Uncivilized

The Best of Green Anarchy

Green Anarchy Collective

Contents

Uncivilized: the best of
Green Anarchy

Welcomes

Welcome to (the Best of) *Green Anarchy*

The stratified past still clung to by those who grow old with time is ever more easy to distinguish from the alluvia, timeless in their fertility, left by others who awake to themselves (or at least strive to) everyday.

For me, these are two moments of a single fluctuating existence in which the present is continually divesting itself of its old forms.

Raoul Vaneigem,

The everyday eternity of life

He not busy being born, is busy dying. -Bob Dylan

It was a difficult decision to end our anti-civilization journal of theory and action after the Fall 2008 issue, but after twenty-five installments, with exhaustion and repetition beginning to set in, and with the specific paths of our lives headed in different directions, we felt that our mission as that particular collective had reached an endpoint. We hoped that other projects would be born to fill this theoretical and journalistic void and carry on where we left off. While in some specific ways some have, we feel there is way too much white space currently in the anti-civilization discourse. With the relevance of the magazine format much in question, our unwillingness to throw ourselves back into the grind of such an overwhelming and demanding project, and the desire to distill what we did achieve down to a condensed format for future generations (or at least those not around, or paying attention, a few years ago), we decided (after being run over by a little black cart) to put out a book of what we consider to be a comprehensive representation of the essays and theoretical aspects of the project.

The Fuse Ignited: A Brief History

Green Anarchy was born in 2000, as an illegitimate bastard child of the primitivist-oriented periodical *Green Anarchist* from the UK. One of its offshoot editors splintered and moved to Eugene, Oregon where he became affiliated with the *Earth First! Journal.* In an attempt to publish direct action updates and articles from a more anarchist perspective, he started a newsprint zine called *Green Anarchy.* Although it was disjointed, somewhat incoherent, aesthetically impoverished, and grossly unedited, as a 16-page newsprint tabloid it was the inglorious birth of our project. After issue #4, the founder, who was moving away to pursue other interests in wilderness survival and

such, passed on the project to the seeds of what became the notorious *Green Anarchy* Collective. After a couple of issues, the original editor returned to find his *Green Anarchy*-lite transformed into a collectively-run, hard-hitting, nail-biting, unapologetically anti-civilization project, which was too much for his luke-warm 19th century (and green-tinted) politics to handle, and he left for good (he later falsely claimed that we stole the project and has recently threatened to re-start *his* project of the same name, continuing at #5, where he left off...another case of sour grapes mixed with selective memory). Needless to say, the fuse was lit and we were on a hyper-enthusiastic trajectory, as it seemed at the time that anything was possible...remember, this was not all that long after Seattle was trashed and Eugene was still the hot bed of vibrant, creative, critical, and militant anarchist activity...and we ran with it hard! Each issue increased in size, print-run, distribution, coherence, and relevance, and by issue #8, *Green Anarchy* was receiving national attention with articles like Ted Kaczynski's "Hit Where It Hurts", which received mention from the likes of Fox News. By issue #11 we had hit our stride, and by issue #15 we decided to change to a magazine format, in order to increase distribution by getting it into more bookstores and to preserve the physical longevity of the hard copies. Over the next few years, while our format continued to solidify, we broadened and deepened our discourse. The collective grew, shrank, evolved, split, and spliced, as change was essential to keep it fresh and alive, with a few key members (those of us whose drive and dedication verged on obsession) making it through most of the journey. Eventually, we had a 100-page journal circulating 8,000 copies an issue around the world. But, like all things, it came to an end.

Black and White and Green All Over: A Typical Issue of *Green Anarchy*

While we hoped that every new installment of what we termed our "anti-civ virus" was vibrant and fresh, aggressively challenging, somewhat jarring, and even downright confusing a times, each issue did contain a familiar format to reserve some continuity. Not only did they all contain a diverse assortment of articles from regular and irregular contributors alike, but also other significant sections which rounded out the project. We became well-known for having the most comprehensive direct action reports in North America, featuring anarchist, anti-capitalist, environmental, and indigenous resistance, as well as prisoner revolts, the often oddly-inspiring "Symptoms of the System's Meltdown", and the ferocious feral fury of "The Wild Fight Back!", an amusing accounting of recent attacks on civilized humans by anything from caged tigers to rabid poodles to strong gusts of wind. We leant our solidarity to those warriors kidnapped by the state with current prisoner listings, updates, and state repression news. We also sent free copies in to any prisoner who requested one, numbering close to a thousand copies per issue. We critically reviewed anarchist and leftist publications, music, videos, and other projects that we felt were relevant to our overall anti-civilization perspective. The reviews were probably our most controversial (and most anticipated) section, due to their often biting tone, which was always from a desire to offer direct and clear criticism in order to further an overarching anarchist project (not just to be mean, as some declared)... we couldn't help it that our critique could be darkly comical too.

Especially venomous was our attitude towards the Leftist drivel and liberal residue that continues to ooze out of the anarchist scene. We made a point to give ample space for our readers to write letters, adding their voice to the ongoing discussions. We published interviews from time to time, re-printed and reclaimed some of our favorite previously published works, interjected some comedic elixirs like the scene-crunching "News From the Balcony with Waldorf and Statler", and rounded it out with random tidbits, announcements, quotes, editorial commentary, and sloganeering. We joyfully embraced the challenge to fill every bit of boring white space with as many provocative images we could find, matched with every font we could possibly use. This was mostly fueled financially by a significant subscriber base and an active distro with over 80 pamphlets and zines, books, videos, and backissues. But *Green Anarchy's* meat (I'll use that term, as vegans and vegetarians are a dying breed, most likely due to malnutrition) was the diverse, and often contradicting, selections of essays attempting to question, challenge, dissect, and dismantle, not only civilization itself, but how we resist it, and how we heal from its devastating means of domestication. Each issue was put out, not as a mere position paper or thesis, but more as a forum for dialogue and critique, and of questions...all contributing to the momentum against civilization. (Note: Although our original website is gone, you can now view all back issues of *Green Anarchy* as pdfs online at: www.greenanarchy.anarchyplanet.org.)

The Type Has Been Set: What's in the Book?

Well, the book was something we had always planned to do, but only after some years of distance from the project (and the ass arson inflicted on us by our good buddy who also happens to publish anarchist books) were we able to assemble this compilation. Selecting the articles was a tough process, and much has been left out (both intentionally and accidently), but we attempt to offer a solid cross-section of what we published over the seven years as an active collective. We could have produced an anthology ten times this size, but chose instead to provide a more theoretical framework, rather than trying to re-produce the magazine or merely regurgitate everything we had done. Here our primary focus was on material unavailable anywhere else. We also chose to organize the book along general subjects, creating thematic sections in which essays could work with each other and add more context, rather than simple chronological presentation. In "So Vast The Prison: Civilization and Submission", we attempt to grasp the totality of the situation we are up against, how deep it really penetrates, and look to outline the nature of the system that brutally defines our world. This section includes the primer we collectively created for issue #17, "What Is Green Anarchy?". Next, "A Dark and Hungry God Arises: Technology and Its Captives" tackles a fundamental property of civilization, its technocratic logic, not merely from a simple physical perspective, but how the perpetually- developing process of technology creates individual and social conditions of dependence, servitude, and alienation. This is

most eloquently presented in our interview with filmmaker Godfrey Reggio. Of course, *Green Anarchy*'s open hostility towards the Left was always a prominent feature in our magazine, but the term "Post-Left" never seemed to quite define our perspective, as our readers may remember in essays in "Anti-Left Anarchy: Hunting Leftism With Intent To Kill", which includes a number of articles that were featured in our primer from issue #15, "The Nature of the Left". In the section "As The World Burns: The Ongoing Death March of Civilization" we included reflections on the overwhelming unhealth, toxicity, and emptiness that surrounds us in the progressive delusion of the abysmal nightmare of modernity, and its global attack on the biosphere. Yes, we profoundly acknowledge the war that has raged on for 10,000 years, one that is inflicted daily....and we chose freedom. We clearly decided long ago not to hide our noggins in the sand, but to confront the enemy head on, and this is where *Green Anarchy* shines! Perhaps more then any other aspect of our project, our unflinching call for action will be our legacy. While we reported extensively in each issue the ongoing global resistance, we also gave much space to strategy, tactics, targets, and creative-destruction, as you will read in "The Age of Obedience is Over: Attacking the Mega-Machine". But fighting is only one aspect of reclaiming our lives. Just as vital is to become whole again, healing from the deeply inflicted scars, and being able to dream again. Liberation is not solely an external and physical matter, but also an internal and psychological one, allowing ourselves to trust our instincts, to be ourselves, unhindered by the self degradation that is built into domestication. Whether we refer to it as decolonization or rewilding, in the chapters "A Call for Escape Routes: Decolonizing Our Minds and Lives" and "Dreams with Sharp Teeth: Anarchic Flights of Fancy" we look at (and are inspired by) some perspectives and poetic concepts on the life-long project of getting free. For better or for worse, whether you like it or not, this is all contained in this book. Our hope over the next few years is to also publish smaller pocket companion books that can expand on certain themes, specific subjects, or sections which have been omitted from this compilation. Again, this is no complete work, but a snapshot of what three of the *Green Anarchy* Collective's longest-term editors remember and think of as a project that was incredibly meaningful to us, and we hope to anyone who recognizes the maddening reality we inhabit, and those who wish to live free!

What the Future Holds...

As this book goes to print, I am living rurally as a decivilizing papa and selftitled cosmic-anarchist-cowboy (we won't go into that one...for now) who is still actively undermining authority, continually rewilding, and perpetually exploring the possibilities of a life beyond the civilized reality...but one who is currently extremely focused on the place I am connected to, and taking things on a human and face-to-face, less mediated scale, with the wonderfully unpredictable vision of a future full of collapse ahead. I'm delighted to once again collaborate with my mischievous cohorts over our mutual

disgust of civilization and desire for a dramatically and fundamentally different world. I hope our previous endeavors as the *Green Anarchy* Collective will continue to inspire both critical thought, and the action that stems from it.

For the Destruction of Civilization And the Reconnection to Life!

Felonious Skunk (one of the numerous aliases and pen names used by one rotten member of the *Green Anarchy Collective*)

I Suppose It Was Worth A Shot

My involvement in *Green Anarchy* had one foot in personal oppression and the other in dreams. For years I'd resisted the Mega-Machine's attempts to absorb me into its lifeless economic rituals, while I also watched (and attempted to stop) the industrial juggernaut's ravaging of the planet. Fed up with a techno-industrial system that measured the worth of my life in dollars and cents and sickened by the inadequacy of the mainstream environmental movement, I saw *Green Anarchy* as an unprecedented opportunity to raise a little hell and (perhaps) exact some vengeance on my enslavers.

Conceived from the premise that what the planet needs is fewer "activists" and more warriors, *Green Anarchy* was essentially a journal of war—an openended richter scale that charted the civilized-decay curve and chronicled the triumphs and tragedies of anarchist resistance to the World System. Very quickly, it also evolved into a fairly substantive theoretical journal, one that came to reflect the growing edge of the far frontiers of anti-political thought. For many anarchists in North America, *Green Anarchy* seemed to appear out of nowhere like a volatile wind—ferocious and new, unapologetic and in league with wildness—but the truth is that the ideas advocated in its pages were ones that had been gestating within anarchist thought for quite some time—ideas that were just waiting to be unleashed by the right crew of troublemakers.

Our conception of Anarchy was explicitly **anti-civilization**, and was deeply informed by what some call anarcho-primitivism. None of us were excessively ideological about any of this, but primitivism (or at least the primitivist critique) was our theoretical point of departure and beyond that we were just following the murmurings of our blood through the new territory our eyes saw in untamed visions and our ears heard in spoken myth whispers. Consumed with the excitement of cascading new ideas, the first several years of producing *Green Anarchy* were great fun for all involved, and had about them a freshness that was like the beginning of the world: new friends, new clans, new dreams that were always going forward and constantly eating their own boundaries, and such a profound belief in what we were conjuring up on paper that it started to actually manifest as a local (and West Coast) reality. In some ways, we seemed to be in tune with the zeitgeist of that particular moment and from about 2000-2007 there was a genuinely strong green anarchist milieu spread out across North and South America, Europe, Australia, and even parts of Asia like a subversive reticulum. Eventually the toxicity of our little microcosm (Eugene) drained the joy out of what we were doing, but those first few years really felt like anarchy in action—and I have fond memories of all the mischief we caused (and got away with).

But even when I was happily immersed in the game we were playing, I never deluded myself into thinking that anti-civilization critique possessed the magical formula for planetary-wide cultural transformation. Sure, I knew we could dramatize the issues of the day (and the last ten thousand years) in the pages of *Green Anarchy*, but we certainly weren't going to resolve them! Despite the passionate enthusiasm that I felt for our publishing efforts, I was realistic enough to know that the enormously complex problems caused by civilization can't be thoroughly dissected within the pages of a magazine article and humble enough to know that we didn't have the solutions anyway. In a way, I saw the writings and perspectives that appeared in *Green Anarchy* more as the desperate and frenzied screams of prisoners, the screams of people who know they are trapped but who are still determined to strain against their cages to the bitter end. I was never personally out to establish new canons or precepts, and always regarded the primitivist critique as a **diagnostic**, rather than a **prescriptive,** tool. I used primitivism as a critical tool to decode the system we live under and peel away the shallow gloss and illusory trappings of civilization, but I always identified as an **anarchist**, first and foremost—though I was largely in agreement with my primitivist colleagues in matters of analysis.

Our Accomplishments?

Well, for a period of about six or seven years "green anarchist" became a phrase in vogue, but subcultural trends being what they are, it remains to be seen what the lasting effects of this seepage into the anarchist collective consciousness will be. And although early issues of *Green Anarchy* were pure adver-prop, we eventually built up a roster of regularly contributing field anchors in regions ranging from Greece to Uruguay to Chile—and in the process became a fairly competent source of underground news reporting and counter-information.

Our uncompromising critiques of Progress, technology, and the ideology of production provided a much-needed alternative (one might say: **circuit breaker**) to the claptrap and gobbledygook of the falsely-oppositional Left— and I'm sure they had nightmares over our existence and staying power. Our raucous vulgarity and irreverent black humor was also almost certainly too much for the anarcho-leftists who consider all their 19th-century positions sacred and inviolate, and as for liberals....well, let's just say they would have passed laws against us publishing if they had the power to do so!

When the opportunity to begin publishing *Green Anarchy* fell into our laps, one conscious decision we made was to rebel against the aesthetic blandness usually associated with journals of social critique, making an effort to challenge even the physical structure of tabloids and journals—through explosive artistic expression that opened up an unexplored plain in the often timid, cautious, and unimaginative anarchist press.

Stylistically, we tried to use images that would shatter the foundations of the reader's existence, images that assisted in a generalized transmission of a **state of mind,** rather than the transmission of mere facts—almost like animated hieroglyphs fashioning a narrative that moved in a mythological, dream-like atmosphere. Actually,

we knocked ourselves out trying to be innovative and experimental in our formatting, as we were determined to break new ground and defy genre expectations—and if we failed at times it's only to be expected, because it isn't an experiment if there's no risk involved. In the end, we probably confounded some of our readers, delighted others, and outraged and repulsed many more, but I think it's fair to say that *Green Anarchy* was never a tedious, pulp-paper sleeping pill!

For me, one of the most important aspects of the primitivist critique is its unflinching examination of **domestication**, but now, years later, as I look back on what we were trying to accomplish with *Green Anarchy*, I've come to feel that even primitivists underestimate the advanced **degree** of domestication at work in our species—and the widespread mass stupidity it engenders. Paul Shepard, a pioneer in the field of "human ecology", wrote extensively on the domestication process and once made this observation:

Domestic animals, who live in restricted environments, are not stircrazy and malnourished because they are the survivors of hundreds of generations of captives. They are the well-padded drudges, insulated by blunted minds and coarsened bodies against the uniformity of the barnyard, having achieved independence from the demands of style by having no style, coming to terms with the grey world of captivity by arriving at the lowest common denominator of survival.

Shepard makes it clear that these reflections apply equally to domesticated humans, who have become physically frail, technologically dependent, neurotic, psychologically tormented, mangled by repressional mechanisms (such as depression), comfortable in their misery, and are now saddled with an almost constitutional stupidity—all the result of the degenerative domestication process. This is an **endemic** condition, one that is both caused by civilization and also reproduces the desire and actual **need** for it among large portions of the human population. The literature on drug and alcohol addiction also provides some useful models for understanding the addictive relationship civilized humans have with the System (even though it's killing them)—and why the prospect of a radical break (let's be honest here) is only appealing to a small minority.

Taking all these factors into account, I think it's exceedingly unlikely that we'll ever see a wide-scale, **voluntary** abandonment of civilized life-ways (such a shift is more liable to be brought on by devastating and calamitous circumstances). Still, if and when large numbers of people start reacting to the catastrophe of civilization in an appropriate fashion, then I'll be there to participate in the carnival of destruction, but until then, de-civilizing **myself** is an ongoing and daily process—and it keeps me plenty busy.

Staplecide

Introduction

Green Anarchy was begun in Eugene, Oregon in 2000 by Saxon Wood. After the first four issues, Wood handed the publication over to a group of rowdier, less-traditional anarchists. From issue #5 through #25, 2001–2008, it matured into an explicitly anti-civilization zine. The subtitle, "An Anti-Civilization Journal of Theory and Action," was added as of *GA*

#13, but that orientation was actually apparent from the new editors' very first issues.

I came on board after about a year. Writing, editing, fundraising, and mailing the zine were my main emphases. *GA* had at one time, briefly, seven editors; the usual number, as I recall, was four.

A couple of things stand out for me. The hostility from the Left, and from leftist anarchists in particular, was pronounced. *GA* became a substantial anarchist periodical, easily one of the most important in English, world-wide. And yet AK Press, noted "anarchist" publisher/distributor, refused to ever carry it. This was shocking, given the number of liberal, authoritarian, and other nonanarchist titles AK has always stocked. This outfit, like others on the left, was clearly threatened by our effort—especially our critiques of mass society/mass production, Progress, industrial life and the like, as well as of domestication/ civilization.

The other thing, the other side of the coin, one could say, was *GA*'s popularity, its levels of support from seemingly growing numbers of folks who saw the importance of the radical questioning that *GA* represented. It wasn't very long before each issue cost about $6,000; $3,000 for printing and

$3,000 for our quite extensive domestic and overseas mailing list, including a free copy to every prisoner who requested a subscription. What seemed an enormous sum to us was somehow always covered, as if by magic. There was a desire for *GA* and widespread backup from quite a number of folks.

As the decade moved along past the anarchy heyday in Eugene, 1998–2001, *GA* grew to almost 100 pages per issue. But it appeared less often, moving from quarterly publication to two issues a year. In 2008 the last four of us editors called it quits.

But green anarchy/anti-civ/anarcho-primitivism certainly hasn't gone away. On the West Coast new zines like *Blackout* and *Eco-Anarchies* are in the works or have already made their appearance. They are not identical to *GA* fortunately, but certainly anti-civilization in outlook. And *Species Traitor* has resumed, with a most impressive issue #5.

Green Anarchy is dead, long live green anarchy!

John Zerzan

Civilization

So Vast the Prison: Civilization and Submission

The popular concept of "man's rise to civilization" projects for the mind's eye a dark struggle with a primordial past, in which men were constantly threatened by a hostile world, followed by the greater margin of safety and enlightened institutions of civilization. Pre-historic man stands sentenced to the limbo of savagery by a conventional historical view which is seldom questioned. Briefly, this view holds that the development of agriculture made it possible for people to abandon the nomadic and uncertain life of hunting and gathering, and that they gladly did so, becoming sedentary. Human well-being was improved and society was stabilized by increasing man's security from starvation, disease, poverty, uncertainty about the future, and the danger of wild animals, storms, and other natural forces. Because food-growing supported more people, the population rapidly increased. The agricultural revolution, it is said, made civilized institutions such as art and religion possible, framed ethic and moral principles, and forged relations among men based on compassion and respect for the rights of the individual.

The objection I raise to these statements is simple: they are not true. For every man whose life was improved by that momentous Neolithic revolution, hundreds lost health, freedom, and social dignity. Because a fortunate few controlled the recording of history, civilized culture became a propaganda machine for itself, which easily manipulated the resentments of peasants and, by redirecting their distorted lives, helped rationalize the genocide of hunter-gatherers on agriculture's enlarging frontier. It is a tragedy euphemistically called historical destiny, economic progress, or the inexorable surge of the political state. —Paul Shepard

The environmental movement in North America—as well as internationally—is largely shooting in the dark and has yet to produce a formidable critique that coherently addresses the roots of global omnicide. Their journals record the mechanics of the System's environmental atrocities in the minutest detail, but they're still afraid to make the obvious connections and remain attached to liberalism's timid, lying morality. With asses glued to their armchairs, these eco-liberals and their narrow outlook continue to advocate superficial "solutions"—like the lowering of pollution levels through laws and minor reforms—"solutions" translated into political terms that only criticize the excesses of capitalism and its commercialization of nature, but never get to the ugly heart of the matter. At *Green Anarchy* we sought to examine the real nature of the catastrophe and weren't hesitant to ask the hard questions: Is this ongoing crisis

really limited to "capitalism", as the Left would have us believe? What **is** the nature of the System we live under and rail against? What **are** Systems and are they inevitable necessities of civilization? Is civilization synonymous with Systems, and the constraint and suppression of the individual? And with ecological warfare?

The wallpaper and stage scenery might vary from nation to nation, but ultimately it's **civilization** that is maintaining this unified reign of misery. Our goals in publishing *Green Anarchy* were to produce a journal that would serve as both an offensive and defensive weapon in this war on life—as well as a compass to help readers navigate their way through this battlezone—and to try to rescue the inheritance stolen from us by the thieves of life centuries ago. We're all part of an old story and involved in it are the endless horrors inflicted behind the skillful shield of religion and law, the vivisection of the human psyche, desertification, forced relocations, and generations of resistance, but to cast light on our situation and make it lucid we need to give a name to our pain—and that name is **civilization.**

What Is Green Anarchy?

An introduction to anti-civilization
anarchist thought and practice the Green Anarchy Collective

This primer is not meant to be the "defining principles" for a green anarchist "movement", nor an anti-civilization manifesto. It is a look at some of the basic ideas and concepts that collective members share with each other, and with others who identify as green anarchists. We understand and celebrate the need to keep our visions and strategies open, and always welcome discussion. We feel that every aspect of what we think and who we are constantly needs to be challenged and remain flexible if we are to grow. We are not interested in developing a new ideology, nor perpetuating a singular world-view. We also understand that not all green anarchists are specifically anti-civilization (but we do have a hard time understanding how one can be against all domination without getting to its roots: civilization itself). At this point, however, most who use the term "green anarchist" do indict civilization and all that comes along with it (domestication, patriarchy, division of labor, technology, production, representation, alienation, objectification, control, the destruction of life, etc). While some would like to speak in terms of direct democracy and urban gardening, we feel it is impossible and undesirable to "green up" civilization and/or make it more "fair". We feel that it is important to move towards a radically decentralized world, to challenge the logic and mindset of the death-culture, to end all mediation in our lives, and to destroy all the institutions and physical manifestations of this nightmare. We want to become uncivilized. In more general terms, this is the trajectory of green anarchy in thought and practice.

Anarchy vs Anarchism

One qualifier that we feel is important to begin with is the distinction between "anarchy" and "anarchism". Some will write this off as merely semantics or trivial, but for most post-left and anti-civilization anarchists, this differentiation is important. While anarchism can serve as an important historical reference point from which to draw inspiration and lessons, it has become too systematic, fixed, and ideological...everything anarchy is not. Admittedly, this has less to do with anarchism's social/political/philosophical orientation, and more to do with those who identify as anarchists. No doubt, many from our anarchist lineage would also be disappointed by this trend to solidify what should always be in flux. The early self-identified anarchists (Proudhon, Bakunin, Berkman, Goldman, Malatesta, and the like) were responding to their specific contexts, with their own specific motivations and desires. Too often, contemporary anarchists see these individuals as representing the boundaries of anarchy, and create a W.W.B.D.

[What Would Bakunin Do (or more correctly– Think)] attitude towards anarchy, which is tragic and potentially dangerous. Today, some who identify as "classical" anarchists refuse to accept any effort in previously uncharted territory within anarchism (ie. Primitivism, Post-Leftism, etc) or trends which have often been at odds with the rudimentary workers' mass movement approach (ie. Individualism, Nihilism, etc). These rigid, dogmatic, and extremely uncreative anarchists have gone so far as to declare that anarchism is a very specific social and economic methodology for organizing the working class. This is obviously an absurd extreme, but such tendencies can be seen in the ideas and projects of many contemporary anarcho-leftists (anarcho-sydicalists, anarcho-communists, platformists, federationists). "Anarchism", as it stands today, is a far-left ideology, one which we need to get beyond. In contrast, "anarchy" is a formless, fluid, organic experience embracing multi-faceted visions of liberation, both personal and collective, and always open. As anarchists, we are not interested in forming a new framework or structure to live under or within, however "unobtrusive" or "ethical" it claims to be. Anarchists cannot provide another world for others, but we can raise questions and ideas, try to destroy all domination and that which impedes our lives and our dreams, and live directly connected with our desires.

What is Primitivism?

While not all green anarchists specifically identify as "Primitivists", most acknowledge the significance that the primitivist critique has had on anti-civilization perspectives. Primitivism is simply an anthropological, intellectual, and experiential examination of the origins of civilization and the circumstances that led to this nightmare we currently inhabit. Primitivism recognizes that for most of human history, we lived in face-to-face communities in balance with each other and our surroundings, without formal hierarchies and institutions to mediate and control our lives. Primitivists wish to learn from the dynamics at play in the past and in contemporary gatherer-hunter/ primitive societies (those that have existed and currently exist outside of civilization). While some primitivists wish for an immediate and complete return to gatherer-hunter band societies, most primitivists understand that an acknowledgement of what has been successful in the past does not unconditionally determine what will work in the future. The term "Future Primitive," coined by anarchoprimitivist author John Zerzan, hints that a synthesis of primitive tech- niques and ideas can be joined with contemporary anarchist concepts and motivations to create healthy, sustainable, and egalitarian decentralized situations. Applied non-ideologically, anarcho-primitivism can be an important tool in the de-civilizing project.

What is Civilization?

Green anarchists tend to view civilization as the logic, institutions, and physical apparatus of domestication, control, and domination. While different individuals and groups prioritize distinct aspects of civilization (ie primitivists typically focus on the question of origins, feminists primarily focus on the roots and manifestations of patriarchy, and insurrectionary anarchists mainly focus on the destruction of contemporary institutions of control), most green anarchists agree that it is the underlying problem

or root of oppression, and it needs to be dismantled. The rise of civilization can roughly be described as the shift over the past 10,000 years from an existence within and deeply connected to the web of life, to one separated from and in control of the rest of life. Prior to civilization there generally existed ample leisure time, considerable gender autonomy and equality, a non-destructive approach to the natural world, the absence of organized violence, no mediating or formal institutions, and strong health and robusticity. Civilization inaugurated warfare, the subjugation of women, population growth, drudge work, concepts of property, entrenched hierarchies, and virtually every known disease, to name a few of its devastating derivatives. Civilization begins with and relies on an enforced renunciation of instinctual freedom. It cannot be reformed and is thus our enemy.

Biocentrism vs Anthropocentrism

One way of analyzing the extreme discord between the worldviews of primitive and earth-based societies and of civilization, is that of biocentric vs anthropocentric outlooks. Biocentrism is a perspective that centers and connects us to the earth and the complex web of life, while anthropocentrism, the dominant world view of western culture, places our primary focus on human society, to the exclusion of the rest of life. A biocentric view does not reject human society, but does move it out of the status of superiority and puts it into balance with all other life forces. It places a priority on a bioregional outlook, one that is deeply connected to the plants, animals, insects, climate, geographic features, and spirit of the place we inhabit. There is no split between ourselves and our environment, so there can be no objectification or otherness to life. Where separation and objectification are at the base of our ability to dominate and control, interconnectedness is a prerequisite for deep nurturing, care, and understanding. Green anarchy strives to move beyond human-centered ideas and decisions into a humble respect for all life and the dynamics of the ecosystems that sustain us.

A Critique of Symbolic Culture

Another aspect of how we view and relate to the world that can be problematic, in the sense that it separates us from a direct interaction, is our shift towards an almost exclusively symbolic culture. Often the response to this questioning is, "So, you just want to grunt?" Which might be the desire of a few, but typically the critique is a look at the problems inherent with a form of communication and comprehension that relies primarily on symbolic thought at the expense (and even exclusion) of other sensual and unmediated means. The emphasis on the symbolic is a movement from direct experience into mediated experience in the form of language, art, number, time, etc Symbolic culture filters our entire perception through formal and informal symbols. It's beyond just giving things names, but having an entire relationship to the world that comes through the lens of representation. It is debatable as to whether humans are "hard-wired" for symbolic thought or if it developed as a cultural change or adaptation, but the symbolic mode of expression and understanding is certainly limited and its over-dependence leads to objectification, alienation, and a tunnel-vision of perception.

Many green anarchists promote and practice getting in touch with and rekindling dormant or underutilized methods of interaction and cognition, such as touch, smell, and telepathy, as well as experimenting with and developing unique and personal modes of comprehension and expression.

The Domestication of Life

Domestication is the process that civilization uses to indoctrinate and control life according to its logic. These time-tested mechanisms of subordination include: taming, breeding, genetically modifying, schooling, caging, intimidating, coercing, extorting, promising, governing, enslaving, terrorizing, murdering...the list goes on to include almost every civilized social interaction. Their movement and effects can be examined and felt throughout society, enforced through various institutions, rituals, and customs. It is also the process by which previously nomadic human populations shift towards a sedentary or settled existence through agriculture and animal husbandry. This kind of domestication demands a totalitarian relationship with both the land and the plants and animals being domesticated. Whereas in a state of wildness, all life shares and competes for resources, domestication destroys this balance. The domesticated land-scape (eg pastoral lands/agricultural fields, and to a lesser degree—horticulture and gardening) necessitates the end of open sharing of the resources that formerly existed; where once "this was everyone's," it is now "mine".

In Daniel Quinn's novel *Ishmael*, he explains this transformation from the "Leavers" (those who accepted what the earth provided) to that of the "Takers" (those who demanded from the earth what they wanted). This notion of ownership laid the foundation for social hierarchy as property and power emerged. Domestication not only changes the ecology from a free to a totalitarian order, it enslaves the species that are domesticated. Generally the more an environment is controlled, the less sustainable it is. The domestication of humans themselves involves many trade-offs in comparison to the foraging, nomadic mode. It is worth noting here that most of the shifts made from nomadic foraging to domestication were not made autonomously, they were made by the blade of the sword or barrel of the gun. Whereas only 2000 years ago the majority of the world population were gatherer-hunters, it is now .01%. The path of domestication is a colonizing force that has meant myriad pathologies for the conquered population and the originators of the practice. Several examples include a decline in nutritional health due to over-reliance on non-diverse diets, almost 40-60 diseases integrated into human populations per domesticated animal (influenza, the common cold, tuberculosis, etc), the emergence of surplus which can be used to feed a population out of balance and which invariably involves property and an end to unconditional sharing.

The Origins and Dynamics of Patriarchy

Toward the beginning in the shift to civilization, an early product of domestication is patriarchy: the formalization of male domination and the development of institutions which reinforce it. By creating false gender distinctions and divisions between men and women, civilization, again, creates an "other" that can be objectified, controlled, dominated, utilized, and commodified. This runs parallel to the domestication of plants for

25

agriculture and animals for herding, in general dynamics, and also in specifics like the control of reproduction. As in other realms of social stratification, roles are assigned to women in order to establish a very rigid and predictable order, beneficial to hierarchy. Woman come to be seen as property, no different then the crops in the field or the sheep in the pasture. Ownership and absolute control, whether of land, plants, animals, slaves, children, or women, is part of the established dynamic of civilization. Patriarchy demands the subjugation of the feminine and the usurpation of nature, propelling us toward total annihilation. It defines power, control and dominion over wildness, freedom, and life. Patriarchal conditioning dictates all of our interactions; with ourselves, our sexuality, our relationships to each other, and our relationship to nature. It severely limits the spectrum of possible experience. The interconnected relationship between the logic of civilization and patriarchy is undeni- able; for thousands of years they have shaped the human experience on every level, from the institutional to the personal, while they have devoured life. To be against civilization, one must be against patriarchy; and to question patriarchy, it seems, one must also put civilization into question.

Division of Labor and Specialization

The disconnecting of the ability to care for ourselves and provide for our own needs is a technique of separation and disempowerment perpetuated by civilization. We are more useful to the system, and less useful to ourselves, if we are alienated from our own desires and each other through division of labor and specialization. We are no longer able to go out into the world and provide for ourselves and our loved ones the necessary nourishment and provisions for survival. Instead, we are forced into the production/ consumption commodity system to which we are always indebted. Inequities of influence come about via the effective power of various kinds of experts. The concept of a specialist inherently creates power dynamics and undermines egalitarian relationships. While the Left may sometimes recognize these concepts politically, they are viewed as necessary dynamics, to keep in check or regulate, while green anarchists tend to see division of labor and specialization as fundamental and irreconcilable problems, decisive to social relationships within civilization.

The Rejection of Science

Most anti-civilization anarchists reject science as a method of understanding the world. Science is not neutral. It is loaded with motives and assumptions that come out of, and reinforce, the catastrophe of dissociation, disempowerment, and consuming deadness that we call "civilization." Science assumes detachment. This is built into the very word "observation." To "observe" something is to perceive it while distancing oneself emotionally and physically, to have a one-way channel of "information" moving from the observed thing to the "self," which is defined as not a part of that thing. This death-based or mechanistic view is a religion, the dominant religion of our time. The method of science deals only with the quantitative. It does not admit values or emotions, or the way the air smells when it's starting to rain—or if it deals with these things, it does so by transforming them into numbers, by turning oneness with the

smell of the rain into abstract preoccupation with the chemical formula for ozone, turning the way it makes you feel into the intellectual idea that emotions are only an illusion of firing neurons. Numbers themselves are not truth but a chosen style of thinking. We have chosen a habit of mind that focuses our attention into a world removed from reality, where nothing has quality or awareness or a life of its own. We have chosen to transform the living into the dead. Careful-thinking scientists will admit that what they study is a narrow simulation of the complex real world, but few of them notice that this narrow focus is self-feeding, that it has built technological, economic, and political systems that are all working together, which suck our reality in on itself. As narrow as the world of numbers is, scientific method does not even permit all numbers—only those numbers which are reproducible, predictable, and the same for all observers. Of course reality itself is not reproducible or predictable or the same for all observers. But neither are fantasy worlds derived from reality. Science doesn't stop at pulling us into a dream world—it goes one step further and makes this dream world a nightmare whose contents are selected for predictability and controllability and uniformity. All surprise and sensuality are vanquished. Because of science, states of consciousness that cannot be reliably disposed are classified as insane, or at best "non-ordinary," and excluded. Anomalous experience, anomalous ideas, and anomalous people are cast off or destroyed like imperfectly-shaped machine components. Science is only a manifestation and locking in of an urge for control that we've had at least since we started farming fields and fencing animals instead of surfing the less predictable (but more abundant) world of reality, or "nature." And from that time to now, this urge has driven every decision about what counts as "progress", up to and including the genetic restructuring of life.

The Problem of Technology

All green anarchists question technology on some level. While there are those who still suggest the notion of "green" or "appropriate" technology and search for rationales to cling to forms of domestication, most reject technology completely. Technology is more than wires, silicon, plastic, and steel. It is a complex system involving division of labor, resource extraction, and exploitation for the benefit of those who implement its process. The interface with and result of technology is always an alienated, mediated, and distorted reality. Despite the claims of postmodern apologists and other technophiles, technology is not neutral. The values and goals of those who produce and control technology are always embedded within it. Technology is distinct from simple tools in many regards. A simple tool is a temporary usage of an element within our immediate surroundings used for a specific task. Tools do not involve complex systems which alienate the user from the act. Implicit in technology is this separation, creating an unhealthy and mediated experience which leads to various forms of authority. Domination increases every time a new "timesaving" technology is created, as it necessitates the construction of more technology to support, fuel, maintain and repair the original technology.

This has led very rapidly to the establishment of a complex technological system that seems to have an existence independent from the humans who created it. Discarded by-products of the technological society are polluting both our physical and our psychological environments. Lives are stolen in service of the Machine and the toxic effluent of the technological system's fuels—both are choking us. Technology is now replicating itself, with something resembling a sinister sentience. Technological society is a planetary infection, propelled forward by its own momentum, rapidly ordering a new kind of environment: one designed for mechanical efficiency and technological expansionism alone. The technological system methodically destroys, eliminates, or subordinates the natural world, constructing a world fit only for machines. The ideal for which the technological system strives is the mechanization of everything it encounters.

Production and Industrialism

A key component of the modern techno-capitalist structure is industrialism, the mechanized system of production built on centralized power and the exploitation of people and nature. Industrialism cannot exist without genocide, ecocide, and colonialism. To maintain it, coercion, land evictions, forced labor, cultural destruction, assimilation, ecological devastation, and global trade are accepted as necessary, even benign. Industrialism's standardization of life objectifies and commodifies it, viewing all life as a potential resource. A critique of industrialism is a natural extension of the anarchist critique of the state because industrialism is inherently authoritarian. In order to maintain an industrial society, one must set out to conquer and colonize lands in order to acquire (generally) non-renewable resources to fuel and grease the machines. This colonialism is rationalized by racism, sexism, and cultural chauvinism. In the process of acquiring these resources, people must be forced off their land. And in order to make people work in the factories that produce the machines, they must be enslaved, made dependent, and otherwise subjected to the destructive, toxic, degrading industrial system. Industrialism cannot exist without massive centralization and specialization: Class domination is a tool of the industrial system that denies people access to resources and knowledge, making them helpless and easy to exploit. Furthermore, industrialism demands that resources be shipped from all over the globe in order to perpetuate its existence, and this globalism undermines local autonomy and self-sufficiency. It is a mechanistic worldview that is behind industrialism. This is the same world-view that has justified slavery, exterminations, and the subjugation of women. It should be obvious to all that industrialism is not only oppressive for humans, but that it is also fundamentally ecologically destructive.

Beyond Leftism

Unfortunately, many anarchists continue to be viewed, and view themselves, as part of the Left. This tendency is changing, as postleft and anti-civilization anarchists make clear distinctions between their perspectives and the bankruptcy of the socialist and liberal orientations. Not only has the Left proven itself to be a monumental failure in its objectives, but it is obvious from its history, contemporary practice, and ideological framework, that the Left (while presenting itself as altruistic and promoting

"freedom") is actually the antithesis of liberation. The Left has never fundamentally questioned technology, production, organization, representation, alienation, authoritarianism, morality, or Progress, and it has almost nothing to say about ecology, autonomy, or the individual on any meaningful level. The Left is a general term and can roughly describe all socialist leanings (from social democrats and liberals to Maoists and Stalinists) which wish to re-socialize "the masses" into a more "progressive" agenda, often using coercive and manipulative approaches in order to create a false "unity" or the creation of political parties. While the methods or extremes in implementation may differ, the overall push is the same, the institution of a collectivized and monolithic world-view based on morality.

Against Mass Society

Most anarchists and "revolutionaries" spend a significant portion of their time developing schemes and mechanisms for production, distribution, adjudication, and communication between large numbers of people; in other words, the functioning of a complex society. But not all anarchists accept the premise of global (or even regional) social, political, and economic coordination and interdependence, or the organization needed for their administration. We reject mass society for practical and philosophical reasons. First, we reject the inherent representation necessary for the functioning of situations outside of the realm of direct experience (completely decentralized modes of existence). We do not wish to run society, or organize a different society, we want a completely different frame of reference. We want a world where each group is autonomous and decides on its own terms how to live, with all interactions based on affinity, free and open, and non-coercive. We want a life which we live, not one which is run. Mass society brutally collides not only with autonomy and the individual, but also with the earth. It is simply not sustainable (in terms of the resource extraction, transportation, and communication systems necessary for any global economic system) to continue on with, or to provide alternative plans for a mass society. Again, radical de-centralization seems key to autonomy and providing non-hierarchical and sustain- able methods of subsistence.

Liberation vs Organization

We are beings striving for a deep and total break with the civilized order, anarchists desiring unrestrained freedom. We fight for liberation, for a de-centralized and unmediated relationship with our surroundings and those we love and share affinity with. Organizational models only provide us with more of the same bureaucracy, control, and alienation that we receive from the current set-up. While there might be an occasional good intention, the organizational model comes from an inherently paternalistic and distrusting mindset which seems contradictory to anarchy. True relationships of affinity come from a deep understanding of one another through intimate need-based relationships of day-today life, not relationships based on organizations, ideologies, or abstract ideas. Typically, the organizational model suppresses individual needs and desires for "the good of the collective" as it attempts to standardize both resistance and vision. From parties, to platforms, to federations, it seems that as the scale of

projects increase, the meaning and relevance they have for one's own life decrease. Organizations are means for stabilizing creativity, controlling dissent, and reducing "counter-revolutionary tangents" (as chiefly determined by the elite cadres or leadership). They typically dwell in the quantitative, rather than the qualitative, and offer little space for independent thought or action. Informal, affinity-based associations tend to minimize alienation from decisions and processes, and reduce mediation between our desires and our actions. Relationships between groups of affinity are best left organic and temporal, rather than fixed and rigid.

Revolution vs Reform

As anarchists, we are fundamentally opposed to government, and likewise, any sort of collaboration or mediation with the state (or any institution of hierarchy and control). This position determines a certain continuity or direction of strategy, historically referred to as revolution. This term, while warped, diluted, and co-opted by various ideologies and agendas, can still have meaning to the anarchist and anti-ideological praxis. By revolution, we mean the ongoing struggle to alter the social and political landscape in a fundamental way; for anarchists, this means its complete dismantling. The word "revolution" is dependent on the position from which it is directed, as well as what would be termed "revolutionary" activity. Again, for anarchists, this is activity which is aimed at the complete dissolving of power. Reform, on the other hand, entails any activity or strategy aimed at adjusting, altering, or selectively maintaining elements of the current system, typically utilizing the methods or apparatus of that system. The goals and methods of revolution cannot be dictated by, nor performed within, the context of the system. For anarchists, revolution and reform invoke incompatible methods and aims, and despite certain anarcho-liberal approaches, do not exist on a continuum. For anti-civilization anarchists, revolutionary activity questions, challenges, and works to dismantle the entire set-up or paradigm of civilization. Revolution is also not a far-off or distant singular event which we build towards or prepare people for, but instead, a life-way or practice of approaching situations.

Resisting the Mega-Machine

Anarchists in general, and green anarchists in particular, favor direct action over mediated or symbolic forms of resistance. Various methods and approaches, including cultural subversion, sabotage, insurrection, and political violence (although not limited to these) have been and remain part of the anarchist arsenal of attack. No one tactic can be effective in significantly altering the current order or its trajectory, but these methods, combined with transparent and ongoing social critique, are important. Subversion of the system can occur from the subtle to the dramatic, and can also be an important element of physical resistance. Sabotage has always been a vital part of anarchist activities, whether in the form of spontaneous vandalism (public or nocturnal) or through more highly illegal underground coordination in cell formation. Recently, groups like the Earth Liberation Front, a radical environmental group made up of autonomous cells targeting those who profit off of the destruction of the earth, have caused millions of dollars of damage to corporate outlets and offices, banks, tim-

ber mills, genetic research facilities, sport utility vehicles, and luxury homes. These actions, often taking the form of arson, along with articulate communiqués frequently indicting civilization, have inspired others to take action, and are effective means of not only bringing attention to environmental degradation, but also as deterrents to specific earth destroyers. Insurrectionary activity, or the proliferation of insurrectionary moments which can cause a rupture in the social peace in which people's spontaneous rage can be unleashed and possibly spread into revolutionary conditions, are also on the rise. The riots in Seattle in 1999, Prague in 2000, and Genoa in 2001, were all (in different ways) sparks of insurrectionary activity, which, although limited in scope, can be seen as attempts to move in insurrectionary directions and make qualitative breaks with reformism and the entire system of enslavement. Political violence, including the targeting of individuals responsible for specific activities or the decisions which lead to oppression, has also been a focus for anarchists historically. Finally, considering the immense reality and all-pervasive reach of the system (socially, politically, technologically), attacks on the techno-grid and infrastructure of the mega-machine are of interest to anti-civilization anarchists. Regardless of approaches and intensity, militant action coupled with insightful analysis of civilization is increasing.

The Need to be Critical

As the march towards global annihilation continues, as society becomes more unhealthy, as we lose more control over our own lives, and as we fail to create significant resistance to the death-culture, it is vital for us to be extremely critical of past "revolutionary" movements, current struggles, and our own projects. We cannot perpetually repeat the mistakes of the past or be blind to our own deficiencies. The radical environmental movement is filled with single-issued campaigns and symbolic gestures and the anarchist scene is plagued with leftist and liberal tendencies. Both continue to go through rather meaningless "activist" motions, rarely attempting to objectively assess their (in)effectiveness. Often guilt and self-sacrifice, rather than their own liberation and freedom, guide these social do-gooders, as they proceed along a course that has been plotted out by the failures before them. The Left is a festering sore on the ass of humanity, environmentalists have been unsuccessful at preserving even a fraction of wild areas, and anarchists rarely have anything provocative to say, let alone do. While some would argue against criticism because it is "divisive", any truly radical perspective would see the necessity of critical examination, in changing our lives and the world we inhabit. Those who wish to quell all debate until "after the revolution", to contain all discussion into vague and meaningless chatter, and to subdue criticism of strategy, tactics, or ideas, are going nowhere, and can only hold us back. An essential aspect to any radical anarchist perspective must be to put everything into question, certainly including our own ideas, projects, and actions.

Influences and Solidarity

The green anarchist perspective is diverse and open, yet it does contain some continuity and primary elements. It has been influenced by anarchists, primitivists, Luddites, insurrectionalists, Situationists, surrealists, nihilists, deep ecologists, bioregionalists,

eco-feminists, various indigenous cultures, anti-colonial struggles, the feral, the wild, and the earth. Anarchists, obviously, contribute the anti-authoritarian push, which challenges all power on a fundamental level, striving for truly egalitarian relationships and promoting mutual-aid communities. Green anarchists, however, extend ideas of non-domination to all of life, not just human life, going beyond the traditional anarchist analysis. From primitivists, green anarchists are informed with a critical and provocative look at the origins of civilization, so as to understand what this mess is and how we got here, to help inform a change in direction. Inspired by the Luddites, green anarchists rekindle an anti-technological/industrial direct action orientation. Insurrectionalists infuse a perspective which waits not for the fine-tuning of a crystalline critique, but identify and spontaneously attack current institutions of civilization which inherently bind our freedom and desire. Anti-civilization anarchists owe much to the Situationists, and their critique of the alienating commodity society, which we can break from by connecting with our dreams and unmediated desires. Nihilism's refusal to accept any of the current reality understands the deeply engrained unhealth of this society and offers green anarchists a strategy which does not necessitate offering visions for society, but instead focuses on its destruction. Deep ecology, despite its misanthropic tendencies, informs the green anarchist perspective with an understanding that the well-being and flourishing of all life is linked to the awareness of the inherent worth and intrinsic value of the non-human world independent of use value. Deep ecology's appreciation for the richness and diversity of life contributes to the realization that the present human interference with the non-human world is coercive and excessive, with the situation rapidly worsening. Bioregionalists bring the perspective of living within one's bioregion, and being intimately connected to the land, water, climate, plants, animals, and general patterns of their bioregion. Eco-feminists have contributed to the comprehension of the roots, dynamics, manifestations, and reality of patriarchy, and its effect on the earth, women in particular, and humanity in general. Recently, the destructive separation of humans from the earth (civilization) has probably been articulated most clearly and intensely by eco-feminists. Anti-civilization anarchists have been profoundly influenced by the various indigenous cultures and earth-based peoples throughout history and those who still currently exist. While we humbly learn and incorporate sustainable techniques for survival and healthier ways of interacting with life, it is important to not flatten or generalize native peoples and their cultures, and to respect and attempt to understand their diversity without co-opting cultural identities and characteristics. Solidarity, support, and attempts to connect with native and anti-colonial struggles, which have been the front-lines of the fight against civilization, are essential as we attempt to dismantle the death-machine. It is also important to understand that we, at some point, have all come from earth-based peoples forcibly removed from our connections with the earth, and therefore have a place within anti-colonial struggles. We are also inspired by the feral, those who have escaped domestication and have re-integrated with the wild. And, of course, the wild beings which make up this beautiful blue and green organism called Earth. It is also

important to remember that, while many green anarchists draw influence from similar sources, green anarchy is something very personal to each who identify or connect with these ideas and actions. Perspectives derived from one's own life experiences within the death-culture (civilization), and one's own desires outside the domestication process, are ultimately the most vivid and important in the uncivilizing process.

Rewilding and Reconnection

For most green/anti-civilization/primitivist anarchists, rewilding and reconnecting with the earth is a life project. It is not limited to intellectual comprehension or the practice of primitive skills, but instead, it is a deep understanding of the pervasive ways in which we are domesticated, fractured, and dislocated from our selves, each other, and the world, and the enormous and daily undertaking to be whole again. Rewilding has a physical component which involves reclaiming skills and developing methods for a sustainable co-existence, including how to feed, shelter, and heal ourselves with the plants, animals, and materials occurring naturally in our bioregion. It also includes the dismantling of the physical manifestations, apparatus, and infrastructure of civilization. Rewilding has an emotional component, which involves healing ourselves and each other from the 10,000 year-old wounds which run deep, learning how to live together in non-hierarchical and non-oppressive communities, and deconstructing the domesticating mindset in our social patterns. Rewilding involves prioritizing direct experience and passion over mediation and alienation, re-thinking every dynamic and aspect of our reality, connecting with our feral fury to defend our lives and to fight for a liberated existence, developing more trust in our intuition and being more connected to our instincts, and regaining the balance that has been virtually destroyed after thousands of years of patriarchal control and domestication. Rewilding is the process of becoming uncivilized.

For the Destruction of Civilization!

For the Reconnection to Life!

Operation Civilization

Sauri Igni

The War That Is All Wars

To secure ourselves against defeat lies in our own hands, but the opportunity of defeating our enemy is provided by the enemy itself. If we know the enemy and know our self we need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If we know our self, but not the enemy, for every victory gained we will also suffer a defeat. If we know neither the enemy nor our self, we will succumb in every battle. – Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

A Strategic Assessment of the Domestic(ated) Frontline

We are warriors committed to defeating our enemy—the totality of civilization—and reclaiming our lives as our own. The internalized systems of domestication: morals, rules, laws, orders—encoded into our psyche by parents, schools, religions, social norms, and spectacular illusions—are no longer (if they ever were) able to keep us in line. Force—decisive, violent, and often deadly—is the primary means used, by an ever-increasing array of military and paramilitary troops, to prevent us from attacking the ruling order we know is a mortal danger to all of life. Fearful of tables turned, the ruling class uses goon squads to attain, protect, and defend their tenuous positions of power and disappearing wealth. For most of us in the West, the daily face of that enforcement is the police: sheriffs, deputies, officers, Bobbies, peelers, cops, narcs, informants—pigs.

Pigs throughout the world have a clear and oft-repeated goal: to serve and protect—one they accomplish quite well. They serve and protect their own interests—particularly their interest in maintaining a position of authority and power, recreating the dominant order with every public contact. They serve and protect the machinery of civilization—the institutions, infrastructure, designers, maintainers, buttonpushers, and apologists—from the likes of us. They serve and protect bourgeois and elite class order from the criminalized individual of lower standing who refuses to conform, cooperate, contribute to the greater good, follow orders, fall in line, get with the program, play by the rules, *obey the law.*

Understanding civilization's frontline offense and defense is crucial to developing successful strategies for our engagement in this undeclared, 10,000-year über war—Operation Civilization. This study is intended as a strategic assessment of the pig

situation in present-day America. It looks at the origin, structure, focus, technology, and weaponry, as well as the social-political-economic apparatus inherent to the law and order system. Finally, it intends to highlight the always-present, ever-escalating, and often-violent resistance against the totality that requires an institutionalized and increasingly pervasive mechanism of control.

The Imperial Origins of Swine Fever

The history of civilization is the history of conquest—murder, rape, robbery, lies and wholesale destruction. It is the history of the domestication of all of Earth's inhabitants—starting with the human. As settled agricultural societies replaced nomadic hunter-gatherer and small-scale cultivating tribes, self-appointed patriarchs (and occasional matriarchs) battled—in the name of greed, glory, or God—for control of Everything. Rigid hierarchical order was enforced creating two classes of people—the rulers and the ruled, the master and slave, the haves and the have-nots, the rich and the poor, the civilized and the savage, and eventually—the righteous and the criminal. As new empires expanded their reach across the globe, defending their booty grew increasingly difficult. With both offensive and defensive armies constantly overextended, there were simply not enough loyal men left to enforce compliance within the conquered, but resistant, lower class.

Imperial Rome introduced the world to geopolitical divisions in the form of the city-state; and with a few more imaginary lines, they divided these areas into wards and precincts. This was done, in no small part, for the convenience of policing. Vigils of seven squads, each containing 1,000 freedmen, monitored the precincts for fire and other human disruptions to the social order. Three cohorts of police, under the control of the army, augmented the less-than-loyal freedmen guards. The emperors had their own squads, the Praetorian Guard, the personal bodyguards to the generals and the political henchmen of the emperors. The Guard carried out political assassinations, assisted in the ascension of new emperors, created their own strategic disorders, and eventually wielded the imperial power themselves. The Guard was of course eliminated. New controls were imposed on the new controllers and innovation—a harbinger of civilization—had arrived in force.

Armed with weapons, money, and God, imperialists spread their spectacular vision of civilization—obedience to the invisible (moral imperatives, religious dogma, imaginary lines drawn); discipline of the sword, truncheon, gallows, and especially of the marketplace; politics of identity and pocketbook; and cultural commodifica- tion—along with the means of enforcing this nightmare, everywhere they conquered.

In 9th century Britain, King Albert, in the face of growing internal strife and frequent incursions of competing empire-driven armies, divided the vast lands into sections called shires, to better force the "king's peace". This omnipresent version of peace is based on his Book of Laws—comprised of Christian morality (including the Ten Commandments)—and a need to criminalize, for the ruled, those acts important to

furthering the authority and power of the rulers. All peasant men of the shire were required to guard their tithing (area). They reported to a hundredman who was in turn commanded by the shire reeve, a local appointee of the King 'paid' through bribes, fines, and confiscations—of his own determination. This sheriff had to swear "... to keep the peace of our Lord the King well, and lawfully according to your powers, and shall arrest all those who shall make any contest, riot, debate or affray, in breaking of the said peace." This first politipig exists today, still as an elected or appointed political position whose primary responsibility is to serve and protect his position, followed by the responsibility for establishing the prevailing socioeconomic order through various methods of coercion.

...it is more enlightening to understand what can be called everyday forms of peasant resistance: foot dragging, dissimulation, feigned ignorance, false compliance, manipulation, flight, slander, theft, arson, sabotage, and isolated incidents of violence, including murder, passed off as CRIME. These forms of struggle stop well short of outright collective defiance, a strategy usually suicidal for the weak. While these kinds of resistance are often a form of individual protection or selfhelp, they are not trivial. They limit the imperial aspirations of lords, monarchs, colonialists, nationalistic parties, and dictatorships of the proletariat.

–Forrest D. Colburn, *Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* Feudalism was the predominant socioeconomic system in medieval times. Through right of noble birth, and rewards granted for conquering new territory, the landed gentry created fiefdoms and built heavily guarded manors while the newly landless peasants were indentured to their lords. William the Conqueror demanded greater centralized control of his empire and its inhabitants. While the sheriff still enforced local order, he now reported to the comes stabuler (master of the horse). This constable was essentially the local military representative of the crown. He too was officially unpaid, but, like the sheriff, he found ways to keep himself well fed. For the next 200 years, depending on the social and political climate, the law and order machine shifted between greater and less-centralized control. But, it always remained ineffective against the rabble that had not yet learned that to act against the crown and manor was to act against God himself. Those who rebelled openly—especially en masse—were likely to have someone "getting medieval on" them with the newest technologies of torture. Less detectable acts of resistance were more widespread—insurgents conducted a myriad of (mostly) individual acts to gain what was needed, or to just fuck with those who were destroying their life. Poaching—the act of the peasant asserting his/her traditional claim to the land's wood, water, food, and medicine—was common. If authorities encountered the poacher, other peasants acted in solidarity, often outnumbering the lawmen, who might find their cottages torched when they returned home. They were also beaten and often murdered for enforcing the foreign and unwelcome order. General non-compliance was used to mitigate the increasing demands for their pittance and labor, and for their unquestioning obedience. The struggle of the peasants to regain self-sufficiency and

their desire for more autonomy (implied in the direct and active resistance) formed the very basis of the pigs' existence.

Crime is the necessary condition of the very existence of the State, and it therefore constitutes its exclusive monopoly, from which it follows that the individual who dares commit a crime is guilty in a two-fold sense: first, he is guilty against human conscience, and, above all, he is guilty against the State in arrogating to himself one of its most precious privileges. –Mikhail Bakunin, *Ethics: Morality of the State*

The commons were being enclosed and traditionally-held lands stolen, all converted to private property. The peasants were increasingly forced to work for others in order to pay rents—on land they and their ancestors had occupied for centuries. An increasing number relocated to the new cities to slave for the new merchants. The ruling classes imposed rents, taxes, fines, fees, dues, and other economic bonds of wage-slavery, ensuring a steady income, and even steadier labor pool. By the early 13th century, over half the adult male population was working for wages in the urban factories of the growing merchant class or as laborers on the large farms of the lords of the manor. Together with the peasant and slave, the oppressed proletariat was ripening for revolt.

Other rebellions were fomenting as well. With the opportunity for greater wealth and power presenting itself in rising local and international trade and the newly recognized value of rents and land speculation, ranks of the nobility and merchants sought to limit the power and wealth of the crown. To temporarily thwart the inevitable, King John sealed the Magna Carta in 1215—a "charter of liberties". This document forms the basis of American law and includes such liberal deceptions as: no taxation without representation, trials by a jury of one's peers, punishments that fit the crime, and the most absurd lie, that no one is above the law.

Liberated from the threat of poverty by exhibiting loyalty to the masters and granted (or taken by the always-successful violent force) sufficient means to create the illusion of a more independent life, the merchant class began to create petty-kingdoms of their own— on and by the backs of the laboring class. While sharing the fear of the peasant class rebellion with the ruling class, they had their own special fear as well. The bourgeois were (and remain today) desperately afraid of losing the material wealth and prestige they gained through their own "hard work" (and no small amount of deceit, theft, and aristocratic loyalty payments) and being forced to return to the ranks of the non-special, barbaric, proletarian class.

With the ruling center in constant flux and disarray, a return to locally controlled protection and order was called for. In 1285, the part-time parish constabulary was augmented by the watch and guard system that required all able-bodied townsmen to take a turn protecting the closed village/town gates from sundown to sunrise. Using the Saxon hue and cry system, the watchmen alerted the residents who were required, under the threat of punishment, to join in the apprehension of 'criminals'—resistant, fellow members of the proletariat who liked to express their revolting joy under the cover of night.

By 1361, with the signing of the Justices of the Peace Act, centralized state control was re-established. Lords of the manor were given the authority to maintain order and law on behalf of the crown. With parish constables as their appointed agents, these justices of the peace (JPs), sought to stop the rabble from "stealing" food, wood, water, and land. Incarceration in newly built prisons, brutal physical punishment, and public killing rituals were broadly applied to even small infractions. In 1381, when the Parliament—meeting in secret out of fear of the exploited classes' reaction—proposed a new poll tax, the first major peasant revolt erupted in the streets of London. For three days built-up tensions were released in riotous splendor until quelled by the killers in the crown's army.

Following the many wars and power struggles for control of Europe of the 15th century, the 16th century saw increased rebellions against the loss of land and ability to make a livelihood without oppression. In 1549 thousands of peasants tore down hedges and fences that had enclosed the common land in Norfolk. 13,000 troops were called to stop the rebellion. Thousands of peasants were killed and injured and the leaders executed for treason. Murder by the State for treason, theft, and witchcraft was instituted; with the single largest day of execution occurring in 1649 when twenty-three men and one woman were killed for burglary and robbery.

Crime continued to rise as the poor and oppressed fought for sustenance and relief from abject poverty. Some were confused about whom to target and brutalized fellow wage-slaves. The creative types took advantage of the middle class naïveté and property theft became an independent business of its own. The 18th century marked the rapid creation of institutions designed to "encourage" civilized order. A reward program that offered £40 per thief captured was instituted and quickly became a new market for the innovative. Thieves set up other thieves and claimed the rewards. The "it takes a thief to catch a thief" mentality was born out of the desperate attempt to hang on to every material manifestation that defined the elite's social standing. Frequent working class riots led to the 1715 Riot Act; if 12 or more people gathered unlawfully or for purposes of disturbing the peace, a lawman would "read them the Riot Act". Those who had not dispersed an hour later would be guilty of a felony. Peasants began using disguises, including blackened faces, while poaching in the woods. This led to the 1723 Blacks Act which made disguises, while worn in the woods, a crime punishable by hanging to death (bet you'd like that, eh pigs?). In 1729 Thomas de Veil, a former soldier, became the first police commissioner in London, taking up office at #4 Bow Street and meting out severe sentences. Oliver Cromwell introduced a mercilessly savage mounted cavalry to enforce order in the busy streets of London, which were increasingly torn by economic uncertainty, deepening oppression, and continuous religious and laboring class struggles.

Exploration and colonization of the 'New World' may have been inspiring the adventuring nobility and speculative industrialists and merchant-capitalists at the end of this era, but it inspired only dread in the proletariat, as deportation to the new 'prison colonies' became the favored punishment for this increasingly criminalized class.

In 1748 Henry Fielding became the next police commissioner, promptly putting 15 men with pistols on the crowded streets. Induced with the payment of "blood money", these Bow Street Runners guaranteed their capitalist clients a fifteen-minute response to calls for help. These red-vested pigs served and protected the interests of the middle class for ninety years. The new bourgeoisie needed their own pigs to guard their new bourgeois neighborhoods and new bourgeois businesses. The West India Merchants funded the first large-scale private police force, the Thames River Police, to guard the busy port from looters. The fearful middle class also created private street patrols, paid with a percentage of recovered stolen property; establishing the bounty system and making theft doubly profitable. This community-supplied and unarmed force remained the norm in Britain until the end of the 18th century.

The situation was very different for the persistently resistant Irish colony where the communities preferred to supply constant, often violent resistance to English control instead of assisting in their own oppression. The first paid, highly organized, centralized, and militarized force was established with the Dublin Police Act of 1786. With the signing of the 1800 Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland the United Kingdom was official, but not welcomed gracefully by the original inhabitants of Ireland. In 1812, Robert Peel, a middle class Tory, was appointed Secretary for Ireland with a formal constabulary. This protestant force, whom the Irish rabble called peelers, was the paramilitary predecessor of the ever-mutating Swine Fever, serving and protecting the Reforming interests of the Empire.

Beginning in early 1811, textile workers began to meet in secret, at night, practicing tactics and maneuvers for an attack on the newly industrialized mills whose owners were cutting their already meager wages. By March, several attacks were occurring *every* night and were expanding to other factory-targets throughout Britain. Despite the offer of rewards and the deployment of four hundred new constables, the rebels—known as Luddites—maintained their pressure through early 1812. Frustrated by the continued, successful attacks, over 12,000 military troops were called into the target areas. The

Frame Breaking Act of February 1812 made industrial sabotage (from the sabot—a wooden shoe—thrown into the mill machinery to halt its operation) a capital crime. The Luddite response—an attack on a textile factory guarded by armed militia. They followed this attack a week later by killing a factory owner. On April 20th thousands of workers attacked another mill being protected by armed guards. Several workers were killed—three days later the factory owner's house was burned to the ground. Three days later a factory was burned. Four men were executed for the act, including a 12-year-old. By summer of 1812, twenty-three men were sentenced to death and thirteen transported to the prison colony in Australia for attacks on cotton mills. While attacks on the textile industry (continuing into 1817) did not stop the machinery, they proved that the wage-slaves were not only going to fight the oppression, but had the intelligence, creativity, decentralized organization, and popular proletariat support to

wage their own offensive and defensive campaigns. The capitalists whined and cried for more civil troops to serve and protect them.

Peel was promoted to Home Secretary and promptly established a public police system in London. The Metropolitan Police Act of 1829 established the first Office of Police, which was headed by two commissioners, Charles Rowan (son of an Irish landowner) and Richard Mayne (son of a JP). Within two weeks, a plan for a new force was presented (and swiftly enacted). The first official pigpen was organized like a military unit, including a strict hierarchical organization with six divisions (with headquarters); sections and beats (named thus for the cadence required for a street cop to complete his rounds in fifteen to twenty minutes, about 2.5 miles per hour); 1,000 candidates; a uniform design and manufacturer; a pay scale; a General Instruction Book written by a former Bow Street Runner; a weapon (truncheon); and communication system (a rattle). The recruits came from the working class; usually agricultural, but always from outside of London. These cops—so-named for their tactics and derived from the verb *caper*, meaning to abduct or nab—were traitors hated by other members of their class and were unceasingly threatened and attacked. When Secretary Peel developed a passion for the Sandy Back pigs found in Ireland, he began to breed them himself, creating the Tamworth pigs and a new name for his army. These paid and specialized forces were required to "maintain order, predictability, and continuity of *gesellschaft*"—a society of the corporation/of the common good. In 1830, the Swing Riots by farm workers in southern

England sought higher wages and the end to mechanization; nine people were executed and hundreds imprisoned. This year also marked the first murder of an official pig when a Division G cop was stabbed to death.

With the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act authorizing other urban areas to establish their own police forces and the County Police Act in 1839 giving Justices of the Peace full control over public forces in the rural areas, no corner of the British Isles was free from Swine Fever.

By 1840, a middle class revolution, inspired by the bourgeois revolution in the North American colonies, threatened an end to monarchical power in England in favor of an elitist democracy. Industrial-capitalist economics with its inherent backbreaking, timestealing, freedom-squashing, life-controlling mechanisms had nearly completed its replacement of the mercantile system. The peasant and wage-slave raged to break free, and attacked the bosses, lords, and cops with increasing fervor; and anarchists and socialists agitated for an end to the monarchy in favor of a classless society.

The forerunner of the modern police was fully established; organized and committed to serve and protect the domesticating order according to their masters' plan. Increasingly complex connections between the military, international police, federal cops, secret police, paramilitary police forces, private pigs, and volunteer citizen traitors enforcing this horror of Civilization were developing, just out-of-view. The Political Era of Swine Fever was just beginning, and the simple, land-based, relatively autonomous lives of the original inhabitants of Britain—gone forever. Or are they?

Part II

For a warrior to succeed, she must practice dissimulation and move only when real advantage can be gained. She ponders and deliberates before moving. Whether he moves alone or with others can only be determined by the circumstances. When on the move he is as rapid as the wind, compact as the forest. When she attacks she is like fire, falling like a thunderbolt. When he needs to stand strong he is as immovable as a mountain. Always their plans are kept dark and impenetrable as night. –Sun Tzu, *Art of War*

The sight, or other sense of a cop, induces a visceral reaction in most everyone, regardless of their actual illegality. This is one measure of the efficiency with which most have internalized the Civilized au- thority. Cops re-present this order, ensuring that we remember: we are watched; ranked according to a vague and massified set of criteria; and that our ability to fulfill our needs and desires is limited by the many forces Civilization brings to bear. As both symbol and enforcer, the pig serves to remind us of the many ways we deviate from the expectations of those whom they protect. It is the degree to which we have been assimilated/domesticated/civilized into the dominant order that influences our reaction to the pigs as well as the pigs' reaction to us.

The ruling classes of 19th century England saw themselves as lawful, moral, righteous, and specially endowed with a destiny to enlighten and transform the rest of the world. Consequently, they needed to envision and portray their new security forces as also having a measure of these qualities. Generally unconcerned with their own legal status, the elite required cops to enforce predictable behavior amongst the inferior. Then, as now, the nonor poorly assimilated often present their refusal in a manner that creates fear in those whom the cops serve and protect. If occasionally this servant and protector of the people had to issue a polite summons to one of their class, to address some minor infraction, it was, of course, annoying—but an annoyance one could deal with. Often their Bobbie was depicted as a rotund, somewhat dumb-looking, unarmed pig—more bluster than substance, more swagger than confidence.

This was NOT the Bobbie (or his cousin, Officer Friendly) the criminalized classes saw. The cops they encountered often expressed their own frustrations with the paradox they were presented with each time they took the beat—the unresolvable reality that they enforce an order that also requires them to be subservient, monitored, and controlled. Those who are designated as born-criminals and those not accepting this unnatural lifeway know, with *every* sense, that the cop and their ilk are a particular danger to anyone who chooses to go where no authoritarian can ever be free to go. Our reaction to the sight, feel, smell, sound, or other sense of a pig's too close presence, perhaps, indicates an instinct not yet suppressed—to fight or to flee, to survive and thrive. As the number of dissidents and the intensity of their resis- tance exceed manageable levels, police adopt more clearly military tactics to maintain order (and its main deviation from the military imperative—law). With its ever-expanding net of interlocking chains of command—police, soldiers, teachers, bureaucrats, priests, scien-

tists and so on, the Machine dictates strategies for commanding and controlling the unassimilated populations.

A strategic formula—employed by compliant controllers using flexible tactics prioritized and reordered as needed—was developed and improved over the centuries. The schema to expand Civilization remains—as yet—still viable, with technological improvements providing the main shift in corollary tactics. Applied by all the institutional automatons, the modus operandi is more or less as follows: *eliminate* (massacre, starve, exterminate, sicken); *provoke fear* (threaten, bully, make examples of, beat, brutalize); *identify* (classify, count, massify, demonize, criminalize); *infiltrate* (survey, comprehend, disrupt, divide); *assimilate* (convert, pacify, civilize, domesticate); *recruit* (induct, create traitors, provide replacements); *incarcerate* (on reserves and reservations, in ghettos, tent cities, hotspots, prisons, jobs); *educate* (indoctrinate, socialize, politicize, train); *enforce* (monitor, intimidate, control, roundup); *expropriate* (annex, seize, take over, confiscate, steal, possess). The multi-faceted, multi-fronted, and multi-jurisdictional at- tacks we're witnessing today are the hyperextension of the industrialcapitalist/imperial-colonial attacks of the 17th-19th centuries. The successes of that era are being applied and failures corrected on the technological-capitalist/ globalized-neocolonial stage. It is our challenge as anarchist/anti-civilization warriors to understand, target, eliminate, and stay safe from the mechanisms of this crippling death machine.

In the many European and American colonies of "occupation", "pacification", and "protection", paramilitary police forces are a key element in this war of global domination.

The Colonial Petri Dish

The British Empire
India: Identifying the Criminals
What was common to all these schools of thought [Platonic, Evangelical, Utilitarian, Romantic, Enlightened Despotism] was the supposition that it was Britain's mission to rule, and India's duty to submit; and that just as Indians were incapable of governing themselves, much less anyone else, so the British had been gifted with eminently good sense, courage, manliness, a sense of action, and active habits of thought to preside over the destinies of a nation far removed from their shores. –Vinay Lal, *Criminality and Colonial Anthropology*

The British East India Company ruled India for over one hundred years, expanding its control and markets in silk, tea, indigo, and opium, generating the capital necessary for expansion and for new estates, businesses, and political power back home. This was made easier by an earlier conqueror that had effectively divided the population into a religious-based, hierarchical (and completely internalized) system of order. This caste system (from casta, Portuguese for breed or race) fixed individuals to a specific position

and expectation depending on their ancestral lineage, skin color, religious practice, and occupation.

However, the task of assimilating indigenous and conquered peoples is never completely successful and there are always those who continue their attacks on the foreigners bent on confiscating their ancestral lands and who deny their ancient way of life. In India, these were called the Criminal Tribes, the many and varied nomadic peoples who were/ are collectivized and ordained as criminal because their *…ancestors were criminals from time immemorial who are themselves destined by the usage of caste to commit crime and whose dependents will be offenders against the law until the whole tribe is exterminated or accounted for in the manner of the thugs.*

The aforementioned Thugs (anglicized from *Thugee*) were a particular sub-caste of men and women, who used secretive means to identify, "befriend", strangle, rob, and bury wealthy travelers. Colonial police estimated that up to 40,000 were killed each year. This was of great concern to the Company and Crown whose personages (along with their Hindu and Muslim merchant/ political allies) were often on the roads exploring their new Jewel in the Crown. India's first police department, the Thugee and Dacoity (armed robbery) Department, employed ethnic profiling, surveillance, and native informants (classified according to reliability as "innocent/artless", "accomplice", "false", "spiteful", and the most desirable "honorable") and infiltrators to eliminate over 1,400 Thugee and imprison thousands in work reserves.

When the criminals adopted impersonation tactics to avoid the increased punishment meted out to habitual offenders, new technological advances provided solutions. The People of India Project, under the control of the Political and Secret Department of the military, stated: *Each Local Government is expected to collect into one collection such photographic likenesses of the races and classes within its borders as it may obtain and furnish a very brief notice of each. The likenesses are to be sent to the Central Committee of the London Exhibition in Calcutta.*

This project was used to identify characteristics that could be assigned to an entire tribe or caste and also helped those innovators experimenting with surveillance techniques in order to learn the secret codes and languages used by the "criminal gangs".

In the late 1800s, a colonial judge invented the fingerprint identification system. This was further enhanced by a British cop who, with traitorous Indian associates in the Bengal police, perfected the means of fingerprint classification along with a telegraphic code used to transmit the results to concerned agencies. In 1887, fingerprinting technology was adopted throughout India as a conclusive means of identifying the criminal castes and tribes. Fingerprinting was not introduced to the British homeland security forces until 1901, where it was first described as "hopelessly inaccurate, ludicrous, dangerous and completely un-British," an attitude that prevailed until the technique was widely accepted, with credit for this innovation attributed to Scotland Yard.

When British educated Mahatma Gandhi (who at one point stopped the rebellion because of "overly aggressive" attacks on traitorous pigs) led the upper castes towards independence, they further embraced the Enlightened order of policing.

Today, the Criminal Tribes, renamed the Denotified and Nomadic Tribes, are targeted by the cops as prime suspects and viewed as primitives in need of being raised up by the social justice do-gooders. Inspiringly, indigenous people of India continue to resist both.

The British Empire

Africa: Recruiting the Natives

...the acceptance of native political authority always implied a British redefinition and limitation of the role of African political powers and radical mutations of traditional practices whenever they were considered repugnant in light of European conceptions. Further, the principle of indirect rule was considered secondary to the overall political and economic objectives of colonial rule. Political paternalism replaced indirect rule when local politics did not resemble appropriate government in the eyes of the British authorities and when it conflicted with Company Rule which sought to make colonial conquest a commercially viable enterprise. –Mathieu Deflem, *Law*

Enforcement in British Colonial Africa

Before the Berlin Conference of 1884, a "mere" ten percent of the African continent was in the hands of the competing empires of

Europe. Indigenous humans, gold, diamonds, and ivory were amongst the commodities deemed useful for expanding wealth and capitalism. The conference resulted in a mandate for colonial powers to prove "effective occupation" in order to gain international recognition of territorial claims and to "permit" direct rule by the occupiers. Consequently, the civilizing powers could not tolerate any acts of defiance that might imply "ineffective occupation". The goals of both military and police—often interchangeable forces—were clear: pacify the natives, protect economic interests, symbolize and enforce the legitimacy of the colonial political authorities, and maintain sufficient order so as to permit access to and expansion of new territories.

Using ethnic security maps, British occupiers determined which tribes could be used, with proper supervision, to self-police tribal territories for the Crown. In the Nyasaland territory, the Yao ethnic community was deemed to be a martial tribe and recruited to protect and serve the masters needs. In the Gold Coast, the Hausa tribe formed the unofficial Hausa Constabulary, a paramilitary police force possessing the necessary qualities supportive of control, combat, and enforcement, recruited even before the official proclamation of the colony. The police, regardless of ethnicity, were considered an intrusive alien force and attacked as traitors to the native African communities.

By the end of the "Scramble for Africa", ninety percent of the continent was in European hands with Britain the dominant owner. Through apartheid and other brutal strategies, Africa remained under official occupation well into the 20th century. As long as native peoples can be recruited and trained as enforcers of their master's order, the possibility of 'effective occupation' remains.

The America Empire

Internal Colonies: Incarcerating the Savages

Indians are the most peaceful people, traditionally, you would ever wish to encounter. But, if you tell any people—to their perpetual suffering, agony, disenfranchisement, dispossession, disallowal of hope—that they are irrelevant long enough, they may just prove to you, in desperation, their relevance by utilizing violence. If they blow your brains out, you see, there's no question they're relevant. This applies to Indians, Palestinians, people of the inner cities, anyone who is oppressed.

–Ward Churchill, *Listening to the Land*

Prior to the Columbus invasion, over 15 million indigenous people are estimated to have lived in what is now America. By 1894, all but 250,000 were eliminated. The remaining people, from many varied and distinct tribal cultures, were identified as a single homogenous unit, negatively denoted as savage and primitive, and forced into prison-reserves. Cultural genocide programs in boarding schools and proper homes picked up where the military genocide left off, as Indian children were abducted and inserted into civil and Christian institutions. Educators and religious evangelists attempted to whitewash the memory of diverse and ancient languages, lifeways, and spiritual connections. Some of the newly domesticated were returned to the prisonreserves to spread the gospel of Civilized behavior.

By the mid-twentieth century, when the Empire renewed its attacks, many believed there were no more 'real' Indians. But the strong and diverse response to the colonizer's first attacks was re-ignited when materials necessary to stoke the engines of the death machine—uranium, oil, coal, and natural gas—were discovered on reservation land, prompting aggressive expropriation. Using many forms of active and direct resistance, members of the American Indian Movement and others focused on getting treaty rights and national sovereignty upheld. Their actions prompted a military assault by the traitorous 'Guardians of the Oglala Nation'. These GOONs used US military artillery in the 1973-1976 bloodbath on the Pine Ridge Reservation on behalf of the Empire. Using intelligence provided by the FBI's COINTELPRO operatives, SWAT and other paramilitary pigs temporarily curtailed the struggle for Indian autonomy. But, as the opening words above, along with ongoing resistance to genocide and incarceration remind us, the spirit cannot be whitewashed and the fight is far from over.

The only way to police a ghetto is to be oppressive... They represent the force of the white world, and that world's criminal profit and ease, to keep the Black man corralled up here, in his place. The badge, the gun in the holster, and the swinging club make vivid what will happen should his rebellion become overt... He moves through Harlem, therefore, like an occupying soldier in a bitterly hostile country, which is precisely what, and where he is, and is the reason he walks in twos and threes. –James Baldwin, *Nobody Knows My Name*

The first militarized forces in urban North America were mounted patrols used in southern cities to keep slave populations from uprising. Once "freed", the neo-slaves were quickly segregated into ghettos, prisons, rural work farms, and urban factories. As

on the reservations, inner city African communities are riddled with unemployment, poverty, and by a particular hopelessness, both induced and soothed by the drugs supplied by a myriad of overt and covert sources. Liberals, feeling the effects of the "white man's burden" and bourgeois white guilt, launch hundreds of programs designed to socialize this "violent underclass". No attempt was made, until after WWII, to induct Africans into local pigpens. As an L.A. pig admitted to an investigating commission, most cops simply did not view blacks as individuals, and therefore could not discern the law-abiding from the lawless—a charge easily applied to the pigs themselves.

Riots, gangs, and even national liberation movements echo the anger and frustration of millions who can no longer bear a life of imprisonment and neo-slavery. Modern police forces in segregated areas were hyper-militarized before their counterparts in ruling class communities and commercial areas. Heavily armed, armored, and specially trained in urban warfare by US military Special Forces, Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) units conduct regular raids in ghettos, inner cities, and 'hotspots' of Black (and Latino) enclaves. Urban warfare, the new primary frontline in this war, requires practice and continual improvements. Military exercises, such as Garden Plot, aim towards a coordination of the full war apparatus—National Guard, military, federal intelligence, local, state, and federal cops to quell the ever-growing urban unrest. In 1992, the pigs that attacked Rodney King were exonerated and the new urban war machine deployed. But the machine is not infallible and potential weaknesses are occasionally revealed for our exploration. A provocative example; on the night of these 1992 L.A. riots, a California State Guardsman was arrested by local cops with materials necessary for concocting Molotovs.

The American Empire

Iraq and the Homeland: Invoking Fear

Insurgency can be extricated from the 'placenta of common crime' in which the state attempted to place it by establishing its identity as a violence which is public, collective, destructive and total in its modalities. These are, of course, the very attributes of the violence characteristically deployed by the modern nation-state. What name shall we give to that violence? Surely not insurgency? In what language shall we speak of the crimes of the state?

–Vinay Lal, *Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*

In 2004, as the UN's Decade of the World's Indigenous People closes, the American Empire and its British partner apply the ageold formula to neutralize native, indigenous, and improperly civilized peoples. In Iraq (as in Afghanistan), all imperial forces—military, police, social, religious, and economic—are being employed in the crusade to secure total control over the (nearly) decimated people. After more than a decade of genocidal sanctions and biochemical and conventional warfare reduced the population by millions, the ongoing military incursion seeks to complete the mass elimination phase of the formulaic strategy. Using superior technology—"smart bombs", "precision artillery", and a steady (if increasingly reluctant) supply of dehumanized soldiers—the predatory neocolonialists attempt to gain access to the region's valuable resources and

militarily strategic position. To this end, American and European civilizers are inserting the Western paramilitary police model into these potential new colonies. However, a significant change from the past must be noted —the insurgents in the new colonies understand that the police (like the military) are key to the political, economic, and social machine waging war on all their lives. As such, they are combatants and are consistently targeted, attacked, and eliminated—with significantly less technological resources than those used by the enemy. Soon, it will be difficult to find traitors willing to serve and protect the Predators.

Here in the Homeland, pigs are removing their dress blues and donning the camouflage of the Battlefield Dress Uniform; exchanging their service revolvers for automatic weapons; and tear gas is replaced with "less-than-lethal" biochemical weapons. Indigenous peoples of this continent and those abducted from distant lands, along with the disobedient, the unassimilated, and the perpetually resistant—need take heed. Operation Civilization has entered its most aggressive phase thus far and the enemy is preparing for the inevitable. The visceral reaction we have to all pigs, indeed all soldiers, imparts an important and positive message. Those who enforce this life of increasing subjugation to the will and whim of the death machine's masters, prepare the way for our assimilation, incarceration, or elimination. Our preparations for fight or flight cannot lag behind.

Rising of Barbarians; A Non-Primitivist Revolt against Civilization

Wolfi Landstreicher

If we examine much of the current debate in anarchist circles surrounding civilization, technology, progress, green anarchy versus red anarchy and so on, we are left with the impression that criticism of civilization has only recently arisen within anarchist and revolutionary thinking. But this impression is false, and harmful for those of us with a revolutionary anti-civilization perspective.

In fact, a revolutionary questioning of civilization, of technology and of progress can be found throughout the history of modern revolutionary thinking. Charles Fourier posed his utopian socialist "Harmony" against the disharmony of "Civilization". A number of the most radical of the Romantics (Blake, Byron and Shelly among others) were distinctly distrustful of industrialism and its utilitarian reason.

But we can bring things closer to home by looking at anarchists of the 19th century. Certainly Bakunin had no problem with industrial technology. Though he didn't share Marx's almost mystical faith in the capacity of industrial development to create the technical basis for global communism, he also did not see anything inherently dominating in the structure of industrial systems. In fact, his concept of workers taking over the organization of society through their own economic and industrial development was to eventually become the basis of anarchosyndicalism. (This development, however, is based on a misunderstanding, since Bakunin quite clearly stated that this organization was not something that could be developed on an ideological basis outside of the direct struggle of the workers, but rather that it was something that the workers would develop for themselves in the course of their struggles. He therefore did not suggest any specific form for it.) Nonetheless, Bakunin's appeals to the "unleashing of the wicked passions" of the oppressed and exploited were seen by many of the more reasonable revolutionaries of the time as a barbaric call for the destruction of civilization. And Bakunin himself did call for "the annihilation of bourgeois civilization" along with "the destruction of all States" and the "free and spontaneous organization from below upward, by means of free associations". But Bakunin's French contemporary, Ernest Coeurderoy, was less conditional in his rejection of civilization. He says simply: *In civilization, I vegetate; I am neither happy, nor free; why then should I desire*

this homicidal order to be conserved? There is no longer anything to conserve of that which the earth suffers. And he, along with Dejacque and other anarchist revolutionaries of that time, appeals to the barbaric spirit of destruction to bring an end to the civilization of domination.

Of course, the majority of anarchists at that time, as in our own, did not question civilization, technology, or progress. Kropotkin's vision of communized "Factories, Fields and Workshops" or Josiah Warren's "True Civilization" inevitably have more appeal to those who are not prepared to face the unknown than do the anarchist critiques of industrialism and civilization that often offer no clear vision of what will be after the revolutionary destruction of civilization.

The early 20th century, and particularly the great massacre known as World War I, brought a major overturning of values. Faith in the bourgeois ideal of progress was thoroughly eroded and the questioning of civilization itself was a significant aspect of a number of radical movements including dadaism, Russian anarcho-futurism and early surrealism. If most of the better-known anarchists (such as Malatesta, Emma Goldman, Mahkno, and so on) continued to see the possibility of a liberated industrial civilization, other lesser-known anarchists saw a different vision. Thus, around 1919, Bruno Filippi wrote:

I envy the savages. And I will cry to them in a loud voice: 'Save yourselves, civilization is coming.'

Of course: our dear civilization of which we are so proud. We have abandoned the free and happy life of the forest for this horrendous moral and material slavery. And we are maniacs, neurasthenics, suicides.

Why should I care that civilization has given humanity wings to fly so that it can bomb cities, why should I care if I know every star in the sky or every river on earth? [...]

Today, the starry vault is a leaden veil that we vainly endeavor to pass through; today it is no longer unknown, it is distrusted.

[...] I don't give a damn for their progress; I want to live and enjoy.

Now, I want to be clear. I am not bringing all of this up in order to prove that the present-day anti-civilization current has a legitimate anarchist heritage. If its critique of the reality we face is accurate, why should we care whether it fits into some framework of anarchist orthodoxy? But Bakunin and Coeurderoy, Malatesta and Filippi, all of the anarchists of the past who lived in struggle against domination, as they understood it, were not trying to create any ideological ortho- doxy. They were participating in the process of creating a revolutionary anarchist theory and practice that would be an ongoing process. This process has included critiques of civilization, critiques of progress and critiques of technology (and often in the past these critiques were not connected, so that, for example, Bakunin could call for "the annihilation of bourgeois civilization" and still embrace its technological outgrowth, industrialism, and Marcus Graham could call for the destruction of "the machine" in favor of an unmechanized civilization). We are living in different times. The words of Bakunin or Coeurderoy, of

Malatesta or Renzo Novatore, or of any of the anarchist writers of the past cannot be taken as a program or a doctrine to be followed. Rather they form an arsenal to be looted. And among the weapons in that arsenal are barbaric battering rams that can be used against the walls of civilization, of the myth of progress, of the long-since disproven myth that technology can save us from our woes.

We are living in a world in which technology has certainly gone out of control. As catastrophe follows catastrophe, so-called "human" landscapes become increasingly controlled and mechanized, and human beings increasingly conformed to their roles as cogs in the social machine. Historically the thread that has gone through all that is best in the anarchist movement has not been a faith in civilization or technology or progress, but rather the desire for every individual to be free to create her or his life as he or she sees fit in free association with others, in other words, the desire for the individual and collective reappropriation of life. And this desire is still what motivates anarchist struggle. At this point it is clear to me that the technological system is an integral part of the network of domination. It has been developed to serve the interests of the rulers of this world. One of the primary purposes of large-scale technological systems is the maintenance and expansion of social control, and this requires a technological system that is largely self-maintaining, needing only minimal human intervention. Thus, a juggernaut is created. The recognition that progress had no inherent connection to human liberation was already recognized by many revolutionaries by the end of World War I. Certainly the history of the 20th century should have reinforced this understanding. We look out now on a physically, socially, and psychically devastated world, the result of all that has been called progress. The exploited and dispossessed of this world can no longer seriously desire to get a piece of this putrefying pie, nor to take it over and "self-manage" it. The reappropriation of life must have a different meaning in the present world. In light of the social transformations of the past few decades, it seems to me that any serious revolutionary anarchist movement would have to call industrialism and civilization itself into question precisely because anything less may not provide us with the necessary tools for taking back our lives as our own. But my anti-civilization perspective is not a primitivist perspective. While it may indeed be inspiring to look at the apparently anarchic and communistic aspects of some "primitive" cultures, I do not base my critique on a comparison between these cultures and the current reality, but rather on the way in which all of the various institutions that comprise civilization act together to take my life from me and turn it into a tool for social reproduction, and how they transform social life into a productive process serving only to maintain the rulers and their social order. Thus, it is essentially a revolutionary perspective, and this is why I will always make use of anything in that arsenal which is the history of revolutionary theory and practice that can enhance my struggle. "Primitive" people have often lived in anarchic and communistic ways, but they do not have a history of revolutionary struggle from which we can loot weapons for our current struggle. Having said this, however, I do recognize those anarcho-primitivists who continue to

recognize the necessity of revolution and class struggle as my com- rades and potential accomplices.

Revolutionary struggle against the civilization of control and profit that surrounds us will not be the reasonable attempt to take over the means of production. The dispossessed of this world seem to understand that this is no longer an option for liberation (if it ever was). If most are not clear about precisely who or what is the enemy, most do understand that they have nothing to say to those in power, because they no longer share a common language. We who have been dispossessed by this world now know that we can expect nothing from it. If we dream of another world, we cannot express that dream, because this world does not provide the words for it. And most likely many no longer dream. They just feel rage at the continuing degradation of their existence. So this revolution will, indeed, be the release of the "wicked passions" of which Bakunin spoke, the destructive passions that are the only door to a free existence. It will be the coming of the barbarians predicted by Dejacque and Coeurderoy. But it is precisely when people know that they no longer have anything to say to their rulers, that they may learn how to talk with each other. It is precisely when people know that the possibilities of this world can offer them nothing that they may learn how to dream the impossible. This network of institutions that dominate our life, this civilization, has turned our world into a toxic prison. There is so much to be destroyed so that a free existence may be created. The time of the barbarians is at hand.

