The Enemy, Life Itself: an exploration of sex negative sentiment

by coolsquid

sex isn't revolutionary

Okay. Try to think of the most normal thing imaginable—not in your own existance, but as a societal whole. The most socially acceptable, commonly-held thought, concept, or idea. Do you imagine the grocery store? Middle-class 40-somethings? Holding a steady job?

Maybe broaden your perspective beyond human society: the most common, normal thing for any thing on the planet. Sunlight? Air? No, plenty of things live without that… Movement? Sort of? I mean, if you qualify it by counting "internal" movements, sure…

Anything/everything has, guaranteed, at least one thing (and possibly only this one thing) in common: life itself. Every organism manages to be alive, continue existence, and ensure things beyond it will exist. It maintains, it devours, it expels, it goes on. At this point in life's development, reproduction is the #1 thing required for it to continue replicating itself into infinity. So, sex: arguably the most disgustingly normal thing on the planet.

It's baffling that this process of life and its replication constantly surrounds us, with no escape in sight. We *must* eat, we *must* shit, we *must* breathe, we *must* be born, etc.—life is far more oppressive

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Songs of Creation & Destruction

Various Authors

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teeth able to chew through raw scavengings? Could we ever walk far enough to avoid the fates of Ishi, June, or Marie-Angelique, or would we be returned to society, no longer as humans, but as rare specimens? Would we become animals only to die in zoos?

Our desire for an Eden may inspire us to search for the Other within ourselves, but our fear of the Self may drive the utopian impulse. And to further confound our search for the keys to paradise, our ability to imagine such questions is, inherently, tied to the same aptitude that allowed us to name our kings and nation states in the first place. When we envision a world in which we can walk no longer burdened by our own humanity, a path to escape the poisons and prisons of modern society, we do so using that which makes us so horribly human. We ask a question. We use words. We name ourselves. Instead, let us pray our names be unspoken.

tantric sex, and martial arts. Today, conversion to radical Islam is popular in some subcultural circles.

In the 1960s efforts were made to negate "both the common culture of the West, and the old educational curriculum that sought to transmit its humane values." This disposition has grown out of, for example, the writings of Jacques Derrida and of Michel Foucault's assault on bourgeois society resulting in an "anti-culture" that took direct aim at holy and sacred things, condemning and repudiating them as "oppressive and power-ridden."

Another example of oikophobia is the hippie back-to-the-land movement that arose after the failure of the anti-war counterculture. This utopian urge was preceded by Anabaptist communes, such as the Bruderhof community (formed out of the German Youth Movement), which drew inspiration from Nietzsche's ideas about creating new transcendent values. They longed to "get back to nature." There is an affinity here with early anarchist experiments in living life outside of social mores. Anarchists at the time responded to industrialisation and modern warfare with nudism, vegetarianism, nature walks, and free love.

Multi-generational nudism was justified by the idea that children were equals with adults and did not need to be shamed for, or protected from, their natural state. John Henry Mackay, an Individualist Anarchist influenced by Max Stirner, is most known for writing *The Anarchists* in 1891. He also wrote about his love of boys age fourteen to seventeen under a pseudonym in *The Hustler: A Book of Nameless Love*. The desire to create a life outside of the one we were thrown into will always have an aftertaste of the dread and wonder of the forbidden.

Those of us who take on rewilding as an existential solution are faced with the possibility that our ability to imagine new worlds is in some way defined by the reality we emerged from. What would it be like to walk alone through the woods for ten years? To hear passing from our unnamed lips only strange new utterances? To feel our feet and hands harden, our fingernails sharpen, and our

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landscapers, and baris- tas of all ages, the residents are very, very old. Hogewey is being heralded as a great advancement in the field of care. It is a village, but it is also a care facility. It is also a rather nightmarish vision of life without sentience.

The residents of Hogewey each have their own apartment, filled with personal touches and tasteful furniture. They all suffer (or perhaps are blessed with) advanced memory loss. The streets are lined with cafes, markets, and shops where no money is ever exchanged. The friendly girl at the hair salon is not only a hairdress- er—she is a nurse, ready to administer medical assistance if anyone has a stroke or a fall. Everyone is either a caregiver or aide of some kind with specialized training, or a resident suffering from dementia. The citizens of Hogewey do not know that they live in a care facility, that they are being monitored at all times by security cameras, that their lives are being engineered for them, or that at any sign of confusion or anxiety, someone is waiting to guide them through the next moment so that they can forget the last. It is kept secret from them. They live much longer than similar patients in more clinical or institutional environments. Their families say that they are much happier, that this affords them at least the illusion of independence and dignity. No shadows dance on the walls of this cave— just the flicker of smiling faces in soft, diffuse lighting. They live in a perfect world, where all edges are blunted.

Oikophobia is a term derived from psychology to describe the fear of the home, especially of household objects like armchairs or kitchen instruments. Conservative writer Roger Scruton uses it to critique what he sees as the left's tendency to reject aspects of the Western project such as respect for political authority, homeland, traditions, etc. The concept of oikophobia exists alongside xenophilia, an inversion of xenophobia where progressive actors express a love for things outside of their cultural borders, as solutions to all kinds of anxieties. Examples from the Vietnam war era include the attraction to the religion of the east: Zen meditation,

her work. She was silent about the existence of Ishi for the most part. In one short note about Ishi she says that her father gave him his name (meaning "person,") because the Yahi held a taboo against speaking one's given name or the names of the dead. We know now that his gestures said something to the world around him, even if ethnology collapses when focused on an individual.

> *[Ishi] demonstrated his tool- making and hunting skills, and spoke his tribal stories and songs. Newspapers frequently referred to Ishi as the "last wild Indian," and the press was full of anecdotes referring to Ishi's reaction to twentieth-century technological wonders like streetcars, theaters, and airplanes. In his writings, Waterman respectfully noted Ishi's 'gentlemanliness, which lies outside of all training and is an expression of inward spirit,' and the records of the time reveal much mutual respect on the part of Ishi and his scien- tist-observers. Each weekend, hundreds of visitors flocked to Parnassus to watch Ishi demonstrate arrow-making and other aspects of his tribal culture.*

After just a few years living at the University, he died. Ishi's brain was donated to the Smithsonian for further study after his death in 1916. A living museum specimen, and then a dead one, preserved in a bell jar.

A century later, a postmodern experiment is being conducted on those not quite dead, not quite alive, under the banner of Humanism.

Hogewey is a quaint village, home to some hundred and forty people. At a quick glance, a traveler might not notice much different from any other small Dutch community, but soon would begin to realize that this village is completely unlike anything else in the world. First, no travellers pass through, since Hogewey is enclosed by walls with locked gates. Second, although there are shop clerks,

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> *parasitism is a short step. The word is now a virus. The flu virus may have once been a healthy lung cell. It is now a parasitic organism that invades and damages the central nervous system. Modern man has lost the option of silence. Try halting sub-vocal speech. Try to achieve even ten seconds of inner silence. You will encounter a resisting organism that forces you to talk. That organism is the word.*
>
> - William Burroughs, *The Ticket That Exploded*

What does it mean to be physically naked? What does it mean to be intellectually naked, without *lingua franca*? What does it mean to be naked in the eyes of society? Where is the Eden in which we are innocent, unashamed, and free? Language ties us to each other but it also leaves lacerating marks.

Herodotus tells the story of a king of Egypt who had two children brought up together, but in silence, reared only by a goat. After two years they held out their hands to the man responsible for the experiment in education, and said to him "beccos." The king, who knew that in the Phrygian tongue "bek" signifies "bread" concluded from this that Phrygian was a natural language, and that the Phrygians were the most ancient people of the world. The scientific method seems cruel when applied to humans, especially when its conclusions are lacking.

The life of Ishi provides another twist on the Wild Man motif. He was said to be the last of the Yahi tribe that was vanishing in the midst of Gold Rush expansion into California. Instead of being a child denied inclusion into communal structures, he was purported to be the sole member of his society. Anthropologist Arnold Kroeber, father of science fiction novelist Ursula K. Le Guin, held him as a living museum specimen at the University of California. While living on campus he was constantly ill due to a lack of immunity to society. Le Guin drew considerably on anthropology in order to create the visions of believable, desirable societies that populate

I want to find a part of me

that doesn't belong to you

After lengthy discussion recorded in their diaries, Jennifer volunteered to die. A few days later, she was overcome with an inflammation of the heart, without any previous signs of illness nor signs of poison, undue stress, self-injury or foul play. And her sister began to speak. An excerpt of June's poem is inscribed on her sister's grave:

We once were two

We two made one

We no more two

Through life be one

Rest in peace.

Photographs of them together at Broadmore show them as smart, eccentric, beautiful young women wearing turbans, silver bangles, elaborate makeup, and slight, strange smiles. They seem to exemplify a tense synthesis between the ultimate modesty and an ultimate, burning ex- pletive—forever foreign in all worlds but their own.

A House of Skin

The 'Other Half' is the word. The 'Other Half' is an organism. Word is an organism. The presence of the 'Other Half is a separate organism attached to your nervous system on an air line of words can now be demonstrated experimentally. One of the most common 'hallucinations' of subject during sense withdrawal is the feeling of another body sprawled through the subject's body at an angle… yes quite an angle it is the 'Other Half' worked quite some years on a symbiotic basis. From symbiosis to

Welcome to Issue #6

The sixth issue of Black Seed continues an effort to challenge and expand the meanings of both Green and Anarchy. As *editors and contributors, we not only wish to reject notions of the state and capitalism, but seek perspectives that are earth-focused, unexpected, or inhuman.*

The binary of the Fearsome Sky God and Sweet Mother Earth is a historical fallacy. If we seek to speak of the earth, let it not be in language perverted and twisted by narrow-minded gender ideals, but in language that rejoices in the cruel glory of the natural world.

The preceding is from the call for submissions to this issue. Even beyond this issue and this theme, this callout stands as a marker for our continuing efforts to live and imagine differently in a world that has seen and foiled many previous such efforts.

Ambiguity is one word for the reality of things that cannot be said to be good or bad, or even good *and* bad, but that exist orthogonal to that polarity. Is a mother who kills her child bad or good? Can you call her good or bad if she's a slave and her child will be a slave too? What if she's attempting to keep older children alive by killing her most recent? These are only a few examples of real decisions that real women (and families) have made and will make, and they point to the two branches of this issue's theme; one that reflects on earth as a mother, and the other on mothers as primarily nurturers.

Our cover image for this issue, a photo of one of the two destroyed dams on the Elwha River, speaks to some of the ambiguous terrain we're exploring. At face value, the destruction of the Elwha dams is an incredible and rare success story. Decades of struggle through legal and less- or not-legal means were finally successful.

Dams are one of the most significant interventions in indigenous subsistence practices, and the removal of these two has meant a remarkable resuscitation in the ecosystem of the river, with birds, salmon, native plants, all coming back with almost unbelievable speed. And yet, there are more complicated ramifications. First, it signifies a struggle that was successfully pushed through the apparatus of the state. For those of us who recognize the structural and perspectival limitations of fighting by the rules of the current system, this step towards a balanced ecosystem will be two steps back if it's seen as a reason to use the tools of the system.

As significantly, one reason to build dams is for energy production. Given the scale of the (ever- increasing) demand for energy, there are no good options—to the extent that sincere and passionate environmentalists have promoted nuclear energy, despite the toxins lasting for thousands of years, because *everything else is worse.*

We celebrate the victory of the Elwha River, while keeping clear in our mind that *that* victory, *that* ecosystem's return, can only come at the cost of other ecosystems. That is the way of the civilization that surrounds and informs us. That victory is both real and not real, in a world in which floating continents of plastic and miles of fishing nets denude the oceans, in which ongoing oil-spills in Africa have no one even attempting to clean them up, in which toxic waste is buried or dumped offshore by the multi-ton load, etc. The very real successes happen in a context of overwhelming poison, misery, and extinction, and cannot be said to offset them.

The goal of *Black Seed* is to look at all of it, not to hide from or over-emphasize the bad or the good, or the things that are neither or both, to see humans, to see ourselves, as small, overly-loud parts of a whole that was doing better when we were quieter, and to consider how we can loudly remember, or learn, to be quieter again, in a civilization that promotes the equation of silence with death.

diaries. Despite being hailed as the "Queens of Broadmoor" by fellow patients, their diaries reveal an increasing level of desperation, pain, and animosity towards each other. They were separated often. Hospital records detail many eerie instances in which they seemed to act in tandem— one day June attacked a nurse while Jennifer attempted suicide in a different ward; they were often observed to be sitting with the same posture and affect simultaneously, in different rooms. After 14 years of torture, they chose their long-standing pact since childhood: if one died, the other would speak, and live. June wrote:

One of us is plotting to kill one of us. A thud on the head on a cool evening, dragging the lifeless body, digging a secret grave. I'm in a dangerous situation, a scheming, insidious plot. How will it end? …I'm in enslavement to her. This creature who lounges in this cell, who is with me every hour of my living soul.

> *We have become fatal enemies in each other's eyes… We scheme, we plot, and who will win? … A deadly day is getting closer each minute, coming to a point of imminent death like hands creeping out against the night sky, intentions of evil, blood, a knife, a mincer. …I say to myself, how can I get rid of my own shadow? Impossible or not impossible? Without my shadow would I die? Without my shadow would I gain life?*

And yet their bond was undeniable, unbreakable, insolvent:

> *(…) locked in*
>
> *locked up*
>
> *creating stories*
>
> *inventing life*
>
> *you and me*
>
> *you are me*

that under the influence, they could talk to the boys. June wrote upon watching her sister lose her virginity:

> *Something like magic is happening. I am seeing Jennifer for the first time like she is seeing me. I think she is slow, cold, has no respect and talks too much; but she thinks I am the same. We are both holding each other back. …There is a murderous gleam in her eye. Dear Lord, I am scared of her. She is not normal. She is having a nervous breakdown. Someone is driving her insane. It is me.*

The girls became increasingly interested in theft and destruction. They attempted to join a gang only to be rejected—then plotted to start their own gang. They began smashing windows at random, stealing bikes and glue, only to call the police and flee before capture. They plotted to make bombs. They burnt down buildings. June wrote in 1981:

> *All this week I've wanted to burn down the tractor store in Snowdrop Lane. I burned it down today—with the help of J., of course. It was the biggest night of my life. We climbed over a barbed wire fence. The sky grew blacker and it started to rain… All the while, my lovely glorious fire was licking its way through the roof, and the thick smoke filled the night sky. It was a picture which will live in my mind for ever—oh what a sinful, evil, selfish mind. I know the Lord will forgive me. It's been a long, painful, hard year. Don't I deserve to express my distress?*

Shortly after this, they were caught by a beat cop nearby. After lengthy judiciary proceedings, they were sent to the infamous Broadmoor Hospital for the Criminally Insane. By far the youngest patients, they underwent years of turmoil and heavy medication. Jennifer developed tardive dyskinesia. They lost interest in writing novels, playing games, and drawing pictures, but maintained

The Leopard's Grammar/ Iron Tree Blooms in the Void

by Ramon Elani
For Avalon

> *It was because the children of the Empire were not suckled by the wolf that they were conquered and displaced by the children of the Northern forests who were.*
>
> -Thoreau, "Walking"

To speak of green anarchy, to attack or denounce civilization and industrialism, without speaking from a mystical place, a sacred place, is to speak with a mouth full of ash. Proper reverence for the gods, spirits, and forces of the earth is at the very heart of our critique. To re-emphasize and strengthen this connection, to re-affirm that what we are about is in essence a religious crusade, is to lead the green anarchist position forward. Do you deny the gods? Guess who else does that? The engineers of the state, the capitalists, the industrialists, the humanists, the ones who will sacrifice the world itself to serve their own ambitions toward godhood. As soon as humanity, in the infancy of the Enlightenment, declared its independence from the gods and the world of so-called superstition, technoindustrial society was born. Those who seek to define a sense of the world in which humanity does not occupy the sole position of power without basing their position in the nature of the sacred are grasping at straws. It is an incoherent position because

it has no foundation on which to stand. In this regard, technoindustrial society is correct: if there is no god(s) than why should humanity not exploit the cosmos as it will?

Leave the earth a withered husk and dream of worlds beyond to scour. For as long as the green anarchist trend has existed, we have venerated the memories and lifeways of those who lived and still live without civilization. And for just as long, we have neglected the fact that those communities, without exception, based their entire existence upon a spiritual conception of the world. There is not, and has never been, a community of people that lived outside of techno-industrial society that did not see the gods in the sky, in the dirt, in the stones, rivers, trees, and creatures.

Thus, let us proudly return to such a vision of the world.

No longer picking and choosing the elements of primitive life that appeal to us and neglecting those that threaten our modern, Enlightenment morals and assumptions, which continue to dominate the thinking of too many, that say that the world of spirits and gods is superstitious and irrational. We do not get to venerate the ways of ancient people on one hand and then dismiss them as simple-minded and ignorant on the other because they believed that powers and deities ruled the world. Make no mistake, the ideology of techno-industrial society is nothing if not secular. And by rejecting the world of the gods and spirits, we put ourselves on the side that we claim to be fighting. Let us clarify further: when we speak of gods and spirituality, we do not speak of the world-denying Abrahamic religions, though even within that repressive tradition there are ways that the old gods filter through via the gnostics, the sufis, and the cults of the saints, among other mystical strands.

In articulating a spiritual basis for green anarchy, we put ourselves back in conversation with some of the our own most foundational and influential thinkers. Moreover, just as we will seek to no longer mould the examples of uncivilized communities to meet our own secular tastes, we will find that the roots of our own intellec-

It is estimated that as many as half of identical twin pairs develop some form of twin language for a time. June and Jennifer developed not a rudimentary language, but a rich and highly complex one indecipherable to any outsider. In the process, they began to develop their own culture and morality. When they were eleven, their family moved to an even more conservative town, somewhat infamous for its racism, and their isolation deepened.

An attempt was made to separate them on the recommendation of a speech pathologist when they were 14. At this point, they had not spoken to anyone except the other for at least six years. And yet when forced into treatment centers away from one another, both would call their case managers on the phone, speaking English, promising to speak more if only they could be reunited. After two years, their family, doctors, and therapists gave up. They returned home at age 16.

What happened next is rather spectacular. The twins began writing manuscripts for novels, eventually self-published, eroticizing their profound love of Americana, crime, and transgression. In *The Pepsi-Cola Addict,* depicting the life and downfall of a boy from Malibu hopelessly addicted to Pepsi, June's hero contemplates suicide, but his best friend talks him out it. *That's the easy way out Preston, and as the Indians say, any time's as good as today to die.* Jennifer's *Discomania* echoes similar themes of addiction, desperation, and the mythical life of an American teen, in a land full of attractive youth with multicolored skin and a thousand convenience stores waiting to be robbed.

They played elaborate, ritualistic doll games, spending hours recording birth and death ledgers detailing the genealogy of the doll clan, all the while communicating with whispers, clicks, and eye movements that unnerved onlookers to the point that some described them as being possessed with each other. They also met three American boys—white boys that "looked like Leo DiCaprio." They began drinking whiskey and sniffing glue, and discovered

It must have been this dramatic distinction between human and animal, civilised and boorish, those who speak and those who remain silent, that inspired such a mixture of infatuation, terror and disgust for that which is neither, or both. The Other is always obscured and mysterious, and often lives between worlds.

My Shadow Will Not Speak for Me

> *I am immune from sanity or insanity—I am an empty present box all unwrapped for somebody else's disposal. I am a throw away egg shell with no life inside me—For I am not touchable but a slave to nothingness.*
>
> June and Jennifer Gibbons, September Poems

The Gibbons sisters were born in 1963 in Barbados, before their family moved to Wales. Identical twins, the only black children in their community aside from their own two siblings, trying to translate their rapidly spoken Bajan Creole into a drawling southern English accent—they must have seemed out of place, to say the least. They were bullied and isolated at school, both by teachers and peers. Their sad, enigmatic story is quite different from that of many so-called feral children, in part because of their brilliance, but also because they were feral while still living within society.

Perhaps the most widely publicized stories of selective mutism, June and Jennifer showed no signs of developmental disability at any point. They actually showed exceptional intellect and talent—their fluency in written English far surpassing developmental standards for their age. However, rather than assimilating into the culture and community that so pointedly rejected them, they chose silence. Compelled within the depths of Kaspar Hauser's cellar, towards each other, towards them- selves—June later stated, *We made a pact. We said we weren't going to speak to anybody. We stopped talking altogether—only us two, in our bedroom upstairs.*

tual tradition were utterly committed to a spiritual understanding of the world. For Gary Snyder, "the poet laureate of deep ecology" and one of the most powerful theorists of "the wild," zen buddhism and indigenous spirituality formed the core of his understanding of the world. In 1973, he described himself as a "Buddhist-animist" or "Buddhist-shamanist." However, and this point cannot be overstated, the spirituality that I propose as a basis for contemporary green anarchy and the spirituality that Snyder promoted, as we will see in what follows, is not of a kind that takes us away from the world to a place beyond the stars. It is not a spirituality that is above nature. It is not a spirituality that teaches humanity that this is not our home and that our true destiny resides in the world to come. It is a spirituality that is immanent, it is instantiated in the world we live in. It is a spirituality that is alive in every fern, in every rock, in every flying, buzzing thing, in every grain of sand. Like the indigenous communities that we are right to venerate, we must rediscover that the universe is animate, vibrant, and alive, with thought and will and spirit. What is at stake in this spiritual understanding of the world is nothing less than connection and relation. This is what we have lost as we have increasingly denied the spirit world. And once again, we must emphasize that the monotheistic religions have not necessarily sought to repair this lost sense of connection. As Snyder remarks in a conversation with philosopher Bron Taylor: *Interrelatedness is a common-sense observation… What's not common is the mind-body dualism that begins to come in with monotheism. And the alliance of monotheism with the formation of centralized governance and the national state, that's what's unnatural, and statistically in a minority on earth. The [most common] human experience has been an experience of Animism.*

For Snyder, an animist spiritual orientation was linked to a critique of the state. While Snyder's relationship to anarchy as such might be debatable, it's clear that he was utterly opposed to the state formation.

In his 2010 book *Dark Green Religion,* Bron Taylor argues that radical environmentalism is fundamentally a religious movement, despite the fact that many individuals who identify themselves that way are explicitly hostile towards religion or supernatural phenomena. Taylor perceives a number of different tendencies within a broader spiritual, environmental orientation. He writes: *the first two types are forms of Animism…one supernatu- ralistic and the other naturalistic.* Taylor refers to the other form as *Gaian Earth Religion…a shorthand way to suggest holistic and organicist worldviews.* This type also expresses itself in supernaturalist or naturalist variations. The two sets of distinctions here are significant. Animism, according to Taylor's definition, refers to the perception of consciousness, vitality, soul, or breath in natural entities. This kind of "spirit" may exhibit supernatural power or not, as the distinction between naturalistic and supernaturalistic demonstrates. What Taylor calls "spiritual animism" is the belief these energies or consciousnesses contain "some immaterial, supernaturalistic dimension," while "naturalistic animism" denies or is at least skeptical of these immaterial qualities but nevertheless seeks some form of understanding or even communication. In this latter form, we can say that there is an emphasis on respect for the animistic world, if not outright reverence. We might think of this distinction as respecting a tree because it is a tree, and thus alive and containing some kind of vital essence, as opposed to giving reverence to the tree because it contains a particular kind of spirit that may offer boons in exchange for sacrifices. Taylor identifies Gary Snyder firmly within the tradition of spiritual animism, for example.

What Taylor terms Ga- ian Earth Religion is based in the belief that the universe or cosmos itself is *alive or conscious, or at least by metaphor and analogy to resemble organisms with their many interdependent parts.* Thus, this tendency is inclined to think of the natural world as a whole, either in scientific terms or not. The supernaturalistic variation of this tendency is explicitly invested in the notion that the universe itself has some kind of consciousness or soul.

yond Champagne. Indians were said to possess an innate ability to live off the land. Like in many other cases of feral children, intellectuals would rejoice in the potential to gain useful knowledge from tragedy. Recent cases are seen through the lenses of medicine, developmental psychology, and linguistics. But if the cause of separation is now understood as neglect or autism, the goal of learning as much as possible for universal benefit is still present. There is always an attempt (often a failed one) to reintegrate the child into society.

The weaning of her from feeding on raw bloody flesh, and the leaves, branches, and roots of trees, was the most difficult and dangerous part of her reformation. Her stomach and constitution, accustomed to raw food, full of its natural juice, could by no means endure our artificial kinds of food, rendered by cookery, according to the opinion of several physicians, much more difficult to digest.

An earlier religious debate before the Council of Valladolid sought to decide if biblical and canonical ideas would justify the existence of encomienda practices of forced labor in Spanish colonies. Philosopher Juan Sepulveda argued, in the tradition of Aristotle, that certain peoples were natural slaves. The Bishop of Chiapas, Mexico—Bartolome de Las Casas offered a different reading on sacred texts to say "All the World is Human!"

We can imagine early explorers seeing in the New World a kind of realization of Eden and the abyss: its inhabitants as either demonic cannibals or moss-covered cherubs. Hobbes and Rousseau said as much in so many words. Lost children are fertile ground for proving the validity of prefigured hypotheses using now- observable Apparitions. Those of us who still seek refuge in the hope of an Outside could try to listen to the language of these *infantes sauvage*, but maybe not in the way other adults have tried to hear.

Wildness has enchanted the European imaginary for centuries. Wild men were central adornments of medieval tapestries. Feral children were shuttled from court to court and viewed as fascinating oddities. Theologians debated whether or not they had souls.

and write. Her tale, seen as partially a hoax by many scholars, is typical of the very old and far-reaching narratives about "wild children." She was rumored to be from the Fox tribe of the east coast of North America or perhaps indigenous to the Caribbean islands before sailing to Europe in order to become a servant for a nobel woman. Speculations about her ethnic origins are important here because meeting the peoples of the Americas posed new challenges to "Western" thought around the concepts of language, human nature, and the distinction between savage and civilized. The European self had to come to terms with seeing its reflection in the mirror of the Indian.

She did not begin to reflect till after she had made some progress in her education; and that during her life in the woods, she had scarcely any other ideas than a sense of her wants, and a desire to satisfy them. She has no remembrance either of father or mother, or any other person of her own country, and hardly any of the country itself, except that she does not remember having seen any houses there, but only holes under ground, and a kind of hut-like barracks.

The idea that a child could live alone in the wilderness without the protection of social armor or language to guide her choices must have seemed almost supernatural to the rationality-reverent men who examined her. Native people were often viewed as childlike creatures in comparison to the sophisticated Christian races. They appeared to be mouthing words, but were they really speaking?

Le Blanc pretends to remember that aboard the ship in which she was transported, there were people who understood her language, which was nothing but shrill piercing cries, formed in the throat, without any articulation or motion of the lips. There were some strange characters engraved on her arms, which might have led to a more particular discovery of her nation.

If Marie-Angelique were a Native American it could help explain how she managed to survive the harshness of the forest be-

Taylor identifies this type of conception within conventional ideas of "God" or the Ve- dic "Brahma." Taylor also points out that this model is especially powerful within the so-called New Age movement. Ga- ian Naturalism is Taylor's term for the conception of a holistic universe that is nevertheless perceived and engaged with via scientific analysis rather than explicitly spiritual metaphors and concepts. However, as Taylor points out, even those who adhere to this perspective most often express their feelings of *awe and wonder when facing the complexity and mysteries of life and the universe* in the language of the sacred. Taylor identifies James Lovelock as a prime example of the Gaian Naturalist type. Lovelock, throughout his career, has emphasized that the basis for his Gaia theory lies in the scientific realm. Taylor writes, *Lovelock emphasized that for him Gaia is a metaphor, not a sentient god.* Indeed, Lovelock consistently identified himself as a scientific agnostic. However, as we shall see, these distinctions are muddier than they appear. While Lovelock argues in favor of a scientific understand of a holistic and sentient universe, he acknowledges that *if we could revere our planet with the same respect and love that we gave in the past to God, it would benefit us as well as the Earth.* Taylor's analysis of what he calls "dark green religion" becomes especially relevant to our purposes when he discusses its articulation among radical environmentalists.

Taylor dedicates the better part of his chapter on Radical Environmentalism to a discussion of William "Avalon" Rogers, who committed suicide while in jail for the infamous 1998 ELF Vail action. We should pause here for a moment and acknowledge that the lesson of Avalon is one that contemporary green anarchists would do well to remember. Years of squabbling about agriculture, symbolic culture, and rewilding has not honored the memory of this courageous man. For the moment, let us simply say that in urging green anarchists to embrace the latent spirituality of our position, I also urge us to return to Avalon.

In *Mountains and Rivers Compel Me,* Avalon's photocopied compilation of essays, poetry, and art (which he distributed freely), he

writes that his goal is to urge activists to abandon "human chauvinism." At this point, it is not clear that green anarchy, broadly speaking, has succeeded in this. Among other influential writers, Avalon also included essays by Vine Deloria, arguing that Christianity was responsible for waging a war against the cosmos and that only a return to an indigenous, that is to say animist, worldview could save humanity. The works of Edward Abbey and Dave Foreman also feature heavily in Avalon's compilation. Both thinkers are paradigmatic of the naturalistic tendency, emphasizing the sacredness of the natural world but ending their critique somewhat before arriving at a fully supernatural position. In an interview with Bron Taylor, Foreman remarks

> *It's very difficult in our society to discuss the notion of sacred apart from the supernatural, I think thats something that we need to work on, I nonsupernatural concept of sacred; a nontheistic basis of sacred. When I say I'm a nontheistic pantheist it's a recognition that what's really important is the flow of life, the process of life.*

Edward Abbey's works also demonstrate this insistence upon a notion of the sacred, albeit in naturalistic terms, as a guiding principle for environmentalism.

Radical environmentalism presents a key formulation of "dark green religion" in terms of its ambivalent apocalyptic perspective. On one hand the end is coming and it will involve immense human and non-human suffering; it may come quickly, it may unfold slowly, but it is unstoppable. On the other hand, the end, however it is conceptualized, will involve the breakdown of the anthropocentric techno-industrial world, which is responsible for the loss of contact with the natural world and the extinction of countless species. The millenarian orientation of the "dark green religions" can be understood in terms of hastening the collapse or bringing about the rapture in Christian theology. The collapse of techno-

Speech of the Nameless

by Dominique Ganawaabi and Soren Aubade

One evening in the month of September 1731, a girl nine or ten years old, pressed, as it would seem, by thirst, entered about twilight into Songi, a village situated four or five leagues south of Chalons in Champagne. She had nothing on her feet: her body was covered with rags and skins: her hair with a gourd leaf; and her face and hands were black as a Negro's. She was armed with a short baton, thicker at one end than the other, like a club. Those who first observed her, took to their heels, crying out, "There is the devil."

The History of a Wild Girl, 1768

*** The Wild Girl of Champagne

The story of Marie-Angelique Le Blanc is one way to talk about of the potential consequences of escaping from civilization. She captivated the French imagination of the time, in part because her life took place against a backdrop of the socio- psychological implications of leaving the confines of the Old World. The success of mapping out the previously unknown spaces at the edges of Christendom entailed a kind of confirmation of a certain worldview but it also meant that Europe was being Othered in the way it usually managed to deflect.

Her story is that of young girl who survived alone while crossing expanses of untamed forest for an unknown number of years. Some reports at the time stated that she protected herself from wolves with a wooden club or a sharpened stick. She was said to subsist by catching frogs and butchering rabbits with only her fingernails. Marie-Angelique would become the darling of some Enlightenment intellectuals who would eventually teach her to read

needs our prayers or healing vibes. Human beings themselves are at risk—not just on some survival of civilization level but more basically on the level of heart and soul. We are in danger of losing our souls.

We don't understand what we are, what we are made of. We don't understand that this world that we treat as the backdrop for our petty dramas and squabbles or as material for our conquests, is alive with spiritual energy and myriad entities and powers. We would not be able to ignore this fact if we threw ourselves into the fearsome and aweinspiring heart of life. Once, we could perceive the leopard's grammar. The law that says, "I will eat you. I will devour you. For you are weak and I am strong." Techno-industrial civilization denies the law of the world. The spiritual life of our ancestors taught us to honor the law: *the archaic religion is to kill god and eat him. Or her. The shimmering food-chain, the food-web, is the scary, beautiful condition of the biosphere.* If we wish to recover what has been lost, what has been taken from us by techno-industrial society, we must look inward to find it. We must rediscover that we exist as spiritual beings in a living world that is simultaneously alive and divine. What is needed now is reconsecration, for there are no longer any paths for us to follow. Let us proudly declare to the mountains and the rivers: we renounce the cult of humanity, we renounce the world of technoindustrial society, and we bind ourselves in reverence and service to the gods.

> *in the service of the wilderness of life of death*
>
> *of the Mother's breasts!*

sources cited:
Gary Snyder, *Turtle Island*
Gary Snyder, *The Practice of the Wild*
Bron Taylor, *Dark Green Religion*

industrial civilization is seen as imminent and thus we are in the position to give it a final nudge. In 1986, for instance, Edward Abbey stated his belief that industrial civilization would not last another fifty years.

Having seen some of the ways that a spirituality, whether naturalistic or su- pernaturalistic, has informed many of the foundational concepts of thinkers within and around green anarchy, let us focus on the example of Gary Snyder.

Forget wild plants, their virtues lose dream-time.

It is the spirit that ties us to the land. In his seminal 1990 collection *The Practice of the Wild,* Gary Snyder writes:

> *For a people of an old culture, all their mutually owned territory holds numinous life and spirit. Certain places are perceived to be of high spiritual density because of plant or animal habitat intensities, or associations with legend, or connection with human totemic ancestry, or because of geomor- phological anomaly.*

The spirit dwells in the land. Features of the landscape, animal and plant species have meaning beyond what is simply perceived by the confessedly inadequate human senses. But we have other senses, as well. Ones that have withered from neglect. Contemporary green anarchists are no less likely to laugh at the idea of talking to trees than those who blindly follow the ideology of the techno-industrial world. What does it say about us that we refuse to accept the common beliefs of those who came before us? We may be tempted to dismiss such stuff as hippie new age nonsense and hokum. But in doing so, we may as well abandon the entirety of our convictions regarding the path of humanity and the natural world. If the trees do not speak to us, we must begin to ask if the fault lies not with us, who no longer address them. As Snyder writes: *If we are on the verge of postcivilization, then our next step must take account of the primitive worldview which has traditionally*

and intelligently tried to open and keep open lines of communication with the forces of nature. As green anarchists, it is not clear that we have yet taken this step. The old anarchist insistence on denying the gods puts us at odds with both the indigenous worldview and the cosmos.

