

Confronting the Rise of Eco-Fascism Means Grappling with Complex Systems

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Spring 2020

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Abstract

The white-supremacist Christchurch and El Paso shooter who he influenced both promoted ecological and anti-imperialist tropes in their manifestos. While this appears contradictory to the fascist project they pursued to its ultimate end, this article offers an explanatory framework for the representation of such ideological terms. The fascist movement's ecological tendency has developed and adapted over time, from the völkisch movement, through the Third Position, to an important part of an interconnected international movement with both vanguardist and populist strategies. These eco-fascist lineages exist in complex syncretic tension with both the modern right and left. Being rooted in a worship of simplicity, eco-fascism fails to address the complex problems posed by climate change which require complex solutions. As such, addressing climate change requires concerted efforts to block fascist entryism in green movements.

CARR RESEARCH INSIGHT 2020.2

To cite this document:

Ross, AR and Bevensee, E. (2020). "Confronting the Rise of Eco-Fascism Means Grappling with Complex Systems". CARR Research Insight 2020.3. London, UK: Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right.

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What is Eco-Fascism?

“If you don’t believe climate change is caused by the Chinese and Indians and we should cull them to prevent further environmental damage you’re a cuckold f—t.”

- Comment from a user in Iron March neo-nazi forum leaks¹

“My pledge @realDonaldTrump is that if you become a pit bull for planet Earth, you won’t need Russia to hack my polling place. I will vote for you.” - Bill Maher²

When the El Paso shooter committed his personal ideology to a manifesto, he saw fit to include anti-imperialism and green claims as part of his identity and motivations, just like the shooter in Christchurch.⁴ The cognitive dissonance is impossible to miss. Anti-imperialism stands for opposition to Eurocentric domination, especially through economic exploitation, and the green movement seems today inextricably linked to progressive values. Whether or not one agrees with its analysis of capital, anti-imperialism must oppose white supremacy, and ecological principles most closely adhere to a shared responsibility among all of humanity, if not a deeper critique of development as an index of human value. However, fascists have worked, since its origins in the 1910s, to apply misleading left-wing jargon and ideas such as environmentalism to its own geopolitical designs, and to assign the blame for imperialism and ecological destruction to Jewish influence and the Anglo-American alliance, while letting Italy and Germany off the hook for their own colonial designs.

The El Paso and Christchurch shooters’ ideology does not manifest ideological coherence so much as it reflects a time-worn strategy by fascists to situate the dogma of inequality within an ostensibly revolutionary worldview against liberal capitalism. Fundamentally subscribing to a biologically racist worldview that abhors inter-racial couples, the El Paso shooter’s manifesto, if real, speaks of an overpopulated, polluted world in which corporations use racial underclasses to undermine workers and tip demographic scales in favor of liberalism.⁵ That conservatives largely reject environmental legislation did not faze the author of the manifesto, who concludes by insisting that corporations be brought to heel under a confederated system of ethno-states in what is now the United States. Importantly, the El Paso shooter confessed to being motivated, in part, by the manifesto of the Christchurch mass shooter, who also embraced green fascism. In turn, the El Paso shooting inspired a Norway mosque shooting later in 2019.⁶

As well, the manifesto authors tend to distinguish between imperialism as the source of industrialism and sovereignty as the possibility for ecological nativism. While fascists’ geopolitical influences have tended to ascribe bad imperialist behavior to the Anglo-American alliance, they view cultural or civilizational expansionism as part of an organic movement of power and dominion. While dreaming of past glory involving Teutonic Knights, Spartan warriors, and Roman generals, fascists particularly in Germany and Italy, as well as the Arab world (such as the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and the Green Shirts) have tended to repudiate such imperialism as a phenomenon of supposedly deracinated “sea power,” which they have associated with Jewry, as opposed to their geopolitical ambitions of expansion and sovereignty. In the words of influential Russian fascist Aleksandr Dugin, the U.S. pursues “its own national, imperialistic interests,” which “is bad because it deprives other states and nations of their real sovereignty,” leading to the necessity of “a possible anti-globalist and anti-imperialist front” that includes fascists and anti-liberal leftists.⁷

¹ <https://www.ironmarch.exposed/post/191187>

² <https://twitter.com/billmaher/status/1165134904339791872?s=20>

Unfortunately, transnational messages of hate set into action by the El Paso shooter have become all too mainstream. In the U.S. alone, Donald Trump’s outbursts and Tucker Carlson’s program on FOX News promote popular far-right images of immigrants and refugees as dirty, disease-bearing rapists and potential criminals.⁸ Indeed, the Trump administration figure most clearly connected to immigration policy, Stephen Miller, promoted propaganda by white nationalists producing a similar picture of an overpopulated world in which white men are under attack.⁹

After the Christchurch and El Paso attacks, a spate of articles came out at once cautioning against the rising tide of eco-fascism. Yahoo News ran a profile on eco-fascism in their lifestyle section, the Washington Post drew an eco-fascist connection between El Paso and Dayton, niche ecology-focused magazines like High Country News published in-depth articles about it, left-wing sites like Open Democracy and Huffington Post contextualized it within the rise of green thought across the board, and The Nation offered a choice: green socialism or eco-fascism.¹⁰ Articles have continued to flow, including Google interest (top), and Reddit and Twitter posts (bottom), with the term “ecofascism”. Note for Google interest: 100 just symbolizes the maximum not raw numbers of searches. Reddit and Twitter graphs created using SMAT.¹¹ Twitter is only verified users. These searches searched the colloquial internet “ecofascism” while we use the hyphenated “eco-fascism” in this piece.

Harpers Bazaar cautioning against the rise of eco-fascism.¹² Even alt-right websites like The Daily Stormer have entire tags devoted to white supremacist takes on environmentalism.¹³ Since the Christchurch shooting on March 15, 2019, searches for the term on Google surged in popularity, while Reddit and Twitter posts began to increase. Another surge came after the El Paso shooting on August 3, 2019, and in March 2020, discussions about eco-fascism further increased as a result of responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. These searches and posts vary in range and quality, as politicians like Nigel Farage have made a habit of wildly mis-applying or failing to understand the term.³ So how apt are progressive warnings of the emergence of a far-right adaptation to the rising anxiety over climate change?

We explore the history of ecological thought within fascism, and vice-versa, to tease out different, warped tendencies of green politics and anti-imperialism within so-called “left-fascism” or the “Third Position” as they have developed over time. We further searched through archived data from the leaked Iron March forum, comparing the sentiments and narratives expressed therein to the overall trends of green thoughts within fascism and fascist ideology within the green movement.¹⁵ Lastly, we analyzed the often-competing strategic approaches within fascism—vanguardism and populism—within this broader context to gain an understanding of the dynamics of fascist approaches to political parties and paramilitary movements as they pertain to green ideology.

The cover image used in the manifesto written by Christchurch shooter, Brenton Tarrant, stresses environmentalism, anti-imperialism, and “ethnic autonomy”.

We found, perhaps most importantly, that radical green and anti-imperialist politics exist in complex relation to other tendencies, including racism, misogyny, ableism, and a desire for extreme violence. We contend that ideology is no longer sufficient for the left to understand the rise of fascism and the Anthropocene. Like climate change, fascism manifests complex problems and requires complex approaches to combat it. While green politics and anti-imperialism are rightly associated with the left, they can and have been wielded by anyone who seeks radical change, including fascists. Thus, leftist efforts to clearly differentiate their political agenda(s) from the far right in order to avoid fascist appropriation of left-wing movements and a “fascist creep” of leftists to the far-right often fall short of their lofty goals (Ross 2017). Put simply, political affiliation is not enough to resist fascism.

This paper will describe the history of ecological tendencies within fascist ideology as they informed current networks of far-right groups that have influenced today’s mass shooters. It will ultimately argue that fascism exists not only with an ultranationalist core ideology but a limited adaptive capacity that enables it to absorb different political tendencies to take syncretic and oft-contradictory shapes. That

³ https://twitter.com/Nigel_Farage/status/1232464628250075137?s=20

means that scientific fields like ecology, long thought of as left-wing, have been sites of political conflict all along.

