

An eco-egoist destruction of species-being and speciesism

**For a union of egoists that includes all living flora, fauna and
mineral individuals.**

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The central focus of this essay is nothing short of the complete and utter destruction of human-being and the total liberation of all individual animals. This is in no way an embrace of misanthropy, whose inverted humanism perpetuates the ideology of human-supremacy. Misanthropy is another boring collectivized prejudice, like anti-Semitism, misogyny, ethnic-hatred, homophobia and so on, that reduces individuals to stereotypes; and, in the same way that I look at individuals spewing the rhetoric of “The Great Replacement” with a feeling of disappointment for how utterly stupid they are, misanthropes fill me with a sense of revolt for how shallow and abhorrent their rhetoric is.

Here are the meanings of the terms as I use them –

Species-being

this refers first to the conceptualization of an individual animal being an example of a certain type. You might find yourself walking along a beach in Indonesia, see and/or hear an animal who is *similar* to others, but *different*, and then moments later be told that this individual is a New Guinean Singing Dog. Before having been conceptualized as a member of this stereotyped form, this was a unique individual, but with the language of species-distinction their individuality is reduced to being a member of the collective body of New Guinean Singing Dog.

This term also refers to the social-performance of being-a-member-of-this-species-collective. This performance involves conforming to the stereotypes of the conceptual limits of that species. The species-being of human refers to behaving in ways that are generally considered normal, right, good and socially acceptable.

Speciesism

this follows from species-being, since to have any concept of a hierarchy of species that enables a social infrastructure of discriminatory prejudice, we must first have a concept of species-being – one builds upon the foundations of the other. Following from this presupposition, that there exist these distinct species who are actual objects that individuals can Be, **speciesism is the logic of the totalitarian ideology which asserts that there is a hierarchy of species.** This Master-Species has either the natural and/or God-given right to force other species to work for their species and to exterminate those species which do not conform to their production-narratives. This ideology is most often called agriculture, with other political ideologies (capitalism, socialism, fascism, feudalism, monarchism and so on), built upon this basic operating systemic-design. This is also referred to as “*The Great Chain of Being*”.

To rebel against these social structures is to rebel against the entirety of anthropological machinery – all of Leviathan-Reality. Most rebellions are limited to one or another

particular anthropological machinery. Anti-capitalists wish to challenge the anthropological machinery of capitalism; anti-socialists wish to challenge the anthropological machinery of socialism; pacifists wish to challenge the anthropological machinery of militarist monopolies of violence; feminists wish to challenge the anthropological machinery of patriarchy. Each particular rebellion seeks to challenge a specific aspect of anthropological machinery, while often retaining all others. To embrace a rebellion against all anthropological machinery is to embrace total liberation, as liberation from every-Thing – every-Thing that constitutes Human-Thing Reality, or a nihilist embrace of no-Thingness.

The most obvious ideology of anthropological machinery is transhumanism, which seek to Man-ufacture a Reality through technological construction, providing a road map to build a History with. Within the ideological rhetoric of the many transhumanist philosophers I have encountered, future technologies are positioned as a means to attain the species-being of the anthropologically constructed Reality of the post-human Thing. The post-human Thing, in being the most supposedly advanced Thing (having transcended biology, life and the wildness of anarchy), is the supreme species, ontologically higher in the great chain of being. Just as the technological apparatus of cars, telephones, urban architecture and shoes have constructed an image of what a human is, technologies that seek to augment and transcend humanity construct the species of post-humanity. The violence of this mode of supremacism is found in how the narratives of African slavery and the mass-murder of indigenous individuals were used as fuel for the anthropological machinery of American colonialism. In addition to humans, species of flora, fauna and minerals – which are considered as ontologically lesser – are used to fuel the production of this supremacist Reality.