[…] May the barbarians break loose. May they sharpen their swords, may they brandish their battleaxes, may they strike their enemies without pity. May hatred take the place of tolerance, may fury take the place of resignation, may outrage take the place of respect. May the barbarian hordes go to the assault, autonomously, in the way that they determine. And may no parliament, no credit institution, no supermarket, no barracks, no factory ever grow again after their passage. In the face of the concrete that rises to strike the sky and the pollution that fouls it, one can well say with Dejacque that "It is not the darkness that the Barbarians will bring to the world this time, it is the light."
—Crisso/Odoteo

Locating an Indigenous Anarchism

Aragorn!

It's easy enough to hedge about politics. It comes naturally and most of the time the straight answer isn't really going to satisfy the questioner, nor is it appropriate to fix our politics to this world, to what feels immovable. Politics, like experience, is a subjective way to understand the world. At best it provides a deeper vocabulary than mealy-mouthed platitudes about being good to people, at worst (and most commonly) it frames people and ideas into ideology. Ideology, as we are fully aware, is a bad thing. Why? Because it answers questions better left haunting us, because it attempts to answer permanently what is temporary at best.

It is easy to be cagey about politics but for a moment let us imagine a possibility. Not to tell one another what to do, or about an answer to every question that could arise, but to take a break from hesitation. Let us imagine what an indigenous anarchism could look like.

We should start with what we have, which is not a lot. What we have, in this world, is the memory of a past obscured by history books, of a place clear-cut, planted upon, and paved over. We share this memory with our extended family, who we quarrel with, who we care for deeply, and who often believe in those things we do not have. What we do have is not enough to shape this world, but is usually enough to get us by.

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

We will need each other to make sure that the flames, if they were to come, clear the area that we will live in together. We will need to clear it of the fuel that would end up repeating the problems we are currently having. We will need to make sure that the seeds, nutrients

,and soil are scattered beyond our ability to control.

Once we get beyond the flames we will have to craft a life together. We will have to recall what social behavior looks and feels like. We will have to heal.

When we begin to examine what life could be like, now that all the excuses are gone, now that all the bullies are of human size and shape, we will have to keep in mind many things. We will have to always keep in mind the matter of scale. We will have to keep in mind the memory of the first people and the people who kept the memory of matches and where and when to burn through the past confusing age. For what it is worth we will have to establish a way to live that is both indigenous, which is to say of the land that we are actually on, and anarchist, which is to say without authoritarian constraint.

First Principles

First principles are those perspectives that (adherents to) a tendency would understand as immutable. They are usually left unstated. Within anarchism these principles include direct action, mutual aid, and voluntary cooperation. These are not ideas about how we are going to transform society or about the form of anarchist organization, but an understanding about what would be innovative and qualitatively different about an anarchist social practice vis-à-vis a capitalist republic, or a totalitarian socialism.

It is worth noting a cultural history of our three basic anarchist principles as a way of understanding what an indigenous anarchist set of principles could look like. Direct action as a principle is primarily differentiated from the tradition of labor struggles, where it was used as a tactic, in that it posits that living directly (or in an unmediated fashion) is an anarchist imperative. Put another way, the principle of direct action would be an anarchist statement of self-determination in practical aspects of life. Direct action must be understood through the lens of the events of May '68 where a rejection of alienated life led large sections of French society into the streets and towards a radically self-organized practice.

The principle of mutual aid is a very traditional anarchist concept. Peter Kropotkin laid out a scientific analysis of animal survival and (as a corollary to Darwin's theory of evolution) described a theory of cooperation that he felt better suited most species. As one of the fathers of anarchism (and particularly Anarcho-Communism) Kropotkin's concept of mutual aid has been embraced by most anarchists. As a principle it is generally limited to a level of tacit anarchist support for anarchist projects.

Voluntary cooperation is the anarchist principle that informs anarchist understandings of economics, social behavior (and exclusion), and the scale of future society. It could be stated simply as the principle that we, individually, should determine what we do with our time, with whom we work, and how we work. Anarchists have wrestled with these concepts for as long as there has been a discernible anarchist practice. The spectrum of anarchist thought on the nuance of voluntary cooperation ranges from Max Stirner who refuses anything but total autonomy to Kropotkin whose theory of a world without scarcity (which is a fundamental premise of most Marxist positions) would give us greater choices about what we would do with our time. Today this princi-

ple is usually stated most clearly as the principle to freely associate (and disassociate) with one another.

This should provide us with enough information to make the simple statement that anarchist principles have been informed by science (both social and physical), a particular understanding of the individual (and their relation to larger bodies) and as a response to the alienation of modern existence and the mechanisms that social institutions use to manipulate people. Naturally we will now move onto how an indigenous perspective differs from these.

In the spirit of speaking clearly I hesitate in making the usual caveats when principles are in question. These hesitations are not because, in practice, there is any doubt as to what the nature of relationship or practice should look like. But when writing, particularly about politics, you can do yourself a great disservice by planting a flag and calling it righteous. Stating principles as the basis for a politic usually is such a flag. If I believe in a value and then articulate that value as instrumental for an appropriate practice then what is the difference between my completely subjective (or self-serving) perspective and one that I could possibly share usefully? This question should continue to haunt us.

Since we have gone this far let us speak, for a moment, about an indigenous anarchism's first principles. Insert caveats about this being one perspective among many. Everything is alive. Alive may not be the best word for what is being talked about but we could say imbibed with spirit or filled with the Great Spirit and we would mean the same thing. We will assume that a secular audience understands life as complex, interesting, in motion, and valuable. This same secular person may not see the Great Spirit in things that they are capable of seeing life in.

The counterpoint to everything being filled with life is that there are no dead things. Nothing is an object. Anything worth directly experiencing is worth acknowledging and appreciating for its complexity, its dynamism and its intrinsic worth. When one passes from what we call life, they do not become object, they enrich the lives they touched and the earth they lie in. If everything is alive, then sociology, politics, and statistics all have to be destroyed if for no other reason but because they are anti-life disciplines.

Another first principle would be that of the ascendance of memory. Living in a world where complex artifices are built on foundations of lies leads us to believe that there is nothing but deceit and untruth. Our experience would lead us to believe nothing less. Compounding this problem is the fact that those who could tell us the truth, our teachers, our newscasters and our media devote a scarce amount of their resources to anything like honesty. It is hard to blame them. Their memory comes from the same forgetfulness that ours does.

If we were to remember we would spend a far greater amount of our time remembering. We would share our memories with those we loved, with those we visited, and those who passed by us. We will have to spend a lot of time creating new memories to properly place the recollection of a frustrated forgetful world whose gift was to destroy everything dissimilar to itself.

An indigenous anarchism is an anarchism of place. This would seem impossible in a world that has taken upon itself the task of placing us nowhere. A world that places us nowhere universally. Even where we are born, live, and die is not our home. An anarchism of place could look like living in one area for all of your life. It could look like living only in areas that are heavily wooded, that are near life-sustaining bodies of water, or in dry places. It could look like traveling through these areas. It could look like traveling every year as conditions, or desire, dictated. It could look like many things from the outside, but it would be choice dictated by the subjective experience of those living in place and not the exigency of economic or political priorities. Location is the differentiation that is crushed by the mortar of urbanization and pestle of mass culture into the paste of modern alienation.

Finally an indigenous anarchism places us as an irremovable part of an extended family. This is an extension of the idea that everything is alive and therefore we are related to it in the sense that we too are alive. It is also a statement of a clear priority. The connection between living things, which we would shorthand to calling family, is the way that we understand ourselves in the world. We are part of a family and we know ourselves through family. Leaving aside the secular language for a moment, it is impossible to understand oneself or one another outside of the spirit. It is the mystery that should remain outside of language that is what we all share together and that sharing is living.

Anarchist in Spirit vs Anarchist in Word

Indigenous people in general and North American native people specifically have not taken too kindly to the term anarchist up until this point. There have been a few notable exceptions (Rob los Ricos, Zig Zag, and myself among them) but the general take is exemplified by Ward Churchill's line "I share many anarchist values like opposition to the State but..." Which raises the question of why there aren't more native people interested in anarchism.

The most obvious answer to this question is that anarchism is part of a European tradition so far outside of the mainstream that it isn't generally interesting (or accessible) to non-westerners. This is largely true but is only part of the answer.

Another part of an answer can be seen in the surprisingly large percentage of anarchists who hold that race doesn't matter; that it is, at best, a tool used to divide us (by the Man) and at worst something that will devolve society into tribalism [sic]. Outside of whether there are any merits to these arguments (which I believe stand by themselves) is the violation of two principles that have not been discussed in detail up until this point—self-determination and radical decentralization.

Self-determination should be read as the desire for people who are self-organized (whether by tradition, individual choice, or inclination) to decide how they want to live with each other. This may seem like common sense, and it is, but it is also consistently

violated by people who believe that their value system supersedes that of those around them. The question that anarchists of all stripes have to answer for themselves is whether they are capable of dealing with the consequences of other people living in ways they find reprehensible.

Radical decentralization is a probable outcome to most anarchist positions. There are very few anarchists (outside of Parecon) that believe that an anarchist society will have singular answers to politics, economy, or culture. More than a consequence, the principle of radical decentralization means it is preferable for there to be no center.

If anarchists are not able to apply the principles of self-determination to the fact that real living and breathing people do identify within racial and cultural categories and that this identification has consequences in terms of dealing with one another can we be shocked that native people (or so-called people of color) lack any interest in cohabitating? Furthermore if anarchists are unable to see that the consequence of their own politic includes the creation of social norms and cultures that they would not feel comfortable in, in a truly decentralized social environment, what hope do they have to deal with the people with whom they don't feel comfortable today?

The answer is that these anarchists do not expect to deal with anyone outside of their understanding of reality. They expect reality to conform to their subjective understanding of it.

This problem extends to the third reason that native people lack interest in anarchism. Like most political tendencies anarchism has come up with a distinct language, cadence, and set of priorities. The tradition of these distinctions is what continues to bridge the gap between many of the anarchist factions that have very little else in common. This tradition is not a recruiting tradition. There is only a small evangelical tradition within anarchism. Outside of itself, anarchism is largely an inscrutable tradition.

This isn't a problem outside of itself. The problem is that it is coupled with the arrogance of the educated along with the worst of radical politics' excesses. This is best seen in the distinction that continues to be made between a discrete tradition of anarchism from actions that are anarchistic. Anarchists would like to have it both ways. They would like to see their tradition as being growing and vital, along with being uncompromising and deeply radical. Since an anarchist society would be such a deep break from what we experience in this world, it is impossible to perceive any scenario that leads from here to there. There is no path.

The anarchist analysis of the Zapatistas is a case in point. Anarchists have understood that it was an indigenous struggle, that it was armed and decentralized; but habitually temper their enthusiasm with warnings about a) valorizing Subcommandante Marcos, b) the differences between social democracy and anarchism, c) the problems with negotiating with the State for reforms, etc. These points are valid. The problem is that anarchist criticism is generally more repetitive than it is inspired or influential. Repetitive criticisms are useful in getting every member of a political tendency on the same page. Criticism helps us understand the difference between illusion and reality.

But the form that anarchist criticism has taken about events in the world is more useful in shaping an understanding of what real anarchists believe than what the world is.

As long as the arbiters of anarchism continue to be the wielders of The Most Appropriate Critique™ then anarchism will continue to be an isolated sect far removed from any particularly anarchistic events that happen in the world. This will continue to make the tendency irrelevant for those people who are interested in participating in anarchistic events.

Native People are Not Gone

For many readers these ideas may seem worth pursuit. An indigenous anarchism may state a position felt but not articulated about how to live with one another, how to live in the world, and about the decomposition. These readers will recognize themselves in indigeneity and ponder the next step. A radical position must embed an action plan, right?

No, it does not.

This causality, this linear vision of the progress of human events from idea to articulation to strategy to victory is but one way to understand the story of how we got from there to here. Progress is but one mythology. Another is that the will to power, or the spirit of resistance, or the movement of the masses transforms society. They may, and I appreciate those stories, but I will not finish this story with a happy ending that will not come true. This is but a sharing. This is a dream I have had for some time and haven't shown to any of you before, which is not to say that I do not have a purpose...

Whether stated in the same language or not, the only indigenous anarchists that I have met (with one or three possible exceptions) have been native people. This is not because living with these principles is impossible for nonnative people but because there are very few teachers and even fewer students. If learning how to live with these values is worth anything it is worth making the compromises necessary to learn how people have been living with them for thousands of years.

Contrary to popular belief, the last hope for native values or an indigenous worldview is not the good hearted people of civilized society. It is not more casinos or a more liberal Bureau of Indian Affairs. It is not the election of Russell Means to the presidency of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. It is patience. As I was told time and time again as a child: *The reason that I sit here and drink is because I am waiting for the white man to finish his business. And when he is done we will return.*

Technology

A Dark and Hungry God Arises: Technology and Its Captives

The historical object of industrialization, its profound truth which the 20th century has made manifest, is destruction: Auschwitz and Hiroshima are the two fronts on which the present era was baptized. —David Watson

In the course of history there have always been different principles of civilization according to regions, nations, and continents. But today everything tends to align itself on technical principles. In the past, different civilizations took different "paths"; today all peoples follow the same road and the same impulse. This does not mean that they have all reached the same point, but they are situated at different paths along the same trajectory. All the business of life, from work and amusement to love and death, is seen from the technical point of view. The number of "technical slaves" is growing rapidly, and the ideal of all governments is to push as fast as possible toward industrialization and technical enslavement.

—Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society*

While our earliest ancestors lived fully in the natural milieu, and our most recent forebears in a more continually-domesticated social milieu, postmodern humans now live primarily in what sociologist Jacques Ellul called a *technological milieu.*

Analogousinscaleandplanetarysignificancetotheatmosphere, lithosphere, or biosphere, a truly global *technosphere* is in an aggressivelyongoing process of development around the planet, like an artificial sheath of technology that's emerged from the activities of civilization and its global financial markets and military-industrial complex, and which now encircles the globe with its planet-girding information/satellite network. Here in the early years of the 21st century, we find ourselves involved in a war between technosphere and not only biosphere but also *ethnosphere,* for cultural diversity is as endangered as biological diversity under the relentless technospheric advance.

Lewis Mumford, a pioneering historian of technology, traced its evolution from the predominant use of water, wind, and wood in the pre-industrial "eotechnic" era, through the rise of centralized factories for mass production using coal and iron (the "paleotechnic" era), through the 20th century's technics, dominated by alloys and electricity (what he termed "neotechnics"). Presently, with global communications networks and off-planet satellites, the reach of the technosphere continues to increase, as machines approach molecular size in the hands of the nanotechnologists, and genetic engineers decipher and change the

DNA blueprint underlying life and speciation itself.

For post-modern humans it is the technosphere, not Earth or even other people, that is the source of their livelihood, food, energy, education, entertainment, and identity; if we despair because our lives have become little more than a frenzy of meaningless multi-tasking, our rulers' solution is to *change* **us** so we conform with their dehumanizing technological system— and so change us they have! In the US alone, over fifty million of us are on psychotropic medication just to get through the work day. About the same number of us are on medication to try and get through the night. And five million of our kids are on mind-eroding pharmaceuticals to get through the school day. Not to worry if the medication is required at ever-higher doses or stops working altogether, or if you've chosen instead alcohol or illegal drug addiction; the genetic engineers promise us that genes for depression, anxiety, alcoholism, and even shyness will soon be found and removed. And it is the awareness repressed by this collective degeneration that tends to fuel the entire cycle of resignation and extinguish the will to resist.

We've already substituted "virtual communities" for the relationships, kinship, and neighborhoods lost in our full-time devotion to technology. Numerous computer scientists eventually hope to make us all "virtual" by downloading us into silicon chips, making us "one" with our computerized office machinery. This will be the final solution to the technological dilemma and the ultimate proclamation that life has been fully conquered. Our rulers can preserve their mechanized production-based System only by fundamentally changing who we are, by prodding us to *become technology ourselves.* This is exactly what we *already are* becoming within the infrastructure of the techno-industrial system: our existence entirely dependent, artificial, and parasitic; our behavior standardized to the internal logic of the machine and to the mechanisms that one needs for anything; our food without aroma or flavor; our ideas conformed to the flux of images and slogans that electronic communication constantly injects into us, feeding our mental universe—our own dreams becoming rancid rainbows. The technosphere, then, is not merely exploiting and wasting the natural and social milieus; it is fundamentally remaking the natural world and the human animal in technology's image. Life and reality itself are being absorbed into the technosphere and being reduced to mere components in the larger System.

Given the scope and pace of the technological takeover, the time for meaningful resistance is growing short...

Science: Civilization's Ally

Ran Priur

What we call "science" is not neutral. It's loaded with motives and assumptions that came out of, and reinforce, the catastrophe of dissociation, disempowerment, and consuming deadness that we call "civilization."

Science assumes detachment. This is built into the very word "observation." To "observe" something is to perceive it while distancing oneself emotionally and physically, to have a one-way channel of "information" moving from the observed thing to the "self," which is defined as not being part of that thing. This kind of relationship is supposedly not only possible, but good. In fact it's not even possible: science refutes itself at its most advanced stages, with theoretical physicists discovering that it does not make sense to talk about "what is" independent of perspective. Detached observation is not itself an observation or a fact, but a mental habit that we have learned and can unlearn. As Stan Gooch has noticed, "experience" is a healthier word than "observation" because it does not imply detachment.

Science assumes that matter is more fundamental than mind. This bizarre idea exists only in Western civilization. Not only is it unprovable, it's obviously false. Your own awareness is more fundamental than "matter," which exists only as an idea shaped out of your awareness. Science gets around this by also shaping the idea of "mind" out of your mind, and sticking this idea in a spot dependent on the idea of matter, and simply telling the giant lie that the mindfulness that sees the whole thing is a function of the idea of mind, and not the other way around. What I'm trying to get at here is a deep paradigm shift. I've just explained it intellectually, but it cannot be practiced intellectually, only by directly experiencing your awareness, your perspective, your *being*, as fundamental.

And what is this "matter"? By definition, it is both objectifiable and dead, just bouncing particles and waves that can be viewed from an absolute detached perspective, but that do not require for their existence any perspective or mindfulness. Matter is mindlessness, and mindlessness is deeper than mind. Again, this is not something we can see, but a basic assumption that tells us how to look.

The view of reality as not dependent on mind became easier to believe with the invention of more sophisticated machines, because these machines could be used as models. Philosophers could point to a clock and say that an atom, or a dog, or the whole universe, is like that clock, just mindlessly going through motions. But machines are not mindless or dead. They are manifestations of the mindfulness and aliveness of their human creators. And if machines are our model for matter, it follows that matter

is not dead, but the manifestation of some deeper aliveness. A few contemporary scientists have noticed this, and have had to say that the universe is not like a machine at all, since a machine is based on mind. Now they say that the basis of reality is something special that we cannot prove (or even really imagine) some kind of myth of bottomless deadness.

The death-based or "mechanistic" view is a religion, the dominant religion of our time. It is far stronger than Christianity, which has totally adopted the machine model, but just tacked souls on top and personified the objectively true, detached perspective as an omnipotent sky-father deity named "God," manipulating the world from a safe distance just like the scientists.

Both mechanistic science and mechanistic Christianity were popularized by the philosopher Renee Descartes, who really believed that the scream of a tortured dog is no different from a bell ringing on a machine. "Putting Descartes before the horse" is deservedly the most common pun in philosophy, because that's exactly what Descartes did. "I think therefore I am" puts existence deeper than awareness, plus it narrows existence and awareness to the detached forms of "I am" and "I think." It is both a reversal of and a flight from the perspective of healthy cultures.

Of course a man doesn't get the urge to intellectually deny the pain of a tortured creature out of nowhere. We were massacring villages and cutting down forests to build insane social monoliths of disempowerment for thousands of years before Descartes. His thinking was not a cause of civilization, but an intensification, an intellectual sanctioning of what was already happening, just as the Nazis made extermination of Jews an official policy after the practice had already begun. It makes it a lot easier to turn everything alive into something dead, to turn forests and people into resources and capital, if you believe everything is dead in the first place.

Science makes everything dead not only by declaration, but by method. Science deals only with the quantitative. It does not admit values or emotions or the way the air smells when it's starting to rain or if it deals with these things, it does so by transforming them into numbers, by turning your oneness with the smell of the rain into your abstract preoccupation with the chemical formula for ozone, by turning the way it makes you feel into the intellectual idea that emotions are only an illusion of firing neurons.

Number itself is not truth but a chosen style of thinking. If you see three apples, you are temporarily avoiding the perspective that sees this apple and this apple and this apple. Saying "three" suppresses uniqueness and diversity.

Defenders of science will say that of course science deals with the quantifiable. If it didn't, it wouldn't be science. And that's precisely my point: We have chosen a habit of mind that focuses our attention down into a world removed from reality, where nothing has quality or awareness or life of its own. We have chosen to transform the living into the dead.

Careful-thinking scientists will admit that what they study is a narrow simulation of the complex real world, but few of them notice that this narrow focus is self-feeding,

that it has built contractive technological, economic, and political systems that are all working together sucking our reality in on itself. Science denies emotion, but it is not itself unemotional. Emotional detachment *is* an emotion.

As narrow as the world of numbers is, scientific method does not even permit all numbers, only those numbers that are reproducible, predictable, and the same for all observers. Of course reality itself is not reproducibleorpredictableorthesameforallobservers. Butneitherare fantasy worlds derived from reality. So science doesn't stop at pulling us into a dream world it goes one step further and makes this dream world a nightmare, whose contents are selected for predictability and controllability and uniformity.

Because of science, we can have a factory that predictably makes one million alarm clocks that will all look the same and all predictably go off at the time they're set for, so that one million people will predictably get to their jobs just when their employers expect them where they're likely to work with machines that, like the alarm clocks, are standardized, so that any laborer can use any machine, and one person is the same as another. Because of science, states of consciousness that cannot be reliably dispensed are classified as insane, or *science: civilization's ally* 61 at best "non-ordinary," and excluded. Anomalous experience, anomalous ideas, and anomalous people are cast off or destroyed like imperfectly-shaped machine components.

Does all this necessarily follow from science? Could we have a system of knowledge based on predictability that produced a culture of chaos and surprise? If we did, it would be through resistance to that predictability and not through obedience to it. But our culture has never wanted surprise anyway, and if it had, it wouldn't have chosen science.

Science is only a manifestation and locking in of an urge for control that we've had at least since we started farming fields and fencing animals instead of surfing the less predictable (but more abundant) world of reality, or "nature." And from that time to now, this urge has driven every decision about what counts as "progress." In a little known fork in the road of science, Goethe experimented with optics independent of Newton, but where Newton shined lights through prisms, producing projected spectra for detached observation, Goethe had people *look* through prisms, and developed these experiments into a theory that was deeply different from Newton's but equally verifiable and self-consistent. No one knows what strange technological path this theory would have led us to, because of course it was ignored in favor of Newton's theory, which was more compatible with objectification.

If you find it hard to believe that science could have gone onto a radically different path, that the universe has room for divergent experimentally confirmable "truths," then it's because you have been raised inside what William Blake called "single vision and Newton's sleep." In an even less known fork in the road of pre-science, Medieval alchemical literature reports that alchemists actually succeeded in creating gold. Of course we can tell ourselves that they were lying, but maybe in 500 years our descen-

dants will say we were lying about splitting the atom or building flying machines, or they will say it was all metaphor. Maybe it is.

My point is, we can look through any filter we want. Instead of focusing toward what's most predictable, repeatable, quantifiable, detachedly observable, we can focus toward what's most fun, most beautiful, most magical, most alive. And we can turn this focus as we did with science into a self-reinforcing system of thought and action, a culture, a society, a sustained, wonderful reality. The real question is, why did we ever do anything else?

Sermon on the Cybermount

Reverend Black Ahole

The Christian resolve to find the world evil and ugly has made the world evil and ugly. —Nietzsche

God is dead: but considering the state Man is in, there will perhaps be caves, for ages yet, in which his shadow will be shown.
—Nietzsche

I have seen the multitudes of weary post-modern wanderers searching for the light to illuminate their brain-in-a-vat. I have seen the chaotic bundles of particles lead into temptation by a connection to that conglomeration of cells they call a body. I fear their eternal salvation from a bestial life of animality in the wretched wilderness is threatened by demons of the most ghoulish kind. I have gathered here on this synthetic, deforested mountain with you on this disgustingly natural day to tell you about a motley crew of hellspawn spreading their torturous sensual terror and fiendish lies of non-symbolic life. Do not be fooled by their wicked ways and trickery. The symbolic is supreme, the alpha and the omega. In the beginning was the symbolic, and the symbolic was with homo symbolicus, and the symbolic was human life.

It has been proven by our priestly archaeologists. They have *facts* to back up their expert authority. Woe to those who shall be so bold as to challenge the holy realm of empirical research. Even if our cardinal anthropologists have miscalculated in their interpretative schemes, it matters not. For one cannot go back, at least until we develop a time machine, for we are thoroughly entangled in the symbolic and there is no escape. Thus spoke Bishop Derrida. But who would wish to visit such ghastly times when homo pre-symbolicus forsook their cognitive abilities and chose instead to constantly revel in the orgasmic pleasure of direct experience with a voluptuous earth? These primitivist heretics will surely be smote by the wrath of the Lord our Savior Science, through the medium of its most faithfully representative son, Noam Christomsky.

The masses have been living in darkness with their false gods of organized religion, exploitative economic systems, and petty political attachments which have aided, yet also impeded, unfettered scientific progress for too long. For the dawn of a new cyber age is upon us. The era of Science has come. Repent all ye sinners who have been naughty through following your instincts and valuing natural diversity over artificial standardization. Reason will reign for 1,000 years on this inanimate rock we are unjustly bound by. For the experimental reign of the Scientific Revolution is approximately half complete. As we enter this second 500-year term of relativity and uncertainty principles, the space-time continuum of symbolic abstraction and distancing of

scientific tinkering will boldly lead us where no other species, with their scientifically-proven inferior intelligence, has ever dreamed of going before. The goal is immortality, and by Science we will either achieve it on this blue and green cesspool or we will travel to other parts of the universe in search of everlasting life.

A scientifically-inclined humanity is the culmination of consciousness on this otherwise meaningless spherical object aimlessly rotating around our arch enemy, The Sun. I know your ears have been stung and your minds polluted by my mention of this most formidable of our foes, but hear me out, my biologically-determined sheep programmed to accept hierarchy. The good shepherds in white coats are here to save you from perpetual torment at the hands of those who dance in the ninth circle of hell, inhabiting the deepest, darkest parts of the wilderness where the species traitors frolic in their games of debauchery and laze about in their unproductive sloth. Such is the way of life the Sun encourages, with its unstinting bounty of abundance uneconomically distributed throughout this gleaming prison of a planet we must fervently work towards escaping. This tyranny of evolution and photosynthesis must be superceded by our own genetic engineering, for no alternative life of autonomy in connection to the disgracefully numerous animal and plant species taking up so much of our space must be allowed to lead us astray from our Scientifically-ordained mission. The species traitors will burn at the concrete stake; they will face the fury of our most powerful gizmos, like sub-human specimens of Sodom and Gomorrah. Their words will be destroyed and prevented from being distributed by any bookseller, including AK press.

For their false tongues spewing a poisonous venom of immediacy cloud reasoning powers with their fanciful tales of humanity not worshipping the Sun during the Paleolithic, not considering it sacred and not deriving morality from it, but simply being affiliated with it in a direct experiential bliss that predates the stately empires of yore whose subjects fell to their knees in praise of what they thought was divine. It is this most primitive of unscientific conditions that we must cast down with a hail of equations. For we can work with the symbolically inclined but the friends of the Neanderthal and pre-symbolic sapiens are the devilish children of nature. It is but a small step from the abstractions and emptiness of cave paintings and divine enslavement to a full immersion in the temple of microscopes and satellites. We shall prevail. We shall forcefully if necessary, voluntarily if possible, convert the unenlightened savages to the true way. For no one comes to the Holy Father Science except through the symbolic message of our messiah Christomsky.

So I call on all ye faithful taxpaying supporters of scientific endeavors and consumers of endless supplies of gadgets to renounce your childish desire to listen to those who would fight alongside the anacondas and alligators. For you should know these flesh and blood mirages conceal their true being as evil spirits ascended from the River Styx sent by the Sun itself to prey on your children. The glorious Christomsky has come as the spokesperson for Science, and he has a new covenant for sinners to enter into and absolve themselves of their pre-technological ways. For our Lord Science welcomes liberals and conservatives, anarchists and communists, leftists and post-leftists, jews

and gentiles underneath the big tent of laborious manipulations. All who so yearn to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, we congratulate thee for thou dismissal of barbaric thoughts and slovenly foraging. But the time has come where you will no longer need to face the possibility of a nasty, brutish, and short façade of existence in the grasslands and deserts of the real, for Science will not stop until it has made its utilitarian mark on every last bit of nature.

And I saw Christomsky open his mouth and teach them, saying Blessed are the poor in internet connections, for no one will be denied computer access in the reign of technocracy. Blessed are the meek, for they will submit to microchip implantation. Blessed are the merciful, for they are the ones who refuse the primitivist call for resistance to our transcendent ways. Blessed are the symbol makers, for they are the prehistoric precedent for scientific separation. And as Christomsky delivered his words, a man in the crowd rose up and said, "Oh faithfully-representative son of the Lord our Savior Science, I once was lost but now am found. You have healed my blindness to the greatness of a life of estrangement from wildness. You have shown me the wondrous capacity of your water skis to walk on water. But I wonder if the others will be as receptive." *sermon on the cybermount* 65

Christomsky was struck by the man's astute observation. After running the data through a supercomputer, the messiah decided more evidence would be needed to sway the thickheaded. He thus consulted with Science. They debated for hours in the usual anarcho-democratic consensual processes, but eventually their work yielded a stunning conclusion. Christomsky descended Mount Pie in the Sky, and proclaimed "Let my people go, you money-hungry bastards. For a post-profit motive society has arrived and we will need new laws to replace the old ones. We wouldn't want anarchy, would we?" And so the new Commandments, entitled Lessons in Bookchinology, were bestowed upon the audience.

1. Thou shall have no other gods but Science, for this god is truly Omnipotent (virtual reality), Omniscient (artificial intelligence) and Omnipresent (electricity).

2. Thou shall not kill, unless of course it is pygmy foragers or gorillas living on land containing coltan you need to mine in order to make cell phones.

3. Thou shall not steal, unless it is the joy one gets from non-sedentary life.

4. Thou shall honor and keep holy Descartes' birthday, for never must we think that historical icons are alienating or that specialists are unnecessary.

5. Thou shall not lie, unless it is done to convert a pre-homo symbolicus savage to the Church of Chemistry.

6. Thou shall not take Inter-Planetary Space Exploration's name in vain.

7. Thou shall not commit adultery with your neighbors scientifically designed android fuck toy.

8. Thou shall not covet thy neighbors widgets for all are welcome to delve into mediation as they please by unrelentingly visiting communal stores filled with the last techno-device.

9. Thou shall not autonomously make anything for cybernetic factory production is the sole source of survival and enjoyment. 10. Thou shall honor thy parents and schoolteachers for they are the key to each generation's adherence to Science.

Recognizing the difficulty in remembering these principal points of Bookchinology, Christomsky boiled them down to one key commandment and spoketh thus. "Thou shall slavishly obey Science by disconnecting yourself from non-symbolic ecstasy and pre-domes- ticated cornucopias." Hallelujah! Praise the Lord our Savior Science! For it has created our world of asphalt, skyscrapers and medical experimentation on animals as a benevolent redemption from the howling wilderness always threatening our concoctions. Now we'll be passing along the collection plate for we couldn't dominate the world without your generosity.

Kindly place your dignity in the wastebasket on the way out.

Towards Something New

The long road of civilization, which has led to the present day technological-spectacular society, has been a constant process of separation from nature and of domestication of individuality. Now more than ever, this is evident in the capitalist desire to free commodity production from the earth and its resources, as well as in the city dweller afraid of losing her grip on society. It is evident in destructive processes, and in those tending toward the concentration of people into a homogenous mass. It is also evident in the alienation from our own bodies and in the entrusting of their cure to specialists accustomed to treating one body after another without valuing subjectivites at all, almost as if these bodies were machines.

And this process has really operated mainly on this last aspect, not only separating us from external nature, but also from the form of nature, unacknowledged and mistreated by most, that we are. In this way, domination plants its roots in the brains of individuals convinced, or maybe constrained, to consider themselves other than nature. But we are not allowed to know what this other is. And by steering the middle course between the pedestal of domination over nature and the simultaneous evaluation of being insignificant within the social Moloch, it is possible to make the appeal to work in order to impose new ideals of the human being, absolutely functional to techno-logical domination and truly other than nature. It becomes imperative to integrate oneself, to evolve at a pace equal to the techno-sphere's separation from nature. And methods for integrating oneself are not at all lacking within the ruling order. They are not merely ideological: genetic manipulation already finds applications on the human being, and individuals are already designed in a laboratory, thus carrying evolutionary control to its farthest end. What genetics cannot achieve, especially on the social plane (truthfully, a lot), will be achieved thanks to nanotechnology that already allows the implanting of micro-chips under the skin with infinite possibilities, from tracking one's location, to the control of gestures and actions, up to interaction with the biological system. Today the lines of control tend to flow more and more into the fabric of life.

F.C., the so-called Unabomber, observed in the manifesto, *Industrial Society and Its Future*: "In the future, social systems will not be adjusted to suit the needs of human beings. Instead human beings will be adjusted to suit the needs of the system". (Thesis 151) With one small error, this future is already present. And it has always existed, even in less intrusive terms, with the adaptation and chaining of individuals, to economic development: work, the factory, degradation of food, commodification, spectacularization, etc

Going back in time, we can see how Descartes smoothed out the path for such artificialization with his mind-body dualism. Setting aside the mind and shifting attention to the body, objectively quantifiable and controllable, he pointed the way to science, which has today achieved transplants and the artificial creation of organs. Already Descartes himself asked, "Couldn't living organs perhaps be conceived in a satisfactory manner, and thus governed, as if they were machines?" But science has gone further, not only realizing his idea as the basis of modern biology, but then conceiving organisms fused with and ruled by machines.

The creation of a post-human race and the colonization of the cosmos by machines, as proposed by the scientistic extropian cult, are no longer only subjects for films or the isolated delirium of some fanatic, but projects under study in the universities of robotics and in research centers scattered throughout the world. The extropian Hans Moravec admits his fantasy that "our non-organic descendants, lacking our limits, capable of redesigning themselves could follow the awareness of things, confining the already surpassed humanity in an edenic environment, like a park". But more likely, in the name of efficiency, and in view of the objective difficulty of finding an edenic environment on this ravaged earth, the descendents of Moravec would eliminate the obsolete organic human forms. The machine and artificial intelligence are now considered by many as the next level of evolution. The disquieting vision of cyborg Kevin Warwick, who has inserted a chip into his arm that commands lights, entrances and computers in his office, is that fifty years from now machines will manage humans and artificial intelligence will outclass and eliminate human intelligence through the physical intervention of psychosurgery.

Beyond the obvious excess of fanaticism that certain theories reach, there is still a very precise direction: the elimination of the living being as we have known it up to now. What comes about with genetic engineering, controlled sterilization and reproduction, the creation of cyborgs, the cognitive flattening to the level of machines or the purging of the unsuitable is yet to be seen, but certainly this technological ideology will damage us from now on, whether there is a concrete realization or not. We are already at a point where reality and simulation sometimes becomes indistinguishable, and in an extension of the techniques of spectacular representation, there is now talk of artificial senses capable of making our perception of reality completely virtual, mediated and thus impoverished.

Before its too late, lets realize that science and technology are historical phenomena directed by a vulnerable elite and that our enslavement is in their interest. The key to the ascendancy of machines and of the post-human for an even more totalitarian domination lies in our acceptance; like it does for every form of exploitation and control. And it is only by overturning this notion and the current society, that it will be possible to find the key for the unknown world of freedom.

Technology & Class Struggle

Wolfi Landstreicher

The developments in technology over the past sixty years— the nuclear industry, cybernetics and related information techniques, biotechnology and genetic engineering— have produced fundamental changes in the social terrain. The methods of exploitation and domination have changed, and for this reason old ideas about the nature of class and class struggle are not adequate for understanding the present situation. The workerism of the marxists and syndicalists can no longer even be imagined to offer anything useful in developing a revolutionary practice. But simply rejecting the concept of class is not a useful response to this situation either, because in so doing one loses an essential tool for understanding the present reality and how to attack it.

Exploitation not only continues, but has intensified sharply in the wake of the new technology. Cybernetics has permitted the decentralization of production, spreading small units of production across the social terrain. Automation has drastically reduced the number of production workers necessary for any particular manufacturing process. Cybernetics further creates methods for grabbing immediate profit seemingly without producing anything real, thus allowing capital to expand itself with minimal labor costs.

Furthermore, the new technology demands a specialized knowledge that is not available for most people. This knowledge has come to be the real wealth of the ruling class in the present era. Under the old industrial system, one could look at class struggle as the struggle between workers and owners over the means of production. This no longer makes sense. As the new technology advances, the exploited find themselves driven into increasingly precarious positions. The old life-long skilled factory position has been replaced by day labor, service sector jobs, temporary work, unemployment, the black market, illegality, homelessness and prison. This precariousness guarantees that the wall created by the new technology between the exploiters and the exploited remains unbreachable.

But the nature of the technology itself places it beyond the reach of the exploited. Earlier industrial development had as its primary focus the invention of techniques for the mass manufacturing of standardized goods at low cost for high profit. These new technological developments are not so much aimed at the manufacturing of goods as at the development of means for increasingly thorough and widespread social control and for freeing profit as much as possible from production. The nuclear industry requires not only specialized knowledge, but also high levels of security that place its development squarely under the control of the state and lead to a military structuring in

keeping with its extreme usefulness to the military. Cybernetic technology's ability to process, record, gather and send information nearly instantaneously serves the needs of the state to document and monitor its subjects as well as its need to reduce the real knowledge of those it rules to bits of information—data—hoping, thus, to reduce the real capabilities for understanding of the exploited. Biotechnology gives the state and capital control over the most fundamental processes of life itself—allowing them to decide what sort of plants, animals and—in time—even human beings can exist.

Because these technologies require specialized knowledge and are developed for the purpose of increasing the control of the masters over the rest of humanity even in our daily lives, the exploited class can now best be understood as those excluded from this specialized knowledge and thus from real participation in the functioning of power. The master class is thus made up of those included in participation in the functioning of power and the real use of the specialized technological knowledge. Of course these are processes in course, and the borderlines between the included and excluded can, in some cases, be elusive as increasing numbers of people are proletarianized—losing whatever decision-making power over their own conditions of existence they may have had.

It is important to point out that although these new technologies are intended to give the masters control over the excluded and over the material wealth of the earth, they are themselves beyond any human being's control. Their vastness and the specialization they require combine with the unpredictability of the materials they act upon–atomic and sub-atomic particles, light waves, genes and chromosomes, etc—to guarantee that no single human being can actually understand completely how they work. This adds a technological aspect to the already existing economic precariousness that most of us suffer from. However, this threat of technological disaster beyond any one's control also serves power in controlling the exploited–the fear of more Chernobyls, genetically engineered monsters or escaped laboratory-made diseases and the like, move people to accept the rule of so-called experts who have proven their own limits over and over again. Furthermore, the state–that is responsible for every one of these technological developments through its military—is able to present itself as a check against rampant corporate "abuse" of this technology. So this monstrous, lumbering, uncontrollable juggernaut serves the exploiters very well in maintaining their control over the rest of the population. And what need have they to worry about the possible disasters when their wealth and power has most certainly provided them with contingency plans for their own protection? *technology & class struggle* 71

Thus, the new technology and the new conditions of exclusion and precariousness it imposes on the exploited undermine the old dream of expropriation of the means of production. This technology—controlling and out of control–cannot serve any truly human purpose and has no place in the development of a world of individuals free to create their lives as they desire. So the illusory utopias of the syndicalists and marxists are of no use to us now. But were they ever? The new technological developments specifically center around control, but all industrial development has taken the neces-

sity of controlling the exploited into account. The factory was created in order to bring producers under one roof to better regulate their activities; the production line mechanized this regulation; every new technological advance in the workings of the factory brought the time and motions of the worker further under control. Thus, the idea that workers could liberate themselves by taking over the means of production has always been a delusion. It was an understandable delusion when technological processes had the manufacture of goods as their primary aim. Now that their primary aim is so clearly social control, the nature of our real struggle should be clear: the destruction of all systems of control-thus of the state, capital and their technological system, the end of our proletarianized condition and the creation of ourselves as free individuals capable of determining how we will live ourselves. Against this technology our best weapon is that which the exploited have used since the beginning of the industrial era: **sabotage**.

Godfrey Reggio Interview

*Godfrey Reggio could be described, simply, as a documentarian. However, his experimental, non-narrated films go far beyond the simplistic mode of information-based moving pictures. Instead of numbers, charts and equations we are presented with inscrutable human faces, immersed in the technological world through which they travel. Stunning natural oases of water and land barricade the ominous enormity of industrialism, which crashes and storms with the surges of Phillip Glass' minimalist orchestral score. Challenging, but never high-minded, encompassing but never elitist, Reggio has finally concluded the Qatsi trilogy (*Koyaanisqatsi, Powaqqatsi *and* Naqoyqatsi*) with the theatrical release of* Naqoyqatsi. *Each film deals with, respectively, the perspectives as regards technology within the first world, the third world and the digital world, to be very brief.*

Reggio has worked in a "non-ideological, mutual aid collective", founded 33 years ago, that operated without wage labor and focused on living life creatively. Its members have managed to retain creative control over their films despite substantial contracts with MGM, which has released the Qatsi DVDs. He and his teams' creative approach to cataloguing and debunking the industrial division of labor is unprecedented in the documentary tradition. Reggio's work, in particular Koyaanisqatsi, *is notable to Green Anarchists as one of the first films to question technology as a totality. In his own words, "The idea was to mainline in the vascular structure of the beast this form, which was created by technology, to question technology. In other words, these are not environmental films, these are films more about the presence of technology as a new and comprehensive host of life and three different points of view about it." The current film,* Naqoyqatsi, *will finish its theatrical run on January 24 and arrive in a three-DVD set with the rest of the films in 2004. Reggio has no current plans to create films after the end of the Qatsi trilogy.*

Sk!: Could you give us some brief background on your life in the context of what brought you to critiquing technological processes through film? What experiences, thoughts or words influenced your path?

Godfrey Reggio: Well, I think for all of us there's a line, even though it's quite crooked, that gives, as it were, some testament to who we are and what we do. In my case, I grew up in a very stratified society of New Orleans. At the age of 13/14, I decided to throw in the towel, that it was all too crazy, not so interesting. I was getting burnt out. At a young age, living in the fat as it were, I decided to go away and become a monk. So I left home. My parents were not too excited about that, and I stayed out for 14 years, having taken final vows as a Christian brother. In effect, got

to live in the middle ages during the 1950s and learned crazy things, like the meaning of life is to give, not to receive, that we should be in the world but not of it. All these things I think, certainly influenced me. I'm very grateful for that highly disciplined, very rugged way of life, that would make the marine corp look like the boy scouts. So I think that had a big influence on me. During the course of that time, I saw a film called *Los Olvidados* (The Forgotten One) by Luis Bunuel, so *The Young and the Damned*, the first film he made in Mexico after being kicked out of Franco Spain. It was so moving to me that it was the equivalent of a spiritual experience. I was at that time working with street gangs. This film was about the street gangs in Mexico City, I was working with street gangs in Northern New Mexico. It moved me to the quick: it wasn't entertainment, it was something that was an event that touched me and hundreds and hundreds of gang members that saw it. We bought a 16mm copy and I guess I've seen the film a couple hundred times. So that motivated me to look towards film as a medium of direct action. Now, film is usually not seen as that. I don't see it as entertainment in my case, I hope it can be a vehicle for direct action. That's how I became involved, it was also during that time that I had the good fortune to meet Ivan Illich, Illich was a priest at that time, I don't know if you know who Illich is.

Sk!: I do.

GR: Ok, he's just passed away by the way, December the 2nd. So I had the good fortune to become a confidant of his, at a young age I used to do my religious retreats in Mexico at his think tank. Got a great appreciation for, I guess, being sensitive to different points of view about what could be done for social change. His point of view was much more radical than, say, the radical left of the country, which was anti-war, pro-social justice, and included a good dose of socialism or communism. His radicalism was way beyond that; it was much more fundamental. It had to do with the very nature of society and institutions (not just who controls them, which is kind of the communist mantra). So I had the opportunity to be in the presence of a great teacher who was also a great activist. So I think those things impelled me to the position I'm in now.

Sk!: One of the influences you've noted at the end of Naqoyqatsi *is Jacques Ellul, whose critique of technology is closely intertwined with a Christian theology. You, yourself, were once a Christian monk. Do you feel that a critique of the dominant technological order is effective in a religious context?*

GR: Yes I do, now let's talk a little bit about his critique. This was a man who was not accepted by either the organized religions of his day or the Left of France. He was *persona non grata* from the Left and the Right, much like Wilhelm Reich was *persona non grata* of the Left and Right of Germany. Here was a man who, more than any single individual, has contributed to our understanding of the nature of technology not as something we use but as something we live. For Jacques Ellul, technology is the new and comprehensive host of life, the new environment of life. The problem with that statement is that our language hasn't caught up to the profundity of the thought, our language has become assumptive and no longer, in my opinion, describes the world in

which we live. Ellul bore great criticism, if not persecution, for his ideas, from the Left as well as the Right, because like Ivan Illich, who made statements like "Freedom is the ability to say 'no' to technological necessity", Jacques Ellul described our greatest act of freedom as to know that which controls our behavior. So both of these men were on very similar tracts, both of them were way outside the sphere of organized Right and Left, both of them were way to the Left of the Left. His ideas on the environment, you could call them Christian, but I wouldn't. Certainly he was a theologian and he wrote many books on the word of god from his own point of view, but his stuff can certainly stand. His book for example, *The Technological Society*, his first book, 1949 I think it was really written and released here sometime in the mid 50s, that book is a solid philosophical, sociological text about the nature of technique. It's light years beyond anything being written now. I think, if I'm not mistaken, the University of California at Berkeley has acquired the rights to his full library, all of his notes, his books, and they have in there a great gem.

Sk!: What was the impetus to initiate the Qatsi trilogy? What motivations brought you, a person not associated with film into the director's chair?

GR: Street gangs for many years, as a brother. I became convinced that, while there are a few loonies that probably would hurt anybody under any condition, most people are good. I believe that; it's my experience that most people are good, it's not something I believe, it's something I know. If you tell somebody they're a shit, they'll probably behave like a shit. If you tell somebody they're great, they might achieve greatness. I think that's the fragility of who we are. We live in a world not of this or that but this and that. So after working with street gangs for quite a long time, I realized that the context in which people of poverty have to try to work out how to live in this society is very cruel. I didn't start this project to set up an institution that would live forever. It was a response to an immediate situation, and I left to pursue film as a form of direct action. Now by that I mean the following; since people are at the public trough of cinema, either through television or in the theater itself, I felt, what better place to put another idea out? Not in the form of language, but in the form of image and music. Let me explain that it's not for lack of love for the language that my films have no words. It's because of my, I guess, tragic thought that our language no longer describes the world in which we live. Through Ivan Illich, I had the good fortune to meet Paulo Freire, in Brazil, in São Paulo, before he passed on. I had a good time talking with him about this enormous book that he wrote, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. In that, he says that the single most important thing a person can do is to begin to rename the world in which they live. This was his form of literacy, not teaching one how to read a book in the traditional sense, but to rename the world, because when you name something, you in effect create it. My own thought is that our language is bound with antique ideas, old formulas that no longer describe the moment in which we are. Therefore, that statement, *A picture is worth a thousand words*, I tried to take it and turn it on its head, and tried to give you a thousand pictures that can offer the power of one word. In the case of each of the three films, *Koyaanisqatsi*,

Powaqqatsi, *Naqoyqatsi*, words that come from an illiterate source, a primal source, a wisdom that is beyond our ability to describe the world. A wisdom that says that all things we call normal are abnormal, all things that we call sane are insane. Now I realize that this is a pretty intense point of view, but that's the point of view I ended up with from my own experience, not from academia but from being on the line in the '60s, trying to see the world from another point of view.

Sk!: The films were independently funded, avoiding governmental grant processes and industrialist handouts. You seem conscious of that old Marxist adage that the ideology closest to the means of production becomes the dominant ideology. Do you feel that you were able to avoid the constraints of capital influence in the Qatsi trilogy?

GR: Well, you know, it's hard to say that. I wouldn't want to exempt myself from anything, all of money is dirty money. Whether I got my money from an angel, and I don't know how you get your money but it's as dirty as the money I got. The events that I'm talking about are way beyond capitalism and communism (which is its flipside). Both of those 'isms are much closer together than most people believe. They both share the same point of view about the instrumentality of life, the mass society, the industrialization of society, their only difference is who controls it. In the case of capitalists, it's individuals who have accumulated wealth on the backs and the injustice of millions of people, literally. In the case of the soviets, it's a new class of administrators, bureaucrats, who created a class, in my opinion, just as ironclad and unjust as the capitalist class. Both really want the same thing; they are just concerned about who controls the means of production. My question is not who controls the means of production, but the nature of production, as such. The question is not whether or not workers have an equitable pay and a healthy work environment, which is the interest of organized labor, or the Left that works with organized labor. The question, more profoundly, is, what is the effect of the automobile on society and should we have that in the first place? So, we're dealing more with fundamental questions. It has become my experience, sadly, that human beings become their environment. We become what we see, what we hear, what we taste, what we touch. Anything that we do without question, in an altered state, we become that environment. If the environment that we live in today, as Ellul says, is a technological milieu or environment, if we no longer live with nature, and I'm not parenthetically talking about going back to teepees and caves etc, if our environment itself is technological, if we don't use technology, if we live it, breathe it like the air that is ubiquitous around us, then we become that environment. In that sense, whether you're communist, capitalist, socialist, primitive, an outsider, an artist, a revolutionary, if you live in this world, all of us doing that, we become this world. In that sense, all of us now are cyborged. *Cyborg* is not something for the future, it is already here. We live now in both worlds. The old world, the world that "nature" replaced, old nature, held its unity through the mystery of diversity. So there are many languages, many different environments to live in, there's tropical, there's semi-tropical, there's mountain, there's desert, there's savannah, there's salva, etc There's not one flower, there's uncountable flowers. Not one animal, a zillion of them, not one human

being, many. The mantra of the old world was, *Divided we stand.* The new world, the technological order, holds its unity through a technological imperative. It creates unity through technological homogenization. Its mantra is *United we stand.* To me, this is the moment we're in. We're at that crossroads and the world is becoming homogenized; what we're seeing is the Los Angelization of the planet through technology. My work has been, in effect, to try to shield my eyes from the blinding light of the new sun, technology, seeking the darkness, walking towards the positive value of negation. Trying to question the very structures, the very contexts in which we live, not who controls them.

We become what we see, what we hear, what we taste, what we smell, it's so easily said but it's a profound concept beyond the simplicity of the words that bear it. We live in an environment, as Ellul said, that is, in terms of a social event, the most enormous event of the last 5,000 years has gone unnoticed, the transitioning of old nature to new nature. Environmentalists don't get it, most of environmentalism is how to make this madness safe. How to make cars safe, how to make industry safe, how to make electricity and war safe for the environment. We live in a time where we are like blind people, we don't see the moment in which we are. We no longer use metaphor as our means of communion or communication (ie language). Metamorphosis is the form now, where the transformation, where the substance of something is changed, the transubstantiation of something is a metamorphic approach to communion rather than the metaphoric, which is the power of language. But language is disappearing. At the beginning of the 20th century, there were over 30,000 languages and principal dialects in the world. Today, with many more people, over double the number of people that were present then, we're approaching 4,000 languages and principal dialects. In other words, as the earth is being eaten up by the voracious appetite of technology, everything that is local is disappearing. In that disappearance, language disappears and when language disappears, we are left with a more homogenized language to describe the world which, again, does not give us access to understanding. It produces more conformity.

Sk!: With Koyaanisqatsi *you examined the first world in great detail, starting off from stunning wild lakes, through constricting cities, the faces of people, culminating in the destruction of the space shuttle Challenger. Throughout this film, technology is portrayed as an accelera- tory, agglomerating, isolating and destructive force. Many critics would charge that it is merely the arrangement of technology or the puppeteer behind the scenes controlling technology that must be changed. Do you see hierarchy as endemic to these systems of control? Can we separate technology from domination?*

GR: I don't believe, I think it's a pure myth, right, left, upsidedown, backward, to think that we control technology. I think that's a joke. Technology is in the driver's seat. I would go to the very radical writing of Mary Shelley, not the Hollywood version, but her original book *Frankenstein*, where we've empowered something that's not in the organic realm, we've organized and allowed it to exist, and now it has its own life form. Now, that's very hard for us to get our mind around, because we give ourselves

more credit than we're due. We think that our greatest attribute is our mind, actually our greatest attribute is what is our action, our act, what we do everyday. It's what we've become. Marx has this great adage, I think Marx says, "Is it the behavior we have that determines our consciousness or is it the consciousness that we have that determines our behavior?" And of course the answer for 8 out of 7 people is that it's the behavior that we involve ourselves in that determines our consciousness. The only way to avoid that is to do what Joseph Brodsky did, to become an outsider to society, all of us have to live in this world but we don't have to be of it. Brodsky decided not to be of it. He became, for me, a revolutionary poet, though he's not seen that way in the communist world. Stood outside, answered Marx's questions. He said consciousness, or removing oneself, being in the world but not of it, would be a way of having your mind determine your behavior. So, the thing that I'm railing against, technology, is something I use. Some would say this is hypocritical or contradictory, let me agree with them, that it is contradictory. In the sense I'm trying to communicate, and wishing to do so in the contradiction of a mass culture, then I have to consciously adopt the tools of that culture or the language of that culture in order to communicate. So it's the equivalent of fighting fire with fire. In that sense, I see the work that I do as direct action. Though I certainly use a very high-tech base, using that in order to make it available to raise questions about the very thing I'm using.

Sk!: The camerawork in city scenes throughout the trilogy often creates an industrial claustrophobia, giant buildings crowd the viewer into a confrontation with urban space as alienation. Living in the desert as long as you have, what are your impressions of urban civilization?

GR: Well I grew up in urban civilization, in New Orleans, then I came out to New Mexico which is one of the highest deserts in the world. Here, the sky... you don't look at, you breathe it. I've lived here now 44 years, I consider myself fortunate to be out here, it's like the Siberia of America. In this magnificent beauty is this enormous enigma, and the evil demon of nuclear technology that sits, as the crow flies, about fourteen miles from my window. So it's a place of inscrutable beauty and unbelievable demonic energy. I'm sure that's had an influence on me, being here, breathing the sky and having the presence of this monster. It allows me to have another point of view of the world in which I lived. When I shot *Koyaanisqatsi* with my collaborators, the way we did this film was eliminate all the foreground of what is a normal theatrical film, the plot, the characterization, the acting etc When you don't have the foreground, what's left is the second unit or background to the story. Stripping the film of all that foreground material, we take the background or second unit, and make that the foreground. So, in this case, the building becomes like an entity, the traffic becomes like an entity, something that has a life of itself. The whole purpose of this film was to try to see the ordinary, that which, let's say, we are basted in. Being marinated in the environment that we live in, it all seems very familiar. And I was trying to show that that very thing that we call familiar is itself a techno-fascistic way of living. So I tried to see it from another point of view, I tried to see it as a life-form, albeit a

non-organic life-form, that has a life absolutely independent of our own. Right now, the cities are made for the automobile, not for the people. When the automobile was brought in as a technology, they said it would just be a "faster horse," it wouldn't have any more effect than that. But we all know that's ridiculous, we all know that we pay a hidden price for our pursuit of technological happiness and we call it, instead of war, we call it accident. But more people die in vehicular crashes than they do in war, if that's even believable. So, it's just the price we're willing to pay for the pursuit of our technological happiness, and these films are about questioning that point of view.

Sk!: Powaqqatsi *is defined at the end of the second film as "a way of life that consumes the life forces of other beings in order to further its own life." Later you are quoted as saying that between the third world and the first world,* Powaqqatsi *captures "our unanimity as a global culture." Now, the film portrays the third world from agriculture to commodity trading, bartering to industry—a narrative is constructed that seems to point the third world in the direction of increasingly intensified civilization. To what extent are the narratives of "development" (in the case of the WTO and IMF) and "history" (in the case of Marxism) negative factors in the lives of people in the third world? Since the definition of* Powaqqatsi *refers to a parasitic sorcerer, is it reasonable to characterize the first world as a parasite?*

GR: My answer would be simply, yes. The whole point of view of *Powaqqatsi* is that through the dogma/religion of progress and development, which again, parenthetically, is not only a capitalist agenda but also a Marxist agenda that very paradigm consumes, and eats, and pulls out of the sockets people who live a handmade life. I was criticized when I made that film by Leftists in Germany, for romanticizing poverty, for trying to eliminate industrialization and, therefore, a better way of living. Well that's in a point of view, if that's how they see it, so be it, but that's certainly not my intention. My intention was to say that standards of living are ephemeral. The standard of living of the world is based on first world norms, of consumption, of the institutionalization of life, of giving up your own control to the control of others. The very opposite is true in the so-called third world or Southern hemisphere, where really, the heritage of the earth exists not only in nature but in human development. Small, convivial, decentralized societies of handmade living, where things can be uniquely different, valley to valley, plain to plain. The world that we're trying to force, through the IMF, etc, on the southern hemisphere, is a world of homogenized value. A world where Los Angeles, Jakarta, Hong Kong, the Philippines, etc, all look the same. This is in diametric opposition to the nature of the development of the South, which is disappearing right now because of the norms of development. The very founding, for example, of the United Nations, was on the dogma, on the theology, on the philosophy of promoting progress and development around the world as our guarantee for world peace. Now what crazier thought could you have? All of us buy in, in some way. Many people buy into the United Nations, but their very purpose is to produce this homogenizing event all over the world. For me this is the essence of techno-fascism, and it's another example of how the Northern hemisphere is consuming, without question,

the Southern hemisphere. The Northern hemisphere has consumed most of its own resources already, the Southern hemisphere is where the nature bank of our world still exists. If the north has its way, that will be consumed to create and further develop the technological order, which for me, is a fascistic venture.

Sk!: The latest film, Naqoyqatsi, *has shifted the focus directly to digital technology and its violent consequences. What societal changes, observed in the bridge between* Powaqqatsi *and* Naqoyqatsi, *did you want to integrate into the new film?*

GR: Here's the thing, these films, early on, were conceived. It took years to realize them, but the idea was that *Koyaanisqatsi* would deal with the northern hemisphere (or in your terms, the first world). The hyper-industrial grids that we call societies. The second film deals with the southern hemisphere or what you might call the third world. Societies of simplicity, where unity is held through the mystery of diversity and how those societies are being consumed by the myth of progress and development. The third film, conceived early on as well, dealt with the globalized moment in which we live. How the world is being homogenized, how unity is being held together by the new divine, the computer. The new divine is the manufactured image, which is the subject of *Naqoyqatsi* and hence, the necessity of using digital technology to create it. In the case of *Koyaanisqatsi* and *Powaqqatsi*, we went to real locations to film them. In the case of *Naqoyqatsi*, we went to virtual locations to film them. We took stock and archival images that venerated familiar those things we have all grown up with through the myth of history, and we've taken and revivified them, or tortured them with a computer to create a manufactured image which is, as Baudrillard would call it, the evil demon of image. The purpose of image is to produce this monstrous, demonic conformity. Right now, image is more important than truth or reality. Look at the political spectrum, it's all about the image of something. So this third film deals squarely with the image as its principal subject matter, the manufactured image in the globalization of the world.

We spoke a bit about the computer, because it plays a central role as an entity in *Naqoyqatsi*. From my point of view, the computer is the new divine. When I say that, it portends supernatural powers.

The computer is not just something we use again, it's the very vehicle that's remaking the world to its own image or likeness. If one were a Christian theologian or a Catholic theologian, the highest form of magic in the Catholic universe is the sacrament. The sacrament is different from a sign in that it produces what it signifies. Unlike a sign, like if one is married and wears a ring, that ring is a sign of your fidelity, of your union with your spouse. But it doesn't produce it, it only reminds you or others that you're married. In the case of a sacrament, the sacrament produces what it signifies. So if there was a sacrament of unity, it produces that unity, it's the very highest form of magic. So I'm saying that the computer is the new sacramental magic, it produces what it signifies, it remakes the world to its own image and likeness. In that sense it is the very driving force of what I would call the techno-fascistic world. As the swastika was the image of fascism in the 20th century, and there were many

other images as well but that one prevailed, the new image of techno-fascism is the blue planet. Not the reality of the earth, but the image of the blue planet. That, to me, is the ubiquitous image of techno-fascism.

Sk!: Notably, Naqoyqatsi*'s framing definition is "civilized violence." Never before in the series has the polemic been so searingly presented. Yet, throughout* Naqoyqatsi*, while high technology and digital life are critically examined, the film is ambiguous as to the fundamental disjunct that enables civilized violence. From a primitivist perspective, which views the rise of technology parallel to the rise of the division of labor, agriculture and symbolic culture, it seems like an incomplete critique. How do we undo technology, a force we breathe like oxygen, if we have no constructive alternative? Is it enough to present the case without suggesting a course of action?*

GR: Well, first of all, let me say that if there's a course of action that someone would recommend that would be right for anyone, that very *rightness for everyone* would make it fascistic. So anything universal for me is fascistic. I don't pretend to have the answers, but I know that the question is the mother of the answer. Rather than presenting answers to people which I think is a fascist modus operandi, it's much more important to present questions. The question becomes the mother of the answer. That which can change things more fundamentally than anything is the power of a community example. The power of a community in direct action or living an alternative. I'm not talking about utopias, I'm talking about a community in struggle, that wishes to present an alternative to the slavery to which we've all subjected ourselves through mass society. That would be a way out. If you look at it from a more comprehensive point of view, perhaps there is no exit from technology. This is, itself, a tragedy. On the other hand, I believe that there is no destiny that human beings cannot overcome. How that is done is up to the individual, it's not up for any of us to give answers to others as to how to remake their world.

Sk!: Many civilized radicals find themselves weighed by guilt and alienated from cultures that civilization has domesticated. How did you, as a person born into American civilization, guide your participation in the lives of the Hopi? Why did you frame the discourse of all three movies in the context of Hopi prophecy?

GR: Well first of all let me say that I'm not a Hopi devotee, I don't spend time over there. All of my contacts have died there. This film is not about Hopi, I am not trying to go back to a Hopi way of life, nor am I espousing that. We can't go back to the teepee, we can't go back to the cave. What I tried to do is simply take their point of view, because I found it laden with wisdom, I found that they understood our world better than we did. That doesn't have to be the result of guilt, it has to be the result of coming in contact with someone that blows your mind with their perspicacity of thought. That's what happened to me. It was music to my ears to hear David Menongue, an elder who was in his late 90s when I met him, say that everything that white people call normal we look at as abnormal. Everything white people call sane we look at as insane. Well that was music to my ears because that was exactly how I felt, they didn't give me this idea, it was like confirmation. If you have a way-out
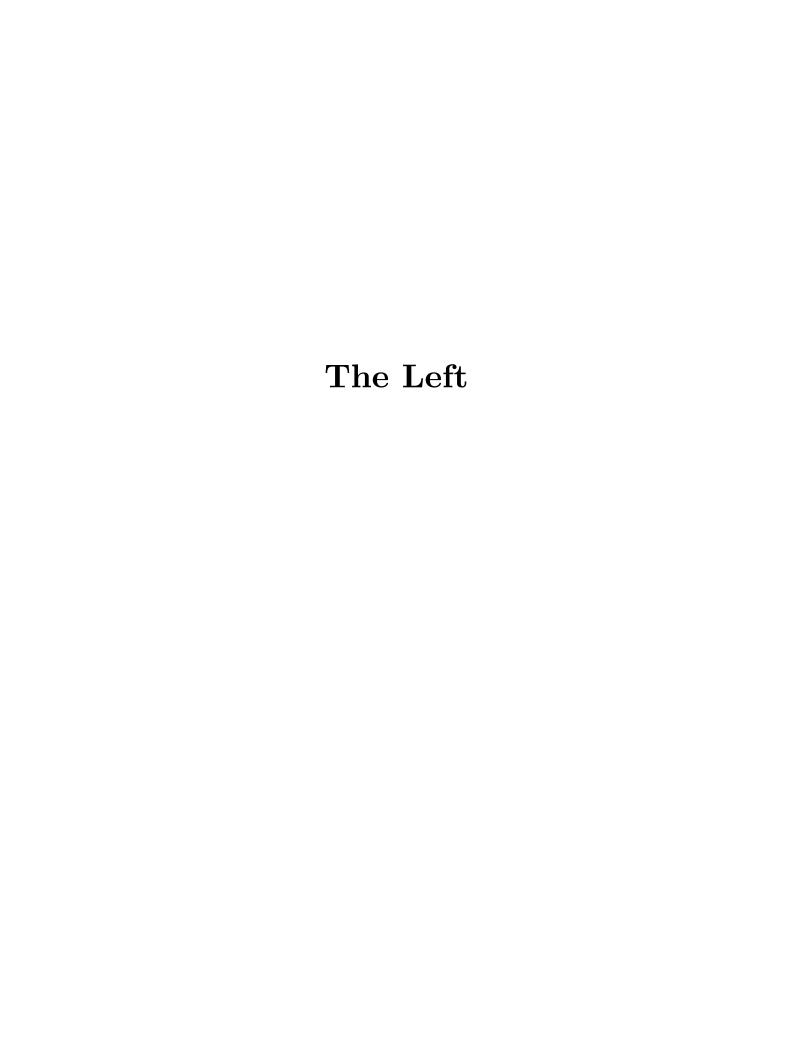
idea and it's so way-out that you think you might be nuts, which I thought for years, if you find some other people that actually have that same idea in another form, it confirms you. So I used it as a confirming. I also felt that their language has no cultural baggage, when you say *Koyaanisqatsi*, no one knows what that means, it sounds like, perhaps, a Japanese word. I'm taking that language, that doesn't come from a literate form, it actually comes from an illiterate form, it's a culture of morality. I'm taking the wisdom of that point of view to describe our world. Much like academics do in universities, they take their own subjective categories of intellectual pursuit and apply them to In- dians through ethnographic studies, anthropology, etc. This is turning the tables, it's taking the subjective content, or ideas, of Hopi, and applying it to white civilization. And that's something that makes some people uncomfortable. That's an easy way of getting out of seeing the value of other people's cultures and contributions beyond your own.

Sk!: One thing that I noticed, after viewing all three movies, was the persistent image of the atom bomb mushroom cloud. Culturally we've seen that everywhere, you could almost say that's a burnt-out image for a lot of people. And yet, in Naqoyqatsi*, which just came out, you put it in again. Is that something you see as an endpoint?*

GR: No, if it's burnt out, it's only because it's been used so often. My whole thing in *Naqoyqatsi* was to take all of these burnt out images, images that we're surrounded with, like the wallpaper of life which we call history, that great lie as it were, and re-examine those, put them in another context. So this film was a little more difficult than the other two, it's taking our familiar, that which we've seen ad nauseam, and trying to put it in another context. Nuclear is something that, while we think we know something about, we have no idea of what it's done to us. Much like television, something as ubiquitous as television, we have no idea of what it's doing to us. Because we keep looking at it from the point of view of the subject matter that's on the tube, rather than the technology, which is a cathode ray gun aimed directly at the viewer that probably changes our genetic structure and certainly puts us into a deep comatose state. I made a film called *Evidence of Children Watching Television* (and they were watching Dumbo actually, or they could have been watching anything, it didn't really matter). Their eyes become fixated, their breathing slows down, automaticities take place on the face, slobbering comes out of the mouth; these kids are on drugs heavier than Prozac just by having the television on. It's the same thing with nuclear technology, we think it's just something that we control, that if we had a "Nuclear Test-ban" treaty, everything would be fine. The nuclear war has already occurred, all during the 50s. We doubled the background radiation of the planet, it's affected all of our genetic structures. So, while these things have the familiarity of the surface image, the profundity of their depth is something that we know very little about. I think it's Einstein that said that the fish would be the last to know water, I would say, taking off on that context, that human beings will be the last to know technology, because it's the very water we live in.

Sk!: What advice would you give to young people all around the world gradually awaking to the nightmare of a world out of control with the proliferation of mass techniques?

GR: I don't like to give advice, but I'll say what I think as to what we can do. I think our greatest opportunity is to live a creative life. Often that means to reject schooling, rejecting organized education. For many of us, our diploma from college becomes our death certificate, because it ingratiates us into a way of life that's unquestioned where the principal modus operandi is finance, or money. The real meaning of life, I think for all of us, in our different ways, is the opportunity to live a creative life, to create things, to name things. I would say for all of us, the most radical thing we can do, and the most practical thing we can do, is to be idealistic, to rename the world in which we live. I think we do that best through example, not just through using words, but using words that we can stand on, the acts that we do. Living in the world but not being of the world, being an outsider, yet knowing that all of us are insiders. Living with the conundrum that life is not this or that, life is this and that. It's not black or white, it's black and white. So I'll add to that whole recipe humor, and one has the possibility of living a meaningful life.

The Left

Anti-Left Anarchy: Hunting Leftism with Intent to Kill

By presupposing the axiom of the economic, the Marxist critique perhaps deciphers the functioning of the system of political economy; but at the same time it reproduces it as a model. There is neither a mode of production *nor* production *in primitive societies. There is no dialectic and no unconscious in primitive societies. Marxism is the projection of the class struggle and the mode of production onto all previous history; it is the vision of a future "freedom" based on the conscious domination of nature. These are extrapolations of the economic. To the degree that it is not* **radical,** *Marxist critique is led despite itself to reproduce the roots of the system of political economy. —The Mirror of Production*

Leftism isn't merely deadly in its dullness, it's homicidally deadly in practice and implementation. In the 20th century the Soviet Union massacred an estimated tweny to forty **million** people in the establishment of their communist empire (some estimates exceed upward of fifty million, but are difficult to verify for as people were sent to camps, the Soviets often deleted all records of that persons existence); Mao Tse-Tung's "Great Leap Forward" in China (widely recognized as the greatest disaster in an attempt to construct a centralized economy) is believed to have left about forty million dead; and Cambodia's Khmer Rouge massacred two million (one fourth of the population of Cambodia) in killing fields—all in the name of an "equal form of communism". The communist regimes of the last century all ran a madman's course and their scientifically-designed Utopias all came in the form of death camps. In essence, communism is just another (particularly violent) administrative branch of civilization—like feudalism—and is committed to a production-based industrial social model with even more religious fervor than capitalism is.

Now one would think that *anarchists,* of all people, would be hostile to the inherently totalistic and collectivizing nature of leftist ideologies— like communism and socialism—yet to this day, a large number of socalled anarchists continue to express sympathy with communist goals, communist epistemology, and Marxist class analysis— and allow their brains to be bamboozled and mislead by euphemisms like "anti-state communist", "autonomist Marxist", or the current-favorite of the urban hipster: "communization". Anarchists who drool over this bullshit are worshiping at the altar of a stagnant pool and remain tethered to a political tradition of authoritarianism and mass graves—regardless of the updated terminology (the thin rhetoric of "communization" has reached new summits of tedium with the trendy writings of mealymouthed shys-

ters like Tiqqun and the imbecilic gurglings of Applied Nonexistence: both duplicitous commie frontgroups that specialize in speaking post-modern gibberish, in substituting elitist, masturbatory language for real speech, and in choking unfortunate readers with a foul, dreamless air—much like that emanating from uncovered garbage cans).

At *Green Anarchy* we'd long ago grown tired of this stupid dialogue and sought to allocate new anarchic color combinations to the political rubbish that engulfs our lives. The deceptive verbiage of the Left has placed a strangle-knot on our imaginative field for far too long, freezing our energy and obscuring the essence of the struggle for Anarchy, its basic and intrinsic qualities, with artificial and pretentious ideologies that stifle the action of thought and dream in tedious, one-dimensional holding patterns. **All** ideologies are straight-jackets to the Free Spirit, but ideologies that don't reflect the chaos, nonsensical whimsy, and maniacal laughter of life—like Leftism—are particularly boring impediments to the unrestrained expression of autonomous and **uncivilized** rebellion. Green Anarchy—or the critique of civilization—is class analysis that doesn't go halfway, that doesn't remain trapped in capitalist logic (as communism does), and that attacks alienation, domestication, and division of labor at their roots...their *civilized* roots. The Left is solidly embedded in the civilized order and as we struggle against this poisoned, horrible darkness that is dragging us towards universal collapse, it would behoove us to struggle with **open eyes.**

The Nature of the Left

Marx considered industry the "open book of human essential forces." Nowhere on the Left is this formulation refuted. Its origins, logic, destination are taken for granted. We find here, in fact, a core assumption that unites Leftists: that the means of production/technology should be progressively developed, its reach always extended. This notion is very close to the heart of the modern conception of progress. All of life must yield to its imperative.

Domination of nature and domestication are in no way problematic for the Left. Leftists fail to notice that this accounts, in a fundamental way, for the Left's sorry record in practice concerning both the natural world and the individual.

Like other defenders of civilization and modernity, leftists uphold the "neutrality" of technology. They cling to this credo even as the horrors of genetic engineering, human cloning, the cyborg future for the self, etc unfold for all to see. Soon, apparently, a wholly mediated and artificial reality will arrive, with the virtual/digital erasure of direct experience itself. Modern industrial "medicine", for example, is on course to dispense with human contact altogether.

But no matter, this development is "neutral"; it all depends on how it is used or who is in power. As if these innovations weren't hugely estranging and destructive processes in themselves.

Technology embodies the dominant values of the social order where it resides. It is inseparable from those values and is their physical expression. Technology becomes a system, as its society becomes a system. At a fairly early stage of the development of division of labor (specialization), tools become technology. Where once there were autonomous, equal individuals and tools accessible to all, the effective power of experts gradually takes over, promoting social hierarchy. Division of labor is a fundamental motor of complex, stratified, alienated society, today as from the beginning.

The Left doesn't question this basic institution that drives all the rest, and so must repeat the dominant lie about the neutrality of technology. In this way the Left works continually for the preservation of the values and the society that produce ever more powerful and oppressive technology.

Globalization is not only the cutting edge of the world system of domination; it also represents division of labor at the global level. The Left, of course, takes even this for granted, opposing only the excesses of certain policies, not globalization itself. Thus "Against Globophobia," (*The Nation*, December 1, 2003) rails against those of us who do oppose it, eg "This might be a good time to junk local self-reliance as an ideal and embrace a deeply global perspective." The current bible of the Left, Hardt and

Negri's *Empire* (2000), is at least as committed to contemporary society's mainstays of productionism, technology, and the basic world system. This system is stamping out all difference, including indigenous lifeways, in favor of standardization and global homogeneity.

In his *Mirror of Production* (1972), Jean Baudrillard showed that marxism (and all of the modern Left) is just the mirror image of capital's techno-economic essentials. Even earlier, Walter Benjamin understood that "mass production is the production of masses."

The Left is not radical and really never was. Its adherents challenge none of the underlying givens of this rotten, massified, anti-life world. On the contrary, the Left—including the anarchist Left—defends them all. What leftists do oppose is a qualitatively different vision, in the direction of decentralized, face-to-face, small-scale community where individual responsibility makes division of labor and domination obsolete, and human anarchy is part of nature.

Leftism 101

Lawrence Jarach

What Is Leftism?

For most it means some form of socialism, despite the fact that there are plenty of leftists who are not opposed to capitalism (clearly from the actual history of socialism, not all socialists are opposed to capitalism either). Plenty of other arguments can be made about that, but let's just keep things simple and assume that the two terms are synonymous. As is the case with most vague terms, however, it's easier to come up with a list of characteristics than a definition.

Leftism encompasses many divergent ideas, strategies, and tactics; are there any common threads that unite all leftists, despite some obvious differences? In order to begin an attempt at an answer, it is necessary to examine the philosophical antecedents to what can broadly be termed Socialism.

Liberalism, Humanism, and Republicanism (LH&R) are political and philosophical schools of thought deriving from the modern European tradition (roughly beginning during the Renaissance). Without going into details, adherents of the three (especially Liberalism) presume the existence of an ideal property-owning male individual who is a fully rational (or at least a potentially rational) agent. This idealized individual stands opposed to the arbitrary authority of the economic and political systems of monarchism and feudalism, as well as the spiritual authority of the Catholic Church. All three (LH&R) presume the capacity of anyone (male), through education and hard work, to succeed in a free market (of commodities and ideas). Competition is the overall ethos of all three.

The promoters of LH&R insist that these modernist philosophies—compared to monarchism, elitism, and feudalism—are advances on the road to human freedom. They believe it more beneficial for what they call The Greater Good to adhere to and promote a philosophy that at least proposes the ability of anyone to gain some kind of control over her/his own life, whether in the realm of education, economic prosperity, or political interactions. The ultimate goals of LH&R are to do away with economic scarcity and intellectual/spiritual poverty, while promoting the idea of more democratic governance. They promote this under the rubric of Justice, and they see the State as its ultimate guarantor.

Socialism as a modern movement has been greatly influenced by these three philosophies. Like those who adhere to LH&R, leftists are concerned with, and are opposed to, economic and social injustice. They all propose ameliorating social ills through active intervention or charity, whether under the auspices of the State, NGOs, or other

formal organizations. Very few of the proposed solutions or stopgaps promote (or even acknowledge) self-organized solutions engaged in by those directly suffering such ills. Welfare, affirmative action programs, psychiatric hospitals, drug rehabilitation facilities, etc are all examples of various attempts to deal with social problems. Given the premises of these overlapping philosophies and their practical frameworks, they have the appearance of being the results of intelligence and knowledge mixed with empathy and the desire to help people. Cooperation for The Common Good is seen as more beneficial to humanity than individual competition. However, socialism also takes the existence of competition for granted. Liberals and socialists alike believe that human beings do not naturally get along, so we must be educated and encouraged to be cooperative. When all else fails, this can always be enforced by the State.

Moderate, Radical, and Extreme Leftism

Tactics and strategies

Regardless of the fact that there is plenty of overlap and blending—precluding real, discrete boundaries—I hope that describing these various manifestations of leftism will be a way to identify certain particular characteristics.

In terms of strategy and tactics, moderate leftists believe that things can be made better by working within current structures and institutions. Clearly reformist, moderate leftists promote legal, peaceful, and polite superficial alterations in the status quo, eventually hoping to legislate socialism into existence. The democracy they champion is bourgeois: one person, one vote, majority rule.

Radical leftists promote a mixture of legal and illegal tactics, depending on whatever appears to have a better chance of succeeding at the moment, but they ultimately want the sanction of some properly constituted legal institutions (especially when they get to make most of the rules to be enforced). They are pragmatic, hoping for peaceful change, but ready to fight if they believe it to be necessary. The democracy they promote is more proletarian: they aren't worried about the process of any particular election, so long as gains are made at the expense of the bosses and mainstream politicians.

Extreme leftists are amoral pragmatists, a strategic orientation that can also be termed opportunistic. They are decidedly impolite, explicitly desiring the destruction of current institutions (often including the State), with the desire to remake them so that only they themselves will be able to make and enforce new laws. They are much more willing to use force in the service of their goals. The democracy they promote is usually based on a Party.

Relationship to capitalists

All leftists privilege the category of worker as worker/producer, an entity that exists only within the sphere of the economy. Moder- ate leftists campaign for workers' rights (to strike, to have job security and safety, to have decent and fair contracts), trying to mitigate the more obvious abuses of the bosses through the passage and enforcement of progressive legislation. They want capitalism to be organized with "People Before Profits" (as the overused slogan has it), ignoring the internal logic and history of capitalism. Moderate leftists promote socially responsible investing and want a more

just distribution of wealth; social wealth in the form of the much-touted "safety net," and personal wealth in the form of higher wages and increased taxes on corporations and the rich. They want to balance the rights of property and labor.

Radical leftists favor workers at the expense of the bosses. Workers are always right to the radical leftist. They wish to change the legal structure in such a way to reflect this favoritism, which is supposed to compensate for the previous history of exploitation. The redistribution of wealth envisioned by radical leftists builds on the higher wages and increased taxation of the corporations and the rich to include selective expropriation/ nationalization (with or without compensation) of various resources (banks, natural resources for example).

Extreme leftists promote the total expropriation—without compensation—of the capitalist class, not only to right the wrongs of economic exploitation, but to remove the capitalist class from political power as well. At some point, the workers are to be at least nominally in charge of economic and political decision making (although that is usually meditated through a Party leadership).

The Role of The State

Leftists view the State on a continuum of ambivalence. Most are clear that the role of the State is to further the goals of whatever class happens to rule at any given period; further, they all recognize that the ruling class always reserves for itself a monopoly on the legitimate use of force and violence to enforce their rule. In the political imaginations of all moderate and some radical leftists, the State (even with a completely capitalist ruling class) can be used to remedy many social problems, from the excesses of transnational corporations to the abuses of those who have been traditionally disenfranchised (immigrants, women, minorities, the homeless, etc). For extreme leftists, only their own State can solve such problems, because it is in the interest of the current ruling class to maintain divisions among those who are not of the ruling class. Despite the ambivalence, an attachment to the functions of government as executed by the State remains. This is the pivotal area of conflict between all leftists and all anarchists, despite the historical positioning of anarchism within the spectrum of leftism—about which more below.

The role of The Individual

Missing from all these different strains of leftism is a discussion of the individual. While LH&R refer briefly to the individual, these philosophies do not take into account non-property-owning males, females, or juveniles—who are indeed considered the property of the normative individual: the adult property-owning man. This led to the complete lack of interest in (and the accompanying exploitation of) peasants and workers, a disregard that is supposed to be corrected by socialism. Unfortunately, virtually all socialists only posit the category Worker and Peasant as collective classes—a mass to be molded and directed—never considering the desires or interests of the individual (male or female) worker or peasant to control their own lives. According to the ideological imperatives of leftist thought, the self-activity of these masses is seen suspiciously through the ideological blinkers of the competitive ethos of capitalism

(since the masses aren't yet intelligent enough to be socialists); the workers will perhaps be able to organize themselves into defensive trade unions in order to safeguard their wages, while the peasants will only want to own and work their own piece of land. Again, education and enforcement of cooperation is necessary for these masses to become conscious political radicals.

A Generic Leftism?

So all leftists share the goals of making up for injustice by decree, whether the decree comes out of better/more responsive representatives and leaders, a more democratic political process, or the elimination of a non-worker power base. They all desire to organize, mobilize, and direct masses of people, with the eventual goal of attaining a more or less coherent majority, in order to propel progressive and democratic change of social institutions. Recruitment, education, and inculcating leftist values are some of the more mundane strategies leftists use to increase their influence in the wider political landscape.

All leftists have a common distrust of regular (non-political/ non-politicized) people being able to decide for themselves how to solve the problems that face them. All leftists share an abiding faith in leadership. Not just a trust of particular leaders who portray them- selves as having certain moral or ethical virtues over and above common people, but of the very principle of leadership. This confidence in leadership never brings representational politics into question. The existence of elected or appointed leaders who speak and act on behalf, or in the place, of individuals and groups is a given; mediation in the realm of politics is taken as a necessity, removing most decision making from individuals and groups. Leftists share this commitment to leadership and representation—they believe themselves able to justly represent those who have traditionally been excluded from politics: the disenfranchised, the voiceless, the weak.

The Leftist activist, as a representative of those who suffer, is a person who believes her/himself to be indispensable to improving the lives of others. This derives from a dual-pronged notion common to all leftists:

1. Non-political people, left to their own devices, will never be able to alter their situations in a radical or revolutionary manner (Lenin's dismissal of workers as never being able to move beyond a "trade union mentality" without some professional outside help comes to mind here); and

2. Those with more intelligence or a better analysis are both wise and ethical enough to lead (whether through example or by decree) and organize others for their own good, and perhaps more importantly, the greater good.

The unspoken but implicit theme that runs through this brief assessment of leftism is a reliance on authoritarian relations, whether assumed or enforced, brutally compelling or gently rational. The existence of an economy (exchange of commodities in a market) presumes the existence of one or more institutions to mediate disputes between those who produce, those who own, and those who consume; the existence of a representational political process presumes the existence of one or more institutions to mediate disputes between diverse parties based on common interest (often

with conflicting goals); the existence of leadership presumes that there are substantive differences in the emotional and intellectual capacities of those who direct and those who follow. There are plenty of rationalizations contributing to the maintenance of such institutions of social control (schools, prisons, the military, the workplace), from efficiency to expediency, but they all ultimately rely on the legitimate (sanctioned by the State) use of coercive authority to enforce decisions. Leftists share a faith in the mediating influence of wise and ethical leaders who can work within politically neutral, socially progressive, and humane institutional frameworks. Their thoroughly hierarchical and authoritarian natures, however, should be clear even after a cursory glance.

Are All Forms of Anarchism Leftist?

All anarchists share a desire to abolish government; that is the definition of anarchism. Starting with Bakunin, anarchism has been explicitly anti-statist, anti-capitalist, and anti-authoritarian; no serious anarchist seeks to alter that. Leftists have consistently supported and promoted the functions of the State, have an ambiguous relationship to capitalist development, and are all interested in maintaining hierarchical relationships. In addition, historically they have either tacitly ignored or actively suppressed the desires of individuals and groups for autonomy and self-organization, further eroding any credible solidarity between themselves and anarchists. On a purely definitional level, then, there should be an automatic distinction between leftists and anarchists, regardless of how things have appeared in history.

Despite these differences, many anarchists have thought of themselves as extreme leftists—and continue to do so—because they share many of the same analyses and interests (a distaste for capitalism, the necessity of revolution, for example) as leftists; many revolutionary leftists have also considered anarchists to be their (naïve) comrades— except in moments when the Leftists gain some power; then the anarchists are either co-opted, jailed, or executed. The possibility for an extreme leftist to be anti-statist may be high, but is certainly not guaranteed, as any analysis of history will show.

Left anarchists retain some kind of allegiance to 19th century LH&R and socialist philosophers, preferring the broad, generalized (and therefore extremely vague) category of socialism/anti-capitalism and the strategy of mass political struggles based on coalitions with other leftists, all the while showing little (if any) interest in promoting individual and group autonomy. From these premises, they can quite easily fall prey to the centralizing tendencies and leadership functions that dominate the tactics of leftists. They are quick to quote Bakunin (maybe Kropotkin too) and advocate organizational forms that might have been appropriate in the era of the First International, apparently oblivious to the sweeping changes that have occurred in the world in the past hundred-plus years—and they then have the gall to ridicule

Marxists for remaining wedded to Marx's outdated theories, as if by not naming their own tendencies after other dead guys they are thereby immune from similar mistakes.

The drawbacks and problems with Marxism, however—for example that it promotes the idea of a linear progression of history of order developing out of chaos, freedom developing out of oppression, material abundance developing out of scarcity, socialism developing out of capitalism, plus an absolute faith in Science as the ideologically neutral pursuit of pure Knowledge, and a similar faith in the liberatory function of all technology—are the same drawbacks and problems with the anarchism of Bakunin and Kropotkin. All of this seems lost on left anarchists. They blithely continue to promote a century-old version of anarchism, clearly unaware of, or unconcerned by, the fact that the philosophical and practical failures of leftism—in terms of the individual, the natural world, and appropriate modes of resistance to the continued domination of a flexible, adaptable, and expanding capitalism—are shared by this archaic form of anarchism as well.

Those of us who are interested in promoting radical social change in general, and anarchy in particular, need to emulate and improve upon successful (however temporary) revolutionary projects for liberation, rather than congratulating ourselves for being the heirs of Bakunin (et al). We can do this best if we free ourselves from the historical baggage and the ideological and strategic constraints of all varieties of leftism.

Liberation, Not Organization

Morefus

If I Have to Pay Dues or Carry a Membership Card, I Don't Want to Be in Your Revolution.

I desire liberation, not organization. While most leftists would claim that the two go hand-in-hand, or at least that the second is necessary to achieve the first (and for some the second might even "wither away" some time after "The Revolution"), to me, the two seem contradictory. I am not fighting for a world which is run better (more efficiently and more fairly), I am fighting for a world which doesn't need running (one which is radically decentralized). Here lies the contradiction between the Left, and those fighting for autonomy and anarchy.

If the politics of the Left (including leftist anarchists) could be distilled into one phrase, it might be "Social Justice"—a vague longing for a social system which ensures equality (socially and economically, although not necessarily politically) for everyone, and the political apparatus necessary to ensure/enforce their particular notion of what that would mean. But only by people controlling their own lives, and all decisions which pertain to them, will people ever be free. This should be a basic concept, at least for anarchists, but unfortunately for those still tied to a leftist mode of operation and thinking, it is not. In fact, this simple notion is attacked for being too "individualist" or "unrealistic". I guess some people just think they know what is best, especially for the "lumpen" and "the masses." They wish to plug everyone into an infrastructure which adheres to the "correct" ideology (a notion anarchists should reject at face value): as Michael Albert (*Z Magazine*) has said, the "good morality". These notions of "the way" are an insult to independent thinking and openness, and stand in direct opposition to anarchy, and deserve only disdain.

Only *we* can fully understand what *we* are fighting for, and our own interests and skills. We waste too much time trying to form affinity and artificial unity with those with whom there is very little meaningful agreement. Decentralized autonomous groups, making all of their own decisions, are the key to effectiveness and to staying motivated. Only when resistance comes from our hearts can we have any chance of fulfillment. I am not just "two arms for the revolution," as some guilt-ridden, uncritical, and uninspired leftists and leftistanarchists have proclaimed. I am not a foot soldier for a vanguard or an "oppressed people." And, the last thing we need is more standardization, mechanization, and militaristic approaches...the logic which projects this whole system forward.

I am fighting for my own liberation, and from this stems my support for my family, my community, others' struggles, and the rest of life. Does this mean we cannot learn

from others, share ideas, or join together in projects of resistance? Certainly not, but these junctures *must* be without coercion, manipulation, and domination. They should be seen as temporary and organic, and their continued connection cannot be at the expense of our autonomy. We need to prioritize the deep and meaningful relationships over the superficial and political ones. We must avoid the "lowest common denominator" approach to liberation, one which sums up our collective desires and struggles in vague catchwords like "freedom", "equality", and "justice", or the "One Big Union" approach, which superficially embraces diversity, yet in reality, works to diminish all individuality and autonomy.