Although fascist movements traditionally favored industrial futurism, their modernism also involves a paradoxical rejection of the modern world and a reactionary appeal to something greater (Herf 1981).¹⁶ As climate change becomes more apparent, fascists adopt and foreground aspects of green politics to advance their goals. By “green politics,” here, we refer to various systems of political commitments that reflect concern over the ecological integrity of a place, often inclusive of modes of production and consumption, as well as population and climate. In our research of available historical and contemporary texts and data from the Iron March forum, as well as Telegram channels, we found three critical points that bear further elaboration:

☒ There is a long-standing, and growing, green tendency within fascism as hazards posed by climate change pose an existential threat to the sustainability of structures undergirding a perceived white identity.

☒ As the need to confront the catastrophic consequences of climate change becomes more immediate, fascists have increasingly sent signals that they will shift further toward eco-fascist violence.

☒ Given that some leftists have proven susceptible to the false promises offered by green fascism, there is a chance that a significant authoritarian turn in the green movement could take place, with terrible consequences for poor and marginalized populations.

Put simply, the international far-right will not be able to ignore climate change forever. Should they actually abandon large-scale skepticism and accept the reality of climate change, fascists may actually draw in many who recognize climate change as a pressing crisis through the glossy appeals of green authoritarianism, only to purge true believers on the way to power. Strangely, with the impacts of climate change increasing ecological crises, the acceptance of anthropogenic climate change is not an absolutely necessary component to the kind of general shift toward green politics based on people’s lived experiences. Indeed, climate skepticism that rejects anthropogenic factors but accepts climate change may be the ace up the fascists’ proverbial sleeve. At the same time, it is important to note that a turn of Conservatives toward ecology does not necessarily indicate a fascist turn, although it certainly reveals the flexibility of green politics and adaptive capacity of right-wing politics, which may eventually produce new strains of eco-fascism given extreme conditions.

This paper tracks the history of right-wing thought within the green movement, from the early days of ecology and the *völkisch* movement to the post-war Greens and parts of

Earth First! to modern networks. We show how fascist networks extended into the left to develop a modern eco-fascist tendency seeking to infiltrate and gain hegemony within the modern green movement. We conclude that fascism, green or otherwise, can never present a viable alternative to the existential threat of climate change. Fascism is not only greening, it is also part of a larger transformation of the right-wing in general, which should be studied, understood, and confronted with clear strategies based on localized conditions in the context of a general movement toward climate justice.

Völkisch and Nazi Ecology

It is often observed that the historical basis of Nazism lay in multiple hostile reactions to the Enlightenment, inclusive of both reactionary and Romantic tendencies (Tønnessen 2009). The formulation of ecology in the mid-19th Century centered around the notion of an Umwelt, a world unto each species produced by disinhibitions toward instinctive sources of reproduction, food, and shelter (Sternhell 2000). Poorly translated through the fashionable sociological ideas of the day, ecology became a conduit for Social Darwinism under the guidance of its nationalist progenitor, Ernst Haeckel (Biehl and Staudenmaier 1995). Increasingly through the 19th Century, pseudo-scientific notions of race, ethnicity, and Volk proliferated in a manner that came to use Heimat (Homeland) as a kind of racial or ethnic Umwelt. This section outlines how völkisch ecology was combined with “geopolitics” by the Nazis toward perpetrating the unspeakable crimes of the Holocaust.

Following Germany’s sweeping military victories that culminated in the 1871 crowning of the Kaiser in the Palace of Versailles’s Hall of Mirrors, a rush of chauvinism swept over the newly unified German Empire, bringing with it novel geographic theories of people and place. Younger generations of Germans trekked the large spaces of the country searching for their identity as Germans among the spiritual ideas of the peasants and their connections to nature. This völkisch movement involved flows of leftist ideas and far-right nativism that sometimes joined together in populist fetishization of rural peasants and in opposition to Jews viewed as alien to the German spirit that supposedly imbued Blut und Boden (Blood and Soil) (Bassin 2005).

With his *Politische Geographie*, geographer Friedrich Ratzel produced a new understanding of the expansion of healthy civilizations, from a strong culture grounded in the soil outward into the borderlands, or Lebensraum (Living Space). Intimately linked to ecological thought, the concept of Lebensraum described a kind of evolutionary, biological space through which human civilization could grow and evolve in new ecosystems (Bassin 2005; Ratzel 1901). In *Politische Geographie*, Ratzel argues “the size of the states is another of the yardsticks of cultural greatness” (Ratzel 1897, p. 196, our translation) However, he argues in the second volume against “[g]lobal truck and trade [which] works to transform the whole earth into a single economic organism in which countries and peoples are only more or less subordinate organs,” exclaiming, “How many streams of world trade have already flowed to London! It takes the greatest energy and perseverance of a people to maintain itself as culturally and politically independent in this centralizing movement” (Ratzel 1903, p. 22, our translation).

The school of thought that developed from *Politische Geographie*, later dubbed “geopolitics,” powerfully influenced German General Karl Haushofer, who later taught its conceptual framework to his students Rudolf Hess and Adolf Hitler in Landsberg prison after the failed Beerhall Putsch (Herwig 1999; Herwig 2016). Haushofer’s ultimate vision of a Eurasian geopolitical axis hinged on his attempted repudiation of imperialism as an Anglo-phenomenon. “Owing to the truth contained in it, the remnant of the mist of lies will

by necessity gradually vanish from the relations of Germany to the largest geopolitically united space on earth, the Pacific one, and to gigantic economic powers that are forming it,” he wrote. “It will vanish even sooner than the fog of deception in the Atlantic area, which the bearers of the real imperialism had to launch as the rapists of nature, in order to camouflage their own greed and in order to make their mercenaries believe that Kaiser Wilhelm II’s theatrical gestures were the true imperialism” (Haushofer 2002, p. xxxiii, our emphasis). In spite of his apparent loathing of “real imperialism,” Haushofer paradoxically embraced the most violent Japanese imperialist secret societies as the bearers of tradition, honor, and

chivalry—in much the same way that Himmler modelled his feared and merciless Schutzstaffel (SS) after them—and hoped to restore the German colonial presence in Africa (Haushofer 2002; Herwig 2016).

Indeed, fascism would prove adept at incorporating green tendencies along with syndicalist workerism because of its nature as a syncretic political movement of palingeneticultranationalism, per Griffin’s minimal definition (Griffin 1994; Eatwell 1996). Fascism aspires to the overthrow of liberal institutions toward a rebirth of a mythical past greatness through sacralized political violence. This anti-liberal revolution manifests a counter-revolution in the sense that its revolutionary violence opposes principles commonly identified with revolution (*liberté, égalité, fraternité*), seeking instead the restoration of a prior form of sovereignty that has been upgraded to suit futuristic ambitions in keeping with ancient, patriarchal and ethno-centric traditions. This (counter-) revolutionary reaction against liberal and left-wing philosophy tends to incorporate and pervert those forces through the formulation of a mass movement in excess of and opposition to them, relying on recalcitrant identitarian positions to solidify ethno-cultural blocs in service to a larger, geopolitical cause integrating exclusionary forms of ultranationalism with discrete territorial claims based on the association between heritage and ecology summed up in the slogan, “blood and soil” (Burley 2017).

As can be seen through their genealogical line from Ratzel to Haushofer and his ostensibly anti-imperialist rebuke of “the rapists of nature,” the Nazis already maintained roots in the right-wing of the epoch’s geopolitical and ecological tendencies together, which remained influential with Hitler in prison, while his second in command, Gregor Strasser, maintained control over the movement. Militants like nihilist Freikorps officer Ernst von Salomon, who participated in the assassination of Foreign Minister Walther Rathenau, viewed farmers and peasants as ideal national revolutionaries exercising their “right to revenge” with extreme racial prejudice (Theweleit 1989, p. 366; Wistrich 2002, p. 217). Other members of the party, such as Richard Walther Darré and Heinrich Himmler, promoted blood and soil ideas within the Party and in *volkisch* leagues like the *Artamanen- Gesellschaft* (Bramwell 1984; Weiss-Wendt 2013, p. 111). In England, as well, the British Union of Fascists adopted a similar ecological geopolitic, with their leading agriculturalist Jorian Jenks linking race to a rural policy outlining a system of small, organic farms that would make England self-sufficient and independent from the global food market (Moore-Colyer 2004). Like the German geopoliticians, Jenks tied the economics of domestic food production with ecological concern for organic, biological integrity and a nativist politics of hate.

