words “quit over rationalising this you daft tit” come into my head and I decide to write this as I have been doing so – as a personal, raw, individualistic account of my experience on the

matter. I find beauty in what has been described as *uncivilised writing*¹ and feel happy with this approach to describe the crows calling.

Tomorrow writing this piece will be less of a struggle, as the great cosmological event of “beginning” has occurred. There will be less anxious, confused moving from one direction to another and more moving from space to space, that will be more akin to shinrin yoku praxis.

I will leave this here today with one story of my experiences in cull resistance that I feel to share here. In my second year involved in anti-cull rebellion, when out with a hunt sab group, we were walking across a field at night, after having checked the woods at the far side from where we had parked. We were aware of badgers playing a short distance away from us in the field, but were unaware of the shooters behind us, who must have snuck in while we checking the woods. I felt the bullet go past the left side of my torso, as it displaced the air between it and me. Moments later, we felt the badger die in our arms, as we desperately attempted to bring them to the car alive, to take them to a wildlife hospital. It was this experience, more than any other, than confirmed to me the intensity to which this culture is waging a violent campaign upon wildlife, akin to other militarist efforts in cultural-extirpation. My awareness of this remains today and I remain on the side of wildlife. I will speak about “tomorrow” tomorrow ...

Respect Existence or Expect Resistance

Yesterday I decided that this section would be titled as it is and took opportunities to reflect on those words. “Respect existence or expect resistance” is a phrase I have come across often in anti-cull media and is probably my favourite radical-slogan – or is equal to the line “death to Gilgamesh”, which I was informed is, or was, a popular statement amongst Rojavan anarchists, the YPG and YPJ. I’m not generally a fan of sloganing and find that it often cheapens and weakens the communication of statements that I find valuable. An example of this would be the Situationist line of “be realistic, demand the impossible”, which I’ve seen to my horror being used in electoralist party propaganda. It strikes me as utterly tragic to encounter this 5 word poem, created out of anti-Spectacle desires, to be Spectacularised into the theatre of parliamentary musical chairs. It seems to me though that those who are most responsible for this situation are those radicals who sloganized this statement of surrealist rebellion to the intensity that it has been. But moving back to the subject of “respect existence or expect resistance”, as far as slogans go, I am quite fond of this one.

“Yeah yeah, okay Julian, we get it – you like the punchy word collection. But, so what?” Okay, yes, I will go into the phrase further, but first I am going to clarify two factors regarding what it is I am stating here. First of all, due to the egoism I am bringing to this writing, I am not seeking to morally justify this statement and encounter nothing that requires me to provide any justification than is greater than my experience of desire. After this, due to the absurdism I am also bringing to this writing, I shall not seek to provide anything more than reasoning that is *absurd reasoning*² as unreasonable reasoning, accepting the limits of this attempt to articulate any reason behind these words or reason for valuing them. You might read these stipulations and decide to disregard what comes next, favouring writings that attempt to hide the writer’s

¹ Uncivilisation, 2014

² The Myth of Sisyphus, 2005

subjective-individuality and the absurdity of their attempts at reasoning – that is, of course, your choice.

Moving on now.

Respect. Respect is one of those words that is used in so many different ways, meaning many different experiences, that your use of the word might be totally the reverse of mine. As I encounter the notion of respect though, I notice how there are two immediate qualities to it: how I experience an-other and how I treat them. To respect this other individual before me I first experience the sensation of being affected by them with the feeling of respect – I encounter their presence as a being who affects me with the affirming feeling of respecting-them, which is generally quite a pleasurable experience, with the sense of positive-relationship it brings. How I treat them, following this experience of positive affirmation, manifests out of a desire to care for them, as a presence that I encounter as valuable enough to care for. (It is hopefully apparent that this description of respect in no way pertains to the authoritarian narratives regarding “respect” that are so often drilled into the ideological rhetoric of this culture!) Towards those badgers who the cull-advocates are seeking the annihilation of, my experience of respect for their presence as an-other, who I encounter as desirable, inspires me to seek to care for them, as best I can.