A less obvious, but surprisingly similar, form of this anthropological machinery is that of primitivism, which seeks to reconstruct anthropologies from a mechanistic standpoint, where they are engineering a new Reality as a future for the species-being of the human-animal. Like how Satanism and Christianity are seemingly different (and are undeniably different) but intensely similar through drawing from the same theological narratives; transhumanism and primitivism are both different and similar for being reversed images of the same Historicizing narrative. Primitivism locates the supreme human species through the anthropological Reality of the primitive and seeks to construct a road map to this Reality. This is found throughout the writings of primitivists, where a Reality is designed based in the ideology of Anthropological Realism. From an anti-speciesist perspective, primitivism is a far less violent mode of anthropological machinery; it is often synthesized with misanthropy as a mode of inverted humanism: modern-Man is ontologically lesser than primitive-Man, but socio-politically greater.

becoming-animal

As I encounter the world from the perspective of the animal that I am, I find the destruction of speciesism and species-being in the experience of *becoming-animal*. Becoming-animal does not mean imitating this, that, or the other stereotype of a species of animal, in the same way that becoming punk or goth or emo essentially involves imitating the stereotype of punk or goth or emo. Imitating a cat, dog, monkey, or any other species only serves as a means of social-performance; in the same way that human-being serves as a means of social-performance. Therianism and furry-culture, as practices of imitation trying to construct images of species-being, are certainly not becoming-animal despite all appearances. They are little more than images. Furry-culture constructs an image of species-being via the fashion of wearing anthropomorphized animal costumes. Therianism's construction is that of the psychic-imaginative image of the spirit of "kintype" species the practitioner identifies with, where the practitioner presents their spirit either to themselves or another as being-this-species. Rather than being experiences of becoming-animal, both furry-culture and therianism are anthropological machineries that simulate the species-being of human animal-Thing categories.

A self-identifying human who many might describe as animal is Ted Kaczynski (the Unabomber), who wrote a manifesto titled *Industrial Society and its Future*. This follows from the concept of (non-human) animals, especially wild animals, being 'savage' – in this context used to mean abusive. As I consider Kaczynski though, I do not find him to be "animal", though he was undeniably an abuser. Building a bomb and putting it in the US postal system, and attempting to hurt or kill individuals with the type of bodily disassociation the action of parcel-bombing involves, does not strike me as an animal activity – his hands, teeth or any other parts of his body were not involved in the act of killing. Given the intensity of the technological apparatus and anthropological machinery involved, this activity strikes me as intensely Human. Kaczynski opens his famed manifesto with an affirmation of the industrial revolution as "a disaster for the human race", with his entire project as a revolutionary being a *Cause* that he embraces for the human race. His book *The Anti-Tech Revolution: Why and How* is an attempt to design revolutionary anthropological machinery to provide the salvation of humanity. Rather than being anything approaching the destruction of species-being, Kaczynski (and his disciples) take up the mantle of the revolutionary Human-Cause and wave the flag with an intensity of identification that is reminiscent of socialist-patriotism.

The ideology of *desertionism*, as found in the book *Desert* and in the essay by Fitzpatrick, "*An Invitation To Desertion*," might also appear to be a rejection of species-being and speciesism. To abandon civilization, like a soldier deserting the army, might appear to be an effort to renounce the species-being of Human and the ideology of hierarchy it clings to. The image might well be found in the ideology of *desertionism*, but I do not find this ideology to be anything more than another-branding of Humanism.

When I think of deserts and desertion in this context, I remember the Exodus story, where the Israelites flee Egypt as an act of desertion to embrace the desert where they wander with Moses for 40 years, before reaching the Promised Land. In the Exodus story, what the desert signifies is Separation – separation from Egypt, YHWH and the Promised Land – as a psycho-geographical gap that is defined by distance, similar to how a city is built to construct distance between the inhabitants and wildlife. Where *desertionism* differs is that rather than seeing the desert as a passageway, *desertionism* seeks to make the desert their home, still defining their ideology as Separation from YHWH, Egypt and civilization. (It is worth noting here that the deserts they would cling to are not the wild processes of earth-becoming, but are the waste products of the anthropological machinery that is Humanist ideology.) Separation though, as seen already in this paragraph, is the Reality anthropological machinery attempts to construct. So *desertionism*, rather than being a rejection of Humanism, seems to me to be little more than a collapse into Humanism, into the passageways of Humanism and its waste product – as the spread of deserts today is the waste of agricultural hyper-exploitation. If we replace the Israelites with primitivists, desertionists have turned their backs on Moses (Zerzan) and stopped seeking the Promised Land, to embrace the desert as home. How separate are they though? Is there anywhere that Separation actually means anything now? Has not the desert simply replaced Zion as the Promised Land for deserters? *Desertionism* does not destroy speciesism, nor species-being, but seeks to turn its back on them, while existing in their waste products; and in affirming the waste product as their Promised Land, they affirm the processes of the production of this waste. Rather than becoming-animal, advocates of *desertionism* seek to-be-Human-waste.

