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Revolutionary Environmentalism:
An Emerging New Struggle for Total Liberation¹
Steve Best and Anthony J. Nocella, II

I. The Current Crisis

George W. Bush's feel-good talk of progress and democracy, given an endless and uncritical airing by mainstream corporate media, masks the fact that we live in an unprecedented era of social and ecological crisis. Predatory transnational corporations such as ExxonMobil and Maxxam are pillaging the planet, destroying ecosystems, pushing species into extinction, and annihilating indigenous peoples and traditional ways of life. War, globalization, and destruction of peoples, species, and ecosystems march in lockstep: militarization supports the worldwide imposition of the "free market" system, and its growth and profit imperatives thrive through the exploitation of humans, animals, and the earth (see Kovel 2002; Tokar 1997; Bannon and Collier 2003).

Against the mindless optimism of technophiles, the denials of skeptics, and complacency of the general public, we depart from the premise that there is a global environmental crisis which is the most urgent issue facing us today.² If humanity does not address ecological problems immediately and with radical measures that target causes not symptoms, severe, world-altering consequences will play out over a long-term period and will plague future generations. Signs of major stress of the world's eco-systems are everywhere, from shrinking forests and depleted fisheries to vanishing wilderness and global climate change.

Ours is an era of global warming, rainforest destruction, species extinction, and chronic resource shortages that provoke wars and conflicts such as in Iraq. While five great extinction crises have already transpired on this planet, the last one occurring 65 million years ago in the age of the dinosaurs, we are now living amidst the sixth extinction crisis, this time caused by human not natural causes. Human populations have always devastated their environment and thereby their societies, but they have never intervened in the planet's ecosystem to the extent they have altered climate.

We now confront the "end of nature" where no natural force, no breeze or ripple of water, has not been affected by the human presence (McKribben 2006). This is especially true with nanotechnology and biotechnology. Rather than confronting this crisis and scaling back human presence and aggravating actions, humans are making it worse. Human population rates continue to swell, as awakening giants such as India and China move toward western consumer lifestyles, exchanging rice bowls for burgers and bicycles for SUVs. The human presence on this planet is like a meteor plummeting to the earth, but it has already struck and the reverberations are rippling everywhere.

Despite the proliferating amount of solid, internationally assembled scientific data supporting the reality of global climate change and ecological crisis, there are still so-called environmental "skeptics," "realists," and "optimists" who deny the problems, often

compiling or citing data paid for by ExxonMobil. Senator James Inhofe has declared global warming to be a “myth” that is damaging to the US economy. He and others revile environmentalists as “alarmists,” “extremists,” and “eco-terrorists” who threaten the American way of life.³

There is a direct and profound relationship between global capitalism and ecological destruction. The capitalist economy lives or dies on constant growth, accumulation, and consumption of resources. The environmental crisis is inseparable from the social crisis, whereby centuries ago a market economy disengaged from society and ruled over it with its alien and destructive imperatives. The crisis in ecology is ultimately a crisis in democracy, as transnational corporations arise and thrive through the destruction of popular sovereignty.

The western environment movement has advanced its cause for over three decades now, but we are nonetheless *losing ground* in the battle to preserve species, ecosystems, and wilderness (Dowie 1995; Speth 2004). Increasingly, calls for moderation, compromise, and the slow march through institutions can be seen as treacherous and grotesquely inadequate. In the midst of predatory global capitalism and biological meltdown, “reasonableness” and “moderation” seem to be entirely unreasonable and immoderate, as “extreme” and “radical” actions appear simply as necessary and appropriate. As eco-primitivist Derrick Jensen observes, “We must eliminate false hopes, which blind us to real possibilities.”

The current world system is inherently destructive and unsustainable; if it cannot be reformed, it must be transcended through revolution at all levels—economic, political, legal, cultural, technological, and, most fundamentally, conceptual. The struggles and changes must be as deep, varied, and far-reaching as the root of the problems.

II. A Critical History Approach

To understand where the environmental movement must go, it is necessary to understand where it has been. To avoid serious mistakes in organizing future struggles, one must know what problems existed in the past and persist in the present. It is increasingly understood that environmental history must be a social history, one that works with a broad definition of “environment” that encompasses both wilderness and urban settings, as it examines how various groups fought environmental battles.

One can chart 3 main stages in the evolution of the u.s. environmental movement: its beginnings in the 19th century, the rise of mainstream environmentalism in the 1970s, and the reaction against it and move toward more radical, democratic, and diverse positions and struggles. We’ll quickly lay these out and then suggest what a revolutionary environmentalism might look like. As one can see, the u.s. environmental movement has been based on economic privilege, whiteness, and male-domination, but these limitations are being overcome in dynamic ways with the emergence of revolutionary environmentalism.

First Wave: 19th Century Origins

One must look to the 19th century roots of modern environmentalism to understand why, in the US and elsewhere, the environmental movement is still comprised predominantly of middle or upper class white people.

The modern environmental movement emerged in England and the U.S. in the mid-19th century, growing out of the concerns of the Romantics and conservationists. As industrialization and capitalist markets reshaped landscapes and societies, figures such as William Blake, William Wordsworth, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry David Thoreau grew alarmed at the destruction of forests and countryside and degradation of human spirit in market relations and mechanistic worldviews. Following the lead of Jean-Jacques Rousseau who declared everything natural to be free and good (before corrupted by society), they praised nature as the antithesis to all that was rotten in modern life, and extolled the beauty and divinity of the wild.

Overall, the founders and pioneers of American environmentalism were white, male, elites; they advanced important new sensibilities within the mechanistic and anthropocentric frameworks of the time, and sparked the creation of environmental protection laws and national parks. Yet many were classist, racist, and sexist, and misanthropic. Their emphasis on rugged individualism and solitary journeys into wilderness hardly encouraged social awareness or activism. They sought to preserve nature for their enjoyment, not the working classes and poor. Their understanding of “environment” was that of a pristine wilderness, such as could be enjoyed exclusively by people of privilege and leisure.

Unfortunately, this elitist and myopic definition discounted the *urban* environment that plagued working classes. If one’s definition of “environment” focuses on “wilderness” apart from cities, communities, and health issues, then it will exclude the plight and struggles of women, people of color, workers, children, and other victims of oppression who work, live, play and attend school in toxic surroundings that sicken, deform, and kill. It fails to see and draw connections between environmental and social problems, and thus ignores crucial issues of race, class, and gender, all of which must be integrated into an effective environmental movement of the future.

Environmental historians also have often reproduced these biases and blind spots in one dimensional narratives.⁴ The standard environmental history moves from the Romantics and conservationists to Aldo Leopold (1949) and Rachel Carson, and climaxes with a sea of more white faces in the streets of the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970. Long before Rachel Carson, however, African-American abolitionists opposed the use of chemicals such as arsenic being used to grow crops. Women played a significant role in furthering the aesthetic appreciation of nature; Alice Hamilton was a pioneer of occupational health and safety; and Jane Addams’ activism on oppressed people was inseparable from her push for better housing, working, and sanitation conditions.

Only recently did environmentalists themselves address the race, gender, and class biases of the movement. The elitist white biases of the 19th century movement resurfaced in problematic form in the 20th century, whether in Paul Ehrlich's book, *The Population Bomb* (1968), which demonizes people of color as mindless breeders, calls for forced sterilization, and invokes eugenic themes, or the anti-immigration and misanthropic attitudes of Edward Abbey and Dave Foreman of *Earth First!*, or the often asocial perspective of deep ecology.⁵

Second Wave: The Modern Mainstream

Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring* (1963), is often credited with sparking the modern environmental movement. It captured the attention of the nation with its vivid prose and dire warning of the systemic poisoning effects of newly invented pesticides, especially DDT.

But the modern environmental movement did not arise because of Rachel Carson, or other key individuals such as Murray Bookchin and Barry Commoner. It emerged and sustained itself in the larger *social context* of the 1960s, as shaped by the struggles of the "new social movements" (radical students, countercultural youth, Black liberation, feminism, Chicano/Mexican-American, peace, anti-nuclear, and gay/lesbian/bisexual/transsexual).⁶ These movements, in turn, arose amidst the turmoil spawned by the civil rights struggles of the 1950s.

Significantly, in the early stages of a social learning process, environmentalism was not initially embraced by new social movements and radicals. Blacks and a number of white radicals rejected environmentalism as a bourgeois concern, elitist and racist cause, and a dangerous diversion from the hard-won focus on civil rights and the Vietnam War. The political mindset was dominated by humanist and anthropocentric concerns, and even "progressive" figures and groups were unprepared to embrace an emerging new ethic that challenged human species identity as Lord and Master of the wild. As they began to take shape in the 1960s, environmental concerns were—and mostly remain—"enlightened anthropocentric" worries that if people do not better protect "their" environment, human existence will be gravely threatened.

As the new social movements began to wane, however, and various types of pollution became concrete and crucial issues for communities, environmentalism became a mass concern and new political movement. At the turn of the decade in 1970 the future of the environmental movement seemed bright. Riding the crest of 1960s turmoil and protests that were beginning to wane, environmentalism became a mass concern and new political movement. The first Earth Day on April 22, 1970 drew 20 million people to the streets, lectures, and teach-ins throughout the nation, making it the largest expression of public support for any cause in American history. In this "decade of environmentalism," the U.S. Congress passed new laws such as the Clean Air Act, and in 1970 President Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency. Some environmental organizations such as the Sierra Club (founded by John Muir in 1892) existed before the new movement, but grew in members, influence, and wealth like never before. The larger groups—known as

the “Gang of Ten”—planted roots in Washington, DC, where they clamored for respectability and influence with politicians and polluters.

The movement’s insider/growth-oriented recipe for success, however, quickly turned into a formula for disaster. Many battles were won in treating the symptoms of a worsening ecological crisis, but the war against its causes was lost, or rather never fought in the first place. Potentially a radical force and check on capitalist profit, accumulation, and growth dynamics, the u.s. environmental movement was largely a white, male, middle-class affair, cut off from the populist forces and the street energy that helped spawn it. Co-opted and institutionalized, in bed with government and industry, mindful of the “taboo against social intervention in the production system” (Commoner), defense of Mother Earth became just another bland, reformist, compromised-based, single-interest lobbying effort.

Increasingly, the Gang of Ten resembled the corporations they criticized and, in fact, evolved into corporations and self-interested money making machines. Within behemoths such as the Wilderness Society, the Environmental Defense Fund, and the Sierra Club, decision-making originated from professionals at the top who neither had, nor sought, citizen input from the grassroots level. The Gang of Ten hired accountants and MBAs over activists, they spent more time on mass mailing campaigns than actual advocacy, and their riches were squandered largely on sustaining bloated budgets and six-figure salaries rather than protecting the environment. They brokered compromise deals to win votes for legislation that was watered-down, constantly revised to strengthen corporate interests, and poorly enforced. They not only did not fund grassroots groups, they even worked against them at times, forming alliances instead with corporate exploiters. Perversely, Gang of Ten organizations often legitimated and profited from greenwashing campaigns that presented corporate enemies of the environment as benevolent stewards and beacons of progress.⁷ Like their 19th century predecessors, they too were largely white, male, middle-class, promoting environmentalism as a single-issue cause, aloof from problems related to race and class. They became a part of the problem rather than the solution. New forms of struggle evolved from necessity.

Third Wave: Direct Action, Grass Roots, and Alliance Politics

The emerging groups of the third wave of u.s. environmentalism were profoundly dissatisfied with a mainstream environmental movement that was corporate, careerist, compromising, and divorced from the complex of social-environmental issues affecting women, the poor, workers, and people of color.

Some groups worked through legal channels at the grass roots level, attacking corporations and effecting change in ways that the mainstream organizations could or would not do. Others viewed the state as irredeemably corrupted by the influence of money and corporate interests, with some turning to sabotage and direct action tactics. These include Paul Watson and the Sea Shepard Conservation Society (Watson 2002), the Animal Liberation Front (Best and Nocella 2004), Earth First! (Foreman 1991; Manes 1990; List 1993; Scarce 1990; Foreman and Haywood 2002; Taylor 1995), and the Earth

Liberation Front (Rosebraugh 2004; Best and Nocella 2006; Akerman 2003; Pickering 2002; Taylor 2006). Still others sought to build new kinds of alliances and link environmentalism to social justice movement. These tendencies include ecofeminism, the environmental justice movement, the international Green movement, Native Americans in the u.s. (Churchill 1993), southern groups such as the Zapatistas (Leon 2001), Black liberation groups such as MOVE, and the alter-globalization movements building alliances against global capitalism, such as were dramatically visible in the Battle of Seattle in 1999 (Danaher and Burbach 2000; Welton and Wolf 2001; Solnit 2004; Yuen, Burton-Rose, and Katsiaficas 2004).