Existence. Not wanting to go too deeply into the matter of existence and what that means here, I would encourage any individual reading this to read my piece regarding Gorgias’ Trilemma and my reversal of his position to state as an affirmation that “nothingness exists”, “nothing exists”, “no-Thing exists”, “existence is nothing”, “existence is no-Thing” and “existence is nothingness”³. (Assuming that this has been read, or my meaning here is understood, I will continue.) How this pertains to the affirmation of badgers as existing as being nothing/no-Thing/nothingness is to affirm their lived presence as not conforming to the dictates of this culture’s Thing-Reality, which does not really exist. The point here is that they are living beings, not objects for the purpose of this culture’s Man-ipulation (of which there really are none).

Expect. The meaning of the word “expect” here, certainly in my eyes, is one of a threat, which holds the statement together beautifully. It positions the force of an active will as a being lurking in the darkness of expectation. The expectation is not an imaginary future though – some kind of utopian salvation. The expectation is a hear and now lived experience of a psychologically immediate presence, intended to bring to the attention of cull-ideologues the presence of this being in the dark, prepared to enact this threat.

Resistance. Resistance is the actualisation of the threat that was positioned in “expect”. But what does resistance mean? Well, to groups like the Jensenite organisation Deep Green Resistance, “resistance” means “organised political resistance”, generally positioned as a solution to a problem – a very optimistic notion. For myself, this is not what resistance means, largely due to my doubts regarding political organisations and my corresponding awareness of how this notion of resistance both requires the “problem”, so that they can be “solution”, and actually, generally, supports the “problem” more than challenges – an example of this being how trade unions now, for the most part, support capitalist infrastructure, by making it more comfortable for “workers”, so as to neutralise any potential challenge to capitalism, rather than actually challenging capitalism. As I encounter resistance in this statement I encounter it as a position of refusing to conform to the ideology of cull-culture and a refusal to tolerate it. The intolerant destruction of

³ <https://ecorevoltblog.files.wordpress.com/2020/12/on-gorgias-trilemma.pdf>

cull-ideology is the positive affirmation of the living presence of badgers – feral iconoclasm⁴, as I wrote about in my book with that title.

So the statement “respect existence or expect resistance” means to me this – positively affirm the living presence, through care, of the living beings called badgers, who are not Things, or expect to experience iconoclastic-destructive intolerance of a rebellion that refuses to embrace cull-ideology. Not wanting to go too deep into the realms of differance, I am comfortable leaving this meaning as it is.

200 Species A Day And Species-Being

As I approach writing this section an avoidant, weaker, part of my being is tempted to put off starting this section to tomorrow. I wrote about *tomorrow* in my piece *Doomed To Deferral*⁵ stating –

“Ultimately, you and I will both be doomed, if we rest our hopes on reading or writing tomorrow, but perhaps being doomed is a decent enough ending to start at.”

and,

“Perhaps there is something to be said about being hopeless and fearless today.”

I am going to begin this section today, as I have done, and I have decided that I will finish it another day. Cull rebellion happens between many sunsets and sun rises, not as a History, with a future to achieve, but as a lived experience of being cosmically tiny, immersed in an ever changing space, which too large to ever fully comprehend.

But anyway, 200 species ...

When I try to comprehend the scale of mass-extinction devastation I am struck by the sheer horrific vastness of the situation. It is both immediately happening where I am and a planetary event, far greater than the limits of my embodied power to affect. The cosmic-pessimism that this brings would be dishonest to deny, especially considering the will-to-life it took for living beings to overcome previous mass-extinction events, with all the struggling and suffering that would have involved. The intensity of the strength and power of those beings who lived amidst those mass-extinction events is truly heroic to me, with all the tragedy that real heroism involves, given their inevitable deaths, which fuelled the births of other beings who also lived and struggled and suffered amidst mass-extinction.