> *Down with demonic killers who mouth revolutionary*
>
> *slogans and muddy the flow of change, may they be*
>
> *Bound by the Noose, and Instructed by the Diamond*
>
> *Sword of ACHALA the Immovable, Lord of Wisdom, Lord*
>
> *of Heat, who is squint-eyed and whose face is terrible*
>
> *with bare fangs, who wears on his crown a garland*
>
> *of severed heads, clad in a tiger skin, he who turns*
>
> *Wrath to Purified Accomplishment.*

It is clear that anthropocen- trism is the root of the industrial and techno-industrial worldview.

We can frame this as humanism or human exceptionalism. In any case, it comes down to the same thing: a vision of the universe that places humanity above nature or the world. Where in ages past, indigenous people saw spirits, deities, individual entities populating the world, techno-industrial society sees the world as having one species and then a lot of raw material, aesthetically pleasing or displeasing scenery, gross things, cute things, and food. To say that the world is spirit neither denies the materiality of the world nor posits an anthropocentric perspective. The things of the spirit are not intangible, invisible specters, not wholly anyway. Perhaps they have this form as well. But the spirit and the land are one. They are intermingled, interpenetrated. The stream that I see is the stream but it is also more than what I see. We may call what that

Returning again to Kali and the figure of the wrathful mother, the giving of gifts and offerings consecrates our bonds to each other and the world. We do not acknowledge the other and so we do not honor the gift exchange. We give nothing to the earth, to the animals, plants, rocks, dirt, wind, and waters. We offer them nothing because we do not recognize them. And so we likewise receive nothing from them. Again, according to the logic of techno-industrial society, humanity is right to view the cosmos as devoid of spirit. In the end, our stinginess harms us the most. We hoard what we have and in the end, are poisoned by it. The worship of Kali demands offerings and austerities and sacrifices. Gifts are given and received. But this is hardly a capitalistic sense of exchange. Gifts and offerings do not have a perceptible exchange value. We give what we have and we receive what the goddess chooses to bestow upon us. It may be what we want, it may not. But according to the wisdom of those powers above us, it is always what we need, whether or not we recognize it. The importance of this relationship is in acknowledging the spirit or consciousness of non-human entities and in recognizing the small, but no less significant part in the universe that humanity plays.

Gary Snyder offers us little as far as action and praxis. This is not a coincidence. The more we search for paths to follow, the further we are from the way of the world. We have only to effortlessly grasp the meaning of things and leave it at that. As it is written in the daodejing: *a path that can be followed is not a spiritual path.* Let us leave things to the spirit of the world. In the end, this is the way to ultimately renounce our anthropocen- trism. If humanity is not the culmination of the natural world, then why should we assume that the world is ours to save. It will not be saved by us, no matter what path we try to follow. Our delusions of control will only become reinforced in the process. If we are gods, as technoindustrial society tries to convince us we are, then the world is ours to exploit or to save. But if we reject the idea that humanity is the center of the universe then *it would be presumptuous to think that Gaia much*

For those who have not swallowed the poisoned pill of techno-industrialism, envisioning a world animated by spirit is as simple as acknowledging that consciousness is not unique to humanity. This consciousness is what is meant by "spirit." In many cases, the word itself is the same. Among the Inupiaq people of the Bering Sea, Snyder tells us, as wth many other communities around the world, shape changing is a common enough occurrence. Animals change form, humans change form, as do rocks, mountains, rivers and other entities. In Inupiaq animal totems, however, it is common for a small human-like face to be carved, stitched, or hidden somewhere on its body: *this is the inua, which is often called 'spirit' but could just as well be termed the 'essential nature' of that creature.* We are not to assume, however, that this practice demonstrates that all things are essentially human. It is simply meant to reflect the belief that all things contain a spirit or consciousness that is maintained and consistent no matter how much the outward form changes. Humanity is not alone.

The ultimate, unforgivable crime of techno-industrial society is godlessness and denial of the spirit. When traditional people killed animals and consumed their flesh, they did so in reverence of the life they had taken and with respect and love for the spirit of the animal. One only has to look at the modern meat industry to see how utterly we have denied the existence of any such spirit or consciousness. While among many indigenous communities it was considered impolite even to point at a mountain, technoindustrial society bulldozes mountains to the ground to strip out the ore within. One does not act in such a way towards another consciousness. And confronted with a world denuded of all spiritual life or consciousness, humanity strips those away from itself as well. Once you are in the habit of denying life, it's hard to stop. So, imagining the world to be barren and lonely, we deprive this or that group of humans until we literally stand alone. And this will be our future.

otherness is by different names. There is an intelligence there, an agency, an identity.

But let us pause here, for a moment. Just as the bland secularism and denial of the gods by most anarchists takes us further away from the proper reverence of the land and accurate estimation of indigenous communities, we must also be wary of positing a return to a lost innocence. This position likewise takes us away from the world that is and puts us into the realm of delusion. The world is what it is. We are no longer what we were ten thousand years ago. What we are now, who can say? The passage of ten thousand years may not be long in geological terms but in terms of human life and society it is not nothing. There is an even more profound point to make, however, which is that there was never innocence in the world. Not among animals, not among early humans, not among the grinding might of the glacier, not among the flaming stars. In reconsecrating our bonds to the gods of the earth, we do not seek to return to some idyllic childhood of our race. To paraphrase Robinson Jeffers, it was dark already when humanity first walked upon the earth. The bonds between humanity and the earth were always, and always must be, honored with blood, without the bourgeois moralism of the Enlightenment. No, there was never innocence. Perhaps there was wholeness or a greater sense of connection to the spiritual, animate earth. But such gifts were bestowed by putting humanity in its proper place, among the other creatures that crawl through the dust. The strength of the non-industrial world is not that it is egalitarian, peaceful, or kind. Its strength is derived from properly estimating the worth of humanity, which is to say, very little indeed. This is not to say that equality, peace, and kindness are absent from the course of human history. They will always have their moments.

"*No need to survive!" "In the fires that destroy the universe at the end of the kalpa, what survives?"—"The iron tree blooms in the void!"*

Innocence. How long has this idea perniciously invaded our vision of the world? The world is innocent and humanity is wicked.

Within humanity, moreover, the civilized are wicked and the primitive are innocent. It is time to dispense with this nonsense once and for all. The innocent is the simple. To be innocent is to lack proper understanding. To be innocent is an enviable though ultimately untenable position. The innocent is so because he does not know. He is naive and gullible because he doesn't know any better. He is innocent because he doesn't have language, because he doesn't have culture. He is innocent because he does not make war, because he does not eat the flesh of animals, because he does not dominate his fellows or the earth. To conceptualize those we admire and seek to emulate in such terms is to reduce them to being ahistorical, one-dimensional, and childlike. In other words, we reduce and simplify them in order to feel better about our own wickedness: "Nothing makes one so vain as being told that he is a sinner." Those who would find an idyllic primeval past full of brainless saints would do well to look at the literature of the architects of modernity, colonialism, and empire and find their poisonous words repeated back to them.

If we acknowledge agency among the other we must acknowledge its capacity to act as it will, not as we would prefer, according to our moral assumptions. The entities and forces of the world will act however they choose. They do not give a damn for our ideas of how one should act. The techno-industrial world cannot grasp that it is not the moral compass of the universe, no matter how radically it has been proven to be morally bankrupt. If we prefer to view the world and its spirits as techno-industrialism does, as inert bodies, dumb and senseless matter, as so much material that must be ordered and arranged by our enlightened hands, then by all means we should continue to ascribe the same level of agency to them as we do to our children.

> *From "King" project a law. (Foxy self-survival sense is Reason, since it "works")*
>
> *and Reason gets ferocious as it goes for*

human but as part and parcel of the cosmos themselves. We are less than the storming waves, less than the thundering storm, less than the bear, and the oak. But we are also a part of them all. The wilderness is the place where these truths become self-evident. And yes, it is no coincidence that the city is the heart of the techno-industrial world and the temple of humanity's worship of itself. The spirit of the world, the wilderness still pulses through us. Stalking silently through the jungles and dark forests of the soul, like a bobcat, a leopard. We are not what we think we are, not as individuals and not as humans.

The dream-world, the world of the unconscious, the spirit world, the dew- drop world has been understood in various ways by pre-industrial communities all around the world. This is the world that we must seek. It is not above or beyond the world that we see but it is deeper and richer. We once dreamed with the trees, rivers, and stones. But now, for too long we have dreamed our own lonely dreams, constructed by the awful logic of the techno-industrial world. For Gary Snyder, the indigenous American spiritual perspective still remains central. It is etched into the landscape, into the earth. It is still alive among individuals and communities that persist. He writes, *the possibility of passage into that mythtime world had been all but forgotten in Europe. Its rediscovery—the unsettling vision of a natural self—has haunted the Euro-American people.* The mythic world cannot be expunged, no matter how grievous the sins of our culture. And our connection to that world cannot be severed. It can go dormant and be forgotten but I will persist in my belief that there are powers which can awaken it. To sit in the stillness of the forest—if one can manage to put aside the chatter of the human world—is to touch that power, to gaze into the heart of the raging seas, to feel the thunder on the moun- taintop. I mistrust anyone who sincerely claims that they do not feel the pull of that other world in those moments and a host of others, both dramatic and simple. To borrow Snyder's phrase, there is a "ghost wilderness" that drifts like mist over the world we have built.

In regards to the dual nature of the mother, as creator and destroyer, that informs our sense of the earth and the wild, Snyder points us to Thoreau's 1851 essay "Walking." In that classic piece Thoreau writes of *this vast, savage, howling mother of ours, Nature, lying all around, with such beauty, and such affection for her children, as the leopard.* We also know, however, that leopards occasionally devour their own children. Thus, this metaphor is even more apt than it first appears. Affection and violence are not mutually exclusive. Love and terror. Thoreau continues: *the Spaniards have a good term to express this wild and dusky knowledge, Gramatica parda, tawny grammar, a kind of mother-wit derived from that same leopard to which I have referred.* Humanity is inarguably a child of the cosmos. This does not protect us, however. For the spirit of the world is armed with stabbing teeth and ripping claws. In the dreamtime, this truth was known by all. For the gods walked the earth then and were armed with fearsome weapons indeed.

We know that the spirit world exists, because we see it in our dreams. Our hidden parts, the parts that have been sealed shut by techno-industrial society like an oyster protecting the pearl within, remain connected with the spiritual nature of the world. It is within the unconscious, within the world of dreams that we confront the self that is beyond the self. And is this not ultimately the lesson of spiritual and mystical traditions? That all is one, all is not human. For that matter, human is not human. We are in the rock, tree, beast, and insect. And they are in us. For all is one, and that one is the spirit. Snyder puts it thus: *the world is our consciousness, and it surrounds us. There are more things in the mind, in the imagination than "you" can keep track of— thoughts, memories, images, angers, delights rise unbidden. The depths of mind, the unconscious, are our inner wilderness areas, and that is where a bobcat is right now. I do not mean personal bobcats in personal psyches, but the bobcat that roams from dream to dream.*

To dehumanize the human perspective, as Robinson Jeffers urged, requires finding that the true essence of humanity is not as

order throughout nature—turns Law back on
nature. (A rooster was burned at the stake
for laying an egg. Unnatural. 1474.)

Re-acknowledging the spiritual vitality of the world may force green anarchy to reexamine some of its current preoccupations. On some level, this may account for the hesitation of so many anarchists to embrace a properly spiritual orientation. Too many are unwilling to let go of the struggles for equality, justice, and freedom. To truly dehumanize our perspective means changing our response to the sufferings of humanity. If we truly seek to renounce an anthropocentric view of the world, we must unfortunately recognize that equality, justice, and freedom are unknown to the spirit of the cosmos. Reason, rationality, and the others are not to be found on earth, other than in the dreams of the same modern, Enlightened consciousness that enslaved and massacred half the world: the same consciousness that gave birth to industrialism. Again, let's be thorough—to deny the existence of a world without suffering, exploitation, and cruelty is not the same thing as sanctioning, promoting, or celebrating the horror and vileness of the current state of humanity. We may be able to trade certain types of suffering for others. And doing so may constitute more than a quantitative difference. But as long as solving human problems—whether disguised or not beneath layers of superficial variation—remains the primary orientation of green anarchists, we will continue to maintain and reinforce an anthropocentric consciousness. Regretfully, we would be better off sitting on the mountaintop and dedicating our lives to prayer than trying to fight the battles that so many are preoccupied with. In the words of Dogen: *The imperial power has no authority over the wise people in the mountains.* These are understandable battles, perhaps. Worthy battles, perhaps. But nonetheless, battles that will bring us no closer to what we claim to seek. Perhaps with prayer and meditation we can return to the

spirit of the world: *knowing that nothing need be done, is where we begin to move from.* There is no doubt that we stand in the midst of the Kali Yuga, the age of vice, of quarrel and contention, and the bull of dharma stands upon one leg alone.

> *Death himself,*
>
> *(Liquid Metal Fast Breeder Reactor) stands grinning, beckoning. Plutonium tooth-glow.*
>
> *Eyebrows buzzing.*
>
> *Strip-mining scythe.*
>
> *Kali dances on the dead stiff cock.*
>
> *Aluminum beer cans, plastic spoons, plywood veneer, PVC pipe, vinyl seat covers,*
>
> *don't exactly burn, don't quite rot,*
>
> *flood over us,*
>
> *robes and garbs*
>
> *of the Kali-yuga*
>
> *end of days.*

To evoke the Vedic goddess Kali here is not coincidental, for she represents a conception of mother nature or mother earth that provides an important corrective to the ways that mother earth or nature has been imagined in technoindustrial society.

It is not surprising that contemporary society is inclined to view the earth as a mother, given the dysfunctional ideas we have about motherhood. Within a patriarchal society, the mother is deprived of all power. The awe-inspiring power to create life is relegated to a figure of domestic servitude. She is expected to love and provide endlessly for her children. She is expected to be selfless, to ask nothing in return, to give and give, without ever thinking of herself or her needs. When we think about this as a model for our

relationship with the earth, much of the basis for our exploitation of the natural world becomes clear. It is not that conceptualizing the earth, or nature, or the wild in terms of the mother is a mistake. It's that our ideas about what constitutes motherhood are so severely flawed. In the vedas, Kali is simultaneously creator and destroyer, war goddess and nurturing mother nature. She is loving as well as terrifying. Moreover, the worship of Kali demonstrates an awareness of the terrible aspect of mothering, as well as the nurturing. What would it mean if we brought this kind of awareness to our conceptions of the natural world? First of all, as we have said, it would mean that we acknowledge how small and trivial humanity truly is. We are not our mother's favorite child, only one among billions. She does not bestow special favors upon us, certainly not without receiving offerings from us, which she has not received in a very, very long time. We are not exceptional, other than the childish petulance with which we ruin things. Secondly, it would mean that we understand the proper role of fear and terror in the wild world. Given the fact that humanity has made its own world, cut off from the wild, it has been a long time since we experienced the kind of fear that we were made to feel. The only fear that humanity now faces, by and large, is the solitary fear of its own madness. It is right for human beings to feel fear in the face of the awesome powers that stand above us. The leopard, the storm, the mountains, the dark woods, the reeking swamps. It is right to be afraid of these things. For fear is the twin of love. And what we do not fear becomes deprived of agency, passive and inert material that we can heedlessly exploit and squander.

> *Not all those who pass*
>
> *In front of the Great Mother's chair*
>
> *Get past with only a stare.*
>
> *Some she looks at their hands To see what sort of savages they were.*

Equinox at the Headwaters

by Sever

We had travelled far that day, even though it was the equinox. A car is not a healthy thing to have a relationship with, and though travellers have always come to love the things that bear them across the face of the earth, burning gasoline is not a good way to celebrate the balancing of the seasons, the beginning of the return of the sun to our hemisphere. But we live in the wasteland, and nowadays, people have to go great distances to connect all their disparate parts.

We were headed to Uytaahkoo, the mountain that rootless ones like me know as Shasta, to find the headwaters of the river that the Spanish colonizers called "Sacramento." The place was not treated as well as it should be. An asphalt parking lot and easy sign posts made access banal. An informative placard gave the spring its scientific explanation. Nonetheless, there it was, a veritable river erupting from the womb of the earth, surging up around the rocks at the base of a steep slope, gathering in a pool, spilling over a fallen log and running its way downhill, to join with countless other tributaries in a long journey to the south—to the Ocean—in one vision, or in another—to a series of dams and irrigation channels to feed a delusional Machine that believes it constructs itself.

It was raining that day, and the heights were lost in dense mist. We knelt, wetted our hands, filled our water bottles, and carried them a ways, accompanying the river on its path. Evergreens collected the cloud- spray and released it half-time in fat drops. The earth soaked up the rain and passed it on to the river. Not a mile downstream the river was already fattened, running white over the

in its demands than any other civilized structure, but for some reason most of us are content with its control over us—celebrate it, even! It seems that the only way to escape its unending crushing demands is to figure out how to live forever (to die would be to give in to the cycle of life, not a defiance of it).

A brief explanation of what "sex" means in terms of this article: an act of penetrative reproduction, or an act simulating such. Let's say… anything involving genitalia, penetration, and orgasm. I'm talking primarily "straight" sex, but honestly, feel free to imagine the best sex you've ever had and maybe it'll still fit into this critique. In addition, I can only critique reproduction from a human lens; while the ongoing existence and reproduction of all life is incomprehensible and repulsive, I can't claim to understand how or why oak trees, sea anemones, chanterelle mushrooms, red ants, jellyfish, et al, reach understanding of this concept (as much as I would like to, because frankly, jizzing wildly into the sea or dispersing my clones through fruiting spore bodies sounds way more appealing).

For all the shame and stigma that supposedly surround sex, people sure do manage to keep having babies, and continue to do so even under the most repressive of conditions. Current society engineers every way possible for two people to breed, with social structures built around making that possible (and then chained to that structure). Latex and pharmaceutical industries allow for plenty of ways to prevent life from being born—per- haps to keep us well practiced?

Anarchists and queers everywhere seem joyous at our new, oh-so-progressive, sex-positive culture. By acknowledging and pursuing our physical desires, we're embracing our "true" primal animalistic selves, fucking and frolicking as we please. As if performing such a mundane, everyday occurrence can somehow be a revolutionary act, or anything more than a byproduct of biological impulses at best, and a set of social roles/obligations at worst. Every-

thing everywhere is desperately trying to get laid, so why would "doing it" be considered radical?

Sex is mandatory for the ongoing existence of civilization: having babies is a requirement for society to continue. Denying sex becomes the marginal act. (Though if reproduction is how we've determined whether or not something is alive, I wonder, does civilization, as a concept, count as a living being as it replicates itself across the planet? Has civilization fucked us?)

sex as identity, identity as coercion

Sexual reproduction, by basic physical requirements, requires a catastrophically enormous imbalance of power. One individual in a pairing is inevitably saddled with the immense resource deprivation required for giving birth, while the other must give up nothing of itself, is allowed to remain weak, lazy, and is left with nothing other than a false sense of superiority. These power dynamics are born of biology (if biology means nothing more than a relationship with one's physical state, not practice of science or a generalization). It's a wholly individual experience and yet, also entirely the opposite: it's environmental, as our boundaryless bodies alter in response to everything surrounding us. Those with functioning wombs live in a different biological reality where threat of pregnancy (and all the horrors that come with it) looms over not just sexual interactions, but how we consider and move through the world. If one doesn't value life or the continuation of it, the ability to give birth can be nothing but punishment. Motherhood be damned.

Society took hold of this already- inconvenient bodily function, adding more and more conditions, obligations, expectations, and disadvantages to those cursed with birth bowels. From the regrettable moment that a child enters into the world, physical traits determine the course of someone's lived experience—gender and so-

My baby was freaking out, clawing at my breasts, trying to scratch the milk out. My midwife told me what herbs to drink and to nurse thru the dry sockets. It will let down, it will come back.

Om Shrim Hreem Hreem Aim Vajra Vairochaniye Shrim Hreem Hreem PhatSvaha

Prayer to Chinnamasta for protection and dissolution of fear.

I knew I couldn't because I have all these children. I was drinking gallons of ginger tea trying so fucking hard to feel better.

Wellness, anything.

I was frantically searching for a reason not to kill myself. This is a familiar place. A comfort zone. I hadn't been back here in ten years. I had to make it stop. I'd been talking to the moon a lot. (This wasn't a coincidence) She gave me answers, mostly gave me fifteen minutes of quiet in a salt circle to slow down and smoke some weed after my kids were asleep. She made me listen to the night and she told me to try to connect. Sit on the earth. Take up space. Stop fucking crying, you're drying up your own milk. Put that water back you fucking life giver.

I needed something tangible. Something I could hold and something I could watch myself, feel myself transmute this energy to. I needed to give off some darkness. I started to give Kali offerings every day. A tomato from the garden, some moon flower. A morning glory. I wasn't sure that she wanted them but I kept offering. I didn't know any of her pushpam prayers but I'd messed with a little diety worship before and have studied my share of meditation so I wasn't exactly unfamiliar.

My problems were earth problems, my crisis wasn't existential. I knew I needed to get free so I asked her to free me on the off chance that she might oblige. I studied her form and I asked myself, how can you relate to this?

I have to be honest, I thought I was forcing a connection where there wasn't any. I felt stupid in my woo, desperate and out of place like a white girl in a head dress.

I was afraid that I was doing it wrong but I kept doing it and one day I felt a shift. I don't think I saw it for what it was at the time but she doesn't bear her fruit like that. It was subtle. A decision. A shift.

I decided that my problems were bullshit as long as my milk was drying up. Everything else could wait. I gave life to three people who didn't ask for me, the least I could do was sustain them.

cial roles were born to fit into this already-existing "biological" box. To quote James Carse's *Finite and Infinite Games* (emphasis mine),

> *It is [] somewhat misleading to describe society as a regulator of finite sexual play. It is more the case that finite sexuality shapes society than is shaped by it. Only to a limited extent do we take on the sexual roles assigned us by society.* Much more frequently we enter into societal arrangements by way of sexual roles. *While society does serve a regulatory function, it is probably more correctly understood as* sexuality making use of society to regulate itself.

Identity within society is formed by the sex you have. Sex begat gender. The penetratee risks violation, death by childbirth, having resources exploited by force or otherwise—the womb is a resource to be colonized by life. Babies are born, the circle repeats—life hijacked society to replicate itself! People who gave birth became women; those who impregnated became men. For some reason people fight to maintain these basic roles over themselves (radical feminists and MRAs both see benefits and argue for the importance/validity of their biology). Others find new and creative ways of applying womanhood and masculinity that are inclusive of all sorts of different biological realities. Both seem like disturbing, undesirable outcomes, and rather than replicating these biological power dynamics, it seems preferable to abolish them from our bodies completely. There's nothing deeper to be found at the core of sexual roles than a social function based on physical reproduction capability, and rarely if ever do acts of penetration do more than replicate the existing power differential (whether vaginal birth canal or sperm-producing penis involved or not). Defy the tyranny of physical existence, defy the urge of biology— there's an infinite body waiting to be touched, with modes of pleasure that negate socially-prescripted roles upon our bodies.

Birth control, from the pill to condoms, remove the greatest fear of sex (i.e. reproduction/disease), thus the role of subjugation and power exchange continue to emanate outwards from the physical form without personal penalization. Frankly, the clitoris must be some kind of trick, engineered towards the downfall of all uterinekind! Orgasms and pleasure sneakily lure people into reckless acts, reproducing unfavorable power exchanges or accidental conception. While orgasms themselves certainly aren't invaluable, the fact that many (queers included) stick to societally-prescribed positions and replicated reproductive functions such as penetration in any orifice in order to achieve release is nothing short of soul-crushingly disappointing. Even if children are not a goal or possibility of intercourse, production if not reproduction is almost always the focus of sex in the form of orgasm. Humans replicate an industrialized version of pleasure with a set goal/product at the end result, and value placed on the quantity of orgasms is produced. Rather than bring the factory home to our lovers, we could do away with systemized gratification entirely.

Any animal occasionally forced to carry young should do everything it can to avoid sex. Ducks grew labyrinthine vaginas; water-spiders developed literal shields to cover their genitals; dragonflies play dead; sharks, elephants, snow leopards, guppies, elephant seals, dolphins, baboons (pick an animal), flee or form gangs to prevent copulation. Those who eat their penetrators don't seem to fear it quite as much, maybe because the resource exchange is more equal. Birth-giving animals outside of humans often appear drab and unimpressive in correlation with their sperm-giving counterparts, because being seen as sexually viable ISN'T AN ADVANTAGE, but rather makes their lives more difficult. Creatures with both sets of genitalia such as snails will literally fight with chitinous knives over who gets to leave un-pregnated. Meanwhile, humans create entire industries based on finding sex, and seem to do little more with their lives other than seek it out!

three in this tract, but will focus intention in the current era, known as Kali yuga, the period of struggle and strife of the Material condition, the end times, right before Bramha breathes in again.

This history was spoken into the ear of vyasadeva in the form of the Vedas and the written word of God, Sanskrit. This language is rooted in primordial sound vibrations known as bija or seed. The contemporary study of cymatics proves the inherent energy of focused sound. These seed syllables are used in meditation and ritual to break the vibrations of the material energy, Maya, a goddess manifesting the illusory potency of material creation.

oh Chinnamasta, incarnation of the divine mother Kali,
You sever Your head to feed Your disciples, You dance on the back of lust and desire.
Barren mother of mothers,
Your blood feast is nourishing sacrifice. How can I be worthy of your warm red embrace. I cannot give up the way you can. I can not give of my own self solely for the benefit of others, for I am male bodied.
I am the focus of your rage, I am your jealous lover, and I will betray you.
Yet you stand bleeding—feeding.
Life giving blood milk.
Your scimitar glistening in the darkest night, the crescent moon hangs in the sky. Procreation is my material curse, please have mercy on those I have selfishly hexed in the seeds of birth.
Screams in a mother's voice,
My life went to shit.

I was crying myself to sleep again. Feeling over tired and shaky no matter what time I went to bed. I started participating in my eating disorder. I lost forty pounds and my milk tried to dry up. I kept saying I'm so sad I'm so sad.

I wasn't parenting the way I wanted to parent. I wasnt being a friend to my friends. I was empty. I wanted to die so badly but

manifestations of these Gods and Goddesses, more bronze, more marble, more wood and soapstone but mostly more rocks, in which the seed syllables buzz in different names than I started with, different sacrifices, same methods of offering and worship, just different wavelengths of creations buzz.

oh, Maheswara, Shivayah, Gopes- war, You sat on Mount Mehru for eons of earthly time in deep drugged meditation.
Your Nataraja form dances material creation to nothing.
You taught Kali that she must break from your neglect.
Your care taker, your lover, is nothing compared to your visions of vrndavana. Your focus on the rasa dance earned you the name gopeswara, protector of the gopis, the deepest love in the universe.

In your desire to merge into the dance, your corpse was left for her to dance on in the material cremation grounds.
This union transcends the material. It stops time, it is creation and destruction in one instant. Please Gopeswara, let me have one taste of this absolution, this dissolution into the loving arms of Her.
Bom shiva, bom babulnath.
Namo shivayah.
Namo bhutanath.
Complete offering to Siva,
Lord of smoke, the underworld and ganja.
Praise shiva.
Praise the Lord of the ghosts

Each vedic deity has internal and external balance of life and death, which complements their physical counterpart; in mathematics, this disposition would equal zero or nothingness. This is the void, where the seeds of material creation manifest; ruled by the deities, Garbodakshya Vishnu and Laksmi, they maintain the realms of dark and light energy. The demiGod Bramha is then born from this energy to exhale the material universe. His inhalation destroys material creation. This cycle maintains in periods of time known as yugas, of which there are 4. We will not discuss the first

As we've seen, life goes on, despite the resistance of those responsible for birth. Coercion is integral to sex across the animal kingdom, including humanity—where we futilely attempt to give consent using abstract symbols known as words.

Rape is not a product of civilization, but a norm of the biological reality of birth. Rather "[r]ape's violence and transgression is not aberrant but rather a defining aspect of sexuality… *Normative, civil sex is only one part of a system that has rape as its basis, as a central operating principle. The imagined integrity of the perfectly consenting subject amounts to little more than a regulatory principle of rape, a purity to be defended against a threatening Other" (Undoing Sex: Against Sexual Optimism* by c.e.).

This is the origin of the existence of woman—to be penetrated/impregnated, to have power asserted over them, and agency denied, for the sake of life. The fear of rape is the fear of being treated as a woman, of being used as a utility. And attempting to heal from this process as a socialized woman becomes another trau- ma—it's alienating to extrapolate the experience of an assigned role on to myself. What happened didn't happen to me—it happened to all women. It didn't happen to me because of anything other than a common, natural practice. The circumstances around it have nothing to do with me as an individual. (Authors Angela Carter and Octavia Butler both tackle this subject remarkably—they both understand rape is a function of their everyday selves, not some horrific evil or virtue signal to villainy.) Society's constraints on the one who is raped are the true torture. Civilization blocks us from the physical and psychological acts that would relieve this trauma—slitting the throats of those who hurt us over a clear pool, so they can watch themselves die, for example, or releasing the energy in some trembling, overwhelming shake, as do gazelles who have just escaped death. We can't fight back or even run away in any meaningful capacity within existing social structures that keep us trapped inside roles where this is encouraged practice.

Sex is the core way in which we enter society. Gender has been built out of the tyranny of biology. The way out is to deny both by negating the acts defining sex, most especially the sex acts leading to or alluding to reproduction.

***sex as self-destruction

This piece began with discussing how reproduction is absolutely critical for maintaining social order—but any piece of philosophy or ideology wouldn't be complete without embracing its glaring and disturbing contradictions.

One would think that by advocating for the end of sex and therefore reproduction, I'm merely reflecting ideas behind anti-natalism: that we should stop breeding in order to let the human race die out, since it would be far better (for whom or what, exactly?) if humanity became extinct. And yet—it seems obvious that the more people we create on the planet, the more resources we extract/consume for population growth, the less likely our chances of survival. Perhaps reproducing until life is no longer possible is the best way to bring about our own extinction.

Many environmentalists (and, I suspect, green anarchists) hold James Lovelock's Gaia theory as a given truth: living organisms form a selfregulating and synergistic system that maintains and perpetuates the conditions for life. Gaia, the nurturing, all-caring earth goddess bestows her benevolence upon all living beings, and we exist within her grace. And yet—all but one of the past mass extinction events have been caused by some microbial creature or another reproducing to such a dangerous degree that it wiped itself, as well as most of its fellow living beings, off the face of the planet forever (at least, if you believe the stories science has to tell, which I, like everyone else, only choose to do when it serves my purpose). Enter Medea, murderer of her own children, and her hypothesis: that life on the planet ultimately leads to the end of conditions favorable to life's existence. Life destroys life.

Organic life has repeatedly caused the collapse of the biosphere (on a regular basis, on a small scale), and on at least one occasion

Straightedge culture in the 1990s, reincarnated this trend, the desire for physical purity and emotional release dovetailed almost perfectly with Prabhupada's version of ve- dic culture. Bands and scene members were yelling primordial names of God, chanting rounds of holy names, taking ancient ritual initiation, preaching this path and visiting it's root of India.

I traveled to India under this mode in the early 2000s. Channeling my youth experience into austerity and deep transcendental understanding.

It was here at the Vrndavana Iskcon temple that I met and sang with my adopted guru, Aindra dasa babaji.

Your eternal servant, Aindra's song entered my ears and heart, the sound vibration made me weep as all of my misconceptions and investment in the material world melted away and I saw your eternal forms dancing in candle light.

That night, dissolution came with the revelation that the purpose of syllabic intonation, sound vibration can be hypnotizing or hallucinatory or rock splitting or healing powers.

Next, I visited Shyama and Radha Kunda, a bathing place where tears of separation from Krsnas girlfriend, Radha fill a warm pool. Next to this pool is a cooler, larger pool formed when Krsna saw the watery result of his separation from Radha, he then cried a pool. I bathed in both. Rad- ha's tears stripped me of my speaking voice for at least 24 hours. The waters were another dissolution, another revelation; cosmic, supernatural energy runs through everything earthbound, skybound and heaven- bound. The syllables, the water, even the blessed food were profound energies to commune with.

I have tried over and over to commit austerity to feel it again, to transmute sound to a force multiplier, harnessing the elements through primal "hums" and "phats"

I have used my physical absence to practice more correct intonation, material austerities, the compete de- nial/ absorption of self. I have embraced knowing the illusion is just that, manipulating it to my control, playing with gods. I have acquired many more

Invocations to the Violent Deities: Shiva and Chinnamasta

by ca/sh

Introductory prayer to Nrsimhadeva, the half-lion half-man incarnation of Vishnu, who slays demons to protect his devotees:

> *om Hrim Kshraum ugram viram ma- ha-vishnum*
>
> *jvalantam sarvato mukham*
>
> *nrisimham bhishanam bhadram mrityur mrityum namamy aham*

I bow down to Lord Narasimha who is ferocious and heroic like Lord Vishnu. He is burning from every side. He is terrific, auspicious and the death of death personified."

A devout Hindu preacher named AC Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada brought the practice of Gaud- iya Vaishnavism (the worship of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu as a direct in avatar of Vishnu) to the north American continent, in the 1960s.