Hitler’s particularly vicious adaptation of geopolitical ideas like *Lebensraum* into the Nazi repertoire of chauvinist revanchism and virulent anti-Semitism would provide the clearest roadmap to the Holocaust (Herwig 2016, p. 99-101, 127-128, 212). Believing the separation between races was tantamount to the separation between species (something rejected by Darwin), Hitler rejected as bourgeois the notion that people whose ancestors had not lived in Germany could be “Germanized.” He based his vision of eradicating the

Jews, whom he called *Weltvergifter* (“World poisoners”), on the notion of states as ethnically homogeneous by nature. With the 1939 Hitler-Stalin Pact, Hitler could enact his “*Eroberung von Lebensraum im Osten*” (conquest of living space in the East), involving the purge of non-German people from desired territories through mass murder and deportation. Ultimately, Hitler would betray the ideological “left” of the Nazi Party, from destroying the Strasser faction and SA during the Night of the Long Knives in 1934 to systematically marginalizing Darré and his organic farming contingent to sidelining Haushofer after invading the Soviet Union.

On the left: “For Great Britain all races and people are equal” – Fascist poster by Dante Conscia from 1944 showing Egyptians, Boers, Indians, Arabs, and Irish people as the victims of the British empire.

On the right: Japanese propaganda showing the Japanese flag and its (potentially) allied forces beating Churchill and liberating Indians.

Propaganda highlighting the oppressive manner with which the enemies of the Nazis’ carried out international affairs became particularly helpful for the expansion of the fascist cause. Leveraging anti-

Semitism in its approach to Arab countries, “Nazi Germany presented itself both as an ally of Arab anti-imperialism as well as a soul mate of the religion of Islam,” in the words of scholar Jeffrey Herf (2009). As well, Imperial Japan promoted itself as an opponent to white supremacism in the Pacific, declaring “Asia for the Asians,” and spreading “propaganda cartoons, gaudy and shocking, depicting starving Indians ground under the heels of fat imperialists or turbaned jawans being kicked out of evacuation lorries by blond-haired Tommies” amongst its potential allies in India, according to author Raghu Karnad.¹ Propaganda from the Indian Independence League also promoted the Japanese forces as an ally in the fight against British Imperialism. As the Allies fought back the Nazi advances in Europe, fascist propaganda accentuated the U.S.’s racist abuses of black people and the British Empire’s imperialist violence, despite their own racist, expansionist moves.

While it is important to refute any denial of the horrors of the Allies’ imperialism and racism, it is also necessary to recognize that fascism never actually amounted to an anti-imperialist, anti-racist ideology, or “green” ideology. Instead, as with most propaganda, fascist progenitors used any and all opposition to their enemies as leverage when and where they could, often in the form of a rejection of older modes of colonialism. Fascist leaders used true believers opportunistically, and then dumped them when exigent for power. While Mussolini certainly advocated a kind of new Imperial great space in terms of “Mare Nostrum,” for instance, scholar Federico Finchelstein correctly argues that “paradoxically, for Mussolini, fascist imperialism was the ultimate form of anti-colonialism” (Finchelstein 2008). To the extent that imperialism meant the natural expansion of a dominant world power into available “living space” connected to the core country by traditional and ancestral territorial claims, fascist geopoliticians like Haushofer would even argue that theirs was not a “real imperialism” at all. As with Imperial Japan promoting Indian independence and the Nazis supporting the Arab Revolt of 1936, geopoliticians viewed territorial expansion as manifest within the organic evolution of power and civilization to dominate “great spaces”—the rational behavior of regional powers who sought collaborative world domination in opposition to the imperialist over-reach of the Anglo-American alliance.

While this represented an immensely hypocritical paradox, it laid the groundwork for later fascist groups to oppose NATO as an “imperialist,” Anglo-American occupying force in Europe and to pledge “anti-imperialist” support for anti-Zionist groups in the Middle East, both as a way of undermining North Atlantic hegemony and challenging perceived “world-destroying” Jewish global domination. They promised, instead, a geopolitical future comprising great spaces under “traditionalist” patriarchal ruleover-and- against the industrial civilization developed through Jewish finance perceived as rooted in the North Atlantic powers. These claims resonate within the manifestos of the Christchurch and El Paso shooters and the chat logs of modern fascist terrorist groups inspired by them.

¹ <https://qz.com/india/1599799/japans-world-war-ii-poster-propaganda-against-britain-in-india/>

The Development of Deep Green “Neo-Fascism”

Led by Julius Evola in Italy, a concomitant fascist movement “against the modern world” emerged steeped in the occult and arguing for a return to ethnic heritage in opposition to civilization itself (Sheehan 1981). A virulent anti-Semite, Evola’s esoteric hatred of modern civilization and liberalism deepened Fascist Italy’s race hatred, and he went on to exert a significant influence over the post-war fascist movement. Whereas those in power, especially Hitler, could be blamed for the downfall of the fascist movement, more marginal characters like Evola and Strasser’s brother Otto would put themselves forward as the protagonists of the ultranationalist vanguard. Relying on strategies of political terror and infiltration, fascists in the post-war epoch maneuvered to gain recognition as the “revolutionaries” of the right. Adopting what they called “Third Positionism” for the rejection of both Communism and liberal democracy, these fascists worked to expand their movement by exploiting right-wing tendencies within broad political and cultural movements, inclusive of the green movement and an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist resistance to industrial civilization.¹⁸ In this section, we track the trends of fascist engagement with left-wing movements and, particularly, the growth of the green movement during the Cold War.

Twenty years after the Holocaust, the hippie and back-to-the-land movements engaged with variants of folksy romanticism and a nostalgic politics of peace in opposition to modernity. These movements, coupled with the anti-war movement, contributed to the anti-nukes movement and, with the first Earth Day in 1970, articulated a new green politics inclusive of bioregionalism, which called for a semi-depoliticized ecological movement focused on restoring biodiversity within discrete territories in opposition to industrialism (Glotfelty and Quesnel 2015). Across Europe, mass left-wing opposition to bureaucratic authoritarianism in the form of both Communist Parties and trade unions sparked a new movement opposed to industrial capitalism that eventually assembled under the term “Autonomism” (Lotringer and Marazzi 2007). Especially powerful in Italy, Greece, and Germany during the 1970s and ’80s, Autonomism called upon a kind of anti-authoritarian politics that rejected modernity and supported the budding anti-nukes movement, green politics, and opposition to war with more punk-rock sensibilities and militant antifascism. It should come as no surprise that, while anti-industrial green politics took these different forms in a complex system of overlapping and often contentious values and norms from the radical left to the center, the far-right also worked to appropriate and utilize its appeals for their own reasons. Most directly, fascists in groups like Italy’s Lotta di Popolo and Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari, inspired by Evola and Strasser who promoted “national revolution,” took on the rhetoric of Autonomism, simply replacing class analysis with a vaguely populist patina and uprooting the egalitarian understorey of anti-imperialism in

favor of vulgar anti-Americanism (Bale 2002; Mammone 2015).

When the Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari fell under investigation for killing 85 people in a bloody 1980 bombing of a Bologna train station, a number of its members and associates faced arrest. On the person of arrested “Nazi-Maoist” Claudio Mutti, police found a membership card to important Autonomist group, Potere Operaio, and the Socialist Party, indicating significant fascist infiltration efforts.¹⁹ Meanwhile, Roberto Fiore, the head of Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari’s front group, Terza Posizione, fled arrest to the UK, where he helped reproduce a similar “Third Positionist” tendency. This tendency became associated with the “official” National Front, which promoted Muammar Qaddafi and the Ayatollah Khomeini as authentic anti-imperialists in the struggle against Israel, and its leaders even

travelled to Libya as guests of the regime (Copsey 2008, p. 46). The “official” National Front’s successor organization, the International Third Position, proposed “revolutionary nationalist and ruralist policies” in keeping with an eco-fascist alternative to modern civilization (Barberis, McHugh and Tyldesley 2000, p. 184).