Some anarchists, and all leftists, propose large monolithic federations, parties, and structures to "get shit done" and "hold people accountable." We must reject this fetishization of organization and control. Our liberation should not be dependent on a political or economic structure—it should come from our own desires and willingness to fight for another world. A leftist-anarchist friend of mine wants to know how we hold people accountable when they continually "flake." To which I respond, learn the patterns of those you work and live with, and know what you can depend on, and what you cannot. If they are continually unreliable, then don't rely on them. It's simple. It all comes down to bringing about a deeper understanding of one another, not some adjudication process to enforce agreements...that is how the state works. Even in regard to abusers, some would like established policies and rigid methods for dealing with people, but each scenario is different, and each victim and community demands a different outcome. It is taking the easy way out, when we attempt to programmatically apply a solution to a problem. Taking responsibility for a situation and working towards the most effective outcome takes time, energy, and commitment to one another, and while it may seem difficult at the time, in the end it is usually the most meaningful.

Smaller groups are more able to make decisions which are relevant to the individuals involved, while large organizations require tremendous amounts of resources and bureaucracy just to perpetuate themselves. Constant decisions need to be made just to keep them "running," and this will inevitably lead to representation and hierarchy. The further we are from any decision-making process, the more alienated we are from the decisions it makes. This is not a healthy model for taking control of our own lives, it is a model for being controlled. As anarchists, we need to take responsibility for our own decisions and their outcomes. This is not to say that we should only be concerned with decision-making on an individual level (although there are certainly decisions which only apply here), but also as small, decentralized communities. Here, decisions are made face-to-face, with each member of our family, band, or collective deeply entwined with one another and our environment—a bio-regional perspective which reflects how natural ecosystems function. We only need organizations and large structures if we want to keep most of the racket known as civilization going (including technology, production, the military, mass society, globalized reality, etc), but if we reject all of this, we can bring our lives back to a human scale, lives worth living.

Ten Blows against Politics

I. Politics is the art of separation.

Where life has lost its fullness, where the thoughts and actions of individuals have been dissected, catalogued and enclosed in detached spheres—there politics begins. Having distanced some of the activities of individuals (discussion, conflict, common decision, agreement) into a zone by itself that claims to govern everything else, sure of its independence, politics is at the same time a separation between the separations and the hierarchical management of separateness. Thus, it reveals itself as specialization, forced to transform the unresolved problem of its function into the necessary presupposition for resolving all problems. For this reason, the role of professionals in politics is indisputable—and all that can be done is to replace them from time to time. Every time subversives accept separating the various moments of life and changing specific conditions starting from that separation, they become the best allies of the world order. In fact, while it aspires to be a sort of precondition of life itself, politics blows its deadly breath everywhere.

II. Politics is the art of representation.

In order to govern the mutilations inflicted on life, it constrains individuals to passivity, to the contemplation of the spectacle prepared upon the impossibility of their acting, upon the irresponsible delegation of their decisions. Then, while the abdication of the will to determine oneself transforms individuals into appendages of the state machine, politics recomposes the totality of the fragments in a false unity. Power and ideology thus celebrate their deadly wedding. If representation is that which takes the capacity to act away from individuals, replacing it with the illusion of being participants rather than spectators, this dimension of the political always reappears wherever any organization supplants individuals and any program keeps them in passivity. It always reappears wherever an ideology unites what is separated in life.

III. Politics is the art of mediation.

Between the so-called totality and individuals and between individual and individual. Just as the divine will has need of its earthly interpreters, so the collectivity has need of its delegates. Just as in religion, there are no relationships between humans but only between believers, so in politics it is not individuals who come together, but citizens. The links of membership impede union because separation disappears only in union. Politics renders us all equal because there are no differences in slavery—equality before god, equality before the law. This is why politics replaces real dialogue, which refuses mediation, with its ideology. Racism is the sense of belonging that prevents direct relationships between individuals. All politics is participatory simulation. All politics

is racist. Only by demolishing its barriers in revolt could everyone meet each other in their individuality. I revolt, therefore, we are. But if we are, farewell revolt.

IV. Politics is the art of impersonality.

Every action is like the instant of a spark that escapes the order of generality. Politics is the administration of that order. "What sort of action do you want in the face of the complexity of the world?" This is what those who have been benumbed by the dual somnolence of a *yes* that is no and a *more later* that is never. Bureaucracy, the faithful maidservant of politics, is the nothing administered so that no one can act, so that no one recognizes their responsibility in the generalized irresponsibility. Power no longer says that every thing is under control, it says the opposite: "If I don't ever manage to find the remedies for it, let's imagine it as something else." Democratic politics is now based on the catastrophic ideology of the emergency ("either us or fascism, either us or terrorism, either us or the unknown"). Even when oppositional, generality is always an event that never happens and that cancels all those that happen. Politics invites everyone to participate in the spectacle of this motionless movement.

V. Politics is the art of deferment.

Its time is the future, which is why it imprisons everyone in a miserable present. All together, but tomorrow. Anyone who says "I and now" ruins the order of waiting with the impatience that is the exuberance of desire. Waiting for an objective that escapes from the curse of the particular. Waiting for an adequate quantitative growth. Waiting for measurable results. Waiting for death. Politics is the constant attempt to transform adventure into future. But only if I resolve "I and now" could there ever be an us that is not the space of a mutual renunciation, the lie that renders each of us the controller of the other. Anyone who wants to act immediately is always looked upon with suspicion. If she is not a provocateur, it is said, she can certainly be used as such. But it is the moment of an action and of a joy without tomorrows that carries us to the morning after. Without the eye fixed on the hand of the clock.

VI. Politics is the art of accommodation.

Always waiting for conditions to ripen, one ends up sooner or later forming an alliance with the masters of waiting. At bottom, reason, which is the organ of deferment, always provides some good reason for coming to an agreement, for limiting damages, for salvaging some detail from a whole that one despises. Politics has sharp eyes for discovering alliances. It is not all the same, they tell us. The Reformed Communist Party is certainly not like the rampant and dangerous right. (We don't vote for it in elections—we are abstentionists, ourselves—but the citizens' committees, the initiatives in the plazas are another thing). Public health is always better than private assistance. A guaranteed minimum wage is still always preferable to unemployment. Politics is the world of the lesser evil. And resigning oneself to the lesser evil, little by little one accepts the totality in which only partialities are granted. Anyone who contrarily wants to have nothing to do with this lesser evil is an adventurer. Or an aristocrat.

VII. Politics is the art of calculation.

In order to make alliances profitable, it is necessary to learn the secrets of allies. Political calculation is the first secret. It is necessary to know where to put one's feet. It is necessary to draw up detailed inventories of efforts and outcomes. And by dint of measuring what one has, one ends up gaining everything except the will to lay it on the line and lose it. So one is always taken up with oneself, attentive and quick to demand the count. With the eye fixed on that which surrounds one, one never forgets oneself. Vigilant as military police. When love of oneself becomes excessive it demands to give itself. And this overabundance of life makes us forget ourselves. In the tension of the rush, it makes us lose count. But the forgetfulness of ourselves is the desire for a world in which it is worth the effort of losing oneself, a world that merits our forgetfulness. And this is why the world as it is, administered by jailers and accountants, is destroyed—to make space for the spending of ourselves. Insurrection begins here. Overcoming calculation, but not through lack, as the humanitarianism that, perfectly still and silent, allies itself with the executioner, recommends, but rather through excess. Here politics ends.

VIII. Politics is the art of control.

So that human activity is not freed from the fetters of obligation and work revealing itself in all its potential. So that workers do not encounter each other as individuals and put an end to being exploited. So that students do not decide to destroy the schools in order to choose how, when and what to learn. So that intimate friends and relatives do not fall in love and leave off being little servants of a little state. So that children are nothing more than imperfect copies of adults. So that the distinction between good (anarchists) and bad (anarchists) is not gotten rid of. So that individuals are not the ones that have relationships, but commodities. So that no one disobeys authority. So that if anyone attacks the structures of exploitation of the state, someone hurries to say, "It was not the work of comrades." So that banks, courts, barracks don't blow up. In short, so that life does not manifest itself.

IX. Politics is the art of recuperation.

The most effective way to discourage all rebellion, all desire for real change, is to present a person of state as subversive, or— better yet—to transform a subversive into a person of state. Not all people of state are paid by the government. There are functionaries who are not found in parliament or even in the neighboring rooms. Rather, they frequent the social centers and sufficiently know the principle revolutionary theories. They debate over the liberatory potential of technology; they theorize about non-state public spheres and the surpassing of the subject. Reality—they know it well—is always more complex than any action. So if they hope for a total theory, it is only in order to totally neglect it in daily life. Power needs them because—as they themselves explain to us—when no one criticizes it, power is criticized by itself.

X. Politics is the art of repression.

Of anyone who does not separate the moments of her/ his life and who wants to change given conditions starting from the totality of their desires. Of anyone who wants to set fire to passivitiy, contemplation and delegation. Of anyone who does not want to

let themselves be supplanted by any organization or immobilized by any program. Of anyone who wants to have direct relationships between individuals and make difference the very space of equality. Of anyone who does not have any we on which to swear. Of anyone who disturbs the order of waiting because s/he wants to rise up immediately, not tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. Of anyone who gives her/himself without compensation and forgets her/himself in excess. Of any one who defends her comrades with love and resoluteness. Of anyone who offers recuperators only one possibility: that of disappearing. Of anyone who refuses to take a place in the numerous groups of rogues and of the anaesthetized. Of anyone who neither wants to govern nor to control. Of anyone who wants to transform the future into a fascinating adventure.

The Left-Handed Path of Repression

Crocus Behemoth

The pleasure police don't always wear uniforms. They wear ideologies—rigid, theoretical constructions in their heads. And their heads in turn rule over their bodies and oppress them.

—Smirk #4 (Post-Leftist Pleasure Politics)

In spite of its abysmal, largely totalitarian history, the various political tendencies that comprise what we call the "Left" are attempting to make a resurgence in North America—basically by trying to exploit situations like the war in Iraq and capitalist globalization as new opportunities to promote their hopelessly outdated and downright ridiculously statist programs for "change." It would be easy enough to just ignore these socialist champions of duty and sacrifice—these would-be world-betterers who tilt at the windmills of established power and ultimately accomplish nothing—were it not for the fact that they've infested the anarchist movement with their authoritarian, guilt-ridden politics and are essentially waging war on the free exchange of ideas between radicals and dissidents. Cloaking themselves in "concerns" about racism, sexism and homophobia, these anarcholeftists seem primarily interested in impeding the development of revolutionary theory and revolutionary action, by setting rules about what can and cannot be said (or even thought) by those who are interested in examining the totality of the System we live under.

When they're not trying to lure anarchists down the deadend path of "identity politics," these self-styled "experts in oppression" are working overtime to impose new "politically correct" moralisms and constraining codes of behavior on other people, adding new layers of repression to an already unbearably repressive and artificial situation, ie, modern civilized "life." In a world where virtually every aspect of our lives is governed and controlled, where the majority of our "choices" and "options" are false, manufactured ones, and where our every instinct and biological impulse is stifled by an authoritarian order, the Left proposes more (or at least, new) rules and regulations as the solution! Like the genocidal Catholic missionaries of the Columbian invasion or the grim-faced, anally-retentive Puritans of New England, these internally tormented Leftists want to universalize their own inhibitions and psychological hang-ups, by creating a new governing structure that mirrors their own fears and personal misery.

The personal is very political when it comes to the Left, as your typical leftist is neurotically obsessed with how others live, what they eat and consume, and most

alarmingly, with the words and thoughts that stray from the Left's approved range of opinions. The main difference between the Left and the "Right" is that the Left's intrusiveness into other peoples' lives is justified on political grounds, while the "Right" generally justifies it on Biblical or religious grounds. In either case, we're dealing with morality, with external codes of conduct and behavior that some self-dictated "superior" believes is the prescription for a more tidy, orderly and efficient society.

At this point, it's worth asking: What deranged emotional disorder leads to the formation of such authoritarian tendencies in the human personality, and what aberration of the psyche convinces the Left that it has the knowledge and the right to refashion and reprogram other people into its new morality? We believe that the research of Wilhelm Reich provides invaluable insight into the "mass psychosis of Leftism" and the remainder of this essay will explore Reich's theories of "character armoring" and how it applies to the Left as an inherently authoritarian political current.

Sexual Repression: The Root of All Social Control?

The person afflicted with the emotional plague limps characterologically. The emotional plague is a chronic biopathy of the organism. It made an inroad into human society with the first mass suppression of genital sexuality; it became an endemic disease, which has been tormenting people the world over for thousands of years. According to our knowledge, it is implanted in the child from the first days of life. It is an endemic illness, like schizophrenia or cancer, with one notable difference, ie, it is essentially manifested in social life. —Wilhelm Reich

Wilhelm Reich was a radical psychotherapist (and former student of Freud) who, in the 1920s, began to make observations about human sexual repression that we believe have a lot to contribute to the anti-civilization critique. The linchpin of civilization, the defining process that holds it all together, is domestication—the suppression and restructuring of what was once wild and free. In the human animal this translates into the repression and bludgeoning of our natural instincts by outside social forces. Reich believed that human beings formed what he termed "character armor" as a chronic result of the clash between instinctual demands and an outer world, which frustrates those demands. This "character armor" is formed when the ego undergoes a structural change in order to carry out the inhibition of instincts demanded by the modern, civilized world and to be able to cope with the energy stasis which results from this inhibition.

Reich described this change in the human psyche as a hardening, a cementing of civilized repressions that take on a chronically operating, automatic character, as if the affected (repressed) personality has developed a hard shell around itself to deflect and weaken the blows of the outer world as well as the clamoring of unfulfilled inner needs. As a protective psychological formation that has become chronic, Reich felt that this character hardening merited the designation of the psychic mobility of the personality

as a whole. The maintenance of this character armor always proceeds according to the pleasure/ unpleasure principle and consists of multiple, interrelated layers that serve to ward off the most deeply repressed impulses.

And the most deeply repressed impulse in the civilized world, according to Reich, is the natural human need to give and receive love and to experience orgiastic, libidinal gratification and pleasure. But human sexuality had been repressed and disfigured, claimed Reich, by the compulsory sex morality of the dominant culture.

Reich linked sexual repression to the formation of authoritarian personalities and believed that there are libidinal energies, which are employed in the anchoring of the authoritarian social order, as he explained in his 1933 book *The Mass Psychology of Fascism.*

Reich believed that it was in this anchoring of the social order in the character structure that we find an explanation for the toleration on the part of the suppressed layers of the population toward the rulership of an upper social class that has the means of power at its disposal, a toleration that often goes so far as to affirm authoritarian suppression at the expense of its own class interests. Reich's analysis of sexual imagery within Nazi propaganda and Hitler's hypnotic oratory performances led him to believe that Germans achieved some sort of orgiastic satisfaction from their dedication to the führer and his weltanschaung of sexual repression. Myron Sharaf, Reich's biographer, commented that, "This intense libidinal excitation, combined with a sense of moral righteousness, was strikingly similar to the atmosphere at religious revival meetings."

Reich went on to apply his same critique of the Third Reich to Soviet Russia and the Communist Party, and came to the following conclusions:

- *Humankind is biologically sick.*
- *Politics is the irrational social expression of this sickness.*
- *The character structure of the masses is formed by socioeconomic processes and it anchors and perpetuates these processes. Humanity's biopathic character structure is the fossilization of the authoritarian process of history. It is the biophysical reproduction of mass suppression.*
- *The fear of freedom—and the incapacity for freedom—of masses of people is expressed in the biophysical rigidity of the character and the inflexibility of the organism.*
- *Interest in money and power is a substitute for unfulfilled happiness in love, supported by the biologic rigidity of masses of people.*

We want to make it clear at this point that we don't uncritically embrace all of Reich's ideas. Like most visionaries, Reich's life was riddled with contradictions, and even as anarchists, we regard some of his later writings as marginally crackpot. And despite his advocacy of "free love" and non-monogamy, Reich seemed to be pretty sexually repressed himself and maintained throughout his life that homosexuality was a "disorder." Nonetheless, we feel that Reich stumbled upon a "piece of the puzzle," and if we accept that even a fraction of what he postulates is feasible, then it revolutionizes our understanding of how both social domestication and authoritarian political rackets work. Human beings as a species have been deeply scarred and traumatized by 10,000

years of colonization, domestication, and sexual repression, and no social order that emerges from this collective dysfunctionality/psychosis can offer us anything but more repression. As Reich described it, "The human masses have become apathetic, incapable of discrimination, biopathic, and slavish as a result of the suppression of their vital life over thousands of years."

This is an amazingly basic insight, and yet so profound in its implications! If left-wing states and political movements originate in the same authoritarian gene pool as so-called "right wing" regimes, then we can be assured ahead of time that they won't reproduce anything but continued slavery and control. The political Left is nothing more than a particular form of authoritarianism and is in essence and character identical to any other version of statism.

The "progressives" who yearn to install a left wing state want to use the power of that state to control other people's habits, living patterns, moral conduct and worldview. This has been demonstrated time after time since the 1917 Russian Revolution, yet shockingly, many younger radicals (especially here in Eugene) continue to subscribe to the myth that the Left is the good guy in an overly-simplistic, cartoonish struggle against the "reactionary" capitalist class. But as anarchists, it's obvious that there can be no cure for the disease of capitalism if the supposed "antidote" (the Left) is itself a carrier of the same virus of control and rigidity.

The Machine as Sadomasochistic Overseer and Technology as a New Layer of Character Armor

If sexual repression forms an early and major layer of our "character armor," then how many additional layers of domestication are added as human life begins to merge more and more fully with technology? And why is it that all leftist models for a "socialist future" seem to resemble the workings of a machine? The second question is the easier one to answer and it lies in the fact that leftists have always seen themselves as social engineers and have always had a nearly religious faith in continued linear progress and the limitless development of scientific and technical knowledge. The machine age and the "machineage consciousness" it promulgates translates into an engineering vision of human beings reworked according to properly mechanical precepts. In the Leftist techno-utopia the repressed sexual energy of the "masses" will be sublimated into work, as we all trudge in uniform fashion to the conveyor belts that will deliver us to our dreary, mind-numbing tasks each day, becoming effectively human extensions of the machine.

The cumulative result of all this is clear: more misery and more repression, as technology penetrates our lives even more thoroughly, creating mechanical patterns to which we are expected to conform.

Welcome to Eugene, Leftist Capital of the World or "It's Starting to Get a Little Kooky around Here"

Several years ago a leftist "emotional plague" swept through the Eugene anarchist milieu, leaving a trail of shattered lives and sabotaged projects in its wake. The "plague" was introduced into the community by a small group of former or currently enrolled,

middle-class college students whose objective seemed to be not only silencing opinions they didn't like but also destroying, both personally and publicly, the individuals who expressed those opinions. A huge preoccupation of this "vanguard intelligentsia" was the imposition of politically correct speech codes and the calculated, manipulative use of certain politicallyloaded buzzwords (like "racist," "sexist" and "homophobic") to stigmatize anyone who had an "unapproved" point of view.

Hiding behind legitimate issues of oppression (and camouflaging themselves for a short time as anarchists) this nasty, humorless sect promoted a group identity and employed all the hallmark leftist strategies of bullying and browbeating anyone who was too naïve to see what was going on. Particularly fascinating was watching this constipated, dour-faced crew attempt to formulate a new, community-wide leftist morality, one that was decidedly anti-erotic, and even anti-pleasure. Like most leftists, they seemed to have zero interest in freedom and actually appeared to be fighting for more pain!

The "administrators" of this leftist plague, the small cadre of self-appointed (and self-oppressed) "teachers" who believed that they— and only they—possessed the "superior knowledge," academic training, and social design to restructure human nature, began to develop a pedagogical style that isolated and demonized anyone they saw as "backwards" and "uneducated"—as well as anyone who desired to have egalitarian relationships with others and wasn't willing to be treated as a "subordinate." A new Thought Police began to emerge under the guise of "abolishing sexism," "smashing racism," etc and implicitly sent out the message to stay quiet about the new leftist orthodoxy, lest you become the next victim of a "reputation assassination." It was a clever strategy and helped to distract people from recognizing just how devoid these power-tripping socialists were of radical ideas and analysis!

Sadism and masochism seemed to be the psychological mechanics employed to foster group-think, along with "sin" and repentance, guilt, shame, fear of freedom, punishment, unworthiness, and distrust of one's own thoughts and instincts: in short, the usual reprogramming techniques utilized by any other cult, from the Moonies to the US Army. The whole "plague" began to take on an eerie resemblance to Catholicism, and fortunately, only infected our community just long enough to serve as a graphic, firsthand example of how the Left wants to control our lives through the imposition of new, uniquely leftist, forms of repression.

The Robots Will Not Get Through!

Authoritarians can be most easily distinguished from anarchists by the fact that authoritarians make their demands of life not merely on themselves but, above all, on other people and on the social environment as a whole. The person afflicted with the authoritarian plague imposes their mode of life upon others by force and will not tolerate views that threaten their authoritarian, repressed character armor or unmask their concealed motives. The repressed-authoritarian personality fights against other modes of life (and thought) even when they don't (or shouldn't) concern them in any

way; they are impelled to fight because they perceive the very existence of other beliefs and ways of life as a provocation.

Left and Right-wing authoritarians all tend to view the human animal as a flawed machine that can be perfected through the installation of the correct "software" into our hard drive. But the Left is divided amongst itself, and there is significant (and often bitter) disagreement as to what the correct software program is, particularly with regard to human sexuality. Some leftists advocate compulsory homosexuality for "political reasons," while others, like the RCP, regard homosexuality as a "perversion" and a symptom of the decadence of bourgeois society. Other leftists go a step further and promote an anti-sex celibacy that they see as the solution to problems such as sexism and rape.

But one thing's for sure, the Left is very interested in the sexuality of other people, as are all authoritarians. Leftist regimes—from the Soviet Union to Cuba to communist China—have all created classes of sexual "criminals" and have all (just like Protestants and capitalists) used the repressed sexual energy of the larger human mass as an instrument of control and as fuel for their grand human and social reengineering projects.

Authoritarians all have a strong hatred against every process which provokes its own orgiastic yearning (suffering from what Reich called "orgasm anxiety"). This helps explain why almost nowhere in the vast canon of leftist theoretical works are subjects like pleasure, ecstasy and self-determination ever discussed... maybe the desire for Eros will be disciplined out of us by the State over time?

We know that sexual repression is only one of many layers of repression placed on the human animal by civilization and ruling elites (the suppression of violence and anger, so brilliantly discussed by Frantz Fanon, will be elaborated on in this Spring's "Rewilding" issue of *Green Anarchy*) but we wanted to tackle the subject of the Left in a way that brings it back home, into our own lives. We've also attempted to provide something that's conspicuously absent from many of the newer "anarchist" publications, like *Onward* and the *Northeastern Anarchist*: a critique of authoritarianism.

Not My Vision of Liberation

Some Thoughts on Organization, Federations, and Platformism

Leaf S. Alone

I am for autonomy. I understand anarchy to be synonymous with autonomy; to live and act upon one's own beliefs and desires with- out outside or overriding influences of power; to be self-sustaining; to live within one's own, or a group's own, limitations. As a green anarchist, this idea of autonomy naturally flows into my understanding of the concept of bioregionalism; to live within the limitations of our immediate sur- roundings; to obtain all nourishment and satisfaction from our local area; to be most deeply connected to the specific geography, micro-climate, patterns, plants, and ani- mals (including humans) of the region in which we live. To me, these terms—autonomy and bioregionalism—can almost be used interchangeably. For me, they are the basis of my anarchist experience. It is for this reason that I become suspicious when I hear anarchists speak of organization. What are they organizing? Who are they organizing? Why are they organizing?

I am fighting for a world that doesn't need organizing, that doesn't need running, that doesn't need controlling. Sure, it is helpful to think about how we resist and live together, to be strategic, and to develop relationships with people outside our families, bands, cells, affinity groups, scenes (or however else we group ourselves based on deeper levels of trust, commitment, common goals, and desires), but these relationships need to be organic in nature, not forced and superficial. Any meaningful and honest decisions can only be made in small groups consisting of those who are directly effected by these decisions. For resistance to be liberatory (which I believe is why we resist, and not because of guilt or concepts like justice), we must be directly connected to what we are fighting for. Yes, it is important to learn about and support other struggles, but not as a substitute for our own. The basis for our resistance must come out of our own struggle for liberation, and our support for others can grow from that.

Yes, we can, and need to, work with other individuals and groups outside our own, but doing so in ways which do not sacrifice our autonomy and desires, and not compro- mising the autonomy and desires of others. We can work on specific or more general projects, we can unite for common goals or events, but again, these connections need to be organic, based on real interactions and honesty, and seen as temporary junctures of interest. Once these relationships are no longer satisfying, effective, necessary, or desirable, we must be flexible enough to accept it and not force interactions for the sake of "unity". There are also different levels of connection and commitment to each other which may change over time, and it is important to be able to distinguish be-

tween true affinity and a nostalgic need to keep things going down a dead end road. The organic dynamics of relating to others can begin to take on a more natural form then the Left or "radical" movements are used to, and this will often be met with hostility and misconceptions of a "lack of solidarity". In fact, by relating to people on more meaningful levels, we are in far greater solidarity (more effective and relevant to revolutionary struggle) than the typical superficial "activist" relationships.

I wish to relate to people as people, and not necessarily in a political way. I think for deeper connections and understanding of one another, it is helpful to transcend politics. Yes, it's political that some people have control of the land, food, and water, but it won't be politics which changes that. Too often, the Left has alienated (and in some cases purged, fought against, and even slaughtered) those they see as the "other", meaning those who do not blindly accept the ideologies, ideals, and morals of the Left or "Progressives" as righteous and "good". Most people do not relate to the Left vs Right duality. These terms are both part of the same system, and are therefore meaningless distinctions. Both have a long history of supporting their ideological stance with authoritarian, and often state sanctioned, force. I reject both as different faces of the same monster. These terms are irrelevant to anarchists, as we should fight against both. Even dwelling too much in "anarchist" politics has its limitations.

Sure, I like to discuss my feelings about organization or lifestylism among other anarchists and radicals, but to most people, this is irrelevant. It has nothing to do with their everyday lives. There are deeper connections to be made. I find that the most fulfilling conversations I have with people are those about how much they hate their job, the alienation we all feel from each other and ourselves, the toxic world we all live in, the new diseases and drugs that appear everyday, the destruction of the world around us, the fact that we cannot feed or take care of ourselves, that we have lost almost all control over our lives, and the spiritual emptiness we all feel. These discussions only reenforce my understanding that the human condition has become a miserable one, and we are all entrenched in it, that there are no political solutions to it, that our only hope is to figure out how to connect to a different way of thinking and living. This is my "outreach". I have no time for the patronizing crap of the liberals, and I have no tolerance for the authoritarianism and vanguardism of the Left (including anarcholeftism). I have no plans for the "masses". I hope people have their own plans, and maybe some of us will work together on a few. Maybe we can *not my vision of liberation* help to empower each other to take responsibility for our own lives, but it won't happen by creating the perfect organization or infrastructure.

History, personal experience, and their basic arrangement have shown me that the Federationist and Party models of relating to one another are not liberatory, but instead are usually based on manipulation, coercion, and deception. They often contain representational structures, and despite good intentions, are often hierarchical. Some go as far as to give certain individuals militaristic and commanding titles as "General Secretariat" and "Minister of...". Ten Point Programs and Platforms tend to be the least common denominator of our hopes and dreams, and to me seem to disturbingly

reflect the neo-liberal nightmare I fight against. It seems that some anarchists' need to "federate" stems from a need to feel part of something larger, to appear larger to others, to validate their perspectives or beliefs, or just the typical leftist ideal of controlling resistance and having their replacement infrastructure already set up. Whatever the motivation, I think it is important to look at these methods of relating to each other and ideas of organization with a critical and wary eye (and this does not even begin to detail the endless list of questions which continue to go unasked by leftists, which are directly linked to that organized and linear mindset, such as technology, division of labor, production, etc). As one who prioritizes autonomy and bioregionalism as vital anarchist perspectives, I feel that strength will not come from a monolithic mass of ideology, but from a multi-dimensional explosion of infinite passions.

You've heard my story about the divisions . . . They always talk about unity, unity; but I always say, if you were the army, and the school, and the head of the health institutions, and the head of the government, and you had your guns, which would you rather see come through the door, one lion, unified, or 500 mice? My answer is 500 mice can do lots of damage and disruption." —Born in Flames

Beyond Utopian Visions

A. Morefus

The Rejection of a "Perfect" Society

Anarchy is the opening up of boundless potentiality, not a social, political, economic, or moral program for an ideal society. A major element of the civilizing process is a quest for a "perfect" society; one which strives for social peace (which is not a peaceful society, but instead the acquiescence of a population of ruled), the efficiency of a machine, and moral purity in accordance with the dictates of those in charge (which is simply propaganda to obtain the first two goals). While the intentions of many of the historical utopian architects may have been to improve the "quality of life" for the "common person", their visions were still contaminated with most of the baggage of the dominant system, and inherently authoritarian, nothing more than another technique for social programming. No matter its specific design, utopia is a singular worldview, a standardizing framework placed over the organic nature of life. It is an imposed structure manufactured on the drafting boards of those who think they know how society could run better, or worse; how it SHOULD function. Utopia is simply not an anarchist project.

Comparable to the contemporary Left's numerous delusions of a "sustainable" and "compassionate" global society (eg socialism, communism, federationism, pacifism, veganism), or the neoliberal capitalist project, Utopia is progressive in nature; striving to reveal and proceed along a supposed ideal evolution of humans. Utopians see a world which is inherently foul and chaotic and in need of development from the rudimentary primordial soup of our genesis, through our "backward" and "savage" ancestors, to the "enlightened" modern human (and in some cases the cyborg post-human). Rational efforts to remake class society and its institutions into an egalitarian and morally correct machine applies to not only the numerous self-described utopian blueprints and endeavors, but also to just about all socialist, communist, and even anarchist visions. As anarchists, truly open to the infinite possibilities of unfettered dreams and liberated desires, the limitations and restrictions of the utopian direction can only be a suffocating enterprise.

The term *Utopia* was coined by "Sir" Thomas More in his nov- el of that name. Derived from the Modern Latin/Greek words: *Eutopia* (meaning 'good place') and *Outopia* (meaning 'no place'), the irony of the word and his novel, meant as a satire of

16th century England, is often missed. More, while yearning for a moral and Christian revolution to replace the profane human-animal instincts with a classless, egalitarian, and humane society, knew this ideal utopia was unlikely and unrealistic. His book was meant as a moral critique of society, not necessarily a method for social change. The paradox expressed by More: that of a vision of perfection and its unattainability, is often overlooked by the pipedreamers and moralists who design their Utopias.

Utopias can be roughly divided into two categories: the religious and the secular, yet both have very similar characteristics, intentions, and methods. Throughout history, every religious sect, political ideology, counter-culture, or fanatic has perpetuated their particular version of the perfect society, in which details differ, but general themes are similar. Huge volumes have been written on these attempts to create the ideal society, but for the sake of this essay, we shall only focus on what this writer perceives as the more significant trends, and not get too deep into specifics.

To be fair, there are a few interesting and potentially positive examples of quasi-liberatory projects and explorations within the utopian tradition, even if the general approach is problematic: for example, the relatively free and anti-authoritarian world of William Morris' *News from Nowhere* (which also has its limitations). These cases, however, are confining even in their least intrusive forms, and certainly different than unrestrained anarchy.

Utopian Visions

Throughout civilization there have been those dissatisfied with the emptiness and the lack of fulfillment in their lives who have dreamed of a more efficient, harmonious, and perfect world. Every culture has had its own concept of paradise, the oldest form of utopian thinking. The word paradise comes from the Old Persian *pairidaeza*, meaning "park" or "enclosure", an eternal garden for philosophical and physical enjoyment, viewed as a state to achieve through perfect balance and arrangement. But the utopian mindset is far more than an innocent and imaginative mental exercise in design. The utopian sets out from an essentialist perspective to create a very specific, closed society. To the utopian thinker (not unlike most leftists), all social discord, conflict, or dissent is unhealthy and unwanted, so all psychological and physical expressions of aggression and distinction must be eliminated. Through proper education, rewards to the "good citizen", and strict institutions and codes which regulate "human nature" and every aspect of life, transgression of the established order would be rare. Tranquility is the ultimate goal.

Generally, utopian thought thrives most in times of great uncertainty, economic depression or widespread suffering. There is usually a perceived "evil" in the air, and the utopian motive is to contemplate and enact a new system in which this "evil" would be eliminated, not merely reformed. We see the increase in utopian planning at great fractures and changes in society: during population increases, the scientific revolution,

times of exploration, the beginning of industrialism, the growth in the gap between the rich and poor, and when traditional cultural bonds are fragile or broken. The utopian seeks to "liberate" individuals from the ungodly and insufficient personal direction of autonomy and self-rule, and deliver unto them the moral guidance and provisions of collective conformity. Order is maintained through obedience to the central authority, which organizes production, distribution, consumption, and all personal and social life. The apparatus, however, is rarely referred to as a political institution, but rather, as in the socialist and communist state, merely an administrative extension of the people.

Utopianism is often filled with duality. The utopian citizen is typically gentle and polite to fellow citizens, but cruel to slaves and outsiders. Internal peace is cherished (usually obtained through violence), but externally war is saluted as patriotic. Utopia has both radical and reactionary qualities. Utopia is pessimistic about "human nature", yet optimistic to overcome our supposedly essential character through enlightened human society. Enforced enthusiasm over this challenge is common, and by strictly organizing "freedom", servitude is created. People perform as automata, as their lives run like clockwork or machinery. The utopian planner views humans as mere pieces in a game, set to the rules and patterns he (not surprising, most were men) designs, through permanently fixed laws, often claiming that human history has lacked "order" due to inadequate education, abusive economic systems, or corrupt leadership.

Utopians feel that they can see the light unseen by others. They distrust reasoning, reject reality, and speak in abstract concepts in order to mystify followers and claim a special Truth. Concentrating on the "arrival" of the utopian society, the method of getting there is viewed as unimportant, mere preparation for the last act or "final solution". This last act itself is seen as a dramatic event in which the world is turned upside-down, and finally cleansed of all evil, a final battle between the righteous and the heathens (those who challenge the utopia and wish to preserve the chaotic nature of the world). These antagonists to the utopian are viewed as backward enemies of progress (and they very well may be), in need of deliverance to maturity and acceptance.

Another important element in much of utopian thought is the blurring of religion and society, in which God and religion are separated. Some, like Saint-Simon, viewed religion as an instrument to be used in the task of industrialization and advancement of science. Machiavelli, who can be viewed as utopian to some degree, believed religion's sole use was to serve the interest of the state through the encouragement of civic integrity. In these views, the concept of God is dissipated into the universe and all of the laws and forces which manifest it, while religion becomes a more worldly project of putting correct order to a mixed-up society. Religion as well as law, statecraft, science, industry, and progress are seen as necessary tools in the enlightenment of humans and the perfection of their environment.

Perhaps Plato was the first to explicitly articulate what we think of as utopian thinking. His *Republic* (5th century BC) lays out a blueprint for a perfect society and basis for the ideal city of the future. He believed moral obligation, inequality, authority, rigid laws, fixed institutions, and the superiority of the Greeks were all "laws of nature".

He desired a strong and unified government, physically, morally, and intellectually. He believed that kings and philosophers should be one and the same. According to Plato, private property and privacy should be frowned upon, all things done in common, and all decisions made by the state. These utopian concepts were influential towards the goal of a universalized society still referenced and modeled after today.

During the Renaissance, the utopian ideal again focused on the running of society, typically attempting to run a single city or commonwealth more efficiently. Trade was viewed as a necessary evil, but the primary focus was on a closed, self-sufficient set-up. Unlike in Plato's *Republic*, work was viewed as a common duty shared by all (not just performed by slaves) and the governing done by the community through guilds and city councils. Communal life was held in the high- est regard, and the city and its surrounding countryside were integrated into stable production which, along with the value placed on the pursuit of scientific knowledge and advancement, would radically change social dynamics and prepare the world for the emerging industrial revolution. In Thomas More's *Utopia* (1519), based on a grotesque Eurocentric perception of indigenous communities in the "New World", everyone was obligated to work six hours a day at their specialized task. Since his Utopia was essentially an agriculturally-based society, all were required to work the land for two years on a rotation from the city to the country. Striving for "total equality", the same conditions were created for everyone; this was also to assure that all basic needs were met Every aspect of life was designed for practicality and utility. Clothes were simple and identical and homes were exchanged every ten years to prevent any pomposity or self-identity. Besides family gardens (usually ornamental, but within strict codes), all life was lived collectively. All food was produced and consumed together and in equal amounts. Children moved from hereditary connections, into the houses of the occupation they were to learn. With almost no distinction in dress, housing, wealth, and use of free time, the Utopians hoped to eliminate pride and individuality from their lives, which they viewed as wicked social vices at the root of class society and social conflict. According to More, "Men and animals alike are greedy and rapacious from fear of want. Only human pride glories in surpassing others in conspicuous consumption. For this kind of vice there is no room whatsoever in the Utopian way of life." With a fixed structure, only the details or interpretations needed occasional visiting, and all decisions regarding every aspect of life were made through the governing body, to avoid its undermining. Ultimately, Utopia must remain relatively static.

On a more grand and encompassing scale, Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun* (1602) offers ideas for a new world order that would lead to a "higher standard of living" for everyone under unification by the rule of Spain. Incorporating astrology, science, and religion, Campanella hoped to create a perfect world, in balance with the celestial bodies, in which all want would be done away with, along with all possessions. Rather than the morality which guided More's utopia, Campanella's society would be strictly controlled by an autocratic monarchy directed by science.

While the utopian thinkers of the Renaissance were mostly concerned with economic and political questions, during the period known as the Enlightenment the focus shifted towards philosophical and religious endeavors. Utopian thinkers had less interest in complete plans for society, and instead pushed for intellectual freedom. This was partly due to the consolidation of power which had occurred in Europe, so that utopians thought in more general terms and veiled social critiques in satirical fantasies and stories. Society as a functioning machine was viewed more as a given, with the realm of the utopian occupied with concepts like liberty, free will, education, nature, sexuality, and morality. This led to some opening from a rigid society, at least in the realm of ideas, but was also a push for the notion of Progress.

The 18th and 19th centuries saw scores of utopian groups, each with their own particulars, but often basically similar. These can be divided into two main categories: the socialist visions, generally grander in scope, yet usually less successful at becoming more than ideas until the late 19th and early 20th century; and the religious sects, which were frequently small, insular Christian communities, typically rigid splinters of Protestant denominations. Many of these groups left Europe to start their new utopias in America, seen as a more tolerant and fruitful place for new concepts of spirituality and community. Some of these communities faded quickly, while others, like the Mormons, eventually became established parts of society. Groups like the Rappites (Harmony Society), Inspirationists, Perfectionists, Transcendentalists, and, probably best known, the Shakers, generally shared simple and downto-earth aesthetics and ethics, combined with obscure and meticulous spiritual beliefs. Many were enthusiastic millennialists who were ushering in the Second Coming of Christ. Every aspect of their communities was carefully constructed as a physical manifestation of righteousness and a safeguard against impurity and sin. They typically isolated themselves from the wickedness of the outside world and attempted to create a communal paradise in which all economic and spiritual duties were commonly shared. Honest work, strict order, spiritual duty, and chastity were common themes, usually guided by charismatic, often enigmatic, figures who claimed their leadership was directly ordained from God.

While religious communities continue to make up a significant portion of utopian experiments in the 19th century, we see other engineers of society begining to take a larger role. From Marx to Bakunin to the Bauhaus, the economic, political, and social realm is drenched with utopians trying to come to grips with and direct modernity according to their analyses and particular visions for society...

Workerist and Socialist Utopias

To each according to his needs, from each according to his possibilities... Just a minute, comrade. There is a smell of book-keeping here. We are talking of consumption and production. Everything is still in the dimension of productivity... What madness the love of work is! With great scenic skill, capital has succeeded in making the exploited

love exploitation, hanged men the rope and slaves their chains. This idealization of work has been the death of the revolution until now... It is time to oppose the work ethic with the non-work aesthetic.

–Alfredo M. Bonanno, *Armed Joy*

The workerist and socialist dreamers never seem to wake from the nightmare, only rearranging the set-up of the same production and consumption carousel. From the Diggers of feudal England to the various nineteenth century installments of the International to the anarcho-syndicalists of the twentieth century, resistance to those in charge was usually confined to the realm of economic injustice. If only we could have fair distribution of all the fruits of production, we would be equal and content... if only workers could be part of a more efficient mechanism, their parts would not wear down so quickly...if only the worker could have more of a say in their working conditions, things would really be different...if only we dump the bosses off our backs, we could self-manage our misery. And still unquestioned is most of the horrific set-up of division of labor, social alienation, environmental destruction, and the commodification of our lives.

This model did not even take into account the lives of all those not identified as "workers", who accounted for much of the population. While certain conditions might be "better" for some, this fraction of transformation was promoted as the ideal society. While there have always been some within the anarchist and leftist traditions who rejected life being reduced to their occupation, skill, or productivity, it was not until the Situationists infused their critique into the radical left that the questioning begin to corrode this outdated model of thinking about society.

The utopian currents of socialism, although themselves historically grounded in the critique of the existing social organization, can rightly be called utopian to the extent that they reject history– namely the real struggle taking place, as well as the passage of time beyond the immutable perfection of their picture of a happy society–but not because they reject science. On the contrary, the utopian thinkers are completely dominated by the scientific thought of earlier centuries. They sought the completion of this general rational system: they did not in any way consider themselves disarmed prophets, since they believed in the social power of scientific proof and even, in the case of Saint-Simonism, in the seizure of power by science. "How did they want to seize through struggle what must be proved?" asked Sombart. The scientific conception of the utopians did not extend to the knowledge that some social groups have interests in the existing situation, forces to maintain it, and also forms of false consciousness corresponding to such positions. This conception did not even reach the historical reality of the development of science itself, which was oriented largely by the social demand of agents who selected not only what could be admitted, but also what could be studied. The utopian socialists, remaining prisoners of the mode of exposition of scientific truth, conceived this truth in terms of pure abstract image–an image which had been imposed at a much earlier stage of society. As Sorel observed, it is on the model of astronomy that the utopians thought they would discover and demonstrate the laws of society. This harmony

116

is introduced with the experimental innocence of Newtonianism, and the happy destiny which is constantly postulated 'plays in their social science a role analogous to the role of inertia in rational mechanics' (Materiaux pour une theorie du proletariat).
    –Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*

Even today, while workers' struggles have been stripped of most aspects of radical or utopian aims, there are still those who move along this trajectory. There are Wobbly (Industrial Workers of the World) groups still attempting, and usually failing, to obtain the most miniscule of changes. These groups tend to be handfuls of delusionally hopeful college students who idealize the myth of "One Big Union". Usually well-intentioned, and maybe occasionally successful at getting minor demands from a few small businesses, but ultimately ineffective in practice as well as theory. Then there are those who want to keep absolutely everything about this society, rename it and pass it off as a model for another world, often calling it utopian. This could not be more apparent than with the brain fart of Michael Albert's (*Z Magazine*) Participatory Economics (PARECON). A full-blown leftist (socialist), sometimes having the nerve to declare himself an anarchist, Albert wants to further the development of most technology, which will unite the world and equalize all people; continue on with the destruction of our environments through "resource extraction", but, when possible, make it "greener"; rename institutions with gentler sounding titles while keeping them virtually intact, so progressives will cherish them and "radicals" will tolerate them; continuing along in the production and progress orientation, because that's just how things work, you silly anarchists; celebrating democracy, because we want everyone's input, even if it is extremely mediated through bureaucratic councils, committees, and representatives, because how else do you keep a global system going; and of course, most importantly, developing an economic system which is fair, transparent, and willing to somehow compensate for the pain, effort, and sacrifice of those doing the work to keep the whole system functioning smoothly. This is an assault on liberatory thinking and should be tossed aside with all other schemes which continue to view humans as mere cogs in a machine and numbers in an economic plan.

Christianity and revolutionary movements have gone hand in hand throughout history. We must suffer in order to conquer paradise or to acquire the class consciousness that will lead us to revolution. Without the work ethic the Marxist notion of 'proletariat' would not make sense. But the work ethic is a product of the same bourgeois rationalism that allowed the bourgeoisie to conquer power. –Alfredo M. Bonanno, *Armed Joy*

The Avant-Garde of Modernity

After the brutality and turmoil in Europe surrounding the First World War, many European artists and intellectuals became disillusioned with the existing social institutions and felt that there needed to be a radical reexamination and challenging of society. Some attempted to link art with revolutionary movements, while others extracted from

Eastern religions. From the Futurists to the Constructivists and Expressionists, these artists/intellectuals gathered at formal schools like the Bauhaus and in loosely organized movements like De Stijl to share their utopian visions of the future. They hoped to realize the future in the present in hopes of propelling society forward. These idealists hoped to reject elitism, and sought to create art, architecture, furniture, dance, drama, and writings for the "masses". While details and specifics varied, science and technology were seen as facts of life, and embraced by those who found beauty in industrial progress and the efficiency of the machine. Abstract styles were seen as a way to express transcendental concepts; their vocabulary was reduced to simple geometric shapes. The organic, in material, form, and idea, was rejected for the steel, glass, and concrete of the new sensibilities. Wanting to make a significant break with the past, these utopians thought they could help usher in a great society where all human need was fulfilled and human potential reached through a new moral and ethical transformation led by the artist. Through abstract representation, and form following function, this aesthetic and mode of design was a major utopian push of modernity.

National Socialist Utopias

Perhaps the most horrific trajectory of the utopian mindset is that which is introduced and directed by what anarchist author Fredy Perlman termed the "Egocrat"—megalomaniacs like Hitler, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao (all of whom initially claimed to be part of a people's struggle), whose own unrealized individual potential led them to project their twisted agenda onto entire nations, and ultimately, the world. The scale of these devastating horrors on humanity (and usually the earth in general) were specific products of the twentieth century. Sure, tyrannical dictators can be seen throughout history, but it took the specific technology (industry, weapons, communications, media, etc) and general project of modernity to bring about their proliferation at the scale and speed necessary for their attainment. It is in this era that the utopian scheme becomes its most dangerous.

Perlman is correct to call all of these examples National Socialism. Although Hitler's Germany was the only one to officially use this title as its political orientation, that was, in reality, what was happening in Lenin and Stalin's Soviet Union, and Mao's China, not to mention smaller scale utopian tyrannical socialist dictatorships like Kim's North Korea and Castro's Cuba. By combining an overtly nationalist agenda and propaganda with the promise of a socialist utopia in which all (of a certain type) are equal and every need met, these Egocrats, surrounded by their elite cadre, took advantage of depressed economies or social strife to twist national psyches and implement their plans.

The Welfare State

In the democratic capitalist realm, as an alternative to the totalitarian (fascist and communist) directions the world was headed during the first half of the twentieth century, the modern day welfare state came into full fruition. From Franklin Roosevelt to Lyndon Johnson, an immense state welfare system was developed. As a method of squelching social unrest and creating an unprecedented acquiescence and patriotism, social democracy was created. No longer would people fall through the cracks of capitalist society; finally, everyone would now be at the table, at least on paper. The legitimate struggles of immigrants, poor, workers, people of color, women, and all other dispossessed were now co-opted by the system. This achieved two goals: it drained growing radical movements and created further dependence on the institutions of power. This welfare state, promising a benevolent helping hand that would ultimately create a utopian-like society in balance between the free market and social safety net, was a strictly controlled social experiment. In the last couple of decades of the twentieth century, this vision eventually approached collapse due to the growing inertia of the free market system, the new utopian model.

Dystopians

With the rise of the totalitarian and welfare states of the early twentieth century, there were many who became quite cynical, and even fearful of what a utopian worldview could look like. As the antiutopian current spread, it began to reflect the prevailing anxiety of modern times. This is expressed best in the early science fiction of the twentieth century. By looking at and exaggerating disturbing trends, many authors and visionaries presented very coherent pictures of the future, in terms of technology, alienation, and control. More than mere fantasy, much of this work represents an extremely potent and deep cautionary social commentary on the trajectory of modernity. Many of the grim themes and topics discussed early in the last century have managed to creep their way, almost unnoticed (but certainly not without some resistance), into the everyday reality of our times. Describing frightful states of programmed obedience in which all freedom and individuality is brutally subjugated, where any connection to nature is all but gone, and where technology and science are the means of control, these anti-utopian descriptions offer a terrifying glimpse into not only our future, but also our present. The concept of the "slave-citizen", al- ways at the core of the utopian and authoritarian model, reaches a new level with the technological apparatus and ethos of modernity.

The anti-utopian reveals the last stop for the dreamers of the ideal or perfect society; the ultimate conclusion of a pre-planned society, complete with composed dictators, romantic notions of scientific perfection, intricate bureaucracies, intense group-think, and economic completeness. Perhaps beginning with H. G. Wells' *Time Machine*, *The*

Island of Dr. Moreau, *The War of the Worlds*, *When the Sleeper Wakes*, and his numerous earlier scientific romances at the turn of the century, his pessimism and pre-occupation with the future and its conceivable horrors was an early predecessor of the science fiction of technological doom. Wells did not reject science as a whole (in fact, he later became a proponent of a global state in tune with technology, termed "Wellsian Utopia"). Instead, he saw it as a problem only when out of balance or lacking ethical human control. His apocalyptic warnings, however, were a catalyst (and often the subject of parody) for much deeper dystopian works like: Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, with its distrust for machines and material progress; George Orwell's *1984*, the all-time classic understanding of techno-fascism, and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, a stark look at modern state control, monotony, and censorship. In the second half of the twentieth century, the trend becomes more sophisticated and satirical, as in Kurt Vonnegut's "Harrison Bergeron", which describes beautifully the appalling notion of enforced equality, in which every positive attribute is balanced with a technological handicap. Those with excellent eyesight are forced to wear glasses which distort their vision, the strong are connected to mechanisms which limit their mobility and action, and those with high intelligence have a piercing sound sent to their brains every few seconds to avoid regular thinking. Finally, two dancers, who desire a brief moment of unrestrained freedom, are shot and killed when they remove their handicaps to have one dance of liberation. The twentieth century is filled with extensive ranges of anti-utopian themes, from the gentle suggestions of ideas headed down a slippery slope, to satirical looks at modernity, to the apocalyptic warnings of the future. The anti-utopian theme is prolific, from Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times* to Phillip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (the basis for the motion picture *Blade Runner*). As civilization moves forward and the Tower of Babel gets elevators, then faxes, then fiber-optics, the trance-like march toward our destruction will be described and predicted by those with the vision to comprehend and articulate this horrific trajectory.

Anarchist Utopians

Historically, perhaps the greatest impediment for anarchists has been their inability to think and dream outside the utopian paradigm. Rather than a world of possibilities opening up, often anarchism has only provided half-measure alternatives to capitalism; still embedded with many of the same values as the current set-up. How many times have we heard the Leftist-anarchists cry out, "but what kind of society do you want to replace the current one with?" And their bafflement and even anger with our response, "None!" With bewilderment in their eyes they often reply, "How will we win people to our side?" or "We have to offer people the security of another system or form." This reasoning suggests an assumption that people are essentially stupid and need their lives laid out for them. True, they have been trained to behave this way and to relegate all their responsibilities to the institutions of the state. But as anarchists, how can we

believe this is inherently who we are? Our project is not one of offering a new structure or society, but instead, the opening up of space to create our own lives. While there are many great examples of this in small-scale anarchist (historical and contemporary) projects, generally they are the minority. Too often, anarchists have fallen into the trap of redefining society, a goal that is inherently non-anarchistic, and has been shown to be doomed to failure. More recently, Murray Bookchin's Municipalism and the limited resurgence of anarcho-communist federations are two of the more overt "anarchist" attempts at defining our existence and rationalize it as necessary to make things function. Bookchin's Athenian-influenced participatory democracy, complete with colonial New England-style town hall meetings, not only seems nauseatingly boring, trading in one bureaucracy for another, but also extremely alienating and limited in possibilities. The idea that we could develop a perfect structure within which freedom exists is absurd. Relationships between individuals, collectives, and communities need to be open, for each dynamic is unique. Again, it comes back to allowing people to create their own relationships on their own terms, rather than attempting to provide a plan for people to subscribe to. And while the federation model of contemporary anarcho-communists proclaims allowance for full autonomy within each collective, the interaction of those collectives with each other, and the federation as a whole, is severely restricted by their "constitutions" or previously agreed upon rules. While these guidelines are open to change through the federation's bureaucracy, they were created and are altered through representatives, once again mediating experience and reducing the level of spontaneity. Similarly, the projects and strategies of each collective are limited by the federation's plans. While there does not seem to be any clear or specific goal for the future, other than the creation of federations, the structure for interaction is explicit enough to warrant critical examination. Too often, anarchists follow the same methods of social change as the Left and the other utopian thinkers: determine the problems based on a specific moral framework, isolate and correct them according to our "universally recognized" methods (ie education, reform, revolution) without significantly altering the foundations of society, and institute a "correct" plan for social, economic, and political interactions. Where is the anarchy?

The Intentional Community

As a reaction to society as a whole (both the capitalist machine and the state communist alternative, otherwise known as state capitalism), various intentional communities have attempted to carve out space on the edges of society. While their scale and sense of autonomy make them less problematic as a sub-theme of utopia, they still fall into some of the same organizational trappings of their society-scaled counterparts. While some of these communities have a healthy and integral connection with those on "the outside", many suffer from delusions of escapism. These communities typically focus intensely on a specific interest (return to agrarian lifestyles, art, non-violence, sexuality,

political ideology, religion, etc), at the expense of a holistic experience, and become extremely incestuous and self-righteous. They begin to see their experiment as "THE way to live" and lose perspective. As society on the whole becomes more dysfunctional and disjointed, these neo-utopian communities have increased, as religious communities, New Age and healing centers, communes, land-projects, and cults. Still within society, we can see similar dynamics in the numerous countercultural experiments. While escape into a closed system with like-minded folks has some very seductive and positive qualities, and has the potential to create band-like situations for individuals and collectives to flourish, they are usually somewhat unhealthy reactions to society involving rigid conditions rather than open and organic approaches.

The Politically Correct Society

Some leftist do-gooders have a vision for society which is socially even more repressive and restrictive than the one we currently inhabit. It is a society where all language, body postures, thoughts, pastimes, and sexual activity are monitored by those with "special insight". While their stated intent is to rectify all inequality and to be sensitive towards "oppressed people", often their condescending and paternalistic attitudes offend those they are supposedly "looking out for". These modern day socialists, often attempting to pass themselves off as anarchists, claim this re-programming is necessary to combat racist, sexist, and homophobic language in our culture, as if all language in the current set-up is not inherently ethnocentric, patriarchal, and heterosexist. This superficial make-up for language is a laughable attempt at creating an egalitarian society, not to mention that it is usually only accessible to its college-educated social champions. Being aware of the language we use and how it affects those around us is important, but no substitute for deeper change that challenges the very notion of a "correct" way to interact. The various progressive attempts at a re-socialization of the contemporary human can be seen as nothing more than a new process of domestication (although taking advantage of the previous form), under the guise of liberation. This type of utopian socialism is the rationale for ridiculous ideas like Esperanto (a proposed global language that could finally unite the world) and other such standardizing projects. If we develop a new code for how we are allowed to articulate ourselves and how we move through our world, we become the new oppressors, though even more insidious for being cloaked in altruism.

The Postmodern Cop-out

While Postmodern thinkers initially offered some interesting antidotes for ideological rigidity, the myth of universal truth, and utopian modes of remaking our world, they ended up creating mazes and feedback loops which go nowhere. At their lowest points,

they broadcast excuses for the current system and warn against any sudden movements or revolutionary activities. In relation to utopian thinking, Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992), which deals with culture, history, and social and economic philosophy, is notable. While offering a clear historical look at the false promises of singular visions of progress, he ends up declaring that we are reaching the endpoint of history, and that we need to settle into its final and complete stage, the free-market of global neoliberal capitalism. These thoughts reverberate through much of academia, once a breeding ground for (at least some) radical thought, and now a cesspool of apathy and justification for the trajectory of the death-march. While many anarchists and postmodern academics have come to a similar conclusion that the utopian dream is problematic, for postmodernists, liberatory thinking in general is completely opposed.

Techno-Utopias

The most disturbing of the postmodern rationales is the socalled "Cybernetic Revolution". Claiming that the era of the truly "natural" is past (or never existsed), these pessimistic geeks hope to fully integrate life and machine to create a neo-"life" capable of bypassing the natural limitations we are coming up against. Their utopian hope is that their inventions will foster new ways for people to connect, a new vocabulary of shared experiences, a new understanding that crosses borders and boundaries, suggesting we will have a freer and more open society since we will, virtually, be creating our own world. Their vision is a world of computers, databases, diagnostic chips, vast wireless networks, digital accessories (ie sun glasses with cameras attached to a global database), and in the near future, each person directly connected to thousands of wireless devices (microphones, micro-cameras, environmental sensors) forming a planetary web made up of billions of monitors managing the flow of people and resources, and delivering enormous amounts of data to those interested. They hope to merge us with technology to expand our relationship with the computer, connecting us in unique ways to a super-organism glued together by technology far more powerful than the internet. Some claim that we will live in an unprecedentedly transparent society, where people's lives are more open due to surveillance and view this cyborg relationship between life and machine as a great and necessary evolutionary leap, comparable to when single-celled organisms joined together to create complex life, changing radically what life is. This concept and trajectory is feeding back into us, and changing who we are. The information flowing all around us strips us of individuality and autonomy, and is what Godfrey Reggio (Koyaanisqatsi, Powaqqatsi and Naqoyqatsi) has called technofascism. The goal is for this technology to be "intelligent", so that, if necessary, we can even be taken out of the picture and the grand project of civilization can continue on after all life is erased. This is the ultimate utopian dream in which all human error, unruliness,

and individuality is completely done away with and there is finally global unity and cohesion, a horrendous embrace of civilization's death logic.

Primitivist Idealism

Even in the realm of the post-leftist and green anarchist milieu, which is typically quite careful to avoid arranged social and organizational trappings, there still tends to be some utopianlike residue. While it is far less than in most other ideological frameworks, it is still present, often making it less flexible than one would desire. This can be seen in two realms: First, in the oversimplification of future visions (ie civilization will collapse either on its own, or with our help, and we will all revert back to hunter-gatherers); and second, in the flattening of most of human existence into an over-idealized "primitive" state. To be fair, most of this is done as an abbreviated way of explanation, and does not represent the full extent of the primitivist analysis and vision, but this simplification has proven to be problematic. As an anti-civilization anarchist who finds the primitivist critique to be one of the most relevant in anarchist theory, this is only pointed out as a cautionary observation, certainly not a dismissal. It is hard to dispute that pre-civilized life in general was much closer to an anarchist existence than any we have seen within civilization; with the lack of institutions, no formal hierarchies, far less mediation, sustainable methods of habitation, and what could be described as a bioregional outlook. It is hard not to idealize an existence which seems paradisiacal compared to any civilized reality. But we must be sure to honestly deconstruct dynamics in pre-civilized life which we have trouble with as anarchists, and not gloss over rough spots like evangelical preachers or politicians. It is also important to not lump all pre-civilized cultures (or those outside civilization) and times into one catch-word or description, because when we do, we perpetuate the same standardizing logic of colonization (not the same results, scale, or motivations, but the same singular and linear logic).

It is also important to note that a post-civilized existence will more than likely look much different then a pre-civilized one. Can we learn from, reintegrate, and explore lessons and dynamics from our precivilized ancestors and contemporary hunter-gatherers? Indeed. And this is vital. But we must be open to look at this on terms different than those we are most familiar with. This needs to be articulated in a multiplicity of ways. I wish to be a wild animal once again, and to do so, I seek to connect to a plenitude of unmediated experiences and life-ways. This cannot be described in a singular analysis or air-tight critique, and my experiences and path cannot be mapped or charted. Primitivism, like any other radical outlook, must be open-ended and adaptable to individuals and circumstances. It should not be seen as something to return to or strive for, but instead, a tool to use on our way.

Nihilism as a Healthy Influence

For the nihilist, the utopian vision is not only off the radar, but the very whispering of the notion fills her with madness. However, this should not be confused with a lack of desire for, or action towards, another world. Nihilism is often mistaken for apathy, especially within the postmodern counter-cultures of fashion. Nihilists were an important influence on early anarchists, especially those engaged in what was to be called "propaganda by the deed". Do nihilists offer us a blueprint of an ideal society, or mode of organization? Certainly not, but instead, an analysis of how deep the institutions of hierarchy and control have been ingrained in all of us by the civilizing process. For the nihilist, her only concern is the complete destruction of all of this! This is her practice and vision. It is only after all remnants of the power structure, and the social dynamics which allow for them to exist, are completely done away with that we may even begin to conceive of another world. While many of us feel that specific analysis of institutions, dynamics, and origins of civilization is a necessary project, as well as the investigation of our true desires and their separation from manufactured ones, nihilism may also be an important element to integrate into our deconstructive process. It is actually a liberatory experience to be freed from the restrictions of thinking within the confines of conceiving of another world. That responsibility should be left to individuals and their communities of affinity. It cannot fully be dreamed, let alone realized, until all power is destroyed!

Communities of Joy

Play is not a pastime but a weapon...Play is characterized by a vital impulse that is always new, always in movement. By acting as though we are playing, we charge our action with this impulse. We free ourselves from death. Play makes us feel alive. It gives us the emotion of life. In the other model of acting we do everything as thought it were a task, as though we 'had' to do it as some kind of duty. – Alfredo M. Bonanno, *Armed Joy*

As anarchists, if there is something for us to propose or advocate, it must certainly be the destruction of power and the connection to joy. Insurrectional anarchist Alfredo Bonnanno goes into this concept in great detail in his inspirational classic, *Armed Joy*. Seeming to fit somewhere between nihilism and anarchism, his mistrust of any organizational schemes has much value for an anarchist praxis. While some mistrust the insurrectional anarchist project for its unwillingness to define its parameters, many of us feel great affinity with its approach and openness. Sure, ideas and activities can reach a point which is so ambiguous and ethereal that they lose all meaning and value, but insurrectional anarchy has far to go before it approaches this; in fact, one could say that of any current anarchist strain, it has had the most effective influence on the physical realm of challenging power, while remaining a truly anarchist project in its

anti-ideological approach. For the insurrectional anarchist, joy is the means and the objective, through the spontaneous spreading of insurrectionary moments and in the expression and lived experience of play. Play is seen not as a pastime or temporary break from our societal duties, but as an approach to life. There is no separation between desires and responsibilities, and no fixed structure of connection. Within this framework, deep affinity, not accountability, ensures mutually positive directions for a community of joy. As Bonanno states, "Joy is arming itself."

Anarchy as the Goal and Practice

While it may be important to contemplate a different world, one outside the confines and logic of the death-trip known as civilization, we must be cautious not to let specifics become too ingrained in our hearts and minds, for once this happens, we limit the endless possibilities of our individual and collective desires. As anarchists, we must also be suspicious of those who offer us plans or proposals for a new arrangement. Anarchist visions can, and in my opinion, need to be part of a larger process and discussion, but if they are not presented as open-ended and humble perspectives based on individual experiences and dreams, they run the risk of becoming the new paradigm of domestication and control.

Another six billion worlds are possible!

China's War on Nature

The Uncarved Block

Overcoming Anthropocentrism and Industrialization

Derrick Jensen once said, "The true authority of any culture is unquestioned assumptions."1 To demonstrate his point he quoted a popular statement in mainstream discourse, "How do we get the US economy to grow?" Jensen goes on to explain that there are three main assumptions in this statement, all of which play an integral role in maintaining the status quo of power. First, it is assumed the economy should be growing. Second, it is assumed there should be an economy at all. Finally, as Jensen so comically put it, "who the hell are we?" For those who have formed their worldview by being indoctrinated in schools and confined within the bounds of the expressible as defined by the media, it is understandable why they label Jensen a treasonous fool hellbent on sending humanity back to the Dark Ages. The United States, and industrial civilization throughout the world, has created paradigmatic assumptions that not only frame perceptions of reality, but create conditions of misery that leave the critical mind wondering whether the biosphere would be better off if humanity disappeared and the sooner the better. Thrown into the depths of despair, confronting Nietzsche's abyss, or simply amused to death by the bread and circus phenomenon of banality, we are presented with the choice of submitting to the onslaught of domestication, committing suicide or endeavoring to eliminate our collective disconnection from each other and nature.

This essay is an attempt to demonstrate that by focusing on a specific country the long term philosophical trends that cement unquestioned assumptions, which force us to confront existential dilemmas of acquiescence or resistance, can be seen as a major component of the root of ecological destruction and human alienation in modern society, and that anything less than a radical deconstruction will essentially leave us, as American Indian visionary Vine Deloria put it, "circling the same old rock."2 China is seen by many as a rising Leviathan in the East, determined to eventually overtake the US as the world's dominant superpower, both economically and militarily. By showing the paradigmatic roots of ecological destruction in both the Maoist and post-Maoist eras of China, sections one and two will show that a false choice was offered to humanity in the second half of the twentieth century concerning whether capitalism or

communism was the proper path to take in order to create "the good life." Neither system was able to sufficiently break with the legacy of civilization, instead choosing to perpetuate the war on nature and psychological health that has been waged since Gilgamesh's narcissistic project of deforesting the ancient Fertile Crescent.3 Section three will look at the trend in current reformist solutions to ecocidal and omnicidal realities and potentialities in China, showing how they are incapable of breaking with the anthropocentric and industrial model. Alternatives concerned with unveiling assumptions can be found in various times and places, including both ancient and current Daoism in China, the existentialist philosophy of German intellectual Martin Heidegger, and the modes of being found amongst many indigenous societies such as American Indians.

The Maoist Period: Confucianism, Marxism and the Drive to Industrialize

The Maoist period of Chinese history is a good example of the dangers of schismatic views. A major tenet of Marxism, and its Maoist variant, was the fundamental division between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. In order for the process of liberation to achieve new heights, the proletariat was instructed to take over the reigns of the state, establishing itself in power in order to more easily rid the world of capitalist parasites. Although this seemed like an adequate prescription for ending workers' exploitation, the schismatic reality of a new class of technicians and statesmen embedded in a soul-draining bureaucracy played against the theoretical aspirations of utopia. By assuming it both proper and necessary to utilize the hierarchical structure of the nation-state, Chinese Communists often seemed more interested in solidifying the cult of personality associated with Chairman Mao than looking at the roots of their flawed attempt at completing revolution. The existence of the role of worker was never challenged, and as Fredy Perlman said in his *Against His-Story, Against Leviathan!*, the anarchists wanted to further enshrine this notion of the worker while covering up the farce with ideologies of anarchosyndicalism or some other variety of anarchism which celebrated machines.

The schismatic reality of a division between those with Party and state power, and those who were treated as cogs, running on human sweat and blood to catch up economically with the industrial- ized West, can also be seen in the realm of ecology. Chinese society was highly militarized, partly due to threats from outside its artificially constructed state boundaries and partly due to the state's own desires to control its population as well as its numerous indigenous peoples not exactly thrilled with the reality of forced assimilation.4

In order to carry out the task of conquering nature, powerful ideas were disseminated, often accompanied by the use of military imagery. Summarizing the type of

propaganda used throughout China in relation to the environment during the Maoist period, Judith Shapiro states, *Official discourse was filled with references to a war on nature. Nature was to be conquered. Wheat was to be sown by shock troops. Shock troops reclaimed the grasslands. Victories were won against flood and drought. Insects, rodents, and sparrows were wiped out. This polarizing, adversarial language captures the core dynamic of environmental degradation of the era.*5

Major consequences of this rhetoric included a renewed cycle of population growth, accelerated indiscriminate mobilization of resources in preparation for war, and grand schemes for economic development, which, in turn, contributed to severe environmental degradation and social turmoil.6

The culmination of these large scale trends saw China become part of the nuclear arms race, joining the likes of the US and Soviet Union who were already pushing the world towards Mutually Assured Destruction. It has been argued that it is necessary for underdeveloped countries to acquire nukes in order to protect themselves from the rapacious imperialism of the West. Although protection from imperialism is needed, nuclear weapons create the conditions for complete omnicide, which includes planetary ecocide. Realpolitik, in all cases, but especially nuclear weapons, is an excuse for maintenance of control.

What, if anything, did this have to do with paradigmatic assumptions in the philosophies of Confucianism and Marxism? Shapiro states The Mao-era effort to conquer nature can thus be understood as an extreme form of a philosophical and behavioral tendency that has roots in traditional Confucian culture. Many of the themes... including state-sponsored resettlements and waterworks projects, extensive and excessive construction of dikes for land reclamation, political campaigns to change agricultural practices, and environmentally destructive land conversions in response to population shifts—can be found in imperial times.7

The Confucian ideology saw the world as being governed by a triad of heaven, earth, and humankind, with humans in the middle. Although this hierarchical structure often legitimated environmental destruction, there was also a tendency to show a deep respect, even a reverence, for a natural order conceived as grander than man and more to be admired.8

So if the traditional Confucian worldview cannot adequately explain environmental devastation caused during the Maoist period, does an examination of Marxist thought yield more promising insights? Rooted more solidly in the Western tradition that will be explored in section two, Marx was a product of a long legacy of anthropocentrism and the desire for progress. Some of Marx's early works show a stronger degree of sensitivity towards nature, however, as Clive Ponting summarizes, *...even in these works Marx adopted the common European view that nature only had meaning in terms of human requirements, for example, when he wrote that, Nature taken abstractly, for itself, and fixedly isolated from man, is nothing for man. In his later works Marx argues that the great civilizing influence of capital is that it rejects the deification of nature so*

*that nature becomes, for the first time, simply an object of mankind, purely a matter of utility.*9

Along with this common European assumption of nature's utility for man, Marx's view of stages of history as representing progress would play a key role in the Maoist drive to industrialize. If humans are achieving greater freedom from nature by destroying it throughout the stages of history, this not only legitimates the capitalist destruction of the world, but also gives Leninists, including Maoists, a reason to enhance the process of progress as quickly as possible. This line of thought is also seen in many varieties of anarchism, dating back to Bakunin's praise of humanity's ascent from animality and into what he perceived to be the greatness of culture. These assumptions concerning the progress embodied in the advent of culture and the impoverishment of wholeness they represent are becoming increasingly clear in the face of worldwide anomie.10

Although a modification of Marx's original conclusion that the dictatorship of the proletariat would come to already industrialized nations first, the environmental consequences of Marxist-Leninist practice is comparable to the more drawn-out process of capitalist accumulation as will be shown in the next section.

The Post-Maoist Period: The Haunting Spectre of Judeo-Christian Arrogance

China in the past twenty-five years is a perfect example of the complete disregard the capitalist system shows towards ecological stability, especially in its earliest stages of accumulation. Getting rich quick is one of the main tenets of capitalist ideology, demonstrating an inability to look beyond the extremely short term desire for the few to profit at the expense of the many. The death of Chairman Mao saw a gradual opening up of China's borders to not only western corporations seeking to maximize their bank accounts, but also to the legacy of Euro-American thought. Like the Maoists desire to conquer nature, late 20th and early 21st century capitalist penetration of China has greatly intensified ecological pillage. Some of the major problems include water pollution from discharge... of untreated industrial wastewater and raw sewage into rivers, rising sea levels threatening destruction linked to global warming, severe deforestation, soil erosion, air pollution in major cities which rank among some of the world's dirtiest, and acid rain due to the emission of greenhouse gases.11

Also, China's biodiversity is more threatened than ever. China...has one of the highest percentages of endangered species to total species, with around 15-20% of the whole being endangered.

The contribution of overall global consumption is beginning to take its toll in China, and if present trends continue, possibly another billion consumers will be added to the already devastating industrial system. As Zhao Bin argues, perhaps nowhere is the

impact of the transition to capitalism having a more devastating effect than upon China's environment.13

Zhao states that on a per capita basis, the billion residents of what is called the developed world in the 1990s consumed at least three times as much water, ten times as much energy, thirteen times as much iron and steel, fourteen times as much paper, eighteen times as much chemicals and nineteen times as much aluminum as someone in a developing country like China. Industrial countries account for nearly two-thirds of the global emissions of carbon dioxide from the combustion of fossil fuels and their factories generate most of the hazardous chemical wastes. Their air conditioners, aerosol sprays and factories release almost 90 percent of the chlorofluorocarbons that destroy the ozone layer.14

Aspirations of China's leaders to integrate their burgeoning population further into this system, encouraged by the lifestyles of many middle class tools and unrealistic pronouncements of cornucopias that do not exist by civilization's guardians, will have long term consequences so severe it transcends the imagination.

As with the Maoist period, there are deep paradigmatic roots at play in the most recent of China's environmental holocausts. Two ancient western thought patterns, one philosophical and the other religious, are the main culprits in setting the ideological foundation for further exploitative inroads to be taken by the European scientific revolution. The Greek philosopher Plato created two fundamental concepts that laid the basis for further developments in Christianity that are currently haunting the biosphere. One idea was the Great Chain of Being, an idea that created a hierarchical structure of all existing beings, categorizing them from top to bottom as God, angels, man, animals, plants, metals, and nothingness. Similar to the Confucian hierarchy with humans somewhere in the middle and above corporeal non-humans, Plato's Great Chain of Being leads to his more elaborate ideas on the world of Forms. Reacting to the pre-Socratic challenge to objective knowledge, Plato constructed an explanation that the material world is not the real world, but rather a shadow world. Therefore, there is a dualism of mind and body in which body imprisons mind. Reason becomes the vehicle by which we know truth; all other aspects of human experience are inferior.15

Dianne Barsoum Raymond's excellent explanation of Plato's thought makes it easier to agree with Nietzsche's aphorism: *Christianity is Platonism for the masses.* Although a connection between Plato's world-denying and speciest philosophy exists with Christianity, the Old Testament, written before Plato, can be seen as offering one of the original validations of anthropocentric human dominance over nature. As God commands Adam and Eve in "Genesis" Chapter 1, *Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth...* The haunting spectre of the Judeo-Christian legacy, with the belief that only humans are created in God's image, provides the divine enjoinder for civilization's trajectory over thousands of years, including the present pulverization of China. 17th century Europe saw the advent of what is called the scien- tific revolution, which essentially built on the legacy

of human dominance initiated by Plato and the Judeo-Christian worldview. Although many thinkers would contribute to this intensification of mechanizing reality, Rene Descartes is seen by many to be the most important in developing this pattern of thought. The reductionist approach to scientific inquiry inevitably led to a fragmented view of the world to a focus on the individual parts of a system rather than on the organic whole...This tendency was reinforced by a mechanistic approach to natural phenomena, which can be traced back to Descartes who wrote, *I do not recognize any difference between the machines made by craftsmen and the various bodies that nature alone composes. Animals were therefore mere machines...*16

A general "rape of the world", as Clive Ponting puts it, occurred throughout Europe and the newly created Third World established by colonialism. Specific concrete implications of these paradigmatic roots can be seen clearly in the rhetoric of the Founding Fathers. George Washington, demonstrating his insensitivity to both the human and non-human world, stated in 1783, "the gradual extension of our Settlements will as certainly cause the Savage as the Wolf to retire; both being beasts of prey tho they differ in shape".17

John Quincy Adams said in 1839, *Shall the savage not only disdain the virtues and enjoyments of civilization himself, but shall he control the civilization of a world? Shall he forbid the wilderness to blossom like a rose? Shall he forbid the oaks of the forest to fall before the axe of industry...shall he doom an immense region of the globe to perpetual desolation, and to hear the howlings of the tiger and wolf silence forever the voice of human gladness?*18

The Chinese environment and its people are being destroyed by paradigmatic institutions that ultimately severs completely the ties humans once had with wolves, the earth, and the entire biosphere. Material accumulation has taken precedence as the number one value promulgated by elites in China and the world, maintaining that it is impossible for human gladness to exist within an intact ecology, for an intact ecology is the antithesis of industrialization. In the next section we will see that some are trying to mitigate the effects of this suicidal implementation, however, alternative traditions representing non-anthropocentric and anti-industrial tendencies are posing the most significant challenge to the current order.

Reformist Solutions and Radical Alternatives

One strand of thought argues that attempts to reform China's environmental problems should be done through utilizing the rhetorical legal framework for ecological protection that already exists in China.19 Other strands of thought see the international community playing a larger role in holding China accountable for its environmental decimation.20 These touted solutions range from reducing greenhouse emissions to developing alternative fuels. The main thrust of the argument behind these reformist solutions is that China should meet its goals for economic development within the

framework of sustainable development. This phrase has become somewhat popular recently among not only activists but entrenched members of nation-states throughout the world. Although there is still the onslaught of capital causing ecological mayhem in China, it is likely that eventually some of these measures to mitigate some of the effects will be implemented. The long term interests of capitalism and civilization would point towards the direction of curtailing the more hyper-exploitative aspects of the system in the name of maintaining power.

What do oppositional currents have to say about solutions? Daoism has deep roots in Chinese society; however, its potential to help create ecologically whole human societies has been largely ignored by Chinese civilization. The Chinese Daoist Association has recently put out a declaration on the earth's current ecological crises. They feel that problems concerning environmental protection are not derived from industrial pollution or technological expansion alone. Rather, these problems are also derived from people's worldviews, ideas of values, or theories of knowledge. Recognizing the deep roots that must be reached when looking to interact with the natural world in more harmonious ways, they continue by saying, "contemporary thought patterns have given humankind a greatly inflated image of itself." Daoists believe that this inflated image of the self is an important cause of the serious ecological crises confronting the modern world.21

Ancient Daoist texts can be consulted to provide insight on how humans can begin to undergo a paradigm shift in relation to the environment and each other. Chuang-Tzu, the 4th century BCE Daoist philosopher in China, wrote many short stories demonstrating the problematic aspects of anthropocentrism, arguing that humans do not always know what is best in all contexts, for do not animals of different bioregions have their own knowledge of what is best for them? Many Daoists see these stories as a solid basis for an alternative paradigm that cuts humans down from their self-imposed superiority over the rest of nature. The Chinese Daoist Association, through their spreading of

Daoism's ecological message and their protection of forests, is an inspiring form of resistance in China, however, can hardly be considered adequate in the face of civilization's onslaught.22

Another ecologically oriented thinker was Martin Heidegger. He became familiar with Daoist texts in the 1920s and 30s, assisting in translations and borrowing themes or even whole passages for his own writings.23

Heidegger, like the Daoists, felt we must dig deeper to discover how to stop being a nuisance to the earth. He used to say that the whole problem arose from the current human attitude towards nature (or, as he put it, the "technological mode of Being"). Technology, he wrote, was a "manner of un-protecting" nature rather than "letting it emerge". Everything around us is adjudged to be a tool of "man as the centre of reference". It was technology, rather than capitalism or communism, that were "the same dreary technological frenzy, the same unrestricted organization of the average man"—which defined the age, he thought.24

In relation to reformist solutions even if new technologies are employed, say, to remove pollutants from the process of burning hydrocarbons, or if the ozone layer is repaired... or if state-of-the-art engineering is brought to bear on China's water crisis, the disaster—said Heidegger—would be merely forestalled, and made all the worse. The root of the problem would not be addressed. Echoing Daoism, Heidegger noted that technology calls for more technology, and that "industrial society exists on the basis of its occlusion in its own concoction".[25]

The third tendency representing an alternative view does not have a direct connection with Daoism, however, the potency of its insights and possibilities for adaptation are enormous. American Indians, like many indigenous peoples throughout the world, have been making comments and participating in actions to preserve human connections with non-human relations for quite some time. A prevalent trend in the past 35 years has seen what has been called ecofeminism, but what American Indian women like M. Annette Jaimes Guerrero see as traditional ecological practices before they were distorted and destroyed by colonization. She states that native womanism is "primarily premised on kinship traditions and 'birthright' tied to indigenous homelands," again stressing connection to the land as a necessity for survival of indigenous tribal people. She explains that the term indigenous refers to "cultures among land based peoples who lived in reciprocal relationship with their environment," which can be conceptualized as 'ecocultures.' Indigenous peoples spiritual relationship to the land is the basis of their resistance to the dominant US notion of progress, which has always included the exploitation of natural resources regardless of the well-being of future generations. For the Indians, the cosmos is often referred to as a web, wherein all forms of life are seen as interdependent, including the Earth itself, which they revere as Mother, not as a lifeless, inorganic "it."[26]

American Indian Movement member Russell Means explains that, *Birds and insects and other animals speak in many ways. In nature, everything communicates with everything else. However, the white man doesn't know how to commune with nature.* Means feels, *Instead of believing that the universe depends on what we think, we teach that we must use our hearts to achieve harmony with our fellow creatures. At Yellow Thunder Camp I began to realize that there are two cultures on earth, one industrial and the other indigenous: One is about death, the other about life.* Similar themes running throughout all these trajectories in the alternative paradigm include a rejection of human superiority over nature as well the negative psychological effects industrial alienation produces in the isolated mind, disconnected not only from meaningful human community, but the natural world.

Footnotes

1. Jensen, *The Other Side of Darkness*
2. Churchill, *Marxism and Native Americans*, pgs. 113-136

3. Jensen, *Strangely Like War* for the Mesopotamian myth of Gilgamesh and its connection to civilization's origins and delusions of grandeur.

4. Connor, *The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy* for info on minority peoples trapped within the territorial boundaries of the Chinese state

5. Shapiro, *Mao's War Against Nature*, pg. 4

6. Economy, "The River Runs Black", pg. 47

7. Shapiro, *Mao's War Against Nature*, pg. 8

8. Economy, "The River Runs Black", pg. 33

9. Ponting, *A Green History of the World*, pg. 157

10. Zerzan, *Elements of Refusal*

11. Murray, *Green China*, pgs. 6-7

12. Olton, *Why Are They Disappearing*

13. Bin, *Consumerism, Confucianism, Communism*, pg. 13

14. Bin, *Consumerism, Confucianism, Communism*, pg. 15

15. Raymond, *Existentialism and the Philosophical Tradition*, pgs. 6-7

16. Ponting, *A Green History of the World*, pg. 147

17. Washington, Letter to James Duane

18. Adams, *The Jubilee of the Constitution*

19. Economy, "The River Runs Black", pgs. 91-128

20. Murray, *Green China*, pgs. 200-204

21. Girardot, *Daoism and Ecology*, pg. 364-365

22. Girardot, *Daoism and Ecology*, pg. 370

23. Collins, *Introducing Heidegger*, pg. 153

24. Nature is sometimes man-made

25. Nature is sometimes man-made

26. Speaking to Survival

Barbarism or Authoritarianism

Jesús Sepúlveda

33 Years of Chilean History and the Failure of the Left

The September Military Coup of 1973 ended an electoral democratic system in Chile which had functioned with few interruptions since 1830. It also exposed the real character of representative-electoral democracy. Experience shows that anytime there is an attempt to reform the system in a drastic way, like the socialist reforms of Allende, the reactionary forces unleash the army—and the cops—to repress the population and to retake political control of the territories marked by the national-state's borders. Reactionary forces operate with the monetary, military and political help of corporate capital, establishing alliances between the Latin American national elites and imperialist power. The coup in Chile was not only fostered by multinational corporations, but by the US. In 1998 Clinton opened the files that finally proved what everybody knew: the Chilean coup was part of a plan of intervention of the CIA and the White House. The form this intervention took in Chile was through a sort of neo-fascism. The form it is taking now in Venezuela is through corporate and media boycotts in order to create a civil war. The form it is taking in Colombia is through military and logistic support. The form it took in Grenada was the military invasion. The form it is taking in Bolivia is through austerity measures. The form it has taken in Mexico was through territorial control and currently through the North American Free Trade Agreement. These experiences show the limits of representative democracy. The real plutocratic nature of the representative democratic system is based on money and interests in strategic bioregions. In 1970, socialist elected President Salvador Allende tried to create Socialism in a Chilean way, the so-called "vía chilena al socialismo." This Chilean way was a peaceful transition toward a better society through elections and confidence in parliamentarian power. Allende refused to arm civilians when one of the most influential and radical groups of the time, the MIR (Revolutionary Movement of the Left), asked him to do so. On the contrary, leftist leaders of Allende's government supported the politics of "popular fronts." Founding popular fronts of wide ranges of progressive social groups in order to win all electoral scenarios was the international platform of communist parties around the world. Most of the time, popular fronts ended up in brutal repression. Political alliances are not strong enough to resist military

coups, military interventions, genocides, ecocides, et cetera. The Pinochet regime ended a naïve democratic dream which believed it was possible to transform the plutocratic system into a truly democratic social coexistence.

In 1936 this dream ended up in a nightmare when Franco destroyed the Spanish Republic and put himself in power until 1977. This also happened in Brazil in 1964 when João Goulart's progressive government was also overthrown by a military coup monitored by the CIA. Latin America as an area of geo-political interests has been controlled directly by US imperialism through the training given to officers and high rank military agents in the "School of the Americas". Liberals and social democrats in Chile believed in the constitutional spirit of the army. But the only Constitution the army respects is that which defends the rich and the interests of powerful people. Not understanding this is not only naïve, but suicidal. This naïveté was the failure of the Left—which cost thousands of lives and drove the Left itself toward political suicide. The leftovers of this left are represented by the current Chilean President, the so-called socialist, Ricardo Lagos, and the Brazilian President and leader of the Workers Party, Luis Inácio "Lula" da Silva. These two governments got into power compromising the lives of people and their environment to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Interamerican Development Bank. Thus, the electoral system cannot be reformed in a radical way because monetary interest is its main concern. Indeed, all systems tend to perpetuate the mechanisms of power that allow their own existence. In this sense, the Left also failed because the main issue on its agenda was taking power instead of abolishing it. As the Bolivian anarchist poet, Humberto Quino, said: "in order to abolish coups de êtats, it is necessary to abolish the state." In order to eliminate military coups it is necessary to eliminate the army and the state.

The Chilean military dictatorship imposed a terrorist state regime which physically eliminated the urban guerrilla resistance in three years. The Chilean military regime imposed a "panoptic society of control" based on surveillance, domiciliation, and imprisonment. After three years of bloody repression, the military junta kept forcing people to be at home through the curfew as well as through the propaganda machine, passing anti-terrorist laws, and creating a state of permanent paranoid alarm. Domiciliation is a tactic of domination— which forces civil social life and public practices to uniformity. This laboratory of power relies on the imprisonment system, which, in the Chilean case, adopted three forms: jailing opponents of the regime; sending political prisoners to concentrations camps or places of relegation in rural and faraway locations; and using unknown places for detention. In these unknown places, torture and kidnapping with the result of death were mainly practiced. In the 1991 report of the "Truth and Reconciliation" Commission, presided over by Raúl Rettig, there were around 3,500 documented cases of political prisoners, who were either executed or who "disappeared" during the military regime. In Argentina there were around 30,000 cases.

The Chilean military dictatorship not only imposed a panoptic society of control, but also a neoliberal model based on the so-called "popular capitalism". The experts who experimented with this model in Chile studied in the Business School in Chicago

under the gable of Milton Friedman. The trickle-down economics applied in Chile in the seventies has been nurturing the model for the New World Order and Imperial expansion through Globalization. According to Greg Palast, under the spell of the Chicago Boys' theories, the Pinochet regime *abolished the minimum wage, outlawed trade union bargaining rights, privatized the pension system, abolished all taxes on wealth and on business profits, slashed public employment, privatized 212 state industries and 66 banks and ran a fiscal surplus.*

This is the "neoliberal" model, the so-called free market, which runs the world.

Homogenization and uniformity were indeed the goals of the regime since its beginning. Chilean writer Volodia Teitelboim recalls that on September 11, 1973, *soldiers lighted bonfires, burning 20 original manuscripts of Chilean authors and destroying around 20 million books from the Quimantú publishing house (the biggest editorial house in Chile at that time), plus 1 million, 100 thousand books in the process of being printed. University and union libraries were also devastated and there were raids (allanamientos) of private houses to make sure that there was no 'subversive' literature. High schools were prohibited to study topics such as Human Geography, World History and the French Revolution because it could cause political discussions.*

Before the imminent institutionalization of the regime and the failure of political negotiations, the Communist Party decided in 1982 to form a political-military organization to carry out the politics of popular rebellion. Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez [Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front] was named after the guerrilla fighter of Chilean Independence in 1810. The FPMR had an enormous logistic capacity of operation, such as: bank robbery, kidnapping military officers, rescue of prisoners from jail, smuggling weapons inside the country, and realizing the assassination attempt of Pinochet in 1986. In December 1982 a splinter group of the United Popular Action Movement, MAPU-Lautaro, emerged. Lautaro was a Mapuche Indian guerrilla who led a rebellion against the Spanish colonizers in the 16th century. MAPU-Lautaro's main actions were directed to looting chain stores, actions of expropriation, and murdering cops. Also, by the beginning of the '80s, the MIR was reorganized. Through the creation of Miguel Enríquez Rebel Youth (a group named after the MIR founder and leader who died in a six-hour shootout in 1975 in a poor neighborhood in South Santiago) the MIR grew rapidly among young people. These three groups coordinated their actions through a Revolutionary Coordination, establishing that 1986 was going to be the "decisive year" for the insurrection. Since national protests sprung up in 1983—after two hunger marches in December 1982 and March 1983—and kept going almost every month for three years with no interruptions, the whole country was headed toward a civil war. In July 1983, the first civilian minister of the Pinochet regime, Sergio Onofre Jarpa, occupied Santiago with 18,000 soldiers. At each protest there were hundreds of deaths, but the opposition and confrontation against the regime became direct. Denunciation and selective repression were no longer an effective means of intimidation. Pro- tests started with people lighting candles and banging on cooking pots at 8 pm And by 10 pm direct actions were being carried out in the form of city blackouts and

barricades. There were also student and worker strikes, and in poor neighborhoods and shantytowns (*poblaciones*) the territories were liberated and police were afraid to be in the peripheral areas. Cops were hung from light posts at night.

It was the FPMR's Command September 4th that attacked Pinochet on September 7, 1986, in the Andean foothill area of Melocotón. The plan was to create a crisis of leadership inside the regime by killing Pinochet. After Pinochet's death, the plan was to take main cities from peripheral areas in the direction of power centers. In that context tons of weapons were smuggled inside the country by ocean, then through the Northern desert of Atacama. Centrists and social democrats came out then with a political way out through a referendum, which took place in 1988, in order to avoid the coming revolution. They compromised with the regime to isolate the Revolutionary Coordination, to demobilize people toward a "civilized" way of opposition, and to not process any officer for his responsibility in the cases of torture and disappearance. Since the rocket that hit Pinochet's car didn't explode, the whole plan of the Revolutionary Coordination failed. After the assassination attempt there was severe repression and most militants had to go underground. Others were killed. Protests decreased and by the end of 1987 they were totally controlled by liberals, centrists, and social democrats, who initiated rallies as a main form of opposition and political action. This opposition won referendum and the election the next year, getting into office Christian democrat Patricio Aylwin. The opponent centrist organization, Democratic Alliance, became the current governmental coalition in power, Coalition of Parties for Democracy (*Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia*). And the Left divided into moderate and hard-core positions. Unfortunately, the lives of many people and the history of a whole country were depending on a rocket badly shot.