It was the fastest growing religion to hit these shores, within ten years of his arrival, the Hare Krishna explosion had a temple in every major world city, many preaching centers and cow protection farms. This religious path emphasized the congregational chanting of the holy name of a merged God in his Radha-Krsna form as well as ritual and meditation as sacrificial entryways to Krsna's heavenly abode of Vrndavana Goloka.

has almost extinguished it entirely. When cyanobacteria first figured out photosynthesis, the sudden influx of oxygen (still considered a poisonous gas by the way) eradicated enough of the existing life at the time that we *still* find it notable. Twice, photosynthetic creatures consumed so much carbon dioxide that they induced a "snowball Earth" that made the planet nearly uninhabitable by anything. Nice try, y'all, maybe third time's the charm.

So is this perhaps why we find sex—undoubtedly a repulsive, dangerous practice—so desirable? Because we are driven to bring an end to ourselves and everything else? Is this the real urge of reproduction: the will to die? We are slaves to life, helpless towards the drive towards destruction. We can't help being alive. Unable to break our link to life, completely obsessed by it—with no way to oppose it.

Humans, I wish you luck in being the first multicellular organisms to abolish all life on earth. Fuck to negate all life on the planet. Also props to everybody out there reproducing asexually, holding it down for the rest of us. If we insist on pursuing sex, let it be for the revolutionary purpose of destroying life itself.

Eleven Ways to Kill a Child

by Mallory Wournos

This piece is dedicated to all those who have paid the ultimate price and all those currently incarcerated for transgressing one of the most fundamental identities to carry society on into the future: that of the parent.

"Infanticide is typically regarded as not only intrinsically wrong but more so than almost any other action, not excepting the murder of an adult or an older child. It is important to note, however, that a majority of human societies in the past have openly accepted infanticide and have not regarded it as morally problematic."

Reconsidering the Ethics of Infanticide

During the Middle Ages in Portugal, a group of women known as "Weavers of Angels" made their living "taking care of" newborns that excessively burdened families. After smothering them, they would tell the community they died due to high fever. There's little doubt their neighbors knew the truth, but treating the death as resulting from natural causes helped to dispel whatever collective guilt may have lingered. These incidents, however common, are now looked down upon as primitive practices that don't deserve attention. Even those who claim to be live in total opposition to society and its demands on our bodies often hold these beliefs. In bringing these types of taboo subjects out of the shadows, perhaps more people can re-evaluate their moral reactions to what most see as incomprehensible. The story of the Weavers of Angels and others like it has shown that despite its discouragement universally, it

alive. For god is but one dream to have died: the dream of objective approval, of validation of our thoughts and feelings and ways of life. But not all dreams have yet been exhausted and vexed. Our shadow dances on the horizon as the dawn silhouettes us toward the mountainside. A mere body, caster and perceiver of shadow in one—a Plato's Cave-Machine— living the dream.

The Bleating Absence of Sound…

In seeking the keys of consciousness, of animation and awareness, one can never have the correct approach. The lens is always too exclusive, the instruments focus blindly and leave out the world in which they exist. Seekers mine to their idea of the center of the world, but a center is a naive a concept as a fathomable whole. Like the wolf who in licking flesh off the blade cuts it's tongue and devours itself to death, the plagued mind of the Scientist rips apart the world in front of him looking for the proof of his superiority of his chosen-ness and stands in heaps of flesh and fire with only the curse of indifference. In the shade of steel monoliths, an inverted sublime, in terror of our own power, the myths of Lucifer and Bacchus lose their initial revisionary lights and evil and delight are taxed and dreary. The heroic have long been cast out as nuisance, for in their sobriety they know they are now the Un-makers, the disruption of mass unmaking, and for that they would suffer unimaginably.

Outside of these myths, in the horizontal light of a rotating Earth, a magic still dances. The play of light on nothing-something for no one, and there life is but for no reason. There are no omens in the moon and wind, just light and displacement. With the arrogance of language we seek to live only within it and not of the world it represents. Nature was perceived as frightening and hostile, so it was fashioned into a nemesis. Now as it runs off with itself still independent of our will, thriving and careless, yet different, always different. Like a sound too loud and distant, and ricocheted across all valleys, so both its origin and texture are indeterminable. A solar flare trumpets the cornucopia. We hold our bitterness like flowers at gods grave. The Earth will pay for not loving me. If I can't have her no one will. Scorned and jealous of every moment we can't preserve of every love not endless. Life lived only for itself is an unbearable torture to the vain. The dreamers of Heaven or Elysium wander, locked out by their own failures to keep the dream

hasn't always been the scandalous aberration it has become today. Even during times of severe penalties leveled against the concealment of pregnancy and infanticide, there has always been support for parents that take this course of action, whether that came in the form of helping to conceal the crime and/or providing material assistance.

Peruse any zine fest or anarchist bookfair and you will notice a plethora of materials on D.I.Y abortions and the politics of women's health and bodily autonomy. In killig her child, a woman declares her sovereign power over her body, and the body of her child, yet noticeably absent from any of these radical publications are discussions of late-term abortions and infanticide. Infanticide is a rare taboo topic that is not deliberately omitted due to the discomfort it invokes in others (though this is certainly a factor); it isn't discussed because the majority of people in the United States and other rich nations simply don't believe it exists anymore, and when they are discovered the case is written off to its own peculiar circumstances. For society at large, any occurrence of child killing is an abhorrence and the work of mental illness for the secular or, for some, the devil.

The reasons for this invisibility are simple: today there is a wide belief in the easy accessibility of all other options, which include everything from contraceptives to adoption. However, as so many can attest, not everyone even has access to condoms and other contraceptives, let alone abortion services. In the U.S., a battle was waged by the evangelical right and abortion doctors experienced a wave of terrorism and political attacks; the result is there are less than 10 doctors that are able and willing to perform the late-term abortions and it is extremely difficult to meet all the requirements. Even the most ardent feminists vocally supporting of women's rights in general have a hard time defending late-term abortions and are often morally opposed. They certainly won't be advocating for a woman's choice to kill their children anytime soon. The perception by the public that (in the West) there are these

ready options available makes the killing of children a particularly shocking and sensational crime. Often the most "at-risk" are, of course, low-income, single women and teens, many who have become pregnant through rape or naievity, as well as suffering in abusive relationships (in the past it was domestic servants who were constantly faced with rape and sexual exploitation from their masters). These are the girls and women who are condemned with long prison sentences (even when others are sympathetic) and the shame imposed on them from society for committing what is considered one of, if not the most heinous crime one can commit.

Destruction occurs among many living organisms including primates and other mammals. Hardly a recent phenomenon, infanticide has been around as long as the human story. Anybody who knows simple biology should have no trouble figuring out why our ancient ancestors would have destroyed their offspring. As nomadic peoples that carried little and were constantly on the move for nourishment, only one baby could be nursed and carried at a time, until it became old enough to walk alone. This meant babies born before their siblings were weaned would be sacrificed for the survival of the tribe. Infanticide was born out of practicality. It wasn't until the coming of the missionaries and Christian values where the savages were told it was a sin that would send them to burn in the eternal lake of fire that these practices decreased in frequency, if they were not completely wiped out. Of course, infanticide was just as common in Christian Europe right up until the 19th century, albeit for different reasons, one of the biggest being illegitimacy.

The helpless and innocent

What makes children exceptional and the killing of them so much more heinous than the killing of an adult? For one, Christianity still manages to seep into popular consciousness its command

rithms weigh the efficacies of new methods of control and force adoption of the behaviors required to be stored as workable data. Many argue that this is our power over the 2nd law of thermodynamics, that we are organizing, crystallizing in antientropy against the 'great evil' chaos and heat death. However, might this closing, this bureaucratic force of consecration to ever limiting modes is itself be much more symptomatic of heat death? This homogenizing of culture is precarious, from our political behavior to food production to our every day. Our blind traditions become our disease, with the all too human oversimplification of life, and thus, of our dear consciousness.

Our fantasy of uploading our consciousness is the mirror side of what has actually happened: we have sheathed our entire civilization in glass and metals. Our activity is simplified down to that of automata encased and crystallized, denaturing ourselves, enshrining our castes; perhaps our consciousness is the one thing that won't make it into the vacuum, for it will be lost like the rest of 'nature' under the gaze of our arrogant instruments, who's operators seek not "what is" but "what can be of use to power." Who's science would limit the scope of the world to have their hypotheses validated into theory and law. An ethos that would rather have humanity mirror our own artificial intelligence, dumbing itself down and removing its connection with unknowing and unthinking and all the chaos our minds are connected to and seek only happiness and comfort (the modes deemed evolutionarily acceptable) fleeing death and discomfort as if they are not intrinsic to life itself, as if one would feel anything floating around as pure intelligence in the music of the spheres, like DMT angels, now bitterly jealous of mere mortals, Lucifer by the billions.

As of yet, "artificial intelligence" remains in the domains of commerce, military and police: driving sales, placing ads, automating transactions, recognizing shoppers, or shoplifters, determining the sentences of convicted persons, the movements of terrifying robotic killing machines (which are still not autonomous by the way), and thousands of backdoor intricacies of The Dark Future. In short, the "intelligence" of artificial intelligence is too mundane to deserve much worry in and of itself. After all, they are programs, mechanical in nature, logical machines and extensions that work on information alone and produce output in the form of information, a ticker tape with a verdict. The implications on the other hand, of it becoming uncontested to have proprietary algorithms, purchased by a state institution, that are subject to no explanation or transparency… That elements of state bureaucracy are embedding itself into code, not the legal codes written in English able to be pointed to and argued in court, but within outsourced, obscured, proprietary computer code, insulated from the scrutiny of the public and the non-specialist, should raise some eyebrows (but it won't).

Order Was Only a Metaphor

Scientists are the innocent theologians of capital. Artificial Intelligence is predominately machines made by humans for industry like any other means of production, yet their uses are encroaching mass manipulation. Our very words that search for our humanity: knowledge, intelligence, awareness, etc., are fraught with fractal complexities. It is all such an excellent diversion, so maddening—so unfortunately obvious. As the closing accelerates, as our options become more limited, the force of artificial intelligence upon our systems is amplified. Monopolies of all kinds (industry, ideology, modality) galvanize and presuppose themselves with the aid of our frameworks of cybernetic governance. On the back end, their algo-

for humans to go forth and multiply. Secular society has its own logic which puts significant value on children. Marked by an obsession with progress and growth, a stagnant or dwindling population signals a decline in economic stability and optimism for the future. Those cute bundles of joy are dollar signs. They are consumers from the get go (if the family has the means), and will eventually become adults who will consume even more and toil away to keep the economy afloat, entering into a while making others pockets even fatter. Similar to animal abuse, the helplessness of a child also plays to people's emotions, along with notions of innocence (if they are white this is especially the case) and as an image of hope. Perhaps this child will cure cancer or become a famous celebrity, or even the next president.

The submissive woman and the myth of the mothering instinct

Infanticide also disrupts common societal expectations of women, which makes it a powerful act of subversion, and an aspect of a "fallen woman," one who is morally corrupted, and extremely dangerous to the state and the status quo. Women were turned into "well-constructed folk devils" who defied expectations that women are naturally inclined towards submissiveness and nurturing. Thus, mental illness came to be used to rationalize the sudden turn to wickedness, to rationalize their fall from grace.

Value Systems that Lead to Tolerance or Persecution

In the past, infanticide in many places reflected a different set of values, one of balance and comfort with death. In Japan, a number of sources have shown a "popular tolerance of infanticide in

parts of Japan between the 1540s and the 1870s." In their first description of Japan in 1548, Jesuit priests reported that women there "killed their newborn children without any social censure." Unlike other places where single women were the most likely to do away with their progeny, here it was primarily married couples from all classes. What allowed women to openly commit infanticide was the view that newborns were not yet fully human, which happened gradually as the child grew more independent. They were likened to radishes that had to be thinned out for the benefit of surrounding plants (mabiki), or thought of as simply "sending a child back" (kogaeshi) to the spirit world (these beliefs would certainly be looked down upon in a Western secular society, one reason to reconsider spiritual practice and the values they can impart and help us navigate this awful world we find ourselves in). Birth, and by extension infanticide and abortion held little ontological significance.

By the 12th century, however, foundling homes had appeared to take in the growing numbers of unwanted offspring being dumped in the streets and riverways. Of particular concern at the time was the fact that the children had been killed before they had been given the baptismal rites. Many believed that foundling homes 'deliberately commit[ted] vicarious murder' due to their extremely high mortality rates. If death didn't come at the hands of the mother or a midwife, it would happen under the auspices of charity.

Despite its continued practice, its relevance to women, and its transgression of motherly values (which proclaim the family as the ultimate achievement for anybody with a uterus), infanticide seem to unworthy of discussion. Taboo topics such as this will have people question your sanity, and/or immediately dismiss you as *edgy*. With both physical and mental healthcare in their current abysmal state, it is ludicrous to stay silent about late-term abortions and infanticide. This article's title is only slightly tongue-in-cheek; more, it is a challenge to the morals that seek to convince us that all human life is intrinsically sacred.

cation both temporal and spatial of our body. Our bodies are the only ledger of knowledge.

Killing Machines or Judge Dredd Runs on a Magic 8-Ball

Considering knowledge as a seizure of beholding, take for example a cluster of signs and slogans: "intelligence that has transcended human levels." The elements easily give rise to assumptions in the mind. Either by themselves, or in combination they electrify our imaginations, and yet mean nothing. Are there levels of intelligence? What is the metric of these levels? What is an 'intelligence?' What is a human level of intelligence? How does intelligence show itself to be transcendent or above-without of another level?

Trans-humanists have no care for these metaphysical and labor-intensive questions. The trans-humanist wants to drag every critic into the murky swamp of ethical puzzles, for there is not a single purely philosophical defense or explanation of this so-called movement. Just like them, we are obliged to leave metaphysics to metaphysicians, and here simply give them a nod. All this to bring to the attention of the reader that those scientist developing "artificial intelligence" have not addressed the answers to these questions, let alone acknowledge that there are complicated questions (not only the wishy- washy ethical ones), and seem to not care to clarify that they are completely ignoring these questions. It is apparent their inability to comprehend matters of thought is dubious to their claims of recreating it. In spite of the appropriation of anthropomorphic words there remains a vast difference between algorithmic intelligence and the centuries long metaphysical arguments about what part of the world our thought inhabits, and the lack of these arguments in the realm of cognitive science, especially at the popular level, now appear as negligence and malpractice.

inquiry, is the practice by which the world turns. The reason for this drought is your sins, the reason of this bad economy is the liberal mind, reason tells us that the singularity is inevitable; when saying has had no inquiry and only platform. When people engage us about how we should see the world, or what the future might hold, when people evangelize explicitly or implicitly for a certain reason (cause).

Those that reason, that say, they show us pictures, they point to graphs, "see" this is my reason, this is what I mean. Like a surprise tour guide in the Museum, "This way to some exciting new information!" But, reason, in the real world is much more complex than that. What reason do those that say have to be saying in the first place? For what reason is such and such person in the media? What is the reason for this suggested content? Really. It is quite easy to reason. It is easy to select from the massive amounts of data exactly what one needs to create 'a reason'. Several critics of the Singularity prophets point to the fact that they use arbitrary, exponential graphs that end in the years of their predictions, ones that paint dramatic pictures despite being misleading.

Reasons hang like stars, at the whim of our beckoning, to say what they mean, to be made into constellations. Seven points become a graph and seven stars become a bear. Reasons can become signs, which can then relate to subjectivities, which we claim are bound in a continuum of restraint to a vista or location, in other words knowledge is embodied. Knowledge, or an object of thereof, is subjective, point specific, mutable, relative, temporal and impermanent. Knowledge is a seizure, a state of beholding a sequence of signs upon which we attribute some meaning. Signs we get from being in the world. Beholding these signs and being 'seized in knowing' allows for an intelligence or emotion to blaze through to create judgments and actions. This beholding can open the automatic glass doors to The Museum, but we find that there are innumerable museums and other more frightening things like, say, pure fear, for instance. Knowledge is embodied in that it is dependent on the lo-

SO, YOU WANT TO KILL YOUR CHILD

From the quick and painless to the drawn out and cruel, there are numerous ways to terminate the growth of unwanted offspring. In places where there would be scandal if people knew your business (and they would), people came up with creative ways to avoid suspicion. Family members and midwives can declare the child stillborn, and in some cases if you could prove you had prepared for the child with clothes and blankets you could also clear your name, as it was seen as proof that you desired to keep your baby. In general, fellow town and country folk had a great deal of sympathy for women accused of infanticide and would be hesitant to press charges, or mete out only a lenient punishment.

1. Smothering

Cutting off the airways of babies either by placing the hands or an object such as a pillow over their face has been an extremely common method for much of recorded human history. Often this was performed by a midwife who "knew the ways to produce a "quiet 'un." Until modern forensic science brought about technologies that could detect whether or not pressure had been applied to restrict breathing, it would have been difficult to determine whether the child died of natural causes or was killed intentionally.

2.Strangulation

Both smothering and strangulation work by cutting off the airway, but bruises have always been evidence of a crime. If the child is newborn, this can be passed off as the result of an umbilical cord around the neck, yet another way deaths were passed off as natural.

3.Drowning

In the past, so many children were dumped in waterways that their bodies were said to clog rivers near heavily populated areas, and were constantly being fished out. Many babies just happened to be born on washing days, stillborn in tubs of water. It is clearly still a convenient method of ridding yourself of unwanted offspring.

In 1995 a woman Susan Smith would claim a black man kidnapped her children. Smith's two sons, 3 years and 14 months, were dead in her vehicle at the bottom of a lake. The black man, of course, was fictional. The case became a media circus and so many people traveled to visit the ramp she drove down, that it was removed, like so many mundane memorials that seem to hold collective trauma. Another modern occurrence that ignited public fury was the case of Andrea Yates. In 2001, she took her five children one by one, the youngest of them 6 months and the oldest 7 years, into their bathroom and drowned them in the bathtub. After each child died, she took them into their rooms and laid them in their beds. The last child tried to run, after seeing a siblings floating in the bath. She caught him and dragged him into the bathroom, completing her mission. Many people find it hard to have much sympathy for a woman who could be that callous, even if they believed that she was suffering from postpartum depression at the time, or had homicidal ideations due to the anti-depressant Effexor.

4.Burying Alive

In some cultures this has been a method of population control. In the Northern Cape of Africa, until missionary interventions, the San and Khoi would kill children who were born while another was still at the breast by burying them alive in a shallow grave or leaving them to be predated upon (see abandonment).

5.Poisoning

Herbs are another old method of midwives and others who use abortificants. While often used to expel a fetus with concoctions that are still of value today, they have also been used to send newborns, infants and older children to early graves.

6. Abandonment

Recorded by the Chinese as early as 2000 B.C., abandonment has been a popular method of infanticide since time immemorial. At times the abandonment of children became an epidemic, leading to foundling homes and laws guaranteeing anonymity and immunity from prosecution if the newborn is left at the door (usually

and capital of all kinds. Let us not forget that the invention of magnetic tape, precursor to the hard drive was one of the technologies "stolen" from the Nazis at the end of WWII (as well as a disturbing amount of Nazi scientists and industrialists). These figureheads of Science, though, speak as if there is no bias to their work and their observations and no implications of the technology they're developing, of the world they're creating, that they work in objective truths, and yet, now we see them evangelizing, speaking in prophecies and predictions, telling us information that they know and we can know too. If we'd just believe.

Knowledge as the Lightning Scars of Chaos

Knowledge against old wisdom, breakthroughs against tradition, our now verifiable truth beckons—no— demands our attention. Knowledge proclaims to be permanent, infinite, the-way-it-is. Knowledge says to the rest, I am the order of the cosmos and you must heed my mechanics. Knowledge too easily attracts attributes of the mathematical and the rational, forgetting the limitations specific to those formalities of relativity. Wisdom cowers in its poetic temporality, tradition tries to incorporate and revise its prophecy, and knowledge now says. But, this saying, is ours a world that can harbor such things as to be saying? Is there any reason upon which one could stand and speak the words, I say.? Reason is a forgiving word in this situation, in that it presupposes a reason to be saying. "Here is my reason." The reason is the impetus of the saying. So, when I say, "this reason", the context is inherent. I reason about the world, and I say my reason to others.

Ideally, reason would have stopped at explanation, in response to an inquiry. Why are you dancing? I have gotten drunk and the shadows of my pet tree induced a vivid wind upon my mood! Why are you leaving? Because I realized you currently annoy me! Such is the good of reason. When saying comes first, however, without

It is an impossible task to research just how many humans believe in this 'Singularity,' in the tragic tenants of Trans-humanism (Human+, Post-Humanism et al), and in the vain and religious origins of these beliefs; for those beliefs are ghostly tendrils of brain cells that our science can still not point to. Our information spaceships shuttle us by headlines and sound bytes and out there forming like a black cloud in the deep web, the intrepid and inevitable eschatological Event. The Singularity is near! A gravitational threshold we careen towards and after which there is no turning back, and no one knows what is on the other side; a Rapture or Kingdom Come of humanity's own making. These morsels of sugary information lie waiting in the spongy, grey-matter for more click- bait headlines that will galvanize one (accidental?) fallacy to the next, until it forms an apparition, a god. Because "only a god can save us, so we must invent new gods."

Perhaps for the sake of drama our scientific and techno-venture-capitalist-entrepreneurs, our symbols of virtuosic intellect and success, our dear heroes, now irresponsibly express fear at the "existential threat" our machines pose to us, as if it's all spiraling out of our control and that these scientific truths would appear to us no matter which way we directed our trusted instruments. But who is directing this intrepid progress in which this "existential threat" lies waiting like a demon seed inside a nucleus waiting to be let out? More importantly, isn't this existential threat a product of consciousness itself? Does Science have a will of its own? Are discoveries really made as if on accident or are situations being studied with an underwritten end use? To be facetious, did a scientist look through a microscope and say, "By Jove! The A-Bomb!"

Obviously, there are likely some scientists that are by no means villains, that study chrysalis or bird migrations, and we do not claim the practice of science to be inherently corrupt. We merely suggest that it is easy to see, when taking the world at large, a very disturbing trend involving the minute inter-workings of government, military, academic institutions, technologists, industrialists,

before it reaches a certain age). Often the parents of the child abandoned it in hopes that a traveler would stumble upon it and take it in. Otherwise, it would die of exposure or predation. Abandonment of children is a fixture in myths, folklore, and fairy tales, including Hansel and Gretel and Romulus and Remus, who were raised by wolves.

For those who were found and taken in, it was not unusual for them to end up in a cycle of abuse and exploitation.

7. With a weapon

The use of weapons tends to be more opportunistic than premeditated. Women in pre-modern societies would be well acquainted with butchering and would have considerable knife skills. One example of this kind of death is the tragic case of Margaret…a runaway slave who, after being hunted down and cornered, slit one of her children's throats. She was grabbed before she could kill the second one. Obviously, in these cases, one can't really speak of Margaret having a choice. Her decision meant sparing them the humility and suffering of a lifetime of slavery. It is little surprise that she reached for that blade.

8.Tossing in the Trash

Melissa Drexler was enjoying her high school prom when her water broke. She went into the restroom and delivered her child into a toilet, and then cut the umbilical cord with the metal side of a napkin bin. If you were around when this happened in 1997, chances are you heard about the "prom mom." Drexler's case certainly wasn't the first nor the last of its kind. As long as there've been garbage piles, they've been convenient places to dispose of newborns and small rotting corpses.

9. Crushing the skull or breaking the neck

Our closest primate relatives have been witnessed using rocks to kill other male offspring in this manner, and it is likely, along with abandonment, the oldest method of what one could call early family planning.

10. Throwing off a cliff

The ransacking of cities in antiquity in some cases led to the mass suicide of the people on the losing end. Faced with becoming slaves to the invaders, rape, or death, women often chose death and took their children with them, the easiest way to do this was with the help of tall and rocky cliffs.

11. Neglect

Deaths due to neglect can be caused by starvation, unchecked injuries, exposure to diseases, or poisoning from drugs or household products; all particularly cruel and painful ways to pass. Sexual and physical abuse of children in foster homes and other shelters is frequent and trauma is no less painful than physical wounds, and can lead to death by suicide. Often kids die by a beating gone too far, like the 6 year old boy in Florida who was beaten to death over a cookie.

One of the worst cases of child abuse and neglect occurred recently in California. A 17 year old escaped her house to alert a neighbor that she and her siblings were being held captive. Discovered in the house were thirteen children, aged 2 to 29 (seven were legally adults) where they were brutally tortured by their parents. They were allowed just one meal a day, and a single shower a year. They lived in a filthy house; the dogs were kept healthy while the victims were subjected to horrific psychological and physical abuse. And what does freedom mean to them now? According to the blissful reporting of numerous media outlets the older children are "watching Harry Potter movies" "using Iphones for the first time," and "skyping" with their siblings in foster care. Most of the articles giving updates on the children's well being focus specifically on their introduction to modern technology, which, we are told, we take for granted. Is this freedom worth the long years of suffering they lived through, which will no doubt affect them the rest of their lives? Might it have been better to have never been born or ended it early?

we desire and–quite often–so much more that we've trained ourselves to block things out.

We don't need to strap phones to our heads with 3D glasses to achieve virtual reality. VR is here, and it has been here. Concepts of immersion, integration, and symbiosis have been implemented to great effect consistently through the development of personal computers and operating systems. The personal computer speeds through The Museum, allowing a rapid intake of text and image (hypertext). The mind and the mirror, in a spiraling ascent of love, reifying what our humanity is: our consciousness. Yet, where are we when we haven't entered the halls of The Museum?

Towards An Atomic Weight of Belief

Our love of our consciousness has led some to dream of uploading a consciousness into the cloud, or nanotechnology that can heal disease keeping us more fit to extend our consciousness, super intelligent machines that amplify consciousness, and programming our DNA to be 'fitter, happier.' and thus have an optimal access to consciousness. Ideas of this nature have all but permeated our technological imagination to the point which most lay people can no longer distinguish fact from fiction. Scientific journalism will proclaim at once how far from these fictions we actually are today, then carelessly attribute the word 'thinking' to the activity of a new algorithm, embedding a covert logic deep in our bio-hardware. Singularity, or the belief that we as thinking animals can transcend our biology, to such extent that we merge with machines of our own creation, inaugurating a new era of super-human intelligence that runs at the speed of light and is benevolent, solving the problems of its past, curing our diseases, saving us, absolving us all at the same time has intoxicated humans in growing numbers (the Chief of Engineering at Google, for one).

Narcissus vs a Liquid Crystal Pool

> *As I write these words, a square of cool, intoxicating light enters through my window and is inscribed in my pupils, my desk extends out to a new set of friendly tools that appear as floating symbols and leaves off at the stars, my desk is a spaceship for my mind that opens unto a liquid crystal cosmos in serotonin releasing violet and lavender. I am at Mission Control. I am on the bridge of my dream machine…*
>
> Anonymous User

It is easy to see how the optimism of early Silicon Valley tinkerers, eager to get rich, mingled with the thorough research and capital of their initial employers within the post-war military-industrial-education complex and led to all the breakthroughs that produced this peculiar view of the infinite: the endless expanse of technological conveniences and media tools catering to both producer and consumer, to developers and users, to engineers and. all the people with their eyes glued to Facebook at the library waiting for the information of the world. Only slightly—technically—different is illusion of the 1984 themed PR campaign: in the Marxist imagery of the industrial laborer, the smashing–through the screen–the face of the dictator. The hacker myth born: the end of centralized power, the democratization of information. Out decades from this gold rush—a virtual-reality, user- centered arms race—to sell us access to information, over half a century from the post-war warnings of elite scientists and historians that were outraged at permanent military and industrial occupation of academia and the private ownership of patents developed with the aid of public money, over a century (if not galaxies) from Marx… At the desktop we can read all about these events, if we know where to look, we have the technology to get all the information

An Evil Act

> *The accusation that some despised group regularly captures members of the subject's group, preferably children, murders them in terrible bloody fashion, and uses their blood in some magical and/or cannibalistic ritual, has been so widely applied through history that it has been given a specific name, 'the blood libel. ' Greeks and Romans and later Christians applied the libel against Jews, Protestants applied it to Catholics and vice versa, and both charged Masons with it. Knights Templar, Christian heretics, Gypsies (Roma and others), Native Americans, Mormons, Africans, members of African-based New World religions, neopagans, Communists, and colonists, have been among the groups so charged.*
>
> Encyclopedia of Infanticide

The idea that infanticide was the work of the devil has, of course, led to many groups of people being demonized as child killers and cannibals, witches, devil worshipers, and other representatives of evil. Nowadays, questions about issues related to infanticide-such as overpopulation (which some call a myth–arguing that if the supply chains were better, there would be no need to have natural checks– which they say either stems from racist ideology, or leads to it in the form of eugenics), or on what would we do in a society with no technology to keep infants alive–lead to suspicions that you are an advocate for genocide and racial cleansing. You might also be called ableist if you question how one would take care of those children who have historically been terminated, and are still terminated today through abortion, due to their scant chance at living a full life. Anybody who has ever had to take care of a severely handicapped child knows the immense sacrifice one has to make to provide for someone who will never be able to take care of them-

selves. Most people, being the humanists they are, cannot accept that some people cannot live without the kind of system we live with today.

> *…there always will be some who refuse to deal openly with the children they have conceived. These women, who bear and dispose of their children secretly, occupy one far end of the spectrum of maternal behavior. But it is less useful to think of them all as monsters than to see most of them as women in the grip of a fear and denial and despair that the rest of us are lucky never to know.*
>
> *Can we summon the grace to see it this way? That there are circumstances in which a woman may experience a baby as a profound disaster is, of course, one of the same truths that animate the politics of abortion.*
>
> Marjorie Williams

What is lost in conversations when certain topics aren't open for discussion so as to reassure the politically correct? How does this affect women and others who have to make difficult decisions regarding their bodies and reproduction? While this piece has been about infanticide, it is a lens for examining our value systems. Does our value system put more importance on birth and childhood than death? What are the limits of freedom? What is okay to talk about (not talking about "bad things" doesn't make those them go away). Dismissing the interrogation of taboo and subversive practices as the terrain solely of edgelords insults those sitting behind bars, many of them young, ill-prepared teenagers with no support. Infanticide was certainly relevant to them, and perhaps if more were honest about the trauma of birth and the constant pressures to get married and start a family, the critics would be more willing to accept the moral ambiguity and difficult questions raised by infanticide and other actions deemed morally depraved.

geometry. As one spends more time in The Museum one acquires the technology of real value, words such as truth and beauty, that must be true and must be beautiful, for there are no other ways to apprehend these elements other than their value. Further, truth and beauty—eventual outposts of conceptual understanding—imply by their very nature as concepts, an order and a language of thought. The life and transmissibility of an idea determined by its value. We weigh information by them, "What truth lies here, and what beauty?"

Truth and beauty are our meager defenses against alienation. They are some kind of primordial affirmation, gateway drugs to consensus and thus, society. Nothing walks into The Museum alone, one must dream The Museum and dream of consensus. Truth and Beauty presuppose society in their nature, for beauty is not in the eye of the beholder but in the passage of one eye to the next, and truth is only a thought until it repeats in another entity. In this thinking The Museum gives rise to an aesthetics of consciousness, which in turn manifests a globalized aesthetics of action, in that it even claims a unified view and criteria of human thought. However, to engage with The Museum and to engage in viewing the world through narratives is to also accept "fake news" (read: all news), to accept brainwashing, revisionism, and that we may brainwash ourselves, to the ends of further tailoring your taste and confining you to halls in which experience of The Museum, self, and selected histories all mingle and carry one off into psychoses. None of this is a problem, for psychoses are mere individuations and patterns of mood and a hierarchy of concepts, roads paved in inner-experience. Isn't our world made of these groping stories? And looking at The Museum from a distance it appears like an endless multi-dimensional anthill full of ghosts roving in currents.

to do with order, how does order serve them? Does not the dark, chaotic, impulsive, creative nature of some thinking disrupt this agenda? When lauded by critics, chaotic impulses acquire the status of art, and become sanctioned by our standards of truth and beauty, but the creative and chaotic white noise of our emotional weather patterns and the bane of moods are not so fortunate.

Intoxication Sin Ambiance The Museum is not the hall of evaporated actual moments—light scattering through leaves on the grass, what people actually say and do, or the perception of these things. The Museum is made up of virtual halls of narratives that tell us about ourselves and the world. Whether or not these narratives tell us anything of substance is another matter, but let The Museum be where people create histories and people view, select, and respond to histories. The Museum is the primordial virtual reality. The Museum is a product of deciding what things are. The Museum is a vocabulary, and a vernacular, and the symbols that overlay the night sky. Or put another way, it is memory weighed against language.

However, The Museum is untrustworthy in that it makes its way to us by means of others, who may have no care to contemplate the things we do, to live by the same calendar, or to attribute beauty to what we do, and who have not yet proven they do not wish to exploit us (because, let's be honest, humans are exceptional exploiters, and this might become important). The Museum differs from *the now* in that it is a retreat from *the now* that establishes connections to value. The Museum produces the Fascist and the Philosopher, the Master and Servant, the satiation and the appetite of ontology, us asking questions: "Hm, what is this about? Let us stroll through this wonderful installation and glean for ourselves something about the world that we can know."

The Museum is the archive of concepts; as we allow ourselves sequences of information, and hold them, and enter a state of beholding information, we enter the Museum. Concepts are a form of technology, a modular marketplace of vistas and their cortical

The massive human population is faced with unprecedented global catastrophe of our own making. More and more people who would never have thought to commit such a terrible deed will be caught in situations where they are moved to do the unthinkable. Things will be seen and done that may bring about revulsion, guilt, and shame. These people could instead be viewed as empowered sovereigns making difficult decisions during trying times.

For educational purposes only. The author of this piece cannot be held responsible for any deaths influenced by this article.

In Thine Image: The Gnosis and Narcissism of High-Tech Escapism

by Val Storm

It is beyond the scope of this article to extrapolate the history and practice of science both privately and academically and to elucidate just what might be driving this allegedly pure and benevolent, humanistic curiosity, this global media stage show. I recommend skimming the first chapter of *The Forces of Production* by David Noble, which covers the intriguing time period between the Depression and the Cold War up to the hilarious formation of the National Science Foundation. However, let it suffice to claim that science is driven and funded by a desire for militaristic supremacy, market power, delusions of grandeur, and all kinds of characters, ideas, and behaviors that can break down to myriad inhumane and anti-social end uses. -V.S.