In France, Holocaust denial and other far-right tendencies made inroads on the left among anti-imperialists opposed to the modern world during the late 1970s and into the 1980s. As notable ultraleft bookstore, La Vieille Taupe, threw its support behind negationist Robert Faurrison, his book received an introduction by leftist scholar Noam Chomsky describing the author as an “apolitical liberal” (Wistrich 2012, p. 463). Amid these efforts, emerging texts cautioned against overpopulation in the Third World. The book *Camp of the Saints* (1973), by French reactionary Jean Raspail, offered a paranoid vision of non-white people invading Europe from the overpopulated decolonized world. In his riff on the emergent theme of overpopulation, Paul Ehrlich’s *The Population Bomb* (1968) warned against the growing population of Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia as the central crisis facing the global environment, while ignoring that the primary consumers of the world’s resources live in the developed world (his predictions have been proven wrong, regardless).¹ These books formed the cornerstone of white nationalist efforts to draw environmentalists toward the far right, and have since been adopted by figures close to Trump, like Bannon and Miller.²¹

In Germany, as well, fascist and far-right activists attempted to infiltrate existing anti-nukes, anti-imperialist, and green groups and even start up their own ostensibly progressive or revolutionary groups. The German Greens found themselves steeped in controversy when antifascists exposed the background of early leader of the Greens, August Haussleiter, who came from the far-right Action Community of Independent Germans (Mammone 2015). Haussleiter was ousted, and co-founder Herbert Gruhl left the party early on to found the right-wing Ecological Democratic Party (Zimmerman 2004). While the Greens never made a “fascist turn” or argued for any kind of “national revolution,” Gruhl’s influential text, *Ein Planet wird geplündert* (1975), put forward the notion that the only way to stop and reverse what was happening was to establish a type of eco-dictatorship. Gruhl was joined in creating the Ecological Democratic Party by another cofounder of the Greens (and the Independent Ecologists of Germany), Wolfram Bednarski, who has since joined the far-right Alternative for Germany and advocates the reintroduction of wolves for the purposes of biodiversity (Forchtner and Ozvatan 2020). Thus, the nascent post-war European green movement already proved an important political flashpoint between left and right, with the latter envisioning an invasion of immigrants from overpopulated countries in the Global South destroying the “human biodiversity” of Europe like invasive species.²²

Another form of reactionary green politics influenced by the population trope emerged from the U.S.’s distinct “buckaroo” tradition, finding a base in the Earth First! movement formed in 1979 (Zimmerman 2004). Rejecting social movements and urban issues as unimportant to the goals of attaining “big wilderness,” EF! fought non-violent campaigns to protect vast areas of endangered species habitat, but also entertained racist and patriarchal leaders like Edward Abbey.²³ Their chapters included a hodgepodge of far-left revolutionaries, hippies, and conservatives who loathed the former two, opposed immigration into the U.S., and inveighed against Third World overpopulation, calling for depopulation. EF! advocated “Deep Ecology” as advanced by Swedish eco-philosopher Arne Naess, a biocentric form of green theory that eco-nationalists like Pentti Linkola encouraged in their rejection of industrial civilization (Burley 2017).

While social justice organizers like Judi Bari opposed the right-wing of EF! from within the movement (Shantz 2002), the radical left-wing author and activist Murray Bookchin (and his acolytes) promoted social ecology, directly opposing the anti-humanist strains within EF!’s “Deep Ecology” philosophy and rebuking the conservative “buckaroos.”²⁴ These fissures culminated in the conservatives’ gradual abandonment of the movement during the early ’90s. By the 2000s, EF! chapters were participating openly in anti-Klan organizing and immigrant solidarity.²⁵

¹ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-population-bomb-was-a-dud-1525125341>

Thus, in some cases, fascists infiltrated left-wing groups, while in others they organized separate but ostensibly parallel groups advocating similar things with a militant nationalist edge. With regard to the green movement, reactionary strains emerged from the beginning and contributed to the movement's growth, giving rise to significant struggles for hegemony between factions. Now we will turn to the continued usage of "entryism" (infiltration) in pursuit of disseminating fascist ideology and right-wing ecology further through subcultural and political milieus.

Fascism after the Cold War

The end of the Cold War led to the growth of the post-Soviet right-wing, as well as new efforts by the international left to combat capitalism in a “globalized” world.²⁶ Fascists made renewed efforts to infiltrate ecological groups, while also developing increasingly powerful international networks. In particular, fascists seized on opportunities of chauvinism, anti-Semitism, and misogyny in social movements to make inroads and spread their ideology. This section will lay out the methods and strategies of networking and entryism that fascists deployed to encourage reactionary ecology through subcultures and fringe political tendencies after the Cold War.

Although EF! would go on to adopt clear anti-oppression guidelines, some continued to embrace the macho image of a green warrior as a “rugged individualist” encapsulated in the writings of Ted Kaczynski. The Kaczynski manifesto, which repeatedly refers to modern environmentalists as “fags” too effeminate to take action themselves, would be published and promoted by various factions of radical greens delinked from the left politics of equality and converging in many ways with eco-fascists. While some in the

U.S. green movement, such as Green Anarchist John Zerzan, tended to sympathize with Kaczynski, perhaps the clearest example of the far-right imaginary in the radical green movement took place in England with Richard Hunt’s infamous journal *Green Anarchist* and, later, *Alternative Green*, which propagated ethnocentric tribalism against the modern world (Macklin 2005).²⁷

Among Hunt’s proteges was Troy Southgate, who produced a spin-off organization from the International Third Position called the National Revolutionary Faction (NRF) in 1996, deploying a strategy of “entryism,” or infiltrating environmentalist, animal rights, and anarchist groups.²⁸ Advocating “National Anarchism,” Southgate attempts to square the order-based tenets of fascism with what philosopher Adrian Parr identifies as a “völkisch” notion of anarchism by insisting upon a return to “natural” hierarchies based in traditional systems of ancestral precursors (Parr 2017). Members of Southgate’s NRF practiced entryism both in real life and online anarchist organizing spaces despite their direct connections to the NRF and watered-down fascist ideology.²⁹

Influenced by the “European New Right” and openly affiliated with Southgate’s “National Anarchists,” “pan-secessionism” emerged in the U.S. to assemble libertarians, leftists, and National Anarchists into a geopolitical axis.³⁰ Pan-secessionists would divide the U.S. into ethno-states and some smaller states dedicated to alternative political tendencies. Such pan-secessionist tendencies typically attempt to co-opt decolonization and indigeneity toward including bioregionalism in a territorial plan to dismantle modern civilization.¹

Since social movements often inhabit parallel subcultures, fascists like Southgate also endeavored to make inroads into music scenes. Although fascist skinheads mark the most infamous entryist effort into musical subcultures, the neo-folk scene became even more important in terms of advancing Traditionalist and völkisch ideas toward the promotion of green fascism.³² Neo-folk and ideologically similar currents of “National Socialist Black Metal” proved useful vectors to inject esoteric fascist ideology into subcultures, vis-à-vis the cult, Order of Nine Angles.³³ There has since been a concerted effort at creating an anti-fascist Black Metal and neo-folk movement.²

Similar entryist efforts were also used in France by an NRF-associated group called Nouvelle Resistance, in Russia by the co-founders of the National Bolshevik Party, Eduard Limonov and Aleksandr

¹ <https://slackbastard.anarchobase.com/?p=2439>

² https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/ywkj8y/riding-the-new-wave-of-anti-fascist-black-metal

Dugin, and in Italy by former Lotta di Popolo member Claudio Mutti (Bale 2002; Savino 2015).³⁵ According to Dugin, a follower of syncretic “Chaos Magick,” fascists must pursue “conscious cooperation of the radical Left-wingers and the New Right, as well as with religious and other anti-modern movements, such as the ecologists and Green theorists, for example.” Through the aid of long-time fascist, Jean-François Thiriart, such groups federated with the American Front skinhead gang in the U.S., a faction of which later adopted Dugin’s ideology and produced a faction called New Resistance.³⁶ American Front also had experience entering experimental music scenes through their leader’s association with controversial noise musician Boyd Rice.