When I first encountered the statistic of 200 species going extinct a day I was awestruck by the sheer magnitude of that scale of annihilation. To comprehend this culture’s totalitarian practices as that colossal was, as they say, “mind blowing”. And as I come to write about this here I am aware of my inability to truly comprehend the entirety of this matter, feeling somewhat “mind blown”. So I am going to move away from writing this for the moment, go into my garden and sit with the wild flowers, bugs, birds and cats who generally share that space with me. I have started this section today, as I decided I would, and now feel like my energies are best put into experiencing other living beings who are also living amidst mass extinction. I will come back to this tomorrow, or more likely the day after (as I am aware that tomorrow is likely to be very busy and active, leaving me unlikely to have the mental energy to write more here) ...

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⁴ Feral Iconoclasm, 2018

⁵ <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/julian-langer-doomed-to-deferral>

The pause in writing this has been a few days. As I am writing, I am sat in my living room, after just having eaten breakfast, with some ambient music playing, the window open and allowing the sound of birds chirping to be heard over the music, and it is a cloudy and chilly morning. Also, as I am writing this now, today, the G7 event is happening in Cornwall, which is a relatively short drive from where I live, with politicians and protesters having flooded to. Last night I meditated on this political spectacle of Greenification and this morning I have sat with a feeling of longing that, after G7, those who have travel through cull zones will seek to challenge cull-practitioners, on their return journeys home. I will share more about my meditations later in this piece though and return focus for now on the subject of this section.

So, mass extinction. Fucking hell; how do I write about this here? To attempt to write something on mass-extinction, through Mesodma, I engaged in speculative palaeontological-realist fiction⁶. But I am not going to do that here. I could attempt to explain the machinery/apparatus of mass-extinction culture, so that someone reading might encounter new informational nuggets that enlighten them to situation at hand – in the ways that many environmentally minded individuals and groups try to do. But I don't believe that that approach to writing holds much value.

I tend to focus on encouraging individuals to turn their attentions to their immediate, authentic, experience of living amidst mass-extinction culture/machinery (civilisation/Leviathan as I would generally describe it), with an affirmation of the primal life desire, will-to-life/power, that I notice in all those I see embracing their being-alive. With this affirmation of individual, egoistic, experience, I have affirmed a position of rejecting species-being throughout much of my writing, which I will also do here – this coming from an ontological perspective that fits a nominalist mode of thought, which I have also named as eco-egoism (see my essay *An Eco-Egoist Destruction of Species-Being and Speciesism*⁷). From this perspective an uncomfortable encounter hits me and that is the prospect that every individual is actually an Endling, the last of their kind and that every death is an extinction event. This does not neutralise the devastation that is mass-extinction culture in any way – at least, not for me – as it actually does the opposite, with every individual living being's life being far more intensely unique and rarefied and valuable, than any collectivised analysis could pertain-to.

How does this relate to badgers and/or anti-cull philosophy and practices? Well first of all, yes, I do talk and write about the species-collective called badgers, mostly for easy(er) communication. But as I consider the abusive practices enacted towards those living beings I might name as “badger”, my feeling of horror, disgust and revolt is not lessened by the notions of “population numbers” or “percentage being-culled”, as I feel intolerant towards the pesticidal abuse enacted towards any of these individuals. Just because the numbers of those named as Melee Melee (another name for badgers) are said to be generally increasing, I do not encounter the life of any individual to be lesser for this, nor their experience of desiring-life. Along with this, I am not attempting to “save the species”, as I know that would be a ridiculous thing for me to attempt – akin to trying to be a badger messiah, providing salvation for “the people”. Rather, I wish to defend those individuals, who share living in this space that is local to me, from cull-machinery. While I can speak to my disgust towards the cull in its entirety, my anti-cull rebellion is localistic

⁶ Mesodma, 2019

⁷ <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/julian-langer-an-eco-egoist-destruction-of-species-being-and-speciesism>

to the cull zone that I live in and directed towards caring for individual sets fiercely, rather than the species in an exhausted manner.