One of the most significant forms of environmentalism took the form of a broad social movement that promoted alliances, inclusiveness, and diversity. A critical part of the grassroots revolution was the “environmental justice” movement that engaged environment, race, and social justice issues as one complex. Building on a long and sordid u.s. tradition of racism and discrimination, corporations and polluters targeted the poor, disenfranchised, and people of color to produce and discard their lethal substances. To protect their communities from *real* “eco- terrorism,” Native Americans, Asian Americans, Blacks, and Hispanics organized and fought back, proving that marginalized did not mean powerless and that environmentalism did not only have a white face. Acknowledging the importance of defending the wilderness, the environmental justice movement sought to build a multi-issue, multiracial environmental movement.

Similarly, the alter-globalization movement recognizes global capitalism as the common enemy of world peoples. As dramatically evident in the 1999 “Battle of Seattle,” “anti-“ or “alter-globalization” groups throughout the world recognized their common interests and fates, and formed unprecedented kinds of alliances (Brecher, Costello, Smith 2000; Kahn and Kellner 2006). The interests of workers, animals, and the environment alike were gravely threatened in a new world order where the WTO could override the laws of any nation state as “barriers to free trade.” Global capitalism was the common enemy recognized by world groups and peoples. Bridging national boundaries, North-South divisions, different political causes, and borders between activists of privileged and non-privileged communities, alter-globalization movements prefigured the future of revolutionary environmentalism as a global, anti-capitalist/anti-imperialist alliance politics, diverse in class, race, and gender composition.

Revolutionary Environmentalism

In the last three decades, there has been growing awareness that environmentalism cannot succeed without social justice and social justice cannot be realized without environmentalism. To be sure, defending forests and protecting whales are crucial actions to take, for they protect evolutionary processes and ecological systems vital to the planet and all species and peoples within it. Yet at the same time, it is also critical to fight side-by-side with oppressed peoples in order to address all forms of environmental destruction and build a movement far greater in numbers and strength than possible with a single-issue focus. Such a holistic orientation can be seen in the international Green network, the u.s. environmental justice movement, Earth First! efforts (as initiated by Judi Bari) to join

with timber workers, alter-globalization channels, Zapatista coalition building, and often in the communiqués and actions of ALF and ELF activists. Examples of broad alliance politics are visible also in recent efforts to build bridges among animal, Earth, and Black liberationists and anti-imperialists (Best and Nocella 2006). These various dynamics are part and parcel of the emergence of global revolutionary environmentalism.

There are key similarities between what has been called “radical environmentalism”—which includes social ecology (Bookchin 1986), deep ecology (Tobias 1984; Sessions and Devall 1985), ecofeminism (Diamond and Orenstein 1990), Earth First!, and primitivism (Zerzan 2002)—and what we term “revolutionary environmentalism.”⁸ Among other things, both approaches reject mainstream environmentalism, attack core ideologies and/or institutions that have caused the ecological crisis, often adopt spiritual outlooks and see nature as sacred, reject the binary opposition separating humans from nature, and in many cases defend or adopt illegal tactics such as civil disobedience or monkeywrenching (Abbey 2000). However, a key distinguishing trait of revolutionary environmentalism is that it supports and/or employs illegal tactics ranging from property destruction for the purpose of economic sabotage to guerilla warfare and armed struggle, recognizing that violent methods of resistance are often appropriate against fascist regimes and right-wing dictatorships. Revolutionary environmentalism seeks to counter forces of oppression with equally potent forms of resistance, and uses militant tactics when they are justified, necessary, and effective. With the advance of the global capitalist juggernaut and increasing deterioration of the Earth’s ecological systems, ever more people may realize that no viable future will arise without militant actions and large-scale social transformation, a process that requires abolishing global capitalism and imperialism, and would thereby embrace revolutionary environmentalism.

As evident in the communiqués of the ALF and ELF, as well as in the views of Black liberationists, Native Americans, anarchists, and anti-imperialists, many activists are explicitly revolutionary in their rhetoric, analysis, vision, actions, and political identities. Revolutionary environmentalists renounce reformist approaches that aim only to manage the symptoms of the global ecological crisis and never dare or think to probe its underlying dynamics and causes. Revolutionary environmentalists seek to end the destruction of nature and peoples, not merely to slow its pace, temper its effects, or plug holes in a dam set to burst. They don’t act to “manage” the catastrophic consequences of the project to dominate nature; they work to abolish the very hierarchy whereby humans live as if they were separate from nature and pursue the deluded goal of mastery and control. The objectives thought necessary by revolutionary environmentalists cannot be realized within the present world system, and require a rupture with it.

Revolutionary environmentalists recognize the need for fundamental changes on many levels, such as with human psychologies (informed by anthropocentric worldviews, values, and identities), interpersonal relations (mediated by racism, sexism, speciesism, ageism, classism, homophobia, and elitism), social institutions (governed by authoritarian, plutocratic, and corrupt or pseudo-democratic forms), technologies (enforcing labor and exploitation imperatives and driven by fossil-fuels that cause pollution and global warming), and the prevailing economic system (an inherently

destructive and unsustainable global capitalism driven by profit, production, and consumption imperatives). Revolutionary environmentalists see “separate” problems as related to the larger system of global capitalism and reject the reformist notion of “green capitalism” as a naïve oxymoron. They repudiate the logics of marketization, economic growth, and industrialization as inherently violent, exploitative, and destructive, and seek ecological, democratic, and egalitarian alternatives.

As the dynamics that brought about global warming, rainforest destruction, species extinction, and poisoning of communities are not reducible to any single factor or cause—be it agricultural society, the rise of states, anthropocentrism, speciesism, patriarchy, racism, colonialism, industrialism, technocracy, or capitalism—all radical groups and orientations that can effectively challenge the ideologies and institutions implicated in domination and ecological destruction have a relevant role to play in the global social-environmental struggle. While standpoints such as deep ecology, social ecology, ecofeminism, animal liberation, Black liberation, Native American autonomy and liberation, and the ELF are all important, none can accomplish systemic social transformation by itself. Working together, however, through a diversity of critiques and tactics that mobilize different communities, a flank of militant groups and positions can drive a battering ram into the structures of power and domination and open the door to a new future.

Thus, revolutionary environmentalism is not a *single group*, but rather a *collective movement* rooted in specific tactics and goals (such as just discussed), and organized as multi-issue, multiracial alliances that can mount effective opposition to capitalism and other modes of domination. We do not have in mind here a super-movement that embraces all struggles, but rather numerous alliance networks that may form larger collectives with other groups in fluid and dynamic ways, and are as global in vision and reach as is transnational capitalism.⁹ Although there is diversity in unity, there must also be unity in diversity. Solidarity can emerge in recognition of the fact that all forms of oppression are directly or indirectly related to the values, institutions, and *system* of global capitalism and related hierarchical structures. To be unified and effective, however, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist alliances require mutual sharing, respectful learning, and psychological growth, such that, for instance, black liberationists, ecofeminists, and animal liberationists can help one another overcome racism, sexism, and speciesism.

New social movements and Greens have failed to realize their radical potential. They have abandoned their original demands for radical social change and become integrated into capitalist structures that have eliminated “existing socialist countries” as well as social democracies in a global triumph of neoliberalism. A new revolutionary force must therefore emerge, one that will build on the achievements of classical democratic, libertarian socialist, and anarchist traditions; incorporate radical green, feminist, and indigenous struggles; synthesize animal, Earth, and human liberation standpoints; and build a global social-ecological revolution capable of abolishing transnational capitalism so that just and ecological societies can be constructed in its place.

Conclusion

Windows of opportunity are closing. The actions that human beings now collectively take or fail to take will determine whether the future is hopeful or bleak. The revolution that this planet desperately needs at this crucial juncture will involve, among other things, a movement to abolish anthropocentrism, speciesism, racism, patriarchy, homophobia, and prejudices and hierarchies of all kinds. In a revolutionary process, people throughout the world will reconstitute social institutions in a form that promotes autonomy, self-determination of nations and peoples, decentralization and democratization of political life, non-market relations, guaranteed rights for humans and animals, an ethics of respect for nature and all life, and the harmonization of the social and natural worlds.

To conclude, we want to raise the question: Is there a direction or coherence in the history of environmentalism? We believe there is, along 3 main lines:

1) *Broadening* of the scope and meaning of environmentalism: whereas the first two waves of u.s. environmentalism were predominantly white, male, and middle class in composition and outlook, and were rooted in a dualistic concept of the “environment” defined in terms of physical wilderness divorced from urban and social environments, the environmental movement since the 1970s has become increasingly diversified and broadened. “Environmentalism” today is defined and shaped by a host of groups and perspectives, and is inseparably linked to social issues and struggles.

2) *Connecting* the various branches of a social-environmental movement: the last few decades show a deepening awareness that all liberation struggles are interconnected, such that no one is possible without the others, thereby leading to the concept of “total revolution” that unites in one struggle human, animal, and Earth liberation. *Igniting a Revolution: Voices in Defense of the Earth* (Best and Nocella, 2006) shows the diversity of the new politics and tendencies toward making new connections and alliances.

3) *Radicalizing* political struggle: analysis of modern environmentalism in the u.s. and elsewhere reveals a dialectic whereby increasingly radical forms of struggle emerge when necessary, when a prior strategy proves inadequate and ineffective for protecting the Earth. Thus, the legal-based tactics of mainstream environmentalism, which turned ecology into just another bureaucratic interest movement, ultimately gave rise to more militant tactics involving direct action, sabotage, arson, and armed struggle. The future of environmental politics is unpredictable, but in this accelerated and desperate stage of ecological crisis and biological meltdown, radicals will defend the Earth “by any means necessary.”

Revolutionary environmentalism is based on the realization that *politics as usual just won't cut it anymore*. We will always lose if we play by their rules rather than invent new forms of struggle, new social movements, and new sensibilities. The defense of the earth requires immediate and decisive: logging roads need to be blocked, driftnets need to be cut, and cages need to be emptied. But these are defensive actions, and in addition to

these tactics, radical movements and alliances must be built from the perspective total liberation.

A new revolutionary politics will build on the achievements of democratic, libertarian socialist, and anarchist traditions. It will incorporate radical green, feminist, and indigenous struggles. It will merge animal, earth, and human standpoints in a total liberation struggle against global capitalism and its omnicidal grow-or-die logic.

Radical politics must reverse the growing power of the state, mass media, and corporations to promote egalitarianism and participatory democratization at all levels of society – political, cultural, and economic. It must dismantle all asymmetrical power relations and structures of hierarchy, including that of humans over animals and the earth. Radical politics is impossible without the revitalization of citizenship and the re-politicization of life, which begins with forms of education, communication, culture, and art that anger, awaken, inspire, and empower people toward action and change.

This is a pivotal time in history, a crossroads for the future of life. Windows of opportunity are closing. The actions that human beings now collectively take or fail to take will determine whether the future is hopeful or bleak. While the result is horrible to contemplate, our species may not meet this challenge and drive itself into the same oblivion as it drove countless other species. There is no economic or technological fix for the crises we confront, the only solution lies in radical change at all levels.

Clearly, there is no guarantee that *Homo sapiens* will survive in the near future, as the dystopian visions of films such as *Mad Max* or *Waterworld* may actually be realized. But nor is there is any promise that revolutionary environmentalism can or will arise, given problems such as the factionalism and egoism that typically tears political groups apart and/or the fierce political repression always directed against resistance movements.

Amidst so many doubts and uncertainties, there is nonetheless no question whatsoever that the quality of the future—if humanity and other imperiled species have one—depends on the strength of global resistance movements and the possibilities for revolutionary change.

¹ Part of this article has been published in the Introduction to *Igniting a Revolution: Voices in Defense of the Earth* (Best and Nocella 2006). In solidarity with the language of resistance used by Black liberationists and anti-imperialists, throughout this article we substitute “u.s.,” “amerika,” “england,” “and “u.k.,” for “US,” “America,” “England,” and “UK.” We graffiti the names only of these two main imperialist powers.

¹ The claim that we currently are witnessing an advanced ecological “crisis,” upon which the argument for revolutionary struggle rests, means that there is an emergency situation in the ecology of the Earth as a whole that needs urgent attention. If we do not address ecological problems immediately and with radical measures that target causes not symptoms, severe, world-altering consequences will play out over a long-term period. Signs of major stress of the world’s eco-systems are everywhere, from denuded forests and depleted fisheries to vanishing wilderness and global climate change. As one indicator of massive disruption, the proportion of species human beings are driving to extinction “might easily reach 20 percent by 2022 and rise as high as 50 percent or more thereafter” (Wilson 2002)). Given the proliferating amount of solid, internationally assembled scientific data supporting the ecological crisis claim, it can no longer be dismissed as “alarmist;” the burden of proof, rather has shifted to those “skeptics,” “realists,” and “optimists” in radical denial of the growing catastrophe to prove why complacency is not blindness and insanity. For reliable data on the crisis, see the various reports, papers, and annual *Vital Signs* and *State of the World* publications by the Worldwatch Institute. On the impact of *Homo sapiens* over time, see “The Pleistocene-Holocene Event,” <http://rewilding.org/theshixthgreatextinction.htm>. On the serious environmental effects of agribusiness and global meat and dairy production/consumption systems (which include deforestation, desertification, water pollution, species extinction, resource waste, and global warming), (Robbins 2001).