With a number of other organizations, these groups formed a decentralized network of “National Bolshevik”-associated groups in favor of an ultranationalist version of the Soviet Union’s authoritarian, socialist state.³⁷ Dugin’s “Eurasianist” approach wove together Ratzel and Haushofer’s geopolitics with disparate fascist and left-wing movements from Thiriart and Mutti into a purportedly anti-imperialist “multipolar world” of Traditionalist, authoritarian ethno-states fusing left and right, grounded in the sacralization of patriarchal politics, and opposed most directly to liberalism and “globalism” as modern forms of imperialism.³⁸ Contributions from the stodgy fascist intellectuals known as the “European New Right” helped this growing movement posit ecological Traditionalism as a way of overcoming multiculturalism and returning to ancestral roots by deporting immigrants and carving out ethno-states for white people (Griffin 2000). Members of this tendency attempted to “enter” the anti-globalization movement, promoting localist ideas within a broader worldview that positioned authoritarian dictators as bastions of resistance to imperialist Western powers driven by secret Jewish conspirators.

The convergence of völkisch green fascism and the occult in subcultures was further spread by Boyd Rice’s “heathen anarcho-fascist” friend, Michael Moynihan, who disseminated the writings of Evola and Satanist fascist James Mason (Gardell 2003, p. 304).³⁹ Two members of the Earth Liberation Front, a network with roots in Earth First! in the US that committed large-scale acts of arson, became devotees of the growing subcultural fascism, but their ideology was not popular among the larger group.⁴⁰ With Moynihan publishing a best-selling book on black metal and Limonov making inroads in Western media, however, fascists developed a growing, diffuse international movement capable of adapting to subcultural shifts and developing signals that could affect larger cultural changes.³

Thus, through the efforts of such “left-fascists” and their collaborators, the fascist movement achieved limited mainstream success. However, they also produced an international network of young constituents eager to commit horrifying acts of violence and willing to unite with both right and left leaning green activists to do so. Increasingly, fascists would transition from the vulgarity and infamy of the skinhead movement to a subtler, more savvy fashion cribbed from left-wing autonomists and eagerly attempting to exploit the gains of social movements as “Autonomous Nationalists” and intellectual elitists advocating revolution against the modern world (Ross 2017).

³ <http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2015/11/inside-pol-4chans-racist-heart.html>

The Alt Right and Their Influences

Created around 2009 largely by fascist leader Richard Spencer, the Alt Right combined Third Positionism and National Bolshevism with a more Americanist form of white nationalism associated with Pat Buchanan’s “paleo-conservative” movement and adherents of biological racism coded as “human biodiversity” (Davis 2018). Seizing on Web 2.0 and the popularity of podcasts, the Alt Right developed communications savvy that prior fascist groups lacked, while building on prior efforts to influence the counter- culture.⁴² In particular, Spencer cloaked his hate in euphemisms and a manner that convinced many in the public of a genteel alternative to the Republican-Democrat duality.⁴³ The Alt Right’s marketing of fascism as young and edgy involved attempts to lodge ecological sustainability and even animal rights in *völkisch* terms, although some within the fascist movement criticized them as weak for it.⁴⁴ At the same time, members of the Alt Right embraced a reactionary form of ecological insurgency in keeping with some of the more radical and reactionary elements within Earth First!. Here, we will describe some of these influences behind the green fascist tendency that emerged within the Alt Right, as well as the corresponding online cultures that help spread its message and gain recruits.

The Alt Right garnered many, if not most, of its constituents from within online gamer communities and the nebulous world of internet image boards and social media that has become the leading point of radicalization for young men seeking radical alternatives to contemporary conditions.⁴⁵ 8chan and 4chan, in particular, grew to promote non-PC gamer culture in a way that encouraged misogyny, racism, and ableism.⁴⁶ Young men whose lives become intensely intertwined with gaming platforms and cyber-technology created by misogynists appear attracted to fetishized understandings of nativist ecology—a way of recognizing themselves as bound to the land of their birth—as a paradoxically-heroic escape from their own mundane, modern existence. Alt Right followers have argued over ideological tendencies, like whether the U.S. should move toward white supremacy or separatism, in which whites would move to a specific region to carve out an ethno-state.⁴⁷ The latter idea was promoted in particular by Harold Covington, whose Northwest Front merged bioregional ideas of Cascadia with the Aryan Nations’ idea of a “Northwest Territorial Imperative” in the Northwest.¹ Real-world networks developed out of the online world to draw this angry following into actual, material activism, and mass shootings become suicidal apotheoses of their growing death cult.

The Christchurch shooter, with his self-described eco-fascist, anti-imperialist manifesto on 8chan and Facebook live streaming of the killings, presented the perfect example of this phenomenon in which the mass shooting becomes a media weapon designed to reproduce itself through its online presence.² Describing himself as radicalized online, the Christchurch shooter says he traveled throughout the world, making connections to mass shooters like Anders Breivik and different far-right groups both above and below ground.⁵⁰ According to his manifesto, the shooter had been a Communist and an anarchist before his travels to North Korea, among other places, changed his politics.³ He turned libertarian and ultimately fascist, internalizing along the way the major positions of anti-imperialism and green politics put forward by the “left-fascists.” Like Duginists, he also celebrated Russia and historic military victories of Slavs over Turks as a model for ethnic war.

¹ <https://crosscut.com/2015/07/hate-filled-zone-a-group-of-white-racists-wants-a-nw-secession-a-vile-dream-with-deep-historic-roots>

² <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/rest-of-world/2019/03/15/shitposting-inspirational-terrorism-and-the-christchurch-mosque-massacre/>

³ <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/brenton-tarrant-accused-in-mosque-massacre-changed-after-visiting-north-korea>

Some of the most violent tendencies within online message boards linked to the Alt Right found expression through neo-Nazi Andrew Anglin's site Daily Stormer.⁵² Anglin's enthusiastic support for deep green radical Derrick Jensen on his site evidences the method by which the far-right makes in-roads through reactionary entry-points in the far left:

Turns out that all queer theorists are pedophiles. And Derrick doesn't give a heck about these college students harassing him...Jensen is a cool guy. He's an anarchoprimitivist, Uncle Ted [Kacyznski] style, who basically believes that the entire structure of civilization needs to be violently torn down. And he obviously views homosexuality as a part of this evil structure, though he's usually low-key about that. But for some reason isn't in the above clip....He was something of an influence on me before I was ever even into Neo-Nazism. He's interesting.⁵³

Anglin's time as a green radical prior to fascism highlights the political vacillations that fascists tend to seize on in order to activate young and curious minds who reject their current surroundings.⁵⁴ With its anti-establishment ethos and subcultural signaling, the green movement can offer a small subsection of its constituents a feeling of belonging also sought by those attracted to the nationalist notion of homeland.

A leading figure in the line of deep green ecology, Jensen has become a model for the kind of authoritarian green leader that fascists would try to co-opt. He leads a radical green group called Deep Green Resistance (DGR), boasting an "accelerationist" agenda to take down industrial civilization by heightening internal contradictions and speeding up its presumed impending collapse. DGR attracted a significant number of green activists before the exposure of the Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminist politics of its leadership.⁵⁵ Advocating the rejection of trans people's very existence on the basis of a fanciful notion of "nature," the supporters of this brand of reactionary politics unabashedly worked with far-right Christian groups to quash reforms that enhanced protections for trans people in everyday life. Earth First! denounced DGR because of such alignments, and much of its membership abandoned DGR's leaders.⁴