I know that it is not within my authentic power and responsibility (ability-to-respond) to save any species from mass-extinction culture. I do, however, have the power, responsibility and desire to care for individuals who I encounter in my life as willing their primal-life desire as a rebellion in the face of Leviathan.

Helpful and Hopeless

With regards to the aforementioned meditation I had last night, one of the points that came into my awareness regards 4 positions that I find as fair generalisations for environmentalist psycho-philosophical “camps” – hopeless-helpless, hopeful-helpless, helpful-helpful and hopeless-helpful.

With regards to hopeless-helplessness, I do not feel entirely rejecting of the position, but have no desire to embrace it for myself. I can sympathise with the feelings of hopelessness and that the world is a very dark place to be, but encounter the position of helplessness as basically pathetic and weak. The individual who has no desire to help or are frozen by a lack of help in their life is not one I encounter as beautiful, but I can affirm their honesty in the sense of cosmic-pessimism.

The hopeful-helpful position is also one that I neither entirely affirm nor reject. While I do not share their faith in political-narratives and/or green-technologies, in any way, I find their willingness to care for wild living beings beautiful and desirable. From my perspective, this is a naïve stance to take regarding hope, but the beauty of the helpful activities are wonderful to encounter.

Hopeful-helplessness is to my eyes a position that is utterly grotesque and revolting. To place faith entirely in the political-productive machinery of Leviathan, whilst offering nothing of help or attempting to deny the responsibility that being a living-free-individual involves, is revolting to my eyes. But sadly this appears to be the position pedalled most often – that we are helpless and must place our hope in abusive apparatus.

This position that I affirm in its entirety and very much occupy is that of helpful-hopelessness. To be without any feeling of hope, not believing that salvation is coming, seems to me an honest position. I feel this and encounter a sense of desire to help those who I experience care for. I encounter individuals who occupy this position as intensely beautiful, for their strength, honesty and will.

I have no hope that the system will stop seeking to repress the lives of individuals we name as badgers, but experience a desire to help those individuals survive free from cull-machinery. It is not a comfortable place to be, but it is where I am.

To Organise Or Not To Organise

It has been a week since I finished the last section. I’ve not written any more for this, nor have I done any set checks in the past week. In all honesty, as I type this, I am pretty tired, after trying to do too much, recovering from my second dose of covid-19 vaccine and having to sort out unexpected car problems. This type of experience is very common to individuals who are

engaged in activist activities – feelings of being burnt out and needing to rest. And activism is the focus of this section.

So, activism, what the fuck does activism mean – or, what does it mean to me (and might do to you soon)? Well, that is a huge question really. I will start my consideration of the question by considering how my “activism” differs from (perhaps?) the definitions of other individuals who consider themselves “activists”. Then I will describe what “activism” means for me, with specific reference to my anti-cull activities.

My “activism” is not that of “organising” or “organisation” – though I do appreciate the activities of organised hunt saboteur groups. In my experience, the energies gone into “organising” and the “organisation” are often wasted life potential, gone into constructing anthropological-machinery for the Cause, rather than seeking to deconstruct and destroy abusive anthropological-machines. Likewise, I am not interested in activism or activists as experts(/authorities) or martyrs, as that typically has the smell of vanity-missionary work, that is entirely about activists positioning themselves socially as objects for worship – I’m thinking in particular here about the media driven activities of the organisation Extinction Rebellion and its worshipers, as well as the organisation Burning Pink (another project very much infected with Roger Hallam’s vanity-missionary agenda). This form of “activism” revels in that most tragic of successes, the small incremental improvement that satisfies the appetites of those who were seeking to have their actions affirmed by state and/or corporate infrastructure – ultimately supporting Leviathan’s abusive practices, by making its violence more comfortable to live amidst so that rebellion is less likely – or, if nothing else, press attention.