¹ For elaboration of the position of corporate interest, u.s. law enforcement, and others that spawn the propaganda that the ELF and Earth First! are “ecoterrorists,” see Long (2004), Arnold (1997), and Lewis (2005).

¹ For an example of a standard, single-focus narrative on the history of u.s. environmentalism (Nash 1967). To read an alternative, far broader account that links environmental and social history by including the fight for safe working and living conditions and the struggles of women, labor, and others (Gottlieb 1993). Marcy Darnovsky (1992) notes that “Too sharp a focus on wilderness blurs the environmental significance of everyday life...In limiting their scope as they do, the standard [environmental] histories contribute to still-widespread associations of the environment as a place separate from daily life and innocent of social relations” (p. 28).

¹ By far and away, the harshest critic of deep ecology, Earth First!, and primitivism—all reviled as being racist, misanthropic, mystical, irrational, and atavistic—is social ecologist Murray Bookchin (Bookchin 1995)). Although Bookchin makes a number of important points against these movements, he often takes statements out of context and fails to account for the diversity and competing divisions within groups, such as existed in Earth First! between the “wilders” (e.g., Dave Foreman and Christopher Manes) and the social-oriented “holies” (e.g., Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney). For critiques of Bookchin’s one-dimensional readings of deep ecology and Earth First!, see Taylor’s article “Earth First! and Global Narratives of Popular Ecological Resistance” in *Ecological Resistance Movements: The Global Emergence of Radical and Popular Environmentalism* (Taylor 1995) also see Taylor’s essay, “The Religion and Politics of Earth First!” (1991).

¹ For a historical and critical analysis of new social movements Boggs (1987).

¹ For examples of greenwashing and “environmental” groups serving the cause of corporate propaganda (Dowie 1995; Rampton and Stauber 1999).

¹ It is critical to point out that contributors to this volume use different terms to talk about similar or the same things; thus, in addition to “revolutionary environmentalism,” one will also see references to “radical environmentalism,” “radical ecology,” or “revolutionary ecology.” It is natural that different people

discussing new ecological resistance movements will use different terminology, and we did not attempt to impose our own discourse of “revolutionary environmentalism” on any of the authors, although some do use the term “revolutionary environmentalism.” While there is general consensus on the need for a militant resistance movement and revolutionary social transformation, we leave it to the reader to interpret and compare the different philosophical and political perspectives.

¹ In 1996, for instance, the Zapatistas organized a global “encuentro” during which over 3,000 grassroots activists and intellectuals from 42 countries assembled to discuss strategies for a worldwide struggle against neoliberalism. In response to the Zapatista’s call for an “intercontinental network of resistance, recognizing differences and acknowledging similarities,” the People’s Global Action Network was formed, a group explicitly committed to anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and ecological positions (see <http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiattiv/agp/en/index.htm>). For more examples of global politics and networks that report on news, actions, and campaigns from around the world, covering human rights, animal rights, and environmental struggles, see *One World* (<http://www.oneworld.net/>), *Protest.Net* (<http://www.protest.net/>), and *Indymedia* (<http://www.indymedia.org/en/index.shtml>).

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¹ This article has been adapted from the Introduction to *Igniting a Revolution: Voices in Defense of the Earth* (Best and Nocella 2006). In solidarity with the language of resistance used by Black liberationists and anti-imperialists, throughout this article we substitute “u.s.,” “amerika,” “england,” “and “u.k.,” for “US,” “America,” “England,” and “UK.” We graffiti the names only of these two main imperialist powers.

² The claim that we currently are witnessing an advanced ecological “crisis,” upon which the argument for revolutionary struggle rests, means that there is an emergency situation in the ecology of the Earth as a whole that needs urgent attention. If we do not address ecological problems immediately and with radical measures that target causes not symptoms, severe, world-altering consequences will play out over a long-term period. Signs of major stress of the world’s eco-systems are everywhere, from denuded forests and depleted fisheries to vanishing wilderness and global climate change. As one indicator of massive disruption, the proportion of species human beings are driving to extinction “might easily reach 20 percent by 2022 and rise as high as 50 percent or more thereafter” (Wilson 2002) . Given the proliferating amount of solid, internationally assembled scientific data supporting the ecological crisis claim, it can no longer be dismissed as “alarmist;” the burden of proof, rather has shifted to those “skeptics,” “realists,” and “optimists” in radical denial of the growing catastrophe to prove why complacency is not blindness and insanity. For reliable data on the crisis, see the various reports, papers, and annual *Vital Signs* and *State of the World* publications by the Worldwatch Institute. On the impact of *Homo sapiens* over time, see “The Pleistocene-Holocene Event,” <http://rewilding.org/thesixthgreatextinction.htm>. On the serious environmental effects of agribusiness and global meat and dairy production/consumption systems (which include deforestation, desertification, water pollution, species extinction, resource waste, and global warming), (Robbins 2001).

³ For elaboration of the position of corporate interest, u.s. law enforcement, and others that spawn the propaganda that the ELF and Earth First! are “ecoterrorists,” see Long (2004), Arnold (1997), and Lewis (2005).

⁴ For an example of a standard, single-focus narrative on the history of u.s. environmentalism (Nash 1967). To read an alternative, far broader account that links environmental and social history by including the fight for safe working and living conditions and the struggles of women, labor, and others (Gottlieb 1993). Marcy Darnovsky (1992) notes that “Too sharp a focus on wilderness blurs the environmental significance of everyday life...In limiting their scope as they do, the standard [environmental] histories contribute to still-widespread associations of the environment as a place separate from daily life and innocent of social relations” (p. 28).

⁵ By far and away, the harshest critic of deep ecology, Earth First!, and primitivism—all reviled as being racist, misanthropic, mystical, irrational, and atavistic—is social ecologist Murray Bookchin (Bookchin 1995)). Although Bookchin makes a number of important points against these movements, he often takes statements out of context and fails to account for the diversity and competing divisions within groups, such as existed in Earth First! between the “wilders” (e.g., Dave Foreman and Christopher Manes) and the social-oriented “holies” (e.g., Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney). For critiques of Bookchin’s one-dimensional readings of deep ecology and Earth First!, see Taylor’s article “Earth First! and Global Narratives of Popular Ecological Resistance” in *Ecological Resistance Movements: The Global Emergence of Radical and Popular Environmentalism* (Taylor 1995) also see Taylor’s essay, “The Religion and Politics of Earth First!” (1991).

⁶ For a historical and critical analysis of new social movements Boggs (1987).

⁷ For examples of greenwashing and “environmental” groups serving the cause of corporate propaganda (Dowie 1995; Rampton and Stauber 1999).

⁸ It is critical to point out that contributors to this volume use different terms to talk about similar or the same things; thus, in addition to “revolutionary environmentalism,” one will also see references to “radical environmentalism,” “radical ecology,” or “revolutionary ecology.” It is natural that different people

discussing new ecological resistance movements will use different terminology, and we did not attempt to impose our own discourse of “revolutionary environmentalism” on any of the authors, although some do use the term “revolutionary environmentalism.” While there is general consensus on the need for a militant resistance movement and revolutionary social transformation, we leave it to the reader to interpret and compare the different philosophical and political perspectives.

⁹ In 1996, for instance, the Zapatistas organized a global “encuentro” during which over 3,000 grassroots activists and intellectuals from 42 countries assembled to discuss strategies for a worldwide struggle against neoliberalism. In response to the Zapatista’s call for an “intercontinental network of resistance, recognizing differences and acknowledging similarities,” the People’s Global Action Network was formed, a group explicitly committed to anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and ecological positions (see <http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiattiv/agp/en/index.htm>). For more examples of global politics and networks that report on news, actions, and campaigns from around the world, covering human rights, animal rights, and environmental struggles, see *One World* (<http://www.oneworld.net/>), *Protest.Net* (<http://www.protest.net/>), and *Indymedia* (<http://www.indymedia.org/en/index.shtml>).

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"Rhizomatic Resistance: the Zapatistas and the Earth Liberation Front"

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"Take care with the puddle and the mud. Better to follow the tracks which, like in so many things, is the most knowing."

Subcomandante Marcos, "Chiapas: The Thirteenth Stele"

Ana Carrigan's proclamation that the Zapatista rebellion in southeastern Mexico is the world's "first post-modern revolution" can be taken in as many ways as there are definitions of the hackneyed term "post-modern."¹ Certainly, the rebellion marks a liberation of many "others." Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos describes the uprising as "all the minorities...untolerated, oppressed, resisting, exploding, saying 'Enough!'"² The post-modern rebellion brings to the attention of the privileged ignorant the face of the other, not to make it known but to present it as it is, largely unknowable unless the familiar becomes unfamiliar. The now astonishingly familiar, but still unknown faces of "all the minorities" in Chiapas have even come to be seen only because they are masked and defiant. The mountain areas of southeast Mexico are in Zapatista rebel hands. "And these Zapatistas are very otherly.... These Zapatistas neither vanquish nor die, but nor do they surrender, and they despise martyrdom as much as capitulation. Very otherly, it's true.... They are rebel indigenous. Breaking...the traditional conception, first from Europe

¹ For a discussion of Carrigan and the post-modernity of the rebellion see Michael P. Palaez, "The EZLN: 21st Century Radicals," http://www.flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/reports/pomo_ezln.html. Marcos himself prefers to make sport of the post-modern moniker. See "I Shit on All the Revolutionary Vanguard of This Planet," <http://www.flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/2003/marcos/etaJAN.html>, p.1.

² Cited in Peyman Vahabzadeh, "Zapatistas: An Introduction," unpublished manuscript, available from <http://www.poeticguerillas.com/articles/marcos.html>; Internet; accessed 3 February, 2004. "Ya basta!" "Enough!" is one of the rallying cries of the EZLN.

and afterwards from all those who are clothed in the color of money that was imposed on them for looking and being looked at."³

Still, it is not merely bringing attention to the other but the "resisting, exploding, saying" way that Chiapas illumines the face of the other that is new. This decentralized and proliferating discourse and set of tactics links up with many "others" under the Zapatista umbrella of "civil society." When Marcos allegedly was outed by the Mexican government in 1995 as Rafael Guillen, an unemployed Communication Philosophy professor, Marcos responded with his own version of his identity. "I'm gay in San Francisco, Black in South Africa...an Asian in Europe,...a Chicano in San Ysidro...an anarchist in Spain...a pacifist in Bosnia...a Palestinian in Israel...a *chava banda* in Nezuahuacoyotl...an Indian in Chiapas." If Marcos fragments into "all the minorities" the minorities conversely unite into Marcos. In response to the supposed identification of Marcos and an attempted police/military roundup of Zapatista leaders hundreds of thousands of students, activists, laborers, and others filled the Zocalo in Mexico City and "*Todos somos Marcos!*" ("We are all Marcos") became a rallying cry in support of the Zapatistas.⁴ The phrase then echoed around the globe among anti-globalization resistance fighters of many sorts.

It is this expansive manner of resistance in random order that distinguishes the EZLN. Like its revolutionary counterparts in North America and Europe--Earth First!, Sea Shepherd, the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), SHAC, The Animal Rights Militia, the Revolutionary Cells, the Justice Department and

³ Subcomandante Marcos, <http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/2003/marcos/resistance13.html>, p.1.

⁴ See John Ross, *The War Against Oblivion*, (Philadelphia: Common Courage Press, 2000), pp. 108-110. It should be noted here that Zapatista communiqués stemming from the recent red alert and encuentro in the

others-- the Zapatista rebellion takes root, expands, and erupts as rhizomatic resistance.⁵ The EZLN and the ELF, in their ideological bricolage, their anarchical and underground organization, and their now you see them now you don't tactics mark a form of organized resistance unique to the conditions of the new corporatized, globalized, surveilled, (para)militarized, and neo-liberal/neo-fascist world order. Certainly, Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome is among the apt literary-biological metaphors for describing the post-modern character of revolutionary environmentalism.