In October 2019, Jensen sat for an extensive interview with the Alt Right associated website Counter-Currents.⁵⁷ "I have always thought it most likely that a new Rightist order will arise out of the chaos wrought by environmental change," the Counter-Currents interviewer wrote. "My interview with Derrick Jensen buttresses this theory. He still has his liberal shibboleths, and surely hates everything about Counter-Currents, but given that protecting the Earth is his axiomatic base, he ends up holding not a few positions quite amenable to this Website and its supporters." Even though Jensen later claimed not to know who Counter-Currents was, the overlap of many of their often reactionary ideals and their brief collaboration exposes the potential for fascist creep in leftist (green) politics.⁵⁸ The fusion of "deep green" philosophy and an insurgent orientation can thus align with an apparently paradoxical yearning for ethno-states—among the most fearsome manifestations of such an assemblage being the Wolves of Vinland. Embracing bioregional politics and the ultraviolence of a white gang, members of the Wolves of Vinland promote fraudulent "race science," advocate Evola's esoteric teachings, and envision a tribal existence in tune with bioregional notions of the spiritual connection between place, ancestry, and the land.⁵⁹ Like pan-secessionist Keith Preston, Wolves of Vinland member and "masculinist" Jack Donovan has contributed to the Alt Right through appearances at conferences and publishing houses. A gay, vegan powerlifter, Donovan's subcultural affinities with radical ecology facilitate a fascinating milieu of "fascist creep" through which Donovan's friends contribute to his own writings while publishing other radical texts more associated with the (post-)left, such as egoist Max Stirner again on Counter-Currents.⁶⁰ Some radical nihilist insurrectionaries have become associated with Donovan's gym, contributing to Donovan's "anarcho-fascist" milieu.⁶¹ Others associated with esoteric spiritualities like the Asatru Folk Assembly and the defunct White Order of Thule have presented similar injunctions for ethnocentric tribalism in tune with *völkisch* ecology.⁵

⁴ <https://earthfirstnews.wordpress.com/2013/05/15/deep-green-transphobia/>

⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/06/us/virginia-cop-white-supremacist.html>, <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2011/former-neo-nazi-explains-%E2%80%98esoteric-nazism%E2%80%99>

The Vanguardists

While the Wolves of Vinland and Daily Stormer are violent, the Alt Right's tendency to connect white nationalist paleo-cons to fascism did not please some more ideologically- motivated fascists and Third Positionists. These vanguardists sought to differentiate themselves from the public-facing movement, which appeared watered down, preferring instead to incite a national revolution against the state rather than insinuating themselves within its ranks. Atomwaffen Division offers probably the most infamous example linking green fascism to modern terror; however, other reactionary green groups have emerged *sui generis*, bearing many similarities to Atomwaffen and other fascist terrorists. In this section, we will describe both Atomwaffen and Individualists Tending to the Wild/Savagery (ITS) in terms of vanguardist efforts to destroy liberal democracy.

Amid the growth of the Alt Right, different fascist forums emerged online to link committed organizers within the global fascist movement from Moscow to Orange County,

California, for the purposes of organizing direct action in the form of racist and homophobic terrorism. In 2011, the International Third Position Federation went online, hosting a number of fascists, including one who went on to form fascist terror group, National Action, with his online friend.⁶³ National Action immediately showed the influence of both original fascism and rebranded versions like National Anarchism, particularly with reference to the neo-folk scene.⁶⁴ National Action leader Alex Davies even spoke at a meeting of the London Forum, a small discussion group formed by Southgate's estranged comrade, Jeremy Bedford-Turner, linked through a broader "Forum Network" to the editor of Counter-Currents.⁶⁵ Within a couple of years, the International Third Position Federation folded into Iron March, a new online forum run by the same person, "Alexander Slavros" (Alisher Mukhitdinov), thus facilitating wider organizing potential and ultimately giving rise to another terrorist group, the now mostly defunct Atomwaffen Division, around 2013- 2014.⁶⁶

Iron March came to feature numerous posts describing ecological commitments largely in keeping with traditional *völkisch* tendencies and the broader National Bolshevik and Third Positionist proximity to the left. For instance, like the Christchurch murderer, Atomwaffen co-founder and convicted murderer Devon Arthurs spent time as a Communist before becoming fascist, as did another leader who called himself "Arathis." One Iron March user posted about his experience as an EF!er involved in a tree-sit in the Northern California redwoods prior to his activity with Atomwaffen.⁶⁷ Another promoted Derrick Jensen's work. Atomwaffen members have also been recruited by eco-fascist groups propagandizing over Telegram messenger.⁶⁸ These groups leverage a white "Indigenous" identity in allyship with neo-Nazi groups like the Azov Battalion, Misanthropic Division, and Right Sector fighting Russian separatists in Eastern Ukraine many of whom are, themselves, Duginists.¹ These groups often see white "Indigenous" identities and connections to nature as a *völkisch* take on anti-civilizationist rewilding.

Atomwaffen propaganda extolling an "Indigenous" fascism in Ukraine

The confluence of individualistic "Lone Wolf" style of terrorism with the ecological awareness and esoteric cults introduced through subcultures is obvious in Atomwaffen Division and associated terrorist network, The Base.⁷⁰ Many within the terrorist vanguard followed the esoteric fascist doctrine espoused

¹ <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2019/09/04/the-hardcore-russian-neo-nazi-group-that-calls-ukraine-home/>, <https://www.unian.info/war/2197709-russian-neo-nazi-who-fought-against-ukraine-in-donbas-now-seen-in-syria-media.html>, <https://harpers.org/2018/11/light-in-the-donbass-window-tankies-and-anti-imperialist-fighters-in-east-ukraine/>

by James Mason and disseminated by Moynihan, which promotes a bloody Aryan revolution using serial killer Charles Manson as a model. This doctrine is combined with an accelerationist critique of civilization often prompting members to allude towards possible large-scale attacks on infrastructure as a means of killing all the weakest humans.

Lone Atomwaffen member posing near an electrical plant with a rifle

Adopting the kind of fascist syncretism that spreads through subcultural entryism, Atomwaffen members took up the creed of a U.S. offshoot of the Order of Nine Angles called Tempel ov Blood, which developed in association with New Resistance.⁷¹ With its connected cult New Bihar Mandir, Tempel ov Blood members deploy anti-imperialist rhetoric and support for North Korean "juche" alongside sacralized violence and a deep reverence for Hindu ultranationalism and Japanese death cult Aum Shinrikyo.⁷² The founder of Tempel ov Blood and nine other members became leaders in Atomwaffen, one of them reportedly naming Boyd Rice as a significant influence, along with Nick Mason and others.⁷³ While members tended to engage in messy coalitions with the Alt Right, the Satanic creed of Atomwaffen and associated groups upsets hardened, Christian white nationalists, and they see themselves less as a front for spreading white nationalism through populist efforts than as a vanguard paramilitary movement set on national revolution anyway.⁷⁴

In the Pacific Northwest, members of the Atomwaffen Division joined an online chat room with other area fascists called "True Cascadia," taking a bioregional approach to organizing a potential far-right coalition before facing exposure by antifascist groups in the region.⁷⁵ Despite their admiration for the "holy trinity" of terrorists (Kaczynski, Oklahoma City Bomber Timothy McVeigh, and Breivik), Atomwaffen members blended in with broader populist fronts like Patriot Prayer during street protests while gaining online tactical support from the chauvinist street gang, Proud Boys (Taylor 2020, p. 284).⁷⁶ These supposed "Lone Wolf" terrorists only exist in a larger, technologically-interconnected network of diffuse groups, tendencies, and campaigns.⁷⁷ At least publicly, that network often maintains ambiguous and intentionally ill-defined political boundaries based on feelings of alienation and *ressentiment*, rather than specific ideological convictions, in order to maximize outreach.