What activism means for me is care, expressed as an authentic, immediate, affirmation of the presence of life. My desire to affirm the presence of living badgers is actualised through my practice of defending setts without mediatory organisations/groups, as an individual activity. This generally involves going to visit setts and checking that they are free from abusive apparatus. But there are other aspects of my anti-cull activist practice and to describe these I am drawing from my thoughts on Massumi’s ideas on the principle of unrest (the book by the same name is excellent reading on activism and ontology)⁸. The 3 concepts I am going to focus on here are those of unrest, affectivity and capture. With regards to unrest, I agree with Massumi that there is no such phenomenon or thing as rest, and would affirm this with regards to self-care as an aspect of activist unrest, as the processes of change occurring within my body. Rather than self-care being, as many “revolutionaries” would position it, being a form of passive liberal indulgence, (my) self-care affirms (my) living bodies (as my individuality is a multiplicity of living bodies) as activist unrest, as I encounter myself as Earth and the living world extending from my body – the attempt at totalising rest(/death) being Leviathan itself. Taking the principle of unrest seriously and considering Leviathan’s anthropological machinery as an attempt at totalising rest(/death), it is impossible to not be an activist, as being alive is unrest, with death being being-impossible – where activism differs is in what they are active in, i.e. the difference between ideological, political, work-placed activisms and life affirming activisms. The second concept of affectivities enters into my thoughts on my practice when I consider what is going to intensify my ability to affect the well-being of badgers most significantly. So today, rather than going to do sett checks, I have decided that I will self-care, through giving myself space to recover, and write here, so that I might psychically affect other individuals who read this. Affectivity in this sense is not

⁸ The Principle of Unrest, 2017

attempting to Cause an effect, as in determinism, but to effectively affect the world as an (absurd) act of care. In much the same way that I am always at unrest, I am always affecting the world, as I affect this chair I am sat on, I affect the air through my breathing, I am affecting this piece through writing, I can affect other individuals through weird conversations and breaking social conventions through everyday activities and so on. The last concept I will comment on here is that of capture, which is very much at the core of my rebellion – rebelling against the apparatus of capture being at the core of many of the ideas in my book *Feral Life*. I am revolted – as both disgusted by and inspired to revolt by – by the apparatuses of badger capture and annihilation, with my desire for total liberation being my desire for the destruction of the anthropological apparatuses of capture that is mass-extinction machinery/culture. As such, my activism is foremost resistant towards the structures of capture that constitute this culture’s Reality. I describe this practice as being neither above-ground or under-ground, as I find that dualism in (so called) activist praxis to be both unhelpful and bullshit – with individuals like Max Wilbert who peddle that rhetoric succeeding only in propagating organisational theatrics. How I describe my activist praxis is non-localisable localism, which is easily differentiated from the localisable non-localism of green ideologues who are concerned only with the easily locatable matters of international green industries and politics, with no authentic relationship to the space that they are here/now. Being non-localisable, the practice is very difficult to find (if you’re not very close to me), but its intensely local to where I choose to live – as I live in the middle of one of the cull zones and actualise my rebellion here.

Now that I have finished this section, I feel that my activist praxis is best placed in doing some dancing, cooking some dinner, bathing and then sleeping. I will likely start the next section tomorrow, which I have been planning over the past few days.

Conservationism? No - Preservationism!

In my book *Feral Life*, I wrote a meditation on conservationism as “jam jar” politics and articulated my feeling of revolt towards the ideology. What I mean by “jam jar” politics is simply the Man-ufacturing of a preserve, which is reminiscent of making jams from fruits to keep the fruit longer for Humanised consumption – rather than preserving the presence of the fruit outside of anthropological systematisation by leaving it as it is where you encounter it in the world, or eating it as you encounter it and doing something to care for the space where you found it, which I put forward here as a mode of preservationism (somewhat akin to Quinn’s notion of being-a-Leaver). The jam-jar preserves of conservationism are intensely Man-aged and Man-ufactured spaces, with the ideological focus being on preserving the flavours of what was once a living space for future generations of Humans to “enjoy”, so that green-ideologues feel less guilty about the industrial ecocidal and specicidal annihilation that this culture enacts, almost everywhere at its current totalising state.