Animal liberation advocates, such as Singer and Dominick, certainly challenge speciesism within the context of industrial meat production, but sadly do not take this far enough. By limiting their notion of speciesism to animal species they fail to recognize the abuse experienced by *floral individuals* and *mineral individuals* as well. They also fail to account for the abuse experienced by individuals grouped into the species-collective of Human and ultimately retain the logic of species-being, which speciesism builds upon as its foundation. As an effort in anti-speciesism, total liberation advocacy comes closer to a full challenge than animal liberationism, but has not yet brought in the liberation of the individual from the species into its thought – something I wish to do here.

Individuality for me starts with my body, affirming my flesh as my immediate experience of being-in-the-world and of being-the-world. As I encounter other individuals I notice that my experience of the world seems to be most like those individuals I would consider to be animals (not that what I consider them to be need affect their experience of being the individual they are). So my individuality, as an act of de-Humanization, begins with the experience of becoming-animal as being-the-individual-I-am.

In as much as bodies have always been individuals, the destruction of species-being is already here – this follows from the ontological-anarchist position that anarchy is

already here and has always been here. This is obvious, given how much this culture seeks to warn individuals of the dangers of de-Humanization and how much it fears the un-Human animal. Myths and stories and art that perpetuate the narrative “do not become-animal” are found throughout this culture, and I would like to consider some here.

One such story is that of Kafka’s “*Metamorphosis*” – a tale of becoming-animal that is greatly valued by most who enjoy existentialist literature. Gregor Samsa wakes up from “uneasy dreams” to discover he has become a creature akin to a giant beetle, a horrific creature. These dreams could be seen as the Typhos of custom, gossip, markets, etc., that ancient cynics sought to destroy through their practices, or the hyper-Real spectacle of party-political news media, or the theological systems of religious orders (perhaps transcendence-producing anthropological machines!). Samsa’s waking is his experience of becoming-animal, of dehumanizing – he has awoken as a giant insect, no longer human. His human-animal hybrid state is emphasized by his size, which is not-insect, as much as he is not-human.

“I cannot make you understand. I cannot make anyone understand what is happening inside me. I cannot even explain it to myself.”

The human-animal hybrid of Gregor Samsa is an image of that which is perhaps most painful about the experience of becoming-animal and of engaging in environmentalist and anarchist activities that are at odds with this culture. The loss of loved ones and friends, who no longer experience you as being familiar to them, is found in this image of a man-becoming-insect. The split between humanity and insect-life is collapsed through this destructive creation.

Another image of becoming-animal can be found in myths regarding *nahualism*. In traditional Mesoamerican theology, a *nahual* is a magician, transforming-trickster or witch, as described by Europeans (who undoubtedly intended to present *nahualism* as pagan or Satanic), who could transform into a non-human animal at will. The idea of a *nahual* being a magician or a witch gets me wondering if there was an aspect of the practice that was primarily focused on medicine-person type work. In their essay within *Atassa* journal, Hast Hax presents a short account of a Mesoamerican-Mexican culture, called “The Seris,” who used *nahualist* practices as a means of engaging in warfare.