These movements liberate by rupturing the conceptual foundations, the received organizational forms, and the [il]legitimacy of everyday action in the corporate-state world order. We will trace some of the roots of the EZLN and the ELF. Specifically we seek to link up two interrelated figures that mark main points of divergence of revolutionary environmentalism from mainstream groups and convergence with the EZLN: a Heideggerian critique of western technology and indigenous bio-centrism. At first glance these themes may appear to be completely at odds? The first moves from near the end point of the western philosophical tradition while the second is rooted in an ancient oral and spiritual tradition that survives despite an onslaught of westernizing forces. Yet, Heidegger's work too is retrospective. And the Zapatistas incorporate indigenous traditions in the context of a critique of a globalized, technological-capitalist "fourth World War" that resonates with Heidegger's interpretation of nihilism. More importantly, both Heidegger's critique of technology and the indigenous themes we trace here illuminate an ontology of openness wherein Being, far from being determined and defined, remains an open space within which the spiritual basis for a surmounting of

Lacandon jungle reiterate a plan for "civil society"—all of the others—to reunite and rededicate themselves to pursuing a path fundamentally divergent from the neo-liberal model.

globalization might unfold. Human freedom understood as care taken that each event of creation might unfold according to its own limits and hope that such a world might emerge within the present are the words of both Heidegger and the indigenous. In these and other discursive figures and their related actions the EZLN and the ELF are clarifying a set of revolutionary principles rooted in indigenous de-centering of subjective identity. These particular traces are part of an incalculably larger rhizome, its branches and leaves rooted in an ultimately un-traceable root-mass. It is a grassfire; it is a wind gathering the force of a hurricane.

Rhizome

Just as the identity of Marcos fragments into "all the minorities," in their introduction to Thousand Plateaus, Deleuze and Guattari move quickly to take apart various conceptions of unity--of themselves as subjects and authors, of the text they write, of literatures, of the disciplines and sub-disciplines of linguistics, and psychoanalysis. Of course, there are themes that hold these fields together as coherent wholes. But beneath the surface, unity dissolves into irreducible multiplicity. "In a book as in everything else, there are lines of segmentarity, strata, territorialities; but also lines of flight, movements of de-territorialisation, and destratification."⁶ The rhizome is an expression of the underside and the tension within disparate elements that always already exists in any sort of organized whole. Deleuze and Guattari's overall project is to constantly call attention to this play of unity and multiplicity, consolidation and rupture. They contest, for example, the accepted idea of evolution of social and political relations from nomadic hunter gatherer, to agrarian village with its surpluses, to state form, developing from the

⁵ Our analysis focuses primarily on the Earth Liberation Front.

agricultural surplus of the village. Rather, forces of organization and dis-aggregation are always in tension. "[N]omads do not precede the sedentaries; rather, nomadism is a movement, a becoming that affects sedentaries, just as sedentarization is a stoppage that settles the nomads."⁷ Today, nomadism erupts in green anarchy and primitivism, a counter-move to "civilization" present from Diogenes and the Cynics in the classical world to the Brothers and Sisters of the Free Spirit in medieval times to the Diggers and Levelers of modernity.

Both Deleuze and Guattari and Foucault emphasize the significance of Nietzsche in breaking apart metaphysical fictions and restoring a recognition of the accidental, the contingent, and the singular forces that underlie that which evolves into apparent unities. Lines of descent from an alleged origin fragment into lines of dispersion that mark the unique and un-remembered chaos of events from which an apparent unity first emerged. Foucault's genealogy, like Deleuze' and Guattari's cartography trace "passing events in their proper dispersion; it is to identify the accidents, the minute deviations--or conversely, the complete reversals--the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that give birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us."⁸

The strange phrases that Deleuze and Guattari use name the dynamic of shifting substrata that constantly challenge a unified, organized whole: a system without center or borders, lines of flight and intensities, bodies without organs, units of density and convergence. Over against the metaphor of the tree with its taproot and trunk unifying the roots, branches, stems, and leaves Deleuze and Guattari posit the proliferation of the

⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. And foreword by Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 430.

rhizome. "The multiple *must be made* [emphasis original]" by subtracting a singular characteristic from the whole expressed symbolically: "write to the power of n-1. Such a system is called a rhizome.... an absolutely distinct type of underground stem-system. Bulbs and tubers are rhizomes.... Even animals are, in their pack form: rats are rhizomes. So are warrens, in all their functions as habitat, provision, passage, evasion and disappearance."⁹ The EZLN, suddenly emerging to occupy towns, their infiltrators just as suddenly disappearing and dissolving Mexican army units, and then fading into their jungle redoubts are rhizomes. The anonymous and autonomous cells of the ELF erupting in sudden arson attacks across the United States and as rapidly disappearing are rhizomes.

Rhizomes threaten an established order; they often operate unseen; they are irrepressible and cannot be eradicated as their root stem system allows proliferation at each of its nodes. One may break off and analyze a section of bamboo in a mature bamboo stand. But the system to which any part of a rhizome may be attached is ultimately un-traceable. No matter the number of segmentations, one is lost in a prodigious maze of branches and stems, not to mention a bewildering and unyielding mass of hidden, densely tangled roots. There is always n-1, with the singular part open to consideration. But the sum of the parts is ultimately incalculable and, as such, the parts cannot be summed up in an ostensible whole.

Deleuze and Guattari isolate six characteristics of the rhizome. Four of these are of particular concern here. First and second, they describe a rhizome's connection and heterogeneity. By reference to language, the authors argue that rhizomatic language features "semiotic chains of biological, political and other kinds, bringing into play not

⁸ Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in The Foucault Reader, ed. Paul Rabinow, translated by Donal Bouchard and Sherry Simon, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), p. 81.

only different regimes of signs, but also different orders of states of affairs."¹⁰

Rhizomatic language disrupts the alleged fixed point of unity and order, the mother tongue or grammatical rules that arrest the multi-faceted points of connection in a prodigious, rhizome of language, referents, language games, and their corresponding states of meaning and states of affairs.

A rhizome endlessly connects semiotic chains, power organizations, occurrences relating to the arts, the sciences or to social struggles. A semiotic chain is like a tuber agglomerating quite different types of acts--linguistic, but also perceptual, mimetic, gestural, cognitive ones: there is no language in itself, nor any universal language, but a concourse of dialectics, patois, slangs, special languages....

Language...is 'an essentially heterogenous reality.' There is no mother tongue, but a seizure of power by a dominant tongue within a political multiplicity¹¹

With revolutionary environmentalism, both in its refiguring of the language of globalization and the radical challenges to it—especially in indigenous philosophy and its anarchic, consensus based democracy--the uniformity of conventional language/social order is exploded. The play of language that connects what, according to the existing

⁹ Deleuze, Thousand Plateaus, p.p. 6-7.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Deleuze and Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, p. 53. The explicitly political character of the authors' analysis here should not be overlooked. Naturally, much Deleuze criticism centers on psychological questions about subjective and personal identity. But the connection between language, signs, political forms, and social struggles is made quite explicit here. See Paul Patton, "Metaphoric Logic: Bodies and Powers in "A Thousand Plateaus," Additionally, in regard to language, Derrida's famous essay "Differance" is of considerable use here. Signs have meaning based on their difference from other signs not based on an ostensible referent of the sign. Additionally, signs defer to other signs in order for an ultimate meaning to be reached, a meaning which, of course, is never in fact reached. Instead there is simply the constant deferring and differing that is "differance." The same might be said of the rhizome: neither the sovereignty of the "One", the unified whole is ever complete any more than the dispersive effect of the multiple. Rather each largely gain their "identities" from their ongoing tension with the other. See Jacques Derrida, "Différance," trans. Alan Bass, *Margins of Philosophy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

constraints of language and social form are dissonant elements, marks the connective heterogeneity of rhizomatic resistance. Zapatista discourse recalls revolutionary heroes, provisions of the Mexican constitution, features of Mayan oral tradition and practice, and neo-Marxism. Revolutionary environmentalism connects both shallow and deep ecology, primitivism, anarchism, indigenous spirituality, and the Zapatistas!

Third, Deleuze and Guattari emphasize the notion of multiplicity. Multiplicity must be accepted as such, as substantive. In this manner, the multiple "loses all relationship to the One as subject or object, as natural or spiritual reality, as image and world." Multiple determinations absent any substantive, unifying signifier, are themselves to be traced, not to a common source but in their heterogeneity. Writing n-1 takes the subtracted element as it is not as having meaning only in its connection to an alleged common denominator.

Fourth, and most importantly perhaps for tracing the ELF and the EZLN, is the characteristic of a rhizome termed "asignifying rupture." Here again, Deleuze and Guattari emphasize the irreducibility of rhizomatic segments to any ultimate organizing principle. Break off a section of a rhizomatic plant or detach or kill a part of a rhizomatic animal population and the plant or pack shoots off in other directions continuing to proliferate. No qualifiers of good or bad, positive or negative can be attributed to this eruptive growth of the rhizome; new shoots take their course in a de-territorialization or de-stratification of any schema by which they would be contained or controlled.

Describing the "symbiotic" relationship between orchid and wasp, Deleuze and Guattari claim: "There is no imitation or resemblance, but an explosion of two heterogenous series

into a line of flight consisting of a common rhizome that can no longer be attributed or made subject to any signifier whatever."

In demonstrating certain parallels between the EZLN and ELF we must resist the temptation to reduce them to a single explanatory framework. The rhizome metaphor is precisely intended to prevent such a reduction. We are merely tracing moves in the context of similar struggles. All we leave is a trace of rhizomatic ruptures that radically confront the state corporate apparatus. Similarly, focus on the two pathways identified here is not meant to obscure, take precedence over, or downplay other lines of segmentarity in these movements. Heterogeneous connectivity in the EZLN links up "civil society"--indigenous rights groups, environmentalists, labor groups, women's rights groups, anarchists, human rights and democracy activists, and other left political activists--with appeals to nationalism, the Mexican Constitution (especially Articles 27 and 39), significant figures in Mexican history, both Catholic and Mayan communal and spiritual traditions, and the dancing of cumbias. ELF communiqués are rife with appeals to deep ecology, social ecology, animal rights, anarchism, concern for natural ecosystems, and a sheer, liberating sense of mischief in monkeywrenching the corporate machine. In the realm of tactics and organization there are a variety of roots one might trace not least of which is that both movements have been able to maintain anonymity and yet broadly extend their connective heterogeneity by an extraordinary use of the internet. In short, while we trace Heideggerian and indigenous, bio-centric roots of revolutionary environmentalism we must not lose sight of the "reinsing exploding, saying 'Enough'" that is these movements. Heidegger's "ontological anarchism" (his attempt to avoid the reduction of the question of Being to some particular kind of being)

complements indigenous philosophy of an ineffable mystery of Being. We might go so far as saying that the ontological space described by Heidegger and indigenous philosophy is parallel to the political space opened up by rhizomatic resistance to the war machine.

Critical Discourses of the ELF and EZLN

Constantly a wider set of cultures and persons are asked to behold the spectacle of the enormous productive forces constituted by the corporate-state apparatus. Both the ELF and EZLN turn this Roman Triumph on its head, demonstrating the equally colossal destructiveness of globalization. It is not a dialectic that operates here; rather, it is a deconstructive proliferation of counter-claims to neo-liberal propaganda. One element that runs through both ELF and EZLN discourse is a profound critique of the technological character of globalization. The critical discourse in ELF and EZLN communiqués reflect the same basic critical interpretation of technology--namely, that technology is a historical and ontological formation, rooted in western metaphysics and centering on synthesizing entities including, ultimately, people into cybernetic systems. Technology is not simply a neutral set of tools and methods but a cultural imperative that everything yield to efficient systematization.

Both ELF and EZLN communiqués reveal a critical interpretation of technological praxis similar to Heidegger's conception of "challenging forth" wherein the Earth is assaulted and provoked to yield up "natural resources" to interlocked, increasingly cybernetic systems. The command character of challenging forth is revealed in the ELF activists' sense of the provocative nature of those business ventures targeted for direct actions. In a series of communiqués from Long Island in 2000 and 2001

concerning the torching of luxury homes that threatened sensitive pine barren habitat and an important aquifer, activists spoke of the virtual assault mentality of the developers. The communique held that the "Earth is being murdered." The writers speak of the "rape of the Earth" by the Earth's "oppressors." The activists vowed to continue to stop such destruction as long as the "Earth is butchered." ELF activists specifically identify with the EZLN rebels and those they defend in Chiapas; both groups' actions are rooted in a defense against a corporate-state apparatus that wages "a war against the environment" as well as "a war against the people who live sustainably within it."¹²

In our view these pronouncements are not mere ideological hyperbole. Emanating from the communiqués is a profound sense of misgiving about and defense against the inherently destructive, "command and control" technological orientation toward nature. In public forums activists cite statistics on the extinction crisis but not with clinical detachment. Instead these statistics help to bear witness to the violent appropriation of nature that they are contesting. Such concern is further demonstrated in videos produced by the press offices of ELF and ALF. One can speak of a terrorism of the Earth as it is bulldozed, a forest of trees splintered by the chainsaw and crashing to the forest floor and the subsequent gaping wound to the Earth of a clear-cut. It is the same terror expressed in the eyes of an elephant that has rampaged in fear and anger against its keepers.¹³ The testimony to the terrorizing of nature expressed in the communiqués and

¹² Resistance, unnumbered volume p. 3. One of the leading figures in the direct action movement, Rod Coronado, whose Pasua Yaqui ancestors had engaged in a rebellion against Spanish conquistadores, speaks of the insight he had early on in his activism when trying to stop the slaughter of harbor seals in Canada. It suddenly dawned on him that the genocide against animal nations, including the seals, was part of the same process of the genocide of the Spanish against his people. Rod Coronado, classroom discussion, CSU Fresno, February 14th, 2003.