Posts from an eco-fascist Telegram channel appropriating leftist/green-anarchist histories and aesthetics

Along with the bioregional mishmash of True Cascadia, Atomwaffen's specific bioregional sensibilities become increasingly clear with a glimpse at associated reactionary reading lists. One list associated with Atomwaffen reveals interest in Jorian Jenks, Richard Walther Darré, Ernst von Salomon, and Pentti Linkola, along with Herbert Gruhl and Ted Kaczynski. Eco-fascist Telegram channels also expose widespread admiration for Edward Abbey and the Earth Liberation Front, viewing themselves as part of their legacy. With many of the same ideological points, The Base promotes the ideas of Covington's Northwest Front with its white nationalist and bioregional overlap.⁷⁸ In 2019, members of The Base claimed responsibility for an eco-fascist arson attack in Sweden, which was quickly condemned by green and animal rights activists.⁷⁹

Another thread named for Ted Kaczynski on 4chan's Nazi-infested /pol/ board advanced a "recommended reading" that listed the works of Pentti Linkola and "conservative revolutionary" Oswald Spengler alongside a text by the group Atassa, publisher of the manifestos of the Individualists Tending toward the Wild/Savagery (ITS), also referred to as Wild Reaction.⁸⁰

Claiming responsibility for targeted assassinations, bombings, femicide, and promoting indiscriminate murder as a way to attack civilization, ITS indulges in what they refer to as "eco-extremism" in opposition to "progress" (Herwig 2016).⁸¹ One Atassa book contains an image of a traditional Indigenous pinwheel design on its cover but in this case, the similarity to a swastika is likely geared towards provoking their critics and normalizing edgy fascist imagery. Atassa writers go out of their way to encourage misogynistic ultra-violence including rape.⁸² Jake Hanrahan, an independent journalist and documentary filmmaker who has conducted deep dives into both Atomwaffen and ITS told us, "I definitely don't think [ITS] have a Nazi ideology, but I do think what they're creating is beginning to resemble the new fascist-nihilist culture we're seeing."⁸³ Importantly, many green activists agree with

Hanrahan and repudiate ITS, for instance, Green Anarchist, John Zerzan, who made a formal split with Atassa and ITS, saying, “I don’t think this is anarchism, I think this is fascism... this is a new low for these people.”⁸⁴

ITS sees themselves as a vanguard of individuals beyond the collective, untethering their associations from any ideology, per se. However, their opposition to the modern world and celebration of stochastic terrorism brings them into line with syncretic, fascist death cults like Tempel ov Blood, to which they are reportedly connected.⁸⁵ Although they betray a fondness for Linkola, linking his thought to Temple of Blood, ITS argue that they cannot truly be eco-fascists, because they do not try to fight for a better world. However, as a defense mechanism to protect their subculture, Atassa, their supporters, and like-minded actors within the wider nihilist movement tend to use targeted harassment, threats of violence, and trolling tactics and memes that closely resemble the style of online fascists. At the same time, ITS has expressed appreciation for fascist terror as part of a tendency toward wildness. Writing in response to the Christchurch killings, an ITS communique declared, “of course ITS celebrates all this, we don’t care about the tears of the massacred Muslims, nor the tears of the future victims of the Islamic extremists, the Tarrant attack will bring chaos and destabilization and if it arrives, it will be welcome.”²

The broader primitivist, anti-civilizationist, and insurrectionary/nihilist political landscape contains many valid critiques and ideas that have developed within the left (and post-left) over the years. However, the way that eco-terrorist groups such as ITS utilize the edges of anti-civilization nihilist discourse to justify the abandonment of ethics undeniably approximates a shift toward fascist ideology. Many “anti-civ” egoists and nihilists are quick to point out the ‘almost Puritanical panic’ among anarchists about ITS attacks that they claim are most likely an elaborate fairy tale. The communities of the people who they have supposedly killed, attempted to kill, or certainly threatened tend to disagree. However, those such as Atassa and their fellow travelers who have provided a platform for this form of fascist provocation into more ideologically cohesive Green Anarchist spaces are engaging in fascist entryism, either consciously or otherwise.

The anarchist website, It’s Going Down, stated that genocide is not and will never be an anarchist project in their response to ITS coddling on the left and post-left.⁸⁷ After this, several international insurrectionary anarchist cells condemned the ITS and their followers.⁸⁸ Subsequently, ITS reacted by threatening to kill Scott Campbell, viciously attacking other anarchists, and suggesting that they had tried to bomb an autonomous space in Mexico.⁸⁹ If one believes the nihilist trope that humans have already condemned earth to ecocide, then it stands that humanity’s only hope is to forcibly wrest the direction of science and industry into scientifically grounded carbon-negative technologies. It is possible to blend the insights offered by anti-civ, Indigenous, and Green Anarchist movements with the advancements made possible by a science unencumbered by warfare and global imperialist capitalism. The more the need for a large-scale green movement intensifies, the more fascists might enter it and the more desperate and scared green activists may fall into their clutches.

² https://twitter.com/Jake_Hanrahan/status/1111232322869825537

The Populists

In contradistinction to vanguardists, populists hope to expand their influence within more mainstream groups, thus furthering the fascist cause without necessarily bringing fascism to light. While populist radical right parties, which follow Cas Mudde in defining by way of authoritarianism and nativism, often deny anthropogenic forcing of climate change through greenhouse gas emissions, their associated groups and youth wings often paint a more complex picture.⁹⁰ That those youth wings often maintain greater overlap with fascist organizations reveals the generational dynamics of populist movements, as well as the expanding import of ecology to them.

Dugin has become one of the global leaders of the populist tendency in fascism. In an effort to shed the identity of the obviously-fascist Third Positionism, he now promotes a "Fourth Political Theory," which claims to have overcome the fundamental contradictions of Communism, Fascism, and Liberalism in a new political approach that he aligns with National-Bolshevism, "national-conservatism," and even more euphemistically, "populism."⁹¹ Importantly, he maintains the same fundamental National-Bolshevik obligations as he did in the 1990s when writing a delirious essay heralding the promise of "Fascism – Borderless and Red." Aside from European fascist networks, Dugin has met with and influenced Alt Right figures, appeared on Alex Jones's conspiracy theory show,

Infowars, appeared on Chinese state TV, and is admired by Trump strategist Steve Bannon, along with various conspiracy theorists and syncretic ideologues.⁹²

Some members of Green Parties persist in flirting with Dugin and the far right. Perhaps most notoriously, Canada's Green Party has experienced run-ins with the far right, including Monika Schaeffer's 2016 Holocaust denial video, along with an array of less direct exhibitions.⁹³ The U.S. Green Party 2016 candidate for Vice Presidency, Ajamu Baraka, also has a running relationship with the far right.⁹⁴ Protested by other leftists as a conspiracy theorist, Baraka has appeared on anti-Semite Kevin Barrett's radio show, Truth Jihad, and wrote a chapter featured in a book edited by Barrett, whose ecological pursuits led him to start a permaculture retreat called 3P Zawiya.⁹⁵ While he disavowed Holocaust denial, Baraka called antifascist organizing a "distraction," and received an award from a shadowy group that supports Syrian President Bashar al-Assad for his defense of the murderous regime.⁹⁶ In 2019, Baraka was listed as a panelist on the programme of the annual Iran-backed New Horizon conference which features keynote speaker Aleksandr Dugin, whom Barrett, a frequent attendee, called "courageous and brilliant."⁹⁷ Baraka's familiarity with Duginist networks, defense of authoritarian regimes, and conspiracy theories contribute to a tendency among some green "anti-imperialists" to converge with fascism rather than oppose it.

Aside from drawing Greens to the far right, fascists work to converge with the radical right in a move that provides fascists ideological shelter and a base for dissemination and recruitment. Among Dugin's cohort in Italy, Claudio Mutti purportedly provided a key connection between the fascist network CasaPound and the populist radical right party Lega, which later fell from grace after an imbroglio involving a corrupt business transaction with Dugin's close associates.⁹⁸ Emerging from squatter networks in Italy to wield considerable street-level power through violent protests, CasaPound also supports, among other things, a nativist version of green politics. CasaPound's Canadian allies in what they call "fascism for the third millennium," Atalante, have also adopted green rhetoric despite their roots in the Quebecois fascist skinhead scene.⁹⁹ While the Conservative Party has done a better job distancing itself from groups like Atalante, the new radical right People's Party of Canada appears to maintain closer ties.¹⁰⁰

Another leading theorist for this new generation of fascists was “Identitarian” ideologue Guillaume Faye of the European New Right, who produced an ideological concept known as “Archeofuturism” postulating a Traditionalist synthesis of futurism and ecological primitivism. Substituting “national identity” as a euphemism for “Volk,” Identitarianism exploits anarchist and green aesthetics to cultivate constituents from the left and lure alienated young men disenfranchised with the status quo into desperate actions of extreme violence to further the “cause” of whitenationalism. The younger, more- dynamic generation of Identitarians who lace their support of populism with “left-fascist” appeals perhaps more closely networked than any before, and on some levels may share more in common with one another across continental boundaries than they share with older far-right activists in their own countries. As well, they are more effective than previous generations at eliding the difference between populist and fascist in order to avoid stigma while advocating fascist ideology, often by connecting subculture to the mainstream through the coded manipulation of popular styles (Miller-Idriss 2017, p. 52).