Hax states:

“Those warriors with great spiritual power would tell stories to their clans of having been transformed into animals during battle. Thus, they could escape without the invaders noticing them. One example of this was a warrior known as Coyote Iguana who told of how he once was captured and bound hand and foot to be thrown into the sea and drowned. Instead, he changed into an iguana and was able to escape his executioners. On another occasion, he was chased and surrounded by the Spaniards, but then turned into a coyote and was able to escape undetected by his pursuers.”

This image of becoming-animal emphasizes the power and powers that non-human animals have. This image also emphasizes a kind of pessimistic cosmic-hilarity, the

image of human-rendered-powerless. As much as it might be joyous to envisage this indigenous individual escaping colonial invaders, from an anti-colonial perspective it is also funny, in a sort of cosmic-slapstick sense, where the utter ridiculousness of the colonists' attempt is affirmed.

Then there are legends of Skinwalkers that come from indigenous North American cultures, such as the Navajo, Apache, Pueblo and Hopi, that appear to be simple and beautiful anarchy-individualizing occurrences.

"Some traditions believe that Skinwalkers are borne of a benevolent medicine man who abuses indigenous magic for evil. The medicine man is then given mythical powers of evil, that vary from tradition to tradition, but the power all traditions mention is the ability to turn into or possess an animal or person. Other traditions believe a man, woman, or child can become a Skinwalker should they commit any kind of deep-seated taboo."

There is an obvious split being placed here between the human-good and the unhuman-evil within this image of dehumanization being constructed in this account. If we focus on the image of Skinwalkers – which translates as "by means of it, it goes on all fours" – as an image of an individual who transgresses taboos and disregards cultural norms, customs and laws, then Skinwalkers signify something with liberatory potential. This image of the de-humanizing becoming-animal can be seen as one of rebellion, akin to the actions of queer individuals who transgress social taboos as part of their personal liberation. A sort of Bataillan post-anarchist accursed-revolt can be drawn from the image of the Skinwalker.

Of course, I couldn't do this and fail to include *were-creatures* here. Philosopher Agamben has beautifully described the position of werewolf imagery within the symbolic cartography of imaginal space as –

"What had to remain in the collective unconscious as a monstrous hybrid of human and animal, divided between the forest and the city – the werewolf – is, therefore, in its origin the figure of the man who has been banned from the city. That such a man is defined as a wolf-man and not simply as a wolf (the expression *caput lupinum* has the form of a juridical statute) is decisive here. The life of the bandit, like that of the sacred man, is not a piece of animal nature without any relation to law and the city. It is, rather, a threshold of indistinction and of passage between animal and man, *physis* and *nomos*, exclusion and inclusion: the life of the bandit is the life of the *loup garou*, the werewolf, who is precisely neither man nor beast, and who dwells paradoxically within both, while belonging to neither."

This threshold whose passageway leads to the forest seems to me to be the journeying from agricultural-political-ideology and into wild-anarchic-aesthetics.

In Margaret Atwood's were-cat short story she makes an observation regarding time that could easily be compared with the anti-civilizational anarchy of individuals like Aragorn! and Flower Bomb. Time and/as History continually appear to me to be more relevant to anarchist theory and practice, as constructs to attack and destroy, rather

than embrace – with my book *Feral Iconoclasm* being basically an absurdist attempt to destroy History. Atwood’s observation on time is found in the cat-girl’s reflection:

“I no longer had to worry about getting in the way of other people and their futures. As for me, I had no future. I had only a present, a present that changed — it seemed to me — along with the moon.”

Atwood’s cat-girl, a *lusus naturae* (freak of nature), experiences a form of transient presentism, where value is placed in now. The image of this werecat child in “*Lusus Naturae*” signifies an abandonment of the future, not as an embrace of self-pity or despair, but entirely the opposite. She is alive now and so now she lives. This image of the human-animal hybrid signifies the collapsing of the splits between past and future, hope and despair, as an embrace of the courage to live now.