¹³ See videos by P.E.T.A., the Animal Liberation Front, and the Earth Liberation Front. Of particular interest to the author is the ELF video "Igniting the Revolution," ELF Press Office, 2002. Gary Yurofsky, a former PETA spokesperson and activist who liberated five-hundred forty two mink from a farm in Canada

videos is the counterpoint of the hidden everyday violence of technological appropriation. That activists recognize the assault as a systematic form of destruction is clear in their repeated reference to “genocide” against many animal nations. What is necessary is a thoroughgoing and constant recognition of the inherently violent nature of technological assault on the earth.

Bringing to conscious awareness the violent character of modern technics comprises, in large part, the truly revolutionary character of the ELF and ALF. These are the only “environmental” organizations that have fully grasped that the current integration of modern technics and corporate capital result in systematic violence against all of nature, including human nature. Consistently ELF and ALF spokespersons critique single-issue environmental policies for failing to understand the universally homicidal/suicidal assault of corporate technics on the Earth. A statement from the ELF press office reads:

The Earth Liberation Front does not commit merely symbolic acts to simply gain attention to any particular issues. It is not concerned merely with logging, genetic engineering, or even the environment for that matter. Its purpose is to liberate the earth. The earth, and therefore all of us born to it, are under attack. We are under attack by a system which values profit over life, which has, and will, kill anything to satisfy its never ending greed. We have seen a recent history rich in the destruction of peoples, cultures, and environments. We have seen the results of

was first moved toward an absolutist animal rights position by his seeing chained and caged animals “backstage” at the zoo. He sensed the deep fear and rage in the animals’ eyes and witnessed the neurotic behavior induced by their confinement. See Yurofsky video "From Liberator to Educator."

*millions of years of evolution destroyed in the relative blink of an eye [emphasis added].*¹⁴

The radicalism decried by critics of direct action environmentalism is a counterpoint to the terrorism against the Earth which continues unabated. It is only in the context of a technological assault on the Earth that one can grasp ELF and ALF arguments that revolutionary direct actions is a form of self-defense.¹⁵ It is largely in defense of indigenous people that the EZLN continues to oppose the destructive element of the essence of technology, particularly as it is manifested in such globalizing events as NAFTA.

Ten years before the Zapatistas burst onto the world stage the EZLN was established in the Lacandon jungle. Two years before the uprising, Marcos penned "The Southeast in Two Winds: A Storm and A Prophecy." The destruction described by Marcos is couched in more explicitly neo-Marxian terms than the ELF communiqués (specifically, Wallerstein's conception of a world capitalist economy in which core countries prosper upon the extraction of cheap labor value and cheap resources from peripheral countries). Also, Marcos is concerned to a far greater extent with the impact of capitalist exploitation on the indigenous people of Chiapas, the ELF centering more on the destruction of the Earth. While this should not be overlooked, the simple recognition and unmistakable foreboding and loathing regarding the corporate-technological juggernaut draws the ELF communiqués and Marcos's "prophecy" into a network of

¹⁴ lesliejames, "Resistance," unnumbered volume, p. 1.

¹⁵ Self, as we allude to below, must be considered in the context of the Indian word "mahatama"—the wider self which includes all that self relates to itself as itself. Ultimately, this self relation must move beyond the relation of particular things to a relation to the whole, to nature or Being. The true, wider self, is a relation involving acknowledgement of the whole to which one is constantly related. See Arne Naess, "Identificaion as a Source of Deep Ecological Attitudes," in Deep Ecology ed. Michael Tobias (Santa Monica, CA: IMT Productions, 1985).

rhizomatic flows. Marcos describes foreign and comprador class exploitation as a "beast [that] feeds on the blood of the people." Foreign and domestic businesses as well as the Mexican state (Pemex) "take all the wealth out Chiapas and in exchange leave behind their mortal and pestilential mark." Recognizing the ecological dilemma, Marcos notes that legalities allow the destruction of the jungle for oil extraction and large-scale logging but disallow cutting in the Lacandon by indigenous people. "The poor cannot cut down trees, but the petroleum beast can, a beast that every day falls more and more into foreign hands. The campesinos cut them down to survive, the beast to plunder." Thousands of barrels of petroleum and billions of cubic feet of natural gas are sucked out of Chiapas; "ecological destruction, agricultural plunder, hyperinflation, alcoholism, prostitution, and poverty" are left behind.

Chiapas, according to Marcos, "bleeds" coffee, beef, fifty five per cent of Mexico's hydro-electricity, twenty per cent of Mexico's total electricity, hardwoods, and a wide variety of agricultural products from corn to honey to avacados, tamarind, and mameys. It leaves behind a third of municipal seats without paved road access, the people in twelve thousand communities on foot, following mountain trails. The railroads and the single port in Chiapas move products not people. Seventy-two per cent of children do not finish first grade--the richest state in natural resources has the worst schools. There are .2 clinics for every thousand Chiapanecos, .3 hospital beds, one operating room per 100,000, .5 doctors and .4 nurses per one thousand. Fifty-four per cent in Chiapas are malnourished; eighty per cent in the highlands and forests.

The Zapatista uprising began January first, 1994, the day NAFTA took effect. As predicted, US government-subsidized corn imports are undercutting Chiapaneco farmers'

corn, deepening the oppression in the state. "The fee that capitalism imposes [on Chiapas] oozes, as it has since the beginning, blood and mud." From the beginning of colonialism to the present, Chiapas exports its natural resources, "it continues to import capitalism's principal products: death and misery."¹⁶

Marcos' "prophecy" (the indigenous elements of prophecy are discussed below) is a powerful, neo-Marxist indictment of capitalism. It is also something more. While Marx considered capitalism to be beneficial in creating the infrastructure from which lower and higher stages of communism would spring, Marcos depicts the malevolence of a form of expropriation from the Earth unhinged from any sense of indigenous reality.¹⁷ Through the economic forces of globalization, an illusion of unification of peoples and internationalization of common exchange is fostered. In fact for "minorities" (all those nations that serve global capitalism as producers of profit) "the lie of unipolarity...turns itself into a nightmare of war, a fragmented war, again and again, so many times that

¹⁶ Subcomandante Marcos, "Chiapas: The Southeast in Two Winds, A Storm and A Prophecy," found in http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/marcos_se_2_wind.html, February 27, 2004.

¹⁷ To give some sense of the indigenous reality that is other to globalization consider corn. As for many meso-Americans, the Mayans hold that corn--red, black, yellow, and white--is the original ancestor of all humans. That bio-confinement of the bio-engineered corn flooding Mexico after NAFTA does not work is evident in the very place where corn first emerged as one of the most vital of human food sources. Researchers have discovered genetically altered material in native corn varieties. UC Berkeley plant scientists discovered that 4 of 6 varieties of native criollo corn grown in fields in the mountains of Oaxaca contained a genetic "switch" commonly used in genetically modified crops. The Zapatista rebellion was an act of defense, in this case (in part) against genetically modified corn. Even before the uprising, the Tzotzil Mayan people of Chiapas took steps to protect their centuries old heirloom corn from Monsanto's Frankencorn by creating a seed "safe house" where heirloom variety seeds could be preserved. The hybrid (pun-intended) "modern/post-modern" nature of the seed saving juxtaposed high-tech conditions in which the seed is protected (carefully regulated temperature in which the seed is frozen) with a ceremony accompanying the seed-saving project. Zapatista autonomous school board members joined students in praying in their native Tzotzil for the survival of the mother seeds of corn. Illuminating the violence of globalization, one of the Zapatista teachers explained "We have to protect these little seeds because they are under attack just like our communities. My grandfather was killed because he defended the traditions of our community and he believed in justice and democracy. Now even if I am an indigenous woman I have to defend our corn so that our traditions can continue." Drawings by students represented the safe houses for the seeds and for the indigenous knowledge that surrounds and gives the seed and the Mayan people their eternal cycle of life. As a Mayan elder put it "you see the seed that cannot survive without its people, and we cannot survive without our corn." See <http://www.organicconsumers.org/chiapas/index.cfm>

nations are pulverized."¹⁸ It is this depiction of the extent and nature of the systematic destruction wrought against the Earth and its masses that is reflective of Heidegger's depiction of the essence of technology as an assault on the Earth. As we discuss below, it is the necessity of being guided by an indigenous heart in order to liberate the Earth and the Earth's creatures from this force that marks the profoundly heterogenous character of the ELF and the EZLN.

A second characteristic of the essence of technology, according to Heidegger, is the "standing" or visible aspect of natural entities set up through challenging forth. It is the way in which things commonly appear "when they are wrought upon" by challenging forth.¹⁹ *Bestand* or "standing reserve" expresses the way in which entities within a technological framework appear as constantly ready or on stand-by. Entities appear to constantly avail themselves to courses of action oriented toward maximum efficiency. Everything is ready to be used; everything is available for instantaneous manipulation. It is "the whole objective inventory in terms of which the world **appears** [emphasis added]."²⁰ With the development of modern technology nature and works literally appear differently to us. "The world now appears as an object open to the attacks of calculative thought.... Nature becomes a gigantic gasoline station, an energy source for modern technology and industry [emphasis added]."²¹ "The Earth itself can show itself only as the object of assault.... Nature appears everywhere...as the object of technology."²²

¹⁸ The Indigenous Revolutionary Clandestine Committee, "The Second Declaration of La Realidad For Humanity and Against Neoliberalism," (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1998), p. 37.

¹⁹ Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 17.

²⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971) p. 111.

²¹ Martin Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking* trans. John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund, intro. John M. Anderson (New York: Harper and Row, 1966) p. 50.

²² Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: God is Dead," in *The Question Concerning Technology*, p. 100.

Ultimately the Earth appears as “a giant gasoline station,” that is, set up for the pumping out of resources.

The awareness that technology has reduced entities to the level of standing reserve, on call for instantaneous use, is widely revealed in revolutionary environmental communiques, especially from ALF activists. A communique from 1999 explains the grounds for the liberation of beagle puppies from Marshall farms in upstate New York. Marshall is a breeder for Huntingdon Life Sciences. The thirty liberated puppies were among “hundreds of beagle puppies waiting to be shipped to vivisection labs. [emphasis added].”²³ Within the essence of technologically ordered cybernetic systems, these animals literally do not appear as animals at all or even as distinct objects. They are factors within a giant corporate-scientific research system ordered for corporate profits. That puppies are often slammed against walls or otherwise abused is obviously shocking and disgusting. That they are subject to live vivisection is simply horrific. But these actions and the entrapment of the beagles in the first place occurs within a technological context in which nature, in whatever particular form, disappears and is able to show itself only as standing reserve. These are not puppies but factors of production in the corporate research/commodification system.

Language in the communiqués that express the conversion of minerals, plants, and animals into materiel and commodities reflects Heidegger’s notion of the “ordering of the orderable.” A tree-spiking action in Brown County and Monroe County Indiana state parks was “a warning to all those who want to turn the beings of the earth into cash.”²⁴ Similarly, a Wisconsin communique concerning genetic modification of white

²³ See "No Compromise" website.

²⁴ “Resistance,” unnumbered volume, p. 3.

pine trees notes that forest “management” treats “wildlife as some numbers on a graph.” The Forest Service coordinates with timber companies in “an insane desire to make money and control Life.”²⁵ Direct action tactics are, on the one hand, self-defense against the assault on the Earth (challenging forth). They are, additionally, motivated by a reaction to a form of state-corporate technics that characterizes humankind’s conversion of nature into standing reserve as the only “natural” relationship of humankind to the Earth. That nature is set up as standing reserve, on call for integration into extensive technological networks is also prevalent on EZLN discourse.