The Censorship of Self-Control

Mindfulness glares at you while you wait in line to purchase your organic produce. The magazines of the fully conscious and *productive* members of late capitalism proclaim to tell you how to unlock yourself from the chains of suffering. For after all these are scientific breakthroughs, life- hacks, and ancient wisdom, "We have the technology!" It is a trend that has grown since the "conscious consumerism" movement of the 1970s through the romanticism of

the techno-utopian Whole Earth scene, and now blossoms in the glut of affluence in the liberal-intellectual pockets of a most dreary and violent society.

The ideology, like that of science at large, sets its sights against chaos and entropy, against the inhumanities of the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics, to establish an anthropocentric and benevolent Order. Not only upon Nature (its cruel weather and dangerous beasts), but upon the Nature of Self, our tortured and unclean flesh. But, when after the death of god did we get Stockholm syndrome? Perhaps god never really dies, or perhaps the death of god remains an attribute only of certain territories and an inevitability in others.

Mindfulness, similar to Transhumanism (or Human+) would like to extend the reach of scientific control to the biological processes that inaugurate the world at every moment: our bodies, our thoughts, and our emotions, resulting in limitless happiness, health, and cognitive abilities. Without yet dissecting the latent spiritual values of this rather frightening eschatology (for to them it is imminent) there is one simple assessment that deserves immediate attention. In the statement, "if only my moods and emotions—my mind—could better suit me," there lies a curious problem. In humanity's apparent wish to subdue the world with order, to make it kind and hospitable to us—to force humanitarianism on the cosmos—our very bodies do not fail to be against us. Our bodies are too dumb, too emotional, too sexed, too human… and for that, they must be ordained with or consecrated to our new values.

This scientific Gnosticism implies that even our bodies are not ourselves, that we lie somewhere beyond the betrayal of matter. It is hard to discern if scientists have not all along been driven by the desire to establish control over chaos: Promethean man vs. the cosmic undoing. Tragic and comic then is the obfuscation of values: chaos is bad and order is good. Heat death is chaos and crystallized order is the epitome of humanity. However, all of this binary thinking has left out a small, yet prized, piece of experience: creativity. No doubt humanitarians love the arts, but what have they

think differently. Later, in discussing Arthur Schopenhauer's Will-to-live, Ligotti states the following:

> *Wound up by some force… organisms go on running as they are bidden until they run down.*
>
> *In pessimistic philosophies only the force is real, not the things activated by it. They are only puppets, and if they have consciousness may mistakenly believe they are self-winding persons who are making a go of it on their own.*

The progressive and revolutionary milieu is based on the idea of an autonomous individual making choices. The existence of free will is the basis for political and social change, and the absence of such will is considered a reactionary idea. Li- gotti is much more bleak in his assessment of human striving. He cites another author stating that, "Conscious subjectivity is the case in which a single organism has learned to enslave *itself*." [Ligotti's emphasis] There is no free inside seeking to defend itself of the oppressive outside. The enemy isn't at the gates, it has been in the center of the city all along. Ligotti speculates that the human may be something "strange and awful," that we may not be so radically special after all. He cites an extended passage from Joseph Conrad about the tragic sense of life in humans:

> *Yes, egoism is good, and fidelity to nature would be best of all… if we could only get rid of consciousness. What makes mankind tragic is not that they are the victims of nature, it is that they are conscious of it.*
>
> *To be part of the animal kingdom under the conditions of this earth is very well—but as soon as you know of your slavery, the pain, the anger, and the strife—the tragedy begins.*

Aside from the disease of consciousness, Ligotti refuses to concede anything positive about human life:

stones. When we came around a bend, I looked into the waters and the face of a coyote appeared, staring at me. "Move in," she said.

I thought of the way coyotes move back in to the wasteland, preying on the rodents that are more tolerant of the Disaster, eating beloved housecats, haunting suburban nights with their ghostly yapping. They belie the victorious narrative of Civilization, breaking through the acoustic barriers that block out all the other voices, the endless voices of the world. They rewild, not in a "Desert" that Civilization has relinquished (Civilization never relinquishes), but at the interstices where the grinding of the gears can still be heard, where the radio voice still booms out, "There is no other way but Onwards."

I realized that the Collapse has already occurred, maybe it happened decades ago, but the State continues to shout out its marching orders, to direct those who follow it and, in a way, those who fight against it. States can manage collapse indefinitely. And in truth, no State has ever collapsed, but that those who suffer it give it a little push. Sometimes we are the protagonists of the destruction of the State, rising against it at its most powerful, and surviving the clash when so many times before we have been slaughtered. Other times, the State is weakened by its own hubris and sickness, and we topple it when it is already off balance. But not even a weak State fails if its subjects choose to remain weaker still, spectators to entropy, waiting for the God-Kings to leave this earth of their own volition.

We are entropy, devouring structures with razor teeth, or we are nothing at all.

The coyote said to move back in, to reclaim the wasteland. It is time, long since time. The Collapse has already occurred.

The world of Civilization and the world of the world are overlapping, one atop the other. There is no moving out of the one, but there is a moving into the other, putting our feet down, eating from it, dying into it. The battles in the streets of the city of the Machine are important. They set the whole thing trembling. Yet the tower

is already tumbling, and we are within it, tumbling too. If everything is falling, then nothing moves. Only when we have our feet on other ground can we see the tower fall, and not fall with it.

I have never written of these things before, that the religion forced upon us calls "hallucinations," that an earlier, more charitable albeit in- fantilizing paradigm referred to as "daydreams." But part of the experience was the compulsion to share it, to talk about it. Here it is. Take from it what you will.

in hand into extinction, one last midnight—brothers and sisters opting out of a raw deal.

A minor controversy arose around the series as to whether the television writer, Nic Pizzolatto, had plagiarized Cohle's views from the work of horror writer Thomas Ligotti, specifically his 2010 nonfiction work, *The Conspiracy Against the Human Race (Conspiracy).* Pizzolatto conceded Ligotti's influence, which introduced a new audience to Ligotti's work, and his pessimistic worldview in particular.

The reclusive Ligotti has been producing short fiction since the 1980's for a loyal cult audience. Influenced by the work of H.P. Lovecraft and Franz Kafka, as well as the philosophies of Emil Cioran and Peter Zapffe, Ligotti has been a seminal author in the genre of horror and "weird fiction."

After establishing his renown as a fiction writer, Ligotti tried his hand at nonfiction in *Conspiracy.* The origin of the work according to a number of sources lies in a therapist's injunction to write a self-help book as part of his treatment of depression and other emotional problems. In response, Ligotti went about writing an anti-self-help book: not a work that discusses how to make life better, but one that elucidates why human consciousness is a bottomless pit of absurdity and suffering. Ligotti channeled his exceptional erudition and insight into an extended essay denigrating the human quest for control and happiness. In his reflections, Li- gotti indicates that humans are puppets playing out a rigged game that traps people in agony until death and decay inevitably triumph.

Ligotti begins *Conspiracy* by citing the very injunction he intends to violate: "If you can't say something positive about humanity, then say something equivocal." Ligotti disparages this obligatory optimism throughout the book. The default opinion states that the fact that we are here is enough for us to merit a ringing endorsement. At the very least, you should keep your mouth shut if you

The Puppet and the Bomb

by Freddie Forest

Humanity is rudderless on a powerful ship of its own making. Having built the impressive juggernaut of civilization, it no longer knows how to steer it, or even why it was built in the first place. Lost in the frenzied search for technique, growth becomes the purpose of life, and distraction becomes the only recourse to address why we are here. Our philosophical and political questions are outdated. Human supremacy, so robust and unparalleled in our context, no longer evokes the question of *how* human life should be, but *if* it should be at all. The perils that undermine our existence, from climate change to nuclear war, seem to point to this most radical of inquiries.

Such an atmosphere of cosmic pessimism has recently leaked into popular culture. In the 2014 HBO television series, *True Detective*, one of the characters, Rust Cohle, explains his views on the tragic futility of life to his partner:

> *I think human consciousness is a tragic misstep in evolution.*
>
> *We became too self-aware, nature created an aspect of nature separate from itself, we are creatures that should not exist by natural law. We are things that labor under the illusion of having a self; an accretion of sensory, experience and feeling, programmed with total assurance that we are each somebody, when in fact everybody is nobody. Maybe the honorable thing for our species to do is deny our programming, stop reproducing, walk hand*

Phagein

by D/G

Your eyes are bigger than your stomach. Your brain is as big as two balled hands held together, your appendix is as long as your pinky finger, your stomach is the size of your fist. We use our body to measure the world around us. In the forgotten northern end of South America, among certain people, the old customs had the lower social classes portioned out with tattoos. The blown-out blue lines of ash and vegetable ink ran around joints and down legs, and across torsos. They made a map. In a hard year—a flooded year with no game or a drought year with no fish— these tattooed bodies showed the way through famine. They would be butchered and divvied up using the guide inked to their flesh; a tattooed bit here, a sectioned morsel there.

The Arawak speakers are familiar with eating flesh, if not personally then historically. Cannibalism was, after all, the justification that the Spanish Queen Isabella gave to Columbus to capture and enslave the indigenous population of the Caribbean. Those who ate their own had to be savage children of the Devil, not a wayward flock of God's, waiting to be shown the way to civilization. Lacking any exposure or evidence of true cannibals in the Caribbean, Columbus invented them, and slaves he got.

Butchering a compatriot to feed your kids is a gruesome, seemingly unimaginable act, but in that extreme instance there is intimate exposure to the junction of ecological disturbance and resilience.

Empty, black rock volcanic islands have been populated by wave-riding seeds. Entire species have flourished after being

forced to new lands by immense storms. Static mountains hold the potential for eruption, stoic redwood stands have the ability to rage with fire. In upheaval there is a bloom of complex and dynamic interactions. Even drought can provide new possibilities for sustenance.

Cannibal is the anglicized version of *cannible,* the Spanish pluralization of *Canibe,* a mispronunciation of *Cari- be* or *Carib,* a supposedly man-eating tribe from the islands. The region's name, Caribbean, is derived from the name of those people, the Carib. Before Columbus, humans eating humans was known by the Greek word *anthropophagia.*

Before there were Greeks or Spaniards or Caribs there were cavemen. Neanderthals ate their dead, at least in some capacity. Bones show the marks of scraping and cleaning—clues suggesting meticulous removal of flesh from wet bone. Some of the bones were then used to make tools, others were crushed and had the marrow removed to be eaten in the same manner as the reindeer, horses, and wild boar the Neanderthals subsisted on.

These hairier Homo ancestors may have scavenged and eaten the partially cooked starchy leftovers of tubers in the charred remains of lightning strikes and subsequent wildfires on the savanna. Although the eating of meat is now fetishized by diet gurus, hunters, and animal rights activists, it may actually have been the tuber, not meat, that was the caloric ticket into the world of enhanced brain power. With the carbohydrates already partially digested by the heavens the primate stomach was able to extract more nutritional value from the subterranean starch.

Even then, those few million years ago on the mother continent, the Homo genus was probably bitten by mosquitoes. Insects have been dated to as far as back as the Devonian, some 400 million years ago. People believe that insects were the first creatures to develop flight. In amber the delicate wings of mosquitoes can be seen folded upon themselves.

and affinities. Telling stories in person is all the time becoming a more exclusive affair. Political activity online is represented as an acceptable and effective means for simultaneously constructing and deconstructing the totality. This presents a problem for the supposed goal of relieving anxiety that will prevent us from pursuing the lives of which we dream.

omy partaking in counter-information, sabotage, material infrastructure development, and dropping out. I suggest this potency is due to the storytelling that amplifies through encounter of a variety of social strata.

I stated above that a discourse is a collection of stories and that desertion is a multivariate collection of stories that describe movement, transience, and impermanence. ABCdyscoing/TAZing is the practice of deserting by moving from one discrete independent process of desertion to another as a means of simultaneously circulating and cultivating the discourse of desertion. It is the practice of honing one's storytelling skills, and furthering space for their development. ABdyscoing generates and tells stories that enrich the connection between desertions. But we ought to invent another more pleasing sounding word/phrase/verb for this phenomenon.

The current surveillance apparatus in the Most Developed Countries, made possible by the general invasion of information technology and communication technology into every sphere of life, neutralizes the ability to tell and spread certain types of discourses of desertion that are particularly potent—sabotage, ille- galism, legendary riotous acts, gun- fighting, etc..—within the fabric of everyday life. The antidote to this has been Security Culture, which still marginalizes this discourse and does not address this marginalization our recent ancestors never had to face. I am often struck with surprise to learn sometimes years into a friendship about that epic escapades of some of my fellows. I first thought this a demonstration of successful security culture, but I have since despaired. I disallow myself, along with many friends and affinities from sharing my most rich moments of—desertion. This means, in many ways, despite our best efforts, we do not know each other. We do not know what we have done, nor do we know what we might do if this situation was changed.

We face a tremendous problem at the basic level of storytelling itself. Communication about radical, outlawed activity can no longer *simply* take place in our homes, in the company of friends

The world's hungriest killer instinct is borne on these ancient wings. Responsible for the deaths of an estimated 1 million humans every year, it is only the female mosquito that seeks blood, which she finds by following the scent of the carbon dioxide that we mammals exhale. Protein and iron found in blood is used for the production of eggs. Some mosquitoes drink so much blood that they have difficulty leaving the body of the host, drunkenly flying off in search of some moist place to lay their eggs.

Ticks, no see ums, bedbugs, fleas, assassin bugs, and lice are also in the business of blood, a nutritional proclivity known as hematophagy. On chickens, blood-sucking mites come out to feed at night, sheltering near the vent of the bird during the day. The host individual will peck and scratch at the bites, causing feather loss and exposure of pink skin. At the sight of flesh the other chickens in the pen will begin pecking at the skin and drawing blood. With blood in the air and meat in their eyes the fratricidal fowl chase and peck and eventually devour their penmates, leaving the ground littered with hollow carcasses.

It seems as though this behavior is very old. There is fossil evidence of both healed wounds and potentially fatal skeletal injuries suggesting that T. Rex may have engaged in violent behavior of a possibly cannibalistic nature. If you squint, you can easily see the terrible lizard lurking deep in the chicken. Listen to them groan and coo as they pick through grass—it's not hard to see them foraging through steamy Jurassic foliage.

The beak is a choke point for birds. Most birds are gape-limited predators, meaning they can only ingest what they can slide down their toothless maws. For the most part there is no cutting, butchering, or dividing of prey, and tearing and shredding is limited to the sharp beaks of birds of prey.

Not all birds will get the chance to hunt worms at dawn. Certain fledglings don't stand a chance. There are lazy species that have learned to roll the unattended eggs of other species out of the nest and quickly lay their own, leaving the parents of the dead to in-

cubate the usurpers' offspring. With colonial nesters such as gulls, it is common for smaller, weaker hatchlings to be preyed upon by older, more developed birds. It is an easy, low-risk foraging strategy that values the species over the familial unit.

In ancient Egypt the mantis, known as *bird-fly,* was a courier of souls, bringing the dead to meet the arbiters and divine deities of the afterlife. In Su- meria the two names for the mantids translate to *necromancer* and *soothsayer,* suggesting the Sumerians also saw the mantis as a magical, even divine creature. The praying mantis' most noted behavioral characteristic is the sexual dynamic. In the book *The Praying Mantids* the authors describe the phenomenon as such:

Males are renowned for their ability to initiate copulation while being eaten. The organization of a mantid's central nervous system will allow both copulation and spermatophore transfer in the absence of descending input from the cephalic ganglia.

The females and males find each other using the chemical networks used by many insects, but cannibalism may not be as much a factor of ritual as just of hunger. Sexual cannibalism is more readily observed in controlled environments and well fed females are less likely to decapitate the smaller male.

Hunger also factors into the sexually cannibalistic behavior of the Australian red-backed spider. In red- backed spiders the fractionally smaller male will launch himself onto the fangs of the much larger female. She disembowels him as they mate over the course of five to thirty minutes. It's understood to be an investment. The well-fed female has little interest in other males, and the cannibalized male has given his offspring a nutritional nest-egg, a caloric head start. Generational foresight taken to a sacrificial extreme.

After their late-summer fertilization, the female mantis extrudes a foam that encases and then hardens around her offspring, protecting them from predators and the elements. When winter has passed and temperatures begin to warm, the egg case cracks

in identity, but only for the sake of leaping beyond it. Static, homogenizing, and ascriptive aspects of identity are the bedrocks of domination and state discourse. From Mao to Thomas Jefferson, the state has employed rigid categories to generate its division of labor in each of its iterations. The place we seek for identity is the place that overflows these categories and the roles they circumscribe.

Desertion cannot be sacrificed for the edification of identity; this is precisely the problem we face. On the other hand, a simplistic rejection of identity does not help to explain its tendency to resurface within a band of deserters. What we are looking for might be a fluid, shifting identity, and groups formed not through ascription, but on the basis of affinity, friendship, and group practice. It is key to have both and to slowly build them through time. This process is likely to generate a new identity that can simply be abandoned because of the prerequisite of a robust discourse of desertion. Any subcultural identity generated out of the muck of the Spectacle has a shelflife, but they can create temporary shelters and stepping stones for desertion. Again, *The Art of Not Being Governed*:

> *Lois Beck says of the Qashqa'i of Iran: "Tribal groups expanded and contracted. Some tribal groups joined larger ones when, for example, the state attempted to restrict access to resources or a foreign power sent troops to attack them. Large tribal groups divided into smaller groups to be less visible to the state and escaped its reach. Intertribal mobility [shifting ethnic identity] was a common pattern and was part of the process of tribal formation and dissolution."*

Desertion that manages to traverse intersections of class and identity can be particularly potent. I am referring here to some of my own experiences of what P.M calls ABC dysco: the coalescing of groups of dysproducers from every class of the global econ-

It may be the coldest day of
the year, what does he think of
that? I mean, what do I? And if I do,
perhaps I am myself again.

Is there a *derive*—an indeterminate wandering through the urban landscape—for the natural, for the woods?

Behind the property line of the four acres where I've been writing this essay is state forest land. A short trail leads to a primitive logging road and a great expanse of clearcuts, and old cutblocks in various stages of Douglas fir regrowth ranging from four foot high saplings to about 40 year old mono-aged stands. Here, the woods are farmed. There is nothing particularly natural or wild about this space, but since I've long since dispensed with those terms, except as a point of departure, I don't seek them outside of myself and what is immediately available to me.

So, I smoked part of a joint. I put on my rubber boots and high-tech lightweight down jacket. I cued The Brilliant podcast, which I adore, and listened to Bellamy and Aragorn!! discuss an ITS communique addressed to the nihilists. I walked into the unwild.

Overflowing identity in the desert

> Social structure is in large measure both a state effect and a choice; and one possible choice is a social structure that is invisible and/or illegible to state makers…The vagueness, plurality, and fungibility of identities and social units have certain political advantages.
>
> *The Art of Not Being Governed*

Desertion presupposes contingent and tentative identity. In the context of living within or on the frontline of a state, identity becomes partially defined by the state. Desertion may find its footing

and nymphs extract themselves from the hardened foam. In the open air their exoskeletons harden and gain slight color. The tiny mantids crawl out of the split egg case, using their siblings like a ladder to dangle to the nearest leaf or stick, where they sway and assess their surroundings. Their eyes swivel and observe. Their spiny raptorial arms are already prepared to hunt. Their mandibles are ready to gnaw. While some venture off to hunt aphids or gnats, others lie in wait for a slower, smaller brother or sister to feast upon.

Sharks also occasionally taste their siblings. *Adelphophagy* is the name for the eating of a sibling. For sand sharks, this meal occurs in ute- ro. In the mature female reproductive system, the young sharks are like a chain with progressively larger links, the most developed of the young swimming freely in the oviduct fed by a conveyor belt of younger kin, eating the others until its expulsion from the uterus as a born killer.

Implicit in the survival of the shark is the remora, that strange sucking fish that hangs from the hunters, as well as the crabs that will feast on the decomposing body of the toothed fish when it dies, and in turn the parasites that live on the crabs' carapace. This harmony with unpredictability and the faculty to seamlessly adapt many functions within a single form is what has allowed sharks to exist, to thrive. Whether hunters, scavengers, prey, or hosts, when all sharks and remoras become detritus there will be another such symbiosis to take their place.

The devouring of a sibling in utero is part of a web that runs from the mother's uterus to detritivores in the deepest crevices of the Mariana trench. Spurious, fickle, impartial, gregariously violent and heartless, the "web of life" is anything but. Far from the warm embrace of a loving parent, it is full of claws and teeth that creep and lurk.

Mabiki is a Japanese word that has the dual meanings of "to harvest rice" and "infanticide." In the rural regions of 17th century Japan a married woman could expect to raise three children on

average but to give birth to twice that number. Particularly for poor families, the benefits of raising a child for future labor had to be weighed against the time and energy expended to do so. The value of an infant was considered in terms of cosmology, economy, and time.

There was no consensus of the sanctity of every individual human life and the loss of one was considered to be potentially beneficial in the long run to many. Death was seen as an act of stewardship akin to the farmer uprooting some crops to allow light and room for others to grow. Balance isn't found in outcome but in the processes. There is no static expression of succession to achieve, or an ideal climax to strive and sacrifice for. Even the most profane, reprehensible acts play part in the simple hardwired drive for hunger. The beauty of complexity is found in disturbance.

aimed to subvert it have in the end provided it with its best weapons. Today, the managers want nothing less than to make every employee a situationist … Trying to outdo this would be absurd. On the other hand, limiting the critique to the domain of the negative, without prescribing a specific goal, is to show great optimism stemming from the hypothesis (obviously unproven) that most people have within them all the energy necessary for their autonomy without their being the need to add any. In his time Lichtenberg wrote, "Nothing is more unfathomable than the system of motivation behind our actions." One can hope that this this impenetrability can definitively restore its rights.

Desertion presents itself here, again, as *a more holistic approach to insurgency* that doesn't rely on revolution or insurrection to be virile and joyous, that remains open to attack, at the level of striking a material blow, as well as the force of inertia of the drop out. This updates the definition of sabotage to our time where mass submission is perhaps as destructive as vacuuming ecosystems of life. One disagreement with *Demotivational Training* would be this: I do not think critique is limited to the domain of the negative. It always gestures in other directions. The author in fact proposes a particular definition of demotivation as an adoption of opacity that allows World Trade, Inc. to collapse in the mire of the beaches of demotivation. This is delightfully congruous with desertion.

4

Now I am quietly waiting for
the catastrophe of my personality
to seem beautiful again,
and interesting and modern.

The country is grey and
brown and white in trees,
snows and skies of laughter
always diminishing, less funny
not just darker, not just grey.

the cracks. Their crushed leaves have an aroma similar to peanut butter. Their heavenly peanut essence busts through the concrete of the existent.

If our aim is the annihilation of civilization, which is a way to describe our current predicament, it is necessary to adopt models to conceive of how it works as a totality through space and time, on Earth, in order for it to be destroyed. Against His-Story provides us a chance to experiment with civilization as an *organism.* This is fitting. Organisms can heal. Institutions aim to produce a similar effect.

What stands out to a lot of people involved with ELF activity and analysis is that nearly everything they destroyed was rebuilt. Who is it that rebuilds, that heals, the wound inflicted by the insurgent act?

It is you and me, and the people just around us. Our neighbors. Our schoolchildren. If the insurrectionary anarchist approach is valid (an open question!), if we can actually destroy society through informally organized asymmetric guerrilla war, a necessary aspect of annihilation is that people we don't know and cannot reach, cease to repair the system as we, the termites, the deserters, devour its foundations.

The barricade functions as Jung- ian archetype in rebel religion. I've always adored barricades since seeing Les Miserables on Broadway. I propose that we have experimented tremendously with the construction of the road barricade to the detriment of the barricades that prevent the invasion of the organism—civilization, capitalism, the United States, society, government—into our creativity and moralities. How do we prevent ourselves from adopting the discourse of the state and domination, and from there opening our work to the metabolism of civilization? How do we let the thing bleed to death with all of its wounds from our pebbles? *Demotivational Training* can help us here:

[The] history of the 20th century has thoroughly demonstrated that the attempts to oppose World Trade, Inc. with models of behavior

Blackfish

by Emily Johnson

There is a fish that lives in very deep, very cold rivers. Their taste is strong, pungent, oily. They are caught in weighted traps that fall, then rest somewhere near the muddy bottom. The traps are left for days. In winter, when the tops of rivers freeze, blackfish push their plump bellies down into the mud, as far from the ice as they can get. They wait. They are never seen swimming in their rivers. They don't jump up into the air to break their egg sacks like salmon or to catch bugs like trout. People know they are there because they know they are there.

When blackfish are hauled up in traps, they are motionless and then they are stored in buckets. 3, 5, 6, 7 blackfish can lay in the bottom of an average bucket. They lay there, belly down. They don't flop, they don't roll off, heaving, to one side. They don't fight the air. They press their plump bellies down on the bottom of the bucket, holding themselves in the fish kind of upright. I imagine that they imagine the top of the bucket covered with ice, the bottom covered with mud.

Blackfish can lay in the bottom of a bucket, sitting on a porch for months; no water, no mud, no food, no fish air. They lay there, on their bellies, still. But when brought back to their river, when held in their very deep, very cold water, when gently primed in the cups of two human hands, the blackfish heaves, its sides pulse, its head moves from side to side, and then, it swims away.

My cousin told me about the time he tried studying blackfish for the science fair at school. It was spring. He put his blackfish trap down into the river and waited two days. He caught four blackfish.

He placed these in his bucket which he placed in the back mud room of the house near the dog food. He had to wait until fall.

I said you can eat blackfish, that their taste is strong, pungent, oily. You can, but you eat them raw, and you eat them head in. Head in your mouth. It's as if you eat the blackfish while, at the same time, the black- fish swims to your belly.

My cousin didn't eat his spring caught blackfish. He wanted to study them. To open them. To see the guts, the bones that seem to dissolve with spit. He imagined blood and a heart and lungs. He wanted to pin the blackfish open, draw a picture, label parts, find out how they sit themselves upright in the bottom of buckets, why they never surface their rivers, how they come to life after months pressed into mud. He took one blackfish and held it in his hand. He didn't wake it. He took a knife, and he cut it. From anus to head, up the belly. But he didn't see lungs or guts or blood. He held the knife in his right hand, the black- fish in his left, but after the cut, he couldn't hold onto the fish. It dissolved in his hand, became a kind of thick, black, liquid goo. He tried to stop it from slipping between his fingers, but the blackfish goo got heavier as it dripped toward the floor and the whole mess of it slid off his palm, gathering in a puddle at his feet.

He tried another.

Same thing.

"If you cannot cut a blackfish open to look at its insides, can you study its insides?" he asked me.

But he didn't give me time to answer.

Instead, he continued, "I couldn't cut another. I ate my last two black- fish. And I ate the blackfish that were sitting upright in my father's bucket, the ones he caught for feasting in late winter. Emily, I ate five blackfish," he said.

"Good god," I said.

No one eats five blackfish.

You eat ONE, for health, but my cousin thought that if he ate a lot of blackfish he could find out about the blackfish soul. About

growth collapsing, mountain lions attacking, annihilating, digesting, and assimiliating black tailed deer, and vultures in turn eating the corpses of mountain lions, appeal to the (an) nihilators sensibility that the destructive urge is also a creative urge. We could say *negation is fecund.*

Clearing out the existent (nihilism) and leaving everyone alone (anarchism) would look a lot like an an- archo-primitivist version of rewilding, but perhaps most surprising to myself (although it shouldn't be) it looks like indigeneity casting off the shackles placed their by colonization. We could call it a contour of indigenous anarchism. Recall this passage from the opening of the beautiful meditation *Locating an Indigenous Anarchism:*

If we were to shape this world (an opportunity we would surely reject if we were offered), we would begin with a great burning. We would likely begin in the cities where with all the wooden structures of power and underbrush of institutional assumption the fire would surely burn brightly and for a very long time. It would be hard on those species that lived in these places. It would be very hard to remember what living was like without relying on deadfall and fire departments. But we would remember. That remembering wouldn't look like a skill-share or an extension class in the methods of survival, but an awareness that no matter how skilled we personally are (or perceive ourselves to be) we need our extended family.

In this poem *Mayakovsky* that I've woven in, Frank O'hara writes: *That's funny! there's blood on my chest*

oh yes, I've been carrying bricks what a funny place to rupture! and now it is raining on the ailan- thus

Here we encounter 'an effect' of the environment of the poem, whether 'consciously organized or not' that ushers me into a daydream of lovely summertime riot, but with something decidedly *Green.* Blood, brick, rupture—all artifacts of the insurrectionary imagination—and ailanthus. *Ailanthus altissima*, whose common name in English is 'Tree of Heaven', are common urban weed trees all over the temperature climates of Turtle Island. They thrive in

geography and nature. A more pure, a more moral, a more American, and a more primitiv- ist eye sees purity in the wilderness *just beyond our reach.* A wilderness of precisely nowhere. There aren't places where *nothing is constructed.* If I leave only footprints and a meditative mind, is this 'constructing the environment'? If we annihilate this world and leave it alone, I suspect some weedy trees will be growing there within a few seasons. Psychogeography, and the anarchist imagination draws almost entirely from people writing in the city—from the overconstructed.

> *psychogeography (n.)(v.) (origins Paris, France and the Situationists, ca 1958)—1. An exploration of urban environments that emphasizes playfulness and "drifting". 2. The study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals. 3. A whole toy box full of playful, inventive strategies for exploring cities that includes just about anything that takes pedestrians off their predictable paths and jolts them into a new awareness of the urban landscape.*

At Standing Rock, it took 30-50 minutes depending on if there was snow or the river was frozen to walk from one end of the encampment to another. That is, 30 minutes of wandering through a dream of dreamers in waking material time, space, and place. But the psychogeographers of yester-generation and today have limited most of their wanderings to the urban.

Bio-Insurrection and Negation's Summer

Annihilation and limitless negation, as a quick sketch of nihilist tendency, are still *earthly.* They may come and go from the cosmos, but they continue to inhabit and haunt the earth. They like it here. Perhaps because volcanic eruptions, disturbances from old

what they dream during the ice over. About their survival through the harshest conditions; laying in buckets in homes, away from the deep, cold habitat of river and mud. About their swim down our throats. He thought there was something the black- fish could teach him that he could, maybe, in turn, teach his family and friends and teacher at school.

But the blackfish made him puke. It poured out of his mouth, swam over his tongue, that same thick, black liquid goo he felt slipping through his fingers. It pulled out of him, leaving him feeling cleaner than before, but with a horrible taste in his mouth. He lay down, belly pressed to the floor. He couldn't move, so he fell asleep.

He told me, "The blackfish are unstudyable. They exist to live in rivers, and buckets, and bellies. You cannot cut a blackfish. Please, do not try. You cannot eat too many. Trust me, don't. But, when the blackfish enters your dreams, you hold still and listen to what it says. It will tell you when to swim head first into danger, it will tell you when to press your belly down wherever you are, and rest. It will tell you how to survive this world. It will tell you its secrets."

Earthdivers: Origin stories, mixed descent, and metaphor

by Gerald Vizenor

The term Earthdivers is borrowed from a traditional theme in tribal creation myths and is dedicated here as an imaginative metaphor. The earth- divers are mixedbloods, or Metis, tribal tricksters and recast cultural heroes, the mournful and whimsical heirs and survivors from that primer union between the daughters of the woodland shamans and white fur traders. The Metis, or mixedblood, earthdivers dive into unknown urban places now, into the racial darkness in the cities, to create a new consciousness of coexistence.

Metis is a French word which means mixedblood in current usage, or a person of mixed Indian and French-Canadian ancestry. The Spanish word mestizo means a person of mixed Indian and European ancestry. The words Metis and mixedblood possess no social or scientific validation because blood mixture is not a measurement of consciousness, culture, or human experiences; but the word Metis is a source of notable and radical identification. Louis Riel, for example, one of the great leaders of the Metis, declared a new mixed- blood nation in the last century. He was convicted of "high treason" and executed.

"It is true that our savage origin is humble, but it is meet that we honor our mothers as well as our fathers," said Louis Riel to his proud followers. He is quoted from *The Strange Empire of Louis Riel* by Joseph Kinsey Howard. "Why should we concern ourselves about what degree of mixture we possess of European or Indian

Rather than critique language, I would propose a means by which we might discover a way of communicating with our friends that is indigestible/illegible to state metabolism. I don't believe we can yet recognize when we are engaged in this process, but I think it will look like the unnoticed or undescribed ritual life between friends. We are all familiar with the experience in which we choose not to name a moment in order to protect it from—its eventual destruction. Instead, we allow it to dance upon our gestures and glances and improvisation, like holding smoke in our palm and passing it around as it drips through our fingers and dissipates.

There is a language to this, a language of imagination and escape available to the prisoner and the CEO alike that might define a path toward liberation—if we can procrastinate its eventual destruction.

A native person where I live told me a story about his people's word for God. Their word was often mistranslated as 'creator', but its closer translation in English would be 'creation', because their word is a verb. This phenomenon of *god as a process* is common in many languages of Turtle Island. I won't offer up the actual word here for the limitless metabolism of civilization down the road, but I think holding onto this idea of desertion, anarchy, remembering, daydreaming, resistance, and insurgency as *illegible verbs* is fundamental.

3

That's funny! there's blood on my chest

oh yes, I've been carrying bricks what a funny place to rupture!

and now it is raining on the ailanthus as I step out onto the window ledge

the tracks below me are smoky and glistening with a passion for running

I leap into the leaves, green like the sea

I've been sitting still (staring?) at the tracks and at the maples and my books and at theanarchistlibrary.org meditating on psycho-

and the clear water is thick
with bloody blows on its head.
I embrace a cloud,
but when I soared
it rained.

I've been tracking deer in the woods around my cabin. Their pebble-like scat appears glistening and fresh within days of being defecated, and slowly erodes by wind and rain to small piles of dirt resembling a mole hill. My eyes move variously from wide-angle peripheral vision: to subtleties in the surrounding landscape; to the ground just in front of my feet where I continuously verify that I am still on a deer path; to the path arcing forward, leading me, as I read the track into the indiscernible veg- etation—hoof print, hoof print, hoof print, scat, hoof print, crushed fern leaf, a deep print where the deer leap, over an undisturbed bramble branch. And then plants, and plants against the color of the sky, and sky's time of day, and the whole majesty of it.