The Austrian Freedom Party’s youth wing, Ring Freiheitlicher Jugend, promotes green positions through their online media presence while maintaining connections to fascist networks like the Identitarian Movement that tend to present themselves as the only vanguard that can put forward radical action in defense of biodiversity and homeland (Turner-Graham 2013, p. 241; Zúquete 2019). After the Freedom Party fell from grace, the Austrian center-right party Peoples Party entered into coalition with the Greens, leading some leftists to caution against a developing green fascism. While the convergence of ecology and anti-immigration policies do undermine the left tendencies within the Greens and open a gateway to a more consistent right-wing shift among the wider European green movement, they do not necessarily insinuate a fascist turn, however.

Also bearing disconcerting ties to the Identitarians, France’s National Rally now calls for Europe to become an “ecological civilization,” advancing the theory that “nomads” despoil France because, unlike the sedentary native population, they do not harbor ancestral concern for the welfare of their place.¹⁰¹ At the same time, the Alternative for Germany-linked extreme right publication, *Umwelt & Aktiv*, attack liberal “sustainable development” in favor of ecocentric nativism under the auspices of biodiversity (Fortchner 2019). While there is little evidence of green parties openly entering into coalitions with these far-right parties, the Austrian example may indicate some potential shifts toward the hegemony of the right.

In other cases, groups perceived to be green have proven more eclectic. For example, Mike Adams “the Health Ranger” made his name as a promoter of organic foods through his website Natural News.¹⁰² However, his career took a turn toward conspiracy theories opposing vaccinations among other pseudoscientific tendencies. Known to co- host Infowars with far-right demagogue, Alex Jones, Adams now advocates QAnon and supports Donald Trump.¹⁰³ Strangely, Adams’s example shows how ostensibly-green tendencies like opposition to pollution and support for organic foods can be associated with climate denial and other reactionary politics.¹⁰⁴

Interestingly, some fascists have admitted climate change is occurring. In his usual call for a pan-European federation of homogeneous ethno-states, “European New Right” leader Alain de Benoist asked, “Which European country by itself, even if one of the big ones, can regulate the financial system... or confront the migratory wave? The challenges of a changing climate? Or the coming pandemics, and all sorts of trafficking that are expanding on a global scale?” (found in Zúquete 2018). While fascists have tended to support ecology for its own right and in opposition to immigration, Benoist’s acceptance of climate change is still relatively controversial and often mixed with the denial that humans are the main drivers. Where fascists do find humans accountable for ecological problems, blame almost always rests on Jews, non-whites, and those perceived as enabling the supposed “deracination” of Europeans.

A number of facts emerge from this overview of fascist populism. Green Parties engaging in conspiracy theories are susceptible to collaboration with fascists, and fascists have made clear inroads to some left-wing parties that maintain some facets of a green agenda. Fascists have also made important connections to the radical right, and though they may not be driving an ecological turn among populist radical right parties by themselves, they are a part of the generational dynamics that have influenced

the change. Although the radical right and fascist groups find each other useful, producing together a conflictive political space we have referred to as the “far-right,” ultimately fascist networks hope to overtake the less extreme radical right through infiltration or revolution (or both). And lastly, while völkisch ecology is often promoted for its own sake across the far-right, climate change is, at least for now, still looked upon with skepticism among far-right parties. However, this may be changing.

Conclusion

In this essay, we tracked how the fascist movement's ecological tendency has developed and adapted over time, from the völkisch movement, through the Third Position, to an important part of an interconnected international movement with both vanguardist and populist strategies. We offered an analysis of the role of digital technology, including social media, forums, and message boards, in the proliferation of fascism and germination of a culture that supports mass shooters. We also showed how fascists work to advance authoritarian goals within populist parties by promoting conspiracy theories and disinformation alongside an ecologically nativist agenda. Lastly, we claim that just solutions to the hazards portended by anthropogenic climate change can only come about through complex, adaptive approaches far from the artificially simplistic answers provided by green fascists. In conclusion, we argue that the threat of fascism and increasingly intense hazards resulting from anthropogenic climate change are best addressed through non-authoritarian systems that can adapt scientifically and with agility to dynamic conditions.

Part of the reality of climate skepticism is due to the fact that climate change is a vastly complex and non-linear set of interconnected problem spaces, and authoritarianism can understand little else than centralized flows and directions of inquiry through a single channel, creating perverse incentives up and down the hierarchy. For instance, networked, distributed systems that value inquiry and non-zero-sum cosmopolitan collaboration offer networked agility needed to solve complex problems that authoritarian parties and their fascist bedfellows lack the bandwidth to address (Carson 2016). Instead of adapting to complexity, the far-right project problems onto the Other. In practical terms, the fascist movement's ecological rhetoric has drawn people toward the radical right and entropy over climate, transmitting the desire to do something into Islamophobic anti-immigrant fervor and ultraviolent pathology.

We found it interesting that eco-fascists frequently find themselves in self-perceived ideological affinity with the anarchist, post-leftist, and nihilist milieu as with the authoritarian left of Maoists and Stalinists (à la National Bolsheviks and National Anarchists). Marxist-Leninists tend to rely on the romanticization of industrial modernism that is difficult to graft onto the green tradition, but inroads have been made between the far right and the more ecologically-minded left in some cases as a result of foreign policy commitments in opposition to NATO.¹⁰⁵ As well, the Tempel of Blood support the authoritarian Communist regime in North Korea, suggesting that their affinity for anarchism lies more in decentralized frameworks of "leaderless resistance" and in cultural transgression than in ideology.

Both the right and left can work to prevent the spread of fascism within the green movement and, concomitantly, the germination of a green fascism within the public sphere through mainstream populist parties and subcultures. While the right can disassociate itself from fascist networks and join the antifascist movement, the left and "post-left" can continue the work to seal up some of the most visible entry-points that enable the spread of right-wing ideology and drift of young activists toward national socialism.

The diffusion of antisemitism within the British Labour Party, and its subsequent denial by many of its members, has shown the discord that right-wing and authoritarian currents can sow within a left-wing movement.¹⁰⁶ Antisemitism is part of a tendency to rely on conspiracy theories to explain away failure and unpopularity. Conspiracy theories often associated with the green movement, like the notion that vaccinations cause autism or that the U.S. government is spreading "chem trails" in the air, also offer crossover points for fascists.

Such conspiracy theories, afflicting both right and left, tend to fit the general authoritarian pattern of projecting complex problems onto an easy enemy rather than solving them through adaptive systems.

The rise of an authoritarian populist mixture of nationalism, socialism, and ecology, supported through broader Russian media strategy, has contributed to a dangerous climate of disinformation that sidelines nuanced discussions on programmatic solutions to emerging crises.¹⁰⁷ Disinformation causes power to flow to lackies who lie with the greatest facility, make the most powerful allies, and work around the limits of bureaucracy are able to survive. Such systems preclude climate justice.

There is more research that could be done to further analyze the cognitive dissonance between the climate denial and skepticism of the far-right, on one hand, and the growing ecological tendencies on the right, on the other. In particular, the growing right-wing disinformation systems around climate change and COVID-19 echo similar patterns as geopolitical conspiracy theories surrounding the Syrian White Helmets and fearmongering about refugees.¹⁰⁸ Correlation between climate denial and nativist ecology with support for Russia's intervention in the war in Syria, which contributes to an influx of refugees, would indicate a kind of continuous propaganda line that reflects broader issues pertaining to international affairs.

Finally, we look with hope to combined and collaborative efforts in the future to understand the inherently complex root causes of both climate change and the rise of the global far-right as interconnected. Hence, both dilemmas can be confronted with carefully calibrated, systemic answers that come from situated knowledge connected to broader goals of equality and justice. While we name many of the problems in this essay and attempt to understand why they exist along with how they emerged, we accept that the solutions will entail rigorous but incredibly necessary work for the future of humanity, earth, and all other life found here.

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End notes

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A critique of his ideas & actions



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