Centrist negotiation, military capitulation and left division were the new scenario after the referendum in 1988, burying the revolts. Most radical people at that time felt frustrated because it was obvious that centrists, social democrats, and some leftists gave in for a political way out, which was not going to produce radical changes in Chile. Negotiation kept business as usual with some civilian ornamentation. Hard-core protesters found more individual ways to oper- ate and started questioning the authoritarian, hierarchical and vertical structure of political organizations. There was a profound critique of political parties and different collectives sprung up spontaneously. This situation allowed the emergence of a rebel culture that distrusted the system and felt betrayed by the Left. Some of the people who formed part of this counterculture accomplished political, social and cultural work in an autonomous way, with an anarchist and nihilistic perspective. Self management initiatives for autonomy happened in poblaciones and combative universities. In the Metropolitan University of Santiago— the former Pedagógico—the group Vanguard animated long battles with police from inside the campus, responding with molotov-cocktails to the police tear gas. There were improvised magazines, fanzines, and books published at the same time that a new consciousness started. Freedom was more valued than political agendas or plans for taking over the power. The desire was to dismantle power and authority— crystal-

lized in the state—and feel free. Maybe the Argentine uprising of December 2001 that overthrew three presidents in a row represents on a mass scale this feeling. In fact, the sensibility of this rebel culture of the late '80s in Chile was highly resistant to civilian values fostered by the new political dominant group, and highly aggressive against any military symbol. From academia the supposedly derogatory adjective "barbarian" came to name this new and isolated counterculture because of its undomesticated and bohemian nature, which never really dissipated.

The so-called "democratic transition" in Chile has lasted thirteen years (from 1990 to 2003). There have been three presidents since then. All of them are from the government's Coalition of Parties for Democracy. Simultaneously, Pinochet was the commander in chief of the army until his arrest in London in 1998. That ended up a *sui generis* transition with the dictator still in power. The third President of the current government is Ricardo Lagos, a member of the Socialist Party. Lagos was the one who negotiated the return of Pinochet to Chile, so he wouldn't be extradited to Spain to be judged as a criminal against humanity. Last year Lagos' government violently repressed several Mapuche Indian communities in Southern Chile to capture members of the Mapuche resistance. This year Lagos signed a Free Trade Agreement with the US. The neoliberal model runs the country, while the Left still talks about taking power and running the state. However, a new movement flows, creating a new type of resistance. The Mapuche renaissance is crucial in this process as well as the anti-authoritarian movement in urban spots. This new resistance grows organically more than in terms of organizations. It doesn't have leaders and it is not in search of power. It has also a non-hierarchical perspective and an indigenous community-based orientation.

The Mapuche movement in Southern Chile and Argentina is reclaiming the land taken from the native people centuries ago, and resisting the building project of six dams in the Mapuche region. The Mapuche fight is also for autonomy and non-intervention of Chilean and Argentine states in their territories. They want to maintain their community-based lifestyle focused on self-sufficiency rather than working in sweatshops to be able to buy plastic products. This struggle against western penetration goes beyond the nation-state projects of development and shows a way to go in future struggles. The socialist government has strongly repressed some Mapuche communities, even killing young activists. Radical actions have been the response of Mapuche people, including burning state installations and private land.

The Zapatista movement learnt from the Mayan communities a new way of resistance, more focus on autonomy and self-sufficiency than on taking power and imposing a State model in Mexico. The Mayan experience in Chiapas has been a new matrix for the EZLN, which started as a classic Marxist guerrilla group. There are no platforms for the resistance, so there shouldn't be organizers of people either. The movement grows organically, and people organize themselves. Mutual agreements without ideological barriers are more liberating than the agendas of political parties. The beat of the planet is the only one who should be keeping the motion awake, and not the mechanized imperial industrial labyrinth.

The corrupt neoliberal "democratic transition" has failed the Chilean people. The social gap, unemployment and marginality are still the main social issues in Chilean society, although today there are also enormous problems of alienation, pollution, natural devastation and mental illnesses as well. This is indeed the failure of an unsustainable system, which overlooks the radical problem of Chile's foundation: colonization and industrialism. It seems fundamental that political interaction with social-empirical reality has to be based on autonomy rather than on power, and self-sustainability rather than on a "global-market" industrial platform. The Left has never acknowledged this matter. Maybe through a deeper analysis of Chile's history in the last 33 years, more vital forms of political thought can emerge and be shared by fighters of other bioregions.

August 2003

Ongoing Death March

As the World Burns: The Ongoing Death March of Civilization

If a new war breaks out, can we still talk without laughing—or crying— about the benefits of education, progress and civilization?

The stagnation in which all the branches of human activity are drowning is not a crisis: it is an outcome, a result.

Progress is senility and death disguised as the future.

Disobey progress and civilization. Disobey the trends, snobbism and fickle, the contradictory, irrational theories. Disobey the machine! Disobey stupidity! Back off the road that the crowd, the mob is taking. Flee the false, modern mysticism.

Go it alone, all alone. Count on no one and obey only your instincts, the sure laws of nature. Maybe you'll have a brush with the abyss, but, all things considered, it is no more of a risk than the nice young man buried on the battlefield or elsewhere.

Whether it be in the service of Attila, Charlemagne, Robespierre, Napoleon, Lenin, Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, etc... The masses vanish, disappear, anonymous in death.

Only the names of few, hands stained in blood, are graven in stone for eternity. They print them in books for little children.

—Maurice Vlaminck, *Disobey* (1936)

It's difficult to walk through the illusion of civilization without being awed and distracted by it, for illusions are seductive and sparkle, and false gold glitters. But at the same time civilization's ornamental purity, its luxurious, barren, and sublime appearance, is being eaten away by the now undeniable carnage that its death march has inflicted on the biosphere—as well as by the vast numbers of ecological refugees (such as most Third World city dwellers) that have been created in the process. The primeval groves, the vast, unmapped, uncharted, and unpredictable groves that once stretched throughout Europe, fragmentarily preserved in places like Slovakia and Belarus, have long ago been cannibalized by the insatiable necessities of war and commerce—while the devastation of the planet's remaining rainforests (and the life forms that inhabit them) continues at full throttle, like an ecocidal blitzkrieg. And then there's the great Pacific garbage patch, a floating continent of civilized detritus located approximately halfway between Hawai'i and San Francisco: due to a confluence of winds and ocean currents, much of the world's garbage ends up in this spot: comprised of 80% plastic and an estimated 3.5 million tons, this staggering monument to human stupidity is now twice the size of Texas.

In the social and psychological sphere the situation is equally horrific, as our lives are incessantly sucked down into the commercial vortex of the global economy and smothered in its prevailing baseness. A company in Tokyo currently markets a product for exhausted workers commuting home on mass transit known as the "happy snooze"; it's essentially a hard hat with suction cups to enable sleeping subway passengers to keep their balance (it sticks to walls and windows). Another company in Japan has invented a device that contains a sensor in a ring which sets off an alarm if a worker dozes off and several companies in China and Japan require job applicants to have type O or type B blood because it's believed these blood types indicate a stable and pleasant work personality! Mass Society resembles an ant colony more and more, and just as ant pupae are captured and trained as slaves from birth— thus having no memory of freedom to stimulate them to resist—neither do the children of the civilized have much memory of true freedom left in their ancestral line.

The brutality of civilization has resulted in an all-encompassing poverty, a despair that's starting to inevitably breed a liberating violence. The simmering alienation and dislocation of the System's myriad ghetto-realities is driving the exploited beyond the zone of faith—faith in reform, faith in politics, or faith in their rulers. Perhaps the only relevant question to be asking at this point is: Is there still time to abandon ship?

Zero War: Total Liberation

Dave Antagonism

Introduction

This article has had to go though numerous revisions and rewrites in a desperate and often failing attempt to stay "current". Indeed one of the most difficult things we face in resisting Capital's bloody adventures (or bloody banalities if you prefer) is the global dimensions of this global war. By this I don't just mean physical space, but maybe less tangible elements that work to reinforce the tangible nature of our current oppression. For one the "war on terror" is working to reinforce and deepen a globalised temporal order. The global size of the planning and execution of the war (and its simultaneous transformation into news/entertainment/marketing) happens in a digital/artificial "Real Time"©. The speed of these endeavors is ever increasing, and the multitude on the whole is left to spectate on a bewildering display of men in suits, tanks and special effects. The ever increasing pace of the war (and for that matter the rest of the global order—can you make a distinction?) makes it difficult to think, conceptualize and act.

Beyond Anti-Americanism

...I awoke in a sweat from the American Dream
—Amebix

One of the first failings of the resistance against militarisation is intellectual. There seems to be a sloppy anti-Americanism that abounds through-out anti-war sentiment in Australia. This antiAmericanism is attractive to many because it is something of an antidote to the cynical flag waving and rhetoric that parades across our screens. It is also credible since it identifies the litany of violent and abusive acts carried out by the US State. However, to identify the causes of global militarisation as a product of a particularly nauseat- ing element of US foreign policy (the idea that "the seppos want to take over the world" or that "George W is a moron"—common sentiments in Australian society) is overly simplistic. Militarisation arises not from the US specifically but from a general crisis within the *global* empire of Capital. Whilst the US does have a specific role in this world order as a major spoke in the composition and

organization of military and economic forces, the current war is a product of the Capital generally. Indeed if anything the "war on terror"—loose short-hand for multiple conflicts between numerous states and states in waiting—is a failing and destructive attempt by capitalism to resolve its unsolvable contradictions: it is an attempt to control an increasingly combative, self-organized and revolutionary multitude.

The Re-colonization of the Globe

And the history of this, their expropriation, is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire.

—Karl Marx

The individual motivations of Generals in Washington or Saudi Princelings are beyond the ken of lowly proles such as myself. The specific individual histories of individual conflict that motivate the "war on terror" are beyond the scope of this article, however we can make some general observations about the role of war to the global ruling class.

The cyber-industrial civilization of Capital is literally always at war. In fact, since the first development of class society violence has been a key component to the maintenance of order. Wars of extermination and colonization were fought to include more and more territories within the sphere of individual imperialist markets. Wars were fought between individual imperialist powers. As Zerzan identifies, the motivations of imperialist conflicts were often attempts to control the population at home.

Class society has never seen peace and is al- ways in a constant state of conflict. The so-called "war on terror" may appear to be a sudden and sharp break with the past, but in reality it is an intensification of a process that has accompanied neo-liberalism as capitalist rackets around the globe have moved to direct violence to reinsure their power.

It is this later motivation for war that is increasingly important to the status quo. As Hardt and Negri write in *Empire*, the entire globe has fallen under the domination of Capital, and a shifting multi-centered world order now administers it all. Thus war today is not between different, separate imperialist powers or even territories within capitalism. Rather it is between factions within a unitary—if hybrid—empire that dominates the globe yet struggles to control the resistance from the multitude. Whilst in their respective propaganda Islamists and "Western" politicians try to define each other as mortal enemies, they both have the same goal in mind: the continuation of the empire of Capital.

War thus is increasingly used to re-colonize the globe—however not for one single nation-state but for Capital generally. This is achieved through the application and extension of *bio-power*. "Biopower is the form of power that regulates social life from its interior, following it, interpreting it, absorbing it and rearticulating it. Power can achieve an effective command over the entire life of the population only when it becomes an integral, vital function that every individual em- braces and reactivates of his or her own accord" . Bio-power is the way that control is created when life is subsumed by the logics and apparatus of Capital. It is the way that the discipline of the system

146

is found in the entire minutiae that constitute everyday life. It is used in numerous ways. Firstly there is no better way to enclose land and destroy subsistence non-market ways of life than war. Throughout the globe militarisation is used to force people into proletarianization. Mass bombings, the torturing of civilians, the imprisoning of whole villages in camps, their transformation into refugees, even supposedly beneficial food aid, enforces the logic of Capital—of being governed and controlled by agencies of the state and dependent on the global economy—into peoples' everyday lives.

Indeed in many parts of the world war is the only business in town and soldiering the only "profession".

Subtle methods are often at work. The mapping of land by the military and the construction of military infrastructure is often the vanguard for the construction of the general apparatus of the global economy and the inclusion of previously peripheral populations into the matrix of cyber-industrial civilization. Indeed there is no better example of this than that of the Laguasa marsh in the Philippines (the site of a decades long Islamic insurgency which is now just a sphere of the "war on terror"), where the military napalmed the marsh into black soil thus literally clearing it of people and life and opening the way for its development into a tourist resort.

For populations, already proletarianized war is a crucial tool used to decompose their agencies of self-activity. A case in point would be that after and during the last Gulf War, the militant oil proletariat through out the region (including in newly "liberated" Kuwait) suf- fered greatly through intensified state violence.

War increased the naked violence of the state in peoples' lives, whether it was through the carpet-bombing of Basra or the torturing and disappearance of Palestinians at the hands of US trained Kuwaiti secret police. The increased marginality people face in their lives from war, their increased insecurity, their displacement, works to break down the feelings of empowerment often necessary for people to launch assaults on Capital. Intimidated by soldiers in the streets, planes in the air and the rule of martial law, disobedient populations can be cowed into acquiescence.

In what remains of the global "North" (as much as that has any meaning in these post-modern times of Empire) the use of war to increase the governmentality of the society of control is far more subtle. The recent experience in Australia suggests that the pretext of the war on terror is being used to legitimize and intensify state violence against dissidents. Even more all encompassing is the use of the discourse of national security to intensify the repressive nature of all the networks of bio-political authority. Militarisation is a society-encompassing spectacle that radiates and mutates out from TVs, radios, and conversations in the street. It takes on emotional, psychological forms that generate a sense of fear and hopelessness within the population about the very future of humanity. The real alienation and atomization that make up daily life in cyber-industrial civilization are telescoped to unbearable proportions. This spectacle of militarisation makes individuals feel completely powerless and at the mercy of global political and economic forces. Faced with a seeming gulf of violence beyond comprehension, people begin to long intensely for the strong hand of the state to protect and

guard them. Paranoia reaches fantastic heights as ethnic minorities become increasingly focused on as the "enemy within". Coupled with this are feelings of sympathy for the armed wing of the state and its successes. A savage brutalisation takes place where people in the malls and workplaces of Sydney begin to believe the security of themselves and their loved ones can only be guaranteed by the deaths of people in Iraq. Bio-political control, however, is not the just the ideologi- cal hegemony of the system: it is not simply the dominance of ideas. Bio-political power arises when all of society is subsumed within the apparatus of Capital: when life becomes dominated by the mega-technological world of work. Militarisation is, if anything, an extension of all the techniques and technologies of control. The division of labour, specialisation, the reduction of the individual into a cog in a machine, the reification of technological ability and the dominance of functional reason—isn't all this expressed perfectly in the armed forces, in the military-industrial complex? And conversely is not the process of militarisation the intensification of all of the above throughout all of society? The post-modern nature of the society of control is evidenced in the collapse of rigid subjectivities. The intensification of the "soldier" socially is the intensification of the "soldier" in all of us: our willingness to be trained, ordered, obedient and subjected to surveillance. Conversely, it is also our willingness to produce ourselves and others as soldiers: to order, to command and to subject those around us to surveillance.

Evidence of the above is the announcement that Australia Post now requires that you show photo ID if you are sending a package over 500 gm overseas. Here is an example of where the practice of surveillance and policing intensifies in seemingly innocent everyday situations. Thus mass society, made up of the lashing together of alienated and atomized individuals becomes even more atrophied as everyone carries out the work of the state.

The Military Forces of the Social Factory

Through the history of capitalism, revolutionary resistance to war was based on the refusal to participate in the war machine. Soldiers would mutiny; others would resist conscription or refuse to sign up. Paralleling industrial action in the mass factory, it was the with- drawal of labour from the military factory.

This undoubtedly reached a high point in the Vietnam War where the refusal to accept military labour inside and outside of the armed forces reached epidemic proportions. The desertion and mutiny by Iraqi soldiers did far more to end the last Gulf War than US smart bombs.

It is thus increasingly obvious that the use of mass soldiering with mass casualties creates political unrest both inside and outside the ranks. The days of mass soldiering were tied to those of the dominance of the nation-state. In contrast the process of globalization has seen with it the creation of global networks of organized violence that are co-ordinated through many points. At the centre is always a hub of the covert, intelligence and special forces of the Global North and around them cheap proxy armies and mercenaries which the former often trains and co-ordinates. In the muddied world of international politics, these networks are often constructed with what ever is at hand

148

and often appear quite illogical and contradictory. Also whilst capitalism is a global system having no home country, it is not homogenous: splits and rifts at all levels of the ruling class are common and often violent. In fact the change in relationship between US forces and Islamist groups like Al-Qaeda is proof of this. Is this current conflict not in many ways an officers' rebellion within a single military force?

We have, however, still seen the deployment of large amounts of ground troops from the Global North. Though their last deployment was a massive operation, and created the feeling of total war , the soldiers themselves seemed to be put into very little real danger. Their purpose was spectacular, to create the feeling at home that there is a lot on the line. Thus the few soldiers that do die were transformed into heroes and martyrs whose deaths were given a weight and importance that in life the system never gave them.

For us then in Australia (and the rest of the Global North?), our refusal to fight is relatively meaningless as our labour is superfluous to the global war machine. We are unneeded, and thus new ways of struggle, more active insurgencies, are needed to destabilize Capital.

Protest as Usual

So far the anti-war struggles in Australia have been confined mainly to street demonstrations of varying size. They have been largely organized by social democratic and Leninist groupings, though the political flavour of them is generally liberal: clergy, trade union leaders, and various do-gooders dominate the podium. Originally after the September 11 attacks these demos were a breath of fresh air. They worked to undermine the consensus that "everyone" supported the war, and combated the feelings of isolation felt by the dissenters. Street demos do and will have a place in struggle. They can draw people together and can have an important morale-lifting effect. However this only works when the demos take place in the context of larger, more combative militant struggles. In their current context they are proving to be increasingly disempowering, ineffectual and demoralizing. Why is this so?

Demos are in many ways left over from the last great upsurge in struggle. Throughout the 20th century, the working class engaged in long running militant actions: strikes, occupations, pickets etc. Rallies played a part in this. However since the early 80s the combative elements of struggle have become largely submerged, only to explode out in various direct actions. On the whole though the praxis of the Left focuses on just a strategy of demo after demo.

Generally these demos replicate all that is wrong with mass society. Small groups of "organizers" fight bitterly in meetings over slogans and speakers; groups of "activists" engage in hyperactively paced work to build the rally, such as postering and leafleting in an attempt to get the "masses" to show up. Those who then do show up are asked to follow a strict and regimented path, often marshaled, chant when they are required to chant, and listen to speakers. The success of the rally is based on either the amount of people who turned up, media coverage, or how many people joined the various left

grouplets. They are generally regimented and boring. They seem to mirror the rest of every day life: being ordered around by our betters.

The essential flaw is that the strategy of demos is based on mediating away the power of people to a different source. The argument goes that through a show of numbers or good copy in the paper, that the rally will convince the relevant authorities to change their minds.

There is a kernel of truth in this in that often the state will worry about the potential of demos to transform into more radical activity and thus change their behavior. On the whole though the demonstration is largely either ridiculed or ignored.

It is incredibly depressing when people go to a rally to protest, say, the increased bombing of Iraq, on numerous occasions and witness that the rally has no effect what-so-ever. Here a strategy of "protest as usual", with its regimentation and ineffectuality works to complement the effects of the state: to convince people that they are powerless. Indeed the strategy of rally after rally is now thoroughly exhausted with numbers dwindling after the coalition military victory and the "leadership" is fracturing as various Leftist sects battle for control and recruits.

This is not the whole picture and occasionally those of us who do turn up have a nice time, make our own networks, or break away from the marshals to take more combative action. In fact, globally more and more people are willing to defy both the State and the embodied statist ideology of the rally organizers. From heckling speakers to fighting the police, a conscious practical critique of pacifism has exploded onto the world's streets, often to the embarrassment and disgust of the liberals and "cadre" trying to shepherd the multitude.

Militancy as Self-Militarisation

How can you celebrate a revolution with a rifle butt?

—Jacques Camatte

Outside of this, small groups of the multitude, often those that politically identify as "revolutionaries", are trying (often in vain) to find more effective and potent methods of struggle. This is all happening in a context in Australia, where combative direct action has flared up in the last couple of years. Coupled with this is an increase in state repression and the sophistication and brutality of the cops. Whilst the often boring, rigid, codified and predictable debate between "violence and non-violence" rages, the reality is that on the streets, any attempts to disrupt the circuitry of Capital has to take seriously the issue of confronting and combating the state.

However, some comrades faced with increased state violence have reduced the questions of confronting the state to purely military ones: a question of physical strength and conflict. This is a fundamental mistake. It is a truism that since capitalism is a social system based on violence that any attempt to overthrow it must be prepared to fight. It is also true that the process of insurrection, which often involves physical confrontation, is a crucial part of the upsurge for liberation. However violence in general, is not only distasteful, it is brutalizing and the product of class society. The revolt against oppression is a revolt that hopes to remove violence permanently from

our lives. The longer violence lingers the more it deforms and twists movements of liberation.

Firstly, it is important to realize that the unleashing of continual global militarisation terrorizes people by confronting them with a seemingly endless cycle of violence. Revolutionaries who fetishise violence, who adorn the process of social liberation in the symbols of destruction (guns, handgrenades, etc) can feed this cycle. How can we celebrate the gun? We can celebrate the human in struggle, but not the commodity they use as part of the struggle. Indeed the fetishism of tools of war and thus the devaluation of human life is a continuation of the logic of class society. The question of confronting the violence and power of cyber-industrial civilization is a question of how can we manifest anti-power and anti-violence that can hollow out and topple the state and the market. We should be realistic about the violence inherent in Capital, we should celebrate all revolts of the multitude, but we should not however allow the necessity of combating the state twist the vision of liberation. If we do, in the current context we extend the terrorizing of social relationships and thus the feelings of powerlessness of the people. Revolution is the weaving together of revolt and dismantling hierarchy, not self-militarisation.

Towards Festivals of Refusal

We can fight it only by showing an equally strong bond of friendship and trust. Differences of habit and language are nothing at all if our aims are identical and our hearts are open. —Albus Dumbledore

Stopping war and the revolution against the empire of Capital are one and the same. Militarisation is a direct challenge to the recent upsurge of proletarian fury and self-activity and war will always exist whilst class society exists. As a general point then the best way to stop war is to keep on fighting. The multiplicity of revolts—large and small, overt and covert—must keep on going, building, circulating, and intertwining. However the broader struggle is difficult, if not impossible unless it faces the challenges of potentially endless militarisation.

Two difficult tasks loom: how to construct positive social relationships that allow the opportunity to revolt to manifest; and how to manifest revolts which will allow the construction of positive social relationships. What we need is to actualize revolts of insurgent desire.

If the drive behind militarisation is to reinforce the governmentality of the population then the best thing to do is to be as ungovernable as possible. I imagine the only thing that will prevent war and push back militarisation is a general wave of disobedience and defiance, a society-wide mutiny that through its own actions makes the continuation of the status quo impossible. This mutiny would have no "leaders" and take countless forms of defiance and non-compliance. Thus no single group or single action can spark it off. However we can make bold strokes that increase the power and strength of the weave of revolt and inspire others to do the same.

Firstly whilst the "realists" of various social democratic and Leninist groups and the few anarchist rackets desperate to look "hard" may scoff at counter-culture, never has

it been more relevant. Never before has dancing and socialising, forming friendships and feelings of autonomy and rebelliousness been so important. To put it another way, the micropolitical revolts and mutations that make up counterculture begin to pull at the atrophied nature of every-day life and create/mutate new pathways of living. Here can we see the seed of the future. So go ahead, put on that gig, pirate that CD, write that zine, take those pills and go dancing. (As always I recommend listening to thrash 7-inches—if this can be done from the aircraft carrier you have just squatted, all the better.)

If the move to militarisation works to secure the rule of Capital by subjecting the world to a global war machine and by further atomizing personal relationships, we can fight back by both monkeywrenching nodes of the machinery and simultaneously beginning to re/ form a community of struggle. To me the task then is to begin to pick our own battles, select sites of military power and attack them in ways that both work to halt their operation and simultaneously bring new ways of living into being. These acts in themselves may not be enough, but in concert with other autonomous activities they may just begin to open the door to rebellions that can dig the grave for Empire.

Postscript

As the cameras turn away from the rubble of Baghdad the official voices of adjudication have declared the war a "victory". Those on the Right triumphantly proclaim the vindication of the US Administration and laud the prospects for freedom and democracy. Those on the Left rub their hands and worry that this victory signals the return of imperialism and a defeat for freedom and democracy. Both sides only see the clash as one between two nation states and equate victory with the Coalition's triumph over the Baathists. But this war was not about a clash between two states as much as it was about securing the entire global order of states. There was no doubt that the Coalition's armed forces were going to easily smash the Iraqi army. The entire war was about securing the continuing reign of global Capital in a time when the entire order is increasing divided and bankrupt.

If there was a central goal, it was the unleashing of "shock and awe" (militarily and ideologically) to terrorize the global multitude and thus re-enforce our obedience. Did it work? Just like in the last Gulf War, huge sections of the Iraq army deserted. In other words they refused the basic lie of nation states: that we should lay down our lives for them. If anything, this act of mass defiance rather than signaling the end of rebellion amongst the oil proletariat is testament to their continuing ungovernability and self-organisation.

Globally too waves of mass defiance swept the globe. Whilst often the mass rallies were liberal in tone and passive in nature, increasingly large sections of them challenged the authority of both the state and the official organizers. In Sydney, Australia, student anti-war rallies defied their Leninist marshals and were transformed into combinations of roving festivals and direct confrontations with the police.

Young people of mainly Islamic and Middle-Eastern backgrounds rebelled against the extra policing that they had subjected them to and exhibited a great willingness to directly fight the state. At the demonstrations in Canberra, speakers were heckled, people refused to follow the established march routes, and eventually a group marched on parliament house confronting the police there. Graffiti and other forms of low level property damage (include writing "NO WAR" in gigantic letters on the Sydney Opera House) were wide-spread. So much so that in Wollongong, the Returned Services League has had to organize vigilante groups to protect war memorials.

These are just examples of a global rebellion. It is this rebellion that was so worrying Chirac and Schroeder. Europe's original "opposition" to the war was not based on any commitment to political liberalism, but rather was an attempt to marshal old liberal and social democratic ideologies to fend off revolt. What the French state realized is plain to see (if you look through the digital-smoke of the simulacrum): that the global order of Capital cannot create a harmonious mode of operation in the face of continuing revolt. The so-called victory has not stopped this revolt. If anything it has deepened it further by chipping away the consensus and compliance that civilization requires for normal operation. The response to this will of course be more militarisation: more surveillance, more police, more violence, more terror. So much so that protesters attempting to interfere with the running of a detention center in the South Australian desert faced a raid by police armed with machine guns. This was the first time in recent memory that this happened. Will increased direct state repression and a neo-conservative political culture of unfreedom secure a future for the cyber-industrial civilization of Capital? The confusion we are faced with is the weave of oppression and resistance. We refuse the rule of Capital, but we are inside Capital and in many ways it is in us; thus living resistance to civilization is a blur of hope and despair. However if anything the war shows that capitalism cannot reach its own totalitarian fantasies: often attempts to govern strip away at the governmentality of the people. New waves of proletarianisation, of social control may defeat struggles here and there, but they move on, grow and erupt elsewhere. Pertinent questions remain; liberation may not be inevitable. However, for all the bluster, it seems at this point that even in the face of smart bombs, embedded journalists, and Saving Private Lynch, the multitude will not be terrorized.

Notes

1 Seppo is a WWII era piece of rhyming slang for Americans. Yanks = Septic Tanks = Seppos.

2 Zerzan J. "Origins and Meaning of WWI" in *Elements of Refusal.* Columbia Missouri, C.A.L. Press 1999 pp 145-165.

3 Hardt M. & Negri A. *Empire.* Cambridge Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2001 p23-24.

4 See Silvia Federici's fantastic essay "War, Globalisation and Reproduction" in *There is an Alternative: Subsistence and Worldwide Resistance to Corporate Global-*

ization. North Melbourne, Zed Books/Spinifex Press, 2001 for a more detailed study of this process.

5 See Midnight Notes "Recolonising the Oil Fields" in *Midnight Oil: Work Energy War 1973-1992.* New York, Autonomedia, 1992.

6 Encouragingly we are now receiving reports of Australian military personnel who are refusing to receive vaccinations against anthrax and are being sent back from active duty. Lets hope this disobedience spreads!

To Produce or To Not Produce?

Kevin Tucker
Class, Modernity and Identity
Class is a social relationship.

Stripped to its base, it is about economics. It's about being a producer, distributor or an owner of the means and fruits of production. No matter what category any person is, it's about identity. Who do you identify with? Or better yet, what do you identify with? Every one of us can be put into any number of socio-economic categories. But that isn't the question. Is your job your identity? Is it your economic niche?

Let's take a step back. What are economics? My dictionary defines it as: "the science of production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services." Fair enough. Economies do exist. In any society where there is unequal access to the necessities of life, where people are dependent upon one another (and more importantly, institutions) there is economy. The goal of revolutionaries and reformists has almost always been about reorganizing the economy. Wealth must be redistributed. Capitalist, communist, socialist, syndicalist, what have you, it's all about economics. Why? Because production has been naturalized, science can always distinguish economy, and work is just a necessary evil.

It's back to the fall from Eden where Adam was punished to till the soil for disobeying God. It's the Protestant work ethic and warnings of the sin of 'idle hands'. Work becomes the basis for humanity. That's the inherent message of economics.

Labor "is the prime basic condition for all human existence, and this to such an extent that, in a sense, we have to say that labor created man himself." That's not Adam Smith or God talking (at least this time), that's Friedrich Engels. ["The part played by labor in the transition from ape to man" - ed.]

But something's very wrong here. What about the Others beyond the walls of Eden? What about the savages whom farmers and conquistadors (for all they can be separated) could only see as lazy for not working? Are economics universal?

Let's look back at our definition.

The crux of economy is production. So if production is not universal, then economy cannot be. We're in luck, it's not. The savage Others beyond the walls of Eden, the walls of Babylon, and the gardens: nomadic gatherer/hunters, produced nothing. A hunter does not produce wild animals. A gatherer does not produce wild plants. They simply hunt and gather. Their existence is give and take, but this is ecology, not economy. Everyone in a nomadic gatherer/hunter society is capable of getting what they need on their own. That they don't is a matter of mutual aid and social cohesiveness, not

155

force. If they don't like their situation, they change it. They are capable of this and encouraged to do so. Their form of exchange is anti-economy: generalized reciprocity. This means simply that people give anything to anyone whenever. There are no records, no tabs, no taxes and no running system of measurement or worth.

These societies are intrinsically anti-production, anti-wealth, anti-power, and anti-economics.

They are simply egalitarian to the core: organic, primal anarchy. But that doesn't tell us how we became economic people. How work became identity. Looking at the origins of civilization tells us. Civilization is based on production. The first instance of production is surplus production.

Nomadic gatherer/hunters got what they needed when they needed it. They ate animals, insects, and plants. When a number of gatherer/hunters settled, they still hunted animals and gathered plants, but not to eat (at least not immediately).

In Mesopotamia, the cradle of our now global civilization, vast fields of wild grains could be harvested. Grain, unlike meat and most wild plants, can be stored without any intensive technology. It was put in huge granaries. But grain is harvested seasonally. As populations expand, they become dependent upon granaries rather than what is freely available. Enter distribution. The granaries were owned by elites or family elders who were in charge of rationing and distributing to the people who filled their lot.

Dependency means compromise: that's the central element of domestication. Grain must be stored. Granary owners store and ration the grain in exchange for increased social status. Social status means coercive power. This is how the State arose.

In other areas, such as what is now the northwest coast of the United States into Canada, store houses were filled with dried fish rather than grain. Kingdoms and intense chiefdoms were established. The subjects of the arising power were those who filled the storehouses. This should sound familiar. Expansive trade networks were formed and the domestication of plants and then animals followed the expansion of populations.

The need for more grain turned gatherers into farmers. The farmers would need more land and wars were waged. Soldiers were conscripted. Slaves were captured. Nomadic gatherer/hunters and horticulturalists were pushed away and killed. The people did all of this not because the chiefs and kings said so, but because their created gods did. The priest is as important to the emergence of states as chiefs and kings. At some points they were the same position, sometimes not. But they fed off each other. Economics, politics and religion have always been one system. Nowadays science takes the place of religion. That's why Engels could say that labor is what made humans from apes. Scientifically this could easily be true. God punished the descendants of Adam and Eve to work the land. Both are just a matter of faith. But faith comes easily when it comes from the hand that feeds. So long as we are dependent on the economy, we'll compromise what the plants and animals tell us, what our bodies tell us. No one wants to work, but that's just the way it is.

So we see in the tunnel vision of civilization.

The economy needs to be reformed or revolutionized. The fruit of production needs to be redistributed.

Enter class struggle.

Class is one of many relationships offered by civilization. It has often been asserted that the history of civilization is the history of class struggle. But I would argue differently. The relationship between the peasant and the king and between chief and commoner cannot be reduced to one set of categories. When we do this, we ignore the differences that accompany various aspects of civilization. Simplification is nice and easy, but if we're trying to understand how civilization arose so that we can destroy it, we must be willing to understand subtle and significant differences. What could be more significant than how power is created, maintained and asserted? This isn't done to cheapen the very real resistance that the 'underclass' have had against elites, far from it. But to say that class or class consciousness are universal ignores important particulars. Class is about capitalism. It's about a globalizing system based on absolute mediation and specialization. It emerged from feudal relationships through mercantile capitalism into industrial capitalism and now modernity. Proletarian, bourgeoisie, peasant, petite bourgeoisie, these are all social classes about our relationship to production and distribution. Particularly in capitalist society, this is everything. All of this couldn't have been more apparent than during the major periods of industrialization. You worked in a factory, owned it or sold what came out of it. This was the heyday of class consciousness because there was no question about it. Proletarians were in the same conditions and for the most part they knew that is where they would always be. They spent their days and nights in factories while the 'high society' of the bourgeoisie was always close enough to smell, but not taste.

If you believed God, Smith or Engels, labor was your essence. It made you human. To have your labor stolen from you must have been the worst of all crimes. The workers ran the machine and it was within their grasp to take it over. They could get rid of the boss and put in a new one or a worker's council.

If you believed production was necessary, this was revolutionary. And even more so because it was entirely possible. Some people tried it.

Some of them were successful. A lot of them were not. Most revolutions were accused of failing the ideals of those who created them. But in no place did the proletariat resistance end relationships of domination. The reason is simple: they were barking up the wrong tree.

Capitalism is a form of domination, not its source. Production and industrialism are parts of civilization, a heritage much older and far more rooted than capitalism. But the question is really about identity. The class strugglers accepted their fate as producers, but sought to make the most of a bad situation. That's a faith that civilization requires. That's a fate that I won't accept. That's a fate the earth won't accept.

The inevitable conclusion of the class struggle is limited because it is rooted in economics. Class is a social relationship, but it is tied to capitalist economics. Proletarians are identified as people who sell their labor. Proletarian revolution is about taking

back your labor. But I'm not buying the myths of God, Smith, or Engels. Work and production are not universal and civilization is the problem. What we have to learn is that the link between our own class relationships and those of the earlier civilizations is not about who is selling labor and who is buying, but about the existence of production itself. About how we came to believe that spending our lives building power that is wielded against us is justified. About how compromising our lives as free beings to become workers and soldiers became a compromise we were willing to make. It is about the material conditions of civilization and the justifications for them, because that is how we will come to understand civilization. So we can understand what the costs of domestication are, for ourselves and the earth. So that we can destroy it once and for all. This is what the anarcho-primitivist critique of civilization attempts to do. It's about understanding civilization, how it is created and maintained. Capitalism is a late stage of civilization and class struggle as the resistance to that order is extremely important to both our understanding of civilization and how to attack it. There is a rich heritage of resistance against capitalism. It is another part of the history of resistance against power that goes back to its origins. But we should be wary to not take any stage as the only stage. Anti-capitalist approaches are just that, anti-capitalist. It is not anticivilization. It is concerned with a certain type of economics, not economics, production or industrialism itself. An understanding of capitalism is only useful so far as it is historically and ecologically rooted.

But capitalism has been the major target of the past centuries of resistance. As such, the grasp of class struggle is apparently not easy to move on from. Global capitalism was well rooted by 1500 AD and continued through the technological, industrial and green revolutions of the last 500 years. With a rise in technology it has spread throughout the planet to the point where there is now only one global civilization. But capitalism is still not universal. If we see the world as a stage for class struggle, we are ignoring the many fronts of resistance that are explicitly resisting civilization. This is something that class struggle advocates typically ignore, but in some ways it is only one of two major problems. The other problem is the denial of modernity.

Modernity is the face of late capitalism. It's the face that has been primarily spreading over the last 50 years through a series of technological expansions that have made the global economy as we know it now possible. It is identified by hyper-technology and hyperspecialization. Let's face it; the capitalists know what they are doing. In the period leading up to World War I and through World War II the threat of proletariat revolution was probably never so strongly felt. Both wars were fought in part to break this revolutionary spirit.

But it didn't end there. In the post war periods the capitalists knew that any kind of major restructuring would have to work against that level of class consciousness. Breaking the ability to organize was central. Our global economy made sense not only in economic terms, but in social terms. The concrete realities of class cohesion were shaken. Most importantly, with global production, a proletarian revolution couldn't feed and provide for itself. This is one of the primary causes for the 'failure' of the

socialist revolutions in Russia, China, Nicaragua and Cuba, to name just a few. The structure of modernity is anti-class consciousness.

In industrialized nations, most of the work force is service oriented. People could very easily take over any number of stores and Wal-Marts, but where would this get us? The periphery and core of modern capitalism are spread across the world. A revolution would have to be global, but would it look any different in the end? Would it be any more desirable? In industrializing nations which provide almost everything that the core needs, the reality of class consciousness is very real. But the situation is much the same. We have police and fall in line; they have an everyday reality of military intervention. The threat of state retaliation is much more real and the force of core states to keep those people in line is something most of us probably can't imagine. But even should revolt be successful, what good are monocropped fields and sweatshops? The problem runs much deeper than what can be achieved by restructuring production. But, in terms of the industrial nations, the problem runs even deeper. The spirit of moder- nity is extremely individualistic. Even though that alone is destroying everything it means to be human, that's what we're up against. It's like lottery capitalism: we believe that it is possible for each of us to strike it rich. We're just looking out for number one. We'll more than happily get rich or die trying.

The post-modern ethos that defines our reality tells us that we have no roots. It feeds our passive nihilism that reminds us that we're fucked, but there's nothing we can do about it. God, Smith and Engels said so, now movies, music, and markets remind us.

The truth is that in this context proletarian identity has little meaning. Classes still exist, but not in any revolutionary context. Study after study shows that most Americans consider themselves middle class. We judge by what we own rather than what we owe on credit cards. Borrowed and imagined money feeds an identity, a compromise— that we're willing to sell our souls for more stuff.

Our reality runs deeper than proletarian identity can answer. The anti-civilization critique points towards a much more primal source of our condition. It doesn't accept myths of necessary production or work, but looks to a way of life where these things weren't just absent, but where they were intentionally pushed away.

It channels something that can be increasingly felt as modernity automates life. As development tears at the remaining ecosystems. As production breeds a completely synthetic life. As life looses meaning. As the earth is being killed.

I advocate primal war.

But this is not an anti-civilization form of class war. It's not a tool for organizing, but a term for rage. A kind of rage felt at every step of the domestication process. A kind of rage that cannot be put into words. The rage of the primal self subdued by production and coercion. The kind of rage that will not be compromised. The kind of rage that can destroy civilization.

It's a question of identity.

Are you a producer, distributor, owner, or a human being? Most importantly, do you want to reorganize civilization and its economics or will you settle for nothing less than their complete destruction?

Limits of Illusion, Limits of Exhaustion

Dan Todd

We must be done now with private property and its characteristic political system, democracy. More than ever anarchy offers the sole remaining prospect not only for life organized around play but also the preservation of human traditions of mutual assistance. Our domination has, in the literal sense, a utopian dimension, as the word means originally *no place*. We are a generation carried from nowhere to nowhere, and if our attempts at love, play, sabotage and cooperation are often pathetic, at least we understand they have their heroic dimensions as well, given the relentlessly centrifugal force field we operate in. We can take comfort in our recognition of limits. The struggle did not begin with us and will not end with us. None of us are indispensable yet all of us may contribute immeasurably to the tendencies of intensifying insurrection. Against the cancer of limitless growth (ie devouring earth and people to preserve Property's preconditions), we are those who know our limits. We know we will die and want lives unshadowed by the need to always be calculating how to just survive. We know there is enough for us all to be satisfied because we are capable of infusing our modest projects with grace, practicality and flair, so the proportions of greed constantly displayed by corporadoes seem to us increasingly grotesque, and the dazzle of virtual reality compensates nicely for an actual reality that more of us find ugly, exhausting and incoherent.

The most chilling evocation of this reality may be found in the writings of the Marquis de Sade, the unacknowledged prophet of the bourgeoisie. At the dawn of the modern era he set down on paper an unsurpassed apology for crime, where the boundary is blurred between sociology and satire. Always immensely wealthy and seeming beyond the reach of law or conscience, his judges, statesmen, bankers, bandits, clerics and aristocrats display an obsession with security that would be astonishing were we not familiar with their contemporary successors. Victims are incessantly reminded of their invisibility, but the endlessly repetitive resort to refined and horrific cruelties intense enough to induce ejaculation in these jaded movers and shakers underscores their actual, permanent impotence. Compare this point of discharge to the purchase, after which the next purchase begins as a glint in the eye of the consumer and continues to clamor compulsively for the consummation of spending: the concupiscence of commerce.

This underlying dynamic corrodes, of course, the importance of restraint and accordingly opens up a contradiction between the imperatives of the global commodity production system and the persistence of "traditional" wisdom, nicely summarized in the inscription found on a Greek temple from the post—Alexander period in Afghanistan:

As children, learn good manners. As young men, learn restraint.

In middle age be just.

In old age give good advice, Then die without regret.

Contrast these sentiments with encouragement currently given children to become consumers at ever younger ages. Is it any wonder that some with "boundary" issues refuse to contain their gratification of whim within the economic sphere? That they do not resist the impulse to kill, say, perhaps large numbers of complete strangers?

Sade's nightmarish visions seem more relevant now for another reason as well. Formerly our submission to paycheck/price tag captivity was seduced—now, it seems, our acceptance of the (black) magic of the marketplace must be coerced. In Sade's world, too, there is no seduction—there is only rape, or among the libertines, mutual masturbation. Sure, today images of sex proliferate, but the sphere of the erotic dwindles. Are we watching it more and doing it less? Is it easier to just play with ourselves and cum in a few minutes than work up some real tension and experience a correspondingly greater gush at the hands or lips of an actual lover? Our isolation intensifies as we are pushed inexorably into solipsism by the centrifugal forces of the automobile and the computer, the latter, like masturbation, perfectly complementing the Solitary Self. Where Comfort and Convenience are the ultimate values, what can be better than to have all of culture available as you sit and watch? Sit and watch. Sit and watch. These are our defining activities. In the car, sit and watch. At school, sit and watch. In the office, sit and watch. In the factory, sit and watch. At home, sit and watch.

Our martial tempers recoil from this spurious slackness, which co-exists with lengthening workweeks and vanishing benefits. The competition for resources and markets fuels increasingly lethal conflicts— the insecurity so evident in the preoccupation with security engenders increasing desperation at every level of society. The State may be losing importance to gangs, though it certainly remembers how to work with them to accomplish its more heinous and unsavory tasks. This has meant danger as well as opportunity for distinction—consider the exemplary, scrupulous regard for life displayed by ELF/ALF, who until 9/11 had apparently caused the most monetary damage of any "terrorist" group, all without a single fatality. The glory given imprisoned comrades inspires valor, and the extensive cultivation of solidarity inspires hope that we can, as Faulkner put it, not only endure, but prevail.

We attempt to practice random acts of kindness and senseless beauty and are appalled by the calculating brutality gaining ground almost by the day. We struggle to maintain equilibrium and create beauty, and are horrified by each new example of ugliness in the service of utility. This vileness—from toxic workplaces to vistas of unrelenting sterility everywhere—is portended in the bedrooms of isolated mansions where the cream of the crap practice their philosophy covered literally in shit, which they

relish. The only limit they acknowledge is that their crimes cannot be repeated and prolonged after their deaths. This limit does not constrain their successors, however; they have produced new, improved shit—nuclear waste—with a half-life of eons.

Sade's libertines are obsessed with impressing on their victims the impossibility of escape, just as today we are given to believe all we can hope for is the expansion of democracy; there is no escape from the forward force of technology in the service of the market, so the (death) ship of state stays afloat. The astonishingly inhuman dimension of our setup is perhaps seen most clearly in the Pentagon's DARPA program to make the market arbiter even of intelligence gathering. Stalin said humans were the most precious form of capital—thanks, Uncle Joe! Are we now the most precious form of data??

Sade's compulsive cruelty can be countered with an implacable insistence on the importance of limits, that the Self is not an empire unto itself, that we have exhausted every limit (even that of illusion) but that of exhaustion itself. To continue with the sexual metaphor, it can be contested by cultivating the Taoist alternative, consciously intensifying tension by initial restraint in order to insure an ultimately more powerful climax. Melting away before the charge *limits of illusion, limits of exhaustion* of massed, heavily armored force is a time honored characteristic of steppe warfare with obvious tactical and strategic resonance today.

To sustain our animal inheritance we must prepare to dismantle that institution most fundamental to human civilization, property. Out of reach to more and more, it is the unseen specter defining the (flattening) contours of everyday life. We do well to remember that the dead hand of the past weighs heavy on the present. Individual ownership goes well with our sedentary isolation as it does with so many other aspects of our deformed existence, that, above all, of turning every experience, every idea, every dream, every wet dream, even, into something of value which can be exchanged in the global marketplace. Increasing value or realizing quality? Will what it's worth win out over what it is? The end is in doubt, but then, it always is.

A Surrounding for Us to Live Within; *Notes on Industrial Society and Its Ecology*

A Friend of Ludd

The Forest and the Village

"A surrounding for us to live within", this is how a little boy defined the environment in a theme proposed to various classes in Rovereto, Italy and the vicinity. It is one of the most beautiful definitions I know. In fact, it is necessary to start precisely from this: looking around. It is glaringly obvious that what surrounds us is not made for "us to live within". One can survive here–that is all–and increasingly at the expense of millions of people.

In the notes that follow, we will try to bring to light some relationships between the progressive loss of individual and social autonomy, environmental devastation and the sharpening of repression. Not in order to update the endless catalogue of horrors and complaints, but rather in order to reflect on some possibilities. Just this once, we will start from a "for" and not an "against".

What is a "surrounding for us to live within"? I would say a place in which the pleasure of solitude and the pleasure of meeting are artfully intertwined, whereas we know from experience that industrial society destroys both. With a telling expression, Gunther Anders described contemporary city-dwellers as "mass hermits", more and more atomized in their relationships and more and more massified in their activities, pleasures and movements. Complete solitude is just as difficult as a truly mutual and unmediated encounter. If we consider wild nature as the place of solitude and the inhabited village as the place of encounter, a "surrounding for us to live within" is an uninterrupted interchange between the forest and the village, continuous movement without violence between the one and the other. It is the possibility of departing from one's fellow human beings in order to later return to them; more, it is the constant awareness of such a possibility. Leaving in search of new thoughts, new bewilderments, and even new fears. The forest that becomes the countryside, the countryside that becomes the garden, the garden that becomes the village square, the path, the house. But a "surrounding for us to live within" is above all a humanity that knows how to

travel through and inhabit these spaces, that knows how to master its uses, habits and techniques.

Our autonomy is an unceasing relationship between what is pre-individual and what is individual. The pre-individual is everything that is common and generic, like the biological faculties of the human being, language and the social relationships we find when we are born. The individual is what we snatch away through our activity. We become individuals through our way of entering into relationships with nature and with history. In this sense, solitude and encounter, forest and village are a threshold between the past and the present. Just as the individual ethic is born and stands out in a collective dimension (the concept of ethos refers, not randomly, to the place where one lives, the usages and customs), living spaces are the encounter between generations and their art of inhabiting. Industrial society, however, makes it increasingly impossible for different usages and customs to live together, just as it abolishes all harmonious interchange between the various techniques worked out in the course of history, in this way destroying the basic creativity of communities.

In short, a "surrounding for us to live within" is a place in which the "art of uttering great speeches and carrying out great deeds" (to take back the splendid definition of politics that is found in Hom- er) responds to two basic necessities:
– That activity is not separated through its representation;
– That techniques employed are not irreversible.

One of the essential characteristics of present-day society is that within it we are witnesses to a growing gap between the activity that we carry out and our capacity to depict its consequences.

Due to the extreme division and specialization of labor, due to a gigantic technological apparatus that makes us more ignorant every day about the tools that we use (incapable as we are, individually, of understanding their nature, of mastering their production, of repairing their breakdowns), we aren't aware of the significance of our activities. This is why the product of our activities can be calmly falsified and artificially reconstructed for us. To give an example, someone noted that it is easier, in terms of the real repercussion of the action on the awareness, to bomb an entire population than to kill an individual person. A bombed population is only whatever flash of light appears on a screen, whereas a murdered person is a reality whose complete weight the consciousness bears. This is why the current society is able to make us tolerate a daily scientifically organized butchering because it renders the relationship between actions and their consequences increasingly obscure. From financial speculation to military production, from necrotechnology to the nuclear industry, everyone can find examples for themselves.

A "surrounding for us to live within" is a place in which activity is not separated through its representation (meant in the political sense, as delegation, in the media/ spectacular sense, as a system of images to be passively contemplated, and in the mental sense, as the dimming of awareness).1

165

Another decisive characteristic of the current society is that it has taken techniques (for producing, building, exchanging) away from any local and communitarian dimension, distancing them in a megamachine—the consequences of which are increasingly irreversible. From nuclear waste to genetic mutation, techno-science has lost any experimental, and thus reversible, character because its experiments now have the world as laboratory—and there isn't any spare world. A "surrounding for us to live within" is a place in which the question of technical efficacy is always subordinated to ethical and social considerations, in which it is possible to turn around if a path leads to the impoverishment of human relationships, hierarchical specialization and power. Only a totalitarian ideology legitimates everything that is technically realizable as scientific, thus imprisoning human becoming in a mechanical succession without end.

Any progress deserving of the name—in customs, in mentality, in social relationships–is sought against this forced march.

A Spare Tire

State ecology—of which the COP9 summit represents a fine concentrate—is only the spare tire of industrial society. In fact, it is increasingly the police management of "environmental resources". Without ever questioning the generalized dependence on the most polluting materials and technologies, it seeks to "moralize" atomized city-dwellers by subjecting them to further controls and vexations. Since this society no longer knows where to put its trash (in both the narrow and the broad sense), let's go rummage in every family's garbage and punish the wasteful.

A shining example of this ecologist ideology is the proposal made by Legambiental2 with regard to new energy sources for stopping greenhouse gasses. For the entire duration of the summit, by sending two electronic text messages per Euro through the cellphone, one contributed not only to the spread of cancer, but also–courtesy of the mobile phone companies–to the acquisition of an Aeolian power plant in Swaziland. When these court environmentalists at times launch catastrophic alarms (about ozone, the icecaps, the scarcity of water), it is only in order to push the civilized still closer to the institutions and their supposed experts. To put it briefly, this ecology is the state solution to state problems, the capitalist solution to capitalist problems.

Up to now the most beautiful–and involuntary–response to the summits of the earth destroyers was given by the Milanese streetcar drivers, announcing the heated return of the wildcat strike, whose absence had been noticed for so long. Beyond their wage demands, maintained outside of any union scenario, these "irresponsibles", these "criminals", these "urban terrorists" (as the media and political choir described them) have posed an important problem of social ecology: that of movement in the big cities. A simple blockade of the transit network paralyzed an entire city. Rather than questioning themselves about how much they really control their lives and movements, city dwellers cried about the scandal, assembled on the sidewalks, throwing the very

fact of existing in each other's face. The ecologists were not missing, scolding the strikers for causing pollution to increase dues to additional car traffic (as if delays or absences at the workplace would not have, in reality, cleared the air a bit).

A Sensibility and Its World

In the last few years, there have been some struggles that were able to intertwine that necessity of conflict and direct action with the reality and the dream of a "surrounding for us to live within". I think of the many initiatives and actions in solidarity with Marco Camenisch. It seems to me that most of the time these have been able to go beyond the limits usually present in mobilizations in support of any particular prisoner, communicating a sensibility and its world. I'll explain. In the face of repression there is often the tendency to almost suspend one's struggles in order to talk about prison and the comrades inside, involuntarily reducing the condition to a conflict between us and those in power. In the case of solidarity with Marco, however, starting from his struggle, the battle for his liberation has defined itself as a continuation and reinforcement of the reasons that led to his arrest: the practical critique of environmental and social harmfulness. We know from experience that this resistance to the tyranny of progress has been able to speak not only to comrades, but also to others, and that some mountain-dwellers and shepherds have considered Marco to be one of them. I noticed the same thing with the campaign against Benneton. Initiatives against multinationals often lead to neglect of the normal despotism of industrial production in order to concentrate on the excesses of a specific globalized economy: I don't think there's any need to give examples. Linking the environmental devastation caused by Benneton to the life and resistance of the Mapuche has been able to bring the problem close, instead of distancing it in an exoticism of sympathetic hues. These are small signs. Still it shows that an opposition to harmfulness based on direct action could generalize as happened recently in Basilicata, Italy.3 I am not saying that we need to talk more about the environment and less about prison. On the contrary. I am saying that it is possible to pose the problem of prison–in discussions and in practice–in a social sense, not starting from "our misfortunes". The best way of expressing solidarity with imprisoned comrades is to radicalize our struggles in their totality.

There is no doubt that a strong repressive wind is rising. I think that the decisive stake in play is that of being able to interpret this repression. Current living and working conditions can be imposed through an increasingly massive use of terror (terror of remaining unemployed and of not being able to pay quickly rising rents, terror of the police and of prison). Repression acts against atomized individuals whose increasing dependence on a bankrupt way of life is rendering them incapable of any material or ideal solidarity. It is a mistake to separate the repressive attacks from this progressive disintegration of the world—in the sense of a direct experience of reality and of one's fellow human beings, outside of the media and mercantile bell-jar, outside of the tomb-

167

like apartments of the concentration imposed by urban planning. Knowing how to interpret repression also means not falling into the illusion that those in power strike us because we are a real threat (with all the locking up of identity that such an illusion entails). If we are a detonator, as someone has said, the aim of those in power is to separate us from any explosive material, ie from any social context of struggle. In word and action, we should do the exact opposite.

In anti-industrial circles, reference is often rightly made to the Luddite insurrection against machinery (1811-1813). If the English government had to use more soldiers against the destroyers of machines than against Napoleon's troops, it is because they were facing an authentic social uprising, anonymous and leaderless. An uprising in which the weapon of sabotage—always the pre-eminent tool of proletarian struggle— carried within itself a "surrounding for us to live within". It was the work of a true and proper social intelligence, as is shown by the fact that during the attacks against industrial machinery, the machines that could be used, interchanged and repaired on a local and communitarian basis, that is, outside of the factory system, were spared. Despite the accusations of all the progressive and Marxist historians, there was nothing "blind" in this revolt. A subsistence economy that made extensive use of collective lands came into conflict with the system of property; an autonomy in the art of building homes and producing where the village met the countryside came into conflict with the dislocation into cities. Industrialism has had to train sensibilities–through beatings–in order to make them fit into its world, its techniques, and its values.

Repression is the bulldozer of a capitalism that is destroying the world, of a civilization that isolates men and women in order to later socialize them into its virtual community.

Utopia in the Mud

It seems to me that the current situation is full of possibilities.

If we were not so often incapable of practicing poetry, ie, "the art of making illegal marriages and divorces between things", as Bacon said, we would grasp many connections between situations that seem to be distant from each other. An example might be the one made earlier, of the wildcat strike of transit workers on the opening day of the environmental conference. There are many others. In this regard, I would like it if comrades were to deepen a discussion: the guerrilla war in Iraq and the questions that opens up.

What is going on there confirms a reality often expressed by revolutionaries: what no army could do (opposing and making things difficult for the greatest military force in the world), a social guerrilla war is able to do. Once again this suggests the necessity–in much smaller situations as well–of considering the concept of force differently. But I am not so interested in speaking about this, because we still have very little information about the role that the clans linked to the old regime play in the resistance (although

the extreme diversity of techniques of attack against the occupation troops suggests that there is a social conflict in action that cannot be reduced to a war between powers). In the same way, I take for granted here the important occasion we have, especially after Nassiriya4, of speaking about who the real terrorists are (the state and its lackeys), considering the propagandistic use that is made of the "terrorist alarm", with its immediate repressive fallout. The governors know how to link the external Enemy (whoever impedes military aggression) to the internal Enemy (whoever remains outside of the choir of consent) much too well. We will have to draw some lessons from this in a hurry.

The Iraq situation, nonetheless, offers food for thought with regard to the relationships already sketched out between industrial society, ecological emergency and repression. I will emphasize a few of these.

There is the question of oil. Numerous studies commissioned by the oil companies are in agreement in pointing to the exhaustion of crude oil resources within the next ten years (not the absolute exhaustion, but rather the exhaustion of that portion of the oil that can be extracted using less energy than what could be gotten from the extracted oil). The curve indicated for natural gas is not many years longer. The same studies inform us that all the alternative energies (nuclear included) would not be able to satisfy even half of the current requirements. Without going into detail here, a question is posed. Even without considering that capital has not provided for alternative projects, kept op- portunely hidden for the moment, there is no doubt that the problem exists, and that it brings to light some of the historical, if not downright ecological-planetary, limits of present social organization. To give an example, let's consider that modern-day agriculture depends 95% on oil (herbicides, pesticides, tractors, industries for manufacturing pieces of machinery and other tools, means for assembling and transporting them, power stations to allow all this and so on). This oil society has generalized dependence on a single resource to such an extent (even the extraction and distribution of water are subordinated to it, and not just for the famous tubular wells activated by diesel), that the scarcity of such a resource takes shape as a catastrophe. Alternative solutions or not, the leap will not be painless, and the rulers know it.

Here is the second point I want to emphasize: anyone who sees the war in Iraq only as a military occupation for taking control of the energy resources is mistaken (though this is certainly also there, as the fundamental role of the oil companies in supporting the Bush administration shows). What is going on is a huge political and social experiment: testing the capacity of/for resistance of entire populations placed in limited situations, situations that will be more and more frequent in the future. Iraq is a laboratory of economic investments, of military strategies, but above all, of social engineering. The ruling order–dealing with necrotechnology or oil–is increasingly carrying out a kind of experimentum mundi: experimentation on the world as such. The civilized must be adapted to all this with increasingly massive doses of control, vexation, terror. In the United States, there are now more prisoners than farmers. In the face of this reality, the Kyoto accords are a macabre hoax or rather, an ultimatum

169

that sounds like this: you will have no other world except me. And here, the curtain falls on all ecology that doesn't want to subvert this society and its institutions. All the alternative energy and all the most diligent organic cultivation in the world run up against this fact: when agriculture itself, now entirely mechanized, cannot do without a system of death, there is nothing to reform. This is what the war and the guerrilla resistance in Iraq is telling us.

No more illusions. The "surrounding for us to live within" that we have in our hearts will be born from the mud, but even in the mud, it is always necessary to affirm the way of life for which we are fighting.

Notes:

1. In the preceding paragraphs, a phrase is used in Italian, *ìlíattivit non si separa dalla sua rappresentazionî*. This phrase can be translated both as "activity is not separated through (or by) its representation" and "activity is not separated from its depiction" (or our capacity to depict it in all its consequences). The author of this piece uses the phrase in both senses, but there isn't a single way to say both in English.

2. Environmental League, one of the best-known Italian environmental organizations.

3. In November 2003 blockade movement organized through general assemblies shut the region down, forcing the regional government of Basilicata to cancel plans for installing a nuclear waste deposit site.

4. Where 19 Italian troops and 7 Iraqis were killed in an attack.

Thoughts on Predator; An Interview with Ward Churchill

Ward Churchill (Keetoowah Band Cherokee) is Professor of American Indian Studies at the University of Colorado, Boulder. An uncompromising indigenist activist, he has been a member of the American Indian Movement for more than thirty years and currently serves on the Leadership Council of the Colorado AIM. An insightful and eloquent author, his many books include *Marxism and Native Americans* (1983), *Agents of Repression* (1988, 2002), *The COINTELPRO Papers* (1990, 2002), Struggle for the Land (1993, 1999), *Indians 'R' Us* (1994, 2005), *Since Predator Came* (1995), *Pacifism as Pathology* (1996), *A Little Matter of Genocide* (1997), *Acts of Rebellion* (2003), *Perversions of Justice* (2003), *On the Justice of Roosting Chickens* (2003), "Kill the Indian, Save the Man" (2004) and *Speaking Truth in the Teeth of Power* (2004). Ward's writings and lectures critically examine conquest and genocide in the Americas, environmental destruction, political repression, cultural appropriation, and resistance to colonization.

Part I

In many of your essays you use the term "Predator" to describe the successive waves of colonial/imperial brutality that began to ravage the Western Hemisphere in 1492. In our opinion, the Predator is a useful concept for radicals in North America to become familiar with, as it describes and reveals the true nature of the United States occupying forces far more accurately than terms like imperialism, capitalism, or even Empire. Could you elaborate more fully on your concept of the Predator?

WC: Sure, although I think it's important to note, as I did in *Since Predator Came* and elsewhere, that I lifted the term from John Trudell, back in the days when he still had something to say. I'm not entirely sure how John conceived it—there's always some sort of visualization with these things—but my own version of Predator—how I saw it—was kind of like Pac-Man. I mean, it's this absolutely antinatural entity, utterly synthetic, the very existence of which is predicated upon its fulfillment of a single function: to consume anything and everything it encounters. There's no reasoning with it, no way of appealing to its "better instincts." It has none. Certainly, nothing resembling a conscience. The fact is that it lacks the capacity to deviate in the least. Ever. Its appetite is infinite. So, it will simply consume until there's nothing left to consume. Like I said, I don't know what specific image John had conjured up when he first started talking about Predator, but I do know that we were using the term in pretty much the same way, to describe precisely the same things: the mindset and

consequent behavior of those who identify with the European tradition from the point their invasion of this hemisphere began on the 12th of October, 1492, right on up until the present moment.

There's a straight and unbroken line of predation spanning the 512 years from then till now, and no sign that the line's likely to be interrupted or change direction any time soon. Or at least not of its own volition. So, there's nothing for it in the end but to look the thing square in the face and see it for what it is, rather than what we might wish it were instead. On that basis, we can appreciate what it is that must be done in order to bring it to a halt.

And that is?

WC: Well, let's just say that since what I've been describing isn't something that's susceptible to persuasion and reform, if we're going to stop it, we're going to have to kill it. That's the bottom line. The only valid question in this regard isn't whether killing the thing is necessary, it's how we go about accomplishing the job. Clear?

Perfectly.

WC: Okay. Good. Because, assuming that's so, I'd like to say that I've come to regret having helped popularize the use of the word Predator in the manner I've just been using it. Framing things in terms of "Predator" is grossly unfair to actual predators like wolves and sharks. How many *thoughts on predator* times have you heard the Great White Shark described as a "mindless eating machine," for example. That's just about word-for-word the way I characterize Predator, eh? Yet the two are diametrical opposites. Predator epitomizes the antinatural while there's nothing more natural than the predator called shark. It's a being so perfectly adapted to its environment that it's remained almost unchanged by evolution for longer than all but a handful of current animal species have even existed. That's because the shark's purpose, "mindless" or no, is to maintain the balance of the ecosystem it inhabits. In other words, the function of a true predator is to preserve the ecology upon which its existence depends. That's as opposed to the function of Predator, which is to destroy that same ecology, any ecology, all ecologies.

The upshot is that my applying the metaphor of Predator the way I do may produce certain constructive cognitive effects among an audience—it had that effect on me when John did it, and that's why I picked it up in the first place—but it leaves me with the queasy feeling that I'm also reinforcing the twisted outlook that legitimates the extermination of sharks, wolves and other natural predators.

And that's the reverse of what I'm trying to do. So, I need to come up with another way of framing what I'm trying to get across, and I've been playing with it, experimenting with different metaphors to see what might provide the same sort of clarity the term Predator seems to engender, without the garbled side effects. Follow?

Yeah, I do. And that makes me curious about what you've come up with. Before you answer, though, I want to pose a second question, and that's whether your preoccupation with finding just the right word or metaphor might not border in some way upon the

linguistic obsession displayed by the so-called postmodernists? That's not meant in a hostile way. I'm looking for you to distinguish your project from theirs.

WC: Fair enough. But I'll have to take the questions in order. With regard to the first one, I've been gravitating more and more towards disease analogies, especially cancer. I like the term disease because it doubles as "dis-ease," and there's a lot you can do with that. Additionally, it's something to be cured, rather than something from which we "heal." I've come to draw an increasingly sharp distinction on that score, largely in response to the rhetoric of "healing and forgiveness" which has become so fashionable of late.

Let me tag you right there. I'd like you to expand on that a bit before you go on. What's your problem with the healing shtick?

WC: Well, that's just it: it's a shtick. More precisely, it's a conflationary routine designed to muddy rather than clarify things, thereby precluding—or at least diminishing—the prospects of concrete action. Consider the sorts of conflations inherent to the formulation. First of all there's the bit about the phrase "healing and forgiveness" being used as if it formed a single word. The implication, and it's not an especially subtle one, is that forgiveness is healing, or at least that healing cannot occur without the bestowal of forgiveness upon whoever inflicted the wound that made the healing necessary. I'll return to the falsity of that proposition in a moment, but I think it's important to touch upon a second conflation—of being sick with being wounded—before doing so. The two conditions aren't the same at all. You get cured from an illness, healed from a wound. Yet, you'll notice that nothing in the formulation goes to curing.

It's all about healing. That might be fine in certain settings where you were dealing solely with wounds and those afflicted with them. But that's not what the "healing and forgiveness" crowd are on about. Their pitch is that, for their "process" to work, everybody should be involved. That's the stated ideal, right? Where does that put us? With perpetrators and victims all in the same bag. If you think about it, it's no different at base than Ronald Reagan's spiel at Bitburg back in the '80s about how both the SS men buried there and the Jews, Gypsies, and Slavs slaughtered by the SS were all—and equally—victimized by Nazism. Well, later for that.

173

Infantile Paralysis

Sky Hiatt

Imagine you have ten people on Mars. They've just arrived and are focused on survival. If they do survive, they'll begin adapting and settling in. If they stay long enough, a Martian culture will take shape. However, after a year, our colonists will be moved to a new planet. A year later, another relocation. And so on. After many years continuing on like this, their cultural profile would become distorted. Their government, if any, would be adapted to change. Their social ritu- als, if any, would be adapted to change. Their art would be adapted to change. Their language would be adapted to change. Their tools. Their songs, their prayers. There could be a deteriorating sense of commitment, dislike of order and sameness, fascination with novelty and an indiscriminate belief in the value of change. Eventually, there could be a diminished ability to understand what's happening to them, or interest in trying to stop it.

Chronic change is affecting the twin hemispheres of their minds, threatening to lock them in the uprooted phase indefinitely. The brain is an evolutionary marvel, but an eccentric one. It's a developmental oddity that evolved in a freakish sequence of up-grades resulting in unheard of cognitive abilities at every stage. But it did this without giving up any of the primordial elements. The brain stem, or reptile brain, took its present form 500 million years ago in the Paleozoic era. To that was added the cerebel-lum, also prehistoric, and the then limbic system. The cerebrum was added 200 million years later, perhaps as an afterthought. The twin hemispheres, the occipital, temporal, parietal and frontal lobes are more recent acquisitions. The brain is a haphazard but cooperative system of ancient attics and stairwells all of which are physically present and obvious in modern humans. Our brain is older than we will ever be. In fact our brain predates us.

We applied our consequent intelligence and built up a formidable material empire unaware we were beginning to out-pace the brain's penchant for geologic time-scales. To maintain a body-mind harmony, things can change but slowly. Here on Earth, we are much worse off than the Martian colony. Down here things change every day. Even every hour. There's no way of telling how many millions of years ahead of the brain we are by now. In its sheltered, temperature regulated dome of the skull, the brain is burning through logic-boards to keep up with us, while other, extremely useful cognitive components are almost ossifying.

One half of the brain was designed to deal with change, newness and novelty. This was important. The other half was wired to manage constancy and comprehend it. This was vital. The right brain learns quickly and ingests novelty, is novelty-seeking.

The left-brain deals with pattern recognition, cause and effect, trends, experiences, prediction of outcomes. Probable consequences. Rational analysis. Without constancy on an epic scale, the right brain can become overburdened while the left side fails to thrive. It's not a degenerative process, but social changes could set up conditions of self-perpetuation. Cognitive imbalance could lock humans into a cycle of perpetual change.

The young of all species are preoccupied with novelty all the time. They are naturally novelty-seeking and programmed to absorb everything indiscriminately. For humans, as the child grows, the saga of novelty dominates their world. If that world remains constant, sometime between the ages of twenty and thirty, there will be a gradual shift to the left-brain pattern-seeking process. This shift leads to cognitive maturity. In his recent book, *The Wisdom Paradox*, Elkhonon Goldberg calls this the first step in the wisdom phase of human cognitive development. He defines wisdom as a fusion of intellectual, moral and practical dimensions.

Today, in advanced industrialized countries, in any thriving city, change is the only constant. Homes are torn down or engulfed in flames, faces appear or disappear from the workplace, friends move away, jobs flown to India, forests destroyed, rivers dammed, birdsongs silenced. In any given year, twenty percent of Americans move from one residence to another. Ninety thousand disappear and are never seen again. We just can't keep track of them. In *The Culture of Technology*, Arnold Pacey warns that such a society will advance counterintuitively by ignoring the complex of variables and the impact both cultural and environmental, [shutting] down cognitive demand and shifting potential geniuses into deskilled jobs... It's progressive. In successive generations, the debilitating process creates wave after wave of cognitively unhealthy people. Here on Earth, we are exceeding our cognitive replacement rate.

If you are living in a society where novelty levels remain accelerated throughout your life, you may begin to suffer from what Elise Boulding (in *The Clock of the Long Now*) calls temporal exhaustion. She believes humans need a 200-year present, or a pace of change obvious only from a 200-year vantage point in time. Otherwise the mind could become impaired. Some people may experience right hemisphere overload and rebel by allowing selected categories of chaos to drift by them. Others may be locked in novelty mode into the adult years. In extreme cases, cognitive maturation is permanently delayed. In this way the counter-evolutionary pace of change can subtract higher-tier cognitive processes from the social equation.

Such a society may be in ruins, chaos everywhere, while the people living in it perceive it as the ideal life. From within the circle of their cognitive limitations, all is well. The birth and death of fads, acceleration of technological intervals, microchip generations and the macro-momentum of time drives the median cognitive age downward, from elders to adults to young adults and finally to the young. The defective adults notice this but it registers as normal. As Wonderful! How are the immature adult victims of chronic change going to raise a population of pattern-seekers? How is the generation after them going to mature at all? According to Simone Weil in the *Need for*

175

Roots, once uprootedness and commerce have accelerated the pace of life past a crucial tempo, it will have a hold on us, compared to which cocaine is a harmless product. If we don't have a literal fountain of youth, we have a psycho- logical one. The crescendo of novelty comfortably abides in the right brain. If there is a lag between fixes, you may need to camp at the cineplex for the next film in a favorite series. According to David Loye in *The Sphinx and the Rainbow*, the right hemisphere is also the seat of moodiness and dark thoughts and will tend to register events as more unpleasant than they are. Marooned at this stage, you may need drugs, alcohol or chemicals to get by. Even the novelty-seeking mind needs rest at times. It's rough being cut off from the calming left-brain aptitudes. Plastic surgery may be a superficial adaptation to superficial times. It may also be a way to keep the outer body aligned with the eter- nally youthful mind. Otherwise, the discord could be unsettling. Top models are the ones with childlike proportions, while the children themselves compete in pageants as miniature grownups mimicking adult mannerisms. Chronic change is blurring the age distinctions. There's a preferred age toward which everyone is deliriously gravitating. The right brain balances dangerously between exhilaration and nothingness.

In the learnable world, in wild times, the incessant barrage would register as catas- trophic. Learning was different then. Even the very young would begin laying down patterns, seeing the connections, building up the left-brain almost from the beginning. Nothing existed in isolation. Once a child reached the adult state, life would have settled into patterned rhythmic certainty. The right hemisphere would become less vital. Data download would be nearly complete. From this, lessons could be extracted, trends analyzed, patterns detected, tendencies, relationships, prediction of outcomes and possibilities. Left brain thinking dominates the mature mind and is the seat of wisdom. Normally, this is the final phase, continuing to develop through old age until death. The left-brain is the seat of hope, optimism, contentment and happiness. But, while many unstable forces are at work, maybe harmonizing forces have been set in place by the governing ellipses of civilization. Maybe we've built in synthetic fixed constants for consciousness to cling to. Well, there's academic, blue collar, white col- lar, and industrial disciplinary isolation. There are schools of higher learning deviating novitiates onto the high-strung crests of specialization. That can't be it. There are workers hired to build the pharaoh's tombs where the fabled human potential can be silently interred. There are street cleaners drained of their dreams. There's a pin-point, over-focused workforce subdividing phenomenon into discontinuous blips. There are professionals trapped in a world of knowledge fragments. No, all along the line, the stamp of divisional thinking scars the mind.

And there are other scars. It was once assumed the adult human brain did not manufacture brain cells. New research has proven this untrue. Elizabeth Gould is a specialist in the emerging field of neurogenesis. She traces the paths of stress and worry on the brain. She calls this neural wounding a cerebral disfigurement. When a brain is worried, it isn't interested in investing in new cells. Separating children from their

parents at an early age can wound the mind. And poverty provides ongoing stress, especially among children. Some brains never even have a chance.

How is it possible to be aware and responsible, Curtis White asks in *The Middle Mind*, in a society that prohibits understanding? Or inhibits the ability to conceptualize an alternative social world. How can people whose minds are petrified, save themselves, or save anything? How will they be able to know truth, or perceive honor or virtue? How will they know the lie? How will they decipher fact from fiction?

They say it takes a village to raise a child. But, it also takes the constancy of a village to move adults toward the maturity of wisdom. Physically mature adults are not the final form. Modernity abandons them in the adolescent phase in the midst of their learning. As a species almost completely dependent upon our minds, we need instruction throughout our lives to survive. This is our renowned species strategy. But there are few elders now. Only old folks in the old folk's home. In counter-evolutionary fashion, adults must now teach their parents how to cross the mine field of modernity.

When celebrities are interviewed, they often say they knew from an early age that life held special things for them. They weren't surprised at success. They always knew. What they don't realize is that all children have such premonitions. The surprise is when it doesn't happen. Ask any child, they will tell you of the great future that's waiting for them. The will to greatness is a key survival instinct. In naturalistic cultures, heroic opportunities were open to everyone. Healthy cultures invite in courage, heroism, genius, normal mental development. Possibilities to achieve great things are theoretically unlimited. Within the dynamic of the tribe or clan, there was considerable cognitive urgency and transparency. Ideas were sought. The mental trust was maximized, not out of egalitarian beneficence, but out of need. Humans were once generalists immersed in ageless sameness. Everyone learned everything and understood the interconnections. An open cognitive trust was essential. Species don't simply materialize and drift forward through time. Out of a thousand that appear, 999 will fail and die away.

Children of the 21st century advance toward non-maturity as their genetic endowment for greatness slips away. The umbilical cord is now attached to modernity. To reach this stage took hundreds of years of cognitive repression and imbalanced minds. Thousands of cultural mistakes were made. The demands of a consumer civilization and hierarchies of power have neutralized many, many minds. Intelligence and wisdom are sabotaged. It's getting harder to understand freedom and its subsidiary themes. If the mind is not free, how can the body follow? White says, Imagination is real, its defining concept is freedom. According to Loye, the novelty seeking mind, frozen in a youthful phase, tends to see the world around them as, ...inherently divided...broken into smaller and smaller constituent parts. The lost boys and girls of the present may have trouble detecting patterns, fathoming them. The data streams fail to conform to a coherent larger meaning. There are single causes, single solutions, imperceptible connections, receding time horizons. From the neglect of constant life experiences comes

one right answer. Black and white. No shades of grey. There are properties at work in separate chambers of the mind.

According to Neil Pacey, in *The Culture of Technology*, these non-consecutive thinkers ...will have limited expectations. They will trust the experts, turn to them. Nuclear power plants could be built without plans to deal with radioactive waste. Wars fought not knowing how to end them. Robin eggs disintegrating. Diseases rising inexplicably. The cranial dimensions of Neanderthal exceeded those of modern humans, embarrassing science to the present day. Why would a primitive people need a larger brain than we have?

With wisdom withering worldwide, and chaos intensifying, social skills suffer, social anxiety and violence surface. Parenting depreciates. Clinical neural disease is on the rise. Consider the case of the mysterious nuns of Minnesota the school sisters of Notre Dame. They tended to live to old age, mentally acute their final days. But, autopsies revealed a medical enigma—evidence of advanced stages of Alzheimer's in the nuns' brains. Elkonon has a theory. They must have been engaged in challenging mental pursuits to the end, and that's what saved them. Lifelong learning. His results suggest other things. Working together, pattern expansion and effortless experts increase the amount of brain space allocated to well-practiced cognitive tasks and decrease the metabolic requirements necessary for the effective performance... That is, dealing with patterned familiarity is metabolically efficient and requires less oxygen than processing novelty. The ability to perform complex mental tasks with diminished blood supply serves as a powerful protection against the detrimental effects of cerebrovascular disease on brain function.

Did the cloister of the convent protect the nuns from the chaos of the times? Maybe the benediction of the nunnery functioned in a lull of ritual continuity passed down through the cloistered ages. A haven for the natural mind to mature in. Alzheimer's typically affects the right side of the brain more than the left. Also, in natural aging, The right hemisphere subsidiary bodies begin to disintegrate earlier in life than the left, which barely changes until around the age of fifty, writes Elkonon. Other factors include diet, genetics and contributing illnesses. Is the current epidemic of Alzheimer's aggravated by unrelenting stimulation of the right brain coping with a standing tsunami of change? Is Alzheimer's just another disease of civilization? If so, are there other stable islands somewhere fostering similar healthy mental tendencies? Well, the Amish have an almost nonexistent risk of Alzheimer's. The disease is also rare among Native Americans in the US, and Canada, but only among those living on reservations. Scientists are hunting for the magic gene that protects them and that can someday protect everyone. Genetic therapy conforms nicely to the edicts of a free market system. Beyond the profit motive Dr. Hugh Hendrie wonders if environmental factors could trigger the tragic illness. The Canadian Cree suggest studying Native diet and traditional remedies.

Then there's the case of the mysterious tribal people of the New Guinea highlands who carry a rare virus almost identical to the one that causes leukemia but never

suffer from the disease. When these people descended from the cloud forests into the lowlands, bewildered scientists got busy trying to explain things on a genetic basis. It's not surprising. After all, as Simon Boron-Cohen writes in *Mind Blindness*, "Scientists do not conduct research to find things whose existence they don't suspect."

Owing to broadband static and psycho-social blindness, many people are willing to allow the present to define them. They are loyal to the present, obedient to it, and defensive of it, even if it destroys them, even if it kills them. Far too many names to put on a wall. It's ironic inasmuch as they don't really *want* the present. They don't even want the future. They want something called futuristic. Forever withdrawing, never quite here. They will fight for a world someone else will imagine for them—a world better than this one. They've submitted to it before they've even seen it. People unknown to them, whose motives they don't understand, whose values they may not share, are the new superheroes. The directive is to keep totally abreast of innovation. Avoid the curse of obsolescence. This version of the future, novel, distorted, and perpetually changing, appeals to the unhealthy mind. The learning curve is subverted, the natural mind unnaturally distressed. Parables are invalidated. The tortoise no longer wins the race.

Modern men and women must learn to yearn for change, not merely to be open to changes...but positively to demand them, actively seek them out and carry them through...They must delight in mobility, thrive on renewal, look forward to future developments.

–Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air*

To say that our society is falling apart, says Berman, is to say that it's alive and well. In the touching memoir, *Yonder*, Jim W. Corder laments, *The holocaust happens again and again in small ways, in large ways, in intense, sometimes agonized, personal ways.* He's talking about the lost Eden of the eternal present, and the irrevocable past of the past. He quotes Hitler. People will believe anything... sufficiently repeated. Mumford warns in *Technics and Civilization* that before industrialization, a reorientation of wishes, habits, ideas and goals was necessary. It's been accomplished. Civilization invokes a temporal distortion that has altered the cultural mind.

This storm, piles of debris, wreckage upon wreckage, Walter Benjamin writes in *Theses on History*, this storm is progress. The digitized content of the World Wide Web surpassed the Library of Congress in 1998 and doubles every few months. Torrents of context-free information, Pacey called it. But he was talking about the telegraph. Eternity has ceased to be a measure of human actions. According to Stuart Brand in *The Clock of the Long Now*, the system cannot be fixed. No one is in charge, no one understands it, it can't be lived without, and it gets worse every year. Evolution favors species that acquire all they need to know in time to pass it on. If you find yourself in a world the wise among you cannot comprehend, there's a problem. Anticerebellum tendencies. Statutory euthanasia of humankind. According to Elk, the mature mind should offer society a vast prism of experience. Herbert Simone, (in *The Wisdom Paradox*) confirms this; pattern recognition is the foremost mechanism of problem

179

solving. The human brain has 100 million neurons, or about as many neurons as there are stars in our galaxy. Right brain domination is shutting down many of our mental solar systems.

They are beginning to predict a right-brained future. The odds are good. We already have cultlike legions of believers craving the tomorrow of ephemera. The struggles, trials, and philosophies of responsible culture are unfamiliar to them. They are estranged from bioregional, intraspecies, seventh generation ethic of survival in which all species advance together through time, where the honor of plants, wild running rivers, wild dark skies, wilderness, and the Earth is the deepest honor. The brain-damaged people of the child mind believe in futures that don't exist. They desire that the past dissolve into a traceless mist to make way for unknown developments.

Within a century after Voyager's launch, it could be that new animals or humans were being manufactured gene by gene, to suit any purpose...emerging as parallel, rival or superior beings... human intelligence hugely amplified... flitting from star to star, forever learning, forever exploring.

–David Darling, *Deep Time*

Of course! By now we need the robots and the robot brains. If we feed enough data into the synthesized mind and watch the screen, we will comprehend evolution, global weather patterns, star formation. Everything! As a precursor, research labs are stringing together herds of computers to amplify their capacity. Gigaflops, or one billion operations per second, is not enough. They are aiming for teraflops, one trillion operations a second. Manufacturers are now selling clusters as large as 1,250 computers. The buyers name them Medusa, The Hive, Beowulf. The human brain can store 100 trillion units of information. It's not enough. We live in a world we cannot comprehend without the unified digital mind. As computers merge the data strings, the human mind remains submissively subdivided.

The boundary between human and human-made was no longer decipherable. What had been computers were continuous extensions of the brain... Now man would aspire to technologies that were truly godlike, reassembled at will...

–David Darling, *Deep Time*

Like a circus of trained toys. Mechanical immortality. So far, we can't figure out how to eat right or even feed everyone. But first things first. For decades we've been limited to climbing inside the machinery, now the machinery will climb inside of us. Manufactured humans wired to the nano-mind. Will it happen? Look around you, we've been poisoned, but so far, instead of dying, we're intoxicated! Persistent change will continue altering things even to the invisible level, to all the levels, wiping out species and sub-species indiscriminately. Much is being lost unwitnessed and without acknowledgment. How will we ever atone for that? Is there terminology to discuss it? Is there a language? Are there words? Our legacy will probably never be fully tabulated. But life is not unconditional.

In *Possessing the Secrets of Joy*, one of Alice Walker's characters complains: Who are you people to never accept us as we are? It is always we who have to change so

that we are more like you. And who are you? You don't even know. Civilization wants everyone to forget who they are and erase their memories and believe in nothing. When the Native American children were sent to the boarding schools in the last century, they promised themselves they would never forget the sacred prayers. They would repeat them and repeat them—the sacred words. But as the years passed, the prayers faded. By the time they were returned home, they had forgotten even the language the prayers were spoken in. They couldn't talk to their parents or to any of their people. The intergenerational cultural bonds had been broken.

Kill the Indian in him, save the man. It seemed harsh, but it wasn't enough. Much remained to be destroyed. The Aztecs practiced human sacrifice. Modern civilization asks only that we sacrifice the mind.

Why I Hate the City;

From "Misadventures of a Dissatisfied Civilian: At War & Going Home"
Sal Insieme

As I walk barefoot down the soft and soggy floor of a fir, cedar, and madrone forest, there is no unevenness of balance between thought and feeling, no uneasy longing, no displacement. It is damp, as the trickle from the trees during a brief pause in the rain continues the downward pattern of water falling, but slower, more relaxed, while other sounds can now be perceived during this interlude. In the distance, a stream that empties into a creek can be heard as the ceaseless travels of water continues. Entering my awareness are the rustle of leaves from a hardy bird, the cautious approach of a hungry deer, and the cleansing smell of moisture fills me. I am calm and alert... content and enthusiastic. As I continue down this worn and familiar path, a glimmer of sun peaks through gray sky, casting faint shadows from the trees. I reach to pick a...

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! SLAM!

Fuck. Why does it always have to end like that?

I attempt to focus my eyes away from the white room and out the window. Across the street, I see a repetitiously ornate facade of an older turn-of-the-century stone building, and in one of its windows, the reflection of hyper-speed motion from the street below. I really hate this place. I need more sleep and I roll back over and try to think of something more pleasurable. With absolutely no desire to enter that world quite yet, it's not hard to initiate and embrace a rush of images, feelings, and thoughts, and before I know it, *I fall dizzily back to the misty mountain forest, only now the sun has opened up more of the sky, to where a sizable portion of pale blue seeps through. An old friend is approaching, as I spot a patch of luscious fungi I have tasted many times before, near the decomposing remnants of an ancient douglas fir. I bend down next to this treasure and begin to examine it more closely. I notice minute aspects of this variety that I have never noticed before. I remember all the places in this area where I have gathered this sort of mushroom and a wave of joy and warmth moves through me as I also recall those I shared the discovery, preparation, and consumption with. I begin to...*

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! SLAM!

Damn. Why does that sharply abbreviated return to connection almost feel worse than none at all? My mind argues with itself as whether to fall back again, or face the day. Believing that my long term stress will increase every time I choose the short-term solution of delay and evasion, I grumble as I sit up and rub my eyes in disbelief at the sheer ugliness and rigidity of this place. I wonder how much more I can take, but what

puzzles me even more, is why I have chosen to come here at all. I hate the city and I wanna go home.

Luckily, I am only here temporarily, some brief affairs to attend to, some friends to see, some exotic foods to eat, and then I can return to my rural existence—not exactly wild, but a hell of a lot closer than this (probably the next best thing to fully going feral; for me, a reasonable and interim detour on my gradual, but deliberate, journey back). I have spent considerable time in the city, and this one in par- ticular. For a few years, I even called it my "home" and saw it as a "natural" habitat for a creative and anxious youth looking to experience as much as I could as quickly as possible. In the end though, it was merely a momentary place of residence for me, filled with temporary distractions, dead ends, frustration, and an occasional meaningful or adventurous experience. It was not the idealized vision of a positive human socialized existence (that's how I viewed it in my over-educated, utopianized, and mostly domesticated mind, one still in recovery from, and reacting to, a youth of suburban sterility, strictness, and boredom).

Time, experiences, growth, new questions, and dissatisfaction, however, eventually sent me on a different path, away from this malignant and soul-swallowing concrete, steel, and cultural maze. Years later, I am still wrestling to move completely away from its entanglement.

I proceed to prepare myself for the world out there. I get dressed, making sure to have all of my attire for this terrain, including... boots (to cushion my feet against the thick layer of inflexible concrete), sunglasses (so as not to have thousands of strangers peeking into my thoughts and feelings, and so they don't see me peeking into theirs), backpack (to securely contain all my nomadic treasures, procurements, and emotional crutches), propaganda (for various pre-determined and unexpected distribution points along my route, or for the random outcast and future escapee), sharpie (for more spontaneous propaganda and alterations), water bottle and snacks (since you can't eat or drink anything which grows or flows here, and everything else must be purchased— if I was really prepared, I'd have a pee jar to avoid the perpetual search for a free place to urinate), book (for all the brief retreats from this reality, where one can grow both dizzy and bored in the middle of thousands of contrary things happening at once), notebook (to jot down random thoughts coming into my head, like these before you now), address book (with all the phone numbers I need to know for any possible situation, as I am venturing into the equivalent to what the civilized view as the wild), walkman and tapes—mostly jazz (for shutting out the constant horrendous screeching, scraping, beeping, and grinding sounds of this place and to remind me that some provocative beauty is actually created in this frantically charged atmosphere; and no, I don't have an iPod), and, of course, my reusable vessel for the substance which keeps it all going, that oily bitter alacritous nectar— coffee (no cream or sugar please, you ain't cuttin' it with nothin'!). At one time 10 cups a day, my extreme dependence on coffee (not to mention other dysfunctional or unbalanced behaviors, dependencies, obsessions, and abuses—based on my own self-reflection and desires, not any moral judgement) is an addiction that has come and gone with me throughout my life, and

directly proportional to the degree to which I was immersed in the urban condition. Just to get into the rhythm of the city, its pulses, its voltage, its abruptness—usually out of sync, and often at odds, with rhythms of the earth—requires us to tweak our bodies, minds, and spirits in some notably extreme ways. The city never sleeps, and often we are drawn to, or at least expected to endure, that same lack of slumber. We might miss something. We need to stay on top of so much heading in all different directions at once. Who cares when the sun rises and sets or what direction is south or where the food and water come from in this superficial mecca of distortion, artificiality, and performance? This reality is almost entirely constructed for completely different reasons than we are, or any other organic life form or process. It is a self-perpetuating mechanism, and as long as the fuel is consumed, and periodic repairs are made, it progresses forward as it builds its own methods and values, ones we must submit to, despite their seemingly arbitrariness to life. I feel both expressionless and deranged among the armies of alienation.