This is a way of perceiving and reading. This is language and communication. 'Hoof-print' could be denoted otherwise. I hope you will understand, but you are not present here with me, and I will never demand that of you either way.

Linguistic lines of flight

I appreciate John Zerzan's critique of language, but I disagree with him. In his essay *Language: Origin and Meaning*, he readily intermixes and confuses language, with writing, with communication. Writing does appear to be a hallmark of bureaucracy and statecraft in many if not most cases, but this is a topic for another essay. Because Zerzan does not clearly define language, we must stop at this point of origin ourselves and unpack its involvement in our crisis.

blood? If we have ever so little of either gratitude or filial love, should we not be proud to say, We are Metis?"

Metis John Baptiste Cadotte was distinguished in tribal and white histories. William Whipple Warren noted in his History of the Ojibway Nation the Cadotte had "received a college education in Montreal. He was among the first individuals whose European, or white blood, became mixed with the blood of the Ojibways. On leaving college, he became possessed of forty thousand francs which had been bequeathed to him by his father, and with this sum as capital, he immediately launched into the northwestern fur trade." Warren was educated in mission schools and was the first mixedblood to serve as representative in the territorial legislature.

"Intermarriage went hand-in- glove with the trade of skins and furs from the first decades of discovery," writes Jacqueline Peterson in her brilliant essay "Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great lake Metis." She explains that the "core denominator of Metis identity was not participation in the fur trading network per se," but the mixedblood middleman "stance between Indian and European societies." The Metis "functioned not only as human carriers linking Indians and Europeans, but as buffers behind which the ethnic boundaries of antagonistic cultures remained relatively secure."

Jacqueline Peterson points out that "it is no coincidence that many of the labels describing the offspring of interracial unions articulate an implicit wish to blot out or sterilize the human consequences of miscegenation. Thus like the derogation 'mulatto,' which stems from mule, and 'griffe' the monstrous winged child of black and Indian parents, 'halfbreed,' 'breed,' and 'mixed-blood' hint broadly at cultural and biological impotence."

In the traditional earthdiver creation myths the cultural hero or tribal trickster asked animals and birds to dive for the earth, but here, in the metaphor of the Metis earth- diver, white settlers are summoned to dive with mixed- blood survivors into the unknown, into the legal morass of treaties and bureaucratic evils, and to swim

deep down and around federal exclaves and colonial economic enterprises in search of a few honest words upon which to build a new urban turtle island. In traditional stories the metaphor of the earthdiver centers on the return to the earth, rather than a separation from the earth and a futurist transcendence to a computerized heaven. The earthdiver does not dive into space. The trickster secures his earth, his urban places now, and then he dreams out of familiar time and space. Tricksters and earthdivers are the metaphors between new sources of opposition and colonial ideas about savagism and civilization.

The earthdiver myth has a "world-wide distribution," according to the folklorist Elli Kaija Kongasin in an article published in Ethnohistory. "It is told in various forms, but it always has four invariable traits— earth covered with water, the creator, the diver, and the making of the earth…"

In his book *The Religions of the American Indians,* Ake Hultkrantz writes that the "primal sea represents primordial chaos, while the great flood is chaos of a later date, caused, for example, by the wrath of a god or the transgression of a taboo… No other creation myth in North America is as extensive as the one about the Earth Diver who brings up land from the primal water "

"In North America there is a profusion of tales regarding the origin of the world, whereas the creation of man is a rarer topic. . . . One of these traditions, which is prevalent in North America and well known in North Asia and Europe, tells how the creator sent an animal down to the bottom of the sea to bring up sand or mud from which the earth was subsequently made…"

Earl Count in his essay "The Earth-Diver and the Rival Twins: A Clue to Time Correlation in North- Eurasiatic and North American Mythology," published in *The Civilizations of Ancient America*, states that the "cosmogonic notion of a primal sea out of which a diver fetches material for making dry land, is easily among the most widespread single concepts held by man."

architecture? We might start by remembering what it is to be free, to play, to be liberated. We can remember and we can tell stories to tend to this remembering. These stories can be told at the campfire, in the coffeeshop, at the party, on the corner, in the trenches, and on the frontlines. In this tending and storytelling we are building a net, a glue, that will hold on to the parts of ourselves that know what it is to be ecstatic.

Desertion is a permanent position in relation to the state that continues with or without the existence of the state, and involves adopting tactics in real time through a moment -by-moment analysis of the state and its imposition into the deserter's life. It is not simply constituted by yet another land project but originates in a discourse—a collection of certain stories—that inform practices that generate more stories. The discourse of desertion is a discourse of verbs. Note that there is not a way to say *desertion, desert,* or *deserting* that is not, at least in part, describing a state of change, of motion. Our aim is the ecstatic abandonment of the shackles of conversation, and beyond. Desertion is an eruption of the spirit that breaks new ground, whether in the prison cafeteria, or in the woods.

2

I love you. I love you,
but I'm turning to my verses
and my heart is closing
like a fist.
Words! be
sick as I am sick, swoon,
roll back your eyes, a pool,
and I'll stare down
at my wounded beauty
which at best is only a talent
for poetry.
Cannot please, cannot charm or win
what a poet!

I knew, as well, that a time of quickening was approaching when the buds would grow noticeably fatter each day, and during each day. Their motion would become perceptible, while in the end of the winter, it required a way of seeing and experiencing the trees. This gave their stillness a tension. I felt myself waiting, waiting for this inevitable burst of life and growth.

I knew that this process would take place whether I acted or not (short of cutting the trees down!). In other words, this process happened autonomously of my interventions, wishes, critiques, desires.

If changing our lives is changing our actions, and changing our actions is changing what we think, and if we think in language, this language reveals certain limits to thought. What saw in the forest around me was tightly bound up with this.

Languages are ways of communicating about the world, and are thus *a way of describing the world.* We can say this about ideologies as well.

Desertion

The jig is up, the fix is in, and it's time to get the fuck out of here. Out of here? Yes, out of what it is we are stuck talking about. Pack your shit, we're moving again.

If the state wants to make us its captives, then we have to capsize ourselves, and escape. We have to carve out space where we can play and experiment with just what playing is, to discover what capacity for play still lives inside us, and then gently tend it and cultivate it into our power. This inevitably entails talking and thinking in new ways.

The lifestyle anarchists and the insurrectionary guerillas both agree: the bottom line is to stay free and evade capture. And what of those of us who *have* become captives?; of work, of television, of social media, of school, of the next new prison and its recyclable

In his provocative research article "Earth-Diver: Creation of the Mythopoetic," published in *American Anthropologist*, Alan Dundes turns his attention from modern myths to psychoanalytic theories and assumes, for purposes of his hypothesis, the existence of a cloacal theory of birth; and the existence of pregnancy envy on the part of males." While Dundes waits to be invited to dive, in the metaphorical sense of the urban earthdiver, through his own assumptions and ideas, consider one version of an earthdiver myth as an illustration of the creation of turtle island. Creation myths are not time bound; the creation takes place in the telling, in present-tense metaphors.

Victor Barnouw collected earthdiver creation stories as Lac du Flambeau and published them in his book *Wisconsin Chippewa Myths and Tales.* Barnouw writes that the narrator of the following earthdiver myth was a shaman, or a tribal spiritual leader, "to who I have given the pseudonym of Tom Badger… a quite level-headed man in his seventies, with a good sense of humor."

Wenebojo is also transcribed as manibozho, nanibozhu, wanibozu, manabozho, nanabozho, nanabush, and other variations from the oral tradition. Nanabozho,is the compassionate tribal trickster of the woodland anishinaabeg, the people named the Chippewa, Ojibway, Ojibwa, or Ojibwe. Wenebojo or naanabozho is the compassionate trickster, not the trickster in the word constructions of the anthropologist Paul Radin, the one who "possesses no values, moral or social. knows neither good nor evil yet is responsible for both," but the imaginative trickster, the one who cares to balance the world between terminal creeds and humor with unusual manners and ecstatic strategies.

Wenebojo was standing on the top of the tree.. .and the water was up to his mouth. Pretty soon Wenebojo felt that he wanted to defecate. He couldn't hold it. The shit floated up to the top of the water and floated around his mouth.

Wenebojo noticed that there was an animal in the water. .Then he saw several animals—beaver, muskrat, and otter. Wenebojo spoke to the otter first.

"Brother," he said, "could you go down and get some earth? If you do that, I will make an earth for you and me to live on.. "

Anyway he went to the bottom of the water…he drowned. Then he floated to the top. Wenebojo tried to reach the otter. He got hold of him finally and looked into the otter's paws and mouth, but he didn't find any dirt. Then Wenebojo blew on the otter, and the otter came to again. Wenebojo asked him, "Did you see anything?"

"No," said the otter.

The next person Wenebojo spoke to was the beaver. He asked him to go after some earth down below and said, If you do, I'll make an earth for us to live on.. "

The beaver was gone a long time. Pretty soon he floated to the top of the water. He also drowned. Wenebo- jo got hold of the beaver and blew on him. When he came to, Wenebojo examined his paws and mouth to see if there was any dirt there, but he couldn't find anything. He asked the beaver, "Did you see any earth at the bottom?"

"Yes, I did," said the beaver. "I saw it, but I couldn't get any of it." These animals had tried and failed..

The muskrat was playing around there too. Wenebojo didn't think much about the muskrat, since he was so small; but after awhile he said to him, "Why don't you try and go after some of the dirt too?"

The muskrat said, "I'll try" and he dived down.

Wenebojo waited and waited a long time for the muskrat to come up to the top of the water. When he floated up to the top, he was all crippled. Wenebojo caught the muskrat and looked him over. The muskrat had his paws closed up tight. His mouth was shut too. Wenebojo opened the muskrat's front paw and found a grain of earth in it. He took it. In his other front paw he found

Still Time: Love Letter To Dark Mountain

By swiddening elf 2

My heart's aflutter!

I am standing in the bath tub

crying. Mother, mother

who am I? If he

will just come back once

and kiss me on the face

his coarse hair brush

my temple, it's throbbing!

then I can put on my clothes

I guess, and walk the streets.

I've been living (staring) at the trees that surround my tiny cabin in the pacific Northwest. Most of them are Large Leaf Maples, *Acer macrophyl- lum.* When I arrived here in February, they had no leaves. There they stood, dormant, appearing the same day after day. One of my landmates tapped some of them for maple syrup. Sap poured and moved from the outwardly appearing stillness and dormancy of each tapped tree. A current of sugar and essence and water dragged up and dragged down the cambium tissue, with a particular sweetness, a particular proportion of sugar, of micronutrients, particular to the contour of the land. Tapping opened my eyes to other aspects of the tree, of each particular tree, to their gnarled curves, arcing into the light above.

Over many days and weeks the trees appeared dormant, except for that nagging current of sap that moved through their veins. And

to mythic structures, they too are being governed by principles of repetition

Autobiography becomes possible only under certain metaphysical preconditions. To begin with, at the cost of a cultural revolution, humanity must have emerged from the mythic framework of traditional teachers and must have entered into the perilous domain of history. The man who knows that the present differs from the past and that it will not be repeated in the future; he has become more aware of the differences than similarities… Artistic creation is a struggle with an angel, in which the creator is more certain of being vanquished since the opponent is still himself. He wrestles with his shadow, certain only of never laying hold of it…

Earthdivers wrestle with their shadows; they capture some light from the written images of their experiences. The opposition of the trickster, and the implied resolutions, are internal; anarchism is balanced in dreams and mythic imagination. The verbal contradance is more than a mere autobiographical cakewalk.

"*There is no question but that a spirit of anarchism is bred within the autobiographical act,*" writes Louis Renza in "A Theory of Autobiography." The sense of anarchism is "mitigated in words where the writer blends the exclusive, though collective, 'minority' persona." In literature or in ecology, comedy enlightens and enriches human experience without trying to transform either mankind or the world.

Wenebojo kept on throwing the earth around.

another little grain, and one grain of dirt in each of his hind paws. There was another grain in his mouth.

When he found these five grains, Wenebojo started to blow on the muskrat, blew on him until he came back to life. Then Wenebojo took the grains of sand in the palm of his hand and held them up to the sun to dry them out. When the sand was all dry, he threw it around onto the water. There was a little island then.

They went onto the little island— Wenebojo, the beaver, the otter, and the muskrat. Wenebojo got more earth on the island and threw it all around. The island got bigger. It got larger every time Wenebojo threw out another handful of dirt. Then, animals at the bottom of the water, whoever was there, all came up to the top of the water and went to the island where Wenebojo was. They were tired of being in the water all the time, and when they heard about the earth that Wenebojo had made, they all wanted to stay there.

Wenebojo kept on throwing the earth around.

Dundes observes that despite the "lack of a great number of actual excremental myths, the existence of any at all would appear to lend support to the hypothesis that men think of creativity in anal terms, and further that this conception is projected into mythic cosmogonic terms."

Dundes continues his comments on excremental expansion: "The fecal nature of the particle is also suggested by its magical expansion. One could imagine that as one defecates one is thereby creating an ever-increasing amount of earth."

We are fortunate, perhaps, as Metis and mixedblood earthdivers, that Alan Dundes did not choose to explain creation in terms of female penile envies, or penis captivus, and the expansion of urine as a theoretical assumption to account for the flood. Expanding his discussion to include ideas from the tradition of philosophical dualism, Dundes asserts that the "devil is clearly identified with matter and in particular with defecation. In a phrase, it is the devil who does the dirty work."

Victor Barnouw does not seem to resist these mythic movements or rise above fecal interpretations of tribal creation stories.

In a section of his book devoted to anal themes he writes that "Alan Dundes has suggested that the Earth-Diver motif is a male fantasy of creation stemming from male envy of female pregnancy and an assumed cloa- cal theory of birth. In Dundes' view the mud from which the earth is formed is symbolic of feces. This may seem an extravagant hypothesis, but it would be in keeping with Chippewa myth with its exclusion of women and its striking anal themes. . . . The idea of creating people from feces occurs in some Chippewa tales. . . .in our series Wenebojo creates some Indian warriors by defecation here and there and sticking feathers into turds."

Barnouw refers to other stories in his discussion of anal themes, including one where the daughter of a chief denies her suitors. The suitors, "in revenge, defecate into a hole, make a human form from the dung, dress it up in fine clothes, and will that it become a human being. The dung man goes to the village, where the chief's daughter falls in love with him. He leaves, and the girl follows his tracks. She finally comes to a pile of dung, where the trail ends.

In both of these stories males create people by defecating, in line with Dundes' hypothesis."

Some anthropologists seem to have little appreciation for sacred games in tribal creations. Their secular seriousness separates the tribes from humor, from untimed metaphors, and the academic intensities of career bound anthropologists approach diarrhetic levels of terminal theoretical creeds. The creation myth that anthropologists never seem to tell is the one where naanabozho, the cultural trickster, made the first anthropologist from fecal matter. Once made, more were cloned in graduate schools from the first fecal creation of an anthropologist.

While the traditional earthdiver themes have been exhausted in minor academic word wars, the mixed-blood earthdiver is a metaphor in a timeless tribal drama. Turtle island is an imaginative

were protected, but tribal cultures were seldom passive—never as submissive as the neocolonial transformers once imagined.

The use of a created name for an author avoids the limitations suggested in autobiographical writing and the use of first-person pronouns. However, other critical textual considerations are raised when an author writes about himself through any name as a character in a narrative. Georges Gusdorf expresses with unusual ease the consciousness of the autobiographer in his article "Conditions and Limits of Autobiography,"

> *The man who takes delight in thus drawing his own images believes himself worthy of a special interest. Each of us tends to think of himself as the center of a living space: I count, my existence is significant to the world, and my death will leave the world incomplete....*
>
> *This conscious awareness of the singularity off each individual life is the late product of a specific civilization. Through most of human history, the individual does not oppose himself to all others; he does not feel himself to exist outside of others, and still less against others, but very much with others in an interdependent existence that asserts its rhythms everywhere in the community.*

Earthdivers are the new metaphors between communal tribal cultures and the cultures that oppose traditional connections, the cultures that would own and market the earth. The experiences of the autobiographer are similar to those of the earth- diver: the blood wavers in personal metaphors.

It is obvious that autobiography is not possible in a cultural landscape where consciousness of self does not... exist, writes Gusdorf.

> *But this unconsciousness of personality, characteristic of primitive societies such as ethnologists describe to us, lasts also in more advanced civilizations that subscribe*

stressed… Impersonal forces are never the causes of events. Somebody is always responsible,

Hallowell points out in his book *Culture and Experience.*

The names of characters in narrative are real and imagined, but it is difficult to know the difference. Real characters seem fictional, at times more imaginary. The real worlds are not unlike the imagined mythic worlds. Differences in realities are never clear because the distances between tribal dreams, earthdiver myths, comedies and metaphors, and familiar places float free from time in some conversations.

Peter Jones, of Kahkewaqouna- by, the Ojibway missionary, said that his personal tribal name, which means "sacred feather" in translation, was given to him by his traditional grandfather.

The Indians have but one name, which is derived either from their gods or some circumstance connected with their birth or character, Jones wrote in *The History of the Ojebway Indians: With Especial Reference to Their Conversion to Christianity*, published more than a century ago in England. *When an Indian is asked his name he will look at some bystander and request him to answer. This reluctance arises from an impression they receive when young, that if they repeat their own names it will prevent their growth, and they will be small in stature. On account of this unwillingness to tell their names, many strangers have fancied that they either have no names or have forgotten them...* "

Jones described traditional practices at a time when tribal cultures were burdened with disease and death, colonial revisions, primal survival; his comments were romantic, perhaps servile to his religious conversion, because this assumed reluctance to reveal personal names, whether such a practice was true or not, belies martial domination. Would we have revealed our names to the men who denied our cultures, or to those who were dedicated to either our destruction or conversion? Indeed, tribal names, dream names, and words that assured the sacred in communal and oral traditions

place; not a formula, but a metaphor which connects dreams to the earth. The Metis are divided in white consciousness, denied an absolute cultural corner, and, therefore, spared from extinction in word and phrase museums.

Earthdivers and new urban shamans now summon the white world to dive, to dive deep and return with the sacred earth. The Metis wait above the chaos at common intersections in the cities for the white animals to return with earth, enough to build a new urban turtle island. Earthdivers, tricksters, shamans, poets, dream back the earth.

"We demand too much when we ask that the poet establish a new world," Writes Karsten Harries in his article "Metaphor and Transcendence." The world seems to float on words, but "first we have to learn to listen more attentively to the many voices of the earth. What makes listening difficult is the fact that as members of a community we are necessarily caught up in already established and taken-for-granted ways of speaking and seeing.

'We understand things without having made them our own. The adequacy of words is taken for granted, their origin forgotten. There are moments when the inadequacy of our language seizes us, when language seems to fall apart and falling apart opens us to what transcends it…As language falls apart, contact with being is reestablished.. "

Earthdivers speak a new language, their experiences and dreams are metaphors, and in some urban places they speak backwards to be better heard and understood on the earth. They speak in unusual languages, so unusual that "language seems to fall apart," but this illusion of disintegration, Karsten Harries asserts, "does not lead to silence.. '

In his essay on "What Metaphors Mean" Donald Davidson writes that "meataphor is the dreamwork of language and, like all dreamwork, its interpretation reflects as much on the interpreter as on the originator. The interpretation of dreams requires collaboration between a dreamer and a waker, even if they be the

same person; and the act of interpretation is itself a work of the imagination.

"So too understanding a metaphor is as much a creative endeavor as making a metaphor, and as little guided by rules. . . . The idea, then, is that in metaphor certain words take on new, or what are often called 'extended' meanings. . . . Perhaps, then, we can explain metaphor as a kind of ambiguity: in the context of a metaphor, certain words have either a new or an original meaning, and the force of the metaphor depends on our uncertainty as we waver between two meanings. . . ."

Earthdivers waver and forbear extinction in two worlds. Metis are the force in the earthdiver metaphor, the tension in the blood and the uncertain word, the imaginative and compassionate trickster on street corners in the cities. When the mixedblood earthdiver summons the white world to dive like the otter and beaver and muskrat in search of the earth, and federal funds, he is both animal and trickster, both white and tribal, the uncertain creator in an urban metaphor based on a creation myth that preceded him in two world views and oral traditions.

Metis, naanabozho tells, were the first earthdivers.

Tribal ideas and sources of consciousness, and earthdiver metaphors, demand some privities on tribal world views: time is circular and creation takes place in ceremonies and between tellers and listeners; sacred names, dreams, and visions are images that connect the bearer to the earth; shamans and other tribal healers and visionaries speak the various languages of plants and animals and feel the special dream power to travel backward from familiar times and places.

A. Irving Hallowell has written numerous descriptive and research articles about woodland anishinaa- beg. His stories are familiar to most listeners. For example, he once asked an old anishinaabe man about the animation of stones:

> *Are all the stones we see about us alive? He reflected for a long while and then replied, 'No! But some are.' This qualified answer made a lasting impression on me. And that is thoroughly consistent with other data that indicate that the Ojibwa are not animists in the sense that they dogmatically attribute living souls to inanimate objects such as stones.*

In his article "Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View," Hallowell explains that his tribal friends were

> *puzzled by the white man's conception of thunder and lightning as natural phenomena as they were by the idea that the earth is round and flat. I was pressed on more than one occasion to explain thunder and lightning, but I doubt whether my somewhat feeble efforts made much sense to them... my explanations left their own beliefs completely unshaken... Underlying the Ojibwa view there may be a level of naive perceptual experience that should be taken into account... What is particularly interesting is that the avian nature of the Thunder Bird does not rest solely on an arbitrary image. Phenomenally, thunder does exhibit 'behavioral' characteristics that are analogous to avian phenomena in this region.*

Hallowell did not have to talk to old men to learn that the earth and other forms of life are personal experiences. Some anthropologists separate themselves from the earth and imagination with colonial research words and elitist templates. The earthdivers now turn around, talk backward, and summon anthropologists to dive for the earth with imaginative words.

The Ojibwa self is not oriented to a behavioral environment in which a distinction between human beings and supernatural beings is

a random choice of venue. The two hikers: well, they explain themselves there, and we will discuss this below. The vice-rector: do I really have to describe that one to anarchists? And the head of a mining company? How about the sacristan and the two pilgrims carrying a statue? So Catholics are now off limits to anarchists, I suppose. Durruti would be proud of today's insurrectionaries for sticking up for the poor innocent believers.

So these attacks and casualties are far from "random". They are most definitely not leaving the powerful alone, but they aren't sparing the "vulnerable" either (whose complacency keeps the "powerful" in power). It is tempting to make sloppy generalizations due to deeply felt antagonism, but this feeling does not make these generalizations accurate.

Individualist eco-extremism refuses to "call-out" or mandate a particular action. If one person wants to sabotage some power lines, and they can get away with it, fine, that is their individual prerogative. If someone wants to randomly kill someone, as enemies of the human race, eco-extremists would never oppose or condemn that. There are no coordinated attacks, no meetings where individualists hash out and have struggle sessions about "correct strategy". The correct strategy is: will someone get hurt or killed; will something be destroyed; and can I get away with it? It's that simple. If you don't think X is a good idea, do Y instead.

So with the true nature of eco-extremist actions in the recent past established, we can move on to the next accusation.

C. Attacking anarchists

This accusation is true. I will let Scott Campbell summarize:

OkupaChe is an autonomous space for a variety of collectives and individuals that for years has been under threat and attacks from the police and university administration. On December 14, after a growing push for the eviction of the okupa, there was to be a large student assembly with OkupaChe as the first item on the agenda. At

> *Deviations from the natural have whirled around us all our days. We kept them at arm's length, abnormalities we denied were elemental to our being. But absent us there is nothing of the supernatural in the universe. We are aber- rations—beings born undead, neither one thing nor another, or two things at once… uncanny things that have nothing to do with the rest of creation, horrors that poison the world by sowing our madness everywhere we go, glutting daylight and darkness with incorporeal obscenities."*

From this passage, one could interpret all dreams of perfect and perfectible worlds as nightmares of undead animals: those creature that refuse to live in the present but are frantically flailing in an idealized past or a harmonious future. Ligotti comments on the mentality of the humanist optimists:

> *They trust anything that authenticates their importance as persons, tribes, societies, and particularly as a species that will endure in this world and perhaps in an afterworld that may be uncertain in its reality and unclear in its layout, but which sates their craving for values not of this earth—that depressing, meaningless place their consciousness must sidestep every day. Sure enough, then, writers such as Zapffe, Schopenhauer, and Lovecraft only wrote their ticket to mar- ginality when they failed to affirm the worth and wonder of humanity, the validity of its values (whether eternal or provisional), and, naturally, a world without a foreseeable end, or at least a world whose end no one wants to see.*

In arguing with an optimist humanist, it doesn't matter how bleak the reality is. The fantasy of the optimist always trumps the bleak reality of the pessimist. The pessimist is always wrong be-

cause they deny that every desire is legitimate, every world is possible, and that every string moving the marionnette about can be cut. To deny any of these expectations is the Last Heresy: it elicits the Biblical weeping and gnashing of teeth almost on cue. That the absurdity of the human animal itself is the primary cause of the impossibility of its dreams never occurs to them. It's as if homo sapiens were an optimistic animal ipso facto.

Ligotti ends *Conspiracy* with a litany of propositions concerning various aspects of his pessimistic philosophy:

> *No self now, consciously speaking.*
>
> *No feeling your old self or new self, false imaginings if you think about it, self-conscious nothings everywhere you look…*
>
> *No bosom of nature, abandoned on the doorstep of the supernatural, minds full of flagrantly joyless possibilities, a real blunder that was, the human tragedy…*

Jon Padgett, a writer inspired by Ligotti and founder of a website devoted to his work, Thomas Ligotti Online, elaborates on many pessimist themes in his own recent short story collection, *The Secret of Ventriloquism.* A trained ventriloquist, Padgett revises old rules of learning ventriloquism in his story, "20 Simple Steps to Ventriloquism," to make a broader point about the puppetry of going through the motions of daily life. For example, Step 12 concludes with the following observation:

> *Remember, the 'People' you must deal with to survive are mere dummies serving a higher purpose—a kind of Ultimate Ventriloquism—that they cannot hope to comprehend. Animal-dummies must be treated at all times with false and/or unsympathetic regard. Believe me, they do not feel a thing.*

Women? Of course, there is the Great Martyr Lesvy Berlin Osorio of UNAM fame (whose boyfriend is being tried for her murder, just for everyone's general information), but also the female hiker who no one talks about (Because she was hiking with her boyfriend who was also killed? What sort of headline-grabber is that?) That's two women, versus the university administrator, the male hiker, and the two Catholic male pilgrims. Add to that the CODELCO chief (where the bomb exploded in his kitchen) and the maimed Catholic sacristan, and we still don't see a war on women. There is the bomb sent to Dr. Dubner, but was she off-limits for being a woman, or fair game due to her position within the university? And the poor random girl who picked up the envelope. Still, no misogynist war in sight.

What we do see, overall, is a war against companies and infrastructure (CEOs, university administrators, construction equipment, infrastructure, vehicles, etc.) as well as against such institutions as the Catholic Church (Have anarchists buried the hatchet with the Papists yet? We must have not gotten the memo.) While the "random attacks" against the "most vulnerable" makes a great talking point for enemies and "frenemies" of eco-extremism alike, that's clearly not what is going on here. Most of the eco-extremist's targets are also being attacked by insurrectionary anarchists in the same regions of the world, only the methodology is different.[6] Any attack that eco-extremists carry out requires planning, scoping out the location, and exceptional measures so as to not get caught. For the most part, their targets are carefully selected not out of any moral considerations, but merely because of logistics. The two major considerations are "Can I do it?" and "Can I get away with it?"

But what of the poor "vulnerable" people who were attacked or died? Lesvy Berlin was walking in front of the engineering department of the university. Perhaps their intention was to leave a dead body in front of a center of techno-industrial progress: hardly

[6] Cf. http://www.excelsior.com.mx/comunidad/2017/07/26/1177661

11. 35th Communique (August): two more explosives left in two churches in Mexico State, Mexico. No known injuries.

12. 36th Communique (August): a tractor trailer set on fire in Mexico State. No known injuries.

13. 37th Communique (August): an incendiary device placed on a bus in Santiago, Chile, which started a fire and consumed the vehicle. No known injuries.

14. 40th Communique (September): placing a bomb in front of a physics and astronomy building at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, addressed to the director of that department, Dr. Gloria Dubner. The bomb was found and disposed of by the bomb squad. No known injuries.

15. 41st Communique (October): a bomb placed in another church in Mexico State, Mexico. No known injuries.

16. 42nd Communique (October): the murder of two male pilgrims carrying a St. Jude statue in the state of Queretaro in Mexico.

17. 43rd Communique (November): attempted bombings of bus lines in Santiago, Chile. No known injuries.

18. 44th Communique (December): the sabotaging and destruction of power lines in the state of Nuevo Leon in Mexico.

19. 45th Communique (December): an attempted mail bomb that exploded in a major processing center in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Two male workers sustained minor injuries.

So let us break down the total deaths, injuries, etc. that ITS has claimed responsibility for and see if they are targeting (in the pirates' words) "women, faggots, and pussies". Now, I don't see any hate crimes against homosexuals here, so that's off the list.

Step 20 describes the Greater Ventriloquists who speak with the voice of the Ultimate Ventriloquist, a stand-in for the absurdity of the universe:

> *But we Greater Ventriloquists are active. We are active as nature moves us to be: perfect receivers and transmitters of nothing with nothing to stifle the voice of our perfect suffering. Yes, we Greater Ventriloquists speak with the voice of nature making itself suffer. Nothing can be more normal than that. The head is a useless mechanism. Cast it aside. We do not need it anymore. There is nothing but the voice of this pain and this panic thrown into the darkness.*

Returning to *Conspiracy*, it would be a mistake to believe that Ligotti has no opinions concerning the ethical inclinations of humanity. Ligotti presents an extinctionist perspective as the only acceptable approach to address the problem of human suffering. Though he is pessimistic about humans doing the "right thing" in this case, he ends his book stating:

> *Why do so many of us bargain for a life sentence over the end of a rope or a muzzle of a gun? Do we not deserve to die? But we are not obsessed by such questions. To ask them is not in our interest, not to answer them with hand on heart.*
>
> *In such spirit might we not bring to an end the conspiracy against the human race? This would be the right course: the death of tragedy in the arms of nonexistence.*

In a footnote, Ligotti elaborates further on the moral dimension of preventing human suffering:

> *What has been called 'man's inhumanity to man' should not entice us to misanthropy smarting for our species to*

> *come to an end. That deduction is another blunder, as much as it would be a blunder to tub- thump for our survival based on the real abundance of what is valued as 'humane' behavior… [T]o conspire in the suffering of future generations, is the only misconduct to be expiated, not that we will ever be ready or able to rectify our incorrigible nature. That we were naturally or divinely made to collaborate in our own suffering and that of human posterity is the blunder.*

In the penultimate footnote of the book, Ligotti vents his frustration at the cosmos (perhaps in keeping with the intention of this being an "anti-self-help" manual):

> *One cringes to hear scientists cooing over the universe or any part thereof like schoolgirls over-heated by their first crush. From the studies of Krafft-Ebbing onward, we know that it is possible to become excited about anything— from shins to shoehorns. But it would be nice if just once these gushing eggheads would step back and, as a concession to objectivity, speak the truth: THERE IS NOTHING INNATELY IMPRESSIVE ABOUT THE UNIVERSE OR ANYTHING IN IT.* [Emphasis in the original]

With these two last points I can express my minor differences with Ligotti and his pessimistic worldview. For if Ligotti's central point in his book is to emphasize the absurd and banal nature of human existence (in contrast to the self-importance we give ourselves), why should human suffering have any special metaphysical status? If Ligotti can otherwise simply look on human existence with a cold eye, why can he not have the same eye of, say, Rene Descartes observing a dog being tortured and concluding that its howls and convulsions are merely physiological hiccups and nothing more? "Pain" isn't even an appropriate classification for these

juries to his hands due to the trajectory of the blast, though his mother-in-law, maid, and three year old daughter were also in the room, though uninjured.

2. 22nd Communique (February): bombs placed in churches and a biotech company in Torreon, Mexico. No one was injured.

3. 24th Communique (February): a bomb placed on a bus in Mexico State, Mexico. No injuries.

4. 25th Communique (March): The assassination of the Vicerector of the Technological Institute of Advanced Studies, Luis Arturo Torres Garcia.

5. 27th Communique (April): Firing on infrastructure in Mexico State, Mexico. No known injuries.

6. 28th Communique (April): The placing of an exploding envelope on a park bench in Torreon, Mexico. A girl found it, it exploded, but the media reported that no one was injured.

7. 29th Communique (May): The deaths of two hikers in Mexico State (male and female), the placing of an explosive device at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), and the death of Lesvy Berlin Osorio.

8. 30th Communique (May): a bomb planted on a bus in Santiago, Chile, which did not explode.

9. 32nd Communique (July): a bomb planted at a church in Mexico State, Mexico. The sacristan of the church picked it up and it exploded, wounding him.

10. 34th Communique (July): another explosive envelope left on a park bench in Torreon, Mexico. It is not known what happened to the envelope.

response to the despair, a check in their own plus column, the form taken by their revenge upon "the world."

It's not just that they claim to hate humans but never kill themselves or each other. It's not just that they dress up "the indiscriminate attack" in the clothes of a serious theoretical proposition as cover for the fact that they increasingly only attack women, faggots and pussies. It's not only that they profess their hatred for anarchists while eagerly claiming a lineage with Severino Di Giovanni, the Italian anarchist and anti-fascist transplant to Argentina of a century ago, who indeed placed bombs with little regard for the possibility of collateral damage, but never randomly, always targeting the powerful.