In one of the most powerful and remarkable of all EZLN documents, the "First Declaration of La Realidad for Humanity and Against Neoliberalism," Marcos describes the distribution of world power as "concentrating power in power and misery in misery." "Dispensible" minorities are arrayed against a "modern army of financial capital" and corrupt governments. "The indigenous, youth, women, homosexuals, lesbians, people of color, immigrants, workers, and peasants; the majority who make up the world's basements are presented, for power, as disposable.... Men, women, and machines become equal in servitude and in being disposable [emphasis added]." ²⁶ The description of the leveling effect that Marcos invokes here is remarkably similar to Heidegger's. The latter's account would seem to involve a clear dichotimization of subject and object, a core principle of western philosophy at least since Descartes. But the advent of standing reserve as an "inclusive rubric" actually undermines even the objective character of individual entities. Entities within standing reserve are reduced to a manipulable

²⁵ Ibid., p. 4.

²⁶ Subcomandante Marcos, Zapatista Encuentro: Documents from the 1996 Encounter for Humanity and Against Neo-liberalism, (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1998), p. 12.

homogeneity, losing even their identity as distinguishable objects. The standing reserve is "mere material...a function of objectification."

If even the objective quality of an entity disappears within the standing reserve it is obvious that its unique qualities will similarly be eclipsed. What the Zapatistas point out is that disappearance by integration of entities within globalized markets includes human beings. In speaking of Europe's negotiating a free trade agreement with the Zedillo administration at the height of the oppression against EZLN and its supporters (not long after the Acteal massacre), Marcos points out that the logic of the market is superior to the logic of human rights or even the recognition of peoples and cultures.

In the great fraud called the "North American Free Trade Act" (product of the great Salinas lie), the future is now being projected with the signing of a free trade agreement with the European Union.... the European governments are extending their hands to Zedillo without caring that his is covered with indigenous blood....The European Union's flexibility can be understood, what is at stake is a slice of the pie that is called, still, "Mexico." Due to the marvels of globalization, a country is measured by its macro-economic indices. The people? They do not exist, there are only buyers and sellers. And, within those, there are classifications: the small, the large and the macro. These latter ones buy or sell countries. At one time they were governments of Nation States, today they are only merchants [emphasis added].²⁷

People as individual human beings or in their collective cultural or national respects, do not exist. Signifiers such as Tzotzile, Zapatista, or even Mexico--if what is meant by

²⁷ Subcomandante Marcos, "On Windows and Reality," http://www.flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/200/marcos_preservejungle_march.html.

that term is a cultural designation, literally are obliterated except insofar as they might denote something of market value as standing reserve (the sign exchange value of an exotic vacation destination, perhaps). Any such non-entities who threaten corporate state hegemonic control must be wiped out. Regarding the Zapatistas, this crucial and absolute fact of international capital was most dramatically brought out in a dry, matter of fact Chase Manhattan Bank memo of January 13th leaked by a banking insider to Counter-Punch magazine: "The government will need to eliminate the Zapatistas to demonstrate their effective control of the national territory and security policy... While Chiapas, in our opinion, does not pose a fundamental threat to Mexico's political stability, it is perceived to be so by many in the investment community."

The third and most complex of the terms Heidegger uses to discuss the essence of technology is Enframing (*Gestell*). Heidegger refers to the essence of technology as a "way of revealing." By this phrase Heidegger has in mind an epoch as defined by a historically conditioned response of human beings to Being. In each epoch the response to Being is rooted in fundamental words (*Grundworte*) that the most important thinkers of that period have coined to orient human beings toward Being. The pre-Socratics conveyed a poetical experience of the mystery of Being: they grasped how the unity of Being concealed itself to allow the coming to presence of beings in their particularity. The elemental forces described by the Milesians are not literally meant to represent the "stuff" of the universe but rather the ultimately unnameable process of unity diversifying into plurality and reuniting into one-ness. The same is true for Heraclitus's notion of the "ever living fire."

But, since Plato, western metaphysics has been marked by an increasing tendency to neglect the question of Being. Instead, western philosophers have consistently tried to represent Being in terms of a specific kind of being—the Platonic form of the Good, Aristotelian substance, Augustinian will of God, Leibnizian monad, Cartesian, *res cogitans*, etc. The foundational words of western metaphysics have always served to obscure rather than to illuminate Being. For Heidegger, this “errant” characteristic of western metaphysics, the increasing turn away from Being, marks the inherent nihilism of the west (and with the world-wide extension of Enframing, most of the globe).

The essence of technology-Enframing--is the extreme point of the development of western nihilism. Being has become completely obscured in a metaphysics of subjectivity worked out in the technological practice of total control. The term Enframing is meant to characterize the historical-ontological factors conditioning a cybernetically centered, nihilistic response to the question of Being. Modernity is marked by a technological imperative, a will to integrate all beings into cybernetic systems or “enframe” them within the orderable. As it stands at present, Enframing is our destiny. Heidegger claims that Nietzsche’s doctrine of will to power (the foundational words of Enframing) epitomizes the subject-centered, nihilistic extreme of western metaphysics. Ontologically, Nietzsche’s doctrine prepares the way for understanding Being as defined by force vectors oriented toward continually increasing power.

We obviously do not expect to find a comprehensive ontology in ELF and EZLN discourse. Implicit in their communiqués, however, is a clear awareness of the manner in which corporate, mass-consumer capitalism continually integrates nature into technical production systems. There is at least a tacit recognition both of an underlying structure of

technological praxis and that such practice is rooted in the unfolding of a distinctively western European oriented history. Moreover, ELF and AZLN discourse clearly is suffused with the sense that, as it unfolds through globalization, this historical process has lost all fundamental sense of human meaning, moral clarity, or ultimate purpose. In a single page introduction to one of its volumes, the ELF press office refers to the system or the systematic destruction of nature eleven times.²⁸ A communiqué regarding the firing of two USDA Animal Damage Control Buildings in Olympia, Washington refers to facilities “which make it a daily routine to kill and destroy wildlife [emphasis added].” It is precisely the tendency toward the routinization of a technical orientation toward life that is named by Enframing. The positions outlined in the communiqués reflect an implicit awareness of the manner in which Enframing and the metaphysics of cybernetic will increasingly define technical, corporate practice. Activists write that “animals are being turned into machines for human consumption.”²⁹ In fact, the description of natural entities as machines is becoming increasingly frequent, not just in core countries but in peripheral countries as well.³⁰ A recent New York Times article describes how Malaysia is conducting research to “engineer palm oil trees genetically to serve as factories of specialized plastics for medical devices.”³¹ But it is not merely the commodification of nature to which revolutionary environmentalists object; it is the setting upon nature, the setting of it within systems that

²⁸ Resistance, vol. 2 # 2, p. 1.

²⁹ Resistance, #3, p. 15.

³⁰ Even a cursory scan of the internet generates numerous references to animals and plants as machines. According to James Robl, president of Hematech LLC, “Cows are ideal factories.” Hematech works in partnership with Kirin Brewing Co. to produce human immunoglobulins in cows. Paul Elias, AP Biotechnology writer notes that this has involved 672 attempts at cloning cows with six live births, two of which died within forty-eight hours. Or us the significance lies in the manner in which cows have been reduced to research units in a systematic attempt to turn them from their essence as bovine creatures into manufacturing facilities. Internet site, <http://www.heraldsun.com/healthneeds/34-256485.html>.

³¹ David Barboza, “Development of Biotech Crops Is Booming in Asia,” New York Times, February 21, p. A3.

reduce nature to useable bits of material. More importantly, they recognize this as an impersonal force that is only gathering strength. "This world is dying. All that is beautiful about the world is being destroyed." Anger and rage is specifically directed "at this system."

The nihilistic character of the extension of Enframing across the globe is more specifically conveyed in Zapatista discourse. Marcos characterizes "globalization" as a "Fourth World War...against all humanity." Against that which provides a sense of human meaning and dignity, globalization offers a reduction of life to calculable, cash value. "Instead of humanity, [globalization] offers us stock market value indexes, instead of dignity it offers us the globalization of misery, instead of hope, it offers us an emptiness, instead of life it offers us the international of terror."³² Marcos links up the specter of war with the increasing militarization taking place within nations and societies:

*From the stupid course of nuclear armament, destined to annihilate humanity in one blow, it has turned to the absurd militarization of every aspect in the life of national societies, a militarization destined to annihilate humanity in many blows, in many places, and in many ways.... What were formerly known as "national armies" are turning into mere units of a greater army, one that neo-liberalism arms to lead against humanity.... armies, supposedly created to protect their own borders from foreign enemies, are turning their cannons and rifles around and aiming them inward.*³³

³² Marcos, "First Declaration of La Realidad," pp. 12-13.

³³ Marcos, "The Second Declaration of La Realidad," p. 38.

This characterization of militarization resonates with anyone whose form of dissent goes in any way or form beyond carrying a sign in a legally designated "protest zone." An overwhelming presence of paramilitary jackboots with their armored personnel carriers, assault weapons, and swat tactics is a given at any IGO gathering anywhere in the world as is the beating, arrest, and incarceration of dissidents.

But what Marcos is pointing to here is the command and control character of everyday life under globalization: its standardization, routinization, constant surveillance, performativity, and military style discipline. The Fourth World War is the "most brutal, the most complete, the most universal, the most effective" for this is a modality of power that "administer[s] life and decide[s] death."³⁴ Part of the lie by which globalization extends its power is by insisting that "everything is under control, including everything that isn't under control."³⁵ In the logic of total control that which cannot be controlled must be eliminated. "Accompanying the government's war strategy is State terrorism. The utilization of the army and the war against Zapatismo represents the possibility of reestablishing political and economic control. The logic is that of a modernization which dictates the elimination of those social groups who have neither the capacity, nor the desire, to consume the products offered by the neoliberal market."³⁶ It is the impersonality of this logic that reflects Heidegger's notion of Enframing. Moreover, note that Marcos describes this process as "destined," recognizing that it flows inevitably from the dual logic of economic and political "control" inherent in western capitalism. On the one hand, this can be a source of strength; resistance is able to thrive beyond the area of control that neo-liberalism attempts

³⁴ Ibid., p. 43.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 57.

to extend. On the other hand, the imperative to drive forward the will to control is precisely what is most dangerous in the project of globalization.

For Heidegger, the fundamental danger presented by Enframing is that human beings will become incapable of grasping their essence as a being that can attain to a thoughtful awareness of the relationship to Being. Inasmuch as the only kind of worthwhile activity appears to be securing, locking, interconnecting, and enhancing technical power (i.e., manifesting the will to will), Enframing threatens the utter loss of meditation on and solidarity with Being. Human beings now stand at "the brink of the possibility of pursuing and pushing forward nothing but what is revealed in ordering."³⁷ Such an exclusively technological life threatens to block the experience of human essence--"the needed belonging to revealing."

Heidegger writes of humans as the beings who, early on, hearkened to Being, but who emerge, in the end, as "the laboring animal... left to the giddy whirl of its products so that it may tear itself to pieces and annihilate itself in empty nothingness."³⁸ Confident talk of values is always already part of "the armament mechanism of the plan," and that which is esteemed as progress is really an "anarchy of catastrophes" confirming "the extreme blindness to the oblivion of Being".³⁹ Direct action events, similarly, reflect "the rage of a dying planet." Activists are motivated by a commitment to divert us from a "path towards annihilation;" recognizing that the ultimate effect of destroying biotic diversity is "suicide."

³⁶ Subcomandante Marcos, "Proposal for FZLN Presentation to the Encuentro by Civil Society Against the War and Repression and for Democracy," <http://www.flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/fzln2000/encuent.propos.june.html>.

³⁷ Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 26.

³⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Overcoming Metaphysics*, p. 85

³⁹ Martin Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, (New York: Harper and Row, 1969) p. 71.

It is morally impossible for ELF activists to “allow the rich to parade around in their armored existence, leaving a wasteland behind in their tire tracks.”⁴⁰

Yet, for both Heidegger and revolutionary environmental activists there exist possibilities for transformation. In the midst of technological peril—indeed, because of that peril—there emerges a sense of solidarity with nature, understood as the living spiritual whole of the natural world including human beings. For Heidegger, it is from within the destiny of Enframing that the world must collapse, that the earth must become desolate, that human work must be reduced to sheer labor power. It is in the context of nihilism that "Being can occur in its primal truth." Heidegger describes the possibility of a return of Being as a re-figured humanism. It is the possibility of suspending the will and attaining a lucid sense of the free play of Being. A human being, like any entity, is—s/he stands forth as present. But "his distinctive feature lies in [the fact] that he, as the being who thinks, is open to Being.... Man is essentially this relationship of responding to Being."⁴¹

Heidegger uses the word--Gelassenheit--a free comportment toward nature and technics alike--to describe this transformation. Releasement concerns the process of Being, the openness within which beings emerge from absence into presence through their genesis, maturation, and finite perfection and back again into the draft of the concealed--Being. Meditating on the essence of a thing involves acknowledgement of the unique limits that govern its appearing and disappearing. In this sense, an ethos of care allows a human or non-human being to become what it is.