When contrasted with social-normativity, being-animal signifies rebellion. This is particularly noticeable when confronted with the image of the human-animal hybrid of were-hyenas. The were-hyena, as the name suggests, is a human who becomes-hyena. The man Qori Ismaris, which means “one who rubs himself with a stick”, could become-hyena at night and become-human during the day, by rubbing himself with a magical stick. This is a key difference to the were-wolf or were-cat, where becoming-animal happens to the individual as an encounter out of their control; the were-hyena wills their becoming-animal. As were-hyena symbols of rebellion, the Kore cult of the Bambara people in Mali are particularly relevant.

“The Kore, which challenges immoral authority and hypocritical morality through sexually explicit gestures and buffoonery, once employed masks representing the hyena, lion, monkey, antelope, and horse but now is represented primarily through puppet performances.”

This description of the Kore’s activities instantly reminds me of guerrilla-ontologist and chaos-magick practices of psychological warfare, as well as free-love and queer sexual liberation practices.

However, stories about becoming-animal are not becoming-animal. They are not a means of destroying speciesism and species-being. I have not presented these stories here to suggest that you should imitate them, since imitation would be a species-being. These images are only intended as an opportunity to reflect.

How are you like Samsa or nahuals or were-cats? How are you unlike them? What is there to draw from these stories and what is there to reject? For each individual the answers to these questions will be different, as each individual’s life experience is different and uniquely their own.

When I consider this experience for myself, one of the qualities that stands out most for me is that this is not an act of work, as in something that must be produced via force. Instead, this has the quality of free play, where the experience arises easily and without effort. This of course presents an immediate tension, in the way that play and work are points of tension – a boss doesn’t hire their employees to have fun and it is a struggle to walk away from a playful activity to engage in work.

The radical potentiality of play is not a revolutionary movement, keeping the History-building anthropological-machinery at work, but an involutory one. It is the event of collapse, where civilization's productive machinery breaks down due to a lack of humans to fuel it – they are becoming-animal. Play is a life-affirming event, where joy is experienced as an immediate event that is here and now, presentist, not bound to progressive or regressive narratives. When you have goofed off at work, to have fun with the other animals around you, you have destroyed the productive aspect of anthropological machinery, become-animal and collapsed civilization in that moment where you are. There are of course less joyful involutions, which are far more traumatic, but no less Real – where systems break down that living-beings are encaged within that leads to their suffering, i.e. a fire at a zoo due to faulty wiring or negligence, or medical equipment breaking down due to lack of maintenance. Play, however, when honest, sincere, authentic and free, is a joyful involution. My personal experience of this form of collapse is one where anarchy arises most easily, especially for those individuals who would never describe themselves as anarchists and be more reluctant to get-wild in other ways.

The de-humanizing quality of individualizing does not negate my experience of other living beings in the way often suggested by critics of individualism. There is an immediate zoopoetic affirmation of the bodily presence of other living beings as different from the being I egoistically am and the power they are. There is an animal which this culture calls a cat who lives with me. Not only does my individuality affirm her unique presence, but her differentiation, the thick black hair that covers her skin, the deep piercing eyes and so on, all are experiences that affirm my experience of being unique – as could be said about birds, trees and badgers (as they are named by this culture). This experience is not limited to those animals generally considered non-human, but as I de-humanize myself I experience an affirmation of the lack of species-being in those living-beings experiencing humanization. Many of those individuals calling themselves Human are also beautiful unique beings, and the contours of their bodies affirm the presence of my being. So it is also of the mountains, cliffs, seas and other individuals of geo-ecological life this culture speciates. My experience of their individual being affirms my being. This pan-erotic encounter is another involutory event: falling in love with a living-being who is earth, where collapse is immediate and non-Historical – gravitational anarchy. The world is sexy! The beauty of bird song, oak trees, hares running, cliffs that make you feel tiny, butterflies who make you feel huge, foxgloves, seals, otters and dandelions, isn't just some-Thing bound to the worlds of representation through the spectacles photographs and videos and Nature documentaries and text, but are here and now presences that are available for immediate sensual experience – you can see them, smell them, hear them, touch them and taste them.

Many who wish to challenge speciesism will undoubtedly reject this affirmation of individualism as anti-speciesism because anti-speciesist thought is tied to collectivist-revolutionary political machinery.