My goals at the moment are much different then my usual day outside of the city. They are more short-term, have preciseness to them. They are not the chop wood, fetch water types of my daily routine, nor the project-oriented ones, nor the spontaneous and celebratory excursions. No, it seems like a carefully plotted military maneuver, with me prepared for whatever comes my way. Ready to trudge through for the mission. No time to enjoy the doing, just strings of tasks and cold space between them. No time to sit and soak in the life around me. Shit, I don't even think about closing my eyes out there. I guess this approach can happen anywhere, but the city seems to have something inherent in its form and function: impersonal scale, velocity driven, and economically focused.

Of course, life does drift in this mess. Some in its margins. Some against its grain. And some, which can more easily adapt to adverse conditions, even seem to flow with the energy of this place. This is mostly an illusion, though, something we tell ourselves so as to avoid being fully honest and risk a completely crushed soul. The hyper-promoted fantasy of cosmopolitan adventure and unending possibility is nothing but the dangling carrot, the cheap lipstick, the polished sports car, the surgically enlarged penis of the system; it really has little behind it, and it just might really hurt you in the end. Officially sanctioned activity varies widely from city to city, neighborhood to neighborhood, even person to person, especially if you ain't got the do-re-mi, but off the radar, you can find the weirdest shit. Now, I ain't no prude and I ain't no moralist. Whatever people wanna do or think they need, that's great, as long as they ain't hurtin' anyone, but down some of the darkest alleys, behind some of the funkiest doors—shit, in some of the swankiest apartments—you can find people engaged in things you never even imagined. But often what passes for the unleashing of desires, is merely the leashing of each other or the desiring of leashes, and mostly the leeching out of desires as our life-force slips away and we become the white noise of the metropolis. Often, people are playing out the most extravagantly obtuse performances because their lives are empty, built on nothing but the urban buzz, designed from a

distorted collage, fabricated in either a boardroom, chemical lab, or chat room. Novelty for novelty's sake, shock for shock value, faster and faster, and you better not get too old around here. The vampiric qualities will eventually turn you blanched and anemic.

Anyway, following an afternoon of poking around town, I have a few used records, a couple expired bus tickets, a queasy stomach from some off-Chinese food, a layer of brownish-gray film on my skin, and a headache from way too much java to show for it. I awkwardly hop on a crowded bus back to my friend's place so we can rendezvous with others for dinner at some exotic restaurant that allows you to pretend for a night that you're a hip globe-trotter, then, maybe see some expensive mediocre band where one drink costs more than all the alcohol I made in a year at home.

The possibilities seem endless, but they really only fit into very narrow parameters for what passes as life around here. I'll probably drink too much, have a few laughs, and make my way back to the crash pad where, instead of sleeping, I will try to remember why I came here and think about what I will do tomorrow. (At least that's all I'll tell you...)

As I lay in bed, drowning the outside noise with some Charlie Parker on the headphones, I begin to scribble some notes for a flyer I will make tomorrow to post around town, particularly in the hipster spots and alternative grunge centers...

...Unlike the post-modernists, the capitalists, the technophiles, the Leftists, and the hipsters, who uncritically, and in many cases enthusiastically, cling to the death culture, I will not defend its most significant manifestation, its very essence: the city. I will not fight for its streets or neighborhoods. I will not reclaim what was not mine to begin with, nor what I would never want. Beyond my personal aesthetic and experiential preferences, it is clear that negative human tendencies (anti-liberatory, confining, authoritarian, and selfdestructive) seem to expand as a society becomes more massified, with its most appalling point being that of the city. While the word "civilization" literally means a "culture of the city", in the past I have hesitated using that definition, and still have some apprehension with that narrow description. I tend to look more at tendencies like domestication and other dynamics and functions to describe a larger range of physical and social organizations, but I do think the city serves as an extreme model of the negative consequences of the civilized reality. It is a cancerous case study, one I wish to understand more fully and occasionally interface with, but one I wish to undermine wherever possible. The toxicity, alienation, and hyperstimulation of the cosmopolitan condition cannot honestly be navigated in any long-term situation. There is almost nothing salvageable. Those who apologize for the urban wasteland, and its inherently unhealthy, unsustainable, indentured, and anti-liberatory condition are trapped in metropolitan fantasies or massive delusion and confusion over the so-called "unrestrained" and "livable" possibilities which lay within the asphalt, steel, plastic, and fiber-optic maze of the city. The city is the test-tube for a neo-world thanks to technology, imperialism, global trade, and post-modern fads, not landscapes where ecology takes thousands and millions of years to evolve based on the slowly transitioning organic micro-conditions of a place. I wish to go home. I do not live here anymore...

As the pen falls from my hand, my head hits the pillow, and a numbness overtakes my weary body, I think about the forest where I live, the ones I am missing, and that I only have four more days before I can use my bus ticket...

Four more days... Four more days... Four more days...

Four dayzzzzzzzzzzz...

Resistance

Guerrilla warfare is that little war in which you have to find allies in fog, damp and the height of rivers, in the rainy season, the long grass, the owl's cry, and the phase of the moon and sun.

—Jean Genet

The Age of Obedience is Over: Attacking The Mega-Machine

The bell has tolled. It is time for the dead and the living dead to rise. Rise! Rise up and claim your birthright! Rise up in an uprising almighty! Roll away the stone and let the graves gape wide. Rise up from your deathbeds. From your graves and your garrets. From your factories and your firesides. For now is the festival of ruin.

The mighty shall be pulled down into the dust and the poor and oppressed exalted. The living and dead shall walk side by side, marching, marching, marching through the streets of pain toward the citadel of power. Breaking, burning, tearing, for yes the urge to destroy is also a creative urge. And the storehouses shall be broke open and their goods scattered to the wind. And the machines will be broken beyond repair. And the houses of the money-changers will be tom down. And the factories will be gutted. And the roads will be ripped up. And the jails will be stormed, And the cages will be ripped open. And the laboratories will be trashed. And the office blocks and the tower blocks will shudder and fall. And the seats of power will be overturned. And the cities will burn and burn and burn.

So come out, come out, wherever you are. Rise up from your stupor and rise up from your torpor. Come level with me!

—John Moore**,** *The Book of Leveling*

The symptoms of a formidable cataclysm leave no room for doubt that we are on the eve of an uplift and a crash, a rising and a fall—but these dynamic and transient conditions favor bold, autonomous rebels who understand the portents and realize that a dazzling (and very challenging) transformation is at hand. We've obviously been dragged to a very dangerous place but the point of no return is way back yonder and it's in this atmosphere of impending doom and unlimited opportunity that formless conspiracies are slowly starting to take shape—conspiracies that take advantage of every weak spot in the structure of the civilized order, just as volcanic fire seeps through faults in rock. The old leftist paradigms (worn and blasted) are a structure of death—a constellation of dead-ends—and the luminous barbarians of the 21st Century heed the call of more primordial instincts—instincts of climactic change, destruction and renewal that seek the ruin of penitentiary-like systems and organized paper crowns. The future will only contain what we put into it and if our enemies kill us along the way, then at least we'll die like suns, diffusing light...

Hit Where It Hurts

Ted Kaczynski

The Purpose of this Article

The purpose of this article is to point out a very simple principle of human conflict, a principle that opponents of the techno-industrial system seem to be overlooking. The principle is that in any form of conflict, if you want to win, you must hit your adversary where it hurts.

I have to explain that when I talk about "hitting where it hurts" I am not necessarily referring to physical blows or to any other form of physical violence. For example, in oral debate, "hitting where it hurts" would mean making the arguments to which your opponent's position is most vulnerable. In a presidential election, "hitting where it hurts" would mean winning from your opponent the states that have the most electoral votes. Still, in discussing this principle I will use the analogy of physical combat because it is vivid and clear.

If a man punches you, you can't defend yourself by hitting back at his fist because you can't hurt the man that way. In order to win the fight, you have to hit him where it hurts. That means you have to go behind the fist and hit the sensitive and vulnerable parts of the man's body.

Suppose a bulldozer belonging to a logging company has been tearing up the woods near your home and you want to stop it. It is the blade of the bulldozer that rips the earth and knocks trees over, but it would be a waste of time to take a sledgehammer to the blade. If you spend a long, hard day working on the blade with the sledge, you *might* succeed in damaging it enough so that it becomes useless. But, in comparison with the rest of the bulldozer, the blade is relatively inexpensive and easy to replace. The blade is only the "fist" with which the bulldozer hits the earth. To defeat the machine you must go behind the "fist" and attack the bulldozer's vital parts. The engine, for example, can be ruined with very little expenditure of time and effort by means well known to many radicals.

At this point I must make clear that I am not recommending that anyone should damage a bulldozer (unless it is his own property). Nor should anything in this article be interpreted as recommending illegal activity of any kind. I am a prisoner and if I were to encourage il- legal activity this article would not even be allowed to leave

189

the prison. I use the bulldozer analogy only because it it clear and vivid and will be appreciated by radicals.

1. Technology is the Target

It is widely recognized that "the basic variable which determines the contemporary historic process is provided by technological development" (Celso Furtado). Technology, above all else, is responsible for the current condition of the world and will control its future development. Thus, the "bulldozer" that we have to destroy is modern technology itself. Many radicals are aware of this and therefore realize that their task is to eliminate the entire techno-industrial system. But unfortunately they have paid little attention to the need to hit the system where it hurts.

Smashing up McDonald's or Starbucks is pointless. Not that I give a damn about McDonald's or Starbucks. I don't care whether anyone smashes them up or not. But that is not a revolutionary activity. Even if every fast-food chain in the world were wiped out the techno-industrial system would suffer only minimal harm as a result, since it could easily survive without fast-food chains. When you attack McDonald's or Starbucks, you are not hitting where it hurts.

Some months ago I received a letter from a young man in Denmark who believed that the techno-industrial system had to be eliminated because, as he put it, "What will happen if we go on this way?" Apparently, however, his form of "revolutionary" activity was raiding fur farms. As a means of weakening the techno-industrial system this activity is utterly useless. Even if animal liberationists succeed in eliminating the fur industry completely they would do no harm at all to the system because the system can get along perfectly well without furs.

I agree that keeping wild animals in cages is intolerable, and that putting an end to such practices is a noble cause. But there are many other noble causes, such as preventing traffic accidents, providing shelter for the homeless, recycling, or helping old people cross the street. Yet no one is foolish enough to mistake these for revolutionary activities, or to imagine that they do anything to weaken the system.

2. The Timber Industry is a Side Issue

To take another example, no one in his right mind believes that anything like real wilderness can survive very long if the technoindustrial system continues to exist. Many environmental radicals agree that this is the case and hope for the collapse of the system. But in practice all they do is attack the timber industry.

I certainly have no objection to their attack on the timber industry. In fact, it's an issue that is close to my heart and I'm delighted by any successes that radicals may have against the timber industry. In addition, for reasons that I need to explain here, I think that opposition to the timber industry should be one component of the efforts to overthrow the system.

But, by itself, attacking the timber industry is not an effective way of working against the system, for even in the unlikely event that radicals succeeded in stopping all logging everywhere in the world, that would not bring down the system and it would not permanently save wilderness. Sooner or later the political climate would

190

change and logging would resume. Even if logging never resumed, there would be other venues through which wilderness would be destroyed, or if not destroyed then tamed and domesticated. Mining and mineral exploration, acid rain, climate changes, and species extinction destroy wilderness; wilderness is tamed and domesticated through recreation, scientific study, and resource management—including among other things electronic tracking of animals, stocking of streams with hatchery-bred fish, and planting of genetically-engineered trees.

Wilderness can be saved permanently only by eliminating the techno-industrial system, and you cannot eliminate the system by attacking the timber industry. The system would easily survive the death of the timber industry because wood products, though very useful to the system, can if necessary be replaced with other materials.

Consequently, when you attack the timber industry, you are not hitting the system where it hurts. The timber industry is only the "fist" (or one of the fists) with which the system destroys wilderness, and, just as in a fist-fight, you can't win by hitting at the fist. You have to go behind the fist and strike at the most sensitive and vital organs of the system. By legal means, of course, such as peaceful protests.

3. Why the System is Tough

The techno-industrial system is exceptionally tough due to its so-called "democratic" structure and its resulting flexibility. Because dictatorial systems tend to be rigid, social tensions and resistance can be built up in them to the point where they damage and weaken the system and may lead to revolution. But in a "democratic" system, when social tension and resistance build up dangerously the system backs off enough, it compromises enough to bring the tensions down to a safe level.

During the 1960s people first became aware that environmental pollution was a serious problem the more so because the visible and smellable filth in the air over our major cities was beginning to make people physically uncomfortable. Enough protest arose so that an Environmental Protection Agency was established and other measures were taken to alleviate the problem. Of course, we all know that our pollution problems are a long, long way from being solved, but enough was done so that public complaints subsided and the pressure on the system was reduced for a number of years.

Thus, attacking the system is like hitting a piece of rubber. A blow with a hammer can shatter cast iron, because caste iron is rigid and brittle. But you can pound a piece of rubber without hurting it because it is flexible—it gives way before protest, just enough so that the protest loses its force and momentum. Then the system bounces back.

So, in order to hit the system where it hurts, you need to select issues on which the system will *not* back off, in which it will fight to the finish. For what you need is not compromise with the system but a life-and-death struggle.

4. It is Useless to Attack the System in Terms of Its Own Values.

It is absolutely essential to attack the system not in terms of its own technologically-oriented values but in terms of values that are inconsistent with the values of the system. As long as you attack the system in terms of its own values, you do not hit the system

where it hurts and you allow the system to deflate protest by giving way, by backing off.

For example, if you attack the timber industry primarily on the basis that forests are needed to preserve water resources and recreational opportunities, then the system can give ground to defuse protest without compromising its own values. Water resources and recreation are fully consistent with the values of the system, and if the system backs off, if it restricts logging in the name of water resources and recreation, then it only makes a tactical retreat and does not suffer a strategic defeat for its code of values.

If you push victimization issues (such as racism, sexism, homophobia, or poverty) you are not challenging the system's values and you are not even forcing the system to back off or compromise. You are directly helping the system. All of the wisest *proponents* of the system recognize that racism, sexism, homophobia, and poverty are harmful to the system, and this is why the system itself works to combat these and similar forms of victimization.

"Sweatshops," with their low pay and wretched working conditions, may bring profit to certain corporations, but wise *proponents* of the system know very well that the system as a whole functions better when workers are treated decently. In making an issue of sweatshops, you are helping the system, not weakening it.

Many radicals fall into the temptation of focusing on nonessential issues like racism, sexism and sweatshops because it is easy. They pick an issue on which the system can afford a compromise and on which they will get support from people like Ralph Nader, Winona La Duke, the labor unions, and all the other pink reformers. Perhaps the system, under pressure, will back off a bit, the activists will see some visible result from their efforts, and they will have the satisfying illusion that they have accomplished something, but in reality they have accomplished nothing at all toward eliminating the techno-industrial system.

The globalization issue is not completely irrelevant to the technology problem. The package of economic and political measures termed "globalization" does promote economic growth and, consequently, technological progress. Still, globalization is an issue of marginal importance and not a well-chosen target of revolutionaries. The system can afford to give ground on the globalization issue. Without giving up globalization as such, the system can take steps to mitigate the negative environmental and economic consequences of globalization so as to defuse protest. At a pinch, the system could even afford to give up globalization altogether. Growth and progress would still continue, only at a slightly lower rate. When you fight globalization you are not attacking the systems fundamental values. Opposition to globalization is motivated in terms of securing decent wages for workers and protecting the environment, both of which are completely consistent with the values of the system. The system, for its own survival, can't afford to let environmental degradation go too far. Consequently, in fighting globalization you do not hit the system where it really hurts. Your efforts may pro-

mote reform, but they are useless for the purpose of overthrowing the techno-industrial system.

5. Radicals Must Attack the System at the Decisive Points

To work effectively toward the elimination of the technoindustrial system, revolutionaries must attack the system at points at which it cannot afford to give ground. They must attack the vital organs of the system. Of course, when I use the word "attack," I am not referring to physical attack but only to legal forms of protest and resistance.

Some examples of vital organs of the system are:

A. The electric-power industry. The system is utterly dependent on its electric-power grid.

B. The communications industry. Without rapid communications, as by telephone, radio, television, e-mail, and so forth, the system could not survive.

C. The computer industry. We all know that without computers the system would promptly collapse.

D. The propaganda industry. The propaganda industry includes the entertainment industry, the educational system, journalism, advertising, public relations, much of politics, and of the mental-health industry. The system can't function unless people are sufficiently docile and conforming and have the attitudes that the system needs them to have. It is the function of the propaganda industry to teach people that kind of thought and behavior.

E. The biotechnology industry. The system is not yet (as far as I know) physically dependent on advanced biotechnology. Nevertheless, the system cannot afford to give way on the biotechnology issue, which is a critically important issue for the system, as I will argue in a moment.

Again: When you attack these vital organs of the system, it is essential not to attack them in terms of the system's own values but in terms of values inconsistent with those of the system. For example, if you attack the electric-power industry on the basis that it pollutes the environment, the system can defuse protest by developing cleaner methods of generating electricity. If worse came to worse, the system could even switch entirely to wind and solar power. This might do a great deal to reduce environmental damage, but it would not put an end to the techno-industrial system. Nor would it represent a defeat for the system's fundamental values. To accomplish anything against the system you have to attack *all* electric-power generation as a matter of *principle*, on the ground that dependence on electricity makes people dependent on the system. This is a ground incompatible with the system's values.

6. Biotechnology May be the Best Target for Political Attack

Probably the most promising target for *political* attack is the biotechnology industry. Though revolutions are generally carried out by minorities, it is very useful to have some degree of support, sympathy, or at least acquiescence from the general population. To get that kind of support or acquiescence is one of the goals of political action. If you concentrated your political attack on, for example, the electricpower industry, it would

be extremely difficult to get any support outside of a radical minority because most people resist change to their way of living, especially any change that inconveniences them. For this reason, few would be willing to give up electricity.

But people do not yet feel themselves dependent on advanced biotechnology as they do on electricity. Eliminating biotechnology will not radically change their lives. On the contrary, it would be possible to show people that the continued development of biotechnology will transform their way of life and wipe out age-old human values. Thus, in challenging biotechnology, radicals should be able to mobilize in their own favor the natural human resistance to change.

Biotechnology is an issue on which the system cannot afford to lose. It is an issue on which the system will have to fight to the finish, which is exactly what we need. But—to repeat once more—it is essential to attack biotechnology not in terms of the system's own values but in terms of values inconsistent with those of the system. For example, if you attack biotechnology primarily on the basis that it may damage the environment or that genetically-modified foods may be harmful to health, then the system can and will cushion your attack by giving ground or compromising— for instance, by introducing increased supervision of genetic research, more rigorous testing, and regulation of genetically-modified crops. People's anxiety will then subside and protest will wither.

7. All Biotechnology Must be Attacked as a Matter of Principle

So, instead of protesting one or another negative consequence of biotechnology, you have to attack *all* modern biotechnology on *principle*, on grounds such as (a) that it is an insult to all living things;

(b) that it puts too much power in the hands of the system; (c) that it will radically transform fundamental human values that have existed for thousands of years; and similar grounds that are inconsistent with the values of the system.

In response to this kind of attack the system will have to stand and fight. It cannot afford to cushion your attack by backing off to any great extent because biotechnology is too central to the whole enterprise of technological progress and because in backing off, the system would not be making only a tactical retreat but would be taking a major strategic defeat to its code of values. Those values would be undermined and the door would be opened to further political attacks that would hack away at the foundations of the system.

Now it's true that the US House of Representatives recently voted to ban cloning of human beings, and at least some congressmen even gave the right kinds of reasons for doing so. The reasons I read about were framed in religious terms, but whatever you may think of the religious terms involved, these reasons were *not technologically acceptable* reasons. And that is what counts.

Thus, the congressmen's vote on human cloning was a genuine defeat for the system. But it was only a very, very small defeat, because of the narrow scope of the ban—only one tiny part of biotechnology was affected—and because for the near future, cloning of human beings would be of little practical use to the system anyway. The House of

194

Representatives' action does suggest that this may be a point at which the system is vulnerable and that a broader attack on all of biotechnology might inflict severe damage on the system and its values.

8. Radicals are Not Yet Attacking Biotech Effectively

Some radicals do attack biotechnology, whether politically or physically, but as far as I know they explain their opposition to biotech in terms of the system's own values. That is, their main complaints are the risks of environmental damage and of harm to health.

They are not hitting the biotech industry where it hurts. To use an analogy of physical combat once again, suppose you had to defend yourself against a giant octopus. You would not be able to fight back effectively by hacking at the tips of its tentacles. You have to strike at its head. From what I've read of their activities, radicals who work against biotechnology still do no more than hack at the tips of the octopus's tentacles. They try to persuade ordinary farmers, individually, to refrain from planting genetically-engineered seed, but there are many thousands of farms in America, so persuading farmers individually is an extremely inefficient way to combat genetic engineering. It would be much more effective to persuade research scientists engaged in biotechnological work, or executives of companies like Monsanto, to leave the biotech industry. Good research scientists are people who have special talents and extensive training, so they are difficult to replace. The same is true of top corporate executives. Persuading just a few of these people to get out of biotech would do more damage to the biotechnology industry than persuading a thousand farmers not to plant genetically-engineered seed.

9. Hit Where It Hurts

It is open to argument whether I am right in thinking that biotechnology is the best issue on which to attack the system politically, but it is beyond argument that radicals today are wasting much of their energy on issues that have little or no relevance to the survival of the technological system. Even when they do address the right issues, radicals do not hit where it hurts. So instead of trotting off to the next world trade summit to have temper tantrums over globalization, radicals ought to put in some time thinking about how to hit the system where it really hurts. By legal means, of course.

Hit Where It Hurts, but In the Mean Time...

Primal Rage

The Purpose of this Article

The purpose of this article is to counter the authoritarian and limited advice offered by Ted Kaczynski in his piece, "Hit Where It Hurts" (*GA #8*). This is an offering of possibilities of revolt against civilization, and we point out that it is one of many and we have no notions of grandeur as to a vantage point of ours. These are our words, an offering, to take what the reader sees fit. Our basic stance is this: by all means revolt should be, to some degree, tactical, but the heart of revolt is within each of us. Any act of revolt is generally not some massified, preplanned action, but the outcome of spontaneous rage—the natural response to oppressive, suicidal conditions. It goes without saying that when acting in self-defense, the defending person seeks to do the most damage possible. In almost every case of revolt this is generally applicable. The civilized mission to domesticate and exploit all life is by any definition an attack on life. Therefore, resistance will always be an act of self-defense. However, in this sense, not all revolt is equitable with the fight scenario that Ted uses as his analogy.

Revolt is not just a defined action, as Ted treats it, but any act of resistance against the civilized order. It is in this rage and spontaneity that we find the spirit of resistance. We feel that limiting or degrading this spirit is to deny the reason we are fighting in the first place, and that is dangerous.

1. Autonomy is Our Goal

It seems apparent to us that the whole of civilization is accountable for our current state and that true autonomy will be possible only from the destruction of that condition. The role of technology in this development (and the continuing of this) is undeniable. We agree that the technological system is a more viable of many targets in the fight for autonomy. In this we respect Teds' comments as to how to potentially disable that beast. However, isolating this aspect can be very problematic. Ted states that activities such as "smashing up a McDonald's or Starbucks" are "pointless" and "not a revolutionary activity." It would be ridiculous to think that anyone truly feels that smashing up some corporate chain stores or factories will halt civilization, but what single action will? Any direct action is rage put to motion. It is literally striking

a blow into the civilized order, and most importantly a strike against domestication. How could this be anything but revolutionary? No blow will be the single or great blow, and to expect such is idealistic at best. Every act of resistance brings us one step closer to the realization of autonomy for all.

2. In Defense of Wildness

"[N]o one in his right mind believes anything like real wilderness can survive very long if the techno-industrial system continues to exist." This much is true, but few harbor notions that civilization will die easily. This creates a multifaceted form of resistance. Our goals are twofold: to end the civilized existence and to keep it from consuming all the wildness that remains. If we put all our efforts into doing one thing, we risk the possibility of having nothing left for a post-civilized existence. We don't feel every action is a great or worthy one, but that is from our viewpoint. We have no part in legal actions, but know of people using them successfully to keep logging out of wild areas. Is logging those areas inevitable? Quite possibly, but I don't feel that those efforts necessarily drain from an effective revolt. We must never forget that civilization is a totality, it encompasses every aspect of life, and we must resist colonization at all levels and do what is possible anywhere. We feel the importance should always be on eliminating the overbearing presence and domination of civilization but this should never keep our eyes off what is happening here and now. Resistance is everywhere and revolt is life.

3. Why the System Stands Strong

The System is truly durable through centuries of domination and exploitation. The State is primarily its own public relations firm and this keeps it strong. If we are to succeed as revolutionaries, we must break through that stronghold at every possible level.

The facade of democracy and any equation of government with freedom is a target and on this and every front we must seek to counter the apathetic, consumerist dogma. All government, technology, and civilization are oppressive; capitalism candy-coats itself and this makes any form of revolt important.

4. No Rage is Alike

Ted's treatment of "victimization issues" is a topic in itself, and so we'll only give it brief attention here. The favoritism in this society towards white males needs little background, but the outcome of that will usually be apparent. Those of us who come from such a position need to recognize the reality that the people Ted calls "victims" have their own source of rage. We should realize how that rage fits into the problem of civilization and embrace that revolt. This isn't to say, "don't be critical", in fact we feel the exact opposite. We all have our own source of rage and contempt for civilization. This gives us the true beauty and power of revolt, and we should embrace that and take and give to it. Anyone who tries to determine whom someone should and shouldn't oppose is hardly fighting alongside that person (not that that should even neces- sarily be the case, but another point is to just be upfront about where you

197

stand). Authoritarianism and elitism should be understood as tools of civilization, it is up to all of us to overcome this in our own ways.

5. Attack with the Brain, Heart, and Fist

We stand by the five targets that Ted points out in his sixth section. We feel that the only real danger here is the simplicity and ease with which he suggests that these be targeted. The way in which Ted implies getting rid of these organs makes it sound like we should all be effective anti-tech warriors. This is just a pipedream, and anyone could tell you that the elves who pull off hits like Vail didn't just decide out of the blue one day to go burn it down. The most impacting of hits are going to be the biggest, and in any case the maxim of "maximum destruction, not minimal damage" should be the principle. However, it really isn't smart to go out and try and burn down some huge building.

Like anything, eco-sabotage is a skill. It takes practice and confidence to pull off something really big, and it takes time to get there. Those little spontaneous actions, such as smashing some windows, gluing some locks, or even confronting people openly are stepping stones to something bigger. While this isn't any sole reason to embrace those, it's definitely a positive one.

To suggest jumping into a big action is a dangerous suggestion. It is important to follow your heart but most important to trust your instincts. If you think something horrible may happen, by all means you should seriously weigh the possible outcomes or try again later. The costs of getting busted doing something without practice are way too high to chance. Practice makes perfect and every bit counts.

6. Give It All You Got

The points on biotech we will leave alone, since we agree in their importance as targets (although it's debatable that something can really blanket over everything else as THE most important of targets). We hope that resistance will continually rise, and that seems to be the most likely case as the State tightens the leash and automation makes our lives all the more meaningless. Our basic point here is that any act of revolt is a positive thing. While each may seem insignificant and even some may not have been the best decisions, those aren't grounds for not giving solidarity to those actions. We must realize that we are not fighting for some obscure academic principle, but for the sake of wild life itself. More is weighing on this than any language could possibly attempt to sum up. We feel that a major point that Ted seems to have overlooked in this instance is that the success of FC didn't come from the elimination of the technological industrial system, but by helping push the seriousness of it to another level. In the long run, offing a few representatives of technological progression and the more common occurrence of improperly made bombs or targeting may not have the impact that the ensuing text and attention did. This is something that we all need to learn from, that every little bit counts. While we should be looking tactically for a way to get rid of this whole mess of a system, we should do every bit possible to strike against it in everyday life.

Does Not Compute

Austin Train

The computer, besides being the most potent symbol of social domestication and Technocratic Tyranny—the swastika of the information age—is also one of the most obvious and globally destabilizing targets for contemporary Neo-luddite resistance. The efficiency and speed with which the industrial megamachine is destroying the biosphere is directly related to advances in computer technology. All governmental and corporate institutions of control have gained—through computer technology—unprecedented power to inventory, process and liquidate whole ecosystems in the blink of an eye. The newly formed Information Awareness Office seeks to amalgamate information gathering and cross-referencing mechanisms of state surveillance around the globe. It also provides the ruling class with a powerful means to neutralize any resistance to the ongoing process of global earth rape. When one considers the crucial role that computers play in corporate globalization, it's surprising that the technology itself is not targeted more frequently by the militant wing of the radical environmental movement.

Computer technology was—and continues to be—developed on the basis of a scientific perception of how the human mind works. This perception inverted is how the powers that be view humanity—as a vast collective computer into which societal programming is installed. Beyond the many ways computers enslave and physically deform humans, they also affect our spirit. Many Native Americans rejected pho- tography in the belief that to be photographed was to give up or enslave a piece of one's soul. The process of being documented, filed, cataloged and categorized also enslaves some part of our being, especially when so many humans collectively believe in the tangibility of computer data. For example, people suffer horribly over financial debt that is only real until the moment the databanks storing the debt information are destroyed. Destroying intelligence gathering and filing systems has long been a tactic of the oppressed in struggle. In the 1970's AIM members took over the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) headquarters during the Trail of Broken Treaties march and burned and liberated files integral to the BIA's oppression of native peoples.

Communication Revolution or Disconnection Download?

The biggest hoax of the information age is the delusional notion that people are well-informed. Granted, the quantity of sheer data assaulting us nonstop is unprecedented. But most of this "information" is what media critic David Shenk calls (in his

book of the same title) "data smog," a toxic atmosphere of annoying factoids, celebrity gossip, useless statistics, government-approved "news," advertising, entertainment and other ambient noise muddling our consciousness—as in those bars where the background music is turned up so loud that you can't have a conversation without yelling, which adding insult to injury, gives you a headache and a sore throat, dulling your mental faculties and muting your voice even further. This full-tilt constant cacophony, multiplied exponentially by 24-hour access to almost any piece of inane trivia in existence, is enough to make people physically sick with the stress of processing so much angst-inducing excess.

Like a blindingly bright-lit all-night mega-mall, the informational marketplace called the internet dazzles liberal environmental and social justice activists with its false promises—just like the larger capitalist/statist spectacle it serves. Like television and the advertising industry, the internet helps to construct and legitimize a world in which technology is an abstract category of effects without any specific social or political context, rather than a critical part of a whole ecologically-destructive way of life based on death and exploitation. The internet foregrounds technology as a special effect—magical, socially ungrounded—while naturalizing the technologies of domination themselves. The "virtual universe" of cyberspace taken for granted by liberal activists of all stripes is actually the carefully constructed artifact of a hegemonic ruling elite, where all perceptions are managed, all "choices" one-dimensional and manufactured; an illusory and psychologically-addicting holographic grid where our imaginations are colonized and our estrangement from the natural world becomes even more complete.

Too much time spent in cyberspace—for *any* purpose, including revolutionary mischief—tends to induce a uniquely postmodern form of "cognitive estrangement" where external reality matters less and less as the net and virtual reality become more real. We're becoming synthetic, disembodied animals as physical space gives way to virtual space, dissolving the body into the realm of data. This meshing of humans and computer simulations in cyberspace can be seen as the fulfillment of Baudrillard's observation that "the triumph of simulation is as fascinating as catastrophe." (*Fatal Strategies*)

Gilded Prisons of Technology

Computer technology was once hailed by liberals as eco-tech that would replace much of the paper waste created in offices, a form of "pre-cycling" that would supposedly decrease the consumer demand for paper and cut back on deforestation! Neglecting to notice that the idea of work or offices was absurd enough, the integration of computers into an already profoundly alienating and suffocating situation is a sad punchline to an even sadder joke. Equally short-sighted and naïve is the liberal "activist" belief that the internet is assisting us in the creation of horizontally-structured, decentralized networks of information exchange that will eventually usher in an era of "direct democracy" (a highly questionable goal in itself).

Computers, as with nearly all other technological developments, were used first within government and military institutions. Their creation was guided and paid for

by government and corporate funding. The collective intent behind the computer's coming into being was one of tighter political control, ie the domination and domestication of large population groups around the world. The classic liberal example of "radical" computer use is the immediate and widespread dispersal of EZLN communiqués following the January 1, 1994, Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico, on e-mail listservs all over the world. While there can be no denying that the rapid establishment of intercontinental networks of solidarity contributed greatly to the survival of the Zapatistas, it doesn't compensate for the fact that military efficiency has increased millions-fold through computers, as has the efficiency of all state-sponsored control systems.

Law enforcement has grown into a hideous beast, its incarnation only 100 years ago a small puppy in comparison. Computer technology was *designed* with a vision of oppression and its great "contribution" to the world (of capitalism) has been the idea of a system, a set of matched, standardized, interacting components linked to a broad market and an all-seeing, centralized police state data bank that tracks financial transactions, political affiliations and beliefs, addresses, criminal records, and the movements of individuals. As revolutionary anarchists we need to seriously question how much the time we spend forwarding e-mail and shooting the shit on anti-authoritarian "chat lines" is really contributing to the struggle against global empire. Perhaps the most genuine act of solidarity we could show the rebels in Chiapas and elsewhere would be to destroy the capitalist power structure's telecommunications links and leave our common enemy with a collection of unconnected and therefore relatively useless pieces of equipment...

I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream

The global computer network is an artificial system designed by scientists and industrialists to not only assist them in their subjugation of nature, but to also *build a new, simulated substitute for the natural world.* Some will say that they experience communication and connection with more people over the internet than they could ever experience in person. This is true only to the extent that sitting alone in front of a computer screen is "connecting" somehow to other people. Messages, data, thoughts, ideas and maybe even emotions can be communicated over the internet, but we must remember that it is not even physical written language, as with a handwritten letter, that we are sending through cyberspace, but the electronic *appearance* of written language. We must not mistake the *disembodiment* of the cyberspace experience for real life. The warmth of a lover's touch cannot pass through fiber-optic cables, nor can a smile, a wink, an embrace or a kiss. We cannot feel sunshine or rain, only back ache and carpal tunnel wrist pain from years spent in front of a video display terminal absorbing all types of low-level radiation. Communicating through machines is preparing us for a transition from human to artificial robot beings. If the system can make humanity accepting and happy about communicating through codes instead of having genuine experience, it will not take much pressure to introduce robots, "virtual" reality and nanotechnology into our daily lives. Microelectronics is the technical basis of simulacra; that is, of copies without originals; the most advanced stage of the spectacle

and the completion of our domestication. This is the world we face if computers are not removed and converted to sad and distant memory.

Your PC is Now Stoned: Cannot Reboot

The computer has come to represent for the politically alienated in many third world countries the domination of western civilization. It has become an outlet for their frustrations. The kidnappings and assassinations of business and political officials is giving way to hatred of the machine; few shed tears when computers are attacked. The economic and political losses, however, can be profound; the attackers understand this very well. The computer, by its very mystique, has become a symbol of all the evils we associate with technology.

—August Bequai, a Washington, DC attorney and self-styled expert in the field of "terrorism."

In a 30-month period between May 1976 and December 1978, the Red Brigades carried out bombing attacks against at least 10 computer centers located in Italy. Although the Red Brigades were a state-communist movement with arguably Stalinist politics, we still feel there is a lot we can learn from some of their tactics. As proletarians and unwilling captives of civilization, we can fully relate to the Red Brigade's *reasons* for targeting computer technology and can only hope that the implications of these actions are as obvious to other anarchists as they are to us. According to statements made by the Red Brigades at the time, the computer centers were singled out because they were "instruments of the capitalist system" and must be destroyed. The attacks which were conducted by the Red Brigades are as follows:

May 1976: Five activists held employees at a Milan warehouse at gunpoint, set fire to the warehouse and destroyed the Honeywell computer center. They left behind the following leaflet:

Today we have hit and destroyed another counter-revolutionary and anti-proletarian center of the government which stored information and names. We have shown the true face and the imperialistic design of the multinational Honeywell, engaged in the process of infiltra- tion and leading to the center of data information of the bourgeois state. The power of the repressive and counter-revolutionary system is today based upon friendship and technical collaboration between the bourgeois apparatus and United States imperialism. Gendarmes, police and uniformed slaves use the electronic information systems, in particular the Honeywell system. The methods have changed, the goals remain the same: yesterday the CIA system, today the multinationals. The target remains: exploitation and oppression. The chase after the imperialistic structure, until its successful destruction, is being continued by the militant forces.

Also in May 1976, fifteen activists, armed with handguns and submachine guns, invaded a local government office in Rome and threw ten molotov cocktails at computer equipment installed there, destroying eight IBM 2740 terminals.

October 13, 1976: Plastic explosives destroyed the computer center at the De Angeli pharmaceutical firm in Milan.

December 19, 1976: A number of security guards at Data-Montedison were tricked into opening a gate by well-dressed individuals. These members of the Red Brigades explained that they were carrying birthday presents for an employee and wanted to come in and give him a surprise party. The guard admitted them to the lobby and asked to inspect the contents of the boxes they were carrying. At that point, the Red Brigades activists opened the boxes, removed automatic weapons, incapacitated the guard, and entered the computer center. They forced all of the employees in the computer center at gunpoint into the lobby, where they were temporarily held. The entire computer center, including the tape library and programming office, was drenched with gasoline and a fuse was set at the main entrance. The attackers fled in cars, the employees left the building, and the building exploded and burned, completely destroying its contents.

January 17, 1977: Four armed activists forced their way into a Liquechimica petro-chemical company in Calabria, doused a production control center with gasoline and set it on fire.

April 21, 1977: A man and a woman force their way into the University of Bocconi (in Milan) computer center and blew up computer equipment.

June 10, 1977: A three-woman team broke into the University of Rome computer center and destroyed a Univac 1110. The masked women carried Uzi submachine guns and silencer-equipped handguns. While holding two professors and an assistant hostage, they allowed all other personnel to evacuate the building. They then poured gasoline on the center's computer and set fire to it. Damage to the computer center and the premises was estimated at between

$2-$4 million.

July 1978: Seven armed activists attacked a computer center in Turin and set it on fire with molotov cocktails.

July 15, 1978: The Red Brigades destroyed a regional computer center in Torrino.

December 3, 1978: The computer center at the Italian Ministry of Transport in Rome was bombed and set on fire by the Red Brigades. The resultant fire destroyed the dual Honeywell Level 66 systems which held the records of all Italian cars, stolen cars and false license plates. This action destroyed so much data that nearly two years passed before the ministry had any reasonable idea of who in the country owned cars and trucks or had licenses to drive them. Hundreds of thousands of files and microfilms representing more than 20 million documents were destroyed.

The Red Brigades announced their strategies and goals against computer centers in their February 1978 publication entitled *Risoluzione Della Direzione Strategica* or Red Brigades Strategic Direction Resolution. This 80-page publication describes the rationale behind, in part, the destruction of computer centers. In it, they identify computers in a two-fold manner: 1) as the foremost instrument of the ability of multinationals to succeed and 2) as the most dangerous instruments to be used against them in terms of files and cross-referencing.

The heart of the publication as it concerns computer centers and computer technology is as follows:

We must not underestimate the use of computer technology in the repression of the class war, as the efficiency of computers is supported by the ideology and the technical-military personnel responsible for their functioning. Computer systems are the monopoly of the American multinationals and, in addition to ensuring the United States hegemony over the world economy (the electronic sector is the strategic sector of advanced capitalism), they also guarantee the exportation of forms of control, of police methods, and they export also the highest levels of repression, ripened in the strongest link of imperialism. In fact, the exportation of these "systems" is not only exportation of advanced technology, it is also a relationship of production, of an ideology. It is the American "filing system" ruling the control structures of all the states of the imperialist chain. And exactly because of this, it is also the creation of a layer of technicians/ policemen in charge of preventive and total espionage of the people. You see, computers are identified as a symbol, the highest profile target. It is important to destroy their mesh, to disrupt these systems, beginning from the technicalmilitary personnel that direct them, instruct them, and makes them functional against the proletariat.

The Committee on the Liquidation of Computers (CLODO)

A long battle of dissident groups against computer centers was also occurring in France in the 1970s and early 1980s. On August 14, 1979, at the Bank de Rothschild in Paris, windows of the keypunching room were blown out and data processing facilities were attacked with molotov cocktails, causing major damage in the data preparation area. In Toulouse, France, on May 20, 1980, an organized left-wing group calling themselves the Committee on the Liquidation of Computers (CLODO) claimed responsibility for the destruction of computer systems and data during an attack on Phillips Data Systems.

Phillips specializes in the sale of computers and the storage of bookkeeping data belonging to private companies. The CLODO activists claimed to have carried out this action because the equipment and data were being used by the armed forces and the French counterespionage organization. Members of the CLODO gathered the computer programs and magnetic data cards and burnt them in the toilets of the offices; they also damaged the computers and removed all the personnel files for the firm. In a statement by CLODO to the Leftwing newspaper *Liberation*, they said:

We are computer workers and therefore well placed to know the present and future dangers of computer systems. Computers are the favorite tool of the powerful. They are used to classify, to exploit, to put on file, to control, and to repress.

As if to help the CLODO activists make their point, the progovernment French daily newspaper *Le Figaro*, in their coverage of the action, pointed out,

The destruction of a computer could cause far more damage than the murder of a politician. A modern nation is infinitely vulnerable. It is much more effective for those who aim to harm or even paralyze it to put computers out of action than to shoot up ministries or murder policemen.

Within four days of the attack on Phillips, the computer center for the C11-Honeywell-Bull company in Toulouse was set on fire. CLODO later claimed responsibility in a phone call to the French Press Agency. The caller told the press that a systematic plan to paralyze the operations of computer firms located in France was in full effect. Their group was out to destroy computer systems on the grounds that they were weapons in the hands of the government. CLODO had approached both Phillips and C11-Honeywell earlier when it had placed bombs at their computer centers. There was no damage but CLODO made its involvement public by scrawling slogans on the grounds proclaiming "out with computers."

In June 1980, CLODO rebels in Toulouse ransacked a hall which had been prepared for an international symposium on computers. The raiders left the message: "Scientist swine. No to capitalist data processing!" Around the same time, another band of French revolutionaries, picking up CLODO's computer cudgel, fired a bazooka rocket at the buildings that housed the French Ministry of Transportation in Paris. The armed anarchist formation "Action Directe," who claimed credit for the attack, wanted to protest the agency's planned computer projects. The blast was intended to dramatize "Action Directe's" belief that computers condemn people to the "ghettos of program and organizational patterns."

CLODO themselves switched their attention back to Toulouse on September 12 when (according to the French magazine *Computer Weekly*) three fires gutted a computer and electronics goods shop. In March 1981, CLODO rebels struck again, this time destroying an IBM computer at the local headquarters of the Banque Populaire in Toulouse. Finally, in May 1981, another computer center in Toulouse was seriously damaged in a plastic explosives attack. "British power kills in Ireland" was spraypainted on the walls of the building. Despite the IRA slogan, police believe CLODO was responsible.

Logging Out

While computers are rampant and spreading faster than is possible to comprehend, do not fear. We'll still yet live to convert offices everywhere to computer catacombs. Beware the Leftist praising such things as indymedia as a liberated technology. For whilst there can certainly be benefits in the war against civilization, we must not get too close to the alienated and destructive dis-ease that lurks behind the production of all technology. A close look at the before and after photos of communities as they are invaded by computers and even electricity reveals what a horrific and wilting effect they have. Focusing on any good effect computers may bring to our lives is as absurd as libertines creating an environmentally friendly bomb or a bulldozer that doesn't harm flowers and grass as it clears trees.

The pot of gold is visible and the rainbow we must ride to get there involves getting rid of computers. There are so many of them and sometimes it seems there are few of us. But the actions listed above serve as inspiration for a new generation of eco-warriors and neo-luddites. Hackers and computer smashers could unite alongside ELF warriors, anti-colonial activists and indigenous warriors. ***We're all monitored by computers***.

Computers run satellites, cameras in the streets, dams, communications, everything. The beautifully chaotic result of this is that there is simply no way for the established order to protect all of their pitiful machines. A creative group of people could wreak havoc undetectably. The NSA pretends to be able to break all codes and other groups claim to monitor the entire internet. Yet, hackers are constantly disrupting huge parts of the world wide computer network. A more concerted effort between hackers and on the ground warriors could prove powerful. Most security systems rely on electricity whose flow is controlled by computers. They are run on a computer interface that is undoubtedly connected to a network in order for it to call the cops. Imagine the possibilities. The targets are endless, all oppressors use computers these days.

Every major Western European armed struggle movement of the 70s and 80s— including Action Directe, The RAF, the Rote Zora and the Communist Combatant Cells—targeted computer technology. Back in Dillinger's day, if you were a better driver than the pigs, you'd escape. Technology has helped put an end to that. But we must realize the metaphor this provides; hackers are already outdriving the state's best computer programmers. The ELF evades capture year after year. Everybody get together. Chaos is on our side.

CLODO quotes:

People talk a lot about the silent majority and it gets a lot of press. But there is also a muzzled minority that can only express itself through political and social rejection, because it rejects the sham of democracy. It doesn't demand the right to free speech, the right to justice, the rights of man—it takes these rights, or at least it tries to. This minority exists, be it organized or disorganized, atomized in the social fabric, revolutionary or deviant. In our practice, we affirm its specific character. We have no illusions about the propaganda of ideas, but we support everyone who can no longer stand injustices and contributes their little recipes to subvert a capitalized daily life.

—From an interview with CLODO member "Groucho," that appeared in the Oct 1983 issue of the French magazine, *Terminal* 19/84.

Faced with the tools of those in power, dominated people have always used sabotage or subversion. It's neither retrograde nor novel. Looking at the past, we see only slavery and dehumanization, unless we go back to certain so-called primitive societies. We are essentially attacking what these tools lead to: files, surveillance by means of badges and cards, instruments of profit maximization for the bosses and of accelerated pauperization for those who are rejected...

By our actions we have wanted to underline the material nature of the computer tools on the one hand, and on the other, the destiny of domination which has been conferred on it. Finally, though what we do is primarily propaganda through action, we also know that the damage we cause leads to setbacks and substantial delays.

—CLODO, the Computer Liquidation and Hijacking Committee

The Enemy is Quite Visible from *Terra Selvaggia*

For several years now, even on the level of the mass media, there has been talk about risks connected with the over-abundance of electro-magnetic waves in the environment. Though the most frequently mentioned and feared sources are the transmitters for cellular phones, these are certainly not alone, but are merely the latest on the scene. In fact, radio and TV antennae, radar platforms, high tension wires, military stations and dozens of different electrical household appliances have already been disseminating waves for decades that, even if trifling when taken singly, together and with continuous exposure could have effects on the health of living beings.

And if these effects are still largely unknown, or absolutely denied with firmness by a few of the usual experts, this is no reason for putting one's mind at ease. After all, the greatest fear is that of the unknown. In this case, the unknown is not just that of the future reversal of health in our bodies (or those of others), of new incurable diseases or of the expansion of cancer-caused slaughter, but also in the invisible nature of the poison in question. If the pure and solid dust of DDT was handled without care or apprehension, as, not surprisingly, other substances still are (perhaps because we don't believe that it's possible for something that we can calmly hold in our hands to kill us), the fear of what we don't know and can't see and touch is another thing altogether. Viruses, bacteria, and radiation have killed quite enough at bottom, and none of us could see or feel them, necessarily delegating the knowledge of and defense against them to science and its people. Their lordships love to describe a fear of this kind as "irrational" in their greed to control it in order to reduce everything to the vision of their rationality. Through measurement, screening, legal limits, and appeals to an unstoppable progress, they attempt to make every danger **scientific** in order to render it palatable ("rational" to be precise) but they cannot hide the roots planted so thoroughly into this reality: the cases of leukemia, tumors, and dozens of other maladies are increasing, and more and more people die without being able to clearly link it to a precise cause because there are thousands of causes. The invisible but omnipresent harmfulness strikes everyone, and no one escapes from it.

But in this climate, some manifest certainties also emerge, as always: first of all, neither the reassurances of the experts nor the legal limits placed on the potency of the transmitters will protect us from electro-smog, and the technical organizations appointed to their measurement are solely price-fixing decrees useful for giving the appearance of a situation under control and pacifying the most enflamed minds. We

will never grow tired of confirming that we can never expect the protection of our health from that which poisons us: the state and capital in their technologically advanced form. And it is with this conviction, combined with the desire not to see the antennae altered but to make them disappear completely, that we must animate the struggle against the antennae. Then the struggle would have to have different contents and methods.

Also, the antennae do not just represent an assault on our health, but are also realizations of the development of technological society toward new forms of economic expansion in alienating communications and control. We must not, in fact, forget that it is not just our phone calls that travel through these waves, but also data and information that in their totality form a huge cage in which to enclose us, signals that keep track of us hour after hour, making it indispensable to **behave** when near an optimum signaling device like the cellular phone.

In a land already polluted by thousands of antennae, they will not hesitate to bring in just as many more for the third generation of cellular phones, capable of transmitting not just voices and words, but images as well. But among the 45 million Italians who own cell phones, and among the remaining few who still lack one, fear and discontent increases as well about these sources of waves placed in the neighborhood of schools and housing. Of course, a bit of hypocrisy can be seen here in those who don't want electro-smog but at the same time demand optimum reception with their little phones, but it is necessary not to fall into the trap of considering those who manufacture and disseminate what is harmful and those who are induced to use it in the same light. It would be like seeing everyone who uses electricity as complicit in the nuclear industry, an idea that in the end becomes an easy excuse for the holders of power who want to make us feel like their accomplices, with the logic that for one's personal good a collective harm is unavoidable. A logic of the same sort that claims that for the collective good of society—in this case the progress, security, and convenience brought by the telephones—it is necessary for the indivdual to sacrifice the antenna over their head. In this way, it becomes difficult to rebel any more, feeling on the one hand complicit, and on the other, egoistic in one's demands.

So it becomes necessary to understand the snares of psychological terror because new passages are revealing themselves in which new channels of resistance have opened. Resistance that is, furthermore, quite widespread with innumerable committees and individual actions against the antennae throughout the territory. A struggle that, if it usually has partial objectives, is, nonetheless frequently carried forward with a deep personal involvement, setting aside sterile and useless institutional methods like the collection of signatures and the appeal to politicians. In reality, one sees road blockades, climbing on roofs or scaffolding with fastenings and lowering placards, as well as the blockage of work at the installations. Moreover, some have acted under the cover of night with the heat of fire to destroy these hateful antennae. These last actions are not distinct or separate from the struggle in which they arise. Indeed, let's leave the distinction between "ecoterrorist" and "honest citizen"—useful for dividing a movement of opposition and justifying acts of repression against those who do not disassociate

themselves from a practice of sabotage, but rather recognize its importance to the struggle—to the infamous journalists, politicians and armchair environmentalists.

We are interested in a struggle from the base, without hierarchy, specialization, or compromise. We think that this is an area in which a partial struggle could become a point of departure for a generalized critique of power, and a consequent practice in which each one chooses the method and moment that he or she prefers.

Terra Selvaggia is an anti-civ, Italian-language publication.

Write to Silvestre, via del Coure no.1, 56100 Pisa, Italia *the enemy is quite visible*

Electric Funeral the havoc mass

An in-depth examination of the Megamachine's Circuitry

In a single superpower world, there is a single best target for those dissatisfied with the status quo. Critical infrastructures are the best target sets within that best target, and the electric power infrastructure is arguably the most vulnerable of the critical infrastructure.

-Lt. Colonel Bill Flynt, Office of Homeland Security

It's 2004 and the planet is under assault by an exterminist megamachine following its own techno-logic of self-annihilation. This now monolithic power structure, with its vast web of administrative grids and military networks, is the suicidal unconscious(ness) of patriarchal history marshalling toward armageddon—the burning, bloodsoaked finale of civilization's pathological death instinct. Two worlds, uncompromisingly opposed to one another, have come into furious collision: the flowing waters of free life and the stagnant, poisoned wells of techno-industrial civilization.

A storm is gathering, and out of the death rattle of our age a wave of new life is arising: new anti-authoritarian resistance movements that are awakening to the horror and desperation of our plight, movements that are ready to throw themselves into open warfare with the techno-industrial system and its omnicidal trajectory. These new movements—born out of a hope for liberation in our Earth's darkest hour—have inspired millions worldwide and have opposed the system with a ferocity that hasn't been seen in this country in decades.

But one thing many of these new rebel movements seem to be lacking is an overall strategy, a strategy which calls for and which can actualize the collapse of the Death Machine. If we're in agreement that our objective is to shut down the Megamachine, then we need to take a close look at the physical anatomy of the Mechanistic Order and figure out actions we can take to "level the playing field". Machines, institutions and "reality" itself are socially constructed and are thus amenable to de-construction. The civilization we inhabit (or more accurately, **of which we are prisoners**) is an Electrical Civilization and it seems obvious to us that the electrical grid offers a soft underbelly to saboteurs at every turn. Let's face it: the eleventh hour is approaching,

Moloch is feeding on war victims beyond measure, the genetic structure of life itself is being manipulated by the death merchants of science, and we're running out of air to breathe...

Our tactics NEED to escalate if we're going to tear this diseased system down physically—and drag its filthy corpse off the planetary stage once and for all.

Italy in the Eighties: A Strategy Emerges

These writings appeared in Palermo in solidarity with the actions where electricity pylons of the ENEL company were sawn through in Caorsa and Montato (the central line). These are the latest examples in a series of acts of sabotage that have been carried out for some time now all over Italy.

Why are the police and the judiciary unleashing such a disproportionate response to this kind of action? In our opinion these direct actions that anyone can accomplish at any time and in any place, possibly frighten them more than the very formation of a closed armed group. This is because the specific armed group is controllable due to the programme and logic that it adheres to, while the spreading of acts of sabotage puts the power structure in difficulty because anyone can carry out such acts. It is enough to obtain a hacksaw and choose a pylon.

This does not please the Greens, the pacifists or environmentalists because such actions undermine their work as politicians tending to homogenize the movement to their practice of platonic dissent.

Against the high priests of ecology we reaffirm our antagonism and disdain. For we antagonists direct action is an attack against the structures producing nuclear energy.

-Palermo anarchist group, 1987

In the late 1980s in Italy a heated (and we mean this literally) battle was being fought against the construction of nuclear power plants and the industries and think-tanks responsible for producing this technology.

On one side of the struggle were all the various reformist political forces (Greens, the Communist Party, "environmentalists", pacifists) who proposed anti-nuclear legislation and referenda and who attempted to put the struggle on an institutional level, thoroughly integrated into governmental/parliamentary logic. But an equally important component of the struggle was a loose confederation of insurrectional anarchists, libertarians and nonaligned comrades who operated outside and against the institutional framework and who actualized their resistance, not just as blockades at the nuclear power plants, but as a generalized attack on atomic energy.

In 1986, a vital crossroads in the struggle was reached, when anarchists—frustrated with the constrained "game-playing" of the nuclear reformers—began to develop a movement against the nuclear project that was autonomous and radical. As the "Provo-cAzione" editorial group put it at the time:

To the mountains of scrap paper produced by those who support and practice parliamentarian referendums, we propose direct action, the only possibility of really transforming this society because it points out the need for attack against the structures of dominion (including the nuclear ones) and the objectives to aim at. Our allies and ac-

complices are the antagonists and rebels, because they want to live, not vegetate, rising up and making a mockery of the reformists preaching survival.

It was in this social context that new and effective strategies against nuclear energy and the power grid itself began to emerge...

On July 12, 1987, a high tension ENEL (Ente Nazionale per L'Energia Alternativa) pylon in Cosenza, Italy, was sawn at the base. After having sawn the pylons, the unknown nightworkers pulled them down, putting out of action an electroduct line of 150 thousand volts. The same fate befell another ENEL pylon in the area of Pec del Brasimone on September 9, 1987. That pylon, which feeds the nuclear reactor of Pec, was also sabotaged by unknown persons who left a leaflet at the spot: "No to the nuclear and coal power stations, no to war, no to the energy bosses."

On March 8, 1988, a group calling itself Antinuclear Revolutionaries attacked another electrical pylon in Italy. Here is an excerpt from their communique:

On March 8, we cut down a high tension pylon in the Cosenza region. In this way we mean to strike at the infamous ENEL gang, protagonists in the atomic project in Italy and abroad. We delegate our freedom to control our lives to no one and want to destroy the one they have organized for us now. The misery of waged work, nuclear death, the increasing militarisation of our territory and society itself are the prisons that call themselves social democracy.

The nuclear nightmare is an effective policeman for terrorising the population, creating that state of impotence and delegation in order to continue to govern us. The complicity of the political parties, with words and power games and sweet illusions through referendums, is clearly trying to kill the antinuclear struggle and bury it in an institutional field. We refuse this.

The farce of the National Energy Conference called by the ENEL and the Government, shows the clear will to make a choice decided long ago seem like something to be discussed in Parliament. Let us spread sabotage over the whole territory, striking the structures that are bringing about such projects of death.

During the night between March 12 and 13, 1988, another two pylons were sawn down: one in the area of Rome Settebagni, another in the Cosenza area. The sabotage was claimed with a letter to the press agency Ansa, in which unknown comrades declared themselves to be against nuclear power stations.

On April 13, 1988, the day on which the Regional Administrative Tribunal of Lazio granted a repeal to ENEL who were asking for work to be allowed to recommence on the electronuclear plant at Montalto di Castro, three bomb attacks took place against the nuclear industry. During the night, paper bombs exploded at an ENEL research laboratory and at two firms: the Carlo Gavazzi Control Co., which produces condensers, and the Passoni and Villa Co., which produces electrical and electronic components. The attacks were claimed by anarchist comrades in a leaflet which reached the ANSA press agency and Radio Popolare in Milan the next day. About a week later, on April 19, another antinuclear bomb exploded at the FITRE electronic communications agency in Milan. This attack was signed with an encircled A.

On June 9, 1988, a main electrical line of the municipal firm of Vicenza was destroyed by flames. A leaflet was published in Sicilia Libertaria concerning the attack on this power line: *We have sabotaged a high tension pylon above Crotone, where factories pour out toxic clouds, pollution, exploitation, products as useless as they are poisonous. THE MAFIA OF CAPITAL AND ITS STATES IS PUTTING INTO EFFECT THE ABSOLUTE DESTRUCTION OF*

LIFE ON EARTH! Their accomplices are the politicians, parties, trade unions, "men of culture", "scientists". The enforced accomplices to their own extermination are the people corrupted and subjected by the myths of "wellbeing", "commodity", "civility", "progress". We are fighting to free ourselves from this imminent perspective. That can only seriously come about after the elimination of the exploitation of man by man and of the environment.

So we are attacking with sabotage, with the refusal of consumerism and waste, and say: stop immediately every kind of industrial production and carburation (traffic, heating, industry) that is even slightly polluting, and all the other processes of plundering of the environment that are just as stupid and homicidal.

And finally, on October 15, 1988, in the mountainous area of Noce in the province of Catanzaro, a 150 thousand kilowatt ENEL electricity pylon was partly sawn down. At the base of the pylon, the Carabinieri (Italian pigs) found a timer device and some leaflets which the unknown saboteurs had left behind. Since that period of time, attacks on the electrical power-structure seem to be a favored tactic of anarchists in Italy. In the 90s–alongside the blitzkrieg infestation of computers and cell phones— came a deepening of the critique and a broadening praxis that addressed the whole electrical web by which we are ensnared. Microwave towers and cellular antennae are now common targets for revolutionary sabotage, as it becomes more and more obvious that our planet is being transformed into an all-pervasive, deadly electro-magnetic field where invisible emissions and silent currents of cancer course through our bodies daily.

You Have the Power, But the Night Belongs to Us!

There have also been several noteworthy instances in North America of radicals hitting the electrical infrastructure "where it hurts", though they've been more sporadic and more censored by the State. Still, bits and pieces of radical folklore concerning these incidents survive in the "oral tradition" of certain anarchist circles, and the memory of these rebellions hasn't been completely smothered by decades of establishment propaganda. One of the more interesting (and widespread) incidents of electrical sabotage in North America occurred during the so-called "Trouble on the Prairie" which erupted in the 1970s, during the "energy wars" between Minnesota farming communities and both public and private electrical utilities.

For example, in Lowry, Minnesota, a community group named "General Assembly to Stop the Powerline" organized to stop a powerline "right-of-way" crossing through

their rural farmland. It was decided by the community that a "total tactic" would be used: demonstrations were staged, protest letters were written to State representatives, but the power plans still moved ahead. Then foundations and building materials were destroyed, and tractors pulled down dozens of transmission towers as they were erected. Finally, the State Police were called in, people were arrested, and the power-plants and power-lines were finally constructed and made operational. But in their 1981 manifesto, the community of Lowry discusses how their confrontation with the government dispelled many illusions they once had about "democracy":

We survive. We were not stopped when we were repeatedly and shamefully betrayed by the politicians. We continue to endure the injuries inflicted by a parade of incompetent bureaucrats acting in collusion with the utilities. We were not defeated when callous judges kept deciding that the time and money of the power companies was more important than truth, and even more important than their law. The combined brute force of the FBI, the BCA, the State and local police, and private armies hired by the utilities has not been strong enough to destroy us. And we have survived the lies, the threats, intimidations, deceits, and the arrogant destruction brought upon us by the power companies themselves.

The line went into commercial operation two years ago, and we are still survivors! That has never happened before...

On July 3, 1981, near Moab, Utah, saboteurs toppled a Utah Power and Light transmission tower carrying 345,000-volt power lines seven miles south of Earth First!'s second annual Round River Rendezvous. No one was ever arrested for this action, nor for a similar one that occurred a year earlier in Colorado in which 3.2 miles of power lines were downed after their line supports were sawn through—costing the Colorado Ute Electric Association

$270,000 in repair bills.

There are a few more incidents of electrical sabotage in the nineties that we know about, but sadly, the practice has yet to really catch on in North America (the purpose of this article is to discuss this). In 1990, after Earth Day celebrations, unknown individuals call- ing themselves the Earth Night Action Group made two consecutive hits in Freedom, California, sawing first through two wooden power poles and then toppling a steel transmission tower belonging to the Pacific Gas and Electric Company. This caused a massive power failure that cut off electricity for Santa Cruz County residents for ten to eighteen hours. And in February 1996, pipebombs were used to attack a SCADA system at a hydroelectric plant in Oregon.

Sabotage: The Way to Success!

The imperialist nature of the power grid has long been recognized and resisted by indigenous communities as well, but space constraints prohibit us from tackling this subject in too much detail. Among the numerous examples of indigenous resistance

to the encroachment of the electrical world is the struggle of indigenous Venezuelans against the state-run company *Electrificacion del Caroni* (EDELCA). In the late 1990's, the Indigenous Federation of Boli'var State, which encompasses the Pemon communities and other native groups, protested the construction of an electrical line system, fearing that it would lead to new mining settlements, tourism and urbanization in their ancestral lands. When their protests were ignored people began knocking down electrical towers intended to carry electricity from the Guri Dam in southeast Venezuela to northern Brazil. EDELCA reported at least four incidents of sabotage in September of 2000, including one in which seven towers were toppled overnight.

Silencing Telecommunications: A Dialogue With the Problem

The grand project that is cyberspace is grounded in the mundane realities of what is required to sustain it. The artificial, virtual worlds of the internet are completely interconnected with the Electrical Order that permeates everything that exists, and are still reliant upon ancient and recurring themes tying the diagnostic "health" of civilization to its sources of energy, war and ecologic exploitation. Together this infrastructure materially represents and sustains the spectacle of otherworldly immateriality while simultaneously depending upon a physical assemblage of wires, plugs and sockets to distribution lines and poles, to transformers and electrical power plants. Without these extensions—and without electricity—cyberspace would cease to exist, and so too would the new global economy as it depends upon electrical power, media and technology in order to function. Given the magnitude of the telecommunications industry (particularly the internet) and its criticality to other infrastructures, it's easy to see how the vulnerability of information communications systems could cripple even the most "impervious" power structure.

An AT&T network failure, for instance, would definitely affect the airline industry, which would have to cease operations because control towers could not communicate with each other. Computer viruses—another form of electronic warfare—could easily be unleashed with the intent of damaging networked computers on a global scale, including electronic banking and stock markets. In fact, we don't need to look any farther than the US military for an idea of how effective electrical warfare can be. In Serbia, the US and its Allies tested a "graphite bomb" cruise missile, in which canisters of graphite tape exploded into great nets of ribbon above power lines, which then shortcircuited the electrical grid by causing power spikes and arcing. In the Gulf and Serbian wars, electronically guided "smart bombs" sought out electrical power plants and telecommunication facilities via artificial intelligence (AI) software and global positioning systems (GPS), so as to nullify the electrical command of the enemy forces.

As these recent nation-state conflicts have shown us, the first step towards defeating your opponent lies in disabling or destroying their sources of artificial power. In addition to rioting outside of global economic summits, perhaps it's time for anarchists to look for ways to render industrial civilization inoperative by pulling the plug on its power grid (liberals who love their computers and the "networking" opportuni-

215

ties they supposedly afford us are advised to reflect on the Greek root of the word "cyber"—kybernan—which means to control or govern).

Objects To Be Destroyed!

It could be that, in the future, people will look back on the American Empire, the economic empire and the military empire, and say, 'They didn't realize that they were building their whole empire on a fragile base. They had changed that base from brick and mortar to bits and bytes, and they never fortified it. Therefore, some enemy some day was able to come around and knock the whole empire over.' That's the fear.

-Richard Clarke, head of the President's Critical
Infrastructure Advisory Board

The US power transmission grid alone has 204,000 miles of transmission lines served by four regional grids located across North America: Western Interconnection, Eastern Interconnection, Electricity Reliability Council of Texas, and Province of Quebec. The grid has a generating capacity of 800,000 mega-watts and is divided into Electricity Generation, Transmission and Distribution Sectors. These sectors contain a nation-wide network of 5,000 power plants fueled by natural gas, nuclear energy, hydropower (dams), oil, and coal, as well as a physical network of more than 4000 miles of gas pipelines, refineries, communication systems, and substations.

The basic structure of an electric power transmission and distribution system consists of a generating system, a transmission system, a subtransmission system, a distribution system, and a control center. Generally, the communication between the control center system and the field equipment takes place over utility-owned communications networks. Today, the majority of these networks are based on analog and digital microwave technology, though dedicated leased lines, power line carriers, satellites and fiber optics certainly play their role. This field equipment, called Remote Terminal Units (RTU's), acts as a clearing house for incoming data.

Digital control systems, such as SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition Systems) supervise and regulate real-world structures like gas pipelines, oil refineries, and power grids. There are four or five companies, three of them European, that make the SCADA software that's widely used in the electric power industry. Most SCADA systems are running Microsoft-operating software, which means they can be manipulated remotely and that their users essentially have a target painted on their foreheads.

Transformers, microwave towers, and transmission substations can often be found in isolated, unpopulated areas. Electrical substations will almost always be secured with nothing more than a lock on an access gate. Once inside, an experienced saboteur might destroy an entire substation. High voltage power lines are run on massive pylons, which are built on concrete foundations but are not designed to withstand sabotage. Each pylon has from four to eight legs, which are secured to their concrete founda-

tions by massive bolts. Wrenches, blowtorches and explosives would all be sufficient to destroy the integrity of the entire structure; many of these power lines run through desolate areas and are only inspected once a week by maintenance crews, usually by helicopter. Probably the main thing that makes the electrical grid such an enticing target is the fact that it's already falling apart, on its own! The 1996 blackout on the West Coast that affected 4 million people from British Columbia to Mexico (including parts of the US stretching from Oregon to Wyoming) was caused when Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) transmission lines sagged into tree limbs. Similarly, on September 28, 2003, a tree uprooted by storms in Switzerland was blamed for paralyzing electricity supplies across Italy when it cut a vital power line over the Alps. All of Italy, along with areas of Switzerland and Austria, were hit by the blackout. And of course, last August's huge blackout in the Northeast and parts of Ontario, lasted for days, and was the largest single power-outage in US history.

The strong inter-linkages between industry sectors has also allowed non-humyn rebels to strike effective blows against the Empire: In 1986, in California, a beaver strategically felled a 10-inch thick tree so that it fell across a major powerline. As a result, 400 residents of Cottage Grove and several industries lost their electricity for three hours (the victorious monkeywrencher was not caught!). In 1987, in Ft. Pierce, Florida, two onslaughts by jellyfish (unfairly considered by many as one of Earth's more ignominious species) at the St. Lucie nuclear power plant caused two separate shutdowns (the first jellyfish attack blocked the ocean-fed coolant system of the plant, while the second covered the water filtering system: the combined financial loss to the Florida Power and Light, Co. was more than $1 million). And in New York, thousands of dollars are spent every year to replace cable TV wires that are used as tooth sharpeners by rodents, much to the consternation of boob-tube enthusiasts.

Lights Out!

As technology advances, so do its dependencies on other sectors: certain infrastructures are the customers of other infrastructures, and when electrical transmission capacity is unexpectedly lost, electrical generation must immediately be taken off-line. Otherwise, the generator's output will reroute and overload remaining transmission lines, causing "voltage oscillations" that will ripple through the power grid and pull down significant portions of it. Thus, a well-planned attack that cripples key energy facilities might severely hamper the distribution of natural gas and could easily lead to cascading failures of the power grid and the telecommunications system.

The costs associated with the August 2003 blackout in the US are currently estimated at **$700 million and growing**. One week after the US power failure, Georgian separatist rebels shut down the Inguri hydroelectric station (in the zone of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict), when two sections of a 500,000 volt powerline were damaged by shots from an automatic weapon. As a result, the Inguri hydroelectric station shut

down automatically, leaving all of Georgia without electricity. And indeed, the efficaciousness of infrastructural sabotage has not been lost on the Iraqi insurgents, who routinely engage in attacks on the oil infrastructure, directly thwarting attempts at coalition "reconstruction" and undercutting the funding for the installation of a CIA-backed puppet regime. In Basra, circuits running underground and belonging to the Bechtel Corporation are routinely attacked by people who pour gas on them and set the fuel ablaze.

So welcome to the Wasteland! It's time to start anew...time to reclaim the earthly paradise our ancestors once knew... prophecies are coming true as a cycle nears completion... global warming, acid rain, advanced ozone depletion... the signs of the times are everywhere, so let's make sure that we're prepared... to finish off the Megamachine before it can be repaired... when the power lines come crashing down and the roads disintegrate... we'll blend in with the pounding rains and move to smash the state!

lights camera action the grievous amalgam

Destroying Video Surveillance Cameras as an Act of Rewilding

In recent years, the use of video surveillance cameras (also called Closed Circuit Television, or CCTV) to monitor public and private spaces throughout the world has branched out to unprecedented levels, dramatizing the rise of a global, centralized One World State that meticulously controls all aspects of political and social life through the use of state power and its perfected technological systems of suppression. The leader in this trend is the UK, where it's estimated that between 150 and 300 million pounds per year are spent building a surveillance grid involving 200,000 cameras furnished with full pan, tilt, zoom and infrared capacity. The more colossal camera web covering Britain is appraised at 1,500,000 cameras and counting, radiating invisible lines of influence on the thoughts and actions of those living under its predatory, voyeuristic Eye. Enveloping all, a frightening electronic Retina is emerging as an absolute and uncontested regulatory mechanism, from which no concealment, let alone escape, is possible. The clarity of the pictures collected by these cameras is usually excellent (for the State!), with many systems being able to read a cigarette package at a hundred meters.

These cameras are intimations of the future, as Britain is in many ways being used as a "social laboratory" for the development of technologies that extend the pervasive homogeneity of the unilateral political order; methodologies of enslavement are being formulated and installed, with the aim of increasing obedient uniformity and snuffing out wildness on an international scale. The UK Home Office estimates that 95 percent (!) of towns and cities in Britain are moving to CCTV surveillance of public areas, housing estates, car parks and public facilities. The System, compulsively preoccupied with order, precision, utility, and rationality, can now zoom in on the lives of its "citizens" and effect the complete elimination of anonymity. Architects and urban planners in Britain are already factoring cameras into the core design of new towns and buildings, and our lives are all tarred with the same leveling brush of what "civil engineers" are now describing as the "fifth utility." Cameras the size of a matchbox are commonplace and are being integrated into urban architecture in much the same way that electricity and telephones were in the early 20th century. Some of the "cameras" being installed are "scarecrows," empty shells meant to look like cameras, but with their surface aesthetics reinforcing the same sense of estrangement and extracting the same obedience from their ghettoized human subordinates.

Appearances are maintained—and monotony imposed—by the invasion of this reifying technical progress that governs the details of urban construction and social scheduling/ social dislocation.

The global system is striving to eclipse all contestable sites of physical space and shape all interpersonal relations through the establishment of a totalizing *spatial enclosure*. This is the process whereby the explicit duplication of a characteristically capitalist mode of production reprograms and utterly restructures the behaviors, life rhythms, cultural habits and temporal sense of its subjects. Nanotechnology, ge- netic engineering, and CCTV are all integral to the project of taming wildness and pounding it down into the coin of mercantile civilization. The very presence of CCTV negotiates conflict between exploiters and exploited, engendering human relationships that are stilted, artificial and lacking in intensity. Public becomes pseudo-public and an "apartheid" of inner-city spatial relations the norm, in a liaison between architecture and the police state that inverts interior and exterior reality. These surveillance technologies are converging with sophisticated software programs that are capable of automated recognition of faces, crowd behavior analysis, and in certain environments, intimate scanning of the area between skin surface and clothes. The US government is now funding the development of "passive millimeter wave technology" that allows police to peer under clothing to see if a person is carrying contraband or weapons.

Through the implementation of CCTV, the political order accommodates into its own structures a safety valve for sedition. When disenfranchised factions within society rebel against the disempowerment of a superorganized, vise-like system, CCTV isolates, enlarges and creates permanent photographic evidence of the rebels' transgressions, recuperating them into bounds where they will have no consequences for the authoritarian state apparatus. CCTV exists to create a sterile, whitewashed world in which spontaneity disappears, our behavior is fully law-abiding and humanity eventually sleeps itself to death.

In the Land of the Blind the One-Eyed Lens is King

The proliferation of video surveillance cameras and other technologies of domination evokes all kinds of nightmarish, dystopian images and scenarios, the most clichéd of which is the overused (and thoroughly recuperated) term "Orwellian." As important a book as Orwell's *1984* is, we feel we would only be doing our readers a disservice by drawing such an obvious analogy, especially when far more potent and accurate political models exist to describe the cage-like conditions of technoindustrial civilization. Any serious attempt to analyze and break down the locked doors that enclose our lives in the modern world will inevitably lead to the observation that society itself has become a vast prison, a monumental gulag of the body, mind and senses. Thus it's hardly surprising that many social theorists since Orwell have discussed the character of modern Western civilization using *prison imagery*.

Max Weber depicted it as an iron cage; Gary T. Marx defined it as a "maximum security society," while others have represented it using terms like "disciplinary society." But Michel Foucault offers a more sinister and arguably more precise concept to outline

the facelessness of high-tech political repression: that of Jeremy Bentham's blueprints for the Panopticon prison, where all prisoners were segregated into cells around a central tower which allowed guards to watch prisoners without being seen and where the prisoners sense that they're under ceaseless observation. Bentham, an English Utilitarian philosopher, unveiled in 1791 his prototype for the "all-seeing place" or panopticon, the ultimate prison with the central goal of using the mental uncertainty and paranoia of implied and constant surveillance as an instrument of discipline, wherein prisoners constrain their own behavior. Bentham found this Utilitarian ideal of oppressive self-regulation to be appealing in many other social settings, including schools, hospitals, and poorhouses, although he achieved only limited success in realizing his twisted vision (at least in *his* lifetime).

Michel Foucault seized upon this metaphor of the Panopticon as the perfect governing design for any institution in which discipline is required. By encouraging self-surveillance on behalf of the prisoner, the Panopticon assures the automatic functioning of power. Control no longer requires physical domination over the body in modern society, Foucault noticed, where our spaces are organized "like so many cages, so many small theaters, in which each actor is alone, perfectly individualized and constantly visible." In the Panopticon all power resides with the State and government control becomes internalized. The gaze of someone in an authoritative position is a power/ knowledge mechanism, which contains and imprisons those subjects who come under its scrutiny, its *guardianship*.

It follows that these examples of the "Panopticon Principle" equip anarchists with a beneficial critical tool to comprehend the ubiquitous spread of video surveillance cameras and the State's scheme to control the "psychic selves" of the populace and turn the mind itself into a space of imprisonment. The "surveillance effect" of globally pervasive "image catchers" creates mental chains as crippling as literal chains. Believing ourselves to be under the microscope of the State at all times, we are conditioned to act in accordance with the will of the watchers. The urban and suburban zoos the System has herded us into become increasingly claustrophobic as the techniques of social control metastasize internally and externally, creating the impression of police

omnipresence and omnipotence. If they "know what's good for them," people will conform to the whims of the electronic eye.

Wide-Angle Enclosure: Overexposed to a Mirror with Memory

It would be a serious mistake to focus exclusively on the "selfpolicing" quality of video surveillance cameras and ignore the *physical dimensions* of this latest despotic encroachment of the State. The ruling class is endeavoring to construct a "Total Institution" of permanently entrenched fear, a digitally re-mastered menagerie, and their cameras *are* there to archive and track our movements as well. The state has a vested interest in establishing whether or not rules are obeyed, who obeys and who does not, and how those who deviate can be located and punished. CCTV cameras *do* freeze moments in time *and* provide a reservoir of information to the probing, investigating eye

of law enforcement; in some of the larger urban labyrinths, these cameras are becoming more common than wildlife.

Class struggle has always been a component of civilization and the War on the Wild, and video cameras are the absolutist tool of a particular social class (civilization's ruling elite), wielded to sequester another class. The exploited, the undesirables, the "bad consumers," the natural world, *the wild*—we are all to be reduced to high-resolution captivity superimposed on us by video surveillance, and autonomy and feralness are to be faded out cinematically. In the workplace video cameras are proving to be a forceful new feature of the class war, as the roving overseer or foreman is being substituted by the silent and untiring electronic eye. The machine has (once again) replaced the presence of a human being; instead of "breathing down one's neck", management now fixes a seemingly continuous and unyielding gaze on one's productivity from the colder and more uncertain distance of the hidden recorder. Scientific control techniques reach a new peak of intensity and the shadow of the Panopticon extends further over our lives, immobilizing revolt and endangering the traditional "weapons of the weak" (sabotage, theft, wildcat strikes).

In the past, the exploited always knew that monitoring was episodic—the supervisor could not be everywhere all of the time. In contrast, camera and recorder can be omnipresent and allow our masters to even analyze the *friendships* that form between fellow slaves. The CCTV network threatens to smother all *wildness*, that "dreaming ground... invoking ever new dreams," as all conceivable sites of resis- tance are absorbed by the Spectacle of self-oppression. The cameras of the State seek to produce a new type of civilized slave, one that is satisfied in its restricted possibilities, isolation and anomie, dreaming the circumscribed dreams of the powerless and unimaginative, never crossing the paltry bounds that the system provides. With no aspirations that go beyond what exists in their plastic tombs, the exploited become like wild animals whose teeth and claws have been removed.

But humans are not simply robots or "docile bodies" following the dictates of coercive micro-mechanisms of state power, but potentially feral, ungovernable agents capable of interpreting, rejecting and destroying these structures. In his book *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*, Erving Goffman discusses how although "primary adjustments" or acts of conformity abound in tightly run "Total Institutions," rebellious individuals also make "secondary adjustments" which defy the suffocating demands of the institutional order. These acts of recalcitrance are practices of "reserving something of oneself from the clutch of the institution... like weeds they spring up in any kind of social organization." To use straightforward war terminology, for every *strategy* that is planned for a particular purpose there are always innumerable *tactics* which can spontaneously be deployed to counteract them.

Put simply, "strategy is the science of military movements beyond the field of vision of the enemy; tactics, that of movements *within* his field of vision." For every new strategy of social control on the part of the State, there is a novel and surprising tactic of negation, and for every video surveillance camera installed, there is a complimentary

form of resistance, of subversion. For Big Brother's telescreen has blind spots just like the human eye that rests on the other side of the lens.

Hitting Your Mark: From Digitized Subject to Insurgent Negative In a Panoptic, conformist society of mediocrity and standardization—where vanquishment, collaboration and/or capitulation (all unacceptable)—seem to be the only responses an overwhelmingly technological, capitalist civilization permits, it's uplifting to see rebels around the world roused to revolutionary action against the CCTV dragnet. In August 2002, a militant aggregation known as Motorists Against Detection (MAD) started a direct action anti-"speed camera" campaign in Britain, kicking it off with the UK's most profitable speed camera located at the bottom of the infamous M11 motorway near Woodford,

Essex. This particular camera was reputed to earn up to 840,000 pounds per week in traffic fines, as it tracks the movements of all motorists and communicates in real time via microwave links and the phone system to the newly upgraded Police National Computer. Within two weeks, MAD had sabotaged a further 29 speed cameras along the whole 27 mile length of the A406 North Circular Road between Chiswich and the east side of London.

A member of the resistance calling himself Captain Gatso (a tongue-in-cheek reference to the inventor of the speed camera, Maurice Gatsonides) released a communiqué soon after the CCTV Jihad started, stating that "we are fed up with lining the pockets of police forces and councils as a stealth tax revenue raising scheme. Everyday now it seems we read stories about camera technology and hear people talking to radio stations moaning about them. Up until now this has not made a lot of difference which is why it is time for all of us to act before it all gets out of hand."

The balaclava-wearing highway liquidators of MAD vowed to burn, bomb, and dismember all speed cameras within the range of their wrath. They followed through on their threats with a string of attacks in the county of Norfolk, where six cameras valued at more than 100,000 pounds were set alight and vandalized. The secretive mutineers are fast becoming the most popular outlaw folk heroes in Britain since Robin Hood and his Merry Men stalked the countryside: from the south coast of England to the Highlands of Scotland no camera is safe, as the "*Gatsometers*" are being playfully destroyed in a carnivalesque transformation of the State's totalitarian topography. With each unit costing about $38,000, a huge bill is being run up. But the rebels are unrepentant: "We are all guinea pigs in a huge experiment that will restrict our liberty, not just in London but the whole U.K."

Communicating to the broader public through internet chat rooms, MAD rails against speed cameras (calling them "Weapons of Mass Persecution") and warns of the menace of what they call the Talivan—mobile police speed detection units. Particularly destructive MAD cells are known to be operating in North London, Essex and Wales, while recent months have seen new operations in central Scotland. Most MAD actions have involved simple approaches like spray-painting camera lenses, burning them or cutting them down with power tools. But Northhamptonshire police are offering a

reward for help in identifying the MAD members who used plastic explosives to bomb a camera in May 2003.

MAD's "mad antics" are definitely catching on, as the destruction of these noxious devices has become a near-weekly occurrence in the British Isles. To date, MAD has taken credit for the destruction of more than 700 cameras, while other clandestine groupings around England have taken up the practice of placing tires over speed cameras and setting them alight (and often posting images of their charred remains on the web). Still other camera-haters are shooting them out with guns and one creative hooligan pulled down a speed camera by attaching a rope from the back of his car to the camera's pole and driving away—a humorous reenactment of the staged toppling of Saddam Hussein's statue?

In early February 2004, a group called the Mendip Mafia achieved a local publicity coup in its battle against speed cameras when it used dynamite instead of the usual flaming tractor tire to destroy a CCTV camera in the village of Emborough, on the A37 Road. This same camera had been destroyed once before—by other means—and twelve of the fifty surveillance cameras operated by the Avon, Somerset and Gloucestershire "Safety Camera Partnership" (who "oversee" this district) have been violently disabled since May 2003. And the camera rebellion is spreading, a heartening sign of chaos in revolt! In Brussels, Willem Laurens is accused of leading a gang that torched twenty six cameras in the city of Flanders, while in France, the country's first radar camera was vandalized just hours after its inauguration by someone who cracked its armored-glass plating with a sledgehammer (equally determined police had the $90,000 unit repaired the next day, and its images were being examined for clues). In early October 2003, a pipe bomb took out a CCTV unit in North Belfast, and on October 23, in Milan, Italy, 101 security cameras were attacked throughout the city.

That's a Wrap

While some people conceive of "rewilding" as scattering marijuana seeds in the cracks around City Hall or learning the Latin names of "native" plant species, we recognize that any serious rewilding will also necessarily involve the destruction of the technological system. The total administration of life is underway and to fight it we need to move from arresting paralysis to the deployment of regenerative chaos, by smashing the rational and institutional restraints placed on our lives and rekindling the Promethean fires of the imagination. The struggle to reclaim wildness is intrinsically a confrontation between chaos and organization: whether we accept it unquestioningly or rebel against it, technology has acquired not simply a life of its own, but a life that substantially infiltrates *our* lives, warping our characters as we gradually accept its mechanistic parameters.

If we succumb indifferently to the totalitarian reengineering of our world, we risk becoming androids ourselves, *animals made into machines.* To deny technology's pervasive role in our existence means, then, to deny reality—at a time when the prospects for life and liberty seem to be rapidly drying up, and we are advancingly imbricated in the Panopticon's presence. Only by demolishing the System's machinery itself can

we hope to get out from under the thumb of the political order and achieve our vision of renewal. Technology and the State are two of the more obvious enemies of wildness. *Destroy what destroys you!*

Revolt of the Savages

Kevin Tucker

In "The Rising of the Barbarians" (from *GA #13*), the influences regarding its "revolutionary perspective" are revealed, in order to draw out exactly where lines of solidarity lie: *'Primitive" people have often lived in anarchic and communistic ways, but they do not have a history of revolutionary struggle from which we can loot weapons for our current struggle.* And this is where I couldn't disagree more (especially regarding the postmodern overtones). The question has been raised as to what the contextual limits are on the implication of "revolutionary struggle", but my response is the same. While I won't argue that more recent "revolutionary" struggles have nothing to offer me, I will argue that "primitive" people have every bit of a history of revolt against civilization. So perhaps I should clarify what I'm pointing towards in regards to revolution. For me, revolution comes about through the destruction (or fatal disabling) of civilization in a totalistic sense. Meaning very simply that I'm not talking about overthrowing or grabbing power long enough to get rid of the current regime or form, but essentially attacking the very thing that makes it possible at all for people to hold power over others: most immediately, the technological grid. I feel the utmost solidarity with those who have rejected and revolted against the civilized order which must impose itself upon others to exist. That system is, by all means, the antithesis of anarchy as it requires the surrendering of autonomy and self determination for all life.

There is no shortage of literature regarding the plight of those who have been fighting this from inception to date and a minute portion of that will be the focus of this essay. As anthropologist John Bodley writes in *Victims of Progress*, indigenous resistance generally aims at being left alone, as the Free Papua Movement has reiterated in its current struggles. There are those who will keep away as long as possible, those who will fight, and those who see no other option outside of acculturation (because of deception or deprivation).

It is nearly impossible for us to imagine the mentality of peoples who are fighting, not to improve the conditions of their survival, but for their lives. That many of us don't equate genocide and ethnocide comes from the fact that we really have no intrinsically deep connection with what it means to live and be a part of the community of life. Being in a situation that is absolutely bleak by any standard, indigenous people throughout the world and throughout history have fought with absolute conviction and fervor while preserving everything that is beautiful about life. It is impossible for me to convey the feeling I get when thinking of the Tasmanian gatherer-hunters who

walked towards their would-be conquerors as if surrendering while dragging a spear between their toes in the face of annihilation.

For these people, resistance is not a matter of abstract principle and ideology, but coming from the depths of their being.

Whether we are talking about the Kayapo of northern Brazil, the many indigenous revolutionaries throughout the South Pacific1, or Traditional Dineh on the Black Mesa, we are talking about resistance that is not just against capitalism, but against the entire artificial order. What I have found looking at indigenous resistance, both contemporary and historic, is a spiritual and tactical arsenal from which I gain nothing but hope and strength, much as I hope any anti-civilization insurgent or revolutionary would hope to aspire. Now I will focus on two particular cases of indigenous resistance that seem particularly important towards attacking the totality of civilization: the Pueblo Revolts of 1680 and the Apache resistance to colonization.

The Pueblo Revolts of 1680

In terms of pillaging the past for clues as to what we can learn and apply for our own resistance, it seems the Pueblo Revolt that swept and successfully removed the yoke of Spanish colonialism for 12 years is as good of a place as any to start. My interests in this particular revolt arose while I was walking through the city center (which has been for up to five thousand years) of Taos, New Mexico and I was told the street I was walking was where the Spanish Governor's head had rolled in the immediate aftermath of the Pueblo Revolt. It stood as a great shame to the 17th Century colonial European powers to be beaten so badly and, in every sense, outsmarted. The Pueblo Revolt stands as one of the most relevant understandings of how the weaknesses of civilization could be used against it, as will be laid out. The Spanish exploitation of the Pueblo peoples and land originates in the very late 16th Century as the European empires tore across the "New World", attempting absolute conquest over both the human populations and the earth itself. It would seem most ironic that these very factors were the key to the success of the revolts, as the Spanish had few other options but to put absolute faith in the power of their technological ability to subjugate both.

The Pueblo were a source of labor and marketable produce in what was an otherwise very dependent colony. The land that the Pueblo had lived on was very ecologically fragile. It had been grounds for empires to collapse in the recent past creating a population of mixed descent that were dependent upon a very ecologically sensitive form of horticulture based primarily on irrigation and clustering of crops to get the most out of a short and undependable growing season. The everpresent ecological stresses alone were enough on a community which was held together very successfully by a much tailored spirituality and rituality. The Spanish attack upon the people and their spirituality only fermented an otherwise patient anger and frustration against the attempt to turn their sacred land into a resource base for mercantile capitalism. The initially passive approach to the Spanish was to be completely altered by the continuation of brutal slaughters and worsening conditions for the Pueblo.