And again:

Meanwhile, ITS is so bad at war, so bad at being the nomadic, cannibal warriors of their own deranged imaginations that all they can muster is collateral damage, the "indiscriminate attack," being their attempt to maintain their aura or nimbus of being the Most Down while actually camouflaging their own letting off the hook of those most responsible (impotence may be to embarrassing of a word to admit). To call their recent claims emblematic of an attack on low-hanging fruit may be understatement to the point of absurdity, an insult added to the injury done to their "random" targets.

And again:

Hyper-masculinized and/or indiscriminate violence, exalted as means and end, coupled with a mythic spiritual ideal is in line with proto-fascism, especially that of ex-anarchists who take their aim primarily or exclusively at "reds," egalitarians, queers, women, etc.

This one is pretty easy to address. We list here all of the attacks by ITS in the last calendar year (2017) and tally how many women, "faggots" etc. they've killed or injured. We can then assess how "misogynist" and "bad at war" they are.

1. 21st Communique (January): a bomb sent to the Head of Codelco, Oscar Landerretche, one of the largest mining companies in the world, in Santiago, Chile. He suffered minor in-

phenomena. Why does Ligotti continue to give particular regard to human suffering, to the point that we have to self-immolate because our consciousness has become a hideous deformity in an otherwise dead and tranquil cosmos? How did we become the only evil in the universe? Should mountains be obliterated as well simply because landslides occur, or trees exterminated because they sometimes get struck by lightning or consumed by termites?

Perhaps Ligotti pulls back a little from the inhumanist precipice before he falls over. Human consciousness is neither formidable nor intimidating. Humans are indeed dumb creatures, and so is their pain. The only reason pain exists is because we forget it: we neither suffer all the time nor are we meant to live lazy endless days in Elysium. No sooner do we despair of a pain than we fall asleep and forget it in the morning. Is this not the real reason the human race keeps going? Our ideas are not strong enough to bring about Paradise, or to damn us entirely to Hell for that matter. Human beings don't live in a horror story. Such tales are merely the other side of the utopian coin. Life isn't absurd because it is perpetual suffering: it's absurd because it's a blind game of chance between agony and ecstasy, governed by the tempos of forgetfulness and decay. In this scenario, humans, like all animals, are much better at coping with crises than preventing them altogether.

As for Ligotti's disgust with the grandeurs of the cosmos, this calls to mind some lines from Robinson Jeffers' poem, "The Broken Balance":

> *All summer neither rain nor wave washes the cormorants'*
>
> *Perch, and their droppings have painted it shining white.*
>
> *If the excrement of fish-eaters makes the brown rock a snow-mountain At noon, a rose in the morning, a beacon at moonrise*

On the black water: it is barely possible that even men's present Lives are something; their arts and sciences (by moonlight)

Not wholly ridiculous, nor their cities merely an offense.

Being unimpressed with the workings of nature or artifice is part of the general stupefaction of modern life. We are unimpressed with some things because we are often impressed by others (though foolishly perhaps). This too is part of our condition, something that we simply cannot help. There is no use being angry at this. Arguably the only anger that is warranted is against putting too much stock in this wonder; against the idiotic tendency to declare, "The heavens declare the glory of God." They do no such thing; they proclaim their own glory: transitory, material, and all-too-earthly. Not being content with this small glory is the tragedy of our condition. It goes this far, and no further.

What then of the "political" and "social", the asinine tendency of modern people to want to "change the world" or "make a better one"? At the very least, you should be suspicious of your own desires and opinions, for they are not wholly yours, nor will you ever be sure where they come from. If existential rage wells up within you, you should acknowledge that it too is part of the puppetry of your animal and social existence: a product of forces that you will never grasp. (For only the forces are truly real. Here we are in complete agreement with Ligotti.) Is inaction the only real freedom here? That is a silly question which you should know the answer to by now. The puppet is not freer when its strings are not being pulled, for the strings are still there. I leave you then with this: If the throwing hand dangles from the end of a string, should it throw the bomb anyway?

to you, take justice into your own hands. Do what has to be done and that's it… If you, individualist, were a victim of this sort of civilizing activity, look for the person who harmed you and make them pay, so that their blood is splattered everywhere and your hands are stained with their blood. And be happy that you did it… and don't be ashamed. When you're doing it, enjoy it, without regrets, your will be done…"[5]

One might say that's "ableist" or psychopathic, we cannot imagine anything more cathartic. What good are endless analyses of the past and present versus vengeance in the here and now?

The "rape apologist" accusation is just a marketing ploy. The eco-extremist, echoing an anarchist of yesteryear, could retort that they could never be rape apologists because they are too busy advocating for (and working for, in their own way) the extinction of the human species. They are innocent of that minor charge as they are busy working on a greater project (even if, admittedly, they could never bring it about themselves).

Of course, to paraphrase Joseph Stalin, one rape is a tragedy, and the extinction of the human race is merely a statistic.

That accusation refuted, we move on.

B. Misogyny

This is somewhat related to rape, but deserving of its own section. The premise is that misanthropy is merely a cover for oppressing the most vulnerable and downtrodden sector of society, insinuating that ITS and other eco-extremists target women and oppressed people disproportionately. We quote the pirates:

Why is it so often that those who claim to be "pessimistic about all human endeavors" seem bound to express this alleged pessimism most potently as a hatred of women? One wonders at how deeply the misogyny runs in those for whom rape is not part of the reason for their pessimism, their alleged misanthropy, but instead is their stock

[5] http://prmlkuddink.torpress2sarn7xw.onion/

I have not wanted to remain thus. I have accepted my existence as a woman, and I have declared war without quarter on civilization, and not on a model of a system of domination called "patriarchy". The eco-extremism that I defend is not focused on gender. I have wounded both men and women equally since this war is against civilization as a whole. Though the gender of the target is not important, at the same time I realize that as an individualist my condition as a woman in what I have done. Maybe I don't recognize it publicly for strategic reasons, but I do with those in affinity.[4]

She acknowledges, at least tacitly, the role the subjugation of women played in the emergence of civilization. The point is that it is no longer important, or rather, it would be important if one expects a "better" society to emerge out of the rubble of the current hyper-civilized techno-industrial civilization. As we don't expect this, and as we think it is absurd to try to engineer a society based on spotty anthropological information, talking about abolishing patriarchy is about as useful as talking about terraforming the Moon or colonizing Mars. We will not waste our energy trying to achieve it.

Is there an eco-extremist approach to rape in particular? One eco-extremist spoke on the topic on an Internet radio program called, "Radio Primate". At around the forty-five minute mark, he stated something along the lines of the following:

"If I say that I oppose rape, what good would it do?… If someone, even if they are old or young, a neighbor, relative, etc. raped you, instead of condemning rape, or victimizing yourself, why don't you look for that person, and in an intelligent manner, get a knife, or even a gun, look that person in the eye, and, again, in an intelligent manner, kill them. Why are we going to declare ourselves in favor of or in opposition to civilizing activities? If someone did something like that

[4] "Eco-extremism and the woman part 1" Found here: http://maldicionecoextremista.altervista.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Revista-Extinci%C3%B3n-1.pdf

Suddenly, Pan

Later that evening she sees an eagle flying across the marshes, in the same direction. It's golden-dark, almost night. The region is lonely and Pan is very close. Geli has been to enough Sabbaths to handle it—she thinks. But what is a devil's blue bite on the ass to the shrieking-out- ward, into stone resonance, where there is no good or evil, out in the luminous spaces Pan will carry her to? Is she ready yet for anything so real? The moon has risen. She sits now, at the same spot where she saw the eagle, waiting, waiting for something to come and take her. Have you ever waited for it? wondering whether it will come from outside or inside? Finally past the futile guesses at what might happen… now and then re-erasing brain to keep it clean for the Visit… yes wasn't it close to here? remember didn't you sneak away from camp to have a moment alone with What you felt stirring across the land… it was the equinox… green spring equal nights… canyons are opening up, at the bottoms are steaming fu- maroles, steaming the tropical life there like greens in a pot, rank, dope-perfume, a hood of smell… human consciousness, that poor cripple, that deformed and doomed thing, is about to be born. This is the World just before men. Too violently pitched alive in constant flow ever to be seen by men directly. They are meant only to look at it dead, in still strata, transputrefied to oil or coal. Alive, it was a threat: it was Titans, was an overspeaking of life so clangorous and mad, such a green corona about Earth's body that some spoiler had to be brought in before it blew the Creation apart. So we, the crippled keepers, were sent out to multiply, to have dominion. God's spoilers. Us. Counter-revolutionaries. It is our mission to promote death. The way we kill, the way we die,

being unique among the Creatures. It was something we had to work on, historically and personally. To build from scratch up to its present status as reaction, nearly as strong as life, holding down the green uprising. But only nearly as strong. Only nearly, because of the defection rate. A few keep going over to the Titans every day, in their striving subcreation (how can flesh tumble and flow so, and never be any less beautiful?), into the rests of the folksong Death(empty stone rooms), out, and through, and down under the net, down down to the uprising. In harsh-edged echo, Titans stir far below. They are all the presences we are not supposed to be see- ing—wind gods, hilltop gods, sunset gods—that we train ourselves away from to keep from looking further even though enough of us do, leave Their electric voices behind in the twilight at the edge of the town and move into the constantly parted cloak of our nightwalk till Suddenly, Pan—leaping—its face too beautiful to bear, beautiful Serpent, its coils in rainbow lashings in the sky—into the sure bones of fright—

Excerpt from *Gravity's Rainbow* by Thomas Pynchon

we think, even though it will infuriate the anarchists that we talk in this way, oh well."[3]

There is absolutely nothing prescriptive about eco-extremism. There is only an extreme pessimism concerning human thought and action, so it is no surprise to us if some *indios* in the hills of Mexico still give away their daughters for the price of a cow. We do not expect humans to be just or reasonable in this or any other context. Eco-extremism has no inclination to tell uncivilized societies how they should behave, we don't believe in "The Fall," good guys vs. bad guys, etc. If that sort of talk was ever appropriate, it isn't anymore. We have no inclination to be Lawgivers to this or any other society, past or present. Our pursuit is attack on this society, this reality, and we do not feel the need to go back two-hundred years to call out injustices that most people have forgotten.

Do eco-extremists then advocate that women simply accept their rapes? To the extent that we care about those in affinity, there are two ideas at play here: 1. To renounce the idea that women (or anyone else) are victims who need to be protected by hyper-civilized society and 2. That all vengeance and retribution be carried out amorally and individualistically, as "societal solutions" and shaming are mere frauds. As some female eco-extremists have stated (yes, they exist):

The Western view is for one to look upon oneself as a woman as a victim of everyone and everything. It forces you to focus on dumb struggles which only distract from the true problem: Civilization. The system benefits when we look for the guilty amongst ourselves, and when we turn our anger on men, immigrants, the justice system, the state, the speciesists, etc. Thus, going along with all of the ephemeral struggles makes us part of the herd, but of a black herd: the supposedly "rebel" one, which one realizes is not even the case.

[3] http://maldicionecoextremista.altervista.org/they-took-their-time-already-wild-reaction-responds-to-destruye-las-prisiones/

or content warnings, or admonitions from hindsight are of any use, or even desirable. Ramon Elani and Abe Cabrera's matter-of-fact descriptions of previous atrocities are neither "laudatory" nor "salutary". Some confusion might lie in the fact that they feel no need to judge two hundred year old events through the prism of modern egalitarianism or morality. *Atassa* is no more a "pro-rape" journal than it is a "pro-infanticide" or "pro-horse theft" journal, as these are also crimes described in its pages. One could here suspect that mentioning "rape" hits the "right buttons," and is the pirates' attempt to jump on the "fake news" bandwagon of 2017. In this case, accuracy suffers when marketing is one's ultimate goal.

If the pirates had so desired, they could have easily found other damning evidence of eco-extremism being soft on sexual violence. Here we will cite one example as the pirates do not seem to have performed even cursory research on the topic. It comes from a work during the Wild Reaction phase of eco-extremism called, "They took their time already: Wild Reaction responds to Destroy the Prisons":

"Before this comment RS [Wild Reaction] answers that if DP take themselves for community connoisseurs, we hope they know that the people of the hills in Mexico, since hundreds of years ago, are used to lifestyles that are frowned upon by the city dwellers sick with Western culture, certain ways of life that are perceived as 'brutal'. For example, to exchange a woman for a cow or a swine, is common among natives, it is part of their customs, their way of life, and is something normal, while for Western moralists (including some anarchists) it is something unworthy, they get all worked up and cry to the heavens when they hear about this. Generally anarchists of the feminist type are those who most make a scandal about it. RS doesn't see it as a bad thing, RS respects the development and customs of the country people, this is why we express ourselves in favor of power relations in such communities because it is not our concern to try and change them. We emphasize, it is not that we are 'machistas' but honestly we don't set ourselves against this kind of native attitudes. This is what

Living in the Hands of the Gods: Remembering Daniel Quinn

by Ramon Elani

> *I think what you're groping for is that people need more than to be scolded, more than to be made to feel stupid and guilty. They need more than a vision of doom. They need a vision of the world and of themselves that inspires them.*
>
> Daniel Quinn *Ishmael*

It's the late 1990s, I'm a teenager. I'm sitting on the floor in a sparsely furnished old log cabin in the forest with my tribe. Proud, beautiful girls with red bandanas worn over their long brown braids. Strong young men, with the soft down of their first beards on their faces. Friends and lovers, all. The air is thick with the smoke of sage and weed. Pachelbel's Canon in D Major plays on an old record player. A pot of lentils boils away on the wood stove. My head rests in the lap of my first love, a girl with a slightly upturned button nose and long red hair. We read passages aloud to each other from Daniel Quinn's *Ishmael.* We drop acid and wander through the forests and meadows, dreaming of returning to the blissful harmony of pre-civilized existence. Golden youth and its dreams.

Thousands of miles away, Julia Butterfly Hill was sitting in the redwood tree she named 'Luna' and a year or so earlier Ted Kaczyn-

ski had been convicted for mailing bombs to computer labs and timber industry lobbyists.

My friends and I had dropped out of high school around this time and taken our education into our hands.

As we had already rejected the conventional notion that intelligent, intellectually engaged young people belong in school, we were thrilled by Quinn's iconoclastic words. The power of stories and the truth behind the stories are not the same thing. You don't need anyone how to tell you how to live. We already know everything there is to know. Quinn could hardly have found a more eager audience. We sought ideas that recreated the world. We instinctively knew that something was deeply wrong with the world. And we were young, naive, and idealistic enough to think, at that moment, that something could still be done to make things right. Quinn's words radically and irrevocably changed the way we saw the world around us.

As a red-diaper baby, raised by cosmopolitan intellectuals, the ideas of Marx already seemed out of touch and reductive. There were deeper forces at work than economics, that much was clear to me. *Ishmael* gave me an entirely new understanding of the problem that I could only vaguely perceive. The notion that there were ideas and biases so deeply ingrained within human culture that we never even saw them at work forever changed my intellectual orientation. Quinn's writing influenced the way I read and engaged with everything that came after. Truly, his impact on me could not be overstated.

I wouldn't be surprised if others reading this piece have their own stories of discovering Daniel Quinn's writing that are similar to my mine. As Lisa Wells writes in *N+1,* following Quinn's death on February 17, 2018:

> *I persuaded my three best friends to read* Ishmael, *and they were similarly affected. At night we convened a kind of book club in a motorboat parked in my friend*

And of course, the "white historian" cited at length after this passage appears to be nothing but an exploiter who wants to spread calumny and detraction against poor indigenous people, because that is the only reason white His-torians exist.

Dr. Shuck-Hall has directed [Christopher Newport University's] *public history program for almost a decade. Her book-length analyses of Southeastern Indians were published by both the University of Nebraska Press and the University of Oklahoma Press. She assisted tribal advocates to secure claims to ancestral lands, and undertook museum curatorial assignments for Southeastern Indian tribes.*[2]

It appears here that the edelweiss pirates were too preoccupied with their invective to do a simple Google search, but we suppose that's forgivable if the object of one's polemic is so vile and lacking in human decency.

One wonders what the pirates think indigenous warfare was actually like, uninformed by Christian admonitions to "turn the other cheek" (which Christian soldiers did not even follow) and where scalping and torturous death were widely reported in the context of war. The Creeks were a remnant of the Mississippian cultures, and in places like Cahokia human sacrifices are widely believed to have taken place. It is odd that the pirates did not blame agriculture and sedentism for all of the bad things done at Fort Mims like every other primitivist. It is rather foolish then to cast doubt on heavily documented historical events, especially if one presents no counter-narrative in its place.

And Abe Cabrera isn't white. One could state that white authors are "cleansed" of their whiteness if he cites them.

We leave the pirates' yellow journalist exegesis and lay our cards on the table. First and foremost, eco-extremists don't have any prescriptive counsels for any human at all in our context. None. We don't care if people rape, murder, kill, commit infanticide, etc. etc. We do not believe that condemning behaviors, issuing trigger

[2] http://cnu.edu/publichistorycenter/about/

well within the cultural and spiritual logic of traditional Creek culture." To prove his point, he quotes another white historian at length.

Here is the ideological underpinning being offered by their US boosters for the femicidal actions claimed by ITS. Here is the "indiscriminate attack" being refined, in print as in thought. Here is Rape-as-Re-Wilding.

Again, we must point out here the "hermeneutic of suspicion". In spite of being an essay that aims to be well-documented, the pirates feel that they can discredit all of the "His-storians" and white scholars without it seems having done any research of their own, or citing any counter-narratives describing the same events. But here it is worth citing in full the passage that so scandalized the authors of OIAWR:

A special fate was reserved for the women. The Indians stripped them naked, scalped both head and nether parts, then raped some with fence rails and clubbed all to death like small game. Those unfortunate enough to be pregnant had their bellies slit open. Then the glistening fetus was snatched out, cord still attached, and laid, still living, carefully by the mother's side in horrible tableaux—in the case of Mrs. Summerlin's twins, on both sides of her. The indomitable Nancy Bailey met a similar end. When approached by an Indian who asked who her family was, she reportedly pointed to a body sprawled nearby and boldly exclaimed, 'I am the sister of that great man you have murdered there.' At which the enraged Indians clubbed her to the ground, slit open her belly, yanked out her intestines, and threw them onto the ground around her.

While a gruesome sight to be sure, this was not the only atrocity that the Red Sticks committed at Fort Mims. Right above the cited text, the "Atassa" author describes a small boy being clubbed to death and bodies being dismembered and held aloft as trophies of war, a custom among some of the Shawnee warriors present at the massacre. One wonders why child murder and dismemberment left the pirates so unfazed, but brutal rapes with fence rails were a bridge too far.

> *Matt's garage, smoking cigarettes and stacking empties of Milwaukee's Best Ice, discussing how best to spread the word about the Civilization problem. Days, we'd cut class and walk the streets of our suburb with oracular intensity, surveying the future ruins of stripmalls and car lots and wondering if anyone else in those multitudes foresaw what was coming. Soon, we'd dropped out of high school.*

In some ways Quinn's message speaks best to teenagers. But this is not a criticism. There is a beautiful, powerful simplicity to Quinn's philosophy that anyone can understand. This is a rare quality. It is a testament to Quinn's gifts as a writer and thinker that he found a way to tell a profoundly threatening, controversial story is such a gentle and accessible way. And furthermore, by framing the problem, an admittedly terrifying, apocalyptic problem, in such a calm way actually seems to have the effect of inspiring people to act. There is something about unrestrained militant rhetoric that really undermines the gravity of a message. That kind of rhetoric, so widespread among primitivists, radical environmentalists, and enemies of civilization, is utterly absent in Quinn's writing.

It's important to stipulate here that Quinn never called himself an anarchist and was hesitant to be associated with anarchy or anarchist ideas. The only ideology that he explicitly identified with was what he called new tribalism, building off the ideas of Gary Snyder. He likewise distanced himself from environmentalism as such, with its hollow notions of conservation. Nevertheless, as philosopher Bron Taylor argues, its clear that Quinn *"articulated the most prevalent cosmogony found within radical environmental subcultures."* In the end, whatever green anarchists and anarcho-primitivists believe, Quinn's ideas have been staggeringly influential in the creation of those beliefs.

The content of Quinn's philosophy is a version of story that most of our readers are already familiar with: civilization is a force,

a way of life, which sprung from the idea of human exceptionalism. As agriculturalists subdued nomadic communities, civilization progressively spread across the globe. The ideology of civilization states that the destiny of humanity is to rule and subjugate the earth. Thus civilized humanity experiences its relationship to the cosmos as a war and as the logic of war demands, there must be a winner and a loser. Ultimately civilization makes a prison of human society and a graveyard of the earth. The impulse to endlessly allow human society to grow is a demonic one, which curses the individuals in that society as surely as the non-human beings of the world.

For all his admiration for hunter- gatherers and non-civilized human communities, Quinn never fell back on prescriptive solutions. In *The Story of B*, Quinn writes, "*The world will not be saved by old minds with new programs. If the world is saved, it will be saved by new minds—with no programs.*" We can see here the influence of Quinn's youthful aspiration to become a monk. The compulsive need of anarchists to act, the absurd idea of insurrection, and of intentionally bringing about industrial collapse were delusions that Quinn was utterly untempted by. Nevertheless, Quinn saw his work as a way to "save the world." He believed that as civilization inevitably weakened, human communities organizing themselves into tribal groups was the only path forward for humanity. This need not take the form of rewilding, per se, given the limitations of the biosphere to suddenly accommodate seven billion foragers.

Echoing Derrick Jensen, another foundational thinker within this milieu, Quinn clearly identified the Malthusian problem of increasing availability of food leading to increasing human population. At the end of the day, whatever solutions are proposed without addressing the simple question of endless human growth, will be meaningless. It seems that Quinn was working on a book at the time of his death that was going to suggest limiting access to food as a way to reduce the human population back to a size that would less radically alter the environment. Throughout his career, Quinn

If these bits of pedagogy and rape culture sound suspiciously rather like modern compulsions, imperatives, and fantasies to the critically-minded reader, you should know that Elani agrees with you…

We will leave Elani's essay for now and turn to the pirates' reading of the titular essay of the journal, Abe Cabrera's "Atassa: Lessons of the Creek War (1813-1814)". In their brief treatment of this essay (which establishes, along with Elani's contribution, the putative "pro-rape" tenor of the project), they focus on one scene of the lengthy essay: the massacre of the white inhabitants of Fort Mims by the Red Stick Creeks:

The section of the essay that follows shortly on the heels of this quotation is "The Massacre at Fort Mims as Re-Wilding," in which one of the bloodiest attacks of the Creeks is related. Cabrera is certain to assure us: "What followed was a slaughter of exceptional brutality, but well in keeping with the ethos of Creek vengeance in war," and quotes a number of white His-storians and anthropologists (who seemingly don't all agree on the precise extent to which this behavior was precedented among the Creek) about the "purifying blaze" that would now rid the nation of the apostate Creeks. Throughout the piece, Cabrera is certain to demarcate the concepts and the actions that are admirable and in keeping with an ancient wisdom. This mostly takes the form of a kind of inverted Noble Savage proposition that always and in all cases upholds whatever brutality was done by the Creeks of 200 years ago and posits such acts and principles as eternal, salutary, and Wild.

When Cabrera arrives at discussing the fate of the women at Fort Mims, his laudatory tone and narrative is utterly unbroken. With an incipient giddiness consonant with everything he's written up to now, he quotes at length about the gratuitous mass rape that took place at Fort Mims. Not a word of contextualization of the horrors of civilized war, or of war at all, is proffered. After this– his crown-jewel block quotation—he begins the next paragraph, "Far from being acts of gratuitous or extraordinary violence, what occurred at Fort Mims was

to believe that this is how these people understand themselves, or that any of their material practices confirm the sexism Clastres seems so eager to confirm[1]

Citation needed but of course none is forthcoming. In the anarcho-primitivist social justice world of the edelweiss pirates, an accusation is all that is needed to prove guilt, and then one moves on to the next slander. Anything that conforms to their "necessary" morality, inherited from Christianity, is a primordial re-wilded desire for egalitarianism, and everything that doesn't is a plot by bad misogynist colonizer anthropologists, or something to that effect:

I can't think of any self-interested or dubious motive for why these observers would remark with horror, can you? Maybe it's because they had a vested interest in making indigenous peoples look like warlike apes to justify their civilizing colonial ventures. Maybe underlying that was a perceptual bias, that spiritual illness that inheres in the very culture we claim to be trying to fight.

OIAWR hits its stride with the accusation that in describing the crime of rape in primitive warfare, women as spoils of war, Elani endorses this behavior. Again, the pirates accuse:

After reiterating that primitive war is a means of preventing radical inequality, we learn that "This is the complexity of primitive society: there are enemies and there are allies [...] Such alliances are created and maintained primarily through the exchange of women, who are also accumulated as spoils of war. This paradox, the exchange of women in securing alliances and the capture of women in war, illustrates, for Clastres the disdain toward exchange economy. Why should we trade for women when we can simply go get some for ourselves: "the risk [of war] is considerable (injury, death) but so are the benefits: they are total, the women are free."

[1] All references from OIAWR are taken from the version on Anarchist Library: https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/edelweiss-pirates-of-indiscriminate-attacks-wild-reactions

supported the idea of a reassessment of the tribal model. As by far the most successful organizational model for human communities, in terms of longevity and minimal ecological impact, Quinn promotes some version of a new tribal revolution, though in his writing he is quick to point out that this does not mean trying to recreate a way of life that largely disappeared. For Quinn, the point is not to try to return to the indigenous way of life but to recognize it as a model or inspiration. The past is past. We cannot go backwards. But we can use the examples of those who came before us to guide us forward. Whatever is coming, Quinn believed, will not happen all at once. We have time to adjust and adapt.

Again, there is a tremendous amount of flexibility in Quinn's approach and he avoids much of the dogmatism that is unfortunately so prevalent in anti-civilization analyses. While recognizing the historical role played by sedentary agriculturalists in relation to nomads and hunter gatherers, Quinn acknowledges that there is nothing inherently destructive in agriculture as a practice or a way of life. It becomes so when it positions itself as the only viable way for human communities to organize themselves, denies the validity of other ways of life, and comes to dominate them. Quinn insisted that humanity as such was not the problem, but one particular type of culture that had come to dominate all others, which we call civilization. And the unforgivable flaw of civilization is that it teaches humanity that it is above nature.

There is an overwhelming sense in the mainstream discourse that the destruction of the biosphere has been the result of some kind of incredible error or foolishness on the part of humanity. That we don't realize what we are doing. That people merely need to be educated and then the destruction will stop. Quinn deeply understood that this was not the case. As he writes in *Ishmael, "We're not destroying the world because we're clumsy. We're destroying the world because we are, in a very literal and deliberate way, at war with it."* The doctrine of anthropocentrism, whether it places civilized or uncivilized humanity at the pinnacle of existence, will perpetuate

this war until we destroy ourselves and billions of other species. In other words, Quinn understood that no critique of civilization that does not make some version of an inhumanist argument central will ever carry very far. The ultimate significance of hunter gatherer life was that it did not place a high value on human life.

Quinn's writing that sets him apart from other foundational thinkers is that he manages to avoid justifying his position by depending utterly on the tradition of Western anthropology, and its inherent links to racism, colonialism, and industrialism. What does it say about our understanding of indigenous communities if that understanding is completely derived from the research of those who sought to destroy them? Instead of deploying mountains of *scientific* evidence *proving* that hunter-gatherer life was superior to our own, Quinn makes his case intuitively and through the use of socratic dialogue.

The world has changed since *Ish- mael* was written in 1992. The tone of our conversations has become darker, more hopeless. The sense of urgency that so many felt in the 1990s evaporated, after decades of inaction and defeat. At some point it became clear that whatever revolution we were waiting for was never going to happen. And truly, before I learned of Quinn's death, I hadn't thought about him and his books for years. The historical moment of seminal writers such John Moore, David Watson, Derrick Jensen, John Zerzan, Fredy Perlman, and Daniel Quinn has clearly passed. Some have been discredited and maligned, some simply forgotten. Meanwhile, new voices have sought to build upon and revise the work of these early pioneers. The young will always seek to distance themselves from the old. And they are not wrong to do so. The old are notoriously hesitant to recognize when it is time for them to step aside. This is the way of things. But for all of the ways that we may deviate from those who have come before, let us strive to be humble enough to praise them for paving the way for us.

If it's true that Quinn was working on a book at the time of his death that proposed that the global food supply should be so heav-

2. ITS's misanthropy is a convenient cover for its misogyny since it now primarily targets women and society's most helpless;

3. ITS attacks anarchists and should not be tolerated in anarchist circles;

4. Little Black Cart (LBC), *Atassa*'s publisher, is directly responsible for spreading this pro-rape misogynist rhetoric in the anarchist community in the United States due to an irresponsible drive to stir up conversation for its own sake;

5. In the end, ITS, *Atassa*, and, by extension, LBC, are proto-fascist forces that seek to give comfort to the enemy as an unwitting Fifth Column within the fight against oppression and domination.

We will address each accusation in what follows.

A. Rape

After an introductory section, OIAWR enters into a tendentious reading of two central essays of the first issue of the journal, *Atassa: Readings in Eco-Extremism*. Generally, the author(s)' method of reading could best be termed as a "hermeneutic of suspicion". Ramon Elani's essay, "Return of the Warrior", is denigrated as a bad reading of a questionable author, Pierre Clastres, with judgments made against the cited scholarship that are little better than unwarranted ad hominem:

In addition to whatever patriarchy was found on his travels, it's fairly obvious in reading Clastres that he himself is some kind of male chauvinist, in the good French intellectual style, who occasionally starts blathering on about the ideas of gender and sexuality that he supposedly locates in the cosmology and customs of the people with whom he lived, but without ever really offering the reader any reason

Tending Toward the Wild (ITS), eco-extremism or nihilist terrorism appear better than they have been portrayed as this would be a fool's errand, and not at all honest. We don't fear being despised, and we understand that people want to kill us. You should want to kill us, because you are our enemy, and we don't even like ourselves that much. You can call us edgy but, honestly, that's one of the nicer things you can say about us.

So to begin…

After the release of the 29th Communiqué of the Indiscriminate Group Tending Toward the Wild (GITS) in May of last year and a cell of the Individualists Tending Toward the Wild (ITS) claiming responsibility for homicides and the attempted bombing of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), the international insurrectionary anarchist community, as well as the social anarchist Scott Campbell, have issued counter-communiqué after counter-communiqué opposing eco-extremism, and ITS in particular. Most of these were rather short until the release of a long 50 page essay on the Anarchist Library website and later Anarchist News entitled, "Of Indiscriminate Attacks & Wild Reactions: An Anti-civ Anarchist Engages with ITS and Atassa, Their Defenders and Their False Critics." (Henceforth, OIAWR) Upon first examination (at least to the uninformed reader) the essay seemed rather comprehensive and well-prepared. However, due to the number of targets it attempts to hit as seen in its lengthy title, engagement with eco-extremists texts and rhetoric is rather minimal within the development of the essay. Most of the accusations are thus inaccurate and a product of the author(s)' rather active imagination when it comes to the current political situation.

The author(s)' main claims against their opponents can be summarized in the following points:

1. The eco-extremist journal, *Atassa*, is a pro-rape publication;

ily restricted that no more than one billion humans were left alive, it would put him in the same category as Scandinavian philosophers Peter Wessel Zapffe and Pentti Linkola, the latter having also proposed the human population should be reduced to one billion. Linkola writes,

> *The crippling human cover spread over the living layer of the Earth must forcibly be made lighter: breathing holes must be punctured in this blanket and the ecological footprint of man brushed away. Forms of boastful consumption must violently be crushed, the natality of the species violently controlled, and the number of those already born violently reduced—by any means possible.*

For all his gentleness, it appears that Quinn had come to a similar conclusion by the end of his life. Cutting off the global food supply and letting six billions starve is certainly no less violent than any method that Linkola may promote. And yet this is where we are. And while most still deny this path and its logic, I doubt I am alone when I say that there are fewer and fewer alternatives that are remotely compelling. If we were all Julia Butterfly Hill in her tree twenty years ago, we are all of Kaczynski's party now, in one way or another.

Whatever my friends and I thought was going to happen back when we first read Quinn seems less and less likely to happen. That fierce group of passionate young people evaporated like dew. None followed that path we discovered among Quinn's words. I'm not sure any of them would even remember that experience we shared. For myself, I have ceased waiting and withdrawn into the self. The future of the human race and the planet ultimately no longer concerns me. I stand among the misty pines in my high place and seek to lose myself in within the spirit of the cosmos, come what may. I attempt to sublimate my consciousness among the spirits of mountain, forest, and moon. To detonate this fragile human identity and

dissipate into the ten thousand myriad things. And rejecting utterly the anti-natal- ism of Zappfe, Linkola, and Quinn, I will seek to guide my children and their children down the path of the way. To whatever extent the world can be saved, it can only be achieved within the soul of the individual.

Against the World Builders: Eco-extremists respond to critics

by Los hijos del Mencho (Fracción anti-pirata)

Eco-extremists and aligned theorists writing in the English language have contributed little regarding recent polemics against our Tendency. This is a wise decision since, for those who hate us, our words only inflame their hatred all the more and, while we don't mind being hated, we would rather focus our energies elsewhere. Our enemies seem to thrive on finding opponents they are unable to defeat (Nazis, the Republican Party, civilization, etc.) so accumulating a few more enemies can make it seem like they are getting somewhere., We neither need nor desire their parasitic attention.

Unfortunately for us, aligned parties have asked us to respond, and to that end we have produced this essay. Herein we seek to inform on certain controversial topics that Anglophone readers may have missed in an environment of social media and twenty-four hour distraction. We do this both for those interested in what we write, but also for those who hate us. If that much emotional investment is going to be placed in events that occur outside of one's immediate sphere, it might as well be for the right reasons.