The transcendental quality of species-being is the reason why anti-speciesist thought that retains species-being mostly fails to impact individuals who encounter the information. As long as the transcendental whole remains, the concept of the species is not erased; from a collectivist perspective it does not matter how many members of that species survive. Think about it! If what you value is the collective of humpback whales it doesn't matter whether or not their numbers deplete to 10% or 5% or 1% of their current documented population, because the numbers could go up again so long as there remains one or two breeding pairs. If you follow ecological media you will likely have watched in horror as the numbers of many species now extinct continually increased without it mattering to this collectivist culture, because, until you're down to the last individuals, the species-being remained. Only when we affirm their being-individuals, the individuality of the last northern white rhino for instance, do individuals encounter an experience of existential value and aesthetic appreciation. This affirmation of the individual through the destruction of the transcendental species-being attributed to them is subsistence – a reverse holism that is even more intensely anti-reductionist than holism as we usually encounter it. The whole is found to be less than the sum of its parts.

This radical individualism is an expression of anti-speciesist egoism. I affirm every living being, the unique individuals they are, as members of an anti-reductionist union of egoists that includes all living flora, fauna and mineral individuals. My desires are drawn towards the liberation of all individuals. Ecological welfare, being my welfare and my self-interest, is drawn towards the well-being of all life and the destruction of anthropological-machinery that represses their lives – and mine. This is total liberation, not as some revolutionary Humanistic Cause, but as desiring-creation/life.

As I stand on a hill and see individuals I might call buzzard, hare, oak or foxglove, my egoism affirms them as being the world that is an extension of me and that I am an extension of. This is both a solitary encounter and one that is shared between us. We are all one, as individual living beings, and One, as monastically non-Separable.

This destruction of species-being is likely to be considered thus far as failing to account for evolutionary-biological factors, perhaps even as far as to be taken as anti-Darwinist. But what is being rejected is not the notions of natural selection or metamorphosis via transmutation, which are the evolutionary process, rather only the ideology of speciation that functions as a biopolitical tool for agrilogistic production. The effort to retain a form of Realism with regards to what is known in biological and philosophical discourse as “the species problem”, is simply the effort to retain the anthropocentric gaze that justifies the speciesist hierarchy that privileges those within the collective of Human. The nominalism that follows from the anti-speciesist egoism I have described here is the destruction of civilization, which is speciesism.

The rejection of biospheric-egalitarianism on the basis of certain species being higher on the food chain than others basically functions to retain anthropocentric narratives regarding species-being. A bio-centric/eco-centric critique of the “food chain” ideology is both simple and obvious – the lives of animals deemed “lesser” are supported by the

lives of those animals deemed “higher” and the lives of those animals deemed “higher” are supported by the lives of those animals deemed lesser; predators rely on other living beings to be able to survive and eventually the predator will be consumed by the earth and become the food those considered as “prey” will eat. The other rejection of biospheric-egalitarianism, this time under the claim that certain species form natural hierarchies, also functions to retain authoritarian narratives — this being the legacy of Social Darwinism. The “natural hierarchy” argument is a tool of conservatives that I am sure anyone reading this will be familiar with. It seeks to organize the world as hierarchal, meaning to have a structure that is static. Rather than encountering the world organized in this way, disorganized-as-anarchy is my experience of the world, constantly changing and unstable. Following both of these points, I would also note that it seems obvious, given that Covid-19 has destroyed any concept of socio-political stability or species-supremacy of Humans, the world is destroying anthropocentrism in a multitude of ways – a brutal and painful involution, but one that is undeniably Real.

To affirm the individual is to destroy the species. I find myself experiencing bio/eco-centrism as ego-centrism. From this, I have found a union of egoists that includes all living beings, where anti-speciesism is a living encounter, not a dead-moralistic revolutionary Cause.

The Ted K Archive

Julian Langer

An eco-egoist destruction of species-being and speciesism

For a union of egoists that includes all living flora, fauna and mineral individuals.

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