The Revolt

The revolt itself is widely accredited to the work of the prophet Popé2, an emerging political leader of the San Juan Pueblo and a traditionalist shaman. As a shaman, Popé was subjected to the most repres- sion from the Spanish as they tried to curb the 'savage religions' and create Christians out of the 'heathens.' Much to their dismay, the more that he was made a symbol of harsh reprisal for enacting his spirituality via public floggings, the more he became a symbol for traditional resistance against Spanish colonialism. This would essentially open the role of spiritual and tactical advisor for a successful revolt and it was then that he began to plot it. After a four year prison sentence for 'sorcery,' Popé relocated among the Taos Pueblo where he was only more adamant in his preaching that "Indians must be Indians again." The revolt was in every aspect ecologically based; he was receiving his council from Po-he-yemu ("one who scatters mist"), meaning that the revolt was taking its command from the sky. He was able to anticipate traitors among the Pueblo, primarily those who had turned towards Christianity, and planned accordingly. The Spanish were well aware that a revolt was being planned, but could get no information other than the leader being Po-he-yemu, whom was believed to be on the other side of the mountains where captured and interrogated Pueblos would point. The entire time they were looking for an actual being when ironically their unknown ring-leader was the sky. Popé's plan for revolt was based entirely off an understanding of the weaknesses of the Spanish and the strength of the earth. As they had been unable to fully plant themselves in this exotic and taxed environment, they would be dependent upon bi-monthly shipments which came up the Rio Grande. Popé saw the river as a snake, and recognized that cutting it off at one point would bring about dramatic effects for the rest of the body. He knew that other peoples would carry their support for an attack upon the Spanish and, as had many other indigenous prophet/warriors, was able to unify huge regions of indigenous peoples from various backgrounds to offer their support. He recognized that the sporadic rains would always slow the shipment of supplies considerably for the Spanish, and towards the end of the bi-monthly period they were always scraping the bottom of the barrel for resources and were at their weakest point.

By looking towards Po-he-yemu, the peoples were watching the sky, knowing that the revolt would occur when the bi-monthly shipment was delayed by the coming of the rains. At that point, the Pueblo and supporters all along the Rio Grande would carry out a highly organized attack upon the Spanish, starting with taking out the supply shipment and moving up the river before the northern towns had even found out the fate of those south of them. The revolt came as a complete surprise (even though the Spanish knew a revolt was likely to come at any time) and it was completely successful in debilitating Spanish rule.

The revolt was successful when gauged as an anti-colonial revolution as it had kept off the Spanish powers for twelve years (as long as the FSLN were able to hold out in Nicaragua). The reason for the failure of the revolution can be seen as another lesson to learn from past resistance. After the revolt, Popé took it upon himself to claim some bit of the power vacuum that had been created in the chasm between traditional

Pueblo culture and that of the Spanish colonizers. He saw the success of the revolution as a heads-up to his impromptu leadership position, mocking more appropriately the role of Christian leaders in Spain at the time than shamans among any indigenous culture.

Popé's new found tendency towards power created divisions and distrust amongst the Pueblo leaving them more apt to be re-conquered by the Spanish. What can be exhibited best by the Revolt then, is not only in terms of attacking the weaknesses of civilization, but also the importance of doing so in a manner that can prevent a position of power to remain open. The Pueblo society, while being under heavy attack by Spanish colonizers, was still in a physical shape much like it had been for thousands of years. It was relatively localized and the face of power was within physical grasp. In this sense, the complete alienation that our society creates between the people and the "people in power" is a scenario in which the role of power is out of reach. Disabling the technological system that fuels this highly stratified society would create a jolt towards localization that is almost completely unknown to us. Either way, the Pueblo Revolts give us a glimpse of vital elements of guerrilla warfare tied to the ecological situation more so than any of the civilized "revolutions," and therefore something that seems more applicable in an assault on the whole of civilization.

Apache Resistance

The Apache carried on one of the most successful campaigns against colonization during the peak of westward expansion. In every sense, their resistance speaks of the beauty and conviction of a people who would risk everything in order to flee domination. When thinking of the Apache, we are often left with the image of Geronimo, despite his role as more of an exception than the rule among warriors. While recognizing the need to not write him off, he was far more of a 'loose cannon' than many of the other legendary Apache warriors who fought and died against the tide of civilization. Victorio comes to mind who, among other warriors, took his own life before being taken captive. This stands as a confirmation of why after exhaustive and complete efforts to annihilate (physically and culturally, respectively) the Apache, the colonial powers were never able to capture an Apache warrior unless s/ he had surrendered. The Apache resistance is extremely interesting in that these were gatherer-hunters, which seems to have been the key to their relative success: this lifestyle was/is impossible to fully acculturate into civilization. In this respect they completely embody guerrilla warfare against civilization. Unlike the later leftist guerrillas, they were completely self sufficient (or able to steal from the army whatever they needed additionally) and thus not reliant upon a peasantry for support or for knowledge of the area. One of the greatest testimonies of the strength, physically and spiritually, of the Apache is Eve Ball's recorded narrative from a young Apache, James Kaywaykla, who grew up through a period of prolonged warfare and still leaves us with a beautiful account not only of resistance, but the beauty of Apache life. In the Days of Victorio, Apache of all ages were brought into the life-and-death battle against those who sought to tame them either by physical elimination or 'eliminating the savage' in them. The young

were as much a part of the warfare as were the warriors, and under these conditions the Apache fought with only an increase in motivation. Kaywaykla sums this up by pointing out: *[The American forces] have admitted frankly that they were outwitted, out-maneuvered, and out-fought by a handful of ill-equipped, half-starved warriors, handicapped by the presence of their families, and dependent upon what they could steal of food and ammunition. They testified to the caliber of my people by placing thousands of theirs in the field against a few—a very few—of ours.*

It was the standard for the Apache to have a minimal amount of warriors against hundreds or more of well-armed and prepared soldiers, and still the Apache would be able to hold out against them. The Apache would learn to adapt and incorporate every aspect of warrior life into their culture, which, much to their benefit, was still able to leave their core values and beliefs relatively intact.

Questions of Applicability

So the question that now opens is what can be learned from this very brief look into the nature of Apache resistance and what ultimately brought about its failure. The Apache were far more successful when gauged on a per battle basis than any of the successful civilized 'revolutions' that have been carried out over the last centuries. They were far more mobile and flexible than Cuba's 26 Julio Army, the Sandinistas, the Shining Path and so on, and were capable of bringing about a more exhaustive assault on the enemy. What seems to stand out the most is that the lifeway of the Apache were completely at odds with the nature of the civilization they were fighting against. It's noteworthy to recognize that Cuba achieved its highest rates of sugar production for international export after the revolution; it was still in a viable position for the market. The failure of the Apache could easily be seen as more akin with the fate of the Sandinistas who Reagan saw as a part of the communist threat 'in his back yard' and thus carried out a lengthy counterrevolutionary guerrilla war to ensure that the FSLN wouldn't be able to assert themselves politically and economically.

So what is the message here? Are we as doomed as the Apache and the Pueblo if we look towards their resistance as our own arsenal? From what I see, the problem isn't necessarily the conviction or necessarily the tactics; as the Apache, like most indigenous peoples (such as the revolutionaries in Bougainville), put in practice the principles of guerrilla warfare as well as, if not better than, other civilized revolutionaries that would follow or coincide with them. The problem is the nature of this particular stage of civilization with hyper-specialization, mega-technology, and a huge surplus of people as potential 'cannonfodder'. The only reason that the United States has jurisdiction over what was 'Apache land' was that they had the numbers and the capital to continually throw into 'westward expansion.' It's not a question of ability, but of how much you have on the table to lose. Fortunately, it seems entirely possible to just disable the whole thing with minimal warfare as the vital organs of civilization become more centralized and more self-dependent.

My decision to limit this brief bit on the topic to the Pueblo Revolt and the Apache resistance was far from unintentional.

It seems that a critical reprisal of what any resistance has to offer us should focus on both targets and on methods of hitting those targets. The ability of Popé to plan ecologically against the weaknesses of Spanish colonization mixed with the spiritual and physical determination and fighting ability of the Apache create an extremely volatile mixture against the current order. The question of what can be achieved is intrinsically tied to what it is we are going to attack. Looking at the his- tory of civilizations and our current state, it becomes apparent that this global civilization is bound to collapse, and soon. Of course, collapse comes about as much internally as externally, and I think that situation is far preferable. From what I know, it is entirely possible that a calculated attack against the technological grid could bring about a huge enough pulse in the mainstay of this civilization to give it a lethal blow. This requires a dedication not towards abstract principles, but an understanding of what it is we are losing and what we have to gain and to fight for. Am I fighting merely for the enactment of my own will? I have no policy to impose upon the world or any kind of 'master plan' that I seek to put out after that vacuum may potentially be created. What I hope to achieve is the elimination of a system that eliminates the potential of all life to live free by virtue of existence. That limiting comes as much by contaminating the air, soil, water, and flesh of all life as it does by direct control over individuals. As an anarchist, I see that system, civilization, as the impediment to a truly autonomous existence. This is a target that has been recognized by indigenous resistors who merely want to "be left alone," fighting for their autonomy and self determination. Knowledge of how 'primitives' have lived plays an equal part in the destruction of the totality of civilization. I see it in many ways as being an insurrection for the mind against the linear, rationalized, future-obsessed thought that allows the continuation of civilization within our own minds.

Culminating a successful attack against this entire order seems to point towards the tactics and conviction which indigenous people have used against civilization every step of the way. The knowledge of life that a gatherer-hunter has creates a situation of absolute independence which has always been a weakness for 'civilized' guerillas. Past and current civilized revolutionaries have only been successful so long as they use and ultimately exploit the indigenous and peasant populations of the areas they seek to claim3. The underlying populism of creating a huge solidified force has always been a trap for the few to impose their social policies and must therefore always be viewed critically4. Any successful revolt will only be the product of determined individuals fighting for their absolute autonomy.

Essentially, I'm laying out what I see as a part of my own 'revolutionary' will, and with it my sources of inspiration and my desires, hoping that it will serve in some way as a stepping stone for others to look into the beautiful and tragic history of indigenous resistance. It's not so much an issue of 'primitive' or 'civilized' revolts, but a question of whether you are fighting civilization or not. My deepest inspiration and solidarity goes out to those who have recognized this as their enemy and have resisted appropriately.

Notes:

1. Many of whom are continually involved in armed revolt, for more information check out *Do or Die* no. 8 or contact: Solidarity South Pacific: c/o sdef! Prior house, Tilbury Place, Brighton, E. Sussex, BN2 2GY, UK or www.eco-action.org/ssp.

2. It is important in order to draw out the differences between indigenous and civilized resistance here by pointing out that indigenous resistance has always been primarily brought about by prophets as opposed to ideologues. Their connection is generally brought about by appeals to 'return to old ways', and the power of these movements is vital as it speaks to the inner character of indigenous culture as it remains throughout the individuals. It speaks to them as people who have known themselves or are still connected rather than speaking to something entirely alien to their being.

3. As has been the case throughout Latin America, Russia, etc indigenous peoples and peasants are generally the 'strong arm' of resistance and they are left off or killed when they are seen as useless or have achieved the goals of the vanguard.

4. For more on this, read 'Insurrection and/or Revolution' in *Species Traitor #3*. Available for $4 from CAC PO Box 835 Greensburg, PA 15601.

Contributing to Momentum against Civilization

Felonious Skunk

Along with the promising contagious articulation of anticivilization ideas within the anarchist movement and beyond, there is a slippery and unfortunate tendency to repeat a motivational and organizational mistake of previous anarchists or revolutionaries; that is, the goal of constructing (whether egalitarian or not) a new social movement. It is baffling that those who have a strong critique of the Left (including an analysis of the fetishization of organization, representation, standardization, leadership, and mass society) can also stumble into the same pitfalls of trying to "build a movement". While I trust that they are motivated by liberatory intentions, I have a hard time understanding how these pursuits are fundamentally different from previous attempts at solidifying ideas or managing conflict with the social/ civilized order. Is it a case of not being able to see their own ideological baggage they wish to build a movement around? Do they see "their" movement as somehow different because they are addressing the "correct" or "fundamental" issues and speak rhetorically of diversity, so long as people agree on the same principles they espouse?

As an anarchist, and particularly as someone whose life undertaking is the destruction of civilization and creating ways to truly live outside of its logic, I find the movement model completely unsatisfactory, suffocating, and foreign to my personal project of liberation. I prioritize my own needs, passions, and dreams. I form my affinity and connection with others based on these. But, I also understand that a small group of green anarchists and primitivists cannot significantly alter the trajectory of civilization, and that a linkage, both directly through action and mutual aid, and in the development of critical theory with other decentralized groups is important.

But what might this look like as a truly nonideological and anti-authoritarian practice, one that prioritizes autonomy? As of late, the way I've been trying to articulate the opening of possibilities along these lines is not the development of a green anarchist movement, but instead, contributing, in my own unique way and in collaborations of affinity, to a diverse momentum against civilization.

There is certainly no shortage of reasons to despise and act against civilization, and each of us comes into the battle with our own experiences and our own agendas. This is demonstrated in our prioritization of certain articulations of analysis, by our strategic assessments, and by our actions. Ideally, these would not dwell on symptomatic elements, but rather grasp a totality of the civilized dynamic. Again, this totality will

be articulated and acted upon differently, based on the filters through which we view civilization, our specific interface and entanglement with it (both past and present), the particular language and terminology we utilize, and our personal desires. How, say, a middle class academic white man in a college town with his own personal and social experiences and analysis approaches civilization will look much different than, let's say, a black factory worker in Detroit, a peasant mother in rural (yet industrializing) Mexico, or a hunter-gatherer who is resisting the deadly encroachment of civilization upon her ancient life-way and the world that she is intimately connected to. Each has their reasons and motivations to destroy and escape from civilization, but their paths along the way, for a number of reasons, will look very different. This difference, this uniqueness, is what a movement (and ideology) tries to flatten in an attempt to "get everyone on board". As a "great unifier", the "movement building" prescription is not that dissimilar in arrangement and motivation to imperialism or globalization, as it attempts to standardize our passions and goals into a lowest common denominator that moves further and further from us as numbers increase. We are left with either a very rigid and dogmatic set of ideas projected by the vanguard or elite thinkers or an absurdly vague and meaningless agenda based on the most superficial characteristics of "diversity".

As we start to look at momentum—a general dynamic or process, rather than movement—a grouping based around specific political ideas or measurements of progress, things begin to open up. Without getting too caught up semantically or limited by the science from which these words are derived, it can still be somewhat helpful to look at momentum and movement in relation to physicality, where these concepts have their roots. Movement, while it is a description of activity, does not increase or decrease rate of motion; it stays at a constant. Momentum, however, by definition, is increasing or decreasing rate of motion.1 If something is in motion ("on the move") then it is said to have momentum. Momentum is dependent upon three variables: how much is moving, how fast it is moving, and where it is going.2 Another important, yet obvious, reduction is that objects at rest, or at a constant speed, do not have momentum (one could say, like the Left).

Momentum is a commonly used term in sports. When an announcer proclaims that a team has momentum, they mean that the team is going to be hard to slow down or defeat. It is necessary to apply a force against its motion for a given period of time to halt it. The more momentum something has, the harder it is to stop. Thus, it would require a greater amount of force or a longer amount of time (or both) to bring something with more momentum to a rest, to change its velocity, and hence, its momentum. An unbalanced force will always accelerate or decelerate an object. If the force acts opposite the object's motion, it slows the object down. If a force acts in the same direction as the object's motion, then the force speeds the object up. Either way, a force will change the velocity of an object, and if the velocity of the object is changed, then the momentum of the object is changed.3

Obviously, these scientific definitions and explanations are extremely restrictive, but they do offer some insight in reference to the question of movement vs momentum.

In this light, we begin to view movement as a linear process which neither offers nor describes any variety, directional change, or acceleration in transit from point A to point B. Momentum, however, is a dynamic or description of motion which takes into account various influences of force (both conflicting and supportive), the mass of what is being measured, and the rate of speed in connection to its acceleration and direction. While clumsy and hampered by the logic from which they come, these concepts can be applied to social dynamics, at the very minimum for their linguistic or metaphoric qualities.

But these are just words with somewhat arbitrary usage outside the problematic scientific realm, and this can take us only so far. What is more important is how these words and concepts have been used both historically and in contemporary social dynamics, and even more importantly, the concepts and practical applications which may be useful to an anti-civilization praxis. The concept of a movement has always been quite clear. To work to spread (read: package and sell) a specific idea or consciousness, so that when a critical mass of proponents, soldiers, sympathizers, converts, believers, or suckers is reached, either society will spontaneously begin to shift in a desired direction, or it will be deemed (by the elite within the movement, or through a democratically determined proposal) justifiable, reasonable, or strategically possible to structurally (physically or legally) change it. These movements tend to be tightly bound by a specific morality, world-view, ideology, strategy, or issue (ie Moral Majority, Anti-Globalization, Marxism-LeninismMaoism, Peace Movement, Gay Marriage). They are often defensive in positioning (anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-prisons, anti-abortion, antiBush, etc), and mostly reformist. They tend to accept and even promote hierarchy (organizations, parties), or at least some sort of informal leadership or expertise (writers, speakers, and organizers). They usually have some formal policies or codes (platforms, programs, manifestos), or at least informal norms (political correctness, etiquette, protocol) for people to adhere to, with accountability, social pressures, punishment, and even expulsion being negative consequences. Typically, these movements have publications, conferences, and projects which, although not always overtly stated, are intended to represent the movement to others and offer a certain amount of internal dialogue. But possibly the most defining characteristic of movements, despite any incoherence, ineffectiveness, or lack of direction or critical analysis they may have, is their inherent desire to have more people be a part of it; the old "numbers" game. At some point, even the most radical and autonomous political or social impetus, unless movement consciousness is critically rejected, will lose sight of itself and become a distortion and shadow of its initial form. Sometimes, this mutation is not even detected until it is too late, but more often, this trade-off is accepted and even embraced in order to gain mass appeal or more converts.

On the other end of the spectrum from the tightly controlled or agenda-driven movements, are those which are so incoherent, arbitrary, and obscure, that they are

virtually irrelevant. Every university, new age, alternative, and hippie town in America is filled with these "movements", and the coinciding one-liner bumper-stickers ("One World", "Save the Children", "Freedom and Justice for All", "Honor Diversity", "Visualize World Peace", and, of course, "It'll Be A Great Day When Schools Get All the Money They Need, and the Military Has to Hold a Bake Sale to Buy a Bomber") placed on their Volvos, Volkswagens, and Subarus, offering zero analysis or direction. These do-nothing dogooders feel they are a part of something bigger, some sort of movement, but when pressed, you'd be hard to find any coherent or articulate ideas or goals, and almost nothing as far as practice (outside recycling, sending out "good vibrations", buying hemp, or voting for Nader, except this year when they voted Democrat). In a way, we can breathe easy, since these "movements" lack any authoritarian (or even visible) agenda.

Contributing to the momentum against civilization may not look like any movement model. Most, if not all, attempts at creating a social movement are naïve, and often come into conflict with anarchy. I have no interest in creating a "new" and "improved" paradigm, but in dispelling with the very notion. I seek to contribute to a diverse momentum against civilization without ideological limitations, moral constraints, or entrenched expectations; through rewilding and healing from the wounds inflicted upon us by civilization with those with whom I have deep affinity and desire for intimacy, while creating healthy living dynamics and projects with these people; putting out questions and my personal analysis of civilization, and resistance to it, for people to do with what they want; learning from and sharing experiences and ideas, and, when possible, supporting others who are unleashing their fury on civilization and moving outside of its confines; and attacking the symbolic and physical manifestations of civilization where I feel I can, and where I determine the strategic targets to be, and where they directly affect my life. I do not need the approval, or even understanding, of what I do (although, I may choose to put energy in the latter) from anyone, except myself, and those I chose to enter into collaboration with when it concerns them.

These modes of activity are not consistent with working to create a "movement", which implies, and has always meant, a singular or ideological project at the expense of the individual. While discussions of strategy, engagement in an ongoing dialogue, and our own personal analysis are important, we should be careful that they don't become prescriptions or proposals for a "revolutionary agenda". Nihilism can offer some healthy influence here (though, by definition no complete "resolution"), as it rejects the notion of something to "get behind". This is a complete rejection of ideology, morality, or preconceived notions of "revolution" or "another world", avoiding the same "blue-print" traps of the Left, and all that comes along with that framework. I see nothing of this civilized logic worth keeping, and wish to destroy it all without preoccupying myself with delusions of another world. Do I think another world is possible? Of course, this is why I continue to fight, but I will not dwell excessively on what that might be until this one is gone. It is an important realization that our visions can only be abruptly limited and incomplete due to the unhealthy and stifling death culture. Can we offer

specific critiques of this world? Sure, this is essential, especially when put forward in personal articulations rather than totalizing language, and always remaining flexible. Can we develop healthier ways of existing now? Yes, but again, the priority, for me, is destroying this world, and seeking collaboration where it is possible. I feel nihilism (as one finite tool) can help free us from our socialist tendencies to re-define society.

Striving for purity is a recurring problem. In relation to anticivilization anarchy, I see a stiffness developing in two main directions: in the anarchist/nihilist/egoist direction (requiring complete openness, along with a suspicious reluctance to define many specifics) and the primitivist perspective (requiring a very specific analysis and praxis). There is a tension here, and one that I am, personally, fine with. We are complicated enough, and it is probably healthier and more strategic to exist within this tension between these directions (at least from where we are at right now). I do not presume to know for certain what my/ our limitations or possibilities are. I am still, and will always be, learning and growing and not static or frozen by a singular world-view, although, there are some things we may generally assume or agree on. While a "primitivist" approach is my general orientation and I express these ideas in the theoretical and practical realms, it is still only one tool (granted, my main tool) in my anti-civilization project. On the other hand, I find many limitations in the post-modern non-positions and egoist rejection of any finite realities. On a practical level, both in developing (at least temporary) strategies for survival and resistance, the need to reject fixed or complete thinking or purity, in any direction, is essential.

I wish to enter into concert with others who do not articulate or approach civilization exactly as I do. I can also be inspired by and learn from many different or even contradicting movements on the level of strategy without embracing all or even any of their specific motivations. I feel as complex beings (and anarchists in particular) we can be stimulated by and draw from an endless assortment of ideas and influences (for myself: anarchists, primitivists, luddites, insurrectionalists, situationists, surrealists, nihilists, deep ecologists, bioregionalists, ecofeminists, indigenous cultures, anti-colonial struggles, the feral, the wild, the earth, etc), without adopting any singular framework from which to view or interact with the world. I have no desire to be rigid and motionless in the physical, spiritual, or intellectual realm. This, however, is different from a "nothing has foundation" post-modern cop-out, the "it's all good" ecumenical approach, or the liberal "we need to all work together" mindset. I feel we need to proceed without illusions, and fight civilization on our own terms, as with the lives we create for ourselves.

This hardly begins to investigate and articulate the strategic advantages to stepping outside the movement model. I have always put more trust in chaos than order, and I have always experienced more success at connecting to my desires and achieving my goals with small, tight, and intimate groups, rather than anything that is "progressing". Perhaps most important, strategically it is a lot harder for our enemies to cut off more heads, especially when we are coming at them from all directions (back to physics

237

again...sorry), and all motivated by our most potent and least alienated passions and instincts.

Notes:

1 Movement is defined as speed (time and space) and does not change velocity, where momentum (mass and velocity) expresses changed velocity.

2 As a vector (directed magnitude) quantity, the momentum of an object is more fully described by both magnitude and direction.

3 These concepts are an outgrowth of Newton's Second (Fnet=m*a) stated that the acceleration of an object is directly proportional to the net force upon the object and inversely proportional to the mass of an object.

Part II

Impulse and Collision in Terms of Strategy

Momentum vs Movement

In the initial installment on this subject, I addressed the urge to be a unique presence in a momentum against civilization rather than working to create a monolithic green anarchist movement. The movement model has proven itself to be an utter failure and a suffocating and antiliberatory process, as it attempts to harden ideas, manage conflict, and reduce the individual to a role. It serves no use to anarchists who prioritize their goals and define their affinity based on desire rather than abstract concepts. Standardizing and alienating our passions and goals into a lowest common denominator for the sake of numbers, the outcome of the movement approach is either a dogmatic set of ideas or a vague agenda based on superficial characteristics of "diversity". Rejecting the movement model of seeking to build a "better" world stemming from a moral or ideological project and agenda, instead, I seek to contribute to a multiform momentum against civilization without ideological prerequisites, moral bondage, or entrenched expectations. As each of us comes into conflict with civilization from our own experiences, understanding, and desires, so should the articulations and actions against it be formed.

To briefly clarify a key distinction from the first essay, a movement is a group of people formed around specific political ideas or measurements of linear progress, while momentum is a dynamic, or process of variable change, that is influenced by an assortment of forces on a continuum of support and conflict. Others have used different terminology to describe similar patterns, but for the sake of this discussion, and for defining a language less bogged down in political baggage, I will continue to use these terms.1 In terms of physics, movement describes linear activity (time and space), but does not gauge the increase or decrease of its rate of motion. That is, it suggests uniformity. Momentum describes characteristics of what is moving, how fast it is moving, and where it is going, but it also describes the increases or decreases in rate of motion (expresses changed velocity). The greater the momentum, the greater amount of force or a longer amount of time (or both) is required to change its velocity. A force that acts against an object's motion slows it down, while a force that acts along with or parallel to an object's motion speeds it up, both changing its veloc-

ity, and therefore, changing its momentum. As suggested in the first installment, the use of scientific terminology is somewhat problematic, but if we view momentum as a description of motion taking into account various influences of force, these concepts can be applied to social dynamics, especially for their metaphoric qualities.

Impulse and Collision

Some interesting dynamics to look at in the realm of describing and understanding motion that can be seen as relevant to a discussion of strategy, are impulse and collision. Impulse describes the change in momentum. In a collision (the agitator of change), an object experiences a force for a specific amount of time which results in a change in momentum (the object's mass either speeds up or slows down). The impulse experienced by the object equals the change in momentum of the object. The greater the time over which the collision occurs, the smaller the force acting upon the object. Thus, to minimize the effect of the force on an object involved in a collision, the time must be increased; and to maximize the effect of the force on an object involved in a collision, the time must be decreased.2

This principle of minimizing the effect of a force by extending the time of collision can be witnessed in boxing. When a boxer concedes that she will be hit in the head by an opponent, she often relaxes her neck and allows her head to move backwards upon impact. Known as "riding the punch", a boxer utilizes this technique in order to extend the time of impact of the glove on her head. This results in decreasing the force and thus minimizing the damaging effect in the collision. This simple technique can extend the endurance of the boxer significantly over the length of a fight, or even a career.

Rock climbers use nylon ropes for the same reason. If a rock climber should lose his grip and begin to fall, his momentum will ultimately be halted by a rope, typically made of nylon or similar material because of its ability to stretch. As the rope stretches upon being pulled by the falling climber's mass, it will apply a force upon the climber over a longer time period. Extending the time over which the climber's momentum is broken results in reducing the force exerted on the falling climber. This can make the difference between minor and significant injury, and can, again, extend the body's endurance over time.

Application to Anarchist Strategy

Your imagination can probably apply these simple dynamics to a multitude of situations. For instance, a long, drawn-out, prolonged and constant warfare begins to lose momentum over time, especially when it is not influenced by new forces of impact. It takes the shape of a description of movement, that is, moving from point A to point B, with little regard for any other factors. To steal a cliché, it becomes more like a job than an adventure. It loses not only the passion, but also the purpose. Removed from desire, it becomes about winning and completing the mission, even if it is revealed the pursuit is misguided or the possibilities for a particular aspect of it are futile.

The contrary position to this would be the application of short, hard bursts or impulses that have considerable momentum. Like any sprinter will tell you, it is easier to give it the juice for a 50-yard dash than a marathon. Sprinters can pull on short-

term power boosts to extend themselves for very brief periods of time beyond what one might perceive as possible, putting every aspect of themselves into it. While the marathoner can draw from a similar type of reserve power supply from time to time, s/he typically settles into a zone, which allows for them to essentially "turn off" aspects of themselves for the larger cause and mechanically and less consciously go through the motions. Rather than seeing ourselves as the foot soldiers in a lengthy war, we can see ourselves as rebels quickly lighting fuses (only a metaphor, of course) in attempts to destroy an immediate enemy. Not that a holistic overview is not also important, but the impulse for action is strongest if it is connected to very direct and present situations in our lives. As a defensive position, a prolonged reaction limits the immediate impact on us from an oppressive force. This might mean that in situations in which we know we are outnumbered or outgunned, or just plain screwed, it might be wiser to save the bullets (just another metaphor) and wait it out a while rather then go out in a suicidal blaze of fire. To go back to the previous boxing metaphor, if we take the punches in a way that allows them to utilize more energy than the damage they are inflicting, they may eventually tire, allowing us to better take advantage of their weaknesses. This certainly is not an excuse or reason to endlessly wait around, as pause and delay is only a temporary maneuver, not a longterm strategy. There is also a tricky line where becoming so limber, stall reaction so long, or stretch out resistance so thin, we become dissipated into nothing. The frog that does not know that the temperature *impulse and collision* keeps rising when it is slowly being boiled alive comes to mind.

Any effective anarchist strategy would also be seeking more conspirators with whom they have considerable affinity, as well as allies whose particulars may differ, but general motion is agreeable.3 The more diverse the momentum against civilization, the more civilization's overall strength and collision against any single opponent will be dissipated. Against any opponent, and in concert with a variety of accomplices, a combination of offensive and defensive impulse and collision strategies can be explored.

Some, who have recognized the depth and pervasiveness of the problems we face and the strength of the forces we are up against, have distorted the defensive collision impulse technique and have turned it into a misguided strategy, suggesting that patience might be the strategic path for anarchists to take. That we need to collect more information before we act. This seems absurd not only from the perspective of one who feels nothing but disdain for this society and is wishing to live their desires, but from a strategic point of view, lacks significant merit, not to mention the ecological collapse we are beginning to experience. Do we really need more information? Does that not become white noise at some point, dulling our senses and further strengthening its grip over us? No, we needn't blindly charge or remain ignorant of our enemy, but their overall momentum is determined and generally transparent and needs not excessive pondering, while their tactics are in a constant state of response, reaction, and development. So to be patient merely means to step aside while we watch this metamorphosis take place (and affect all of us). Patient until when? And at what expense? Perhaps this installment was too semantically burdened for some, and perhaps for others it

was over-simplistic, but I hope it at least added one more layer to the discussion of anarchist strategy. Perhaps if we look at the world around us, and understand some of its basic dynamics and functions, we don't need a hypersophisticated or convoluted theory on strategy to act in the world that we live.

Notes:

1. *In my own writings, I have always distinguished social movements—which arise when people's rage against being dispossessed, dominated and exploited creates an impetus to rebellion that begins to take on social dimensions—from political movements— which attempt to either channel social movements into narrow ideological confines or replace them altogether. What F. Skunk refers to as "movement" is what I refer to as "political movement" and reject. What he refers to as "momentum" includes what I refer to as "social movement", but also includes individual acts of rebellion that those of us who despise the civilized order carry out on our own and with a few others we trust even when we see no evidence of a social movement of revolt. Used in this way, the concept of momentum may be useful in the sense of continuing the momentum of our own revolt regardless of what is happening on a larger scale.* -Wolfi Landstreicher (letter to *GA #20*)

2. This equation is known as the impulse-momentum change equation. The impulse experienced by an object is the force*time, the momentum change of an object is the mass*velocity change, the impulse equals the momentum change. [F * t = m * Delta v]. The equation says that the Impulse = Change in momentum.

3. *How do we anarchists, who have specific ideas of how this society operates and how to fight against it, intertwine our rebellion with the rebellions of those who may not have such ideas, who are rebelling in response to immediate circumstances, without falling into the role of politicians presenting a program? Having been in situations where social rage began to burn, and not being satisfied with the limits of my own minor acts of rebellion in these situations (since these acts do not in themselves prevent the various politicians and community leaders from channeling such rage into safe, meaningless non-action dependent upon the institutions), this is not a question I can ignore. My own desire to tear down this despicable order moves me to confront this question.* -Wolfi Landstreicher (letter to *GA #20*)

Nihilism & Strategy

Aragorn!

(Nihilism) stands like an extreme that cannot be gotten beyond, and yet it is the only true path of going beyond; it is the principle of a new beginning.

—Maurice Blanchot, *The Limits of Experience: Nihilism*

If we desire another world, what is necessary for us to do to achieve this end? Specifically what changes must we enact personally, socially, and as a movement?1 Beyond a coming to power, what is the task of resolving the contradictions of not only the current methodological system of social organization, but the partial solutions offered by others who would also pursue social power? To what extent must these changes happen now or can they be part of the action-as-consequence?

Here is where nihilism can provide some new perspective. A definition of nihilism2 could be the realization "that conditions in the social organization are so bad as to make destruction desirable for its own sake independent of any constructive program or possibility." This exposes one of the greatest idealistic flaws of modern activism: The articulation of the specific world-to-be as a result of your actions does not guarantee that world's creation.

It is the tradition of the materialist conception of history that allows for the fallacy of causality to pollute the spirit of today. If production and exchange are the basis of every social structure throughout history, then we can limit ourselves to studying them to understand how any transition to another world may occur. Therefore an understanding of economic systems should suffice to understand the strategic opportunities for transition. Since the vast majority of economics is understanding the relationship of institutions (which are only accountable to the current power structure) to each other, such an analysis seems like trying to understand an internal combustion engine from the motion of a car.

Materialism has largely been seen as an incomplete conception of history. This is partially due to the power structures embedded in the formation of most institutions but also due to the moral forces that challenge materialism's functionalist underpinnings. In the simple case, a benevolent God created the universe and has some vested interest in how things happen here. Therefore moral systems exist in the name of God's interests, as stated in holy texts and by fallible interpreters. Since the dispersion of the Reformation and the secularization of the rise of Science, morality is usually defined in relation to politics. This has led to the moral component to Marx's analysis and of the Left in general.

The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the lines of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement. —Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*

Moral value, or "good", is defined by the specific cultural values of Europe, of a developed Christian worldview, and the developing beliefs in individualism, meritocracy, and mercantilism. These are still the hurdles that even the most starry-eyed of protesters trip over, sometime spectacularly.3

Historical evidence, if it is to be believed, would actually demonstrate that the visions of "successful" social revolutionaries have shockingly little to do with the form of the new society they create. Take the French Revolution, where the form of class society was to be changed. It did, from the three estates of church, nobility, and commoners to a powerful state, centralized bureaucracy, and burgeoning capitalist infrastructure. All it took was the Committee of Public Safety, a Reign of Terror, and a fifteen-year Total War effort that would transform warfare forever. For the Russian Revolution many differing tendencies aspired to revolutionary victory. Its eventual leaders called for "All power to the Soviets" and ended up settling for crushing their opposition and enacting the New Economic Policy.4 The 20th century has ended with a steep decline in not only successful social change but also a poverty of visionaries who are pursuing change at all.

Anarchism and nihilism share a common antecedent. Bakunin's 1842 dictum, "Let us put our trust in the eternal spirit which destroys and annihilates only because it is the unsearchable and eternally creative source of all life. The desire for destruction is also a creative desire," sparked both movements. Nihilism's cultural peak was in the 1860s, although its activism continued almost to the early twentieth century. It is arguable that anarchists inherited 'propaganda by the deed' from the Russian nihilists. Nihilism's theorists5 continued to be cited as precursors to the revolutionary activity in Russia until they were 'disappeared' well into the Bolshevik regime. What does nihilism have to offer beyond a mere avocation of destruction? The nihilist position does not allow for the comforts of this world. Not only is God dead to a nihilist, but so is everything that has taken God's place; idealism, consciousness, reason, progress, the masses, culture, etc. Without the comforts of this metaphysical place, a strategic nihilist is free to drift unfettered by the consequences of her actions. "A nihilist is a person who does not bow down to any authority, who does not accept any principle on faith, however much that principle may be revered."6 Philosophically, much has resulted from the nihilist ideas on value, aesthetics, and practice. Most notably in Adorno's conception of Negative Dialectics, which is a principle refusing any kind of affirmation or positivity, a principle of thorough-going negativity. The nihilist tradition includes Adorno, Nietzsche, Bakunin, much of classic Russian literature, Dada, punk

rock, some of Heidegger, existentialist, poststructuralist and post-modern thinkers, and much of anarchism.

What does this really mean on the modern stage? Strategic nihilism allows for the possibility that there is no future. The possibility of radical social transformation then becomes unhinged from the utopian aspirations of its proponents. Their 'hope' can clearly be shown to be disconnected from the social and material reality of both the society as-it-is and the potential society that-could-be. If the destruction of the current order must be achieved, for our own potential to be realized, for its own sake, for the children, it may be better to do it with open eyes than purposely blinded ones. A strategic nihilist understands that an ethical revolution does not create an ethical society. An ethical anarchist is not one concerned with non-utopian social transformation, only an idealized one. A strategic nihilist understands that the infrastructure of the modern world embeds its own logic and inhabitants, and the nihilist is willing to toss it asunder anyway.

Vaneigem states in *Revolution of Everyday Life*, that "Juvenile delinquents are the legitimate heirs of Dada." This speaks to a positive nihilism that may be a comforting way in which we can approach the troubling consequences embedded within nihilism's logic. Anarchists have generally accepted property destruction in their humanist vision of an ethical social change. Things matter less than people. Nihilism informs us that this dichotomy ties us to the world we must supercede, before we are capable of actually having social relationships with people and not things. Strategic nihilism provides us a solution to existentialism and liberalism. It argues for an active pose in this world and for the inviability of reformist solutions. When confronted with the horror of your existence, race towards the bleak consequences, not away. Deal with the moralism explicit in your stated irrelevance by identity politics, communism, and postmodernism with a sword in hand. Moralists should be spared no patience.

What if you are struggling in The Movement? Nihilism can provide you a suite of tools. The first is deep skepticism. Every action, every meeting, is filled with politicians-in-waiting who are easy to discern, with their plastic smiles and fluency with "the process". A strategic nihilism allows its practitioner to see these types for what they are and the ability to do with them what is necessary by your analysis, and not theirs.

The second is a new eye towards history. Whereas before it may have been easy to get caught up in the details of the who's, when's, and why's of the Paris Commune, now it is easy to see the failure in the partiality without getting bogged down in the specific half measures. Time devoted to arguing how many angels dance on the head of a pin is time away from the pursuit of anything else.

Finally, a strategic nihilist position allows for a range of motion heretofore not available. The ethical limitations of 'doing the right thing' have transformed movements for social change. From pacifists and ethicists who sanctimoniously wait for the club to fall or the strength of their convictions to shatter capitalism, to adherents of the Vietnam-era form of social protest. It is clear that the terrain allowed by morality is bleak and filled with quagmire. Armed struggle groups, who led nonexistent masses

toward their better world, have shown similar failure. If these are not the models that frame your conception of change, you are free to make moves on a chessboard that no one else is playing on. You begin to write the rules that those in power are not prepared for. You can take angles, you can pace yourself, you can start dreaming big again, instead of just dreaming as large as the next demo, action, or war.

Notes:

1. The term movement is used to provide perspective here. It is a matter of scale in Western Culture to begin with the self and end with the society. While we reject this tautology, we embrace the clarity of its apparent simplicity.

2. There are about as many definitions of nihilism as there are of Anarchism. The difference is that to the extent that there is a social phenomenon of nihilism it is largely regressive and insular. Anarchism has puppet shows, nihilism only has black coffee and cigarettes.

3. "When that explosive detonated yesterday it broke all the windows in the family's house. I was in the process of being served tea and playing with the two small babies. I'm having a hard time right now. Just feel sick to my stomach a lot from being doted on all the time, very sweetly, by people who are facing doom. I know that from the United States, it all sounds like hyperbole. Honestly, a lot of the time the sheer kindness of the people here, coupled with the overwhelming evidence of the willful destruction of their lives, makes it seem unreal to me. I really can't believe that something like this can happen in the world without a bigger outcry about it. It really hurts me, again, like it has hurt me in the past, to witness how awful we can allow the world to be. I felt after talking to you that maybe you didn't completely believe me. I think it's actually good if you don't, because I do believe pretty much above all else in the importance of independent critical thinking. And I also realise that with you I'm much less careful than usual about trying to source every assertion that I make. A lot of the reason for that is I know that you actually do go and do your own research. But it makes me worry about the job I'm doing. All of the situations that I tried to enumerate above (and a lot of other things) constitutes a somewhat gradual, often hidden, but nevertheless massive, removal and destruction of the ability of a particular group of people to survive." -Rachel Corrie (to her mother)

4. "This policy was initiated in 1921 to replace the policy of War Communism, which had prevailed during the Russian civil war and led to declines in agricultural and (nonmilitary) industrial production... a policy of substituting a tax instead of requisitions; of allowing the peasantry to dispose of their surplus within the limits of "local trade"; of allowing the development of capitalist concessions to a delimited extent, and of state capitalism. This state capitalism, in industry and agriculture, was allowed a considerable field of possibilities in which to develop, while the proletarian government retained control of the key industries, state banking; that nationalization of the land remained and that the state held a monopoly of foreign trade." *Encyclopedia of Marxism*

5. Chernyshevsky, Pisarev, and Herzen

6. Ivan Turgenev's 1861 novel *Fathers And Sons*

"Eventually the system will reach a point—the word that provides the social cue is "integration"—where the universal dependence of all moments on all other moments makes the talk of causality obsolete. It is idle to search for what might have been a cause within a monolithic society. Only that society itself remains the cause."

Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*

Thinking through the Fall

Ran Priur

To try to end this civilization is to give it too much credit. What we call "civilization" is a flight from reality, a momentary extreme deviation from the ways of the whole wide Universe, and every attempt at it will end no matter what we think, no matter what we do. If we accept this, it changes the focus of our energy: Instead of working for the fall of this civilization, we are getting ready for the fall—preparing to guide it, to navigate it, to survive it and to fight through it.

The most naïve way of thinking about the future, after the escapist fantasy of techno-utopia, is the eco-liberal one that we must stop destroying the Earth right now, or it will be "too late." Even though most people accept this, our civilization is not stopping or even meaningfully slowing down—and none of the historical ones did either. Western industrial civilization will continue to make insane war on all life within its reach until it crashes, because that's what civilizations do. Not only that, but unless all the ecological specialists who made their "last chance" warnings in the 70s and 80s were wrong, it's been too late for a long time now.

Too Late for *What*?

Not for life on Earth. For countless species of fungi and bacteria, who call food what we call toxic waste, the future is looking better than ever. Most plants and insects, and even some small mammals, are in no danger of being exterminated this time around. I'm going to say that even humans are safe. We're so busy mythologizing ourselves as planners and originators that we forget that we're the most flexible and adaptable animal that's ever lived. If civilization were going to exterminate humans, it needed to bring the whole species to a uniform level of utopian domestication and helpless dependence, and then let the whole thing crash. Instead we're making a billion people as tough as rocks with the barbaric global violence that makes "advanced" society possible.

It might be too late for whales, eagles, giant trees, and many other species that we love when it's convenient for us. And it might be too late for all but a few of our surviving non-civilized human cultures. What it's definitely too late for is a non-catastrophic transition to a sustainable society.

Regional famines are caused by erratic weather, by depletion of the soil, by blights in monoculture crops, and by trade that permits large populations to live in desolate regions. All of these are becoming greater and greater threats, and we're only continu-

ing to feed our population by feeding these threats, by borrowing against the Earth's capacity to feed us in the future.

Disease epidemics have ravaged humans ever since we started living in cities and traveling a lot. They're not just remote history—the flu epidemic of 1918 killed 20 million people. Technological society claims to have defeated many diseases, when really it has just been running from them with vaccinations, antibiotics, and chemical toxins. These are cheap fixes that actually weaken our ability to deal with the deeper causes of disease. Again, like someone falling into debt, we have only been increasing our troubles by pushing them into the future.

In the same way, we have been putting off and intensifying the inevitable disastrous effects of chemical pollution, radioactive waste, irrigation that concentrates salt and makes deserts, species extinctions, destruction of the Earth's natural ways of detoxifying, and of course our own increasing alienation from the rest of life. Like participants in a pyramid scheme, we have been buying our "success" by stealing from the people who will come after us—except soon those poor suckers will be us.

I expect the catastrophes to come in waves, a little one here, a bigger one there, teasing us and licking at our feet, until we're in them. The USA has more money, water, and good land than most places, so we won't be worst off, but we've been living so high that we might fall the hardest. Some time when you're on a busy street, in line at the post office, on the bus, look around. Get used to the idea that most of these people will not live a lot longer. Who among them would survive if the food stopped coming into the city for a month? A year? How many would survive as refugees, walking hundreds of miles in weeks? Who would lose the will to live before learning to eat rats and drink from puddles? In the worst epidemics 90% die and 10% live. Which group will that person be in? That one? You?

It seems unfair: The people who will pay are not the ones who borrowed. But what do the payers pay? A few weeks of suffering and an early exit from this horror movie. And what did the borrowers borrow? A lifetime of fear and denial half-covered by shallow pleasures. If we're going to survive *mentally*, we need to unlearn the value system that civilization taught us for its own benefit, and learn a different one, where death is not the unspeakable ultimate bad thing but a normal friendly part of life; where electricity and hot tap water are not necessities that elevate us from humiliating poverty, but minor luxuries, even fads; where living well doesn't mean insulating yourself from everything you can't predict or control, but having honest friends and a day to day life that's meaningful.

People know this. Of futures where humans survive after this system falls, one of the worst imaginable would be where the Earth is barren but the violent selfishness of civilization continues. But we know this as the "postapocalypse" genre of popular adventure movies like The Road Warrior. That's how bad our own world is—that we *fantasize* about a world with war, hunger, and no trees, just because we'd get to be outside all day fighting for something that matters, instead of cowering in sterile buildings rearranging abstractions.

I don't want to romanticize the collapse. It's not going to be a judgment or a "cleansing" where the bad people die and the good people survive. It's not going to have a clear beginning or end and it's mostly not going to be fun. We will be throwing the stinking dead bodies of our families into pits and kneeling in garbage coughing up blood. But we may also get to break the pavement off the streets with sledge hammers and plant gardens. It's what's really going to happen: this civilization will fall, humans will survive, the Earth will survive, and we will have an opening to try something new. Within that range of imagined futures, even the bad extreme is not so bad, and at the good extreme we see the Earth quickly healing to its former fecundity, and people living peacefully with other life, and never sliding out of balance again.

But why shouldn't we? Historically when great centralized empires fall, younger ones at their edges grow and take their place. Why should it be different this time?

Now it begins to get tricky. Obviously we don't just want to knock the system down to get revenge on it for forcing us to go to school. We want to make it so our descendants can live a million generations without ever falling back into this nightmare and dragging the Earth with them. How can we do this? Is it even possible?

What is the deeper disease, of which corporations and factories and police are merely symptoms, and how can we learn immunity? If this is the question, then the answer is not to just be Indians again, because Indians clearly did not have immunity and were overrun by civilization everywhere. Maybe we can return to the same economy, but if we also return to the same consciousness, I see no reason civilization won't overrun us again.

Indians are always quoted saying they "don't understand" civilization, and this is precisely why they're so vulnerable. It's why, when Columbus landed, people ran out to bring him gifts, instead of... Instead of what? What *could* they have done? The Seminoles went into the swamps and fought a guerrilla war and didn't do much better. How can a non-coercive society defeat a coercive one? That's what we're here to figure out, and whatever it is, it's not going to come from a perspective on civilization that says "We do not understand why you do not hear the Earth screaming." It will come from a perspective that says "Oh yeah, civilization. Been there, done that." It is only here, in the belly of the Beast, that we can learn it.

I'm assuming that the permanent transcendence of civilized consciousness is possible, but we'd better not assume it's inevitable. We don't have to do anything to end any given civilization, but to end civilization in general, to stop one after another from rising and falling until humans go extinct, we will have to take focused, inspired, and audacious positive action. This action will be deep—more on the level of emotions than ideas or physical tools; it will be more about being alive than being right; and it will be done with, or upon, people with the full-blown emotional plague, starting with ourselves.

Now we're walking a dangerous line. We have to go deep into civilization to get over it, but not so deep that we cripple the Earth. Oops! It looks like we've already failed both ways: By the time this civilization crashes, the Earth will be badly wounded, and

still many people will be fighting to start the game again or keep it going—not just hard-driving white yuppies, not just the super-elite preserving technology in their fortified compounds, but working people all over the world, who, when they're programmed successfully, are programmed to value laboring to gain advantage for their families in zerosum games of money and social status.

All the people in the world who have lost sight of their oneness with the Earth, but not yet gained sight of the emptiness of their striving, will be fighting to rebuild the farms and factories and schools and offices and governments, and we're going to have to live with these people, and stand up to their abuse and protect the Earth from them, as long as it takes for them to wake up.

Even if it takes only a lifetime, that means *your* lifetime. Even if we can and do transcend civilization, nobody alive now will get to see this transcendence as a sudden happy event. For us it will be a process, drawn out, messy, and unresolved.

I don't know what exactly is going to happen, but I can guess! First, before things start to loosen up, they will get even tighter. For generations the most powerful, brainy, and wicked people in the world have dreamed of a high-tech global security state, and this is their big chance, their little moment on the stage. We will see retinal scans, chip implants, and every computerization of authority that you can imagine, and to everyone's surprise it will all be an embarrassing failure, because systems run by technology are easier to scam and inspire less loyalty than systems run by people.

Now we've got several things going on at once. Systems are being run by machines, so people are forgetting how to run things— but the machines are not sustainable, and the deadly disasters are striking closer and bigger. And different parts of the world are at different stages in all this, and they're probably fighting each other.

Systems will break down in many ways and not at the same time. If somehow the whole world's technological infrastructure fell hard all at once, then it would not be rebuilt, and to rebuild something like it would take hundreds of years, because no one remembers the older technologies that the newer ones were built on. But I don't see this happening without a science-fictiony super-catastrophe.

In a complex and uneven breakdown, some societies will still have high-tech industry, and they will certainly use it to try to consume societies that don't. Like a fire that goes to where there's still fuel, the present system will live on where there is enough oil and emotional distress to keep it going. Elsewhere, depending on how many people get left alone to try things, we might have a spectacular variety of local economies and societies. Then we can work out in practice what we can now only argue about: How much technology, and which ones, can we get away with without going out of balance?

In any case, all over the world, the conflict between addiction to civilization and transcendence of it will continue. It will be fought with stories and ideas, with competing cultures and technologies, and sometimes with deadly force.

Violence is a shallow and temporary solution, but sometimes a shallow and temporary solution is exactly what's needed. Using force in exceptional cases does not make us "just the same" as people who use it habitually—the psychology is completely

different. With discipline, it is possible to use non-consensual force and then to back out of that world and heal the damage, just as it's possible to go into debt and then pay it off.

But also, it is important that the catastrophic failures of systems are seen as the natural result of civilization, and not of resistance to it. If both sides think civilization would succeed if it wasn't for the dissenters, then they will keep fighting each other forever. Calling for the overthrow of industrial society is a bad public strategy, because it gives civilization's servants a way to blame us when their own plans fail. When people starve in an economic collapse, they can say, "See, this is what the anti-civilization people were asking for." But if we *predict* catastrophes, and explain how they're built into the system, and save some people through our own systems, then we are giving civilization enough slack to hang itself, and skillfully inviting people to our side.

I think we're going to do it. For one thing, the oil and coal that power industrial civilization have mostly been used up, and much of what's left will take more energy to extract than its burning will generate. Non-industrial civilizations will emerge, maybe like ancient or medieval civilizations with scavenged technology, probably powered by slaves. But the first time around they had surprise—they succeeded by conquering naïve Indians and other people with no experience resisting a more "advanced" society. Next time they will be fighting cultures forged in the deepest fires of the techno-industrial megamachine—the cultures that we are creating now, even if we don't know it.

I've made a lot of assumptions in this article, and ignored many potential events, some of which will actually happen. China could launch an all-out nuclear attack on the USA. Or the breakdowns and changes could be less extreme and take hundreds of years. I'd like to see people with different knowledge and ideas get into a wide dialogue on the post-civilized future. It's possible to do too much predicting, but right now we are not doing enough, especially with so many people accepting the dominant predictions that technology will fix everything, or else humans will go extinct so there's no use trying. Probably the most important thing happening right now is something I've completely overlooked. I remember what an old Soviet dissident said: "History is like a mole, burrowing unobserved." Get ready.

Initial and Final Communiqué: As I Walk Through the Valley in Darkness...

It Seems I am Mostly Alone.

Ann I. Solation

(My Individual Liberation Front)

"People will be together only in a common wretchedness as long as each isolated being refuses to understand that a gesture of liberation, however weak and clumsy it may be, always bears an authentic communication, an adequate personal message. The repression which strikes down the libertarian rebel falls on everyone: everyone's blood flows with the blood of a murdered Durruti. Whenever freedom retreats one inch, there is a hundred-fold increase in the weight of the order of things. Excluded from authentic participation, men's actions stray into fragile illusion of being together, or else remain locked in its opposite, the brutal, total rejection of social life. They swing from one to the other like a pendulum turning the hands on the clock face of death.

Love in its turn swells the illusion of unity. Most of the time it founders and is aborted in triviality. Its songs are crippled by the fear of always returning to the same single note: the icy fear, whether there are two of us or ten, of finishing up alone as before. What drives us to despair is not the immensity of our unsatisfied desires, but the moment when our newborn passion discovers its own emptiness...No love is possible in an unhappy world...Are you ready to smash the reefs of the old world before they wreck your desires?" —Raoul Vaneigem,

Revolution of Everyday Life

As 2006 unfolds, there is an unprecedented response by the state to radical environmentalism and eco-anarchist activity. This response is not all that surprising given the tremendous damage (well over $100 million) inflicted on earth destroyers and animal torturers by groups like the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and Animal Liberation Front (ALF) over the past ten years (with until recently, only limited arrests). Add to this, the Federal government's need to save face after a much-hyped (yet bungled) "war on terrorism", and we are left with a substantial blow which is having a devastating impact on what was an already waning and disjointed movement. Such a

significant hit by the state should act as a kick in the ass for us to take a hard look at how we might more effectively challenge the vast network of control.

While it is essential to provide support (and strategize what that really means) for those who remain strong and retain their integrity in light of attacks by the forces of control (harassment, intimidation, grand juries, indictment, incarceration, and conviction), it is also important to remain constant in our continual revolt against this society. In doing so, it is imperative that we honestly and critically examine our strategic and tactical goals and practice. To not do so would only lead us into the realm of constant ineffectiveness and would be a suicidal termination to our particular role in a resistance to the global nightmare many of us wish to abort. Strategies and tactics need to remain uncongealed and pliable, taking into account current realities and situations, as well as relevant historical context. This is not meant to be a proposal for a *new* type of action, nor a return to older tactics, but instead some ideas to consider and questions to ask ourselves. Hopefully people from an assortment of positions are having serious discussions on such matters. To not be, is to consider our lives as insurrectionaries, revolutionaries, or those simply wishing to end the current order, a mere game.

Questioning the Cell Structure

For many, the cell structure model has offered a favorable alternative to the tedious, hierarchical, and ineffectiveness of organizations and the mass movement, often held up by the Left and militaristic movements. It offers autonomy, and so people thought, a higher level of security. In light of recent arrests of purported ELF cells via the snitching by one or more of numerous cell's alleged key members, and the subsequent flipping and cooperation with the state by others said to be involved, it is time to reevaluate this mode of operation in not only ecoactions, but all underground or illegal activity.

Let us start by taking a closer look at the cell structure. Cell structured groups operate independently and autonomously from one another, but may be grouped together under an organized name, philosophy, or issue. It is a form of guerilla tactic that has been success- fully used around the world for organizing resistance against a greater or more comprehensive military power (its historical use is long and worthy of extensive study, although you'll have to do your own independent research here). The various cells may or may not be subject to control by a higher authority, but for the sake of *anarchist* strategy, we will only concern ourselves with the ones which are truly autonomous in theory and practice; those who are not merely autonomous for the direct actions, but for their entire existence (ie conceiving, examining, deploying, and assessing actions, and other internal dynamics).

The most obvious advantage of the cell structure is the autonomy it provides, which allows for more diverse action, stemming from the cell's priorities, skills, and goals, while still being able to link, support, and be supported within a larger collaborative effort. This collaboration is typically based on ideas rather than concrete activity, although similarity of action may also form cohesion. For instance, ELF cells should be unaware of the membership (or existence) of other cells and do not have a centralized

location or infrastructure, yet they are connected to each other in their adoption or adherence to shared "guiding principles", or as it is often crudely presented, their "ideology".

This aspect of the cell structure, if successful, creates distance between cells, and provides security and continued effectiveness, and at the same time, offers a larger context to the actions. Authorities have more experience and aptitude in dealing with hierarchical organizations, which they can more easily disrupt, infiltrate, and destroy by focusing on key members or leaders. This separation also helps secure the longevity of the movement, since the interruption or termination of one cell should (hypothetically) not interfere with other cells.

Naturally, there are also some considerable disadvantages to the cell model of organizing attack; some are inherent in this form of structure, while others are recent problems in application. One significant issue with the cell structure (although certainly not exclusive to it) is the division of labor intrinsic in its use. Since there begins to develop a separation between those taking these types of actions, and everyone else, they become the experts or specialists in action. This is compounded when more technical or specialized skills are required. This isn't necessarily an insurmountable or unequivocal problem. Considering the immensity of the situation we are up against, it might not be that bad of an idea for people to be attacking with their own unique skills. But perhaps social struggles can be more effective if they are devoid of "elite" cells and are more informed by the concept of generalized revolt. Acts that are more easily reproducible for more people offer inspiration that anyone can connect to and act from, rather than simply be in awe of.

As a group delves deeper into illegality, and wish to conceal their identity, there may begin to develop new dilemmas. Cells that are comprised of folks who maintain a connection with activist, anarchist, or sub-cultural scenes, or those who are semi-underground, risk their safety and effectiveness by remaining partially visible in realms which may already be watched. Often this is even further complicated by the differing needs of various members of a cell (jobs, families, friends, etc). But those who are completely underground also commonly suffer from an assortment of issues, from delusion, depression, paranoia, to the isolation of being removed not only from their peers and a larger social movement, but from society in general. They often, by necessity, live very dull and marginal lives aside from the brief moments of action. Social dynamics in a group frequently become distorted from the stress of the situation combined with the extreme detachment. These problems can be minimized through healthy communication and selfcare, but the dynamics of being underground do create specific problems to be honest about and deal with.

There are also some contemporarily specific problems with the usage (properly and improperly) of the cell structure and its practice in our current context. As stated above, members of one particular cell should not be cognizant of others' association in different cells. Their relationship is purely philosophical. Any physical relationship between different cells is detrimental to the longevity of the goals, the security of its

members, and their general effectiveness. Currently, however, there seems to have been a number of grave mistakes made by some of the recently arrested, as certain members claim to know the make-up of many different cells, and are vocal about it. This may occur when the same individuals are members of various cells, especially concerning when cells inhabit an incestuous scene. Also, as people move on with their lives and the vigilance of an underground warrior wears off and they surround themselves with less militant people, reliving the good ol' days and less security conscious conversations may occur (and, as we have found out recently, sometimes on tape). These are just a few of the possibilities which may come back to haunt whenever one is engaged in illegal activity with other people, and especially in an immature and disjointed movement, devoid of a sincere culture of resistance.

The fact is, today's accessory may be tomorrow's stool pigeon, and that doesn't even account for agent provocateurs, or those purposely planted by state agencies to incite certain behavior in order to trap people into illegal activity (or prospective illegal activity). This means that trust between individuals may never be certain, so extreme mindfulness is always needed. Hints as to people's deeper commitment, behaviors, and strengths under pressure can never be fully measured, but careful analysis and diligent awareness is a must. The line between paranoia and caution is a difficult one to distinguish at times. Often indications of people's true character, or what people are capable of, can be revealed over time. It is best to slowly progress through levels of seriousness, using instinct combined with conservative judgment all along the way, being sure to never be pressured into prematurely furthering experiments. While the cell structure may be a useful method for action in some cases, it must be employed with extreme caution, and probably better left for marginally illegal activity, such as minor disruptions, vandalism, and riotous activity. That is, until a more distinct war situation is upon us.

Revisiting the Lone Gunman Theory

When it comes down to it, however deep we are in relationship with another person, or group of people, however long we have known them, or whatever interests or activities we have shared with them in the past, we are ultimately alone. In our current context, we can only truly trust ourselves, and even then never completely, if we consider the myriad of dysfunction thrust upon us, and that we consciously and unconsciously perpetuate. At least we can help create certain situations in which we are only responsible for *our own* actions, we solely bear the brunt of its outcome, and it may only be possible to implicate ourselves. This is not an appeal for cutting ties with our friends, families and communities of desire. For what is life worth if not to share its joys, sorrows, and moments with others we care about? Nor is it a call for running and hiding, as a social element is necessary for any significant transformation. No, this is a tactical advisement for those who wish to take extreme and militant direct action against the system, and in regard to those situations particularly.

When one decides to enter the road into underground action, it is best to keep specifics to one's self, and, depending on the extremity, even in generalities. At this

point in time, due to the higher level of sur- veillance, repression, and snitching, or until an open war is upon us, acting alone in more extreme actions seems the wisest move. While there are certainly some drawbacks to solitary action, for instance, more elaborate or coordinated activity is severely limited (although there are still some interesting possibilities along these lines), acting alone provides a number of advantages over group efforts. Even more so than in small groups of relative affinity, by going solo one can act more closely to their own desires and take full advantage of their unique skills, as well as better safeguard against their limitations. Only we know our full potential in the negative and positive. It is also easier to slip in and out and integrate your activities more fluidly when there is nobody else to consider. There is no group to answer or justify to, so a secret life is more attainable under these circumstances. Another key to acting alone is the exclusion of the less healthy dynamics of group activity, which often, despite our best egalitarian intentions, are still typically riddled with problems. This is fine if it is a group house situation, an infoshop collective, or a love triangle. These explorations are important and working through these issues are a part of living as an anarchist, but drama, jealousy, insecurity, possessiveness, dishonesty, control issues, and the likes are not things to bring into an action. When achieving serious immediate goals and when our own safety and security is on the line, these issues are best left to be dealt with at home, work, or in the bedroom.

Probably the most important reason to take action alone is for security reasons. Any glance through the "State Repression" section of *Green Anarchy* or the various internet sites will show that most people's integrity in stressful and troublesome situations is shaky at best, let alone more excruciating or prolonged torture scenarios. When taking action that could land one in prison for huge periods of time, is it not best to have only yourself to worry about trusting? It is simple, if only you know what you have done, only you have the potential to rat yourself out. Sure, people can lie about or project onto you activities to which you can be convicted, but that is out of your control. What is in one's control is the level of security placed around oneself, and the less who know what we do, the better.

In times where solidarity is glaringly weak—unlike struggles that have a deeper cultural element, where resistance is the culture people are born into and die within—we may not be able to expect much more from some. Also, without an *overt* war situation (although some of us understand we *are* in a war), people's privilege, in many cases, will often override solidarity against the state. This is a sad and unfortunate reality that we are learning all too well (and in some cases too late), as people trade their integrity and friends for less prison time, in hopes of sooner continuing with their carved out niches and professions in this society. This makes acting in hyperanonymity and in seclusion all the more appealing, at least in regard to underground action.

Alive on the Edge of Shadows

It is tough, at times, to exist in this schizophrenic and often paranoid state of being; exhaustively open and honest about huge portions of our feelings, thoughts, and lives, breaking down the walls of isolation and alienation, and yet, concealing from

even those closest to us some of our most daring, significant, and inspiring ideas and activities. This is not only emotionally challenging, ripping at our very being, but how we actually achieve this separation with any amount of success is overwhelming and seemingly unattainable, and certainly not too agreeable in our mythical "perfect anarchist world". That is until one recognizes what is at stake: our freedom. We did not create this world, and those of us whose lifeblood is boiling with a disgust of it and whose every breath is steamy with venom for it, must come to grips with the contradictions we face, and the self-protection necessary to move through this reality while still living our desires, and attempting to dismantle civilization. Safety is an illusion, one that also offers complacency and acquiescence. Thoughtful maneuvering and mindful action seems the only way to act consciously and directly, while limiting unwanted negative repercussions.

Walking in and out of parallel and contradicting worlds can be difficult, and it will mean different things to each of us. For some, it may mean acting in isolation from most of society, ala Ted Kaczynski. For others it may mean a double life as a daytime straight 9 to 5er and nighttime eco-warrior. But for most it will be an amorphous and spontaneous existence in community with like-minded folks who share different projects based on affinity, and each taking responsibility for shared and solo subversive activity depending on the circumstances, while being clear about the boundaries. Solo action does not merely mean acting in segregation. There are some very interesting possibilities that have been attempted in the past, and many more to be explored with individuals connecting anonymously for more elaborate or coordinated activity. The potential is endless, both in method and target. No one should expect that their actions will ultimately be the act which destroys the system, but each of us, acting from our own will and passions, with our own unique skills, may combine to create a tangible resistance. From this, inspiration for further activity and a culture of resistance may grow; one that encompasses more than exclusively isolated anonymous nighttime action. We may walk into the darkness alone, but the shadows we dance alongside of once there are unanticipated and incalculable.

Youth Liberation:

Burn the Schools and Destroy the Media!

In order for civilized villagers in Southeast Asia to tame a wild elephant and use it for agricultural labor, they must first break its spirit. This is accomplished by luring an adolescent animal away from others of its species, and then chaining each of its legs securely to the ground. The elephant cannot move, cannot seek assistance from family or friends, cannot independently take care of itself. The poor creature is totally dependent, imprisoned, and surrounded by strange thin-haired apes, who laugh at or applaud its pain and misery. After this goes on for days, the elephant's wild spirit is broken, and it becomes a docile plough animal.

School serves a similar purpose for civilizing and breaking the spirits of young humans. At the tender age of 4 to 6 a child has just begun to articulate clearly in complicated symbolic language, as well as starting to master complex physical and mechanical tasks. It is at this point that vulnerable, fragile young humans are forcibly taken away from their family home, human neighborhood, and eco-system. With the threat of police violence and imprisonment or at the least kidnapping of their child, waved at parents to ensure compliance, countless children are loaded on mass transport carriers, and carted away. For the next thirteen years they spend as much as eight hours a day with hundreds of other displaced youth in massive, sterile, unfriendly institutional buildings. At these institutions they are trained, under constant threat of various cruel and unusual psychological punishments, to sit still, follow orders unquestioningly, and most importantly to fear what might happen if they ever stray outdoors beyond the walls or yard of their little prison and the watchful eyes of their overseers.

At the same time as young children are being schooled, another powerful force begins to fully eclipse and dominate their perception of the world. For many children in the first world, the flickering of the cathode ray behind TV sets and computer monitors, and the recorded sound vibrations of radio, record, tape and CDs may become essential to their perception at the earliest developmental stage possible—when their hearing and vision become clear and distinct senses. In other cases the child's parents attempt to defer this experience until their kids reach the age of 3 or 5 or even 14—but beyond that point it becomes virtually impossible to save any human from the brainwashing experience of the commercial corporate media.

Sometimes these sounds and images offer children a rebellious voice, which seems to counter and subvert their schooling by extolling the pursuit of maximum "cool" social status via product consumption. At other times the media simply parrots the same messages of obedience, fear and conformity first learned in the educational system. At

all times TV, radio, stereos, computers and other electronic media are defining and delimiting a young human's existence, from the level of the physiological to that of the mythical.

Fight the Real Enemy

Certain contributors to this publication have suggested that those who wish to physically fight civilization should prioritize attacks on biotechnology and nanotechnology. These developments, which are not currently accepted as essential and inevitable by a majority of civilized people, make imminent the possibility of total ecological collapse at a basic molecular and genetic level—as well as the more frightening possibility of total human control over the basic building blocks of life, a "post-ecology world" as the proponents of nanotech admit they are working towards. All these reasons put biotech and nanotech high on the list of important targets for calculated outbursts of rage against the machine.

Yet at the same time, in giving material manifestation to one's love of life and hatred of the gears of death, informed people should not forget that a few main institutions are primarily responsible for molding human beings into citizens, consumers and capitalists— namely: mass corporate media, the nuclear family, and the compulsory education system. Finding ways to attack and transcend these evil influences is essential to moving beyond civilization. Of the three, only the mass media and the schools have clearly identifiable centralized offices of operation. And just as the people most essentially responsible for killing the earth have names and addresses, so the buildings and equipment which are most important for indoctrinating youth and maintaining control of the minds of adults are quite obvious in any town or city—they are usually clearly listed in telephone books, and in many cases (unlike prisons, government centers, or resource extraction corporation offices) they have little security to speak of.

This is Personal and Political

I spent 13 years being educated in the public schools, I have watched loved ones waste decades working at them, and I have even spent several years as a wage slave in the school system myself. Based on this experience, I have decided that from an anarchist point of view, and especially a green anarchist viewpoint, there is almost nothing redeeming about the experience of schooling and the public school system. Any helpful ideas and emotional support that youth get from a stray iconoclastic teacher, tutor, or counselor are completely outweighed by the nature of the educational system as a whole: a mass bureaucratic machine of increasingly militaristic and inherently prison-like institutions, whose admitted purpose is to mold humans from their natural wild state into the roles of good citizens and docile workers. For anyone who claims to oppose government, authoritarianism, or hierarchy (let alone civilization) to apologize for or support the public school system is sheer hypocrisy and back-stepping. Though my personal economic survival is still partially dependent on wage slavery in the public schools, I would be overjoyed to see every school burned to the ground.

259

If you doubt that the youth of today are turned into docile consumer drones by the double whammy of school and the media, I suggest that you spend some time around masses of young people. Listen to the way small children parrot the lines of movies and TV shows, and structure their entire identities and daily routines around *youth liberation: burn the schools* them. Observe the vacuous, worn out, dragged down lack of curiosity in many high school students—that is, beyond interest in product consumption, and media icon worship.

Making Some Space to Think In

Most American public schools are severely understaffed and underfunded. They can ill afford to hire increased security or to rebuild following serious sabotage or attacks. If a campaign of such actions took place on a national level, where would this leave the youth of America? Well, not locked up in schools for starters. And, in a world where consumption and production reign divine, idle hands **can** be the tools of the devil.

Of course in such a scenario a lot of youth autonomy would be recouped by real prisons and private schools—and certainly by television. Unless of course, the equipment and buildings needed to broadcast and receive this pacifying influence were also under constant attack, at both a local and international level, by diverse small autonomous groups. The same strategy could also be used against the Internet, or any other electronic corporate media tools of social control.

If first world youth can't go to school, watch television or surf the web on a regular basis, and their parents can't reliably entertain, supervise, and pacify them with these innovations, what the hell happens then? I don't know—but it sounds like a scenario that's a lot more encouraging of spontaneous revolt than our current situation.

Providing Alternatives

When and if thousands of bored kids start roaming the streets in hordes, it behooves anarchists to offer them access to radical ideas and tools for helping them deal with and understand their world. To this end, anarchists should start right now building up publicly accessible libraries, free school seminars, and personal repertoires of sociopolitical theory, historical knowledge, and more important by far, real hands-on skills of all kinds: from creating art and music to building and fixing your own cars, bombs, and bicycles; from permaculture to wild food gathering and hunting; from marksmanship to conflict resolution. I mean, don't we want to learn how to really live and share that with the next generation?

We are All in Prison

I don't want to denigrate the uniquely awful experience of those actually incarcerated in real penal institutions, but most individual humans on the planet right now live day to day existences which are basically not so different from prisoners. Even for most of us living in first world luxury, from cradle to grave, school to work, with the gaps filled in by TV, our minds and bodies are not free.

I wish I had never spent the hours of my youth locked up in school or numbing the pain of that experience with more hours spent staring at a television screen and a computer monitor. In some ways it's too late for me now, my spirit has been broken—

but, just like a tamed elephant that one day snaps and tramples its overseers, I too can lash out and fight back against the voices that bent my soul, and in doing so maybe I can help to save the next generation from having their spirits broken.

Are you with me?

Play Fiercely!

Our Lives are at Stake!

Anarchist Practice as a Game of Subversion

Wolfi Landstreicher

When I first encountered anarchist ideas in the late 1970s and early 1980s, it was quite common to talk about play and the subversive game, thanks to the influence of the Situationist International and better aspects of the counterculture. There is a lot to be drawn from thinking of our practice on these terms. In particular, I think that looking at anarchist revolutionary practice as a subversive game is a fruitful way of understanding anarchist aims, principles and methodologies as a basis for developing our strategies and tactics.

The thing that has distinguished anarchism from other conceptions of radical transformation is that anarchists have generally considered their ideas to be something to live here and now as much as possible as well as goals to be realized on a global scale. While there have certainly been anarchists who have chosen to turn their perspective into mere politics, the idea of living anarchy immediately gives anarchism a scope that goes far beyond such meager visions, opening it to the whole of life.

This aspect of anarchism is what makes anarchist practice resemble a game. Let me explain. A game could be described as an attempt to achieve a specific aim using only those means that fit certain conditions accepted by those involved for the enjoyment they find in following these conditions, even though they may lower efficiency. The aim of anarchist practice would be to achieve a world free of all domination, without state, economy or the myriad of institutions through which our current existence is defined. I cannot claim to know what the most efficient way to get there would be. From an anarchist point of view, there has not yet been a successful revolution, so we have no models for efficiency. But for those who desire this end, not out of a sense of duty as a moral cause, but rather as a reflection on a grand scale of what they want immediately, for their own lives, petty calculations of efficiency in achieving this end are hardly a priority. I know that I would rather attempt to achieve this end in a way that gives me the immediate joy of beginning to take back my life here and now in defiance of the social order I aim to destroy.

Here is where anarchist "principles"—the "rules" of the game—come in. The refusal to choose masters, promote laws, go to the negotiating table with the enemy, etc are based on the desire to make our lives our own here and now, to play this game in a way that gives us joy immediately. So we choose these "rules" not out of a sense of moral duty nor because they are the most efficient way for achieving our goals, but rather for the joy we get from living on these terms.

In this light, we can also understand why in the area in which compromise is most forcefully imposed on us—the realm of survival in a world based upon economic relationships, which always opposes the fullness of life—we will choose whatever methods are necessary to keep us alive. (How else could we play this game?) But we will do what necessity imposes on us in these situations (work, theft, scamming, etc) as temporary measures for sustaining our capacity to steal back our lives and fight for the world we desire, maintaining our defiance in the face of this imposition. This is, in fact, one aspect of the subversive game in practice, twisting the impositions of this world against it.

Here, I feel it would be good to draw a distinction between the outlaw and the anarchist who is playing the game of subversion. Of course, every anarchist is to some extent an outlaw, since we all reject the idea that we should determine our activity on the basis of laws. But most outlaws are not playing the subversive game. Rather they are centered on the much more immediate game of outwitting the forces of order without seeking to destroy them. For the anarchist revolutionary outlaw, this immediate game is simply a small part of a much greater game. She is making a much bigger wager than that of the immediate "crime". He is grasping his life now in order to use it to grasp the world.

So this game combines the goal of destroying the ruling order so that we can create a world free of all domination with the desire to grasp our lives here and now, creating them as far as possible on our own terms. This points to a methodology of practice, a series of means that reflect our immediate desire to live our lives on our own terms.

This methodology can be summarized as follows: 1) direct action (acting on our own toward what we desire rather than delegating action to a representative); 2) autonomy (refusal to delegate decisionmaking to any organizational body; organization only as coordination of activities in specific projects and conflicts); 3) permanent conflict (ongoing battle toward our end without any compromise); 4) attack (no mediation, pacification or sacrifice; not limiting ourselves to mere defense or resistance, but aiming for the destruction of the enemy). This methodology reflects both the ultimate aim and the immediate desire of anarchist revolutionary practice.

But if we are to consider this practice as a game, it is necessary to understand what type of game this is. We are not dealing with a game in which two (or more) opponents are competing against each other in an effort to achieve the same goal. In such a game, there could be room for compromise and negotiation. On the contrary, the subversive game is a conflict between two absolutely opposed aims, the aim of dominating everything and the aim of putting an end to all domination. Ultimately, the only way this game could be won is through one side completely destroying the other. Thus, there is no place for compromise or negotiation, especially not for the anarchists who are clearly in a position of weakness where to "compromise" would, in fact, be to give up ground.

The aims, principles, methodology, and understanding of the nature of the battle at hand describe the anarchist revolutionary game. As with any game, it is from this

basis that we develop strategy and tactics. Without such a basis, talk of strategy and tactics is just so much babble. While tactics are something we can only talk about in the specific contexts of deciding what moves to make at specific points, it is possible to speak in a more general way about strategy.

Strategy is the question of how to go about reaching one's goals. This requires an awareness of certain factors. First of all what is the context in which one is trying to achieve these goals? What relationship do the goals have with the context? What means are available for achieving these goals? Who might act as accomplices in this endeavor? These questions take on an interesting twist for anarchists, because our goal (the eradication of all domination) is not just something we want for a distant future. Not being good christians, we aren't interested in sacrificing ourselves for future generations. Rather, we want to experience this goal immediately in our lives and in our battle against the ruling order. So we need to examine these questions in terms of this dual aspect of our goal.

The question of context involves analyzing the broader global context, the nature of the ruling institutions, the broader tendencies that are developing and the potential points of weakness in the ruling order and the areas for potential rupture. It also involves examining the immediate context of our lives, our voluntary and involuntary relationships and encounters, the immediate terrains that we traverse, our immediate projects and so on.

The relationship between what we are striving for and the general context of this social order is one of total conflict. Because we are striving not only to destroy domination, but also to live immediately against it, we are enemies of this order. This conflict is deeply ingrained in our daily lives, in the variety of activities that are imposed on us by the rule of survival over life. So this conflict is central to determining our strategy.

Since part of our goal is to grasp our lives back here and now, our means need to embody this. In other words, any means that involve surrendering our grasp on our lives (such as voting) are already a failure. But this is where it becomes necessary to distinguish what activities constitute such a surrender (voting, litigation, petitioning, bargaining with the enemy) and which can be incorporated into the reappropriation of one's life and the attack against institutions of domination (for example, a temporary job, certain sorts of scams, etc, that give one access to certain resources, information and skills that are of use in one's subversive activity).

Our accomplices could be anyone, regardless of whether they have a conscious anarchist critique or not, who use means in their specific battles against what immediately dominates and oppresses them that correspond to our own—means through which they are actively grasping their lives and struggles as their own immediately. Our complicity would last only as long as they use such means, ending the moment that they give up their autonomy or begin to bargain with their rulers.

Having established this basis, here are a few areas for discussing strategy:

Survival vs the fullness of life

Strategies for continually overturning the dominance of survival over our lives, for making our projects and desires determine how we deal with survival to the greatest extent possible—for example, when one needs to take a job, using it against the institution of work and the economy through theft, giving things away, sabotage, using it as a free school to pick up skills for one's own projects, always seeing it as a temporary means to ends of one's own, and being prepared to quit as soon as one's desire requires it.

Solidarity

There are two distinct aspects to this. 1) There are many flareups of social conflict that partially reflect the desire to take back life and destroy domination and that use a methodology like that described above, but without a conscious total critique on the part of the participants. How do we connect our conscious, ongoing conflict with the ruling order to these flare-ups of conflict in a way that fits with our aims, "principles" and methodology? Since evangelism and "moral leadership" conflict with these "principles" by turning us into pawns of a cause that we are trying to promote, we need to think in terms of complicity and straightforwardness. 2) Then there are the times when the enemy grabs some of our comrades and accomplices and locks them up. There is a habit in these situations of falling into a framework of support/social work/charity. In terms of our aims and desires, I think this is a huge mistake. Without denying the necessity in building defense funds and keeping communication open, our primary question is how to turn this situation into a way for attacking the ruling order. The anti-prison activities of the French group Os Cangaceiros give some food for thought here.

Small-scale, everyday ruptures

There are events that happen every day on a small scale that cause temporary breaks in the social routine. How can we use these subversively against this order, to expose the reality of this society and to open other possibilities? How can we create such ruptures in a way that undermines resignation and acceptance of normality?

Large scale ruptures

Disasters, riots, local and regional uprisings all cause ruptures that can reveal a great deal about the ruling order and that move people to self-activity, generosity and a temporary rejection of the moral order of this society. How can we take advantage of such situations in a timely manner? What can we do to help extend the awareness and the rejection of the moral order beyond the moment? How can we expose the various politicians and bureaucrats of rupture—political parties, union leaders, militants and activists—without coming across as another one of that parasitical bunch?

So there is a vast and challenging game before us, one that I believe could make our lives into something marvelous. It is a game we have to play fiercely, because in this game our lives are the stake. There are no guarantees, no sure-fire methods for winning. But for each of us, as individuals, there is one sure-fire way to lose. That is to give in, to resign oneself to what the ruling order imposes.

Who's ready to play?

endgame

IN THE FASCINATING GAME OF CHESS much is made of the opening move. The opponent who is savvy to the canon of opening analysis, which has been ongoing for centuries, will respond almost automatically. The opening moves among the initiated may be made quickly once the first move and its response have been made. Slow, thought-out deliberation rules the middle game that provides oppor- tunity for some creative tactics born of the actual dynamic of the game at hand. The endgame arrives when the playing field of men and pawns are reduced in number sufficiently for precise and calculated conclusion. The queen is absent from the endgame, having been removed by mutual agreement through a series of moves designed to remove her powerful influence over the terrain, so the king and his closest allies... the church hierarchy (bishops), the military bosses (knights) and their soldiers (pawns) can get down to the business of winning or maneuvering into stalemate. But the queen's potential return is decisive to the outcome. If she shows back up, the game is over unless the opposing queen returns pretty much within the same move. All remaining pawns on the board are potential queens. Any and every pawn that advances to the eighth rank is promoted to...becomes...a queen, an exchange of gender and rank. Experienced chess players rarely play to the actual final winning move (checkmate) in the endgame. The balance between creative finesse and sheer calculability seen in the middle game has tilted heavily toward the mathematical in the end game. Sober, correct analysis. Economy of efficiency..."rules", until the end is precisely foreseeable to both sides and the loser concedes the game.

Games can mirror the rules and rituals of the culture that gives rise to them. Ritual is the deliberate closing-off of a segment or zone of the immediate moment, inwardly *and* outwardly, simultaneously. It is a willful ignorance attempting to ameliorate a broken social bond originally lost perhaps upon the shock of the killing and mutilation of a tyrannical ego in the midst. Chimpanzees, our closest cousins, have been reported to collectively assassinate the "alpha male" among them in a sudden eruption of adrenaline coursing through the entire tribe in an ecstatic moment. The palpable sense of shock and relief is tense and wants resolution. The humyn cerebral cortex is sufficiently complex that psychic sensitivity suggests ritual response. Deliberate, easily repeatable ritual ameliorates, but does not resolve such psychic tension. Ecstatic, spontaneous drumming and dance can and does. It is seen among chimps and humyns and is nonritual, but among humans can become ***Ritualized,*** thereby canceling its immediate effectiveness. The ritual response among humyns is sufficient to have established ritual culture, which has elaborately ***Evolved*** into symbolic culture and its
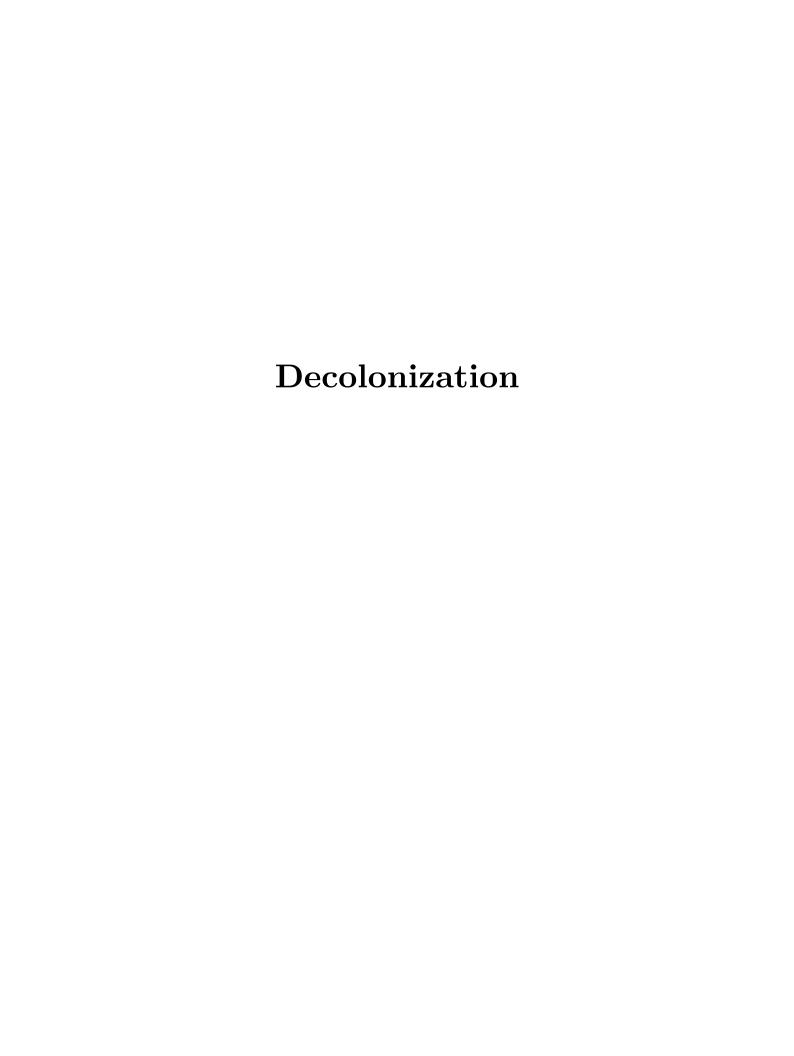
self referential authority. Cognitive reflection probably co-arises with the leap from ritual to symbol. The limit of symbolic culture is the reign of value-driven utilitarianism in its every guise...an aberrance but not at all *an inevitability*. The original ritual could not have been a necessity giving rise eventually to the supposed inevitability of theworld-as-it-is. It was a deliberate act, not a necessary one. Otherwise it wouldn't have been ritual.

Games can easily become obsessions to minds entangled in symbolic culture. Symbolic culture itself is carried out obsessively and with deadly seriousness. But there seems to have always been those among us who cannot and will not engage it with the ***Appropriate*** seriousness...those we call children. Where the depravity of symbolic culture has most advanced, the term "terrible-twos" describes the perhaps strongest moment of nature's resistance to ritual/symbolic authority among humyns. A child in that particular stage of growth will scarcely submit to even the simplest rituals of eating, sleeping and shitting much less the more complex ones concerning proprieties of selfhood and respect of property. But the natural resistance can and often does continue into later stages of development and into adulthood. Laughter in a solemn setting and other such misbehavior is symptomatic of a level of UN-domestication...a lack of civility, childish frivolity worthy of stern glances and even abusive punishment if the offender is a child and to be pitied, shunned, and despised if he/she is an adult. "Mental health" (behaviorism in one form or another) becomes the concern of the thoroughly symbolized/civilized. Fear, shame and guilt are the most enduringly effective tools by which to draw out and correct the natural impulses still alive in the unconverted, the uncivil, the vulgar.

Some games employ the idea of gaining territory or progressing from point A to point B, usually traversing challenging obstacles. Musicmaking is generally taught as such a game. The written score is the rule by which it is played. Music-making at its best takes on the character of playful juggling. The thing about playing a game is not to take it so seriously that you lose sight of the fact that it's only a game with madeup rules. The rules can be changed at any time and give the game a new character altogether. Or if the game becomes tiresome, there is always the simple option to quit playing it and either come back to it later or just forget about it without any harm being done. The manufactured, thought-out world of everyday life and death is a vast, complex game that has been taken over by star players whose ***Hubris*** long ago pushed it beyond the limits of playfulness. They are so obsessed, they will use the deadliest and nastiest means at their disposal to ensure the continuing madness of their lives. And everybody had better appreciate their prow- ess and rightful place as the gifted players of the game or suffer their devious wrath. Their precarious hold on the game rests upon the rules of the social rituals habituated into the lives of everyone else, keeping us from the spontaneous, ecstatic dance of the chimpanzees...the removal of the showmyn and leaders by means of an explosion of energy, ending the damn game so we can all go about living and playing freely!

The endgame of domination has arrived. The myths and rituals by which we have been mesmerized and befuddled are being cast aside. The sound of the drum, unruly shouting and laughter and the phenomenon of sensual, energetic and unchoreographed dancing are arising everywhere making it clearer all the time that the end of the game won't be ordered and civil as in chess. It'll be more akin to our cousins' way of ending the repressive and annoying antics of the maniacal alpha among them. Reciprocity will occur, the cycle will complete, and the game will end.

Oh, yeah. *endgame*

Decolonization

A Call for Escape Routes: Decolonizing Our Minds and Lives

Picture yourself planting radishes and seed potatoes on the fifteenth green of a forgotten golf course. You'll hunt elk through the damp canyon forests around the ruins of Rockefeller Center, and dig clams next to the skeleton of the Space Needle leaning at a forty-five degree angle. We'll paint the skyscrapers with huge totem faces and goblin tikis, and every evening what's left of mankind will retreat to empty zoos and lock itself in cages as protection against the bears and big cats and wolves that pace and watch us from outside the cage bars at night.

Imagine stalking elk past department store windows and stinking racks of beautiful rotting dresses and tuxedos on hangers; you'll wear leather clothes that will last you the rest of your life, and you'll climb the wrist-thick kudzu vines that wrap the Sears Tower. Jack and the beanstalk, you'll climb up through the dripping forest canopy and the air will be so clean you'll see tiny figures pounding corn and laying strips of venison to dry in the empty car pool lane of an abandoned superhighway stretching eight-lanes-wide and August-hot for a thousand miles.

— Fight Club

The fundamental strategy of colonization is actually quite simple: if you intend to destroy an individual or group, first destroy their dreams, their languages, and their habitat. From there, it's a process of instilling in the colonized people a veneration for all that civilization has created and represents, and cultivating in their minds a psychology of dependence and submissiveness: just shape their thoughts in the brutal mould of civilization, until the majority of the colonized subjects can no longer think in terms of freedom any more than a bee can think in terms of poetry or mathematics. And it's this slave instinct, crystallized in our natures over the course of thousands of years, which petrifies us and deadens our responses to the totalistic nightmare we are faced with. The domestication of our species has been occurring for a *long* time, and the failure of "working class" revolutions makes a lot more sense when we consider the stern slave instincts that have been carved into their fibre by ten thousand colonized generations, to whose iron mandates they bend as unconsciously as they do to the demands of their belly.

What the civilized social order requires to function before all else is mediocrity of the highest order—and we continue to submit to this degradation of life because our ancestors were slaves and our minds are still crowded with slavish superstitions and fictions. The primary "revolution"—to use an extremely loaded and suspect term—is to purge the slave from our consciousness and allow a new freedom to emerge through the layers of dead skin. Imagination is the emergency exit here and the more we reclaim our colonized imaginations and surrender to the fever of our authentic dreams, the more we awaken the volcanos of liberation that will one day set fire to this diseased system.