Recently two conservationist organisations have reminded me of how intensely I dislike the ideology. The more recent of these instances is the Mammal Society spreading speciesist rhetoric about racoon dogs as being a “non-native invasive species” and a threat to the wildlife on this island on the North Sea. Calling any living being invasive for migrating from where they live while trying to survive amidst the totalitarian violence of Leviathan, whether they be Syrian refugees or racoon dogs, is just ridiculous, especially as it is coming from an intensely invasive

culture, technologically, ecologically, militarily and through essentially all other forms of dialectical systemisation. I am also repulsed by the positioning of wild animals as invaders and a threat to living beings here, when cull-practitioners are blocking the entrances and exits to setts, are out with guns and are putting cages near setts to capture living beings and annihilate them. The other recent example of revolt inspiring conservationism is learning of the John Muir Trust engaging in deer culling – something Muir would have been disgusted by, with its conservationist non-preservationism.

The distinction between conservationism and preservationism, within environmentalism, as practices has its roots in the disagreements between Pinchot and Muir. Muir, who interviewed bears and considered the preservation of forests to be defending God's first temple⁹, sought to affirm an intrinsic value in the living world through his preservationism, with his desires being that bears and forests would be left to live their lives without experiencing interference from Leviathan. Pinchot's conservationism, which was embraced by the American political establishment and has sadly become the go-to rhetoric of many environmentalists, sought to position instrumental (systemic/machinic) value in some living beings, as being worth keeping (as property) for their usefulness to Leviathan. The difference between these perspectives is largely the difference between transcendentalism (Muir) and materialism (Pinchot).

In my book *Feral Iconoclasm* I articulated my rejection of materialism (as a dead perspective), through an affirmation of hylozoic-physicalism, and don't feel any need to differentiate from materialism further, as it is clear that I am rejecting the tendency. But while I do not embrace materialism (and conservationism), I do not share entirely Muir's perspective regarding preservationism, for its transcendentalist qualities. Intrinsic value, God and transcendence to me are spooks and phantasms. To differentiate from transcendentalism here I will use the thoughts of two relevant transcendentalists, who have both inspired and influenced my thought and practice.

The first of these is Henry David Thoreau, who stated -

*"This is one of those instances in which the individual genius is found to consent, as indeed it always does, at last, with the universal. Faith, indeed, is all the reform that is needed; it is itself a reform. When the sunshine falls on the path of the poet, he enjoys all those pure benefits and pleasures which the arts slowly and partially realize from age to age. ... The winds which fan his cheek waft him the sum of that profit and happiness which their lagging inventions supply."*¹⁰

in his piece *Paradise To Be Regained*, and -

*"Ah, the pickerel of Walden! when I see them lying on the ice, or in the well which the fisherman cuts in the ice, making a little hole to admit the water, I am always surprised by their rare beauty, as if they were fabulous fishes, they are so foreign to the streets, even to the woods, foreign as Arabia to our Concord life. They possess a quite dazzling and transcendent beauty which separates them by a wide interval from the cadaverous cod and haddock whose fame is trumpeted in our streets."*¹¹

in his most famous work, *Walden*. Thoreau's affirmation of religious and transcendent qualities of the living world is largely shared by his friend Ralph Waldo Emerson, who, in his piece *Nature* states -

"Who looks upon a river in a meditative hour, and is not reminded of the flux of all things? Throw a stone into the stream, and the circles that propagate themselves are the beautiful type of all influence."