Releasement towards things thus expresses the opportunity of human beings to correspond with Being through saving. It is in this sense that Heidegger writes "Mortals

⁴⁰ Each of these citations is from Resistance, vol. 2 #1.

⁴¹ Heidegger, Identity and Difference, p. 31.

dwelling in that they save the earth.... Saving does not only snatch something from a danger. To save really means to set something free into its own presencing."⁴² The aducacious phrase “saving the earth” might come to mean simply allowing the creatures of the Earth to live as nature and millions of years of dna development intended them to live. That is, to save means to allow a plant, river, or animal to be freed "into its own presencing" rather than being channeled into a human technical system. Through this ethos of meditation and care humility is attained. Control gives way to the awareness of Being or "life" as primary. From there, a simple relationship to technology can ensue. Instead of deluding ourselves as supposed masters of the earth, we can easily move from using technics—itsself never allowed to undermine the essence of a thing--into a more exalted and higher participation in the realm of our belonging with Being. In fact, dwelling authentically will substitute for much facile technological willing.

The possibilities of an emerging new humanism rooted in a meditative reflection upon and awareness of Being may arise from different contexts.⁴³ Revolutionary environmentalism also centers on a spiritual re-awakening revolving around the mystery of Being. But a pre-dominant theme in ELF and EZLN communiqués is Native American and indigenous spiritual philosophy and practice. A reverence for the sacred power of nature pervades ELF and ALF communiqués (as well as other radical environmental organizations including Earth First).⁴⁴ Spiritual identity with animal “nations” is a recurrent theme in ELF

⁴² Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, p. 150.

⁴³ Heidegger can rightly be criticized for a tendency to emphasize an alleged inner connection between Greek and German language as the sole path to a recovery of a sense of Being. On the other hand, in some instances Heidegger points to non-western traditions and language as actually better exemplifying the human belonging together with Being. See for example "A Dialogue on Language" which concerns Zen Buddhism. Martin Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter Hertz (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1971), pp. 1-56.

⁴⁴ Bron Taylor's work has been instrumental in documenting the diversity and pervasive influence of Native American religious themes in revolutionary environmentalism. See for example Bron Taylor, "Earth

communiqués. A November 1997 communiqué concerns an arson event against the BLM horse corral at Burns Oregon and an earlier ALF arson event at a Redmond Oregon slaughterhouse and horse meat processing plant. The focus of liberation was wild horses on BLM lands—classified as invasive and non-native—that are rounded up and auctioned off for slaughter. In defending the arson activists speak of the “genocide against the horse nation.” The Vail arson event occurred, in part, in defense of the "mink and fox nations." More generally activists speak of "wildlife nations" and abhor the destructive forces that hate and kill off the spirit of that which is wild.⁴⁵

Spiritual identity with the earth’s creatures understood as "relations" of different "nations" is central to traditional native-American practice. In a sweat lodge ceremony even the rocks are acknowledged as the old ones who know everything because they have been here from the beginning. The closing prayer of the sweat lodge invokes “all my relations,” meaning a prayer to all one’s relatives with whom one is constantly connected. The prayer is an acknowledgement and reminder of that connection. Linda Hogan, a Chickasaw poet, powerfully evokes the living-remembering connection forged in the sweat lodge:

“the entire world is brought inside the enclosure...smoking cedar accompanies this arrival of everything.... Young lithe willow branches remember their lives rooted in the ground, the sun their leaves took in... that minerals rose up in their trunks...and that planets turned above their brief, slender lives.... Wind arrives from the four directions. It has moved through caves and breathed through our bodies. It is the same air elk have inhaled.... Remembering is the purpose of the ceremony.... It is

and Nature-Based Spirituality: From Deep Ecology to Radical Environmentalism," *Religion* (2001) 31, pp. 175-203. Totem animals and other Native American religious symbols are encountered frequently, especially among Earth First activists. This has been effectively depicted by Taylor in his video

*the mending of a broken connection between us and the rest.... The words 'All my relations' ...create a relationship with other people, with animals, with the land. To have health it is necessary to keep all these relations in mind.*⁴⁶

Obviously it is difficult for a person from a western, rational-scientific-technological context—i.e., who is destined from within Enframing—to grasp the notion of a willow pole “remembering.” The point is that the willow has an essence as a willow. But as a natural being it is also connected to other beings (the sun processed through photosynthesis, the river and rain nourishing it, the minerals flowing in its sap). Precisely the same is true for human beings, and ceremonies like a sweat lodge or a bear dance enable a spiritual identity with specific relations or with Being. In such ceremonies the reflexive association with oneself as ego is often surmounted by a more authentic prayerful voice. Such a voice in song or prayer can attain a simultaneity of self and "relation." Ego and other is surmounted by a spiritual connection of beings. The identity with horse nations in the communiqué stems from this kind of remembering/acknowledging spiritual relationship.⁴⁷

presentation "Radical Environmentalism: Promise or Peril," presented at the "Revolutionary Environmentalism" conference at CSU Fresno, March 13.

⁴⁵ Each of these references is from Resistance, #3.

⁴⁶ Linda Hogan, "Sweat Lodge Ceremony," in Native Heritage: Personal Accounts by American Indians 1790 to the Present, ed. By Arlene Hirschfelder, (New York: McMillan, 1995), pp. 227-228.

⁴⁷ Bron Taylor notes that many wilderness defenders have experienced a variety of spiritual epiphanies while in the places they seek to protect, all of them involving some sense of profound spiritual solidarity to the place and creatures they hope to defend. Panel presentation, CSU Fresno March 13, 2003. Paul Watson's life-long activism to defend whales and other sea life was "cemented by a vision in an Oglala Sioux sweat lodge.... A bison appeared to Watson [and] told him that he should "concentrate on mammals of the sea, especially whales." Recounted in Rik Scarce, Eco-Warriors: Understanding the Radical Environmental Movement, (Chicago: Noble Press, 1990), p. 97. Similarly, Rod Coronado relates an experience on the Great Plains while on the run from federal authorities. His fear of being captured and constantly keeping a gun at his side had brought him to the breaking point. "That's when she spoke. I cannot describe it as anything other than love. A flow of energy that reduced me to tears as I awakened to the spirit around me. 'We are here. We have always been here. We will always be here, but there is nothing we can do for you until you believe in us more than you believe in them.'" Coronado was strengthened by the solidarity he experience with the despised and the hunted and by the knowledge that everything he had been taught in his traditions was true. Rod Coronado, Dzil Nchaa Si An: In the Altar of Our Warrior Ancestors," Earth First!, November-December, 2000, p. 88.

In fact, this is the very meaning of the “Earth **Liberation**” and “Animal **Liberation**” Fronts. They seek to literally free plant and animal species as well as natural environments from a cultural-political-economic construct that would convert them from what they essentially are into commodities for exploitation and profit. “Welcome to the struggle of all species to be free.”⁴⁸ At the same time these efforts are oriented around a spiritual practice of identity with the species and environments being liberated. The close of the aforementioned communiqué is a petition for others to “stop the slaughter and save our Mother Earth.” Mother Earth, in a traditional Native American context, is the first mother, the life generating and life sustaining force from which all creatures live. The act of saving as restoring lies both in deed and in spiritual recognition. This is a restorative surmounting which unites actor and the fullness of the life giving ground from which all our relations thrive.

Though it is not born out in the communiqués it can be argued that traditional Native American spirituality draws even closer to Heideggerian ontology in its evocation of an unseen and un-nameable but all encompassing spiritual power. There is an extraordinary dialogue between J R Walker, a physician who lived among and was accepted by Oglala *wicasa wakan* (or "medicine men") during the early part of the twentieth century, and a number of such Oglala figures including Finger. Finger describes how there are eight separate elements—the sky, the Sun, the Earth, the rocks, the moon, the winged, the wind, and the beautiful buffalo calf woman who brought the Lakota the pipe and the first ceremonies to the Lakota people. Yet each of these elements are one—Wakan Tanka, the Great Spirit or *Taku Skanskan* which is the living spirit in each thing giving it its essence and causing it to behave in its own unique fashion. . Walker asks whether the sun and *Taku*

⁴⁸ Resistance, Unnumbered Volume, p. 3.

Skanskan, are the same. Finger responds that this is not so, that the sun is in the sky only half of the time. But Finger adds that it is the sky which symbolizes *skan* because *skan* "is a Spirit and all that mankind can see of him is the blue of the sky."⁴⁹ What is fascinating is the idea that that which, unlike the sun or even the Earth, cannot be delineated as a thing—namely the sky—symbolizes the ever present, pervasive and ineffable spirit. The vault of the sky, a continuum within which everything unfolds, is taken to represent the unity of spirit which is itself unseen but through which every being takes its course. The timeliness of revolutionary environmentalism stems from its elucidation of an ethic rooted not in subjectively centered values but in spiritual unity, grounded in an ontology which itself cannot be ascribed. A similar bridge to indigenous bio-centrism exists for the EZLN.

Two mythic figures in Marcos' discourse exemplify the indigenous spiritual/political elements of the EZLN: Old Antonio and Votan-Zapata. In fact, according to Marcos, it was *viejo Antonio* who first explained to the rebels the real meaning of Zapata. As Marcos recounts the story, the first village that the Zapatistas entered in the mid-eighties was that of old Antonio. Antonio asked Marcos about the rebels, and Marcos told the elder Antonio about the Mexican Revolution, Pancho Villa, and Emiliano Zapata. Antonio, whose gaze had never left Marcos' eyes replied simply "that's not how it was" and proceeded to tell the real story of Zapata. The story begins at the beginning when the first two gods were making the world. These two were Ik'al and Votan--opposites, night and day, dark and light, cold and heat. They were two as one, but their movements were uncoordinated. However, they found that if they sought together how to move and what to do they could move together as one. Soon their laughing and dancing exhausted them, and they agreed that 'who moved first

⁴⁹ See "Oglala Metaphysics," in Teachings From the American Earth: Indian Religion and Philosophy, ed. Dennis Tedlock and Barbara Tedlock (New York: Liveright, 1975) pp. 210-211.

and how they moved was irrelevant--they moved together, separated and in agreement.' That is how the true men and women learned that the questions help us to walk, not to just stay stuck in one place." Zapata is Ik'al and Votan appearing as one person; they had come to Chiapas at the end of their journey to find out where the road led. The sacred Votan-Zapata said that "sometimes there would be light and sometimes there would be darkness, but that they were all the same, Votan Zapata, Ik'al Zapata, white Zapata and black Zapata, and that the two were the same road for all real men and women."⁵⁰

Votan Zapata links a great hero of the Mexican revolution with the spiritual traditions of the Mayan people of the canadas. The rhizomatic nature of this hybridization is suggested by Lynn Stephen in her description of the potential impact of the EZLN on the conceptualization of Mexican national identity. She describes "the possibility of multiple levels of sovereignty" involving communities, regions, and ultimately a genuinely pluralistic, multi-ethnic nation. Similarly, in reference to the struggles of the Miskito people of Nicaragua, Charles Hale describes a "strategic multiplicity" not "a unified discourse" but instead a "hybrid politics."⁵¹ But we must not overlook the radical rupture that occurs when introducing the indigenous aspect. The figure of Votan Zapata decisively transforms the nationalist issue by grounding Mexican tradition in the spiritual traditions of the people who have lived in the land for millenia. This tradition underscores the rhizomatic element of difference. Night and day, heat and cold, one and the other in their multiplicity must be accepted as valid in that and in what they are within the balance of life. That is, the other must appear authentically, without obscuring or oppressing the actuality of the other as other. Each moves together in their separateness because they seek and discover together.

⁵⁰ Subcomandante Marcos in Lynn Stephen, Zapata Lives: Histories and Cultural Politics in Southern Mexico, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002) pp. 158-161.

The indigenous rebellion echoes and re-echoes in a way that "recognizes the existence of the other and does not overpower or attempt to silence it."⁵² Such recognition, as it recognizes the reality of the other, is what constitutes "the real men and women."

Votan and Zapata help bridge the gap between the indigenous and nationalist elements of the Zapatista rebellion. In a sense it is a figure for the re-emergence of the indigenous in a way that links it to the position of the peasant in the context of the revolutionary aspect of Mexican history.⁵³ But Old Antonio's stories also provide a bridge from Mayan tradition to Zapatista action. It is possible to trace here the same ontological openness that links the Native American aspects of Sea Shepherd, ELF, and the ALF to Heidegger.

Consider one of Antonio's stories which also involves the symbolism of the sky: the "History of the Upholder of the Sky." Old Antonio related to Marcos the story of the first gods who made the world. Their efforts left them exhausted, and, each at one of the four corners of the world, they took hold of the sky to try to hold it up over the world. The sky is where "the sun and moon and stars and dreams could walk without difficulty." It is the open space to which prayers go, where the heavenly bodies take their course, and through which dreams awaken us to spiritual reality. But the danger is the sky falling--"then absolute disasters happen, because evil comes to the milpa [the Mayan, communal plot of corn] and the rain breaks everything and the sun punishes the land and it is war which rules and it is the lie which conquers and it is death which walks and it is sorrow which thinks." To prevent this, the gods left one of the upholders of the sky to remain alert and watchful and

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 335-337.