We are All Indigenous

Homer Bust

I did not fall from space...

However alien I may appear to this planet, this land, these people, I come from this earth. From its water, its soil, its people, its blood. It has provided me with a life, which I willingly and humbly direct. Despite all attempts by the civilized logic to separate me, to dislocate me, to destroy my connection, I am still part of this fusion of life, this deeply integrated accumulation of living beings.

I, like all of us, have direct lineage to a different way of being, to a direct experience with the world. We once lived unmediated from the earth, ate directly from the forest, drank straight from its waters, slept touching the ground, healed ourselves with its plants, made all of our decisions concerning our lives with people we loved. We are still these people, only scarred, with cold and clunky armor created for us by a culture of death that we have reluctantly accepted when and where we have grown too tired and weak. We have been tamed. We have been domesticated. But, we are still connected under this baggage, this defensiveness, this disposition.

I have been severely damaged from generation after generation of upheaval, defeat, and domestication at the hands of colonizers, and at times I did the colonizing. But this was only after I had been sufficiently separated from the earth, others, and myself. But mostly, I have been just a pawn and a tool in the ongoing war against life. I have suffered greatly: in the direct brutality inflicted upon me in my own life, through more subtle institutionalized methods, as an accumulation of my ancestors' pain, and from missing out on a penetrating and more integrated connection to the world. I have been moved so far from where my relations once dwelled, yet I can still feel connected to place. Maybe not in the same way that my relations did to the land they were indigenous to, or the people who were/are connected to where my feet currently rest, where I inhabit. But I can still go deep into the ground, take the air into my lungs, learn from the whispers of this place, offer my respectful and modest influence to this land, and unite the world around and within me.

I have always felt dislocated within civilization. Whether the suburbs, the cities, or small towns, I have always felt suffocated, empty, and lost. Traveling from one location to the next, always over-idealizing the succeeding context. The grass always seemed greener. In this postmodern reality, dislocation is not the exception but the norm, and even the sought-after condition. We can never be whole as long as we live outside and

above our surroundings, or for that matter, even view them as surroundings, and not as part of us. At some point I think it is important to find a place, a bioregion, a home (though not necessarily a sedentary location).

I have much to learn from those deeply connected to the place I call home, those who have an intimate relationship with the land, animals, plants, people, and patterns of this specific environment. I have most to learn from those who have evolved with this place; whose bodies, minds, spirits, and culture have developed alongside these mountains, birds, trees, and rivers. I do not wish to "play native" or co-opt traditions, but to tap into and learn from a physical and spiritual knowledge, so that I can live respectfully and sustainably with this particular part of earth (which is comprised of infinitely diverse forms of life).

I have much to learn from the survivors. Those who were forcibly converted to patriarchal gods. Those who were burned at the stake. Those who were given blankets with smallpox. Those who were stolen from their homes and families and chained in the bellies of ships. Those who were pushed out of their lands and herded into camps. Those who were marched and dragged down trails of tears. Those who were stripped down, re-educated, and assimilated. Those who became beasts of burden. Those who were pitted against one another. Those who were put on trains, and again, herded into camps. Those who were gassed and burned. Those who were lynched. Those who were bombed. Those who were raped. Those who were beaten. Those who have been virtually destroyed, yet continue to endure. Those who have been whipped, yet amazingly continue to thrive. Those who attempt to regain their ancestral knowledge. Those who raise healthy children. Those who burn down the suburbs. Those who reconnect with the earth. Those who remember. Those who survive. And, I have much to learn from myself. I have much to remember.

I did not create this monstrosity, this leviathan, this death culture. I am both a by-product and survivor of it. I was not the first to step out of the forest. I did not create the first separations, plant the first corn, irrigate the first field, domesticate the first animal, subju- *we are all indigenous* gate the first woman, support the first stratification, fabricate the first weapon, construct the first city, build the first ship, enslave the first foreigner, kill the first indian, assemble the first railroad, erect the first factory, split the first atom, plant the first flag on the moon, genetically produce the first clone, and like Al Gore, I didn't invent the internet. But I am also profoundly tied to their legacy and their innovation and expansion. And I am also the victim of their legacy of death, domination, and destruction. *"Pleased to meet you, hope you guessed my name [civilization]. But what's puzzling you is the nature of my game."*

I know in my heart and in my bones that we can live differently, that we have lived differently, and that those possibilities can come together in beautiful ways. I have no expectations within this nightmare; my/our only hope is to wake up from the confusion. There is no future in this failed experiment; all I can do is reject it. There is no possibility of readjustment; it can only be destroyed. I must find a place, people, and a way to live differently; to reconnect and to dream. We were all indigenous to

somewhere, someone, and somehow...and can become so again. The old ways are gone, but I am still going home, not necessarily where I started, but maybe somewhere I began.

Wish us luck!

Strangers Touching the Void

Sky Hiatt

You are born. The faces watching you will be known to you throughout your life. They will tend to you, dress you, feed you, teach you. They will love you. You will grow up playing under the same trees they played under before you and their parents before them. You will sing the songs they sing. You will dance the ritual dances passed down through time. You will sing and dance in unison with your tribe. You will learn the traditions, the codes, the rhythms, the customs and the mysteries of your kind and you will pass them on to your own in time. You will eat the common foods and follow the fashion that follows cli- mate that follows the land that surrounds you. You will call the Earth home. You will build lodges by your own hand. You will never doubt the meaning of being alive. Everything around you will reflect you and will be anchored in the cultural mind. Your life and your ideas will be valued. Shared myths and legends will intensify the bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood. You will never wonder what to *do*, what to *be*. The resonance of your way of life will ratify the social memory and you will be free.

But all that was before. Things are different now. Today, infants are born into the anonymous hands of people they may never see again. They are swaddled and laid in rows in bassinets, Baby Smith, Baby Lee. Their first labels. Their indoctrination begins at the beginning. The cries, the sounds, the faces, all this will fade, and be lost to them. They will move on to daycare, pre-school, first grade, second grade. The continual rotation of teachers, schoolmates, even the rooms and buildings they study in, inure the young to the perverse influences of social impersonality. By the age of 12 most children cede in utter unquestioning concession to the unbearable weight of being. They are already experts at suppressing the primitive senses. They are the ghost in the shell of Mamoru Oshii's dystopic human being. Strangers stream past them, the faceless white noise of modernity. Today's children are born into the void.

We all know the process. We too have internalized the isolative overdrive of the present, not blindly, not happily, but, as Lewis Mumford would say, "...with more abject obedience than terror alone could achieve." As we age, we reify the process. This is how things are now. But we will anyway pass the iconic nobodies of life over the radar of our anticipation, hunting for facsimiles, replicas, approximate versions of ourselves. Because deep inside, so deep nothing can ever erase it, is the longing for a true human compliment, someone who speaks our language, shares our passions, our

intensities, our instincts, our fears, our noble goals. Everything. But usually the radar detects only errors and we waver indecisively. Maybe there is no one out there. Maybe we can settle for the closest thing.

How did these two populations, that of the past, and that of the present, come to be so different? What happened to that other world? History covets such revelations. Today we know that few abandon such a life willingly. Things were done. But what was done, at the time, wasn't even a crime. To the contrary, it was heroic. It was messianic. Because when Christopher Columbus and his crew regarded the naked naturalist populations of the new world, the first mission was wealth and power, the second was to crush out everything unfamiliar, everything not like them. And they succeeded so well in these goals, they fixed for all time the landmark and by now almost Sabbath notion of the justness of colonialism. Their achievements have survived the trials of time and they are immortalized. They opened the conquered lands to the architecture of industrialization, the genius of the germ theory, advanced weaponry, fashion, and an otherwise almost imponderable body of knowledge festered into existence in the plague-ridden hubs of Europe. Along with the barbarism of soulless greed, the intrepid adventurers of the age of exploration brought with them the bounties of technical and scientific ingenuity and the fortitude of spirit necessary to impose these towering gifts on a naked people who had nothing.

Modern multiculturalists, after having cleared aside the atrocities of history so as to view the pure core of the blessings colonialism conferred upon the world, ruminate and apologetically sanctify the assault. The primitive people were lost, Columbus found them. For this he has been historically indemnified. He sailed under the flags of commerce and entrepreneurial consciousness became the condescending hallmark of our times. He changed our world, rewrote future history and generated an alternate future world-view. He and the other adventurers crisscrossed the globe victoriously destabilizing cultures, unable to detect the subtle shifting in the well of social souls their victories authorized for the generations. They were on a proud mission of inevitability and there was probably no way they could have known what they were doing or understood why their distant descendants would politely shun each other and live implausibly humbled and cautious all the time. The dazzling colossus of cultural decay set into motion by colonialism, exploration and global commerce weakened the laws of social attraction and tempted the human world into severance and decay. Their pursuit of adventure, privilege, and prosperity, has devastated culture upon culture and erased thousands of years of tribal knowledge and social continuity from the Earth and replaced it with shopping plazas and urban landscapes as sterile to human cultural wellbeing as the vacuums of outer space. As we now know, the mission the conquerors set out on was a mission of human estrangements.

Emigrant millions flooded out of beloved, old-world homelands sheared of familiarities and regimes of life evolved over centu- ries—even millennia. The global population shifts rose out of other displacements—the collapse of feudalism, the rise of capitalism, and the industrial revolution—and initiated intercontinental casualties of cultural be-

reavement. Most of the pioneers would never rediscover all of what they had left behind. They would become the "new people." They would be hated and feared. Their greatest thinkers would earn renown critiquing their own disastrously flawed social associations. The new world would be populated by strangers. It would be built by strangers, run by strangers, ruled by strangers, and their dead would lie among strangers in the cemeteries of the new land.

Incoming surges of invasive populations, already displaced from cultural identity, are helpless. For them life is a puzzle. How to stay healthy is a mystery. What to eat is a mystery. Every generation meets a world made new by the impetus of chronic novelty and the incessant social upheaval this novelty foments. Here there are no sacred places. Sacred lands are an enigma. There is no community. Communalness is unthinkable—unbearable. Tradition fades. Even families deteriorate. The standing populations have no meaningful social aim or direction. They are a mystery to themselves and a menace to everything else.

The grand corrosive compromise of our times—the psychology of the conquering ages—has produced an intransient, rational, over-specialized world where the modern neo-nomadic homeless hoards have settled into a state of permanently arrested cultural evolution. Lionel Tiger called it, "Emotional rigormortis." A disease of the present. In the initial phase, so many strangers monopolizing the horizon must have been shocking, stunning. The daily assault now drifts passively into our systems shutting things down, deconstructing the tribe day after day. "I've...heard footsteps, seen the fading dust cloud of Diaspora, felt at least a candle's worth of Holocaust, heard echoes..." Thanks to the adventurers of history, we falter toward one another, even toward our image in the mirror. Are we prisoners of war? Are we slaves? If not, where are our people?

"Hello, My name is Bob." At least that's what the nametag says. It also says, "I am a victim of psycho-social dismemberment. I don't know you and I probably never will." The label implies a precondition of impermanence and superficiality and a lack of interest in you, whoever you are. It proclaims a temporary dissolution of the process of formative acquaintanceships. It's a signal—you will not be expected to remember anything they say, or care. Labels bypass the old standards and substitute new methods based on the ebbing enthusiasms and the incremental erosions of modern social life. We don't object.

Best not to ask more than society cares to give. We are comfortable not knowing who these people are. The label guards the outposts of social isolation.

It's a new and unusual social category—people we don't know and may never meet again, meaningful only in the aggregate. The doors are opened. Seats must be filled. It doesn't matter by whom. Just interchangeable biologic units relieved of the burdens of familiarity. Better to pray with strangers than to pray alone. Better to join an impermanent social coalescence that anyway allows total strangers to refer to you by name. Time is short. Times have changed. Modernity prefers a cursory social experience. Just relax. Nothing significant or wise or memorable needs to happen. These are the times of social splitting, the decay of perceptual conditioning, the breakdown of the cohesive

bonds that once rooted us to place and aligned us with our kind. I know what is happening to you. There has been a death. Our counterparts have died. In our desolation we live on.

This slyly intoned anonymity has become a conditioned norm. Intense congregations of strangers diffuse the gregarious instinct. And another instinct surfaces, a kind of reluctancy passing as tolerance. Theaters, churches, parties, workplace seminars—these are the laboratories of reverse social alchemy, where all the cultural gold is spun back into straw. Here's where we perfect our talents of dehumanization. Before, you may have been a warrior, greeting fate with legendary bravery. Now, you are a culture of one, a gang of one, a jury of one, sequestered. We are a population of stellar crystals, no two alike, two hundred and seventy million markets of one in the hyperselectivity of modern-day marketing. It has all been sanctioned by social temporariness—the sand dunes of uncertainty, the deterioration of your reflection in the glass. There is little there now but shadowy silhouettes of narcissism. The fabric of hereditary cohesion has unraveled leaving behind a society feeding on its own toxicity. History has fixed our dearest undreamt dreams inside us. Oh, to never have to talk to strangers again, never to have to try to make them understand you.

We are the uprooted people in contact daily with others we do not know, may fear, and may never meet again, people who will demand only a fraction of our attention or concern. Escape is rare and fleeting. You can stand in line and fill the stadium. Everyone there will share a passing passion. The stranger on the stage entertains the strangers that have paid to see them. It's not free, such unity. The lights go down and now, electrifying synchronicity! All are tuned to unanimity! But the tidal bore of ticket holders will soon recede and you will be alone again. It's like a practice for death and dying. Or maybe you could follow the entertainers, and prolong the sensation. Join the slipstream of consciousness to catch a glimpse of what once was sanctioned social heritage. It could be we suffer from undiagnosed multiple personality disorder splitting ourselves in ritualized self-mutilation. Each personality has a different wardrobe, different jargon, different rules of social order, different friends who don't care to know each other. We are internally programmed to be in and out of touch with 'the other me.' Each of us is far more specialized in our own psyche than we are in the labor force or academia. We are subdivided against the self and much of our lives are spent 'passing' as somebody else.

When Whites first entered the New Zealand highlands, the native people there thought they were their ancestors returned from the dead. They were so pale. Today they know the difference, but when the tourist boats land, still they say, "The dead have arrived." The dead are now arriving all over the world. Vacation—from the Latin—vacatio—freedom. The modern extreme sport. We will uproot the tentative tendrils of constancy and lie on a beach with people speaking foreign languages. Maybe it will be beautiful there and therapeutic. But, surely, where you are living should be beautiful and it should be your sacred home. As a species, we strayed outside the tropics on the

crutch of agriculture and beyond that on a meat-based subsistence diet. A craving to get away is symptomatic. In general, the world belongs to those who stay at home.

Home? That would be the alabaster thrall of apartment asylums a little bit like death row. Even time-travelers could tell from a distance there is a problem. Monstrous buildings imply towering social hierarchies draining the timeless zones into the world of clocks and mechanisms. Theaters—beloved names on the marquee—supermarkets, waiting-rooms, churches, museums, mortuaries. These are the places where the "lobotomized dwarfs" of the Lewis Mumford present intermingle, keeping the genuine instincts on hold. Beyond this there are neighborhoods of tidy houses. Inside the folks are waiting for something. Sure, you should love thy neighbor as thyself, but probably, first, you should know them. They say agoraphobia is a pathogenic response to social distress. But they have it wrong. It's not that these people fear going out, it's that they yearn to stay in. They yearn for familiar things, sameness, control, continuity. For some, at least, it's better to pray alone than to pray with strangers. Uprooted people are fearful and will build a world of limits and seal themselves inside it. They've been sensitized, which is a condition we may all be working toward. Already we need our space. Are we deranged? A crisis hotline? Yes, strangers have trained for years to help people much like yourself cope with life's indignities. Support groups offer you a chair. AA, NA, AL ANON, adoption support groups, rape crisis centers. The Amber alert. The Megan law. The Lindberg baby. There is a vast network of strangers in place helping each other get by. Have they any sense at all what the problem is?

If you fall sick, the emergency room is the place for you. Health care professionals. If you die, there'll be a marker, a marble nametag identifying your place of rest. Without a tombstone, your loved ones will not know which grave to lay the flowers on. But before the burial, somebody will have to find you where you took your last breath. Businesses specializing in cleaning up after the dead confess they are not often called to scenes of violent crime and murder. Usually someone has died alone and lain so long before discovery that their bodies have begun decomposing, silently melting into the T.V. chair. What will the autopsy reveal? Blood type, fingerprints, visible scars. Just another human genome archetype packed with tantalizing morsels of chemical perfectibility. When the genome is all mapped out, the golden age they've promised will finally dawn upon us. "From dust thou art to dust thou shall return?" That's just the way naïve angels say things. We'll be embalmed for future reference, future museum trophies. It's like a reenactment of Sylvia Plath's poem. "...I am the magician's girl who does not flinch. What have they accomplished? Why am I cold?"

Populations are becoming a standing mausoleum of human artifacts already a little out of date. A culture of artifacts, or perhaps a cult. Our age is becoming peripheral even to itself. We are not the ideal species. We are weakened by strangers. They weaken us. So we give in to a future of digital detachment and isolation, and to the reign of personalized nationalism. Each of us is being nudged into antiquity by the force of anonymity—edging toward a future of museums and voiceless mummies. We're not the only ones.

Museums are the fallout shelters for the Christopher Colum- bus atomic bomb that feeds on the uneven unparallels of the present and recent past. We, the living, visit such places shamelessly viewing the forensic detritus of former times that collapsed around simpletons too idealistic to survive. Apparently, cultural amnesia is a disease fatal only to those uninfected by it. Museums codify the domino theory of civilization. The more museums, the faster the pace of loss, more cultures driven to oblivia. It's a controlled panic. Dead artifacts buried by the momentum of minutia and the oceanic flux modernity feeds upon, sustaining nothing. And many, many more museums are needed by now. There is simply no way to adequately house the losses of our times. This is all amelioration. It's meant to pacify us, so that the mission the explorers set in motion will seem wondrous. "See, we're saving everything." Without Christopher Columbus so many people would still be stuck in yesterday and decomposing there.

A society of mandatory strangers is the power that keeps modernity going. A collective would rise up and shut it down. To allow civilization to continue, we simply cannot know each other too well. Of course, in the end, none of this matters. We are gradually losing the capacity to become humiliated. Once the sublevels of cohesive attraction are destroyed the decay rate severs the mother bonds, the blood bonds, the human quantum knowledge base. These days we don't know too much about the past or graves that didn't need name tags. Identity theft? What's left to steal?

Is there anywhere further down we can go on the conveyor belt to nowhere? We are already on the digital, virtual, microchip path. The radio, the television, the movies— phantom qualities of secondhand human beings. Voices and images we will come to accept into our inner circle of icy intimacy. These are the specialized, intangible people of the present. Often it's enough to build an obsession on. There is the news to keep abreast of. All kinds of things are happening to people far away. Strangers are dying, getting married, having babies. We can follow presidential campaigns to get to know the candidates. Our future rulers.

Familiar strangers, in charge of everything. The phone, the internet, email—a bonanza of disembodied attributes! Acquaintanceships wisely hiding all dissimilarities. Or open a book. The written word is the way people unknown to each other communicate. Telephone buddies, chat room pals, words spewing out across the screen. World Beat—the music of strangers. Out there somewhere is your multiple-personality soul-mate. If things go wrong, rebuild the firewalls, terminate all exter- nal links and become reclusive. In a fragmented society, it is destined that the forces of specialization will calcify human social freshness. In its place, a fragment of a friend pulled out of Frankenstein's boneyard. Strangers on the street are far too intimate, not quite specialized enough, too complicated, and sadly, sadly, different than we are.

We cannot survive this way. Like rats and coyotes, we humans are generalists. Simplification of natural and social systems favors such species as ours, which can often adapt to the changes, whatever they are. But, usually, for each human society, the survival skills that back up adaptations are passed on as a coherent body of teachings. In our case, this cognitive pact has been broken. It was broken in us, and in those

before us and those before them. The intergenerational human system of common thinking that once protected the tribes and the world around them has atrophied and set us on an unfortunate path. At this point, we are just unidealized vessels for technological minutia. No matter how many indentured strangers gather together, they can never hold enough common, generalized knowledge to allow us to survive. Analytically derelict cultures such as ours cannot even hope to outlast the generations of an average anthill. It's a mathematical imperative. Anthropologists have theorized that for human cultures to endure, it would be best not to let cognitive trust populations to dip too low. Estimates vary. To hold on to enough functional information, it's important the members of the trust remain well acquainted and stable geographically. The indigenous Tasmanians are the champions here. They lived in small groups isolated from contact with other cultures for 12,000 years before being discovered by the British and wiped out. They survived in their wild world with a compliment of only 24 cultural artifacts, giving them the title of the most 'primitive' people alive in recent times. Will we ever be so clever? The comprehensive hive-mind they shared allowed the Tasmanians to survive.

But, we are modern. So we are at a disadvantage. Modernity makes us stupid. Not by killing brain cells, although it surely does, but by displacing us from the land and destabilizing the cognitive trust. And, of course, by monopolizing our time. Culture should take care of all basic human needs. That's why it was invented. It should solve things for us, and set us free. In an overcontrolled society, such as ours, one has to create one's own reality, and cope with the ever-present conundrum of what to be and what to do, where to live, what to wear, and where to eat, and so on. This brings out certain qualities. It's been theorized that if we were to check on the planet in 1000 years, and if humans were still here, we'd likely find it populated by type 'A' personalities. In that world, flashes of group autonomic expressiveness may remain situational improbabilities. The type A life doesn't allow much time for the hive-mind or the genius of self to manifest.

But citizens of the present prefer a culture that doesn't hem them in. They want to do whatever they want to do. Eat out, vacation in Hawaii, quit their job, move to Missouri, collect Ming pottery. This is the modern rebel on the road with Jack Kerourac demanding more individuality, more self-indulgence, more instantaneous wish fulfillment. Inhabitants of the present want to distance themselves from their parents stuck in the past. They don't want the dark ages falling in on them. These are the cultural eunuchs cynical beyond their years suffering from chronic uprootedness, or what Marshall Berman refers as a "... a perpetually renewed form of suicide." They guard select accomplishments and thrive on absolution. Maybe abandoning culture altogether will cure them.

But, this is not what we need. We need a robust, rooted, mirror-image society of savages that magnifies our image, empowers us and protects us. We have the job of resuscitating ourselves. And there's no one to help us out. Rebuilding the collective will be a painful and humbling effort that we truly may not have the strength for. Failure

is possible. We are coded for the past but we don't live there. A society of idiosyncratic strangers is going to have trouble getting it done. Maybe like Helen Keller reassembling the Titanic. In the case of anticivilizationists, maybe the Luddites and the vegans and the road kill addicts and the agrarians need to shake hands and talk it out. There is a planetary problem affecting everything. It's a war the lonely orphans of the present were born into. There are only two options, to fight or to give in. If we fight this war and if we win and we survive, and we are able and allowed to live on, and rebuild everything and heal the deep wounds, we may be rewarded with the chance to submit to the Earth unconditionally, to stay home and never give it up to anyone again.

Strangers Source Material:

The Myth of the Machine: The Pentagon of Power; Lewis Mumford

Against the Machine; Nicols Fox, 2002 *Guns, Germs and Steel*; Jared Diamond *Columbus: His Enterprise*; Hans Konig

All That is Solid Melts into Air; Marshall Berman

The Technological Society; J. Ellul

The Culture of Technology; Arnold Pacey

The Mission, film 1989; directed by Chris Menges

Technopoly; Neil Postman

Invisible Frontiers; Stephen Hall, 1987

Conditions of the Working Class in England; F. Engels *Ghost in the Shell,* film; directed by Mamoru Oshii *The Manufacture of Evil*; Lionel Tiger

Cannibal Tours, documentary film; directed by Dennis O'Rourke

Discover Magazine, 3/9, pgs 48-57 *Radio I.Q., This American Life,* Jan 2005 *Portraits of the White Man: Linguistic Play and*

Cultural Symbols Among the Western Apache; Keith Basso

First Contact; Bob Connelly and Robin Anderson

The Need for Roots: Prelude to a Declaration of Duties Toward Mankind; Simone Weil

From *The Bee Meeting, the Collected Poems*; Sylvia Plath 1962

Why Misery Loves Company

Ron Sakolsky

THERE IS A REALITY TO THE OLD SAYING THAT MISERY LOVES COMPANY.
Like much commonsensical wisdom it purports to explain a pattern of human behavior that seems to occur over and over again and whose very reoccurrence gives it the ring of truth. My parents passed this saying on to me, just as their parents passed it on to them— unexamined. However, if we dig deeper and place it in a social context, what is revealed is the secret of the misery-making-matrix; namely, once people have internalized the artificial construct that their misery is inevitable, they are doomed to a life of despair. Accordingly, we surround ourselves with those who have come to the same conclusion, so as to reinforce their acceptance of the chains of consensus reality with the weight of mutual acquiescence.

What I have called mutual acquiescence is the polar opposite of the anarchist concept of mutual aid in that it paralyzes revolutionary action rather than facilitating it. Why bother trying to change things, people cynically say to each other, it's hopeless. They fear and ridicule those rebels who refuse a life of misery, and attempt to socialize their children to accept misery as their lot in life or even as the very price of being human. Those parents who instill an unquestioning acceptance of the status quo into the next generation do so not only as a conscious means of attempting to insure their offspring's survival in "the real world," but as an unconscious way of normalizing their own condition of resignation. At best, using this logic, they teach their kids how to individually manipulate or circumvent the system of misery that is presented to them as a given rather than how to overthrow it by taking direct action toward the creation of a new reality or a world of new realities.

The process of the accumulation and distribution of misery creates the oppressive regime of everyday reality that governs our daily lives and is mediated by a constant barrage of both homespun sayings like "misery loves company" and the spectacular messages and amusements that constitute the incessant drumming of the As Is. In essence then, what surrealists refer to as miserabilism is a system which not only creates misery, but convinces us that misery is the only possible reality. A dull Panglossian "best of all possible worlds" replaces the potential excitement of knowing that all worlds are possible.

Anarchists, like myself, who find an affinity with surrealism's critique of misery, seek to erase the artificial dichotomy between dream and reality as a subversive act. Surrealists, in assisting the process by which the imaginary becomes real, decry the commodification of our dreams into political party branding and consumer fantasies of plasma screen televisions and eternally perfect bodies. We are outraged that our desires are carved into market niches and sold back to us in the form of lifestyles, gadgets and products. Social revolution? Why resist domination when the seductive voice of (too) late capitalism presents us with the impoverished idea that we can change the world by our consumer choices. In this regard, we are repeatedly propagandized to shop our way out of our alienation dollar by dollar literally buying into a market system that requires only "conscious" consumption to purchase a smiley-faced revolution at the cash register. Even our most revolutionary dreams are given price tags and rung up for sale.

Survival in this system of miserabilism is based on coping. Our minds have been so colonized by the unofficial dictatorship of market profitability that we are mired in the endless maze of manufactured reality. The bird's eye view that might offer a visionary perspective on our situation is absent. We cope in the present so that we can better cope in the future. Even for those who see the need for fundamental change, *why misery loves company* the long march through the institutions of the bureaucratic capitalist state is seen as the only "realistic" strategy. Yet what if we could set a new course "as the crow flies." It's no accident that human beings all over the earth dream of flying. The question is how to translate the aerial insights gained from those flying dreams into direct action in order to liberate ourselves from the oppressive yoke of civilization. The crow in flight laughs at the "you can't get there from here" miserabilism that is characteristic of the fenced-in settler mentality.

In Mohawk scholar Taiaiake Alfred's new book, *Wasáse* (2005), he points to the aforementioned coping as a symptom of colonization. In seeking to get beyond coping and to develop a theory of what he calls "anarcho-indigenism," he asks the question, what prevents us from decolonizing our minds? Interestingly enough from a surrealist perspective, he points to the atrophied power of the imagination as a key impediment to decolonization. As he explains, "We have lost our ability to dream our new selves and a new world into existence. We have mistakenly accepted the resolution to our problems that is designed by people who would have us move out of our rusty old colonial cages and right back into a shiny new prison of coping defined by managed fears and deadened emotional capacities." In the process of liberating the land from the continually grasping claws of the colonial system, he calls for the creation of an "indigenous warrior ethic" based upon emancipating the occupied territory of the mind.

If we aspire to be dream warriors, we must recognize that we have all been colonized by the hegemony of civilization— both settlers and indigenous people, though not in like manner. Though this colonization is experienced differently, and is predicated on unequal access to privilege, civilization has cut deeply into all of our psyches, in effect, threatening to lobotomize our ability to dream. For surrealists, the ultimate

revolutionary goal of realizing poetry in everyday life is very much about regenerating the bedrock primal connection between dream and reality that has been eroded by the same miserabilist system of civilization that has stolen the land from beneath indigenous feet. From an anarcho-surrealist perspective, moving toward a world in which we can all lead more poetic lives involves restoring the insurrectionary power of the imagination and unleashing it to create an anarchy that is not afraid to dream.

I am Not a Machine, I am a Human Being:

Technology as Mediation

by Mia X. Kursions with self-established provocation from Jerry Mander*

…it struck me that there was a film between me and all of that. I could "see" the spectacular views. I knew they were spectacular. But the experience stopped at my eyes. I couldn't let it inside me. I felt nothing. Something had gone wrong with me. I remember childhood moments when the mere sight of the sky or grass or trees would send waves of physical pleasure through me. Yet now… I felt dead. I had the impulse to repeat a phrase that was popular among friends of mine, "Nature is boring." What was terrifying even then was that I knew the problem was me, not nature. It was that nature had become irrelevant to me, absent from my life. Through mere lack of exposure and practice, I'd lost the ability to feel it, tune into it, or care about it. Life moved too fast for that now…

I am reasonably unsure where **I** (in the purely egoist sense) *end* and **everything else** *begins*. It is somewhat vague and amorphous, and, well, subjective. I don't mean to sound like a fucking hippie here, but as I search for an authentic and unmediated life free of (or at least minimizing) alienated circumstances (from myself, others, and the world around us), the edges and essences of who I am (and who I am not) must be examined. One thing I will say with a fair amount of measurable conviction, is that ***I am not a machine…*** I will not confine what I am intimately connected with to those people with whom I have a formal relationship, nor exclusively humans, nor those animals with vertebrae, nor that which we typically consider "alive"– as some have suggested,

"stones can speak", and therefore they may also listen, act, and emote. I am thrilled to explore these possibilities and peculiarities. But, when it comes to "technology"[1], or the deadness of space it controls (physical, psychological, and institutional), I have no delusions (nor futuristic orgasmic revelations) of connection to it, nor its supposed benign neutralness (nor naturalness). I will utilize the technological infrastructure and some of its segments where and when I feel that I, or a collaborative effort, can have

a momentary benefit for an immediate or a long-term process within, or despite, technology's overall and inevitable dominance and degradation (ie using a computer to put out a publication critiquing and strategizing against civilization). Ultimately, it is impossible to reject the idea that technology is an unhealthy conglomeration or system of tools not designed for my support or health, controlled and motivated by an inorganic and anthropocentric mindset of control, efficiency, and order. It is an incredibly powerful network of domination projected by the concept of progress and separation. Technology has determined the circumstances of our world more than any other single factor (capitalism, racism, government, theology, etc). It literally creates the physical, social, and psychological playing field in which all forms of domination function. It makes the rules, and perpetually rewrites them based on its own self-referential logic.

Technology is the religion of our time, and as it has a staggeringly comprehensive control of our minds, bodies, and spirit, ***it must be destroyed***[2] if we are to live unmediated and unrestrained lives. Technology's devastating influence is vast, but for the sake of brevity and focus, I choose *not* to dwell on the ecological devastation caused by the production, development, functioning, and perpetuation of technologic society, nor the toxicity it creates (that which is killing all of us on the cellular and genetic level). The impact in this realm is well documented and understood, and the widespread comprehension of these factors, while extremely relevant (soberingly so), has not altered the trajectory of the technologic nightmare in the least. In fact, those who dwell exclusively in the realm of "environmental impact", seem at best to argue only for a more "sustainable", "greener", and "compassionate" technology— a solar powered police state which never questions basic assumptions of civilized relations. This only strengthens the technological society by adapting its infrastructure (or mere facade) to popular trends and tendencies, extending its existence. And, although the production aspects in a technologically-driven society, as well as the workers manipulated and coerced into its functioning, is another valuable subject to explore, the topic is huge, and one, I might add, that has been addressed with much more potency and immediacy than I could offer.

The questions I prefer to ask have more to do with technology's impact and effect on the personal and the social in reference to alienation, technological dependence and addiction, spiritual and emotional unhealth, shifts in perception of time and space, automation, technology's ever-strengthening control, and the trajectory towards cybernetic neo-lives. Recognizing the contradictions we face, and possible directions ahead, are also of immense importance to our particular situation as civilized humans at the beginning of the 21st Century, longing for a completely different, non-technocratic world.

As humans have moved into totally artificial environments, our direct contact with and knowledge of the planet has been snapped. Disconnected, like astronauts floating in space, we cannot know up from down or truth from fiction. Conditions are appropriate for the implantation of arbitrary realities. Alienation is the method or state of being separated from something (or everything) we were once (or intrinsically) connected to.

Personal and social alienation is inherent in the technological process. This disconnect from life is the primary source of our condition of domestication, without which it would be much harder (even impossible) to manipulate and control us. This has always been the principle mode of control. Separate people from their land and recontexteralize them through methods, processes, and techniques they are unfamiliar with; insulate them from who they are. It is precisely because we are floating through the world without connections to the actual substance of life, that we can be tied to and driven by external agendas and artificial pushes and pulls. Technology is the primary source of this alienation, in every sector of our lives. In an ever-expanding process, the world has been constructed to limit our connections outside the technological paradigm. What aspects of our life are not directly linked to the technological process? Are there any forms of "connection" between people that are not mediated through technological means?

On the personal level, our lives become alienated through clocks, pharmaceuticals, microwaves, processed food, television, white noise, concrete, machinery, computers, electric lighting, air conditioning...On the social level, we are alienated from each other through telephones, email, pop culture, ipods, highways, housing developments, voting booths, spectacles...At this point in civilization's trajectory, it is difficult for most to even comprehend an unmediated (and non-technological) existence; with those who can still imagine such a reality labeled as wingnuts and extremists. But within the logic of this technological nightmare, those of us who are nevertheless able to conceive of another set of relationships are truly mad, and the only response, according to its paradigm, must be extreme. But within another context, that of an uncivilized reality, we are sane and ordinary. We are humans *being.*

What we see, hear, touch, taste, smell, feel, and understand about the world has been processed for us. Our experiences of the world can no longer be called direct, or primary. They are secondary, mediated experiences...We are surrounded by a reconstructed world that is difficult to grasp how astonishingly different it is from the world of only one hundred years ago, and bears virtually no resemblance to the world in which humans beings lived for four million years before that...At the moment when the natural environment was altered beyond the point that it could be personally observed, the definitions of knowledge itself began to change. No longer based on direct experience, knowledge began to depend upon scientific, technological, industrial proof...Now they tell us what nature is, what we are, how we relate to the cosmos, what we need for survival and happiness, and what are the appropriate ways to organize our existence... As we continue to separate ourselves from direct experience of the planet, the hierarchy of technoscientism advances...The question of natural balance is now subordinated. Evolution is defined less in terms of planetary process than technological process.

Forcing technological dependence and addiction is the modus operandi of the techno-driven society we inhabit. Dependence is the state of being influenced or determined by, reliant and conditional upon, something other than oneself. Addiction is to give up or over to an external source. Within the technological society, we give up ourselves.

We trade our lives for a detached reality, for what we are told will be better days. Safety and comfort. New and improved. The first one's free. With each neoteric step taking us further. Up, up, and away. Until we can't live without all the previous steps. We can't imagine a world without them. We are hooked. Habituated with progress, we become codependent with technology. We no longer trust our intuition or instincts. Our personal observations become suspect, not only to the logic of the system, but even to ourselves, unless they are corroborated by scientific or technological institutions. But, what compels us to want a more technified life? What personal emptiness drives this? What social pressures push this? Is there a physical dependency? And, perhaps most important, is recovery possible?

The growing incidences of mental illness these days may be explained in part by the fact that the world we call real and which we ask people to live within and understand is itself open to question. The environment we live in is no longer connected to the planetary process which brought us all into being. It is solely the product of human mental process... We are left with no frame of reference untouched by human interpretation.

Predominating spiritual and emotional unhealth is one clear indication that the current set-up is failing humans. Spiritually and emotionally strong and vigorous beings that can form deep independent and collective connections with the world are discouraged by a mechanistic, utilitarian, and materialist driven world. We get our food from sanitized supermarkets, our water from bottles or piped in from chlorinating treatment centers, our emotional support from specialists with degrees on their walls and Internet chatrooms, and our sexual gratification from porn sites or online dating (or not at all). Our emotions are either sporadically jerked from all directions, or dulled to languid nothingness, while spirituality is perversely funneled into ideological and dogmatic institutions instead of real lived experience. The robustness and richness of life has been lost to the monotony of cold routine and ritual. In a our schizophrenic state, we must choose between a world to which we have no authentic connection, one which appears to us to be arbitrarily constructed, or a world outside of these processes, isolated from the technological society. But with our domesticated logic, which has not been allowed to develop in an organic and connected way, this is painfully difficult, often causing emotional swings ranging from ungrounded elation to deep depression. Confusion, delusion, apathy, isolation, and masochism occur on both sides of this dilemma. We are left painfully asking ourselves, (if we are able to break from our frenzy or wake from our stupor), "what is missing"? What social factors push this? What are the implications? Is there hope outside of self-help philosophies and New-Age pseudo-panaceas?

It is obvious that plants are alive in more or less the way humans and other animals are. Our failure to see plants as living creatures, and appreciate ourselves as some kind of sped-up plant, is the result of our limited human perception, a sign of the boundaries of our senses or the degree to which we have allowed them to atrophy...We have become too speedy to perceive the slower rhythms of other life forms... Pretechnological peoples do not have to go through a slowing-down process. Surrounded by nature, with

everything alive everywhere around them, they develop an automatic intimacy with the natural world…No sense maintains itself if not used. If a sense remains unused, it atrophies.

Alterations in our perception of time and space shift as technological society expands. Since time is merely an abstract division of our lives into "usable" portions, the context it is measured from determines its characteristics. Domestication's timing is one of linearity, moving away from the earth's, and our own, cyclical timing. Rhythms change from multi-layered and complexly contrasting and reinforcing to mechanistic, sharp, and singular. Technological society is in a constant state of acceleration, with the momentum of all previous developments behind it. With the force of this push, it becomes harder at each moment to slow down. While pockets of rest do occur, they are mere bubbles, after which the breakneck speed of the technological infrastructure persists. We become so used to this constant acceleration that it feels customary to us. We become more comfortable with the pace and methodology of technology. We start to mimic more and more of the artificial systems that "inhabit" our world. The computer becomes more of a system we relate to than any biological one. Our cars become our friends, and our cellphone an extension of ourselves. We begin to view them as indispensable. Communication is instantaneous across the globe, distorting all relationships, and collapsing our perception of lived space. We can chat with someone we will never meet in Brazil or we can eat sushi in Japan in a matter of hours. We not only experience space like never before, but our transit from place to place becomes unrelated exobiological points plotted on a map, rather than a lived experiential connection through the world. Our perception of these changes get blurred further and further as our relationship to time becomes more rapid. Our lives ticking away faster and faster, yet nothing seems to happen quick enough for us and there are so many places to go. We are profoundly ungrounded. How does this ever-quickening and shrinking perspective of the world affect our lives and our relationships? How does it transform and distort our internal rhythms?

It would be going too far to call our modern offices sensory-deprivation chambers, but they are most certainly sensory-reduction chambers. They may not brainwash, but the elimination of sensory stimuli definitely increases focus on the task at hand, the work to be done, the exclusion of all else.

As we move from the life-based time of the eternal present to the planned time of the perpetual future, automation and specialization replace spontaneity and shared experience. Through automation, technology supersedes authentic experience and relationships. Automation controls and limits through systematic apparatus or process, turning action from a willed and free motion to a mechanical and involuntary response. It removes all life from activity. With the expansion of mass society, instrumental reason generates more advanced forms of labor division. The standardization and mechanization of the world becomes the norm, while organic and human-scale communities based on face-to-face and direct relationships disappear. We become cogs, or specialists, in a larger machine. Parts must submit to the logic of the whole. Our lives become

a string of tasks for our accomplishment. We lose perspective on anything outside of these shortterm and system-defined goals. We begin to lose our ability to even conceive of approaching the world outside of this method, and the ability to be self-reliant or independent from the system. Can we even begin to imagine what we might be losing in the automated process?

Anything connected to natural ("savage") awareness must be ridiculed and eliminated, and all experience must be contained within controlled artificial environments. In a large society, technology is a good standardizer, and confinement works best if technology has been enshrined...As technology has evolved, step by step, it has placed boundaries between human beings and their connections with larger, nonhuman realities. As life acquired ever more technological wrapping, human experience and understanding were confined and altered...until people's minds and living patterns are so disconnected that there is no way of knowing reality from fantasy. At such a point, there is no choice but to accept leadership, however arbitrary...Autocracy needn't come in the form of a person at all, or even as an articulated ideology or conscious conspiracy. The autocracy can exist in the technology itself. The technology can produce its own subordinated society.

Technology's control over us has reached the status of super-god. It is no longer enough to ask the question "should we have technology?" or to examine its positive or negative attributes. It is ingrained in all of us on every aspect of our life, from womb to tomb. And there are even those who wish to submit to this deity even after death. We bow, often unknowingly, but certainly with a disfigured anticipation, to this technotheocratic altar. Every creation, every solution, every emotion, every social organization is processed through a technological principle, which will always feedback upon itself. So we need not be persuaded to "keep the faith", since it is all that is available to us. Control is omnipresent, so brute force is rarely necessary. To most, resistance *appears* futile. Can we even recognize how deep the rabbit hole goes? And if we can, is our perception enough to break out of it? Is it possible to live a nontechnological life within this world?

Noting that reality and its definitions have now entered the realm of game and are up for grabs, they become better at the game than anyone else, exploiting it, reshaping disordered, uprooted minds and tilling a new bed of mental soil from which monsters will inevitably grow.

The trajectory towards cybernetic neo-lives is not solely the desire for self-preservation and expansion by those controlling technological society, but also of its minions, believing they can be part of the super-god and intelligence of technology. Cybernetics moves towards an all-pervasive control over reality (both informational and physical), as it fully over-rides (yet mimics artificially) natural neuro-processes. It becomes the basis for a hybrid of biological, mechanical, and virtual systems. As we move toward an all-enveloping crisis on the environmental level, and as resources to run the technological system begin to dwindle (or at least become less efficient and profitable), the shift towards a world less restricted by material elements (and still plagued by human limitations) becomes the prospective direction. Through cybernetic

research, along with biotechnology, the push to a colossal leap in evolution is proposed, and most are along for the ride, convinced that either this is the logical next step, that it is unavoidable, or that it is already too late. We are already witnessing the preliminary phases and most are quite open about this process. Is this civilization's last hope and endpoint? What are the consequences of this? Why do people accept this scenario?

In one generation, out of hundreds of thousands in human evolution, America had become the first culture to have [almost completely] *substituted secondary, mediated versions of experience for direct experience of the world. Interpretations and representations of the world were being accepted as experience, and the difference between the two was obscure to most of us.*

For those of us searching for a de-technified life, the contradiction of being both within technological society, and outside of it, is nearly unavoidable. Beyond running to the woods in a survivalist mode (which still has the dual problem of bringing our domesticated mind into that situation and that, in a shrinking world, escape is becoming less and less possible), in a technologically ubiquitous world, we must reconcile this situation in order to maneuver and seek its destruction. Just as a bankrobber may need to change clothes and hair, cover tattoos, wear make-up, and better understand the functioning and security of the financial institution they are targeting, so may we need to become more observant of the technological system, become proficient in some of its operations, and temporarily "fit in". Since every aspect of our lives is so ingrained with technological processes and apparatus, it is crucial for us to be critical of those processes, yet decide which we are willing to become skilled in, to utilize them for temporary goals. This can be a painful course, and also contains the potential for a slippery slope, with technological dependence or fetishization becoming negative possibilities. On a theoretical and critical level, there is nothing about technology that is beneficial to the human experience. But on a practical level, it seems somewhat necessary to have one foot in this world, although with extreme cynicism and caution, and certainly not exclusively, at the expense of authentic unmediated experience and practice. We must also be prepared to ask ourselves what it means, what are the consequences, of living this contradiction? And, how it can ultimately be destroyed?

When people fully accept the idea that all reality exists solely in their own minds, and that nothing outside their minds is definitely, concretely real, each person then has unlimited personal power to create and define reality. It is now up for grabs. There is no cause. There is no effect. Relationships do not exist...In this denial of everyday worldly reality, all realities become totally arbitrary, creating the perfect precondition for the imposition of any new "ground of reality" within the void. Though it may be nonsensical or fantastic, any reality is acceptable...Reality becomes arbitrary only within the confines of a mental framework.

People who live in direct contact with the planet itself are not concerned with such questions.

Given our current reality, how can we begin to live differently? What could a less mediated, less technologically-dependent world look like for us here and now? Can we regain direct contact with our world? Does it just mean escape and isolation? How do we avoid postmodern complacency? Can there be a transition? These are all vital questions to ask ourselves, as we embark on a critique of, resistance to, and departure from this technologic nightmare that is worsening with each micro-second. While simply "going back" is not a possibility, the virus has been released and the techno-logic is everywhere, it is still encouraging that for most of our time on this planet, humans lived in direct connection with our world, without the mediating factors of technology and instrumental thinking. Perhaps our most significant lessons are here.

Despite the bleak outlook, our future is still unwritten, and while I still maintain an ounce of strength and free will, while I am still of flesh and blood and can still discover and connect to my passions and dreams, **I am sure that I am not a Machine, I am a human *being*.**

* All italicized quotes above are from "Argument One: The Mediation of Experience," contained in Jerry Mander's *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television* (William Morrow and Company,Inc. 1977). While the book is dated, and contains some liberal notions of democratic process, Mander addresses perhaps the most pervasive, popular, and damaging form of technology of his time, television, which could easily be viewed as the predecessor of a much more destructive and alienating aspect of the technological system, the Internet. The first section of his book, "Argument One", is the most impressive, as it deals very little with television per se, and addresses the much larger question of technology's inevitable qualities of mediation.

Notes

1. "Technology" is used in quotes, because it is not a simple word with a simple definition, despite those who wish to fix it for everyone based on their own biased understanding of history. Even in the common usage of the term there is much incongruence. While this essay may shed light on the author's particular usage, the meaning still seems somewhat amorphous and contextual. In this context, it is generally used to describe the complex system of tools and techniques that separate ourselves from direct experience, and the ideological and institutional logic which perpetuates and maintains these systems. It is an ideology of technique, systematic treatment, and progressive industrial science.

2. It is understood that "technology" cannot be merely destroyed in the physical sense, like you can destroy a car or television. To "destroy technology" is to analyze, understand, critique, abandon, and attack all of the institutional, cultural, and personal manifestations of the technological system. It is no easy feat.

Intuition as a Crucial Part of Rewilding

Ardilla

What would the world look like if non-human animals second-guessed their intuition? If a squirrel, for example, heard a noise and convinceditself that it was "probably nothing"?—it was just being "paranoid." The squirrel would be eaten within minutes. But instead, the squirrel, like many others, listens to its instincts and then uses its adapted skills to affect the situation. This may involve running away, investigating the scene, and/or mumbling a low warning growl. Civilized humans are the only animals who are so removed from our primal instincts that we often talk ourselves out of what our instincts are telling us. Domestication makes us rationalize our intuition, taking us out of the moment and into a mental battle to talk ourselves out of what we feel. We are told that in order for us to act on our instincts/ intuition—we need proof... feelings don't count.

I use intuition and instinct interchangeably because they signify a similar relationship to the body and its surroundings. As the Oxford Dictionary ('97, American edition) says, "intuition is the immediate insight or understanding without conscious reasoning." It goes on to list synonyms as "instinct, inspiration, sixth sense, presentiment, and premonition." Interestingly, instinct is described as "an innate pattern of behavior, especially in animals" and as an "innate impulsion" or "unconscious skill; intuition." I include these definitions to reiterate the connection between intuition and instinct, thus illuminating the importance of listening to our intuition as an act of re-learning more natural/wild ways of living. What has been crushed by the weight of this numbing, industrial nightmare can be revived by following the example of non-human animals and not second-guessing our instincts. Although occasions may arise when it is necessary to think more in-depth, apply rationality, or brainstorm about a particular situation, generally the solution will also become clear when it "feels right." Those that are wild do not second-guess their intuition. They live by it.

Domestication is civilization's way of gaining control, of removing us from our primal animal selves. We are left with neat systems and formulas that are designed to "problem solve" for us. Western culture's preoccupation with the scientific method (hypothesis > experiment > conclusion) helps to highlight the ways in which our instinct is not sanctioned as a valid way of knowing. Your hunch must be tested... there must be a theory to explain it... it can be objectively assessed... seeing is believing! This process of desensitizing separates and then delegitimizes our instinctual feelings—and so our intuition is severed from our embodied selves. Often described as a "gut feeling" or our first reaction, intuition is a mode of survival that civilization works to dull/remove/ paint over. We are told that these emotions are "not rational" and "should be thought through." However, it is within *intuition as a crucial part of rewilding* this second-guessing that domestication proves its ultimate conquest. We begin to cultivate a mistrust of what our bodies are telling us, and what we really feel. We begin to think that other people know what we want more than we do. The mind/body split deepens. We are further cut off from our bodies.

It is interesting that a connection with intuition becomes gendered too easily, paralleling the dynamics of the dominant paradigm. By exaggerating both men and women's relationship with their intuition, western culture has made an intimate connection with intuition synonymous with hysteria and non-rational thinking, and has thus made the connection to instinct seem unobtainable, therefore perpetuating the man=mind=rational, and the woman=body=emotional misunderstandings. Old story. But it is interesting to see the ways that lessons of domestication are channeled through our understandings of what it means to be women or men. To successfully indoctrinate people into a static understanding of gender roles means that it becomes possible to simultaneously implement a preoccupation with maintaining these fragile facades.

So the spectacle continues. For example, when men acknowledge their intuition, it is often masked in more rational language by saying that he is "a good judge of character." They are cast into hyperrational, non-emotional roles that champion out-of-body/objective ways of being. It isn't a coincidence that people in positions of authority (cops, doctors, judges, teachers, government officials, etc) are generally classified in this way. On the other hand, women's intuition has also been de-legitimized, belittled, and exaggerated, through insinuating that women are somehow solely driven by their intuition, and so are incapable of any rational or deductive thinking. This is similar to the ways that the "other" (the poor, people of indigenous descent, the alter-abled) is generally portrayed. Therefore, it becomes apparent that both men and women are saturated with messages that it is problematic or even impossible to live by listening to instinct. Obviously there are cases and cultures where these dynamics are different, but it can be helpful to explore the patterns that emerge in Western civilization's strategies to keep people from being themselves. In order to break down these dynamics, it is important to look more closely at the ways in which domestication removes us from our intuition and has used strict gender roles to ensure that our animal selves seem unobtainable. Part of my revolution includes unlearning the lessons of dull- ness and separation that civilization has forced upon me, and instead embracing a more holistic and instinctual way of living. In order to re-wild, to become more in touch with our primal—animal selves— it is imperative that we can trust our "guts" ... that we listen to our intuition. I feel that following our animal/primal instincts is crucial in the difficult process of re-wilding. I understand re-wilding as part of my struggle to be fully in my body, use all of my senses, and to become in tune with the natural world around me. Letting these phases of awareness shape where I live, who I have affinity with, what I eat, how I spend my time... every part. Re-wilding is a process of unlearning domestication. Of wanting and experiencing passion. Of following our instincts.

My process of re-wilding involves re-learning who I am—by listening to my intuition.

A Question of Spirit

Faith Stealer

Buried inside the temples, mosques, cathedrals, churches, and synagogues of religion are some of the deepest, most extensive—and too often overlooked—roots of

civilization. Specialization, segregation, and obedience to authority are three main characteristics of religion and of all hierarchies (from *hieros* meaning sacred—holy, set apart for service to the deities; and *archeum*—to lead or rule). Hierarchy first described and enforced the ranked division of angels, the rule of the high priest, and the leader of sacred rites.

The collective refusal to look critically at the presumptions, assertions, and interconnected ideologies programmed into us (leading to a sense of their being 'givens') has led to an almost religious expansion of the reason-based, thus more accepted, 'secular' institutions of academia and science. Theologians, scientists, psychiatrists, philosophers, and mystics have strictly divided, compartmentalized, and further mystified the whole of our life experience through their self-defined (thus self-proven) analysis, abstractions, and symbology. Body, brain, chakras, conscious, dreams, ego, emotion, feeling, heart, id, imagination, instinct, intellect, intuition, knowledge, memory, mind, personality, psyche, reason, senses, soul, spirit, subconscious, superego, third eyes, thought, unconscious, wisdom ...even a godspot are offered as fundamental, discrete components of a once whole being. And with each division comes a potent entry point for our (most often self-) control. The divide and conquer strategy begins within.

The invisible, powerful force that so many call spirit (variously translated as wind, air in motion, power of breath, vital life-force, vigor, or soul) that the masters have used so successfully to their own ends, cannot escape our questioning. Acceptance of any 'given' is counter to an exploration of an authentic, unmediated, and exquisitely free life. Some questions that came up for a group of anarchists discussing spirituality are offered for your consideration:

Do you have a thing you call spirit? Do other humans have spirit? Other life forms? Nonliving things? Manufactured things? What is your spirit and how does it present itself–form, source, location, function? Is there more than one spirit in the world? If there are multiple spirits, do they have some relationship to each other? How does spirit connect to the rest of your entity? If someone denies the existence of spirit, are they wrong, not conscious, missing something? Do you attempt to convince them otherwise? Are you convinced otherwise? If their spiritual beliefs/practices/ paths/ culture/religion is different from, even contrary, to yours, how do you interpret the difference? When and how did you become aware of spirit? Does your family share spiritual or religious views? Do you have a spiritual practice? Where did you learn/ develop it? Have you evaluated the relationship between your current beliefs and/or practices and those of your "formative years"? Are there similarities or contradictions? What role do specialists play and what makes them authorities on your spiritual path? What is the goal of your spiritual practice and how do you evaluate its efficacy? Are you easily influenced by new ideas? Are you susceptible to suggestion? Do you use ritual, symbology, repetition, unfamiliar language, or other predetermined functions? Has your spiritual awareness changed over your lifetime? In what ways? What was the impetus for change? How will you know if/when others are using your spirit for their own goals? Does spirit die when the rest of you dies? Do you see your spirituality as personal?

294

Are you reluctant to share/discuss it? Do you have secret practices? Does your spirit encourage your engagement in or withdrawal from political/ social resistance? Is it neutral? Does it enhance or detract from other relationships? If your spirit or practice effects others, is it really so 'personal'?

The roots of our separation from the whole of self (with the close/simultaneous disconnection from the rest of life) and the resultant ease with which every aspect of life became ordered and controlled may well lie deep in the antechambers of religion to be later twisted and extended throughout the hallowed laboratories and offices of science and state. But the seeds of their existence and the fundamental elements that sustain their growth remain within each of us. If we don't question our own motivations, mindset, and practices used for our so-far successful enslavement/domestication, how will we really know when we are being manipulated by other forces? How will we ever have an unmediated, unique, and individual wholeness where the only practice necessary is one of simply BEING?

**Be wary of easy answers; the best questions lead only to
more interesting questions; none will lead to The Truth.**
Seeds on the Breeze
Scavenger

Most of the things I know, to be distinguished from the things I think, believe, accept, or contemplate, I have learned from non-humans. Trees, storms, herbs, rocks, rivers, and critters have taught me an inestimable amount about themselves, the world I inhabit, myself, and the ways that we all can and do interact. My deep-seated respect for these "teachers", and for the significant humans I have learned from, is by personal necessity balanced by my understanding of the process of teaching and learning honestly and openly without the corruption of authority. Teaching and learning in this sense occur simultaneously, with all beings involved sharing knowledge and experience to broaden their own connection to the world.

Lest I seem to be merely redefining a hierarchical student/ teacher relationship in clouded language, I should clarify that my perception of knowledge, experience, and wisdom are irrevocably intertwined, relying on mutual growth and understanding rather than a downwards transmission of "facts". When I learned from an old box turtle the meaning of silence and hiding in plain sight or from New Mexico Vervain the true feelings of passion that occur in taking the life of another, there was not so much a lesson as a connection.When I speak of teaching/learning, or knowing, there is actually no distinction, no separation between the two beings and the experience they share. The question that arises from this experience is how to live constantly in this exchange and interaction.

In this fractured and alienated society, experiencing a true community and the opportunity to teach, learn, and share are far too infrequent and awkward, accompanied by emotional and intellectual baggage that interrupts and confuses the experience.

Overcoming these obstacles can be a challenge, to say the least, even in circles sharing similar viewpoints about communication and experience. This challenge is a major

factor in the rewilding process that many GA/AP folks are consciously undertaking and that countless other folks are engaging in other ways. The greater challenge is attempting to extend this to those outside of the cliques and communes— outreach, but not in the typical, organizational sense—to those who are in search of meaning or looking for a way to define their personal struggles with authority and civilization. I am suggesting that there is a tactical as well as honestly compassionate approach that exists in finding meaningful and effective ways of communicating the struggle against civilization to individuals we come across under circumstances that lend themselves to sharing understanding and experience.

For the past few summers I have spent a considerable amount of time working jobs that involve living in educational wilderness settings with teenagers who usually have personal conflicts regarding authority and a general attraction to the wilderness experience. The conversations that I had with these folks, who generally have no conscious struggle with civilization, tend to fall very easily into areas such as passionate critique, active strategy and rewilding. Many times I have witnessed an alienated and anti-social person (aren't we all in this civilization?) come out of their shell and catch a spark from a wellplaced question or experience and follow through into a rant, personal struggle, or plan for action. The passion in these people is the core of this particular tactical consideration. Lecturing someone about civilization's problems is an inherently flawed approach—no being wants to hear another authority figure preaching about how (not) to live! The passion in the eyes of the oppressed fades quickly before the excitement of any kind of preacher. Instead, we can teach and learn like our wild brethren, allowing meaningful questions to be answered in few, simple, honest words and direct actions. It is crucial to remain centered on our own personal struggle, to live up to our words of resistance. Experience is by far the most effective method of direct teaching/learning, and sharing tactics and strategies as part of a critique is essential. There are some obvious security concerns here, so by all means be careful, but also be honest.

The inherent dishonesty that underlies all relationships and interactions within the context of civilization is a huge barrier to overcome. We have been carefully trained *not* to be honest with anyone, least of all ourselves. This is exactly why exposing one's self, "getting naked", so to speak, in front of others is such an effective strategy. When we begin to break down the barriers within where others can see the results, we impart the courage necessary for them to begin their own journey of rewilding. This is a process that has many names and can be found in many cultures, most explicitly in the oral folklore of trickster fools such as coyote and raven. In the field of outdoor leadership it can be seen as an extension of the method of leading by example; instead of leading by upholding some moral code, this open confrontation with the self inspires others not to act exactly as you do, but rather to express their own passions. Pushing the boundaries of our conditioning is an important internal process that can be greatly facilitated by working in a small group setting. This aspect of rewilding is essential for most other forms to take place in a meaningful way. What good is it to be an expert fire crafter or blade maker, hunter or forager if we cannot even communicate

with ourselves honestly? Some desensitized humans may overlook our hypocrisy, but wild beings will know who we are. Brave words do not cover the scent of fear.

However we encounter situations with the potential for sharing knowledge, it is essential to stay open to the tactical possibilities for broadening the struggle against civilization. We are not a movement and we have no need for indoctrinated "recruits"; we are part of a wild and natural backlash of feral resistance. We are the dirt in the gears of a machine far too large and dangerous to confront directly—but rust spreads easily on shiny metal, creeping roots shatter the strongest cement, and dandelions can infiltrate the most manicured lawns.

Although I would be the last to recommend any job or work to anyone, it is understandable that some circumstances lead many of us to sell our time during parts of our lives. Seeking jobs that exist within wild settings I have found deep personal affinity and deep potential for expanding communication with alienated people who are not always sure why they find themselves at odds with the society around them. Upon reflection, it is easy to see why internal growth and deep healing is so possible in youth that volunteer or are sent to spend time in the woods with outdoor leaders to show them the "ways of the woods". The change in surroundings, from having nothing in sight but walls and plastic, metal and sheetrock to having forest and sky, mountain and creek become the surroundings, is inherently healing. The artifice of our environment reflects the space that we occupy mentally, physically and spiritually. Wild spaces connect and revitalize, as they are alive and open to communication. Look around you. Do you see right angles, flat walls, light bulbs that place you nowhere on earth but firmly within the bowels of civilization or do you see the glint of a warm fire, towering trees or open deserts that remind you that you are in a specific bioregion; do you see plastic and metal shaped by slaves and used by slaves or do you see wild, living beings exchanging life and wisdom in an unending relationship? The psychological effects of existence within civilization are horrifying. Not only do they hold no life to reflect the lives of those trapped inside, they cut us off from each other and from the rest of the world in a very literal and direct way.

The physical aspects of rewilding are in many ways essential to creating the foundation for an honest relationship with the human and non-human beings we encounter in our lives. Earth skills and primitive knowledge create a solid base that allows us to know, not just think, but truly know that we don't *need* civilization. When I know that I can enter the forest or the desert and find food, make fire, locate water and communicate with whoever I find there, I have reduced the physical necessity in my life for the artifice of civilization. As mentioned before, the artifice that surrounds us reflects us and shapes our lives in very literal ways. To confront the mentality of civilization on an internal level however requires more than just learning some basic skills. It requires much, much more. Elite military forces often have some pretty solid skills in survival, even if they don't really know how to communicate with the wild spaces they encounter. Some of the most experienced and knowledgeable primitive skills enthusiasts I have read or met are locked into ideological religious beliefs and addictive

civilized mentalities. Memorization and extensive learning can give the appearance of having a deep connection to the earth, but there is a difference between knowing the names and medicinal uses of a thousand herbs and actually knowing even one of those plantbeings. Although the physical setting and surroundings are very helpful in the process of rewilding they must not be mistaken for completing the rewilding process, if such is even possible.

Honest rewilding is not only about breaking old patterns and addictions but just as importantly it is about fulfilling deeper needs. Rewilding is a path to learning self-sufficiency, living with meaning— finding joy and contentment with each day, seeking adventure and real entertainment. Connectivity with self, land and others fulfills me. Full connectivity needs no one family or one landscape, though honoring specific allies can certainly deepen the mutual experience. Identifying and responding to the deeper needs and urges that we feel when we allow them to manifest is an excellent beginning for the rewilding process. Eventually the impulse and our response become inseparable, and we reduce the levels of mediation within ourselves until they are no longer hindering our experience. I find it important to constantly critique and question where these deeper urges and needs arise from. For if the needs arose from the civilized mentality, from a lingering connection to the mindsets and physical manifestations, then the chain is not fully broken. Needs that exist within the mindset of civilization reflect the connection to that mentality. Deeper needs that do not reflect that connection are thus ever more difficult to locate and identify with. Yet they exist, and when we really disconnect from our training, we feel them calling us. When we enter wild places and see it reflected within us we feel these urges and the passion that come with it and we know that we are not alone. We feel it so strongly that we know there must be others who also feel them even if we don't see them or even know of them. Perhaps we read of them, or see glimpses in the pages of history, no matter how shoddily presented.

Some of those urges may seem dramatically different from one person to another. Defining our boundaries and what we accept in ourselves in others is one of the most fascinating aspects of creating a community life. The line of intolerance and the level of intervention that is acceptable are questions that we should continue to consider openly, for tyranny can exist just as surely within any small group as it can in vast states of consolidated power. The urge to live spontaneously and act on deep desires is not meaningless or trivial. Live your dreams in whatever way you can; live for yourself, and without even trying, you will become the most important type of teacher: one who inspires others to act upon their own deepest desires.

Rewilding in the context of an open community creates the setting for transition, for some patterns are already shattered. Connections are created spontaneously, laughter abounds, beauty overwhelms from so many aspects of life at once that even the physical strain, itself a crack in the dependence on so many comforts of living anywhere near the center of the machine, becomes a liberating and liberated behaviour. Addictive behaviours can safely crumble with no new addictions to be grasped for. Granted, addiction may be difficult to see sometimes, even within oneself, because of the many

levels of alienation and oppression that we have been so carefully taught to self administer continue to pervade our experience of the world and poison our interactions. Honest communication is the only way to overcome these issues, and honest interaction with others maintains that honesty and keeps hypocrisy where it belongs—out in the open and being dealt with. I despise hypocrisy. That is why I accept that it exists within myself and confront it directly in as many ways as do not create greater hypocrisy. To deny its existence altogether is to be self-deceiving on some subtle level.

Rewilding is unplugging from within, breaking chains of perception, restraint, obedience and compliance. It is physical also—unmaking addictions, not just staving them off but finding their roots and pulling them all the way out of the self, unraveling the shroud of fear that is wrapped tight around us even before we are born. It is about becoming what we were born to be; it's about becoming human in the way we choose and acting as we will, not simply as we can. Ironically that is one of the most common arguments against various forms of anarchy: that people will do whatever they want. The key to remember is that everyone will do what they *want* and not whatever they *can*. In a community of healing individuals there is an ongoing process of confronting oneself and others about all inconsistencies that minimize behavior that would be harmful to others. We call each other out, we call ourselves out, and we gradually become more whole as we remove ourselves from the shroud of fear, drifting free of constricting mindsets, boxes and borders.

Living in bands predates living in nuclear families by the vast majority of human existence, and the experience of collective living is found in many of the more fulfilling and meaningful organizations still in society. There cannot be said to be any true "natural" human state, certainly, as we are evolving and changing social creatures, but living in a band allows people to overcome much of the alienation and separation that the lifestyle of nuclear families and institutional interaction with others in schools and offices ensures and perpetuates. Living in a small group keeps people honest and open, promoting group dynamics wherein abusive behavior will be dealt with. I do not speak in universals, for surely a tyrant can monopolize power in a small group as surely as in a patriarchal family, but it is more difficult and less likely. I perceive such a group setting to have great potential for healing as well, especially in terms of overcoming alienation and insecurity. Surely I have seen how people come into such groups closed off and insecure, yet within days of joining the group, even the shyest open up and begin laughing and shouting, playing and joking with the rest of the group. How often do you smile (and I damn well don't include faking it for customers) or laugh raucously while working a wage labor job? I remember all too well the institutional despondence that overwhelms everyone who works indoors, cut off from the source of life and bound to the rules of social interaction that make up "customer service"—essentially an antiquated servant mentality bound up in postmodern niceism. By contrast I find that working outdoors with a band keeps us all laughing riotously throughout the day, regardless of the intensity of work or environment. Simply the opportunity to run and yell releases so much of the frustration borne of the enforced self-hypnosis of city life.

The urge to rewild and actively resist runs through the deepest parts of our spirits that have not, cannot be fully domesticated. Any and all steps we take build the momentum that will eventually bring this death-machine to a grinding halt. Teaching urban youth how to gather wild food plants and how to build fires (from campfires to more strategic fires) allows them to begin the journey that one day will set them and all of us free. The wild ones have much to teach us, and we have much to teach each other. The challenge before us all is to spread the seeds of resistance and rewilding to whoever is able to listen, understand and create their own path in the world; meanwhile never ceasing our personal struggles to become more fully human and our collective acts of direct resistance. Our roots are deeper than the machine can ever comprehend.

The journey is never complete. Undoubtedly, there are some very critical plateaus to reach early on, some basic foundations of thought and behaviour upon which so much else is based. From these peaks of experience we come to a place where we begin truly walking wild. The process of breaking through is beautiful, and will involve a lifetime of self critique and growth. Once the questions and critique begin and especially once the first few answers begin to come clear and pathways beat true within the heart, then the journey is begun in earnest and may lead to the hearts of others to help them begin their journey, a sharing that parallels the continued deepening into one's own experience. The wounded healer, the humble but wise coyote teacher, the honest friend is an existence we are all capable of. We are all stronger than the mightiest shaman, for we are all shamans and shapeshifters, feral beings alive in a society that recognizes us but doesn't fully understand us. They remember a flicker of light from an ancient fire, a glimpse of another way of life deep in the past but still within all of our hearts. That reminder intrigues us, pulls us into the realm of possibility where the past stands alongside the future and the present appears as it is, only a mere blip of reality, a choice among many, many others. Knowing that choice sets us free. Knowing that choice lets us see that all around us are the keys to an unknowable number of potential worlds that we will create, consciously or not, by the way we live our lives. Knowing sets us free, but once free we must still climb out of the cage.

The lonely, hermit philosopher sits in a doorless cage, pondering the meaning of his freedom. Rewilding hurts. Honesty hurts. Dealing with hypocrisy within and with others is frustrating and can be maddening to understand, much less deal with in a productive manner. Making choices that are true to one's heart will often bring a whole new form of alienation from the wider society that pangs the heart just as surely as the alienation of not knowing oneself and one's potential can bring. The goal of rewilding is not to bring us to a cozy world of comfort, an idyllic life in a happy community somewhere in a pristine forest. Like I said, honesty hurts. Rewilding brings us instead into an unstable world of uncertainty and constant change. That adversity makes us stronger than we ever thought we could be. Giving in to the impulses of real needs strengthens personal confidence and the focus that allows dreams to become reality. GO ANYWHERE. But don't *just* go anywhere. Go exactly where you want to be.

Run through a dark forest on a moonless night, leap into a raging river and flow with a current stronger than you are, dance with rattlesnakes in desert canyons, howl with rage at a smoky city from high atop a lonely mountain. *Live free that you may die whole.*

We are Not Separate

Thoughts on Indigenist Resistance to
Civilized Colonization of the Mind, Body and Earth
A.R. Son

We are not separate beings, you and I.
We are different strands of the same Being.
You are me and I am you and we are they and they are us.
This is how we're meant to be, each of us one, each of us all...
–Leonard Peltier

A few weeks ago, my mother mentioned in casual conversation that her grandmother was a "half-caste" Maori—the indigenous people of Aotearoa [known as 'New Zealand' in the civilized world]. Thus I am apparently, to the extent that I actually believe in these biological blood-quantum calculations, 1/16 Maori. This was something of a bombshell to me. In recent times, I have become increasingly aware and passionate about indigenous cultures and politics, but it had never occurred to me for a second that I might actually have some indigenous heritage. I know my mother's family in Aotearoa only as white, lower middle-class, and more than a little racist. It seems that the spiteful racism of my grandfather stems not just from his conditioned white colonial mindset, but also from his pathological denial of his own ancestry. The child-abusing, wife-beating fuck has no more room for his own Maori heritage in his racist worldview than he has for his own sexuality in his heterosexist worldview. But that's another story.

Because of the shame and stigma attached to the indigenous heritage, my mother's family have lived, and continue to live, in denial—a common condition in today's world. Denial is everywhere: the Earth is not crumbling beneath the weight of our sick culture; the nuclear family really works; I really don't mind working for 40+ years; we are not in any way connected to those people. But as well as the in- sanity that clearly comes along with it, denial also just simply means secrecy. My mother can't answer my questions about the Maori heritage in her family, because she doesn't know the answers. We don't know where her grandmother was from, or where her people were from. We could call up my grandfather and see if he fancies having a chat about it, but even if we tied him down and tortured him for the information, he has probably long since cast the names of the people and places out of his tiny mind. Deny. Vilify. Forget. Thus the thin shred of hope that I might find a place within a culture that I could feel part of, or even proud of, slips away...

But hope was always a false promise; an indulgence of disempowerment—merely an excuse to sit quietly with fingers crossed and try to wish misery away. Hope be damned. I am an anarchist. I want action and empowerment, uproar and uprise, glorious victory and yes, even catastrophic defeat. Anything but resignation.

So I'm taking what I have: my white skin, my cultural privilege, my mind and body, my so-far cursory knowledge of the indigenous culture I have a tenuous biological link to, my love of the Earth and of life, my utter disgust for this culture that's wrecking the planet as I write these words and my fury and determination that this will not continue—and I'm fighting back.

My struggle for liberation will be fought on three fronts: my mind, my body, and this Earth—all currently colonized (that is to say, occupied) by the sickness we call civilization. All three fronts must be fought at once—colonialism cannot be divided up and asked to wait until it is convenient for me to fight. Colonialism is everywhere. Colonialism is relentless. Colonialism is the totality. Thus if I am serious about liberation I must struggle constantly, everyday to decolonize my mind, my body, and the land I am standing on. I must be prepared to live life as war.

"Life as war" isn't the desperate and deathly existence it seems to be, of course— self-perpetuated misery would hardly be a sustainable or successful form of resistance! We need only remind ourselves of our enemy in this war to be assured of its liberatory potential and absolute necessity: boredom, drudgery, domestication, dispossession, subjugation, rape, genocide, ecocide (and eventually *omni*cide), the colonization of all lives and all land: civilization.

If I am to live my life as a war against my colonization and the infinitely destructive force that maintains it, I am in need of vari- ous strategies and tactics. One such strategy for liberation, one that I think warrants widespread discussion, expansion and implementation amongst anti-civilization anarchists, is indigenism—perhaps best expressed in Ward Churchill's 1992 essay "I Am Indigenist". Churchill characterizes his indigenist outlook thusly:

…I mean that I am one who not only takes the rights of indigenous peoples as the highest priority of my political life, but who draws on the traditions—the bodies of knowledge and corresponding codes of value—evolved over many thousands of years by native peoples the world over… indigenism offers […] a vision of how things might be that is based on how things have been since time immemorial, and how things must be once again if the human species, and perhaps the planet itself, is to survive much longer." In short, "indigenism stands in diametrical opposition to the totality of what might be termed 'Eurocentric business as usual'.

The relevance indigenism has for anti-civilization anarchists is obvious here, and indeed to a certain extent many of the ideas that comprise Churchill's indigenism are already part of the green anarchist spectrum of thought. There is, however, clearly some hesitation— demonstrated aptly enough by the lack of clear, direct affiliation with actual indigenous peoples. My recent cultural identity crisis has made clear to me why that hesitation is so prevalent, as I have most certainly felt it gripping me

these past few weeks: we're terrified of becoming colonizers ourselves. Of course we are, and rightly so. White activists (including anarchists) have a long and sordid history of taking over, fucking over and flaking out on non-white struggle of all kinds. Just as often white activists (still including anarchists) have feigned support for a far more militant non-white struggle, and then left them to be crushed by the full force of the state once some actual effort was required—you could ask the Black Panthers about this (but evidently they're mostly all dead or in solitary confinement).

This dichotomy of white and non-white struggle has troubled me deeply these past weeks, ripped me apart even. I have felt like a power-hungry racist undercover agent for the white colonial empire every time I've given serious thought to even just investigating my Maori heritage. And then just last night I read those words, echoing out from the belly of the beast, from the cell of an Indian warrior kidnapped and held captive by the U.S government, a bona-fide prisoner of war in this war-to-end-all-wars: "We are not separate…". *we are not separate*

What if we were to take this note from the front to heart? Not as a license to co-opt and colonize, or even as a new 'strategy' in our own idea of the war-that-need-be-waged, but as simple truth? What if the indigenous of the land we live on are simply our older siblings, ready to guide us with their knowledge and strength if only we would stop running around in circles and listen? What if the impossible quandaries of race and history and power and privilege disappeared as soon as we learned to love our older sisters and brothers, and act accordingly?

I want to be clear that I'm not talking about abandoning our responsibilities and realities as (mostly) white anarchists, and wandering into indigenous communities with our hands in the air proclaiming "Show us the way! We are but lost sheep!" While it would be a huge understatement to say that we have a lot to learn, we are also not entirely clueless—it is entirely possible that indigenous people in struggle will want to exchange ideas with us. Certainly it is doubtful they will want an army of mindless zombies or disciples waiting to be shown the way. We have to have the maturity and intelligence (by this I am not referring to sharpening our 'critique' with even more convoluted academic theorizing) to find our way to effective struggle and sustainable lives starting from here. Look at what you have—your heritage, your knowledge, your passion, your strength, everything that makes you the flawed, damaged, brave and uniquely beautiful person that you are. Then start your process of inner and outer decolonization in earnest: keep what you need and burn the rest. That's what you have. That has to be enough. Don't steal from your brothers and sisters. Cheating sends us all back to square one. Also, and this should hardly need saying, indigenous lives and communities are far from perfect. To varying degrees they are in fact ruins— the rubble left behind after a merciless demolition job. This is why they need active, militant supporters, not brain-dead, burdensome followers.

I am not advocating cultural appropriation—unless you mean appropriating this culture in order to further undermine it; or 'forgetting' the holocausts our white ancestors perpetrated against indigenous nations everywhere (and that our white relatives

continue to perpetuate). Quite the opposite: I am advocating realizing that, as people trying desperately to disentangle ourselves from the mire of civilization and simultaneously bring it crashing to the ground, we have more in common with indigenous peoples, struggles and communities than with our fucking murderous 'ancestors', 'relatives' and the civilization they have erected on the backs of every living creature on this planet. It's time to decolonize our minds and bodies, to build the bridges of trust and love with the indigenous communities that will accept us (those that will not can hardly be blamed), to leave this culture of death for good in order to gather in its shadows and at its frayed edges, and finally, to wage one last assault against Babylon and bring it down forever, together. Un-separated. Unconquered. Unbowed.

This article has barely scratched the surface of a deeply complex topic. I do not suppose to have offered all, or even any, of the answers, and I do dearly hope that this will continue to be discussed—on a clear, practical level as well as a theoretical one—amongst those who take liberation seriously.

I welcome any feedback and discussion at: itsalreadyhere@wild- mail.com

Stones Can Speak

Jesús Sepúlveda

Bolivia and the Lulaization of South America

A year or so ago, as I was having a conversation with a Bolivian friend about the US culture and the modern industrial complex, he pointed out to me with surprise that there were people who believed that stones were not alive. He mentioned this as an example of alienation—because he knew that everything from this planet is a living creature, even a stone. And knowing that was not a big deal for him; on the contrary, it was just common sense.

The amazement produced by the realization that there are some people who don't see that stones are alive is a clear example of the crash between two cosmovisions. As Carolyn Merchant stated in the early 80's, European rationalism and Western science put nature to death in order to make supremacist ideology a prevailing one under the promise of progress (The Death of Nature, 1983). "Animism" was the name given to the non-Western, holistic, down-to-earth perspectives that view the earth as a living organism. The turmoil experienced in Latin America in the last decade is the overlap of these two contemporary Weltanschauung[s] interacting openly. First World capitalist globalizers, Second World industrialist-Communists, and Third World developers are becoming unified—in spite of their own agendas—in their war against the Fourth World, which doesn't aim to clear-cut the ancestral trees, dam the rivers, poison the earth, enslave its people or sell out for cash. Stones are alive and there are spirits inhabiting them—people heat stones in sweat lodges because they represent the ancestors that come to us with answers. Then, we pledge to them, we get reconnected, and we get healed. There is no equivalent practice in the Western rationale. For the West, this is superstition.

Following George Manuel, Ward Churchill uses the notion of the Fourth World to refer to the indigenous nations, whose territories allow the existence of the industrialized First and Second Worlds and the industrializing Third World ("The New Face of Liberation", 2004). Churchill states that in any territory where there is a nationstate there is a Fourth World suppressed by the masters and the industrial chimeras. Thus, any Fourth World liberation implies dismantling the state structure and its military territorialization. Indigenous liberation can sometimes be in opposition to the Third World liberationists—often centered on progressive-Socialist agendas with a preferential emphasis on the role of the state.

Walking through the Witches Market in La Paz—a day after the road barricades were cleared on January of this year—I realized how deep the Western view has been inoculated in my mind. I couldn't really understand the meaning of the various amulets

and magical objects that people were offering in that peculiar market. I realized that my perception of reality has been modified and trained according to one model of interpretation, which standardizes the notion of the world in order to impose on us a set for socialization, in which the Hegelian master-slave dialectic is still in power. This is the logic of control, the realm of *La Politique.*

In the Andean world, everything is alive. The anima of living things is expressed in an uncanny and symbolic form to be interpreted. This symbolic world does not exist to serve a privileged caste but to clarify the meaning of life in the living web of the universe. The sun, the sky, the stars, the mountains, the clouds, all the elements of nature are symbols to be deciphered in the course of one's life. The planet is a natural garden—simultaneously wild and affected by our existence— where we grow and recover consciousness, while the social-petro-in- dustrial urban complex is the scenario where we become absolutely lost persecula seculorum.

John Zerzan suggests, based on archaeological evidence, that there is a link between "ritual and the emergence of organized warfare" ("On the Origins of War":2005). Symbolic culture derives from ritual, which apparently appeared in the Upper Paleolithic. Civilization, hierarchical division of labor and domestication appeared later on, around 10,000 years ago approximately, during the Neolithic. From that point on the "imperialism of the symbolic" has reached all human spheres of social life. Organized warfare epitomizes civilization and its practice of standardization However, humans lived feral but with a symbolic dimension at least for 40,000 years. The oldest cavepaintings documented by anthropologists are dated from the Upper Paleolithic in Australia, circa 50,000 years ago.

The invasive symbolic thought of the West is based on the Logos, which shapes instrumental reason and is very different from the symbolism of Australian aboriginals and native peoples from other parts of the world. Shamans walk about the Amazon in tune with the jungle to find the right mushroom or liana or plant to treat a specific disease or for other purposes. The Mapuche Machi uses floripondio (brugmansia sanguinea) to induce dreams and visions in order to cure people. Dreams and visions are interpreted through symbolism. Amazonian peoples have a tradition of foraging. The Mapuche were hunters and nomads. They crossed the Andes from Argentina to Chile, and mixed with the horticulturists and fishers who had already been living in the region.

According to US Archeologist Tom Dillehay, and Chilean Geologist Mario Pino, the oldest human settlement on the continent was in Monte Verde II in the South of Chile. In 1976 they found medicinal plants, stones and artifacts in a location 35 kilometers— 21 miles approximately—southwest of Puerto Montt, which are dated from 33,500 years ago. Although this discovery challenges the current theories about the continental population, it was confirmed in 1998 by the US Society for the Progress of Science basedin Philadelphia.

Later on, one hundred years before the arrival of Pizarro and the conquistadors, the Incas used slaves and domesticated llamas and alpacas—vicuñas are still wild—

to create their empire, which ended with the arrival of Europeans. Colonization and conquest imposed the Spanish empire in the Americas, initiating an early process of globalization.

Humans will either go extinct or will survive living according to the cycles of the earth. The symbol of summer is the harvest and the symbol of winter is hibernation and fire making. In the Andean cosmogony, symbols are not representations of reality that mediate direct experience but signs that allow the reading of the will of nature. More than a representation, the symbol is an interpretation of the force of life, which requires being in tune with nature itself and all the elements. For Andean symbolism, profit, efficiency, progress and acceleration are vacuum concepts. In this world, life is about something else. If you cannot hear the murmur of stones there is no way you can communicate with this secret world. Andean people were forced to speak Spanish, but they still speak their mother tongues (Aymara and Quechua, primarily). Understanding this vision is not a matter of learning the language and the culture, but to un-westernize and un-modernize yourself, producing a switch in the brain cortex and the personal mindset.

As UO professor and author Rob Proudfoot put it in an informal conversation with a graduate student, it is impossible to fit your sandal on the foot of an elephant. Circular perception of time of native cultures has no intersecting point with the linear perception of Western civilization. Both perceptions can coexist on different levels. When they touch each other there is conflict, and a lot of people usually get killed. That is what is going on in Bolivia.

According to Western standards, Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in Latin America. There is no governmental stability and the political interregnum is increasing. As in many other places in Latin America, modernity never took off.

Chilean Professor J. points out that the Bolivian political impasse is the consequence of conflicts of political power ("Bolivia: crónica de la revolución que no viene" and "Bolivia: el fin de la alternativa reforma o revolución" in www.pieldeleopardo.com). The sandal of political solutions is being enforced in the altiplano reality through the insurrectionist strategy of the main Bolivian Workers Union (COB), and the electoral strategy of the Trotskyist organization Movement Toward Socialism (MAS). Since the Bolivian people overthrew two presidents in two years (Gonzalo Sánchez de Losada in October 2003, and Carlos Mesa in June 2005), the Bolivian institutionality has been in crisis. The US man to carry out the Empire business is the neoliberal Jorge Tuto Quiroga—whose tactic to control the country would be repression. Sánchez de Losada tried the same tactic and it did not work. People were killed but water wasn't privatized. Mesa was more decent. He didn't repress. In addition, balkanization is taking place in the country and the reactionary region of Santa Cruz is trying to get independence from the nation-state. Bolivia has water and gas, and multinational corporations cannot afford to lose control in the area. Strategically, a couple of months ago, US marines opened a new military base in Paraguay—another landlocked country, that borders Bolivia. However, coca farmers, local assemblies of various indigenous

309

groups from El Alto and other sites, and campesinos keep fighting for autonomy and local power in the communities. These spontaneous and organic mobilizations have empowered the Bolivian people who fearlessly challenge any authority and feel proud of their indigenousness. To save the nation-state, the Chief of the Justice Supreme Court, Eduardo Rodríguez, was appointed as an interim president. But the conflict does not go away. Solares, the leader of the Bolivian Workers Union, proposed the centralization of the conflict through UN support and Brazilian and Argentine assistance. Congressman and Trotskyist leader of MAS, Evo Morales, is urging an election in order to institutionalize the crisis. Meanwhile, the temporary autonomous zones—to quote Hakim Bey—are becoming stronger, more rooted and more permanent. This situation is certainly working in favor of local autonomy, liberating the imagination of people from the Eurocentric Logos and reinforcing a non-Western indigenous biorhythm.

The Bolivian movement for autonomy goes beyond institutional solutions and hierarchical and vertical decisions. It is setting a precedent for the liberation of the Fourth World, and is spreading rapidly. Amazonian people from the areas of Sucumbíos and Orellana in Ecuador have been protesting the militarization of the region, chemical fumigation, the Plan Colombia and the violence imported into their bioregion. This month (August 2005) the Mapuche people initiated a cavalcade from Temuco to Santiago in an attempt to be recognized as a nation and achieve national representation. People from Chiapas have been supporting and keeping alive the Zapatista Caracoles centers as a form of independence and self-government.

When the indigenous nations take the initiative and force the crash between their cosmovisions and the modern-standardized Western Logos, the whole institutional structure based on the nationstate trembles. Probably, what the elite will pursue in Bolivia will be to reaffirm the institutions and save the nation-state. Social-Democrats, leftists and Socialist governments are taking office all along South America in order to serve as a social cushion and give an apparent face of stability to their countries, so the elite can keep its control and continue neoliberal business as usual: Lagos in Chile, Lula in Brazil, Kirchner in Argentina, Tabaré Vásquez in Uruguay, Palacio in Ecuador, and—to a certain extent—Chávez in Venezuela.

Last month, experts from the Lula administration met with Evo Morales. Apparently, the agenda for the new government has been laid out. What used to be a desire of the people to elect leftist governments during the period of the military regimes seems now to be a tactic from the neoliberals to Marxist-Socialists to stop the increasing pressure of the indigenous nations. Endurance of and resistance against the European—and now American—penetration have been taking place for more than 500 hundred years. Anti-Columbus day is rising all over the continent. The Maya predicted the end of the Fifth Sun by 2012, which could coincide with visible and everyday-life ecological disasters and the dramatic—if not total—reduction of the industrial energy supply. Nobody knows what the end of the Fifth Sun might mean, except for stones, which are murmuring in a symbolic language that we need to learn to hear.

Eugene, August 2005

Reclaiming the Myth-Time: Finding Our Place through Story and Song

Scavenger

Several Years Have Passed Now Since I Saw One for the First Time.

In the oldest mountains on this continent I sat like a stone beneath an old Hemlock, silent and still. A shadow of flickering movement drew my attention and there she was, fluttering by my head, small as a tiny bird but certainly not at all avian in nature. As my head turned she paused in flight, backing away but turning, and in that short instant our eyes met, shock and wonder reflected simultaneously between two very different beings. She spun away and flitted on into the trees up the hill, leaving me stunned and perplexed. "I just saw a ..." Fairy? Nymph? Sylph? None of the words I knew seemed quite right in that moment— of course, they are the words used to name the little wild folk of another continent, of my ancestors, and in my ignorance I did not know the words that the original inhabitants of these hills used for these creatures. I decided that "Wildfolk" would have to suffice.

Now honestly, what did I *really* see? A brief hallucination produced by my willing mind, anthropomorphizing a shadow? A brown bird, after all? Perhaps an insect that I don't know that has a long trailing abdomen split into two leglike appendages...

But that brief glance, that lock of eyes; hair! She had hair!

Ultimately it does not matter what I saw. Being very critical of most things and yet receptive to the mystery of the world I came to see that the *impact* of that brief connection was all that really mattered. I changed. I believe that we both changed, whatever that small creature happened to be. Those days in the old forest live with me in a magical way. The fact that I am willing to share that story and the way I share it speaks more on who I am than on the allegedly objective reality of what I saw on that day. Believe, disbelieve, or ponder—how you receive the story is how we relate as beings. How we communicate is how we connect, or fail to connect.

Many indigenous communities have stories of their creation or emergence into the world that tell the story of who they are. The dominant cultures call these songs and stories "myth", because they are often "fantastical" and do not correlate with the objective and (constantly changing) scientific truth. This truth that involves such "facts" as Big Bangs, large spinning spheres with immense fields of power called gravity and burning balls of gas hanging in vast spaces. So, truth consists of concepts like gravity, where objects are inherently attracted to other objects on the basis of their mass—a concept reinforcing that size does in fact matter above all. What a convenient scientific reinforcement for a pathologically insecure patriarchal culture! The stories of the dominant cultures also speak many things of their creators, intentional perpetuators and all of us who repeat the stories. They speak of a *need* to have all the answers, no matter how absurd or conveniently reinforcing of social mores they happen to be in the end. They speak of alienation, disconnection, objectification and all the fears inherent in a culture that has moved away from the earth and seeks to control it at all costs. When ethnographers and anthropologists do manage to inflict an understanding of the difference between objective "knowledge" and irrational "myth" on indigenous peoples, many natives have indicated that, no, of course they don't literally believe their story of creation, this tale of why Raven is black or why Vulture is bald. They *know* that coyote's tail is not perpetually burnt, but they tell this story anyway because it tells other people who they are, what they think, what they value as a society. The stories of the dominant cultures do the same, though we are all too often ignorant of the process. The maintenance of mundane existence and the façade of rational understanding has become more important than the sharing of who we are and the joyful embracing of Wonder. The distinction between mundane and wonderous need not exist. Songs of gathering seeds, tales of long walks, these show us the connection that we have lost with the rhythm of our lives. Mundane existence was created when we as humans chose to sacrifice spontaneity for security. The nature and value of song is a vivid example of this process. Songs bring expression to our actions, bursting into reality and connecting thought, action and passion together as a seamless whole. When the world is song we never know boredom, we are never lost.