⁹ <https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1021&context=jmb>

¹⁰ <http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/henry-david-thoreau-paradise-to-be-regained>

¹¹ <http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/henry-david-thoreau-walden>

Man is conscious of a universal soul within or behind his individual life, wherein, as in a firmament, the natures of Justice, Truth, Love, Freedom, arise and shine. This universal soul, he calls Reason: it is not mine, or thine, or his, but we are its; we are its property and men. And the blue sky in which the private earth is buried, the sky with its eternal calm, and full of everlasting orbs, is the type of Reason. That which, intellectually considered, we call Reason, considered in relation to nature, we call Spirit. Spirit is the Creator. Spirit hath life in itself. And man in all ages and countries, embodies it in his language, as the FATHER.”

and -

“To speak truly, few adult persons can see nature. Most persons do not see the sun. At least they have a very superficial seeing. The sun illuminates only the eye of the man, but shines into the eye and the heart of the child. The lover of nature is he whose inward and outward senses are still truly adjusted to each other; who has retained the spirit of infancy even into the era of manhood. His intercourse with heaven and earth, becomes part of his daily food. In the presence of nature, a wild delight runs through the man, in spite of real sorrows. Nature says,—he is my creature, and maugre all his impertinent griefs, he shall be glad with me. Not the sun or the summer alone, but every hour and season yields its tribute of delight; for every hour and change corresponds to and authorizes a different state of the mind, from breathless noon to grimmest midnight. Nature is a setting that fits equally well a comic or a mourning piece. In good health, the air is a cordial of incredible virtue. Crossing a bare common, in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky, without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect exhilaration. I am glad to the brink of fear. In the woods too, a man casts off his years, as the snake his slough, and at what period soever of life, is always a child. In the woods, is perpetual youth. Within these plantations of God, a decorum and sanctity reign, a perennial festival is dressed, and the guest sees not how he should tire of them in a thousand years. In the woods, we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life,—no disgrace, no calamity, (leaving me my eyes,) which nature cannot repair. Standing on the bare ground,—my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space,—all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God. The name of the nearest friend sounds then foreign and accidental: to be brothers, to be acquaintances,—master or servant, is then a trifle and a disturbance. I am the lover of uncontained and immortal beauty. In the wilderness, I find something more dear and connate than in streets or villages. In the tranquil landscape, and especially in the distant line of the horizon, man beholds somewhat as beautiful as his own nature.”¹²

From the transcendental perspective, preservationism is God’s Cause as explosive holism, as seen here in both Thoreau’s and Emerson’s writings, with the intrinsic value being an essential, soul-like, quality that is appealed to.

How my preservationism differs is that I don’t experience badgers, or any other species or individual, as being intrinsically valuable or being expressions of God’s will. My preservationism is explosive holism reversed –implosive holism. Rather than intrinsic value, I experience badgers as egoistically valuable/desirable, not for instrumental value, but for the immediate joy of their presence in my world. The reversed holism is subscendental, in that preservation isn’t a mode of connecting to God through transcendence, but an experience of being-me, of encountering my being and the world as extending from me and me from the world, as an un-

¹² <http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/ralph-waldo-emerson-nature>

ending paradox. From this, badger preservationism is self-preservationism, not a Cause, but an expression of egoistic-will-to-power/life – I actualise my being through the practice of preservation. Subscendence, as I encounter it, is individualising, rather than collectivising – in the same way that I described earlier on species-being. I also want to note here that one of the key differences between transcendental-preservationism and subscendental-preservationism is the difference between spirituality and mystical-experience – (transcendental-)spirituality being something bound to words and (subscendental-)mystical experience being ineffable. There is an obvious absurdity to any self-preservation, which my absurdism is happy to accept.

Anarchy!

Anarchy is here. Anarchy is now. I experience anarchy most intensely when among the living, usually while surrounded by badger setts, trees and bird song, but it is not separate from my body. My bodily presence is the ontological actualisation of primal-anarchy – not as anthropological performance, but as the free expression of my will.

The anarchy of my anti-cull rebellion is my refusal to accept systematisation, to accept the systemic abuse of these living beings I encounter as egoistically valuable. It is primal in two senses. The first of these senses is that it is not bound to secondary or other mediatory “higher levels” of activity (rejecting that hierarchy), which are bound to organisational practices. It is also primal in that it is an expression of becoming-animal.