We will primarily address the essay, "Of Indiscriminate Attacks & Wild Reactions," from the Olympia-based "edelweiss pirates." We will also touch on criticisms expressed in *Black Seed* 5, as well as in other communiqués and call-outs issued in the last six months or so as needed. Our aim is not to make ourselves, the Individualists

of a type of division that has refined itself into an incapacity to meet someone outside of their brands, signifiers, or disgust.

t Radical is a term I've been criticized for using that I'd like to reflect on for a paragraph or two. On the one hand every term to describe someone informed by the same ideas that I have been is kind of silly. On the other it is necessary. I can feel the hunger for its lack. I wish anarchism or anarchy were enough, but they're not by a long shot. For starters I disagree with about 80% of anarchists on just about everything and many somethings I agree with far more (as a distracting sidebar I mention those who are influenced by the SI who stopped thinking after they criticized anarchists for being bureaucratic, as if that were a unique characteristic).

So what to do? In my case I've picked a broad term, with its own baggage, to say that I am part of a conversation that is bigger than the 10,000 people who might see Black Seed but not as large as I'd like it to be. There are some pre-conditions but the bar to entry is low. Let's call radical-the-word what it is, a speed- bump and not a reason to slow down all that much.

$ The sweet anarchy of a lawless land dictated by no value but the one we determine together.

§ The best description of this, to my taste, is in Adam Curtis's excellent documentary series The Century of the Self *and especially the episode titled "There is a Policeman Inside All Our Heads; He Must Be Destroyed."*

Night through Dreams: Sangre de Muerdago – Noite

by Ramon Elani

> "We seem to move on a thin crust which may at any moment be rent by the subterranean forces slumbering below."
>
> "From time immemorial the mistletoe has been the object of superstitious veneration in Europe."
>
> —James Frazer

Voy os pinos. I go to the pines. There is a hidden presence among the trees there. It walks alongside me. Something I cannot see but feel in the submerged parts of my soul. The dark lagoons of consciousness, where strange fish swim and forgotten structures lie buried beneath algae and dirt. Titanic beasts move beneath those waters with glacial slowness. Shapes that blend and merge with each other. Mad, incomprehensible struggles occur in those lightless deep places. A stirring upon the fringes of awareness. A light fluttering in the bottomless caverns of sleep. The Thing-Among-the-Pines whispers to me but it is my own voice. Is it a dream? Or a memory?

Above the rocky cliffs, where millennia of waves have broken their strength upon those fortresses of stone, stand the dolmen rising out of the gloom of twilight. Fearsome monuments, mystic and dread. The fair Iberian moon shines down on these relics of the people of the hill and the forest. But I have seen the corridor through

the pines that leads to the great mound. The force that sleeps within stirs in its fitful dreams. It has seen castles rise and fall. It has seen the great forests torn down. It has seen the thousand rivers flow to the sea, bearing the silt of ages. It has seen the wolf dancing among the lightning on frosty peaks. And it will see many things more. Things forgotten, things dreamed, things only partly remembered as consciousness slips beyond the threshold. Is it night? Is it day? It is the moon, the moon and the pines. Do I dream? Or do I remember?

It is upon the threshold between the two worlds that the gentle sounds of Galician folk druids Sangre de Muerdago ("Blood of Mistletoe") dwell and weave together ancient songs of the lost gods that once prowled lush inlets and pine forests. The songs of those who now sleep beneath the barrow and dance quietly under the moon. Since 2007, San- gre de Muerdago have been evoking the haunting memories that wander among unhewn stones and ruined castles on the Galician coast. Universally acclaimed for their blend of medieval and contemporary folk traditions, their latest LP *Noite,* continues to tell twilight stories of moss, mud, and stone through the nickelharpa, hurdy-gurdy, and the celtic harp.

Having played almost 300 concerts in over 20 countries over the past several years, Sangre de Muerdago has become one of the foremost voices in the global neofolk movement. And fans of their recognizable haunting, ethereal aesthetic will not be disappointed with this latest release.

Moving gracefully from gentle, somber, and contemplative moods to the rousing, intoxicating, and ecstatic, *Noite* builds on the work Sangre de Muerdago has done over their last three albums, split records, and EPs, while also bringing a fresh sense of inspiration. Pablo Ursusson's otherworldly voice drifts through these songs like the mist descending from the mountains, weaving its way through the pines. With accompaniment by Asia Kindred Moore, Georg Borner, and Erik Heimans- berg, Ursusson brings the listener on a rambling midnight journey through the woods.

probably always been wrong but since the owners got organized it becomes easy to see leftist math as the desperate attempt to create another cop inside our heads.

Brown Cow

The new (old) green anarchy is another world that is impossible. It is not possible to live without constraint when every day a new headline blares excitement about a new enclosure. Whether it's social media, a fantastic ideology, or a movement heading towards a new law, our attention is drawn to the productive energy of doing something. Anything.

Turtle Island is here and not here. We both live there and have done everything humanly possible to distance ourselves from this place we live on. This disconnect is as fundamental as the body-mind split but doesn't have a movement to express it. (Perhaps the New Age expression of a new direction from Western pedagogy is a type of answer but it's always been too mired in personalities that directly benefit from its not-rad- ical approach to difficult subjects—like capitalism.)

My effort, started last issue and continuing here, is to articulate this impossible goal by way of a kind of negation. If we can't say, "this is what we are for," we can only say what we are against. Stack up our objections and climb them, reaching, for the sky, for the sun, for the world out of reach. Our mouths cannot say words that do not exist. There is no enunciation of what the beauty of not-this could be. I've never seen it but I welcome you to join me in this sound and flow.

**Of course there is an existential point here too. I'm trying to refer to an outside of abstractions represented by the state forms like band, tribe, nation, and country. But also outside of the knowledge of genre and team-sports. Prior to the Internet is also prior to the knowledge*

How

To put this in the now old-fashioned and tired war language of anti-civilization discourse, how does the war against civilization turn into the confused set of identifications-as-partici- pating in this war? How come we are further removed from actually ending the reification, separation, and the current order while at the same time having fiercer, less-compromising, rhetoric?

The fundamentals are obvious, or should be to someone with a basic radicalt education. At some point the world was divided into the takers and the doers, the top and the bottom, the owners and the workers. From our position as workers, this didn't seem like a preferable state of affairs so we got organized. We found each other, we found our voice, we named what was going on and what we'd prefer. We tried to make that happen and basically failed.

At best we came to a kind of detente that is aggravating when calibrated against how things should bet. But, for many, an 8 hour day was a fair compromise to not living in the war-torn landscape of Pinkertons and our bare naked divisions. If the choice is Total War or a peace that embodies structural inequality, guess which won? After the victory of liberal reforms we relaxed, smoked a joint, and divided into our constituent parts.

Those who chose peace lost again when the takers got organized and used our own divided selves as the very way to control us§. In our condition it's easy to diagnose the cause and impossible to know what the cure is. Do you know anyone who is not infected?

This is not to say that many aren't trying. A large part of the fierce rhetoric about the beautiful being that is me, and you, is that each expression of it has a chance of appealing to another oppressed person. Leftist math says that adding up all the pain will somehow equal enough—for a movement, a new category of demands, a hip new slogan, something real. But if what you want is a different world entirely, it is clear that leftist math is wrong. It's

There is a kind of selfdiscovery that can only be achieved through the descent into darkness, a kind of knowing that only shines by the light of the moon. *Noite* offers us a contemplation of this dark knowing. There is sadness in these songs but it is of a sweet and delicate kind, a stabbing at the heart occasioned by a potent memory.

The world we pass through now is the dew upon the blade of grass.

It exists in a moment of staggering beauty and pain before it vanishes in the blazing truth of the sun. Sangre de Muerdago playfully reminds us of the vastness that lies beneath our feet. A greater world, thickly numinous, inhabited by the ten thousands things and spirits, vaster and more true by far than the one we wander through blindly during our days and nights of loneliness and confusion. This is music that calls us to the groves, to the high places, to the ruins. It beckons us to follow the image of the capering flute player, the Horned One and his skin of wine, to leave behind the world of modernity and industrialism, a world that seeks to bury the old gods and the Spirit of the Wild. But as we know, buried things are no less potent, though they are entombed. A god forgotten becomes a myth and in the dreams of night, myths rise from their dusty slumber and stride boldly through meadows and woods. *Noite* brings us to this dream-like realm, where the gods of the wild world dance and sing around the bonfire, beneath the moon. It is music that dances like the ceremonial flame.

Sangre de Muerdago Noite-LP/CD/
Digital, Out in Spring 2018
Neuropa, Musica Maxica—LP
SMGS Records, Musica Maxica— CD & Digital

Without Words: A New (old) GA

by Aragorn!

A new green anarchism wouldn't require words to describe it. It'd be as simple as opening the door and saying, be here! Here, a place forever hidden in the expansion of civilization, in the grousing about concrete and wires, in the dissection of what exactly is wrong with… where exactly? But a new (old) green anarchism would be located in one place and one place only. A new green anarchism would be an anarchism of infinite here-ness. Hello. Nice to meet you.

Grammar is the problem…

Words are put together just so. Into paragraphs and pages. Into rows and columns. And for words to make sense they are organized by grammar. By Strunk & White, by sentence diagrams, by slaps on the wrist from the forever rulers. This discipline isn't part of the problem, it is the problem. What I want to say has been disciplined into me. What I will say to you has the rigor of the 1000 slaps it took for me to say it correctly. The violence of grammar is that now I do it to myself, and when I don't do it, it is only for a moment and I'm aware of it the entire time. Like the shy guy at an orgy.

Or is it recognizability?

Each issue of Black Seed could add to the new (old) GA, because the parts lend themselves to infinite review. There are three parts: unrecog- nizability—a basis in presence; here- ness—this place called Turtle Island; the metis, blurred, impure nature of life today. For this issue we'll focus on recognizability.

I recall when I was trying to live in this world (instead of outside of it) I went to a school, one I paid for, one filled with Brutalist blocks of Real Live Learning. I took chemistry, I fell in love, but I was alone. Largely this was because I was looking for a sign that others were not giving.

Today it would be something else entirely. The kind of counter-cultural signs I was looking for in the eighties are readily available today. It is nothing to swing by Hot Topic on the way to campus and be seen. I'm talking about a different time, a time when Wikipedia didn't allow people to easily calibrate themselves perfectly That was a time when recogniz- ability was possible*. It was enough to understand that Charles Hurwitz was evil and that the machinations of the Maxxam corporation were going to destroy one of the last holy places left in North America. What the kids today call wildness was an actual place. It was called the Headwaters Forest Preserve and it was under attack. We saw each other in a couple of old strummed songs and we went to war—a war in which it seemed our bodies could possibly stop the machine.

By the time Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney were bombed, it wasn't possible to believe this any more. The one weapon we had to fight the monster and to stay clear of its horrors was dulled by overuse and un- suitability—a sword against a tank works only in rare and very particular circumstances.

But this is my story. Yours is probably different.

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Songs of Creation & Destruction
2018, summer

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some point during the night before the assembly, an explosive device was left outside the doorway of the auditorium. It was described as a package made up of flammable material and nails, powerful enough to have started a fire and wounded people at the space as well as passers-by. Initially thought to be part of the push to evict OkupaChe, in March an ITS group mentioned "an annoying device that we left in the mousetrap called che." In the more recent statement, ITS elaborates further, regurgitating without irony the government's talking points about the space:

[D]id you know that one of our groups placed a bomb at the "Che Squat"? That was done mainly because they were defaming us and we shit on those anarcho-rock star ex-con politicians and drug addicts who hang out there, because the auditorium is supposedly so legendary: a symbol of "autonomy" and the "combative" student movement of the '90's.

So along with their tirades and death threats against individual anarchists, one can see that they have actually attempted to kill or injure anarchists en masse and cause damage to anarchist spaces. In preparation for this article, I reached out to anarchists in Mexico to attempt to document other ITS threats. They indicated that numerous threats from ITS have been directed against anarchist individuals and projects, but no one felt comfortable going on the record.[7]

In replying to Mexican anarchists in particular, ITS wrote the following in its Thirty-Third Communiqué:

We ask ourselves, are not the people who the federal government sent to infiltrate your anarchist spaces more important than ITS, who aren't in those spaces? And speaking of, did you know that one of our groups placed a bomb at the "Che Squat"? That was done mainly because they were defaming us and we shit on those anarcho-rock star ex-con politicians and drug addicts who hang out there, because the auditorium is supposedly so legendary: a symbol of "autonomy" and the "combative" student movement of the '90's. Now it's just a den of

[7] https://itsgoingdown.org/its-attacks-anarchists/

slimy journalists, a place where the Cisen and Mexico City Investigative Police plant their informers to gather information no matter how irrelevant. From there the press has gathered names, nicknames, photos, addresses, etc. of "comrades" in 2014 after various "slaps," from there you get the Pegasus malware that infected the personal cellphones of anarchists that year and at that site. Let it be noted that we are not saying this to portray ourselves as "defenders of anarchists," of course not, that ITS group placed the bomb at that squat because inside was a person who was trying to pass himself off as one of us. He foolishly deceived a bunch of young anarchists and dazzled them with his guns, with his threats, his made-up stories, and supposed connections with us to gain popularity and be "that guy". With that bomb we got him out of the scene and we started to hunt him. Only with the help of anarchists who he had deceived (who you should try to "eliminate" instead of posturing as the "new people who will deal with ITS," which is apparently now in style). That person returned to his police barracks and we lost track of him. This isn't a lie, you can investigate it with your sources and you will see that it's not part of our "pathological lying." Ha![8]

Since this event, there has been much back and forth, mostly one sided in terms of actual harm done against either side. In the 39th Communiqué, ITS in Chile stated that it tipped off the family of a person murdered by the anarchists some years back, apparently the victim of a botched incendiary attack:

So now that it is all the style to threaten an anarchist war against the Eco-extremist Mafia, snitching included, we gave some clues about these nuns to the friends and family (some of them criminals) of Sergio Landskron, so that they'll know who to shoot and stab to get even. They're looking in freed squats around the site of the indiscriminate attack and they'll know who took their son-uncle-brother from them. They're squats full of shitheads who have gotten out of

[8] https://atassa.wordpress.com/2017/07/20/thirty-third-communique-of-the-individualists-tending-toward-the-wild/

the explosives game because of this anarcho-Christian sin, but we know that they have this hidden sin on their chest and it won't be forgotten anytime soon.

Do the moralists consider this snitching too? It's all the same to us, it's not for nothing that we are egoists, criminals, and amoral. But let it be known, what we have just stated is just one demonstration that we know quite well those behind certain things, we know where the campaign in Chile against eco-extremism comes from. We thus state that if they continue with this pathetic campaign they shouldn't be surprised when we respond.[9]

Eco-extremists have also insinuated that there is a link between the beating of an anarchist in the University City in Mexico City and ITS, though no direct responsibility is taken for this attack. In the 44th Communiqué, which takes responsibility for the destruction of an electrical tower, ITS mentions this most recent violent incident against an anarchist, ITS explains:

These kids, have they forgotten from where anarchist groups in Mexico have gotten their explosives from 2015 onward? If they forgot, we remind them than in many cases these explosives have been acquired from the aforementioned eco-extremists with the intent of causing more destruction without regard for the political differences that divide us. We aren't going to name those groups with "anti-authoritarian" leanings that have bought explosives from our contacts so that they wouldn't have to put their asses on the line. They know full well who they are. Why is it that (with the exception of old insurrectionary groups) none of these "new" groups of anarchists say shit against the eco-extremists?[10]

Here we recall that, while the initial polemic against ITS by old members of the FAI / CCF in Mexico issued a vigorous condemnation, it did not deny a former collaboration:

[9] https://atassa.wordpress.com/2017/09/19/thirty-ninth-communique-of-the-individualists-tending-toward-the-wild/

[10] http://maldicionecoextremista.altervista.org/mexico-cuadragesimo-cuarto-comunicado-its-grupo-7-se-posiciona/ (our translation)

Although ITS were one of the few clusters with which we did not directly coordinate when undertaking joint actions, we were in solidarity with them, in the same way that some of the comrades that made up our affinity groups obtained monetary resources for them to solve specific difficulties when requested. That has been (and is) the basis of practical co-ordination between the new anarchic insurrectionalism and eco-anarchism.[11]

To think that there is an absolute wall between anarchists and eco-extremists in the countries where eco-extremists operate is a bit silly, especially since overlap between these groups has been documented.[12] In places of relative peace and legality (i.e. most of the places from where condemnations of eco-extremism come), people can afford to morally pick sides according to unsullied principles. In the realm of illegality and violence, one's allies and enemies are not as clear. We are speculating of course. To expect that people involved in that way of life will take as authoritative the words of anarchists far away in comfortable situations seems a bit delusional, especially if just for the crime of planting a bomb at an "anarchist" squat named after Che Guevara (an authoritarian Marxist). And as for subsequent actions, we are not sure what anarchists expect from the eco-extremists: that they are supposed to treat them with kid gloves because they're "comrades"? The anarchists have already made clear that this isn't the case, so they shouldn't be surprised when people who like attacking human beings start attacking them.

To us it seems that a particular group of "Third World" anarchists are asking "First World" anarchists to come to their rescue. An interesting spectacle but we don't see how this goes anywhere. This is a family feud and not one side deciding to "go fascist". Perhaps some anarchists on the ground can't afford to be as moral as

[11] https://325.nostate.net/2017/08/03/its-or-the-rhetoric-of-decay-joint-statement-of-insurrectional-groups-in-mexican-territory/

[12] Cf. http://maldicionecoextremista.altervista.org/chile-la-ciudadania-espero-que-le-explosen-infinitas-bombas/

spirit of all life knows this. It has always known this. I've only begun to listen," "When we learn to open ourselves to wildness and chaos, the organic anarchy of our beings will flow"—can suddenly be read in an entirely different light.

As compelling as I found this book it likely will not matter to the AP fan base. In an online discussion I had with another reader of *Corrosive Consciousness* they attacked BF for what they saw as his personal attacks on AP, but more for not understanding that the facts, or details, of what the AP write isn't important. What is important is the "greater point" of AP, which is that it is somehow deeper in its analysis than other forms of green anarchist ideas. This isn't on the pages from the AP writers, it is, perhaps, in the cries to connect spirituality to AP. If you can't see it in the words, it's because you can't feel it in your soul/heart. If you can't feel it, it's probably because you are disconnected from your body and have a bad case of the civilizations.

Some readers will hate the chapter and verse citations, the use of logical fallacies to tear apart arguments, and the footnotes, but as far as I'm concerned this is as complete a demolition of AP as is necessary, and maybe more than necessary. If the best response AP has to this book is a blow off 10 minute discussion on John's radio show about how postmodern and philosophical it is then I think the time for these AP writers has passed. They are not participants in an ongoing discussion about how green (ecological, based in the earth) ideas should inform our anarchism but a religious doctrine based in a bizarre interpretation of anthropology. As such they would no longer be the kind of content I'd like to see in any of the projects I host.

Scott Campbell, the pirates, the veterans of the CCF, or others. We end this section with an excerpt from an eco-extremist text entitled, "The Anarchist Myth":

Who knows, maybe new generations of anarchists will know how to turn this decadence around and take other paths, more dangerous for the existent. We don't know one way or the other and, contrary to what many people think, we would be glad if this happened since more tension, more attacks, more bombings and fires, assassinations and alterations of normality of any kind; in short, extremist and destructive criminal activity (of whatever kind) adds chaos and destabilization to a declining civilization.[13]

Intermezzo: An exegesis of the GITS / ITS 29th Communique

In order to proceed further, we have to address the red herring of "ITS Before the 29th Communiqué" vs. "ITS After the 29th Communiqué". Like most hyper-civilized, even those interested in eco-extremism had a hard time moving past the death and destruction reported in that communiqué and their significance. There was no schism in these events, and if one is perceived, it was due mainly to the difference in rhetoric / reasoning behind the actions as reported in that communiqué. To give a more faithful interpretation of events, we will of course have to enter the realm of speculation, but we think the following is a more accurate interpretation of events.

In addressing the 29th Communiqué, we must keep in mind that eco-extremism is not a doctrine or even an ideology. It is a tendency: that means that it mainly indicates the inclinations of its adherents and not their actual positions. For example, eco-extremists have been characterized as "religious fundamentalists," when certain members of the Tendency have been explicit that they do NOT

[13] https://atassa.wordpress.com/2017/07/15/the-anarchist-myth/

have any religious beliefs or spiritual practices.[14] The nihilist terrorist tendency in Europe does not seem to have any religious inclinations at all, or even explicitly ecological ones for that matter. This is a broad tent, but instead of an ideological position holding these groups and individuals together, the binding position is one of attack: violent, indiscriminate, and misanthropic. Beyond that, it is up to each eco-extremist / nihilist individualist to determine their reasons for doing things.

In that sense, the 29th Communiqué does not come from the "mainstream" of eco-extremism, at least in Latin America where it is most active. Though co-signed by an ITS cell, the main author of the communiqué was the *Grupo Indiscriminado Tendiendo a lo Salvaje* (GITS), the Indiscriminate Group Tending Toward the Wild. While it is safe to assume that there is a solid strategic union between ITS and GITS, their reasoning and actions have been somewhat different, as have been their results.

GITS surfaced first last year as the *Grupúsculo Indiscriminado* or Indiscriminate Faction that claimed responsibility in early 2016 for the murder of a computer science student in Mexico State. The police caught the supposed assailants of this attack and sentenced them in 2017, though the Indiscriminate Faction stated that they were the real culprits.[15] They were also part of coordinated actions with ITS in 2016 and early 2017, including bombings and sabotaging a rail system in Mexico State. In the 18th Communiqué, they issued the following ominous threat:

We'd like to state to all those people who are attracted by "natural beauty" that you too are in our sights. Just like the list of scientists, the list of "forest lovers" who we will attack is quite long. Don't be surprised if one day while you're out camping the "Devil" shows up. This time you won't be offered as a sacrifice, you'll just be fertilizer for

[14] http://maldicionecoextremista.altervista.org/es-en-it-unas-notas-sobre-las-recientes-difamaciones-y-breve-aclaracion/

[15] http://www.milenio.com/policia/estudiante-poli-upiicsa-muerto-iztacalco-gabriel_ramos_millan-sentencian-milenio_0_911308918.html

the AP writers to talk about the question of ants. BF asks how the behavior of ants and other nonhumans could be measured to humans with regard to domestication. After several exchanges this question was dismissed as a demonstration that BF did not understand that domestication was a distinct phenomenon from evolution. Here is a great quote from KT on the matter

> *As far as we might know it, ant "agriculture" is an evolved trait, ostensibly one they could always have had (likewise, it could be recent). Domestication by/of humans is historical, it represents a change in subsistence and evolutionary trajectory.*

There are many things to value about *Corrosive Consciousness*, from its carefulness to its humor. Among those things, my favorite— which might take on too much signif- icance—is the chapter that goes into the question of wildness. Wildness is obviously a bridge term representing the crossover from a spiritual understanding of what nature is, to an objective, *scientific* understanding of what nature is. It's both. It's neither. "Wildness is our genetic state" but also "Wildness, at least how I experience and conceptualize it, is sacred; that word is an indicator, not an encapsulation… " Couple this thinking with KT's relationships to the spirit world and the totemic animals that personally deliver him messages and it's not unfair to name KT as a mystic.

> *A retrospective reading of all of Tucker's work as mysticism thus becomes possible—his whole oeuvre becomes much more comprehensible. Like Zoroaster and Mani before him, Tucker's belief structure is founded on a revelatory spiritual experience that transformed him. That much of his writing is peppered with ardent paeans and urgent assertions— "Wildness exists," "I believe in human nature," "my spirit knows this. My spirit* feels *this. The*

of violence, since AP famously defended Ted Kaszinski and his anti-social, redemptive violence, which injured innocents and grandfathered eco-extremism. JZ was specifically brought to public attention (specifically in *The New York Times*) because he was running the Unabomber for President campaign. Twenty years later, eco-extremist groups (especially ITS—Individu- als Tending towards the Wild) have declared their brand of ecologically fueled war against civilization as one where "indiscriminate attack" will happen (as was also the case for TedK's mail bombs—and all bombs) and all of a sudden the AP are declaring that such tactics are fascist and anyone who would not unequivocally reject them are at least quasi-fascists.

Around eco-extremism, AP takes the easy route of arguing in synch with the popular refrain of the day, which posits indiscriminate attacks as fascist and fascism as the crisis at hand. Aside from the shift in perspective from the days and actions of TedK to today, it is fair to be critical of violence, as it is fair to be critical of non-violence. It is true that no one knows how to get from here to there. Whether it is called The Revolution, The Collapse, the Great Insurrectionary Something, or the wild popularization of GoodTM ideas over Capitalism and the State, it is impossible to know how transition will happen. When you participate in the game of this prediction you will always fail, frequently sound like a fool, and probably be incoherent in your thinking. This puts active dreamers of any stripe into the uncomfortable role of advocating for things they like while trying to sound like they have a plan. AP doesn't have a plan but that puts them into good company (everyone else). It doesn't make them particularly incoherent, it makes them as incoherent as everyone else. The issue is less that they sound like they know the answer, and more the rigidity and dogmatism that they bring to the topic, and the bad faith attacks that they make on other arguments and arguers.

Over the years, BF has engaged in many back and forths with the AP, and the funniest part of this book records BF trying to get

the trees. "The coyotes descended from the mountain, now they return to them."[16]

In a communiqué in March 2017, the Indiscriminate Faction announced its merger with an ITS group to form GITS. In this communiqué, they took an explicitly extinctionist line regarding humans, renouncing terms such as "wild nature" and making explicit that their reasons for omnicidal attack were completely secular:

Our position now is to attack the human being, killing and mutilating, now that the human being is the principal culprit for the changes that Planet Earth has suffered. Among these are the changes in the biogeochemical cycles that the planet has suffered in the last few years. These include cycles of N, P, C, CH4, H2O. We don't deny that the whole system is in constant change but this change has accelerated considerably after the Industrial Revolution (we don't have to go into detail here, whoever wants can study this, whoever doesn't can call us crazy.) Why do we say this? Many leftists, ecologists, anarchists, hipsters, pseudo-intellectuals, and the rest spit out the same thing: "the human feels like god in modifying natural systems." We speak here of the use of GMOs, which industry paints a rosy picture of. "They do it for the good of humanity," so that there can be better quality, more productivity, where they can't produce or there is a lack of production of this or that crop. So why is it so bad to isolate a specific protein in "X" species and put in a bacteria (Thermophilus aquaticus) to synthesize the protein? At the end of the day it doesn't seem too "bad," since the human being consumes proteins, synthesizes proteins, and requires essential amino acids. Maybe the use of GMOs isn't so bad to additionally benefit "X" species… Wait, what about the biogeochemical cycle of N? What about the nitrates and nitrites of the Earth? You already have an example of how the biogeochemical cycle is altered and the consequences that come with it. Anyone with knowl-

[16] http://maldicionecoextremista.altervista.org/mexico-eighteenth-communique-of-the-individualists-tending-toward-the-wild-indiscriminate-faction/

edge of the above would tell us we're right. They would stoop down and say that we (humans) are a danger for the Planet Earth. Others will call us crazy. But the changes are there, more evident than ever. Some hope that so-called "wild nature" will end it all, others hope to enjoy life, others struggle for equality of the human being, and the vast majority lives as a mass on the planet...[17]

While this was the first explicitly extinctionist text in the eco-extremist canon, the position has been adopted by most in the Tendency as far as we can tell. Nevertheless, few eco-extremist groups are keen on scientific reasoning, and some even criticize it.

A couple of months after the release of the 18th Communiqué the murders of the two hikers and Lesvy Berlin Osorio took place, as well an attempted bombing of the UNAM. At the risk of satisfying no one, we will point out a few things:

1. There is a reiteration of the scientific reasoning for their attack at the beginning of the essay;
2. The murder of the two hikers was predicted by GITS' predecessor some months earlier, so that might make the story of GITS "settling" for the hikers instead of illegal loggers not as plausible;
3. Taking responsibility for the Berlin Osorio murder is almost an afterthought at the end of the communiqué.

This is not to say that the communiqué is not telling the truth, but Berlin Osorio's boyfriend was arrested for her murder and is currently being tried for it[18] (as was the case with computer science student). Again, we do not know for sure, but these are the

[17] https://atassa.wordpress.com/2017/03/18/communique-of-the-indiscriminate-group-tending-toward-the-wild-gits/

[18] https://lasillarota.com/metropoli/novio-de-lesvy-berlin-osorio-sera-juzgado-por-feminicidio/183672

These are arguments you've seen before if you have paid any attention to good-faith criticism of AP prior to *Corrosive Consciousness*. The difference here is that the argumentation is literally supported by chapter and verse citations (219 footnotes in all), is as complete as is reasonable to expect, and comes from someone from the inside, not a hostile actor.

The carefulness of BF's reasoning is demonstrated not only in the extensive notes, but also in his understanding and naming of rhetorical devices that are even more important to recognize in their ubiquity. For example, one takeaway from the book is about certain kinds of argumentation techniques. Here again BF does us a fantastic service. He introduces the argumentation technique of Motte- and-bailey, which I am sure our readers will recognize from themselves and others.

> *Motte and bailey (MAB) is a combination of bait-and-switch and equivocation in which someone switches between a "motte" (an easy-to-defend and often common-sense statement, such as "culture shapes our experiences") and a "bailey" (a hard-to-defend and more controversial statement, such as "cultural knowledge is just as valid as scientific knowledge") in order to defend a viewpoint.*

AP purports to be both a source of wisdom about the world we come from, and an indicator of where we should be headed, an answer to "what is to be done." *Corrosive Consciousness* has points to make about AP's usefulness in both these endeavors. BF defends AP from the unfairness of the attack that any world other than our own is impossible to defend. He then goes on to list and consider some things that could be done, including insurrectionary subsistence, perma-culture, forest gardening, etc. and discusses APs ambivalence toward these strategies. This ambivalence is particularly poignant in the case of a discussion

myself equipped, or particularly interested, in engaging with the AP on the level necessary to be heard past the FUD of JZ's radio show, KT podcast (!!!), or their shared publication.

To put it differently, this review of *Corrosive Consciousness* is not a critique. While I am not in lockstep with BF (especially with regard to his views on anthropology and forest gardening), I believe he did a great service to the modern green anarchist space in this work. Full stop. This is the kind of writing and critical analysis anarchists need to get past the ways we are bogged down in our own, and in the broad left's, toxic pattern of assertion as argumentation. End sidebar.

The strongest point that BF makes here is a denunciation of what KT considers his strongest theoretical contribution to AP thought, domestication. In a sequence that fills about half the book (p34—92) the complex of ideas, theories, and values that comprise the AP ideology are itemized and evaluated. This includes an incendiary attack on KT-as-theoreti- cian that we'll return to, but mostly the purpose of this denunciation is a kind of clearing of the decks. Namely, AP is called out for claiming to argue from the mainstream of anthropological thought but instead holding a conservative, and largely discredited, set of anthropological ideas as the basis of its truth. AP (mainly KT) has developed some new terminology that is, to say the least, highly specious. He uses domestication, wildness, nature, human nature, and other terms to lay out a taxonomy of good and evil, pro and con, us and them.

> *Perfectly paralleling domestication, wildness refers at once to the genetic, the metaphysical, the social, and the spiritual, effectively bleaching it of any clear meaning and theoretical relevance. It is yet another margarine-word, a word for moral posturing, rhetorical bludgeoning, and subcultural positioning. If one is "For Wildness", they are one of the good guys; not for it?—Get Fucked."*

only two actions that an eco-extremist group has taken responsibility for internationally where others were caught and charged with the crimes. (It should be pointed out that the murder of the hikers remains unsolved.)

What unsettled many about the 29th Communiqué was its randomness and seemingly absurd justifications for the discussed actions. We should remember that the groups that carried out these attacks envisioned them well in advance, and the venues were not at all random. Also, in comparison with all of the other eco-extremist actions in 2017, these remain a bit of an outlier. Most other attacks have been against biotechnologists, executives, academics, etc. There have also been a disproportionate number of attacks on the Catholic Church and its faithful. As we saw above, to think that the 29th Communiqué was some sort of "watershed" moment does not conform to the character of most attacks carried out in the last calendar year.

D. Black Seed no. 5: With frenemies like these…

Eco-extremism haunted the latest issue of the LBC paper, *Black Seed*, published last year. While there were some articles that mentioned eco-extremist themes in a positive light and would not have been entirely out of place in *Atassa* or similar publications (with honorable mentions to "Murder of the Civilized" and the "Erotic Life of Stones"), there are two articles in particular that were explicitly critical of eco-extremism, namely Bellamy Fitzpatricks' "Revolutionary Dissonance: Why Eco-extremism Matters for Those Who Most Hate It," and "Eco-extremism or Extinctionism" by John Jacobi. While OIAWR offered its own critique of *Black Seed*, we will ignore it in this section because their criticism amounted to little more than upbraiding the *Black Seed* writers for not being moral enough in their critiques.

Fitzpatrick's article was balanced in places, but its critique seems to be little more than nihilist one-upmanship. Also, in spite

of having footnotes, his reading of eco-extremist texts is careless to the point of negligence. For example, his main critical section is entitled, "Ajajema's Holy Warriors," and later in his essay he characterizes the events of the 29th Communiqué as "'sociopathic' people who have killed hikers and an intoxicated woman in the name of an unfamiliar, long-dead god." Only, as we have seen above, that is NOT why GITS allegedly killed those people. Their reasoning is actually more along the lines of his own when he speaks of cyanobacteria. Indeed, there have been eco-extremists or individualists who have been explicit about their own lack of religious motivations in carrying out their attacks:

Here in Europe there are also groups of nihilist terrorists, individualistic criminals and extremist misanthropes who are alive and kicking, and we remind you again that some of these groups were until a while ago close to you and your rotten environment, we know who is who and where they hang out each other, violence and the attack for us is not something new, but a practice that has become an extension of our own being, since it has been part of our life for years already… we do not have "pagan gods" what we have are weapons, explosives and information… So watch your words, your internet bravery can be expensive in real life.[19]

So alright, maybe that is a minor slip-up. And maybe we can state instead that ITS sent a bomb to the CEO of one of the largest mining companies in the world[20] in the name of a "long-dead" god, which is a sensible conclusion because the *Ajajema* journal most likely is published out of Chile and not Mexico. We have seen that some eco-extremists are "spiritual", and some are not. But never does a personal belief within eco-extremism become an exclusionary confessional barrier. The enemy is the human, and the reason to attack is entirely your own.