How do we as domesticated or recovering humans deal with knowing by infliction one set of myths that do not serve us, either collectively or individually? It seems disturbingly clear that the effects of understanding the world according to the civilized paradigm will leave us disconnected and in many ways traumatized. Our sense of Wonder has been stolen from us. Having all the answers in a textbook leaves nothing more to discover, and yet leaves whole realms of thought, connection and understanding unexplored. I hesitantly pose the question, wrought with hope and fearful despair alike: Can we change our personal and collective mythic structure? Can we form new identities, like the shapeshifters of old, and leave one set of understanding behind and claim or create another? Could we then go out into the world and share our songs and stories as a means or showing who we are?

A small band lounges around the warm embers of what was just a roasting fire and basks beneath a cooling and clear moonless night. The wisps of smoke rise high and fast but the scent of juniper spreads through the camp and lingers pleasantly amongst the people. A gentle current of excitement and anticipation builds; a stranger is coming to visit, so the scouts are saying. Two of the younger scouts are guiding her up the canyon to the camp just now. When she arrives the visitor walks confidently but respectfully up to the group and they look at her with interest, trying not to gawk at her hairstyle and odd manner of clothing. They welcome her closer to the fire, for the desert night is quite chill and she has come far. Once she has been made comfortable and warm one of the people asks her, "Would you share with us who you are, that we may know you?" Speaking slowly and clearly, her voice resonates in the sandstone shelter as she assents. She gazes deep into the fire to gather her thoughts, and in the lull a child of the people steps close to her, offering a cup of rosehip and juniper needle tea, which she accepts graciously. She removes her cloak as the people build the fire higher against the chill and begins, and all the people lean in to listen carefully. Her story begins when the world was made and winds through the origin of her people and the stars, how her people found fire and escaped the great beast she calls Machine. Between tales of sorrowful loss and witty stories of mischief and joyous play the people sigh and laugh, not once calling her stories wrong, though none of them have heard these tales before. At last the visitor tells of her People as they are now, her parents and her clan family, what sort of things they eat and why they dress as they do. Finally she speaks her name, Cota, after a yellow flower from the canyons to the north that she says makes a delightful tea with the flavor of desert rain rising off the rocks in the warm sun that follows the storm (Theslesperma megapotacium). Pausing at the end of her tale, she pulls a small bag out of her larger travel pouch and offers it to the child who brought her tea. The people smile, satisfied by the sharing, and thank Cota with words and embraces for her stories. As the people settle into their sleep places for the night and offer Cota warm blankets and a place near the dimming coals of the firepit they also welcome her to stay with them and rest for some days before continuing her journey to the West. She tells them that she has heard of their people before but does not know them yet.

Tomorrow, they promise, they will share with her their stories of how the world came to be, and she will know them as they now know her. The human mind learns by absorbing the experience of its surroundings. Just as sun and clouds, rocks and rivers and trees will shape a mind differently than plastic, metal and boxy indoor spaces, so too will creative and inspired stories that manifest Wonder shape a mind and society differently than boring claims of objectively discovered truth. Does it matter, truly, if we relate the shape of a rock spire to erosion and pressure or to the story of the time when Magpie insulted the ground beneath his lofty wings? Does it really matter if our stories are deemed "True" by others? I tend to be a very critical person with a compulsive attachment to honesty in my connections with others. Honestly, what I see in our stories is the structure of our psyche reflected on the world as well as the world

313

reflected on our minds. If we have the understanding that allows us to choose healthy relationships over unhealthy ones and ideas that connect us to each other and to the place we live instead of clinging to an alienated and oppressive discourse, then the greater reality of our health and sanity compel me to abandon what a pathologically minded civilization calls "truth". As stated before, the point of indigenous stories is to tell who we are as a people and individuals, not to claim what IS.

To speak seriously of becoming indigenous, intending to actually live in the Place that we inhabit, we must seek the songs and stories of those places. To be indigenous is to listen to a place, to let it share its stories with us and share those stories with others who come there. The world is ultimately a vast mystery. Our role in the world is what matters, not the innumerable details of how and why. We all know that toxic chemicals can kill us. No healthy or sane person can be convinced that it is necessary to experiment by killing animals or people to see just exactly how much of a chemical it takes to end life. The heart beats and blood flows through the body. To know this is enough; it is not necessary or acceptable to cut into living flesh to see how or assume why. Such is simply not necessary. The stories we have been told, likewise, are not worth the effect they have on us.

A titanic heel the size of a whole range of mountains lands dustily, lightly on a ring of stardust, touching down ever so gently before rising once more to step out the endless cycling reel of an ancient dancer. In a delight beyond time the Great Dancer spins and flails comet tailed arms to a rhythm that beats from the heart of a nearby world. Around and around the shining moon the great one twirls and swings, prancing on the dusky ring that hangs in the sky around the moon that appears bright and full to the world below. The people on the world cannot see this dancer, who is clothed in the same darkness that lies between the stars, but the effervescent ring that forms as a vast circle for this gargantuan Being we can see on the nights when those immense feet land heavier with the fervor of the dance and dislodge shimmering pieces of the sky that glimmer in the moonlight as they fall softly to the earth below. On these nights, when the ring shines around the moon, the People hold their own dances to accompany the Great Dancer, glancing every so often at that magnificent ring of light above to honor the One whose dancing steps keep time to the pulse of our Earth and maintain the spinning of the sky itself.

The stories we tell and the songs we sing reveal who we are. They speak of our passions, visions, fears and hopes. Our songs and stories are our interpretation of the world, and the working of the world around us upon ourselves. This is a relationship to be delved into, not a problem to solve or a fact to be known. To know a place, person, Being, is to know not only the words, those mere symbols that interpret and explain, but the way that eyes shine as a story is told, the tone of an excited voice. How much is known by the gleeful croak of a Raven as she completes a flip on a rising thermal? What do we learn from the stance of a mountain and the perch of its majestic crags? What contrast it is to even consider if a story could be devoid of meaning! Can a song lack the passion of the singer? Far too many examples abound within civilization to need

314

reiteration here. Turn on their radios, televisions; enter their museums and libraries: see for yourself. Better yet, do not see. Do not accept their stories. In some objective, analytical way perhaps no tale or song can totally lack meaning, as they cannot lack the reflection of their creator. This realization may be even more frightening than the idea of a song without passion. Knowing that our songs and stories speak so clearly of who we are, I ponder why so many of our treasured tales are borrowed or stolen. Where are my stories? For that matter, where are my People? I claim, as do many, that I am still looking for them, perhaps waiting for a song to guide me. As we come to know the stories of the Place that we inhabit and we come to discover the ancestral songs that lie deep within our hearts we may at last come to know ourselves. The stories that will bring our tribe together are merely waiting to be shared, waiting to be sung.

About Getting Free from the Myth of Revolution

Pablo A.

Since I was a little boy I've felt how my desires for freedom have been more than powerful. Even more powerful than that omnipresent Christian morality that wanted me to be obedient and quiet, charitable and weak. During those days of childhood emerged as a very strong force within myself, an inevitable struggle not to allow the offensives of modern life to hurt me, and to set myself free from the possible chains this same life would have installed in me. Those were unconscious and spontaneous processes. At 9, when I wished to drop out of school and learn on my own the things I was interested in, there was no ideology holding my arguments for freedom. There was no system of ideas telling me to hate that adult discrimination towards kids, putting them as ignorants, disabled and modifiable by punishment. It seemed simply absurd and very harmful that we were not allowed to have our own opinion (or that they have to authorize us to have one, in the first place), that we had to fulfill expectations that weren't our own, and that we couldn't just do what we wanted to do.

As the years passed by, I had the luck (or the misfortune, as some of my closest repressive leaders would say) to get in touch with people, books, bands and organizations that, in one way or another, channeled those uncontrollable desires for freedom. And that fact (my search for freedom being channeled) has had positive and negative effects. The positive ones are those we all know in the radical movement: the creation and integration of an international community of wonderful people working for diverse ends and with different means, with a similar spirit of liberty and happiness, the learning of multiple artistic disciplines, the liberation from traditions and other paradigmatic repression's, among other things. The negative effect are those unconscious things allowed by that Western flavor that's present in almost every thing we do, that almost inevitable installation of a universal and universalistic language in our daily life.

Of those negative effects that radical thought (or whatever you want to call the group of ethics, aesthetics and ideological systems that tend to put freedom as the priority and as a human necessity) has had in me, there is one that I'm particularly worried about. And it's related to those protolibertarian desires I had in my days as a little kid. It's precisely about the conceptual systematization of natural, selftaught and absolutely uncontrollable impulses and the desire for freedom. It's about the limits that ideology and "libertarian movements" impose themselves, whether by making their members or supporters feel guilty through installing a unique moral speech, or

determining a discriminatory plane of action and theory. Guilt is one of the worst inheritances of the Western Christian tradition, and it works as an excellent method of social control. And with making their members or supporters guilty through installing a unique moral speech, I'm talking about the creation (consciously or unconsciously) of certain behavioral standards that would govern these members and supporters. They vary in shape and color according to place and moments, but are, basically, those assumptions that seem to settle comfortably in the base of ideologies. Class struggle, social war and protest as revolutionary methods, in the classic position. And within more sophisticated groups (not to say, even, bourgeois): vegetarianism, nonviolence and the last tendencies of life-style revolution, such as shoplifting and political graffiti and stenciling. The dangerous thing is not ideas or actions themselves, but the framework where they get to install themselves: these are ideas and actions that are pretty attractive and they seem to be intensely subversive. Because of the same, they begin to install themselves as necessary, as correct methods, and mainly, as "good". I'm talking about the unconscious imposition of guilt in ourselves, when we're not doing the right thing according to those named standards. I'm talking about the uncomfortable feeling of being a failure to the world, to us, to the radical movement by driving a car, buying at the supermarket, eating meat or its sub products. I'm talking even about the self-repression of impulses due to this same guilt.

At the same time, and very related to this, there is the tendency of some individuals and groups to determine a plane of theory and action on which one's supposed to act (also correctly) to successfully realize those desires for freedom, revolution or whatever it is. This comes usually from those interesting theories that claim they've found the precise point of the origin of our tragedies (hegemony of economics, Christian morals, incorrect distribution of resources, patriarchy or even a "bad" way to deal with the "real" capitalism). For these, we *about getting free* have pacifists telling us that violent protest works against any possible change. We have anarcho-syndicalists telling us that once the means of production are in our hands (or the "workers") everything's going to change. (It's important to say that I'm referring to "isms", and not to individuals that adhere to or participate in any ideology). This is how, besides a right way to act, there is a right perspective, the place to look at the world from, to comprehend it and understand which are the right actions to solve its conflicts. Before these two impositive positions, driven mainly by the individual and collective unconsciousness, I was only to celebrate the sane and nicely pure chaos of the "ansias libertinas" of my childhood. Before this insistent Western mindset, manifested subtly in the radical movement, I only had to desire a constant and daily re-invention of my desires for freedom (let's understand it now and once and for all: freedom for me, freedom for everyone; freedom, freedom, freedom!). I'm not proposing the reactionary Peter Pan ("be kids forever", thus locking up those playful and free characteristics as only for infants), nor a coming back to the Paleolithic as a paradise. I'm not proposing the eternal "nostalgia" for past times, or even less the abuse of subversive/ situationist literature to light up hearts (by that way liberating ourselves from some old charges

of Revolution) and not leaving enough fuel and fire to burn churches, city councils, malls and police stations. I propose to shake ourselves off the myth of that promised day that never arrives, after which all our post-revolutionary plans are supposed to happen. I propose to dissolve and solve all the psycho-emotional charges that we've put (and others have put; there is no need to deny the influence of some ideologies) and promoted through the years, forcing us to go beyond fear and starting by disarming our own systems. Do not be surprised, (directed towards McDonald's or any other corporation) or printed slogans, because I'm proposing to subvert our schedules, our food, our obligations, our loyalties and our strongest beliefs. To play and liberate, to reinvent ourselves constantly, in daily life, in that impermanent emergency of desires, instinct, intuition, and the yearnings for absolute freedom.

Now's the time to get scared: I propose to do whatever we want to do. I'm not going to be revolutionary because of a divine mission. I'm not going to fulfill the expectations my comrades have of me.

Let's make this a game: to live fully is what we're missing. To die of boredom in obligations (even if they are super revolutionary) is what we've had enough of, and it's too much by now. To live, to enjoy, to free life, and free ourselves is what we need. May the revolution be daily life, and daily life be revolting. *Radicals of the world, ¡you're dismissed to liberate yourselves from the shackles of Revolution!*

Max & I

An-ok Ta Chai

I've had an interesting proposition set before me, something that I've been avoiding clearly looking at for a while. How would I delineate a connection between the philosophy of the famous 19th century German individualist anarchist writer Max Stirner and the general "green" or anti-civilization approach to anarchy? I've been daunted by this question, for one, because Stirner is simply so *old*—a dead European intellectual of days gone by—and anti-civilization anarchy in its current expression, in my opinion, is quite cutting-edge. For another, Stirner is quite individual-oriented, some may even say "narcissistic", while green anarchist analyses address all of world history, the global eco-sphere, and all aspects of life. And finally, I've seen a lot of different people love Max Stirner, from Platformists to Libertarians to green anarchists—and all of them strike me as intense and weird individuals, and I'm not quite sure that I would want to attract their attention.

Nonetheless, I must confess—I love Max Stirner. I always have, as long as I've known of the guy. Then I realize—I don't really like Stirner as a person, or even as a writer. He was a German girls' school teacher who hung out with snotty intellectuals like Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and he was married to a wife who admitted to never loving nor respecting him. His writing often went off on unnecessary rants about European history or some other philosopher guy, and he frequently informed his readers about how bad-ass he was because of how free and uncompromising he supposedly was. This is not why I love Max Stirner. I love Stirner because of what I personally *get out of* his writings or ideas attributed to him. I would sum this up as—you experience your life as *you*, not as anyone or anything else. As far as you know, this is the only life that you've got. Therefore, you should make sure that all of the relationships and ideas that you come across actively help you to live your life in a way that is free, fulfilling and enjoyable to you in the here-andnow. And *fuck* anyone or anything that gets in your way.

A lot of modern-day commercialized self-help shit vaguely has this same message, so aside from being the original quotable self-help guru, Stirner had some integral, unique iconoclastic components to this philosophy on life. Stirner took an anarchist approach by saying that all forms of government, capitalism, and authority destroys people, thereby eliminating the possibility of achieving this self-supporting aim in life. Stirner also had an amoralist angle by holding that the concepts of good/bad, right/wrong, duty and obligation cloud one's vision away from this self-chosen focus. He came from an individualist direction by believing that conceptually placing society,

319

the collective and/ or the group *first* deters from valuing one's own life as primary. And he took an existentialist stance by saying that concepts, belief systems, and ideas have no inherent meaning in and of themselves—that *you* put the meaning into them yourself, and then act accordingly. When you put this all together you then have a direct line of sight straight to yourself— what are you doing *here* and *why* are you doing it? Stirner pointed out how chances are that in any given situation you're not even *trying* to take care of yourself—you've in effect lost *yourself* in the process.

Stirner helped me to take my anarchist beliefs and outlooks *personally*. He helped me to clearly situate *myself* in the midst of all this bullshit society that surrounds me. Government and capitalism directly screws me over, right here and right now, so if I want to personally live a free, fulfilling, and enjoyable life, then it's all got to go.

More striking for me was how Stirner helped to expose the ghost-like nature of all these different ideas of morality, obligation, family, property, government, and society itself—how so often I view these things as being tangible entities in and of themselves (as opposed to being just concepts in my head) and as a result I see them as making demands and threats upon me. Stirner reminded me that it is people and the physical world that hurts or obstructs me, that all thoughts and relations to that are based on ideas inside my head, so why not choose to think and act differently, in a way that helps *me*?

One concern that comes up around Stirner's approach, particularly when considering it in conjunction with green anarchy, is that it can be used as an excuse for consumption, gluttony, and over-indul- gence. To this, I can only say that I believe that there is a certain joy and fulfillment that occurs in human experience that is more profound and far-reaching when health and balance is reached than when consumption and over-indulgence is engaged in. I believe that because one's body is a natural organism, we can trust an inner felt-sense (as opposed to whim and habit) to guide us in finding our own personal health and balance, and that we can trust to make our decisions based on that.

This is all great so far, but the tricky part comes when trying to apply Stirner's ideas to establishing mutually-supportive relationships with other people and non-human life. Stirner had a suspicion that relationships of mutual support and respect with other people were indeed possible, but he really did not know how to do it.* His relationship with his wife is an example of that. And as far as non-human life goes, Stirner was more a "dominate nature, make it serve you" kind of guy—not exactly eco-conscious.

This is where I think that it is important to take Stirner's ideas and "run wild", so to speak. I see this as best being done by first keeping in mind some basic principles of human social dynamics—if you disregard or screw over other people, then they are less likely to keep *your* interests in mind. Therefore if you want social relationships that help *you*, you need to keep in mind and help out others, too. Mutual respect and support, voluntary cooperation; aka—anarchy.

Next, if you want people to help you out in a thorough and personal way, then you need to really know each other and trust each other. After a certain number of

people, the personally-knowing quality begins to diminish, and hence the ease and depth of mutual trust goes as well. This puts a cap on the number of people that a group can have while still maintaining this kind of integrity. Therefore it becomes desirable to personally choose to organize in small-scale groups based on trust and affinity—"tribes".

If you want to live for yourself, to respect your own enjoyment, satisfaction, and freedom in life, and if you want to include the often overlooked realms of the sensual and the spiritual, *all* aspects of life as you experience it—chances are that you wouldn't be choosing to work in factories, till the fields, sit in traffic, go to war, wait in lines, numb yourself to the incessant grating background noise of industrial society, wade through continually-growing piles of trash, or other trademark features of Civilized life. When living your life in this different way, work itself clearly becomes seen as an undesirable choice. Domestica- *max and i* tion, an essential pillar of Civilization, is clearly at odds with Stirner's philosophical approach to living. Domestication requires displacement from yourself and that which naturally supports you. Stirner's approach is that of finding yourself and consciously putting yourself in alignment with that which effectively supports you. How can you tacitly accept programming and training from outside of yourself when your whole chosen basis for living is to clearly find and carry out your *own* standards, assumptions and actions to best support *yourself*?

Living with others who also choose to live their lives in this way, and respecting and supporting eachother in this, then, establishes a social norm which is inherently antithetical to the driving force of agricultural and industrial society, ergo, Civilization itself. This social norm could spread as a generalized mode of interaction among people, or it could serve as a foundation from which to attack Civilization or defend against its encroachments. Either way, this way of relating socially and living your life is inherently fulfilling and supportive of yourself, therefore it is of value. Stirner's philosophy then becomes antagonistic to Civilization.

Living an uncivilized, undomesticated life consciously chosen and meaningful *for* myself within a context of a small group of known and trusted people engaged in mutually supportive and respectful relationships towards this end—this is Stirnerite green anarchy. The thought of this as an applied practice in my life sends chills up my spine. The thought of this generalized to the rest of humanity—no Civilization at all—is simply exhilarating. That crazy dead German loner wingnut didn't know what he was getting into.

*Stirner called his vague notions of anarchistic social relationships "unions of egoists", and his ideas on this became a foundation for what was later fleshed out in insurrectionary and post-left anarchist models for decentralized self-organizing groups.

Recommended Reading:

For more information on our boy Max, you can check out Stirner's most well-known and influential book, *The Ego and Its Own*, currently in print from Cambridge University Press and the anarchist publisher, Rebel Press.

Other writings by and about Max Stirner can be found online at http://www.nonserviam.com/

And for a true story of some Stirnerite anarchists who took his philosophy to a whole new level, I recommend *The Bonnot Gang* by Richard Parry, also published by Rebel Press.

Dust in the Wind

Mysteria

I am an ever-changing, shape-shifting, undifferentiated (except to the surgeons scalpel or scientist scope; neither I trust) fusion of particles I ingest, absorb, inhale, and allow in that come from other infinitely re-forming amalgamations that shat, pissed, cum, vomited, shed, decomposed, spit, exhaled...on and on and on. Infinite. Eternal. Immortal. Sometimes I imagine each particle carries (but not by phys- ics formula, especially quantum) an essence-unique. Perhaps it even accumulates essence from all it has been a part of or in proximity to (though not in the geographic sense) in its tumbling, traveling dance with life. I occasionally ponder the idea that when those uncountable entities enter into my own, their essence is added (though not mathemat- ically) to what was already here. That the whole of my existence is temporary, yet infused with all that ever was, all that is now and (perhaps) all that will ever be, seems, well—almost obvious. Infinite. Eternal. Immortal.

The unique creation that is "I" is vibrantly alive alongside all other entities in the con- tinuum called life. I often connect with other life-mixes in a deep and meaningful way that defies logical, reasoned, rational explanation. Coincidence, déjà vu, extrasensory perception, dreams, visions, magic, instinct, intuition, and that special understanding (not the learned kind) I share with one or another that needs no words, seem as those small voices (not in the oral sense) whispering on the poets wind. Voices of times past, experiences gathered, entities merged and separated; in an organic, chaotic, symbiotic anarchy. The dance of the wild, uniquely manifested. At times the wisdom (not of the bookish implication) of the ages seems present in the smallest existence and experience and I am reminded of the horrors of human progress that have denied me this.

It seems that this spirit others talk about so much these days (too often with a cleric's tone) might be that essence I grok in lively things. But, I get confused because I don't have a path or a practice related to it as others have to their spirit (much less a religious practice, though the distinction between practice and religion alludes me most of the time). I can't imagine what purpose, what goal such an intent would serve, much less what a physically-bound/intellectuallystimulated/specialist-developed prac- tice could do that a prolonged moment of stillness, lying bare on the earth, inhaling and absorbing life's essence, sensing (not in the 5 or even 6th division way) and reinvig- orating my wholeness—could not. I have no void to fill, no aspect of my being I want to transcend. If I am a seeker at all, it is for that elusive wholeness—stolen. I love (not in the Hallmark way) living and the totality of me. All I need is to be unencumbered,

detangled, and disconnected from all that stands in my way of dancing freely—before my time (not the clock kind) to shift arrives.

That which is "I" is but naught but a speck in the whole of everything. Just as surely as I am living, "I" am also dying (and so are you) It often seems this notion of transcending is borne of a fear of the death of the "I" that rarely experiences an exuberance, trapped in a machine (in every sense of that technologic atrocity) existence that splits us into smaller an smaller differentiated identifiable matter directed into its appropriate purpose.

I have little fear left of leaving this "I", but this does not stop my instinct for living. That which is "I" will end in some tangible way in its own space and time (not in a clock or calendar counting). Memories of me in others will continue and so in a way "I" go on. Perhaps as I touched others and others touched me, an essence merged to became a living but slowly fading reminiscence. It often frightens others when I talk about looking forward (without tempting an early arrival) to that moment when all that is now rendered as "I" transitions to something new. I want to be whole in that moment (not a material dying/spirit ascending Ultimate split), so that which is "I" will experience a transitioning in a glorious blaze of ecstasy and all that makes up the "I" is carried in the wind to invigorate what is touched or bound (gently) to next. (But even that desire carries too much of that "I" ego, I suspect). Some days, when all is silent (that is, minus the techno-human cacophony) and the hawk's wings flap so close overhead they are all I hear, it seems I may have heard the sound a spirit-essence would make.

I always smile and feel a certain thrilling calm come over me.

But these are all just so many meanderings of a restless, aging, fool of a human caught in a mechanized, industrialized turmoil so massive I can hardly breathe. My movements often express my rage and a deep unspeakable sadness; too often overshadowing the equally (not by accountant's formula) deep and unspeakable joy whose dance infuses all of me as well..

I am not certain (by any technique) about this spirit-essence thing and I waste little time pondering it. But I would love the sound of wings in free flight to accompany me in the moment "I" move on.

Don't hang on, nothing lasts forever but the earth and sky It slips away and all your money won't another minute buy Dust in the wind, everything is dust in the wind

Dust in the wind, all we are is dust in the wind All we are is dust in the wind

–Kansas, "Dust in the Wind"

The Error of Correction

Correction has elevated itself to the heights of oppression in its manifestation as the vast prison complex whose various branches (in the US, at least) subsume the general designation of "department of corrections". From the perspective of the dominant culture into which we are thrown and pinned, to correct is to make right. It's easy to see the error of correction for anyone wanting to see. In fact, correction has risen to disastrous proportions when we look at all that goes on in its name. Technology is, in one aspect, the employment of means to correct or improve (which can be seen as a mode of correction). Children are introduced to correction/improvement early on and live with its oppressiveness all throughout childhood in the domicile and in school until they become conditioned to self-correct. This is seen as "maturity"(maturity, in the sense of ripeness, suggests being ready for harvesting and processing). From there they enter the domain of human resources...fit for work and service and to be consumed by the reigning storm of the ideological systems of nations, states... Civilization.

Politics are about correction. The right wants to protect the material basis of wealth from flowing out beyond the possession of its elect. It seeks to correct any ideological currents of thought that would serve otherwise. It will use any means at hand from the most subtle propagation of it's "values", to invasion and obliteration of whole cultures whose lifeway is perceived as a threat (by merely being an alternative!) to those values that it uses for its maintenance. The Left wants to maintain the material base of wealth, but desires a more "equitable" possession of resources and an increase in the outflow of wealth. *Material wealth is the ground of all politics and its only real concern* in spite of all the pontification by politicos to the contrary. Both right and left will use whatever means they can muster to correct any deviation from their ideal. This includes everything from brute fascism to the most "benevolent" socialism. All political wrangling and busyness is about the correction/improvement of the institutions of society for the sake of material wealth and the power, privilege and comfort (whether charitably disbursed among "the people" or kept largely to the elite) accompanying it. Politicos, right and left, cannot question the basis of their mode of being...material wealth...the whole realm of resources and goods, who gets them, and *most especially*, who *decides*. They delve no deeper in life than that, or if they do, they fear it for whatever reason and refuse to admit it. They don't dream, and if they do, they ignore and suppress their dreams discounting them as distractions from "reality".
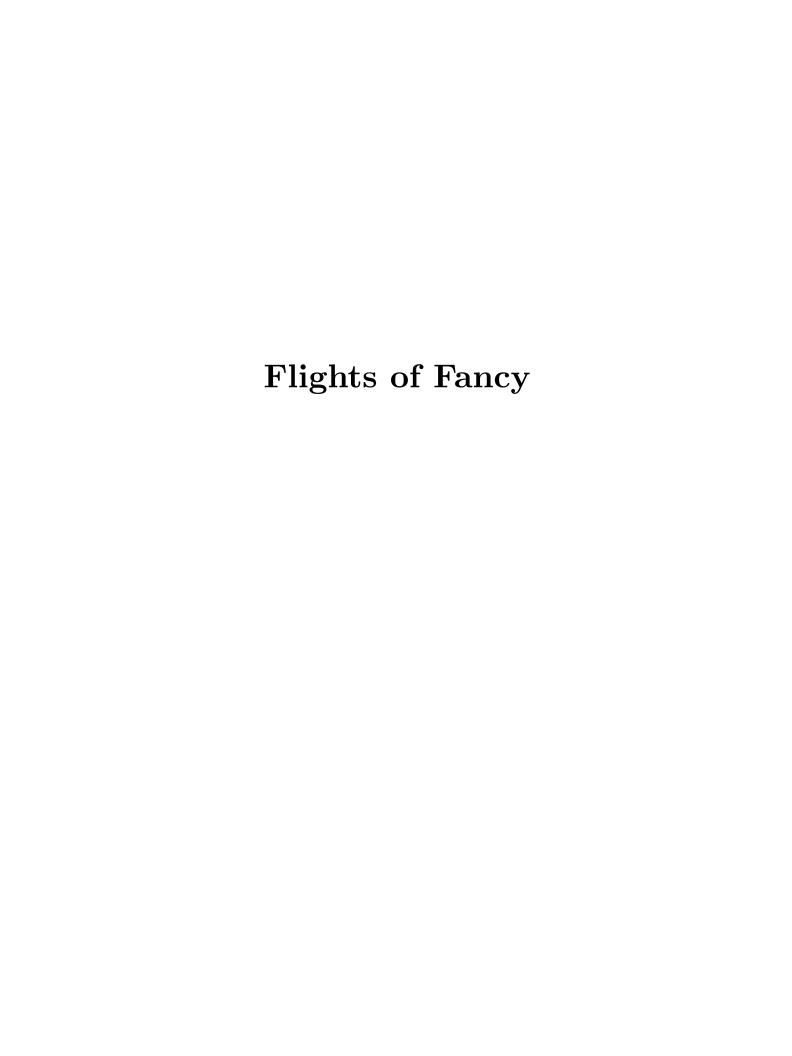
In music making, especially when composing on the fly, the components of musical energy: rhythm, tone, amplitude, and velocity... ebb and flow as the performance stretches along. There can be moments of mad chaos followed by sudden silence opening

into ethereal sweetness and poignancy. But the musician's virtuosity and sensibility is limited and he/she may stumble into a moment of "error". Suddenly the flow may be arrested. A finger may abruptly strike an unintended string or key. The metered pulse that was so effortlessly *there* a moment ago may suddenly be lost. A hesitancy or sense of bewildered embarrassment may seize the player. Here, the musician is "all in". What happens next is crucial to the entire performance. But the one thing most wanting to be avoided is to correct anything. Better just to deliberately play on, fully cognizant of the uncanny territory and, like the fool of the tarot, walk right off the cliff, knowing that the wind of musical inspiration will kick in and buffet the fall, or even turn it into flight. *Or one may simply stop, ending the piece precisely there.* Anything but correction. There is grace in music making. Correction has its place in practice and study, but in performance (even if the musician is alone), it is unwanted.

Life is not the practice or study of itself. It neither needs nor wants correction. The chaotic and bizarre movement that has entered the scene of life on earth that is called civilization, with it's phrases and phases of nations and governments and contorted inventions of social manipulation, is a song of death. Over much of the earth, the silence of nightfall undisturbed by machines has been forgotten except in the deeper regions of the body, which resonate with the rhythms and sounds of nature. The business of civilization with its incessant correction of every damn thing, from the flow of streams and tides right down to the minute behaviors of humans and other animals and plants, including the most hidden lifeforms and energy formations of molecules and atoms, is the "performance" that needs desperately to be stopped.

A musician can be carried away with the flow of a performance. The music's energy has its own momentum, which can sweep the performer along ecstatically...for a time. A part of a musician's skill is the ability to discern at such times when and how to regain conscious and deliberate control of the piece at hand and wrap it up in just the right manner. To just continue on unaware of the necessary limit of even the most inspired rhapsodic flow would end in cacophony and exhaustion. And that is the stage of civilization now. Our home is exhausted and the incessant mechanical din is a mad cacophony void of inspiration. Politics wants to correct all of this. It's time to *end* the piece. The pianist may have to have his stool jerked out from under him and the conductor shoved off the stage. We can't just walk out of the performance; that's not a choice. The song of death is echoing in every crevice of existence on the planet.

It's time to *stop* the madness, not correct it.

Flights of Fancy

Dreams with Sharp Teeth: Anarchic Flights of Fancy

Chaos, birth, stars—this says everything. —Jean Genet

When the cities are gone, and all the ruckus has died away, when sunflowers push up through the concrete and asphalt of the forgotten interstate freeways, when the Kremlin and the Pentagon are turned into nursing homes for generals, presidents, and other such shitheads, when the glassaluminum skyscraper tombs of Phoenix Arizona barely show above the dunes, why then, why then, why then maybe free men and wild women on horses, free women and wild men, can roam the sagebrush canyon lands in freedom—goddammit!—herding feral cattle into box canyons, and gorge on bloody meat and bleeding fucking internal organs, and dance all night to the music of fiddles! banjos! steel guitars! by the light of a reborn moon...

—George W. Hayduke on his Night March,

The Monkey Wrench Gang

Rising from deep within our psyche, anarchist aspirations have appeared, waned, and reappeared throughout history and have been expressed in diverse forms by diverse individuals. In many ways, Anarchy is a poetic concept, an inflammatory energy that, once admitted into our consciousness, initiates a visionary process of creative conjuring, with effects akin to magic. Dreams share with poetry a sense of the profound importance of inspiration, of the glow of illumination in the mind, the sudden grasp—whole—of something previously perceived in fragments or not perceived at all. We view the writings gathered in this section as a prophetic pre-figuration, a step forward into the feral unknown—a rupture, a point that is open for the subversive usage of things, a lucid unreason that is not afraid of chaos. These fantastical musings—many of which possess all the crackling intensity of the lifeforce transferred to paper—are adventurous experiments at fighting television with vision, propaganda with poetry, and silence with song. Because changing the world starts with changing your mind: it's just that matter is thicker and more viscous than imagination so it takes a little longer!

Earth's Lament

Everyday Revolution

Once I was wild. Once countless creatures crept, crawled, wriggled and ran over me. Flowers and trees shot up wherever they pleased. Sometimes they competed for space, but just as often they cooperated to live together in harmony. The same was true of the animals: they preyed upon one another only as they hungered. They knew nothing of murder or genocide. The law of the jungle was take what you need, and no more.

In those golden days, the thin-haired apes who call themselves people were just another tribe among my laughing, playful children. They foraged and hunted as their hungers dictated. They fornicated and procreated as their passions moved them. They built simple, efficient structures to protect themselves from the elements, and spent most of their time in play.

Some might say that they did nothing but play. They had no time clocks, bosses, or rigid work ethic. Maybe you could argue that these early people were really engaged in productive work only when they weaved, sculpted, cooked, or hunted, while their dancing or storytelling were unproductive leisure and play. But this distinction would come as a surprise to the happy, hairless apes themselves. All their activities were voluntary, and all fulfilled essential human needs—to these uncivilized humans, gaiety and camaraderie seemed just as essential as food and shelter.

Unfortunately, somewhere, at some time, some of these hairless apes decided that they constituted the center of the universe. They decided that the lives of those in their tribe were more important than the lives of all the other creatures around them in the community of life. They decided that they possessed the knowledge of who should live and who should die, and the sole power to save or destroy the world. Misled by these delusions, some human tribes decided that they could remake the entire world to fit their purposes. To this end they began to tamper with the intricate systems of life that had spread across my body during billions of years of chaotic interactions.

Because of the egotism of a few hairless apes, these infinitely complex systems, in which every organism's independent actions served the interests of the community of life as a whole, were rapidly replaced. The apes constructed simplified systems meant to serve only the interests of a few human masters. Wetlands, forests, and prairies filled with diverse life gave way to geometrical rows of plants and subdued herds of animals, completely dependent upon human care for survival, and bred only to service humans' material needs and designs.

Maintaining fields and herds required much more time and effort than living off what naturally grew up from my body. The domesticating humans fought a constant battle to defend their ordered gardens from the vital, natural chaos around them. One threat came from other human tribes, who still lived wild and free off my plenty. This way of life, without respect for property or boundaries, was incompatible with that of the domesticated tribes.

In fact, everything wild seemed incompatible with humanmade systems: one of the biggest threats to life came from the dangerously unpredictable behavior of birds, deer, insects, and even other plants. All seemed set on consuming the crops that these tribes had sown, or upon taking advantage of the growing conditions in their fields. These relatives of the hairless ape did not understand that the new domesticated lands were not meant to exist as free space in a wild garden, where every thing was provided for your consumption through the larger design of a chaotic system.

To stop the wilderness threatening their controlled design, the civilized apes took up arms against their wild relations, conquering and enslaving all that they could. Free plants and animals were domesticated. Free humans became servants or slaves—or were simply assimilated as fellow farmers enslaved to a plot of land that they must constantly maintain and guard. Those humans, animals, and plants who would not be pacified, and therefore threatened the new human-designed world order, were exterminated. In this way murder and genocide came to be.

As these brutal apes imposed a hierarchy on the community of life, where they decided what people and other organisms outside of their own tribe would be allowed to live or die, the internal organization of their tribes also came to reflect this unequal power dynamic. The new, domesticated human societies were invariably formed in a hierarchy. A few bullying tyrants or self-important individuals would go about making decisions for other people based upon their own needs and whims, just as they made decisions for the entire living world based upon the interests of their tribe.

Despite many successful crusades to kill off all that was wild and free, these early human leaders were constantly thwarted in their attempts to rule the world. Slaves rebelled, free tribes continued to raid their herds and gardens, and pestilences continued to destroy their crops. The community of life, in all its glorious chaos, was constantly showing how impossible it was for any humans to rule over me.

Yet these early rulers did not step back to question the source of their constant insecurity. Or, if they did, they were too blinded with self-importance to assess what was really happening. Perhaps a few thoughtful storytellers were getting at this when they created tales about a lost Garden of Eden, where life had been all easy play. But these stories explained humanity's fall from paradise in terms of punishment from an all-powerful supreme being. This explanation obscured the voluntary choice humans had made to accept authority and domestication, and made obedience to powerful authorities seem inescapable.

Neither the human leaders nor their bullied followers comprehended their mistakes early on, when they had just begun to betray my trust and love by killing and enslaving

my other children. Instead of abandoning their brutal ways, they began a full-scale attack against my body itself. They tried to make my soil barren through their wasteful, ill-conceived agricultural enterprises. They pitted my body with mines and quarries in order to build huge structures, temples to their self-importance, or in order to burn the prizes they had dug up and send up clouds of smoke to blight my breath.

Human societies began to move faster and faster, working to gobble up all that was wild and turn it into factory farmland, or piles of slag and debris, or massive stone and metal monuments to the brutal apes' self obsession and complete estrangement from the community of life. Even in those few spots, those few nature preserves set aside for creatures not of immediate use in the human-made system, constant efforts were made to police, regulate and control my other children, so that they could never become strong and plentiful enough to leave the sanctuary and reclaim the blighted human world.

I grow old, I grow old... this refrain comes from a poem by T.S. Eliot, one particularly adroit wordsmith among the most privileged classes of the brutal apes. Eliot also wrote a poem characterizing the modern human society in which he lived as a barren wasteland. These observations are important. They tell me that, through their constant insistence that slave-master relations are the only interactions possible, humanity's leaders have not just deprived other creatures of their joy, play and freedom. Even those at the top of the human-designed social system can sense that, without the ability to interact with all living things as brothers, they have lost all chance for beautiful, full lives. They have lost the chance to live in a world that is beautiful because it is out of their control.

But even though they know that they are empty, only a handful of these humans have ever tried to let go, and restore the world to its previous, chaotic order. Most take the easy way out, trying to fill up their emptiness through redoubled efforts to impose human-made order at every level of life. T.S. Eliot joined the Anglican Church in order to find meaning in its rituals, and he was not alone in this. Over their brief history, the vast majority of humans seeking escape from the brutality of their social order have become trapped in ritual, religion, superstition, philosophy or science. In fact, the efforts of some humans to return to wild freedom and the community of life have even been used to create new religions or philosophies, and thereby increase the weight of their chains and the severity of my injuries.

With each passing moment, I lose hope that the thin-haired apes will make any kind of peaceful, voluntary return to a state of free play, mutual respect, and wild nature. Once I wished for this possibility in every moment, and looked constantly for signs that it was coming. Now it is only a very misty deep dream. Instead of wishing for the best I find myself hoping that the absolute worst does not come to be.

Perhaps these misguided ape children of mine, guided by their egotistic leaders, will destroy me completely in one final blast of egotism. Or perhaps they will only annihilate themselves and the majority of life, and I will be able to enter a long, deep sleep of healing and rejuvenation. But what I most fear is that they will find a way,

using their technology, to prolong my life and their own, keeping us alive indefinitely in a tame, debilitated state—just as they string out the mutilated lives of their own elderly with painkillers and hospital respirators. I would rather that they kill me in a bright blaze than that they keep me alive as the single flickering flame of vital life in a cold world of stone temples and sickly slave farms. But the choice is not mine...

The Dream l'argonauta

The Dream

Unreal, surrealistic, utopian, in any case it is a dream. In the universe of dreams nothing is codified, preprogrammed or placed in rational order. Will they remain dreams or will these dreams become reality? We trust the infinite possibilities of chance.

The first and only episode

In a certain metropolis, there were thousands of machines, huge colossi of the mechanical and electrical facilities. Each particular machine had a special function. One produced toothbrushes, another paper with which to wipe one's ass, the next produced polyester chairs. All of these machines produced 20, 50, 100 times as much as was actually necessary for the inhabitants of the metropolis.

Where the hell this excess production went, no one knew. Dubious figures known by the name "Worker" settled around this technological monster. They also had a special role in production. They were responsible for assuring that the entire technological apparatus functioned, as well as monitoring the end product. This was the universe of the factory. In this universe, the workers used up eight hours of their wretched and insipid existence each day. But the workers were sick. They suffered from a strange disease that was particularly dangerous, even deadly. The disease in question was the morbid syndrome, Paroxysmus Affection Productionismus. The medical specialists couldn't diagnose the source. Some believed it was a question of an occupational deformation; others thought that it was a spiritual deformation. Indeed, the workers did not wish to leave their machines after eight hours of work, even though their bosses ordered them to go home. The workers protested in various ways. Some chained themselves to their machines, others suffered attacks of depression, still others threatened to kill themselves if they were not allowed to keep working. Often the bosses had to call the guardians of order to make the work-hungry workers leave the factories.

The PAP syndrome complicated the lives of the workers in strange ways. The most frequent symptom of the disease was that the worker had a compulsion to identify with the products they produced. Those who operated the machines that made toothbrushes were convinced that they were toothbrushes. Others identified with toilet paper and continually tried to lick the asses of their bosses clean while they were in the factory. Workers competed with each other to produce more. Hostility spread like wild fire, finally becoming a harsh war of competition.

There was only one exception, in perpetual conflict with the workers: the unemployed, everyone who, out of a lack of enthusiasm or due to circumstances beyond their control, had no work. The dimensions of the struggle were appalling: workers

333

sold heroin to the unemployed in an attempt to exterminate them. In return, the unemployed set fire to the workers' cars so that they could not drive to and from the work place.

One night, however, a large black cloud descended upon the metropolis and the people stayed in their apartments, because they could see nothing outside. The next day the thick fog was still there and the desperate workers did not know how they would get to their jobs. A few stubbornly tried to go on the street, but as fate would have it, they ran face-first into the electric poles on the street corners. Thickheaded workers ran their cars into trees. There were countless accidents, injuries, and deaths that day. The frightened people barricaded themselves in their apartments. Forced to stay home, they began to enjoy the small pleasures of life without the compulsion of work. The people became happier and laughed; they talked with each other and helped each other out. Something new and wonderful happened to the people. They became more and more human and less and less workers. Gradually the addiction to work disappeared.

Finally the huge black cloud disappeared and the factories opened their doors again. But nobody returned. The days passed by, but not a trace of the workers. The bosses were shaken and depressed as they saw their unproductive machines and began to kill themselves one after another. Detox centers were built for workers, and the most stubborn work addicts who tried to return to their machines and produce had their hands sewn into their pockets. With such good will all the workers were healthy again. The unemployed were no longer a threat to anyone and ceased to be treated as outsiders.The bosses and capitalists who had survived the suicide phenomenon took their place. The factories were burnt down, and with them, the banks, the malls, the official press, all the political and social institutions that had guaranteed the exploitation of some people by others.

This is the only new society worth conceiving. To hell with work and exploitation...
the dream

Diary of a Female Stone-Age Hunter-Gatherer in a European Forest during the

Roman Conquest of Gaul

Army of the Twelve Monkeys

Day One:

The forest is the giver of life and the bringer of death. Humans are an integral component in this tapestry of balance. We observe the patterns of behavior exhibited in the diverse organisms sharing our homeland, learning from their wisdom and adapting their ways to our communities. Both the animals and plants with whom we interact and depend upon teach us important information about our role in this dance of exuberance, our forest world. Cooperative hunting and sharing food are key aspects of our lifestyle, helping to bond families together in mutually reciprocal relationships. By attentively watching wolves we have taken on their hunting strategies, allowing parties of our men and us women to communicate with each other through non-verbal methods in a joint pursuit of collective fulfillment. Although we must use tools such as the bow and arrow to successfully procure meat because of our inadequate natural constitution, we are grateful for the invaluable lessons of the wolf.

As with the animals, our plant co-inhabitants not only provide us with sustenance, they have influenced us in our continuous quest to be one with the forest. Patience and humility are the two most important traits we have picked up from the plant population. Through a relative stasis, the towering oaks and tiny berries have enabled us to see that there is an enhancement of life when one is still, whether through long cold periods when our mobility is limited or simply during a succession of moments while watching vegetation return in abundance during warmer periods. These patient excursions into the harmony of quietude contribute to our sense of being embedded within the forest, molding our social identities without creating feelings of discontent. Humility is exuded in plants from root to branch, giving us further in- sight on how to maintain equilibrium with life. As humans, we have come to recognize that although we are animals, a potential to disrupt the functioning of the forest is inherent in our very mental makeup. By assimilating the maturity of the plant community, we have

endeavored to remain humble before the intertwined fate the forest produces for us and the web of life. It is a perpetual process of living and learning, but one which we have grown to love.

Day Two:

Sadly, this world of ours is rapidly coming to an end through undertakings we are somewhat familiar with. However, unique challenges previously unimaginable pose threats so severe one would have to see it to believe it. Our recent past experiences have been subsumed by the increasing presence of people who have a very different way of life than our own, not only in how they think but in how they act. Oral traditions tell how some time in the distant past various human groups started to migrate into our beloved forest region. We were initially somewhat skeptical, being that we have come to understand the dilemma of overcrowding in relation to available food, but were willing to initiate peaceful relations. Quickly our skepticism increased in reaction to the incomers' plans. Social interaction took place, seemingly as a gesture of possible friendship, however, things deteriorated shortly after our first contact.

One of our younger hunters, a girl named Silent Oak, who was showing exceptional abilities at animal tracking and stealth, voluntarily left our camp, lured into the trap of lusting for material possessions. As I said yesterday, the forest has taught us about humility and reciprocity, but our hunter-woman-to-be found the urge to experiment with another lifestyle too tempting. We respected her decision, as it is common among our people to occasionally separate from the group in order to avoid conflict escalation or because a close friend is located at another camp site. At the time, we were generally uninformed about the visitors. What other experience had we been confronted with that might help us understand them? Their possessions led us to believe they were up to something more and Silent Oak's journey proved us right. When meeting up with the newcomers, Silent Oak found out they were not a hunting and gathering group, but lived in more substantial fortifications they called villages. Many more people lived in any one village then in many of our camps put together. She took notice immediately of various differences between our ways of life, most notably that the Gauls, which is what the villagers called themselves, were clearing forest at an increasing rate to accommodate their larger populations as well as a system of gaining food we took to calling domestication.

Domestication was a word in our language we used to describe the process by which individuals tried to bully the group, attempting to subordinate everyone to their will either through shamanistic trances or boasting over a successful hunt. We used various non-violent ways to deal with these individuals, but if the circumstances became too extreme, collective execution of the domesticator could occur.

Day Three:

As the story goes, Silent Oak ran away from the village due to her disgust towards what she described as the "domestication of life in the forest." By this she meant not only were the villagers controlled by a head domesticator as well as a subordinate council of domesticators, but animals and plants showing traits absent in the normal

functioning of the forest were the primary form of food. Silent Oak noted there were no longer the familiar berries, nuts, and roots she was accustomed to; the Gauls had something called "wheat" to feed their growing population. She was also there long enough to witness fighting between two groups of Gauls, a fight they called a "blood feud". It seemed that as the villagers put greater pressure on the life of the forest to continuously yield domesticated food, groups fought with each other more and more, creating a system by which any member of an opposing village could be killed in retaliation for a previous offense committed by an individual who might no longer even be alive. They enshrined fighting as a cultural value, disconnecting themselves from a life of peace we once all knew.

This description of Silent Oak's experience remains deep within our hearts to this day, for we can see how correct she was in her assessment of the Gauls. Our forest was gradually encroached upon. We did not want to become sick from the domestication illness, so we talked to decide collectively how we should deal with this threat. According to oral tradition, Silent Oak told of how Gaul councils were dominated by the head domesticators and a few of the elder men and prominent warriors who gained status from leading raids. Our meetings, whenever they needed to be convened, were a much more informal affair with us women, along with the men, participating freely in the discussion. We had no "prominent war leaders" to excessively honor and give undue speaking time to during councils. Personally I wasn't sure which idea was more repulsive, domestication or war, but my sister agreed with me that they were probably interconnected. Not many of our people voluntarily associated with the Gauls after Silent Oak's story was told, however, that didn't prevent our women being taken as slaves by these intruders. Some escaped, and had learned enough Gaulish language to assist with future attempts at reconciliation. They told us of the sexual divisions that existed in the Gaul's society, as well as the rigid religious rituals that reinforced supposed gender essences. This gender essence is incomprehensible to me, for I hunt with the men regularly, and participate in all decisions about when and where to move camp. I always have many companions, male and female, nearby to deal with a rapist, although our society is nearly without rape. Eventually we came to the decision we had to fight if we were to survive. This would require hit and run tactics, seamlessly reintegrating back into the protective forest cover when necessary. Just today I fought, using my skills as a stealthy hunter to pick off members of the senior domesticator council. We figured that maybe, if the leaders were shown to be vulnerable, the others would revolt internally, throwing off their own shackles to join us in the forest.

Day Four:

It was not to be. Our raid on the village yesterday was greeted with a response by the commoners that shocked us. Earlier we had observed the villagers shooting wolves on sight because they had such an entrenched notion of ownership of their crops and animals that a wolf posed a constant threat. This time, however, the wolf had truly lain with the sheep, metaphorically speaking. What I mean is that the others, instead of throwing off their mental and physical chains, sided with the elites. We were utterly

crushed because we were inexperienced at warfare and the commoners pursued us into the forest cover, killing a few of our people, however stopping just short of penetrating more deeply. The villagers have these superstitious beliefs about the evilness of the forest, so they are generally reluctant to come into our world unless they have their axes ready to chop down trees or kill animals like the buffalo when they need something to fall back on after crop failures. These are the effects of the continued encroachment of the

Gauls. Increased slavery of our people, loss of game, and less variety of plant foods (due to their fields of wheat) are some of the major problems we are facing, let alone the unsuccessful fighting we have been attempting in defense of our way of life. We do not wish to be enslaved. If the commoner Gauls have come to not only accept their subjection under the domesticators, but also to love it, there is little we can do for the close-minded. We only have our desire to fight back, but the horizons are looking bleak.

Day Five:

Although future prospects have never been positive, recent information from one of our fellow bands to the south has increased our group's pessimism. A group of people calling themselves the Romans, who have huge fighting forces, many more slaves then the Gauls, and a complex social formation they call "urbanization," are being led by a man named Caesar with the goal of conquering the Gauls. From the information we received from the southern band, urbanization creates such widespread forest destruction that the Gauls may be the least of our long-term problems. I have not seen these Romans. However, if the stories the southern band tell us are true, I'm not sure there is a word in our language to describe this vast instrument of death, but Leviathan seems like a good descriptor. Although it seems unlikely, we may have to consider a final effort to make reconciliation with the Gauls so we can join in a united resistance. Based on our experiences with the Gauls and the stories of the most recent newcomers, I fear our ultimate fate is to disappear along with the forest.

When the Zombies Take Over, How Long Till the Electricity Fails?

Dear Tom O'Bedlam: *After watching* Dawn of the Dead, *I am left to wonder about one thing: If we were to suffer an apocalypse where most of the living became flesheating zombies, how long, assuming I survived, would I continue to receive hydroelectricity from my power company? Is it a mean-time-before-failure situation, or would the system automatically shut itself down after a few days? (I am assuming that most of the people who were supposed to be maintaining things at my hydro company would be out looking for brains, and that the surviving hydro employees would be busy digging shelters, etc.) Also, what's the outlook like for people whose chunk of the power grid is supplied by coal, nuclear, and other types of energy? Just wondering how many solar panels I should be putting on my roof!*
—Jason, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Tom O'Bedlam replies: Believe it or not, this is a question I've been asked before. Many people wonder how key parts of civilized society might continue after a postapocalyptic *Dawn of the Dead/Night of the Comet/Omega Man/Teletubbies Go to Paris* scenario. Your question has two possible answers depending on which scenario of zombie conquest you envision.

In *Dawn of the Dead*, the zombification process doesn't happen all at once. We can imagine a gradual scenario in which the infrastructure systems controllers plan ahead for shortages of personnel and try to keep the power going as long as possible.

Alternatively, zombification could happen fairly quickly—say, over a few hours. I'll address the second, more dire scenario in detail first, then the first, slightly less alarming one, briefly. How long the power supply would last in the most critical zombie situation depends on two key factors—first, how long a given power plant can operate without human intervention, and second, how long before enough power plants fail to bring down the entire transmission grid. I'll ignore the side issues of whether the zombies would want to try to run the power plant themselves, or if they would be a union or non-union shop.

Power plants are incredibly complex facilities with an enormous number of controls, and consequently an enormous number of things that can go wrong. The level of complexity and reliability of the plants is a function of the type of power plant, the control systems installed, and the plant's age and condition. In addition to the possibility of unplanned events causing shutdowns, there is also the problem of maintaining a fuel supply without human intervention. Given all these variables, coming up with hard

and fast numbers is difficult. To address your question as well as I can, I'll break down power plants by type (coal, nuclear, hydro, and natural gas) and discuss each one separately, focusing on the US and Canada, since their electrical systems are closely tied. I'll ignore oil-based plants because, contrary to popular belief, oil provides only a small fraction of total utility power generation in North America.

About 51% of US and 16% of Canadian electrical generation comes from coal-fired plants. Coal power plants are generally the most problematic in terms of supplying enough fuel to remain in operation, and I could write (and have written) hundreds of pages about them. Merci- fully, I'll summarize. At most coal power plants, the coal is stored in a huge outdoor pile, where it is typically pushed by bulldozers onto a conveyor and carried to large silos or bunkers at an upper level of the plant, from which it is fed to the burners. When the plant is operating at full output, these bunkers theoretically have a capacity ranging from eight hours to more than twenty-four hours. As a practical matter, depending on the amount of coal in the bunkers and the way the plant distributes coal to the burners, the plant may start losing power in as little as two to four hours. Whether or not this initial reduction in coal flow shuts the plant down depends on the sophistication of the control systems and the ability of the plant to continue at partial power output without operator intervention.

Coal plants commonly require a lot of operator input to keep running. The controls at coal plants vary tremendously, from systems that are essentially unchanged since the 1950s to modern closed-loop neural network predictive models. In my experience from many months spent in control rooms of power plants around the world, coal plants on average require some sort of operator response for a "critical alarm" every one to three hours. Sometimes this is a relatively minor issue, such as a warning to flush the ash systems; sometimes it's more serious, such as excessively high steam temperature or low coal supply. Whatever the case, if the control room were left unattended, I think it's likely that a large number of coal power plants would "trip" (automatically shut down and disconnect from the electrical grid) within twelve to eighteen hours.

About 20% of United States' and 12% of Canadian electrical generation comes from nuclear power plants. Nuclear plants can operate a long time between refuelings—500 days is a typical quoted figure, and some plants (Brunswick 1 and Pickering 7) are notable for having gone more than 700 days between refueling. Nuclear plants tend to be more stable in operation than coal plants, and generally have more advanced control systems that can correct for minor problems or routine fluctuations. Two nuclear plant operators I asked about this wondered what I had been drinking, then said that a modern North American nuclear plant would likely run unattended for quite a bit longer than a coal power plant barring a mandated operator response—perhaps as long as a few days to a week. This could vary considerably depending on the plant.

Hydroelectric plants supply roughly 60% of the electricity in Canada and 7% in the United States. In addition, the northern US imports a significant amount of Canadian hydropower on top of that 7%. Hydro plants, for the most part, are highly reliable and require relatively few controls. Since their "fuel" is the water contained behind the

dam, their "fuel reserve" can often be measured in weeks or months. Barring sudden equipment failure or other unusual circumstances, most hydroelectric plants in good operating condition would last days or weeks unattended.

Natural gas is the least significant fuel source for power plants in the United States and Canada. Most natural gas power plants in North America use turbines, which resemble a stationary jet engine. (Boilers, the other major gas technology used for electricity generation, typically are used for emergency power or startup power at coal plants.) A turbine receives its gas supply from a pipeline; as long as the pipeline has sufficient pressure, the turbine will have fuel. How long a pipeline would keep its pressure during a *Dawn of the Dead* event is difficult to determine. Experts I asked thought that pipelines in most regions would maintain pressure for only 1-3 days without human intervention—maybe less, depending on the status of power to the controls and other electrically-powered equipment. In other words, failure of a few key power plants or transmission systems could result in a cascade failure of natural gas supply to large portions of the system.

Simple-cycle natural gas turbines are highly automated systems with relatively few moving parts. I have worked at a power plant with simple cycle natural gas turbines that ran essentially unattended for three days at a time, with operator input limited to dropping the power output at night and ramping it back up in the morning. That particular plant operated so well and so safely with minimal attention that the operators tended to read a lot, tie flies for fishing lures, and engage in Greco-Roman wrestling when the urge hit them (don't ask). Combined cycle gas turbines, which include a steam generation component, have more controls and moving parts and require greater attention. Combined-cycle gas turbines would likely operate unattended for a shorter length of time—perhaps only a day or two, depending on the age of the plant and the degree of automation. Focusing on individual plants doesn't give us the whole story, though. The North American power grid is a classic illustration of a chain being only as strong as its weakest link. As we saw during the blackout of August 2003, a relatively minor event or series of events can, under the right circumstances, bring down large portions of the whole system. During the August blackout, despite massive non-zombified human intervention, enough parts of the system failed to result in the loss of more than 265 power plants and 508 generating units within a few hours. As bad as the blackout was, without human intervention to shut down plants safely, balance load, transfer power to different lines, and disconnect salvageable chunks of the system from those that had totally collapsed, it could have been much worse. Quick intervention allowed isolated "islands" of power to remain in service—one large island in western New York supplied nearly 6,000 megawatts and was used to restart the power grid days later. But without humans working to isolate it, that island would not have been formed in the first place.

Bottom line? My guess is that within four to six hours there would be scattered blackouts and brownouts in numerous areas, within twelve hours much of the system would be unstable, and within twentyfour hours most portions of the United States

and Canada, aside from a rare island of service in a rural area near a hydroelectric source, would be without power. Some installations served by wind farms and solar might continue, but they would be very small. By the end of a week, I'd be surprised if more than a few abandoned sites were still supplying power.

Now, let's address a scenario where the zombification process is gradual. If the operators and utilities had sufficient advance warning they could take measures to keep the power going for a while. The first thing would be to isolate key portions of the grid, reducing the interties and connections, and then cease power delivery altogether to areas of highest zombie density. After all, it's not like the zombies need light to read or electricity to play Everquest. Whole blocks and zones would be purposely cut off to reduce the potential drains (and to cope with downed lines from zombies climbing poles or driving trucks into transformers). Operators would work to create islands of power plants wherever possible, so if a plant were overrun by zombies and went down it wouldn't drag others down with it. In cooperation with regional reliability coordinators, the plant operators would improve plant reliability by disabling or eliminating non-critical alarm systems that might otherwise shut down a power plant, and ignoring many safety and emissions issues.

Fuel supply would eventually be a problem. Hydro plants would fare best, essentially having an unlimited fuel supply given normal rainfall, and could operate until some essential component failed or wore out. Nuclear plants could run for perhaps a year or more before they would need refueling. Refueling is a tricky operation requiring many specialized personnel, and it's doubtful that a nuclear plant could effectively refuel if 90% of the nuclear technicians and engineers in the country were running around glassy-eyed in the parking lot. Coal power plants on average have maybe forty-five to sixty days' worth of coal on hand. If the power output of the plant were reduced, this could be stretched for six months or more, but eventually it would run out unless deliveries could be maintained.

There are a few mine-mouth coal power plants in the US that could conceivably run for years, provided enough miners and operators remained un-zombified. Natural gas plants might be the most vulnerable, since maintaining the gas wells, balancing the gas flow, and otherwise keeping the pipeline system intact requires considerable effort. In addition, most power plants have little or no gas storage available on-site, so a zombie situation could put natural gas plants in a real bind.

So there you have it. As to your final question, I can suggest a better tactic than relying on solar. Go to the abandoned hardware stores, load up a flatbed trailer with gasoline generators, and take them and a few dozen-tanker trucks of gasoline to your house. You could have power for a long time, possibly years or more, until the zombies finally come for you.

What about random zombie sabotage? For example, if some zombies got into the power plant and started randomly pushing buttons, pulling levers, and yanking cables, how much damage could they do?

—Ward Cleaver

Tom O'Bedlam replies:

Outside the control room, most essential wires and cables are contained in armored cable trays, or else are tucked well out of the way. However, once you get into that control room... well, the ones at the power plants I have been to are amazingly fragile. Most coal plants have an incredible number of exposed controls that can trip the unit, and I have met engineers who had accidentally done just that during a site visit. That's why I instruct all the engineers working under me on their first visit to the control room to not only not touch anything, but to leave a "magic foot," or one-foot barrier, between them and any and all controls, tables, chairs, etc.

Sometimes that doesn't work. A co-worker was notorious for years for having bumped an empty ceramic coffee mug that fell onto a control panel, hit a control, and ended up tripping the unit. A $20,000 mistake. Thankfully, I've never done that. Gas turbine plants are typically self-contained and the controls are out of the way. However, punching or clawing at a few panels would shut them down hard. My understanding is nuclear plants have more safeguards, but they're not my areas of expertise, and times being what they are, I'd just as soon not know.

References:

Canadian Electricity Association Website: www.canelect.ca/english/elec- tricity_in_canada_snapshot_Demand_1.html

US DOE Energy Information Administration Website: www.eia.doe.gov/ cneaf/electricity/epm/table1_1.html

Nuclear Energy Institute Website: www.nei.org/index.asp?catnum

US-Canada Power System Outage Task Force, Final Report on the August 14th Blackout in the United States and Canada: www.reports.energy.gov. *when the zombies take over, how long*

Reclus Fire; An Egoist Green Anarchist Perspective on Elisée Reclus …

Just as I begin my exploration, a huge periwinkle blue dragonfly enters my mid-autumn world. Hovering just above the pond a few feet away. I appreciate its lacy wings that seem so delicate yet are strong enough to carry the creature great distances. Strong enough to cause ripples across the water's surface. What is it doing? Is it looking for something to eat? What shall I do with it now that it has entered my world? An infinite number of possibilities exist for me and this unique creature. I could study the movement of its wings and their effects on other lives of the pond. I could capture and cage it for further examination (or to merely admire whenever I wished). Then again, I could kill it and dissect it to better understand the mechanics of flight. I wonder if it's edible? How would it taste? Would it nourish me? A thousand possibilities, a thousand thoughts flying around inside my head. Filling the spaces between us…I begin again.

Reclus is …

Sharp and darting movements mark my dragonfly's maneuvers. Is it searching for something beneath the water? Is it dancing with its own reflection? Is it awakening to it's conscious? Is it… ARGH! I do love my curious nature, my inquisitive and contemplative mind. But these qualities keep getting in the way of simply enjoying the dragonfly's marvelous presence. Its gift to my day. Why can't I simply dwell in its freedom of movement and of time; far more expansive than mine. Or so it seems from the perspective of one who is limited by boundaries far more insidious than of a perceived absence of a proper consciousness or shorter lifespan or…

Reclus is dead!

And here I am, spending my too-quickly waning fall days aiding in his resurrection. Bringing back to life yet another long-departed, enlightened, European, male anarchist. Beyond the obvious academic credentialing that his revival has brought, why do we care about the words and activities of one dead for over a hundred-fifty years? Did he discover something profound in his world travels as a preeminent geographer? Can he further clarify our perspective on the current and potential future of our worlds? Is there anything in his ancient assessment that remains relevant today given the scale of unpredicted—and unpredictable—human-directed geographical and social changes (aka Progress) scraped from our bones since his time?

Humanity is nature becoming self-conscious.

What is this great self-consciousness Reclus insists humankind must develop and spread? From *conscientia*, knowledge-with or shared knowledge. Numerous systems of thought have evolved around the notion of consciousness. Commonalities include subjectivity, self-awareness, sentience, sapience, and the ability to perceive oneself in relationship to one's environment. It is often tied quite closely to conscience—a moral sensibility.1 Is it an inherent aspect of higher life forms as most Thinkers suggest? Or does it emerge from human intelligence and its constructs? Particularly ideology.2 Over and over Reclus speaks of humans *and* nature, maintaining the artificial separation that continues to pervade the modern world view where humans are invariably placed outside of—and most often above—all other life forms. Reclus does attempt to overcome this hierarchy and concomitant domination through rhetorical exercises that are wholly unconvincing despite any sincerity of attempt. What was the state of Reclus' consciousness when he chose to explore and map the world and its human inhabitants? Did he, could he, with his great human intelligence and moral conscious *know* that his works would be used by states and empires to conquer and destroy? By the industrialists he railed against to further exploit the coexisting land and life? By scientists and technologists to further the reach of human domination? Reclus suffered, as surely we all do, from a certain shortness of vision. Our eyes are shaded by motivations imposed by society, by ideological preconceptions and presumptions left unquestioned.

One test for the existence of consciousness is based on the human observation of animals gazing into a mirror. If said authority deems the animal has recognized itself, the animal may be conscious. If he could look in the mirror today, what would Reclus see?

The dragonfly appears to be gazing at its own reflection. Am I witnessing—or am I influencing—a beginning of self-awareness? Is it situating a human morality in place of instinct, experience, and nonlinear adaptation? Oh, but wait! Could my dragonfly be giving thanks and praise to the Buddha cemented into the artificial pond? Can it absorb Buddha consciousness through a concrete icon? Can you? So many possibilities. Far more than language, no matter how poetic, can describe. Looking through the mirror of history, all sorts of justifica- tions and rationalizations have been built into our consciousness. Reclus may have abandoned the official religion of his preacher father, but he held onto the notion that humanity would be saved by a higherpurposed, globalized morality. A morality that has *always* been used to bend all of life to others' wills. That requires someone to determine and enforce it. What morality and unquestioned rules and judgments frame your reality? What ideologies underlie your perception of the world, thus consciously directing your actions? How many and which acts have become quite unconscious?

I don't know if other creatures have this thing called consciousness, but I am disturbed by Reclus' glorification of a human consciousness that (no matter how one

defines it) has brought with it a power so strong it has overridden all other possibilities of how humans might be truly of their world.

Is it my particular madness to think I'd be better off with the consciousness of a dragonfly than that of a domesticated human?

When the cities grow, humanity progresses and when they shrink the social body is threatened with regression into barbarism.

Reclus was a great fan of Progress so he did not sufficiently question the pervasive notion that humans have an innate mandate to advance their lot through the Sciences and particularly through its materialization in more and more advanced technology.

His dialectical approach to the question of cities, culture, agriculture, institutions often seems more an apology than a means of questioning. Cities are an absurdly complex way of organizing human life. They require authorities and bureaucrats in institutional settings who know how to keep them going. Cities require the importation of even the most basic necessities: food and water. Importation that has always meant and will always mean, theft from other life outside the city. The city requires massive amounts of human and non-human energy just to maintain its fragile equilibrium. How can this mean anything other than a continued exploitive division of labor as glorified in Reclus' and others' worker ? No one has yet described how cities can continue to exist without more and more advanced technology. Technology which first enlarges the human impact then spreads it farther and deeper than humans with only the energy of their bodies and simple tools in hand could ever accomplish. The polis exerts a pressure so great upon the land and air and water—on all life within and without—it has never failed to create an explosive discord.

If Rita had had a human conscious, would it have spared this city on the edge?

Suddenly, the dragonfly charged right at me, aiming at my head then quickly disappearing from my view. But, never again from my awareness. With that single startling act even more thoughts leap into my mind. Was it drawn to me because of my great human consciousness? Was it as curious and appreciative of me as I was of it? Could the dragonfly have known the thousand possibilities of its demise at my hands and so was warning me away? Or was I just another obstacle to be dodged on its afternoon free-flight?

Alas, the most horrific thought of all could not fail to enter into the realm of Fire and dragonfly possibilities: this beautiful creature could be—if not now, one day all too soon –a replicant, a robot, a spy, or worse.3 This thought wrenches me towards a paranoia only possible in a world where the architects of the future go unopposed as they design the next, new and improved version of surveillance and killing-technology to deal with those whose wings (however weakly) send disturbing ripples across the surface of their artificial landscape.

With this last raging thought, I am finally able to shrug away the intellectual games and feel the simple pleasure of sharing a warm, vibrant fall day filled with that moment of beauty, of the wild and expansive freedom of a dragonfly dance.

Elisée Reclus is dead, but he is not alone.

346

In the years since he ceased breathing—and I think it's time I stopped breathing for him—countless billions have joined him. The massive human-caused extinctions that continue to escalate are a direct result of a refusal to recognize, contemplate, and challenge every new progressive incursion into our worlds. This is not because we do not question authority. It is because we do not reject it at its base. We rely on the authority of official thinkers and big S scientists, as well as politicians, professors, leaders, and thousands of other mediators to tell us what is right, what will work and what won't, what makes sense and what will bring our salvation. Layers of civilized logic have all but severed our connection to what it is we really need and might expansively desire; forcing us to see these two as separate far too often. We are even more removed from how to fulfill our wildest dreams without destroying the environment that contains it all.

All the world is ours, each one of ours. But we can only know it from our own center where all we need-want is within our grasp.

And we must take it back from those who wrest it from us daily. Or to whom we give it up so willingly. To live our own lives as we choose, not in servitude to others and their ideas, but in impassioned explorations, experiments, and uncertainties. To take all we want, but with a wholism that includes a direct, sensual, intellectual, emotional consciousness; what I have come to think **instinct** might actually be. To locate that place where we cannot fail to heed the warnings of others issued when we go too far; when we may cause irreparable harm to the world we love and wish to keep. Can we get back to our selves, those strong and free individuals who cavort with all the natural wonders that we choose and who choose us? How do we prepare ourselves to confront the consequences of those choices? Reclus was "ahead of his time" and his life's work added a depth and breadth in much of the early environmental movement. But we would be foolish to lay our faith at Reclus' enlightened feet. Faith in scientific, technological—that is, Progressive—solutions has led us directly to the dire straits we find ourselves trying to navigate. Despite his atheism and break with "conservative" religion; despite his dedication to an anarchist ideal of liberation, Reclus' view of the world was rooted in a belief that humans have a Special place in Nature. He—like so many—merely exchanged his patriarchal god above for the equivalent below, a universal morality that does not, cannot, and ought not exist. His much acclaimed statement, "Humanity is nature becoming self-conscious", exemplifies my greatest concern with his legacy.

What need has the free-flying dragonfly for a human consciousness? Where would the wild river go, once so imbued, that it has otherwise avoided? The earth and all its inhabitants are reeling from the great human conscious!

Until each domesticated human grasps the fullness of life in her own eager hands; feels its possibilities coursing through his veins; screams their own warnings; and recognizes their individual connection to the wretched, beautiful whole that Reclus at times so eloquently described, the "environment"and "nature" will remain separated abstractions shaped by yet another external authority. An authority that delivers solutions
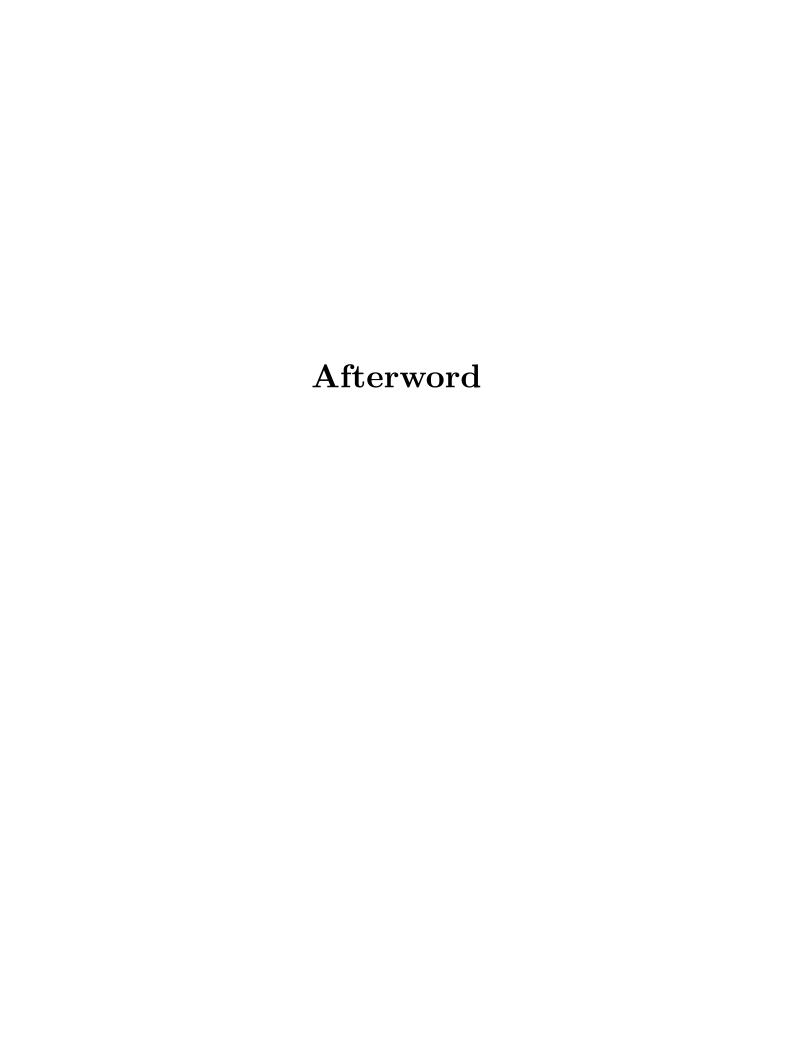
through the stick of objective universal righteousness and the carrot of progress. Some, including Reclus, say that primitive humans understood this symbiotic relationship with life. Perhaps this is true, but we are *here* now. Can we create paths to our own liberation and release our choke hold on all the rest?

Reclus may inspire those who seek refuge in the past. I am most inspired by those I meet and play with today. Perhaps the whimsical words of one of my very much alive anarchist friends, Apio, will inspire you to explore some of the thousands of wild possibilities of being in your own world:

Sometimes, if I am out on a cloudless night when the moon is full, I will reach up and grasp the moon between a finger and my thumb. I close my eyes and pop the moon into my mouth. It leaves a taste on my tongue that is icy and sweet like wintergreen or mint. But that taste is really the taste of a starfilled, winter mountain-top sky glowing icily in an infinite brilliant dance of the darkest night with the exquisite light of countless stars. I open my eyes with joy at seeing the moon still dancing before me. It is wonderful to be able to take something so completely into yourself without losing it, to experience it so completely.

Notes

1. The French word for conscience and conscious are one and the same— conscience.

2. Thomas Aquinas describes the *conscientia* as the act by which we apply practical and moral knowledge to our own actions. Descartes described conscious experience as imaginings and perceptions laid out in space and time, as viewed from some point. Marx considered that social relations ontologically preceded individual consciousness, and criticized the conception of a conscious subject as an ideological conception on which liberal political thought was founded. Nietzsche was the first one to make the claim that the modern notion of consciousness required the modern penal system, which judged a man according to his "responsibility". Perhaps the most accurate description of the modern conscious is W.E.B. Du Bois' doubleconsciousness—the awareness of one's self as well as how others perceive us, which has led to an unconscious conformance to their perception.

3. DARPA is asking scientists to submit design proposals that would allow implantation of engineered material into insects, such as dragonflies and moths for surveilance and attack.

Afterword

Silence

John Zerzan

Silence used to be, to varying degrees, a means of isolation. Now it is the absence of silence that works to render today's world empty and isolating. Its reserves have been invaded and depleted. The Machine marches globally forward and silence is the dwindling place where noise has not yet penetrated.

Civilization is a conspiracy of noise, designed to cover up the uncomfortable silences. The silence-honoring Wittgenstein understood the loss of our relationship with it. The unsilent present is a time of evaporating attention spans, erosion of critical thinking, and a lessened capacity for deeply felt experiences. Silence, like darkness, is hard to come by; but mind and spirit need its sustenance.

Certainly there are many and varied sides to silence. There are imposed or voluntary silences of fear, grief, conformity, complicity (eg the AIDS-awareness "Silence=Death" formulation), which are often interrelated states. And nature has been progressively silenced, as documented in Rachel Carson's prophetic *Silent Spring*. Nature cannot be definitively silenced, however, which perhaps goes a long way in explaining why some feel it must be destroyed. "There has been a silencing of nature, including our own nature," concluded Heidegger,[1] and we need to let this silence, as silence, speak. It still does so often, after all, speak louder than words.

There will be no liberation of humans without the resurrection of the natural world, and silence is very pertinent to this assertion. The great silence of the universe engenders a silent awe, which the Roman Lucretius meditated upon in the 1st century BCE:

First of all, contemplate the clear, pure color of the sky, and all it contains within it: the stars wandering everywhere, the moon, the sun and its light with its incomparable brilliance. If all these objects appeared to mortals today for the first time, if they appeared to their eyes suddenly and unexpectedly, what could one cite that would be more marvelous than this totality, and whose existence man's imagination would less have dared to conceive?[2]

Down to earth, nature is filled with silences. The alternation of the seasons is the rhythm of silence; at night silence descends over the planet, though much less so now. The parts of nature resemble great reserves of silence. Max Picard's description is almost a poem: *The forest is like a great reservoir of silence out of which the silence trickles in a thin, slow stream and fills the air with its brightness. The mountain, the lake, the fields, the sky—they all seem to be waiting for a sign to empty their silence onto the things of noise in the cities of men.*[3]

Silence is "not the mere absence of something else."4 In fact, our longings turn toward that dimension, its associations and implications. Behind the appeals for silence lies the wish for a perceptual and cultural new beginning.

Zen teaches that "silence never varies...."5 But our focus may be improved if we turn away from the universalizing placelessness of late modernity. Silence is no doubt culturally specific, and is thus experienced variously. Nevertheless, as Picard argues, it can confront us with the "original beginnings of all things,"6 and presents objects to us directly and immediately. Silence is primary, summoning presence to itself; so it's a connection to the realm of origin.

In the industrially-based technosphere, the Machine has almost succeeded in banishing quietude. A natural history of silence is needed for this endangered species. Modernity deafens. The noise, like technology, must never retreat—and never does.

For Picard, nothing has changed human character so much as the loss of silence.7 Thoreau called silence "our inviolable asylum," an indispensable refuge that must be defended.8 Silence is necessary against the mounting sound. It's feared by manipulative mass culture, from which it remains apart, a means of resistance precisely because it does not belong to this world. Many things can still be heard against the background of silence; thus a way is opened, a way for autonomy and imagining.

"Sense opens up in silence," wrote Jean-Luc Nancy.9 It is to be approached and experienced bodily, inseparably from the world, in the silent core of the self. It can highlight our embodiment, a qualitative step away from the hallmark machines that work so resolutely to disembody us. Silence can be a great aid in unblocking ourselves from the prevailing, addictive information sickness at loose in society.10 It offers us the place to be present to ourselves, to come to grips with who we are. Present to the real depth of the world in an increasingly thin, flattened technoscape. The record of philosophy vis-à-vis silence is generally dismal, as good a gauge as any to its overall failure. Socrates judged silence to be a realm of nonsense, while Aristotle claimed that being silent caused flatulence.11 At the same time, however, Raoul Mortley could see a "growing dissatisfaction with the use of words," "an enormous increase in the language of silence" in classical Greece.12

Much later, Pascal was terrified by the "silence of the universe,"13 and Hegel clearly felt that what could not be spoken was simply the untrue, that silence was a deficiency to be overcome. Schopenhauer and Nietzsche both emphasized the prerequisite value of solitude, diverging from anti-silence Hegel, among others.

Deservedly well known is a commentary on Odysseus and the Sirens (from Homer's *Odyssey*) by Horkheimer and Adorno. They depict the Sirens' effort to sidetrack Odysseus from his journey as that of Eros trying to stay the forces of repressive civilization. Kafka felt that silence would have been a more irresistible means than singing.14

"Phenomenology begins in silence," according to Herbert Spiegelberg.15 To put phenomena or objects somehow first, before ideational constructions, was its founding notion. Or as Heidegger had it, there is a thinking deeper and more rigorous than the

conceptual, and part of this involves a primordial link between silence and understanding.16 Postmodernism, and Derrida in particular, deny the widespread awareness of the inadequacy of language, asserting that gaps of silence in discourse, for example, are barriers to meaning and power. In fact, Derrida strongly castigates "the violence of primitive and prelogical silence," denouncing silence as a nihilist enemy of thought.17 Such strenuous antipathy demonstrates Derrida's deafness to presence and grace, and the threat silence poses to someone for whom the symbolic is everything. Wittgenstein understood that something pervades everything sayable, something which is itself unsayable. This is the sense of his well-known last line of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*: "Of that which one cannot speak, one should remain silent."18

Can silence be considered, approached, without reification, in the here and now? I think it can be an open, strengthening way of knowing, a generative condition. Silence can also be a dimension of fear, grief–even of madness and suicide. In fact, it is quite difficult to reify silence, to freeze it into any one non-living thing. At times the reality we interrogate is mute; an index of the depth of the still present silence? Wonder may be the question that best gives answers, silently and deeply. "Silence is so accurate," said Mark Rothko,19 a line that has in- trigued me for years. Too often we disrupt silence, only to voice some detail that misses an overall sense of what we are part of, and how many ways there are to destroy it. In the Antarctica winter of 1933, Richard Byrd recorded: "Took my daily walk at 4pm... I paused to listen to the silence...the day was dying, the night being born—but with great peace. Here were imponderable processes and forces of the cosmos, harmonious and soundless."20 How much is revealed in silence through the depths and mysteries of living nature. Annie Dillard also provides a fine response to the din: "At a certain point you say to the woods, to the sea, to the mountains, to the world, Now I am ready. Now I will stop and be wholly attentive. You empty yourself and wait, listening."21 It is not only the natural world that is accessible via silence.

Cioran indicated the secrets in the silence of things, deciding that "All objects have a language which we can decipher only in total silence."22 David Michael Levin's *The Body's Recollection of Being* counsels us to "learn to think through the body...we should *listen in silence* to our bodily felt experience."23 And in the interpersonal sphere, silence is a result of empathy and being understood, without words much more profoundly than otherwise.

Native Americans seem to have always placed great value on silence and direct experience, and in indigenous cultures in general, silence denotes respect and self-effacement. It is at the core of the Vision Quest, the solitary period of fasting and closeness to the earth to discover one's life path and purpose. Inuit Norman Hallendy assigns more insight to the silent state of awareness called *inuinaqtuk* than to dreaming.24 Native healers very often stress silence as an aid to serenity and hope, while stillness is required for success in the hunt. These needs for attentiveness and quiet may well have been key sources of indigenous appreciation of silence.

Silence reaches back to presence and original community, before the symbolic compromised both silence and presence. It predates what Levinas called "the unity of representation,"25 that always works to silence the silence and replace it with the homelessness of symbolic structures. The Latin root for silence, *silere*, to say nothing, is related to *sinere*, to allow to be in a place. We are drawn to those places where language falls most often, and most crucially, silent. The later Heidegger appreciated the realm of silence, as did Hölderlin, one of Heidegger's important reference points, especially in his *Late Hymns.*26 The insatiable longing that Hölderlin expressed so powerfully related not only to an original, silent wholeness, but also to his growing comprehension that language must always admit its origin in loss.

A century and a half later, Samuel Beckett made use of silence as an alternative to language. In *Krapp's Last Tape* and elsewhere, the idea that all language is an excess of language is strongly on offer. Beckett complains that "in the forest of symbols" there is never quiet, and longs to break through the veil of language to silence.27 Northrup Frye found the purpose of Beckett's work "to lie in nothing other than the restoration of silence."28

Our most embodied, alive-to-this-earth selves realize best the limits of language and indeed, the failure of the project of representation. In this state it is easiest to understand the exhaustion of language, and the fact that we are always a word's length from immediacy. Kafka commented on this in "In the Penal Colony," where the printing press doubled as an instrument of torture. For Thoreau, "as the truest society approaches always nearer to solitude, so the most excellent speech finally falls into silence."29 Conversely, mass society banishes the chance of autonomy, just as it forecloses on silence.

Hölderlin imagined that language draws us into time, but it is silence that holds out against it. Time increases in silence; it appears not to flow, but to abide. Various temporalities seem close to losing their barriers; past, present, future less divided.

But silence is a variable fabric, not a uniformity or an abstraction. Its quality is never far from its context, just as it is the field of the nonmediated. Unlike time, which has for so long been a measure of estrangement, silence cannot be spatialized or converted into a medium of exchange. This is why it can be a refuge from time's incessancy. Gurnemanz, near the opening of Wagner's *Parsifal*, sings "Here time becomes space." Silence avoids this primary dynamic of domination. So here we are, with the Machine engulfing us in its various assaults on silence and so much else, intruding deeply. The note North Americans spontaneously hum or sing is B-natural, which is the corresponding tone of our 60 cycles per second alternating current electricity. (In Europe, G-sharp is "naturally" sung, matching that continent's 50 cycles per second AC electricity.) In the globalizing, homogenizing Noise Zone we may soon be further harmonized. Pico Ayer refers to "my growing sense of a world that's singing the same song in a hundred accents all at once."30

We need a refusal of the roar of standardization, its information noise and harried, surface "communication" modes. A *No* to the unrelenting, colonizing penetrability of

non-silence, pushing into every non-place. The rising racket measures, by decibel up-ticks and its pol- luting reach, the degrading mass world—Don DeLillo's *White Noise*.

Silence is a rebuke to all this, and a zone for reconstituting ourselves. It gathers in nature, and can help us gather ourselves for the battles that will end debasement. Silence as a powerful tool of resistance, the unheard note that might precede insurrection. It was, for example, what slave masters feared most.31 In various Asian spiritual traditions, the *muni*, vowed to silence, is the person of greatest capacity and independence—the one who does not need a master for enlightenment.32

The deepest passions are nurtured in silent ways and depths. How else is respect for the dead most signally expressed, intense love best transmitted, our profoundest thoughts and visions experienced, the unspoiled world most directly savored? In this grief-stricken world, according to Max Horkheimer, we "become more innocent" through grief.33 And perhaps more open to silence—as comfort, ally, and stronghold.

Endnotes

1. Martin Heidegger, *What is a Thing?* (Chicago, Henry Regnery Company, 1967), p. 288.

2. Quoted in Pierre Hadot, *The Veil of Isis*, translated by Michael Chan (Cambridge, MA: Bellknap Press, 2000), pp 212-213.

3. Max Picard, *The World of Silence* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952), p. 139.

4. Bernard P. Dauenhauer, *Silence: the Phenomenon and Its Ontological Significance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), p. vii.

5. Chang Chung-Yuan, *Original Teachings of Ch'an Buddhism* (New York: Vintage, 1971), p.

6. Picard, op.cit., p. 22. 7. Ibid., p. 221.

8. Henry David Thoreau, "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers," in *The Works of Thoreau*, edited by Henry Seidel Canby (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946), p. 241.

9. Jean-Luc Nancy, *Listening*, translated by Charlotte Mandell (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007), p. 26.

10. I first encountered this term in Ted Mooney's novel, *Easy Travel to Other Planets* (New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1981).

11. Aristotle, *Works of Aristotle*, translated by S. Forster, Vol. VII, *Problemata* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), p. 896, lines 20-26.

12. Raoul Mortley, *From Word to Silence I* (Bonn: Hanstein, 1986), p. 110.

13. Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, edited by Phillipe Seller (Paris: Bordas, 1991), p. 256.

14. Franz Kafka, *Parables*, cited in George Steiner, *Language and Silence* (New York: Atheneum, 1967), p. 54.

15. Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement*, Vol. Two (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), p. 693.

16. Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," *Basic Writings* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1992), p. 258.

17. Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, translated by Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. 130.

18. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (London: Routledge, 1974), p. 89.

19. Quoted in James E. B. Breslin, *Rothko: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 387.

20. Quoted in Hannah Merker, *Listening* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), p. 127.

21. Annie Dillard, *Teaching a Stone to Talk* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1982), pp 89-90.

22. E. M. Cioran, *Tears and Saints*, translated by Ilinca Zarifopol-Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 53.

23. David Michael Levin, *The Body's Recollection of Being* (Boston: Routledge, 1985), pp 60-61.

24. Norman Hallendy, *Inuksuit: Silent Messengers of the Arctic* (Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 2000), pp 84-85.

25. Emmanuel Levinas, *Proper Names*, translated by Michael B. Smith (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 4.

26. Emery Edward George, *Hölderlin's "Ars Poetica": A Part-Rigorous Analysis of Information Structure in the Late Hymns* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973), pp 308, 363, 367.

27. Samuel Beckett, "German letter" dated 9 July 1937, in C.J. Ackerley and

S.E. Gontorski, *The Grove Companion to Samuel Beckett* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), p. 221.

28. Northrup Frye, "The Nightmare Life in Death," in J.D. O'Hara, editor, *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Malloy, Malone Dies, and The Unnamable* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 34.

29. Thoreau, op.cit., p. 241.

30. Pico Ayer, *The Global Soul* (New York: Knopf, 2000), p.

31. Mark M. Smith, *Listening to Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press), p. 68.

See also Thomas Merton, *The Strange Islands* (New York: New Directions, 1957); specifically, this passage from "The Tower of Babel: A Morality":

Leader: *Who is He?*

Captain: *His name is Silence.*

Leader: *Useless! Throw him out! Let Silence be crucified!*

32. Alex Wayman, "Two traditions of India—truth and silence," *Philosophy East and West* 24 (October 1974), pp 389-403.

33. Max Horkheimer, *Dawn and Decline: Notes 1926-1931 and 1950-1969* (New York: Seabury Press, 1978), p. 140.

I'm thinking that this is the last of our civilization. I think we are all going into the crapper, waiting to be flushed. It just feels like the whole world's on fire right now.

—Tom Waits

The Ted K Archive

Green Anarchy Collective
Uncivilized
The Best of Green Anarchy

www.thetedkarchive.com