My anarchy is individualist and subscendentally-holist – psychic-nomadism as being here, being nowhere, being-in-the-world and being-the-world. My anti-cull rebellion is individualistic and subscends to affirm the lives of badgers as being valuable to my self-preservation.

The Cull

Today it is really difficult, for me at least, to find a starting point to discussing the cull – in a similar way that anti-cull practice is really difficult to find a place to start with. It has been a few days since I last added to this piece and as I am sat here I am unsure how to begin this section. I can say quite easily that I hate and despise the cull with an intensity that I experience an immediate bodily reaction while writing now. But from there it is less easy. I hear that crow cawing though and wish to not give in out of weakness.

Last night I attended my first gig/concert since the pandemic and lockdowns started over a year ago. The night was comprised of a lot of folk rock music, fiddle playing and dancing, I saw more folky and crustie friends than I expected to, and my legs are now very achy from all the dancing. Among the friends I saw there were two who are active in radical rebellions, one an activist involved in Extinction Rebellion and the other a hunt saboteur also engaged in anti-cull rebellion. I was immediately intensely joyful to see both of them, after extended periods of distance. I am starting my description of the cull here because I encounter this experience of joyful affirmation of the living presence of other individuals, particularly those with a conflictual relationship to this culture, as to be an intense point of differentiation from the philosophy, practice and attitude of cull-culture.

It takes very little research to affirm that badgers are being cull as a means for the infrastructure of agro-politics to be seen as “doing something” to address bovine TB, while actually

doing nothing of the sort, as the disease is being spread due to horrendous agricultural practices. Several years ago, I did some work experience on a small free-range, organic, dairy farm, and I can remember the farmer spitting venom about the cull, the horrendous practices and the farms where TB was spreading, because the cows were being kept too close together and the farmers were spreading TB infected muck across their fields. So I don't believe that the cull is a matter that is based in poor information or a lack of information, and I'm not bringing here any information, facts, figures, or knowledge, so as to present an analysis of the cull – I sincerely doubt such an attempt would produce the desired result, in much the same way that statistics regarding global warming don't result in any response. The description of the cull that follows from here is intentionally expressive, rather than attempting factual-realism.

The cull is nothing short of a Man-ufacturing effort attempting to produce death, through systematic-machinery, as a mode of anthropological-machinery that seeks to exclude these living beings, called badgers by this culture, who do not conform to the narratives of the Humanised Reality. Put more simply, it is a systemic effort in mass killing, which is only not-comparable to genocidal war efforts and the politics of ethnic-cleansing from a position of revolting speciesism. As a dialectical-effort, the cull is seeking to negate the presence of badgers, in the pursuit of Absolute-agricultural domination, as they are positioned as an antithesis to the collective endeavour.

What else is the cull? The cull is a narrative of the production of mass-extinction. The cull is lies and deceit and cowardice and a failure to affirm the failures of farming-practices. The cull is state-apparatus and approved by the government. The cull is practiced in the open, in a culture that keeps its doors closed.

How do I experience the cull? I experience the cull as right here and right now, as it is happening where I live, today. I experience the cull when I go rambling through woods and find cages close to setts. I experience the cull with a burning hatred for its practice, feelings of disgust and detest, and a desire to revolt. I experience the cull as an effort in erasing my ability to experience beautiful living anarchic beings. I experience the cull as a Cause attempting to effect the negation of badgers, which my egoism is revolted by and wants to see collapsed.

I am ending this piece of writing on my anti-cull philosophy here. My anti-cull rebellion is not ended and will not end, even if the badger cull ends, as any and all cull-practices are revolting to me. The logic of cull I reject. The machinery of cull I detest. The culture of cull is horrendous and ultimately one of life-renunciation, which I refuse to conform to. This will continue off of these pages, as I journey through cull zones and within my being, as a primal experience of life affirmation.

I long for a night with no cages to capture living beings.

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Julian Langer
My Anti-Cull Philosophy
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