[19] http://maldicionecoextremista.altervista.org/es-en-it-unas-notas-sobre-las-recientes-difamaciones-y-breve-aclaracion/

[20] https://atassa.wordpress.com/2017/01/15/twenty-first-communique-of-the-individualists-tending-toward-the-wild/

Critique, in my view, is always implicitly complimentary: its mere existence validates the importance of its target, regardless of how harsh it may be. As someone who fell in love with the nonhuman world as a child and found the human one nauseous, Anarcho-Primitivism drew me to anarchism in a way that the Humanistic Left-wing or Right-wing versions never could have, and so I've lavished it with a good deal of this praise. Barring a sea change in the discourse with the Anarcho-Primitivists, what follows is a sincerely fond farewell.

If personal experience is any indication this critique will be treated like the attack of an enemy but any honest reader will be shocked at the generosity and willingness of BF attempts to improve the Anarcho-Prim- itivist perspective. To put it a different way, BF was surprisingly eager to participate in the project that we understand as AP but is largely the work of two authors, John Zerzan (JZ) and Kevin Tucker (KT). Bellamy wanted to be on the team; this is that story, and it is far more friendly than I would have been given the same circumstance.

As a sidebar, I am not an innocent bystander to this engagement. I have been in something like a public feud with the AP for a number of years, since I publicly asserted that "we (*Black Seed*) will also develop space distant from anarcho-primitiv- ists' tendencies towards fetishizing indigenous cultures, uncritical rewilding, appropriated spirituality, and reliance on anthropology." Mostly this feud has been comprised of offhand dismissive comments on JZs weekly radio show but it's also included dismissive essays conflating all enemies (ie those who disagree with any aspect) of AP as egoists who can now be ignored due to the irrelevance/wrongness of their position. My ambivalence with the AP has resulted in a lack of engagement with the silliness of this disagreement (what seems to be mostly a spectator sport). This is not to say I'm don't have opinions about AP or their statements, but I didn't consider

Do Ants Dream of Domestication: a review of Corrosive Consciousness

by Aragorn!

I believe I am like most people who write. When I sit down to write I am not quite sure what I am going to say. I have a couple points in mind when I sit down but don't have an organization to what I'm trying to do. When I'm lucky, I make my points and find a couple of other things along the way. A thesis, argumentation, and supporting evidence comes out of the momentum of the writing process. I recognize I'm not lucky often.

This book is the opposite of that. Bellamy Fitzpatrick (BF) demonstrates how to make a clear, full- throated argument. Here he is not restrained by the word count of a magazine (a much shorter version of this book exists in a prior issue of *Black Seed),* or the ad hoc nature of the audio format (Bellamy is best known as a podcaster on both The Brilliant podcast with me and the Free Radical Radio podcast with Ry- dra Wrong). The thesis of this book is to demonstrate a "corrosive consciousness: an orientation that, in each lived moment, dissolves reification, an anarchist form of life as a way of unmaking civilization within yourself and your relations." This demonstration is mostly as critique, and here Bellamy excels. This book succeeds as critique in exactly the way I wish were more common with anarchist (and personal) disagreements with each other.

In condemning theology, Fitzpatrick ignores the critique that eco-extremism has of such humanist concepts as "liberation," which he un-reflexively accepts and takes for granted in his essay. For example, he cites an article on the Wandering Cannibals blog but only in passing. Allow us then to cite a selection relevant to this conversation:

For the eco-extremist, indiscriminate attack against the hyper-civilized is a cultic offering to the Unknowable which breaks the anthropocentric ambition of techno-industrial society. It is an attack on the supposed stability and bliss that law and order seeks to bestow on its adherents, a blood offering to Wild Nature. It is a religious act, not a political one, even if religion is understood very loosely here (as it had been before the emergence of modern Western civilization). It is a blow to the ascetic ambitions for a better tomorrow of both priest and scientist. It is the affirmation that only the Inhuman can defeat the idea of Human Power as Its Own End, only it can break apart all ambition for control and artificiality. The shedding of the blood of the hyper-civilized is a prophetic act that foreshadows the final destiny of techno-industrial society, and perhaps of humans themselves: a descent into Chaos, that fecundity that births and destroys beings without measure, and of which techno-industrial civilization is only a farcical imitation.[21]

And if we can beg the reader's indulgence, we will cite another passage from an article on this blog that is pertinent to the conversation:

Perhaps the real ethical problem behind indiscriminate attack isn't one of assigning guilt, but of discerning if innocence even exists in this context. Seven billion people don't live their lives being innocent or guilty of anything. Their default mode is "minding their own business". They're fodder, they know not what they do. At that level, their lives are mostly devoid of discernible ethical content. And

[21] https://wanderingcannibals.wordpress.com/2017/04/14/of-angels-and-cyborgs/

even in situations where people "care", they often rob Peter to pay Paul: they live part of their life unethically to sustain an ethical veneer elsewhere in their lives. The bottom line is: if you don't want that forest cut, or that ocean floor drilled, or that river polluted, you don't have to look far to see who is at fault. You are, your friends are, those you love are. Or do you and they eat only air and live in thatched huts made from the branches of native trees? Or do you treat yourself with local plants when you are sick, or check your email using only a wooden bow drill? If (by your actions, not your words) you don't care about Wild Nature, why should it care about you? Why should anyone?

Human life is not and can never be heroic, ethical, noble, or anything else it aims to be. You can expect little from it, and it is not eternal. Those who continue to defend humanism only wish to circle the wagons and defend Human Power as its own end by any means necessary, but they are defending the material means by which that species supremacy is upheld. The eco-extremist has come to the conclusion that the only way to attack Human Supremacy is to attack humans in any capacity in which they are capable. They do this not out of some inverted sense of morality, but out of the realization that morality is impossible, or rather, it cannot do what it says it does: sift the wheat from the chaff, the sheep from the goats, and the innocent from the guilty. Their attack is a refusal of the premise that the human ideal can govern life on a universal ethical level. It is a launching out into the Inhuman in the Name of the Unknowable, with little expectation in terms of human achievement.[22]

So while it is of passing interest that Fitzpatrick compares humans to cyanobacteria in terms of ethical responsibility and moral weight, what better way to take the argument a step further than killing some humans for no other reason than it's Tuesday or cloudy outside? If human beings really aren't that significant, then

[22] https://wanderingcannibals.wordpress.com/2017/08/20/notes-on-extinction/

stigma. Hopelessness is reactionary, hope is revolutionary, and the condemnations will continue until morale improves.

Eco-extremists are not the friends of humanity. We don't want to save you, and we don't really care if you live or die (honestly we would prefer that you weren't here.) All the same, we're doing you the solid favor of pointing out the humanist trap that the edelweiss pirates are placing for you to get you back into the cage of hyper-civilized political logic. Eco-extremists would do what they do in a fascist society, a bourgeois democratic society, a communist society, an anarchist society, and so on and so forth. We don't care about your political calculations or prejudices, the "social significance" of this murder or that bomb doesn't matter to us. The point is that those who carried out these things enjoyed themselves, and the only social significance is in transgressing those humanist Christian values that would condemn those who assert "MY will be done." You can consider that fascist, egoist, civilized, it doesn't matter to us. Your elections don't matter, your victims don't matter, and your social justice doesn't matter. We have no faith that you could destroy civilization, or even pose a threat to it. We have no faith in your collective solutions, or visions of a brighter future. If you built your impossible "other world," we would want to burn it down as well.

It's okay to have lost, to be a loser even. We weren't given very much to work with in the first place, and deceiving ourselves otherwise does no one any favors. The issue now is: do you want to go out in a dignified manner, do you want to make it interesting at least, or are you going to stick to the script that made us lose in the first place? There is no use complaining, and you can't withdraw from the game now. Your move.

-Los hijos del Mencho (Fracción anti-pirata)

Besides, letting misanthropy come to the forefront, even in its most illegalist and anti-social form, might reveal the self-hatred at the core of each hyper-civilized person in terms of their own meaningless life. It is best to not lead them down that rabbit hole, they just might surprise us. It would then be harder to recruit them into a racket or commune or whatever mysterious scheme anarchists happen to be running this week.

If the pirates had read the titular essay of *Atassa no. 1* with better intentions, they may have noticed the very first paragraph:

It has been over 150 years since Karl Marx in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon *reflected on how events occur in history, as it were, twice: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce. Yet it is arguable that to differentiate between the two (tragedy and farce), one has to assume that history tends toward a particular direction. An event that is similar to a past event, so the logic goes, somehow failed to learn "the lessons" of its unpleasant predecessor. This idea makes assumptions concerning humans in a particular context acting in groups: that they have agency, that they have complete transparency in realizing what they are doing, that certain lessons can be learned after the fact, etc. If, on the other hand, we appreciate the blindness and resolve needed for heroism in an endeavor, any act can appear to be foolishness to the observer looking on in hindsight. All that the actors see in the middle of things is necessity. Our struggle may not be one of "learning the lessons" and breaking the cycle of tragedy and farce. It may simply be an issue of returning to the "heroism" of tragedy. That is to say, perhaps we must return to the tragic as an escape from progress: to realize that things must be thus, and it is our own reaction that is most important when faced with an inevitable outcome. It's an issue of whether we fight or lay down our arms because we are blind to an elusive "future."*

The pirates cannot admit the tragedy at the heart of human endeavors, especially collective ones. If they did, the gig would be up, the Emperor would have not clothes, they would have no carrot to use on the hyper-civilized along with their stick of inter-group

killing a few of them should be no big deal, right? And of course, eco-extremists admit every time they mention human extinction that their efforts are rather insignificant in terms of bringing it about.[23] The problem is ultimately *quantitative* and not qualitative: it is not one of innocence or guilt, but one of mere existing and taking up space. Whether Fitzpatrick wants "liberation" for a particular group or his own circle of friends is neither here nor there in this regard. As the eco-extremist writer Zupay states in his "Reflections on Freedom":

We cannot state it emphatically enough: freedom is an illusion. Nature is not our mother, she is "cruel," "merciless", and yes, "oppressive". Or at least that is how the hyper-civilized would see it. But for us, all this merely is, and what has always been. We don't tremble at the movement of the tectonic plates, or when the tsunami makes a particular eco-system disappear. Nor are we taken aback when a crocodile eats its young or a tribe of savages strangles its babies. We got rid of our civilized prejudices, we killed our moral being. We blew to pieces those who sought to domesticate our bodies and minds. We accept reality, we look our truth in the eyes and we are NOT afraid.[24]

And as we have stated above, perhaps to Fitzpatrick's relief, eco-extremism isn't prescriptive. It doesn't tell him or anyone else what to do. It has no plan for him other than being another hyper-civilized for whom it has no reason to care about. All the same, Fitzpatrick seems to think that the eco-extremist way of life entails living "ascetically and dangerously", which is out of the question for him. Rest assured, the mentality of the eco-extremist is more like that of a criminal, and, dare I say it, a serial killer, and less like that of a monk or a Bolshevik. Yes, it is dangerous, but no more dangerous than for anyone else who decides to live a double life.

[23] For example, Jeremias Torres' "Notes on extinctionist violence", found here, in Spanish: http://maldicionecoextremista.altervista.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Textos-Pensamientos-de-un-ecoextremista.pdf

[24] http://maldicionecoextremista.altervista.org/reflexiones-respecto-a-la-libertad/

There is difficulty in it, but all "normal" people live double lives at work, in their homes, and certainly out in public. So it is no more "ascetical" than what most people experience in their normal lives on average.

As for the whole "not getting caught," one can think that here is the rub. Fitzpatrick thinks that since their activity is "dangerous," of course eco-extremists must be fanatics on par with Che Guevara and Vladimir Lenin, displaying the same revolutionary "trappings." What he forgets is the actual joy of harming and killing one's enemy: a particular pleasure that we hyper-civilized don't often experience, or if we do (say in the context of modern warfare or "revolutionary" violence) we are asked to feel guilty about it. As the last article of *Regresión* no. 7 stated:

I recommend to the individualists who are ready to take a life to choose their target wisely, commend themselves to their ancestors, sharpen their knives, and be cold at the moment of committing the deed. They should also enjoy it: nothing compares to the moment when you hear the last breath of a hyper-civilized person and seeing the blood spurt forth from the body of your victim. Let us decide the fate of the lives of others with guile, remembering the acts of previous murderous warriors![25]

If we are going to be truly amoral and nihilistic, perhaps the acts of eco-extremists carry no more ethical weight than stamp collecting or taking up the accordion. After all, humans basically have the same metaphysical significance as cyanobacteria and stones. Why make a big deal out of humans killing other humans, especially if they seem to be able to get away with it? All human activity requires effort, from killing people with bombs to creating a permaculture homestead somewhere in the countryside. That doesn't make any of it "ascetical".

John Jacobi's essay in *Black Seed* no. 5 is a public repudiation of his dialogue with eco-extremism due to its embrace of extinction-

[25] http://regresando.altervista.org/revista-regresion-n-7/

sorbed by the surrounding milieu. However, another gang will take its place, and its first theoretical wailings will consist of attributing every misdeed and mistake to those who have preceded it, looking in this way for a new language so as to begin again the grand practice of seduction; in order to seduce, it has to appear to be different from the others…. The inability to confront theoretical questions independently leads the individual to take refuge behind the authority of another member, who becomes, objectively, a leader, or behind the group entity, which becomes a gang. In his relations with people outside the group the individual uses his membership to exclude others and to differentiate himself from them, if only – in the final analysis – so as to guard himself against recognition of his own theoretical weaknesses. To belong in order to exclude, that is the internal dynamic of the gang; which is founded on an opposition, admitted or not, between the exterior and the interior of the group. Even an informal group deteriorates into a political racket, the classic case of theory becoming ideology.[32]

The edelweiss pirate, the primitivist, the "nihilist" poser, etc. cannot live without their safety blanket of Enlightenment humanist values, and even though they espouse principles that undermine those values, they have recourse to claiming to possess a "grown-up" critique as opposed to the new kids in town who are just out to be edgy. The thoughtful reader may still be taken aback by the moralizing *fatwas* of insurrectionary anarchists who are themselves demonized as "terrorists" by government agencies and most normal people. "Aren't you guys supposed to question everything?" These neo-Christian humanists masquerading as "anarchists" have to jam the square peg of eco-extremism into the round hole of an illusory rising fascism, but no one really buys it. "Why not just call them crazy psychopathic misanthropes?" Indeed, that is what we are, but it just doesn't have the same ring to it as "misogynist rape apologists."

[32] https://www.marxists.org/archive/camatte/capcom/on-org.htm

machines that modern activism expects them to be, that they just want to get through the day and not be bothered with questions above their pay grade? Could it be that not everyone can be bitten with the bug of concern for the Future, that such a preoccupation is by no means universal? Could it be that even those who are driven to make a better Future for their children have only a dim and partial conception of what that could possibly look like?

Conclusion

Here then we can make our definitive judgment on OIAWR: it is an intellectually lazy interpretation of eco-extremism veiled in grad student verbosity. With the quote that ended the last section, their motivation appears to be to "sheep dog" wayward anarchists and nihilists back into the fold, or rather, back into the vicious cycle of the leftwing of Capital. "YOU MUST CARE! YOU MUST BE MORAL! YOU MUST WORSHIP THE VICTIM!" The "rape" and "misogyny" emphases aim to appeal to the common human desire to save the "damsel in distress". It's the pitch of the snake oil salesman or weight loss guru of the magical result despite all odds: "Yes, things look bad, but there's still hope. DON'T YOU WANT A BETTER WORLD?!!!" It's "green anarchism 2.0: This time, it's different." We are reminded of the vicious cycle of the racket that Jacques Camatte once described in his essay, "On Organization":

In its external relations, the political gang tends to mask the existence of the clique, since it must seduce in order to recruit. It adorns itself in a veil of modesty so as to increase its power. When the gang appeals to external elements through journals, reviews, and leaflets, it thinks that it has to speak on the level of the mass in order to be understood. It talks about the immediate because it wants to mediate. Considering everyone outside the gang an imbecile, it feels obliged to publish banalities and bullshit so as to successfully seduce them. In the end, it seduces itself by its own bullshit and it is thereby ab-

ism. Though Jacobi has had very public relations and even sympathetic exchanges with eco-extremism, up to writing a rather informative article in *Atassa* no. 1 concerning eco-extremism's ideological pedigree[26], he now feels the need to break ties since eco-extremism has lapsed too far into theological and nihilistic inclinations. This newfound aversion to eco-extremism brings up the question: if eco-extremists were not extinctionist before, what were they? Did they hope that a certain group of humans would be able to make it out of civilization and start anew? If so, Jacobi's reticence to endorse indiscriminate attack would be justified: if you accidentally kill one of the Chosen with enough of a "Wild Will" to make it out of civilization, are you not diminishing the chances of ultimate victory, i.e. a fully feral, wild humanity?[27] Clearly, eco-extremists have never thought this. Their hopelessness and pessimism toward all of hyper-civilized humanity (i.e. the only humanity left for all intents and purposes) has never been in doubt. The hypothetical positing of a "small group of people who are willing to embrace the wild," does not bring such a group into being, and neither does the existence of the peoples of such places like the Amazon or the Andaman Islands whose entire existence is due to the "conservationist" impulse to "leave them alone". The exception proves the rule, and if techno-industrial civilization and the rule of law collapsed tomorrow, such isolated peoples would no longer be protected.

The real issue with Jacobi has always been his intransigent belief in the human as a closed system, no matter how much recourse to "the wild" he has at times. He can't but spout such Enlightenment dogma as "the source of human values is human beings themselves," as if all "humans" have been equal throughout history, as if to predicate "human" in both the civilized and uncivilized resolves the issue at the level of first principles. As if the object of human

[26] "Apostles and Heretics"

[27] For more on this position, cf. "On Wildism and Eco-extremism", found at this link: https://ia801902.us.archive.org/20/items/AtltlachinolliEcoExtremistDialogues/Atltlachinolli%3A%20Eco-extremist%20Dialogues.pdf

cognition continues to be the continuation of the actually existing human genome, even if only within the circle of those who have an adequate affinity with the "Wild Will." But even if eco-extremists posit a "human nature" that is corrupted by industrial society, they neither posit a clear idea of its essence, nor a way to "fix" that nature by creating an "outside" of civilization. Such an "outside" does not exist, and there is no feral future, nor is one possible.

So to Jacobi's question, whether eco-extremists carry out their action because of their hatred of humanity or their love of the wild, they would reply that this is not an "either/or" dilemma. One can, and probably should, have both points as motivation. There is no natural "outside" that the hyper-civilized can take refuge in, as we are all products of civilization itself. But as techno-industrial civilization is neither a well-defined nor stable phenomenon, the ultimate object of hatred is the idea of human power and control as their own end, which can only be countered by attacking the human as both product and agent of that control. In this sense, extinction is like a wish more than a practical program: it is like the anarchists who wish for a "society without domination," though they know that this is probably not attainable. There will probably be *homo sapiens* well into the distant future, but one can act as if they should simply not exist.

In the end, this difference between Jacobi and the eco-extremists may be scholastic, at least on the surface. In terms of action, Jacobi and other wayward disciples of Theodore Kaczynski will continue to go about seeking the right theory and conditions under which to act, sinking deeper into ineffectiveness and sectarian bickering. Individualists, on the other hand, will act in the here and now, within the only life that Wild Nature has bequeathed to us, with the imperfect tools that we have both theoretically and practically. Though the embrace of human extinction may be more of a provocation than a real possibility, it does more starkly define what is important in our context, and what is secondary.

sort of "promising" social movements that arose when the Democratic Party was not in power, the universal disdain for the "Idiot" missing from a village in Texas, etc. etc. We remember liberals turning into radicals overnight, only to turn back into liberals once they performed the mandatory kabuki theater motions of the "Lesser of Two Evils," again leaving radicals holding the bag of fanaticism and irrelevance.

That is not to say that things are not as bad as the pirates say they are. Really, the glaring omission from their essay is their failure to engage anything that a particular author actually wrote, even though they send much "exquisite venom" his way elsewhere. For example, in their invective against *Black Seed*, they fail to mention that another "rape apologist" wrote an essay for that publication. Perhaps this was an oversight; perhaps they were not impressed with the essay. But at this juncture, a passage from that essay, "The Catalog of Horrors," can shed some light on the pirates' possible motives:

The categorical imperative is simple in this case: give people the information, all the information, and they will act on it. This is what birthed the Green Movement, anarchist or not. Show the people how much the environment is hurting, how much civilization hurts people, how awful civilized life is, and they will wake up and oppose it. Ideologues cite trends such as increased recycling, emissions regulations, electric cars, and the like, as examples that this approach works. Just a few more campaigns to enlighten and inform, and maybe, just maybe, we'll save the Earth and destroy civilization. Just one more issue of the Catalog of Horrors will finally get people to rise up, never mind that this tactic seems to date to the dawn of civilization itself.

I don't completely blame the average person for going about their day while the world falls deeper and deeper into environmental crisis. But I don't let them off the hook either. The leftist wants to have things both ways: he or she wants to place all power in "the People," yet blame all ills on a tiny minority that the People could easily defeat. Which one is it then? Could it be that people aren't the knowledge

of a small sector of already middle class individuals within an "oppressed community," as well as a tool for smooth talkers who can work their way into the academic or government bureaucracy. At least this is what we have seen with our own eyes, in Ethnic Studies Departments and other places where this dreck is peddled. The endgame of the anti-racist critique is the neoliberal Barack Obama, the endgame of anti-sexist politics is the greedy imperialist harpy Hillary Clinton. There is no way to separate the meat from the fat on that decaying, maggot-strewn carcass of New Left politics. So we have walked away from it.

Subverting the culture of civilization doesn't mean never trying unprecedented things. If certain social innovations can be seen as species-wide or species-effective experiments (like, say, those that involve pronoun usage, gender presentation, or other retooling of the conventions of language and custom), there is no more reason to oppose them than there is to curse the first tree dwelling shrew's descent to the forest floor, or the first following of the game into unknown territory.

With this passage, it is appropriate to discuss why anti-civ and nihilist readers might still distrust the pirates at the end of the text. It is precisely due to where this confluence of antifa and anti-civ politics leads: the conviction that the fascist menace appeared *ex nihilo* on November 9th, 2016, when half the country determined that a white nationalist coup was just around the corner, and every single "decent' person in this country entertained the possibility that a riot might be in order.

Except some of us have seen this film before know and how it ends. We remember that the largest marches in history failed to prevent the invasion and sacking of Iraq, which brought about such horrible fascist things as the Islamic State. We remember the "General Strike" of May 2006 when many Latino and other immigrants marched in the streets for their right to remain in the United States, only to be given the same President Obama who deported more people than his predecessor in the office. We remember all

E. Fascism

We return to OIAWR to address the issue of fascism and eco-extremism's supposed role in political discourse in the United States and beyond. Even if eco-extremists eschew political action and intentions in their attacks, the pirates attempt to graft eco-extremists into the leftist narrative (though the places that OIAWR most speaks about in this regard are not places where actual eco-extremists are active). If the eco-extremists wish to be excluded from that narrative, it's too late: for the pirates, individualists are already useful stooges of the reaction, patriarchy, 4chan, and a host of other ominous enemies.

The pirates assert that, *pace* Scott Campbell, there is no "eco-fascism," but this is far from letting eco-extremists off the hook. Eco-extremists obviously do not share many of the essential characteristics of fascism, which they define succinctly as "*populist ultra-nationalism fixated upon the rebirth* (following a period of perceived degeneration or decay) *of the Nation or the People as conceived, usually, as a racial entity.*" Nevertheless, like a pestilence in the air, eco-extremists have caught the fascist contagion, and are already proto-fascists. This small secretive cabal of individuals is doing the work of the State by attacking anarchists and giving the anti-civ movement and ideology a bad name. Or to put it in the pirates' words:

…The fact of the ever-shifting content of the ITS ideology bespeaks a political opportunism that is indeed reminiscent of the early italian fascists and their figurehead Mussolini, whose superficial, chameleon-like qualities as a theoretician were among his hallmarks. One can imagine current ITS positions, like prior ones, being thrown over in short order in favor of more fascistic ones. The resemblance could conceivably prove to be something more than incidental.

So the fact that eco-extremism is a developing Tendency and not a defined ideology means it's a loose cannon without principles just waiting to go fascist at any moment. Not only this, but

they give "comfort to the enemy," and that enemy could readily sympathize with the ethos of eco-extremism at some point:

Similarly, we can imagine new combinations for our enemies, the formation of an equivalent bridge or web connecting the opportunistic apocalyptic ramblings of the ITS to a more explicit fascist populism. We can imagine new ranks of fascists inspired or informed by their own homegrown supervillains. We can even imagine (quite easily) white nazis who think these homicidal subversives are pretty cool, potential allies even if they are Mexicans, or insurrectionary white boys gleefully seizing upon these role models to gloss over or christen their own lack of commitment to fighting against rape culture. It is the formation of such a bridge that must be prevented. It is the beginnings of this formation that we may be glimpsing in the recent turns of this situation.

So the accusation stands: if ITS and those who dialogue with it aren't "eco-fascists", they might as well be. Their lack of commitment to the humanist egalitarian values that the pirates defend means that, "if they are not with us, they're against us." These "suspicions" and "imaginings" must be taken seriously by the whole anarchist, anti-authoritarian, and radical community because the OIAWR authors have studied the issue and have come to the conclusion that, *mirabile visu*, the anti-civilization and anti-fascist agendas are one in the same. The best way to fight civilization is to double-down on fighting for egalitarianism (which for the pirates is practically an Eternal Dogma written in the heavens via cherry-picked anthropological data[28]), against patriarchy, transphobia, and the whole host of Neo-Christian talking points that enshrine the Victim as the Supreme Object of veneration. They can call ITS and LBC "proto-fascists" because they know history, and they know these groups better than the

[28] For a discussion of this topic, see Bill Finlayson's work: https://www.academia.edu/2024993/The_Complex_Hunter-gatherer_and_the_Transition_to_Farming

as Science, Medicine, and Technology, who fought for a wild and untrammeled existence right in the heart of the un-living beast, advocating for a life based on hunting and gathering. We recall the positive reviews of anti-civilization literature written by Mumia Abu-Jamal, Howard Zinn, and others who set us on our path of resistance. We share the love and the rage of those for whom white power and fascism are faces of the absolute enemy.

So it's all one love, one cause, one struggle… except for the Fight for 15 or Medicare for all or free college education, or every other leftist cause that the pirates, with their penchant for anthropological texts and anti-tech rhetoric, simply cannot endorse. But they have gotten "positive reviews". The Great Primitivist Awakening is probably just around the corner.

And of course, there is the question of racism:

Anarchists are not the first nor the most intimately knowledgeable of the problem to identify white supremacy as the key to power on this continent. If any of our enemies can be defeated, it will not be without defeating this enemy as well. As the lynchpin to the rotten schema of civil society, there is a corresponding panoply of social institutions and cultural scripts at work day and night to make matters of race and whiteness invisible and uninteresting, obscure and menacing. As the elephant who has lived in the room with us since birth, it is the issue nobody wants to talk about.

Whether intentionally or not, there is a certain antiseptic critique of identity politics to be found in the post-left and nihilism that is consonant with this imperative, consigning matters of race, white supremacy, and fascism to secondary importance at best, perhaps affording them the stock response of silently collapsing them into a general critique of hierarchy.

As non-white people, perhaps people who have been "victims" of racism in the U.S. context, our lack of faith in anti-racist politics is not due to failing to acknowledge racism as a problem in our lives. It is, rather, an acknowledgement of the complete failure of anti-racist politics to be anything other than reformism in favor

on oppressed peoples in their quest for total liberation. Within this process, eco-extremism and LBC's nihilism are temptations in the desert, the sin of despair against the Egalitarian Holy Ghost. And as we know from catechism class, the sins against the Holy Ghost cannot be forgiven in this life or in the next.

The urgency that the pirates believe is needed for their agenda is clear in their disappointment that others don't see things as they do:

At a time when hard-hitting and practical analyses of both civilization and fascism could serve as direly-needed interventions in post-election discourse and on-the-ground struggles marked by the talking points of corporate media, alt-right, white nationalists, tankies, social ecologists, and syndicalists, they think a crucial use of their access to resources is to clearcut another field in order to publish their 35th title on egoism.

As the world burns to cinder and bleeds out from the wounds inflicted by civilization, and as white nationalists enjoy a resurgence on the way down, consolidating power, influence, and initiative, the nihilists believe that one of the most pressing issues of our time is the precise contour of the religiosity of conventional primitivist thought. This religiosity is evidenced primarily by a belief that a qualitatively better life could be had by humans which would necessarily accord with some aspects of our deep past, but most importantly it is revealed by a refusal to endorse the femicidal rape theology of ITS and Atassa.

If those who deviate fail to fall into line concerning "what is to be done?", shame them and name call, just as Stalinists called those outside of their sphere "social fascists" in the "original antifa". The time to strike is now! Or so the pirates declare. The wind is at our back and the masses are open to the anti-civ Gospel:

We, too, remember the words of Tecumseh and the burning of forts[31]*. We remember the visions and sacrifices of the members of the MOVE organization who took aim at their enemies manifested*

[31] Except for the rape-y parts that probably didn't even happen - our note.

groups know themselves (in spite of their getting very basic facts wrong).

We counter such a specious reading of what eco-extremism means in the current moment by pointing out the pirates' true tactic: throwing a lot of things at eco-extremism and hoping something sticks. Rape apologists? That's clearly not a thing. Misogyny? Eco-extremists hate all humans equally, and attack on that basis. Proto-fascists? Well, they share some characteristics if you use your imagination and squint rather vigorously… ITS is like the new *Freikorps* ready to stick another rifle butt in Rosa Luxemburg's head. Never mind that the circumstances in which fascism arose in the 20th century, with rising working class militancy and increased labor actions shaking the capitalist system, look nothing like what "fascism" is today, at least in the United States: social lepers live-action role playing in the streets and hitting each other with sticks. This is still fascism, trust us. (So say the pirates.)

If this accusation is clearly not sticking to eco-extremism either, what is eco-extremism on the social level? Really, not much. Nor does it aim to be much. ITS has stated the following concerning the possible grafting of ex-leftist cadres with some training in arms into the criminal element:

The FARC have also given up their arms (and the ELN is on the same path). Even though some groups are determined to continue in the jungle as they have for decades, the organization itself has signed a peace accord with the Colombian government. This has generated different reactions. Some members of the paramilitary groups (that fought to the death against the FARC) have dedicated themselves to hunting down ex-guerrillas, now disarmed and mere vulnerable civilians.

On the other side are the ex-guerrillas who refuse to give up their arms. They don't want to be easy prey, and even though they know the "revolution" failed, they can't really return to civilian life after so many years of war. So they contract themselves out as mercenaries for strong criminal groups like the PCC (Primeiro Comando da Capi-

tal, a criminal organization with its origin in Brazil but with strong presence in Paraguay and Argentina, which is dedicated to drug and arms trafficking.) This was seen in the "Robbery of the Century" in Paraguay in April of this year, where different decentralized groups lit various cars on fire to serve as a distraction for the main mission. At the same time, the principal body of heavily-armed commandos detonated a large explosive that blew apart one of the walls of a transport company, and after a firefight the bandits entered the company and robbed ten million dollars. On top of this, they had the nerve to escape on a boat that passed through the Itaipu Reserve in Brazil. This act, totally different from the usual methods of the PCC, could not be realized without military expertise, and without the technical and strategic help of the ex-guerrillas of the FARC now working for the PCC.

For some time these types of criminal actions have pleased us more than the acts of political guerrillas. This is sufficient to allow us to say with pleasure that the era of "revolution" has passed and the only thing left is to commit oneself to the individualist struggle for survival, leaving behind weak and disgusting humanist values.[29]

It is thus either extreme negligence or opportunistic intellectual sloth that leads the pirates to think that ITS will "break bad" (or "break worse"?) and become a bunch of brown Mexican Nazis, along with the entire editorial board of Little Black Cart passing over into fascism (Little Brown Cart? They wouldn't even have to change the acronym). The Enlightenment / secular Christian prejudices of the pirates can't possibly fathom the chaotic future before us, thus they have to resort to labels from early last century to assess social phenomena that have little to no resemblance to those of the past. ITS aren't a bunch of ex-anarchists tending toward fascism, but rather ex-radicals tending toward anti-social criminality.[30] Maybe one could make the argument Karl Marx makes in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon* concerning the lumpenproletariat being a fertile breeding ground for reaction, but why then single out the eco-extremists who make up a minuscule blip when compared to the vast numbers of slum dwellers in Latin America who are low-hanging fruit in terms of recruitment into criminal gangs? Will the pirates begin policing them as well?

Perhaps ITS is cannon fodder for the reaction, a front for reactionary / police forces in the countries in which they operate. But if this small, individualistic terrorist project in the periphery of capitalist civilization is somehow part of the vanguard of the neo-Fascist wave, I would say that fascism could certainly do a lot better. Not that individualist eco-extremists are incompetent: they have evaded capture so far to the point that perhaps some government actors still think they don't exist, or are not a priority (which is not the case for the high priests of the CCF, et al. who think ITS is some sort of cancerous menace) Rather, in terms of societal change, they have made no impact outside of their own pleasure at attacking people. Very little "strategy" is involved, at least from the point of view of accomplishing some transcendent interpersonal goal. A group of dangerous and somewhat competent individuals a neo-fascist menace does not make.

But if we are going to armchair psychoanalyze eco-extremists from behind computer screens, as the pirates and others have done, it is appropriate that we return the favor, especially since OIAWR is so explicit concerning the beautiful vision of hope that it advocates. Namely, its view of anti-civ primitivism is that of a deeper critique of this society whereas previous versions of green anarchism "failed a lot of people". In attacking hierarchy in the name of equality, this critique must pick up allies in the feminist and anti-colonial struggle, engaging with such new trends as Afro-pessimism that seek to uncover the chains that previous green anarchism has left

[29] https://atassa.wordpress.com/2017/07/09/thirty-first-communique-of-the-individualists-tending-toward-the-wild/

[30] Cf. http://regresando.altervista.org/n-5-en/