⁵² Marcos, "Second Declaration of *La Realidad*," p. 47.

stop the sky from falling in. This upholder carries a caracol (a piral, conch shell) at his chest to warn the other gods and awaken them to do their part in upholding the sky. The spiral lines of the conch, endlessly circling towards itself while gathering the outward and the inward, is linked with the good heart that seeks the same--neither forgetting nor abandoning the other, including, certainly, the gods, or the self.

The word of the one who does not sleep, of he who is alert to evil and its wicked deeds, does not travel directly from one side to the other, instead he walks towards himself, following the lines of reason, and the knowledgeable ones from before say that the hearts of men and women have the shape of the caracol [and they] awaken the gods and men so that they will be alert to whether the world is just and right.... [they] use the caracol for many things, but most especially in order not to forget."⁵⁴

There is a triple symbolism at work here with the sky, caracol, and remembering with one's heart representing a humility in the face of that which is greater and ultimately un-knowable. As with the above account of the Lakota "medicine man" Finger, the sky is the open, the vault within which everything takes its course; when the sky falls in--that is, when the natural order of elements--each following its own course--is upset, evil results. But the sky itself exceeds determination; it is the space within which each entity follows its limits. Similarly, the caracol, containing "the sounds and silences of the world within it," marks the spiral path by which the self turns in upon itself but simultaneously draws the external into itself in the gathering spiral. As a spiral, there is no end yet there is constant connection.

⁵³ The significance of this spect of the Zapatista rebellion is examined in Courtney Jung, "The Politics of Indigenous Identity: Neo-liberalism, Cultural Rights, and the Mexican Zapatistas," Social Research, vol. 70, #2, Summer, 2003, p. 433.

Finally, the heart, spiral-shaped like the conch, connotes a felt, remembered connection with the first makers of the world and others. On this felt connection is based the diverse lines of reason that allow a human world to be present in just fashion. In this just fashion Zapatista politics emerge through “walking and asking” and good governments are seated, embodied by the paradox of ruling by obeying the interests of the Others.

Unless and until an ethos rooted in biocentrism becomes a matter of course, environmentalism will always be consigned to a series of half measures concerning humans and their need to "manage resources." In this context the inherently destructive practices of technological Enframing will never be decisively surmounted. Native American spiritual practice is fundamental to a revolutionary shift in thought and everyday behavior because, for the first time in the west, the most fundamentally destructive hierarchy, that of human dominion over nature and all non-human beings, is fundamentally challenged. Heidegger's re-figured humanism, like deep ecology and Native American ceremonial practice, comprises an ontological anarchism. It is marked by a radical egalitarianism wherein the intrinsic worth and interdependence of all beings is acknowledged, honored and celebrated. Moreover, in regards to revolutionary action it opens a way for the healing of an antagonistic relationship between human beings and the Earth. In the nexus enabled by a radical openness to the Other, solidarity is attained by all those struggling to bring this transformation about. In what we have described here as rhizomatic resistance "the reproduction of resistances, the 'I am not resigned' the 'I am a rebel, continues.'" In becoming other oneself, one is linked in a rhizome of resistance. There is "no ultimate organizing

⁵⁴ Subcomandante Marcos, "OldAntonio's History of the Upholder of the Sky," <http://www.narconews.com/Issue31/article832.html>.

structure, no central head or decision-maker, no central command or hierarchies. We are the network, all of us who resist."⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Marcos, "The Second Declaration of *La Realidad*, p. 53.

References

- 1 For a discussion of Carrigan and the post-modernity of the rebellion see Michael P. Palaez, "The EZLN: 21st Century Radicals," http://www.flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/reports/pomo_ezln.html. Marcos himself prefers to make sport of the post-modern moniker. See "I Shit on All the Revolutionary Vanguards of This Planet," <http://www.flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/2003/marcos/etaJAN.html>, p.1.
- 2 Cited in Peyman Vahabzadeh, "Zapatistas: An Introduction," unpublished manuscript, available from <http://www.poeticguerillas.com/articles/marcos.html>; Internet; accessed 3 February, 2004. "Ya basta!" "Enough!" is one of the rallying cries of the EZLN.
- 3 Subcomandante Marcos, <http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/2003/marcos/resistance13.html>, p.1.
- 4 See John Ross, The War Against Oblivion, (Philadelphia: Common Courage Press, 2000), pp. 108-110. It should be noted here that Zapatista communiqués stemming from the recent red alert and encuentro in the Lacandon jungle reiterate a plan for "civil society"—all of the others—to reunite and rededicate themselves to pursuing a path fundamentally divergent from the neo-liberal model.
- 5 Our analysis focuses primarily on the Earth Liberation Front.
- 6 Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia, trans. And foreword by Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).
- 7 Ibid., p. 430.
- 8 Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in The Foucault Reader, ed. Paul Rabinow, translated by Donald Bouchard and Sherry Simon, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), p. 81.
- 9 Deleuze, Thousand Plateaus, p.p. 6-7.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Deleuze and Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, p. 53. The explicitly political character of the authors' analysis here should not be overlooked. Naturally, much Deleuze criticism centers on psychological questions about subjective and personal identity. But the connection between language, signs, political forms, and social struggles is made quite explicit here. See Paul Patton, "Metaphoric Logic: Bodies and Powers in "A Thousand Plateaus," Additionally, in regard to language, Derrida's famous essay "Differance" is of considerable use here. Signs have meaning based on their difference from other signs not based on an ostensible referent of the sign. Additionally, signs defer to other signs in order for an ultimate meaning to be reached, a meaning which, of course, is

never in fact reached. Instead there is simply the constant deferring and differing that is “differance.” The same might be said of the rhizome: neither the sovereignty of the “One”, the unified whole is ever complete any more than the dispersive effect of the multiple. Rather each largely gain their “identities” from their ongoing tension with the other. See Jacques Derrida, “Différance,” trans. Alan Bass, *Margins of Philosophy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

12 Resistance, unnumbered volume p. 3. One of the leading figures in the direct action movement, Rod Coronado, whose Pasua Yaqui ancestors had engaged in a rebellion against Spanish conquistadores, speaks of the insight he had early on in his activism when trying to stop the slaughter of harbor seals in Canada. It suddenly dawned on him that the genocide against animal nations, including the seals, was part of the same process of the genocide of the Spanish against his people. Rod Coronado, classroom discussion, CSU Fresno, February 14th, 2003.

13 See videos by P.E.T.A., the Animal Liberation Front, and the Earth Liberation Front. Of particular interest to the author is the ELF video "Igniting the Revolution," ELF Press Office, 2002. Gary Yurofsky, a former PETA spokesperson and activist who liberated five-hundred forty two mink from a farm in Canada was first moved toward an absolutist animal rights position by his seeing chained and caged animals “backstage” at the zoo. He sensed the deep fear and rage in the animals’ eyes and witnessed the neurotic behavior induced by their confinement. See Yurofsky video "From Liberator to Educator."

14 lesliejames, “Resistance,” unnumbered volume, p. 1.

15 Self, as we allude to below, must be considered in the context of the Indian word “mahatama”—the wider self which includes all that self relates to itself as itself. Ultimately, this self relation must move beyond the relation of particular things to a relation to the whole, to nature or Being. The true, wider self, is a relation involving acknowledgement of the whole to which one is constantly related. See Arne Naess, "Identificaion as a Source of Deep Ecological Attitudes," in Deep Ecology ed. Michael Tobias (Santa Monica, CA: IMT Productions, 1985).

16 Subcomandante Marcos, "Chiapas: The Southeast in Two Winds, A Storm and A Prophecy," found in http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/marcos_se_2_wind.html, February 27, 2004.

17 To give some sense of the indigenous reality that is other to globalization consider corn. As for many meso-Americans, the Mayans hold that corn--red, black, yellow, and white--is the original ancestor of all humans. That bio-confinement of the bio-engineered corn flooding Mexico after NAFTA does not work is evident in the very place where corn first emerged as one of the most vital of human food sources. Researchers have discovered genetically altered material in native corn varieties. UC Berkeley plant scientists discovered that 4 of 6 varieties of native criollo corn grown in fields in the

mountains of Oaxaca contained a genetic "switch" commonly used in genetically modified crops. The Zapatista rebellion was an act of defense, in this case (in part) against genetically modified corn. Even before the uprising, the Tzotzil Mayan people of Chiapas took steps to protect their centuries old heirloom corn from Monsanto's Frankencorn by creating a seed "safe house" where heirloom variety seeds could be preserved. The hybrid (pun-intended) "modern/post-modern" nature of the seed saving juxtaposed high-tech conditions in which the seed is protected (carefully regulated temperature in which the seed is frozen) with a ceremony accompanying the seed-saving project. Zapatista autonomous school board members joined students in praying in their native Tzotzil for the survival of the mother seeds of corn. Illuminating the violence of globalizaion, one of the Zapatista teachers explained "We have to protect these little seeds because they are under attack just like our communities. My grandfather was killed because he defended the traditions of our community and he believed in justice and democracy. Now even if I am an indigenous woman I have to defend our corn so that our traditions can continue." Drawings by students represented the safe houses for the seeds and for the indigenous knowledge that surrounds and gives the seed and the Mayan people their eternal cycle of life. As a Mayan elder put it "you see the seed that cannot survive without its people, and we cannot survive without our corn." See <http://www.organicconsumers.org/chiapas/index.cfm>

18 The Indigenous Revolutionary Clandestine Committee, "The Second Declaration of La Realidad For Humanity and Against Neoliberalism," (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1998), p. 37.

19 Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 17.

20 Martin Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971) p. 111.

21 Martin Heidegger, Discourse on Thinking trans. John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund, intro. John M. Anderson (New York: Harper and Row, 1966) p. 50.

22 Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: God is Dead," in The Question Concerning Technology," p. 100.

23 See "No Compromise" website.

24 "Resistance," unnumbered volume, p. 3.

25 Ibid., p. 4.

26 Subcomandante Marcos, Zapatista Encuentro: Documents from the 1996 Encounter for Humanity and Against Neo-liberalism, (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1998), p. 12.

27 Subcomandante Marcos, "On Windows and Reality,"
http://www.flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/200/marcos_preservejungle_march.html

28 Resistance, vol. 2 # 2, p. 1.

29 Resistance, #3, p. 15.

30 Even a cursory scan of the internet generates numerous references to animals and plants as machines. According to James Robl, president of Hematech LLC, "Cows are ideal factories." Hematch works in partnership with Kirin Brewing Co. to produce human immunoglobulins in cows. Paul Elias, AP Biotechnology writer notes that this has involved 672 attempts at cloning cows with six live births, two of which died within forty-eight hours. Or the significance lies in the manner in which cows have been reduced to research units in a systematic attempt to turn them from their essence as bovine creatures into manufacturing facilities. Internet site,
<http://www.heraldsun.com/healthneeds/34-256485.html>.

31 David Barboza, "Development of Biotech Crops Is Booming in Asia," New York Times, February 21, p. A3.

32 Marcos, "First Declaration of La Realidad," pp. 12-13.

33 Marcos, "The Second Declaration of La Realidad," p. 38.

34 Ibid., p. 43.

35 Ibid., p. 57.

36 Subcomandante Marcos, "Proposal for FZLN Presentation to the Encuentro by Civil Society Against the War and Repression and for Democracy,"
<http://www.flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezln/fzln2000/encuentro.propos.june.html>.

37 Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 26.

38 Martin Heidegger, Overcoming Metaphysics, p. 85

39 Martin Heidegger, Identity and Difference, trans. Joan Stambaugh, (New York: Harper and Row, 1969) p. 71.

40 Each of these citations is from Resistance, vol. 2 #1.

41 Heidegger, Identity and Difference, p. 31.

42 Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 150.

43 Heidegger can rightly be criticized for a tendency to emphasize an alleged inner connection between Greek and German language as the sole path to a recovery of a sense of Being. On the other hand, in some instances Heidegger points to non-western traditions and language as actually better exemplifying the human belonging together with Being. See for example "A Dialogue on Language" which concerns Zen Buddhism. Martin Heidegger, On the Way to Language, trans. Peter Hertz (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1971), pp. 1-56.

44 Bron Taylor's work has been instrumental in documenting the diversity and pervasive influence of Native American religious themes in revolutionary environmentalism. See for example Bron Taylor, "Earth and Nature-Based Spirituality: From Deep Ecology to Radical Environmentalism," Religion (2001) 31, pp. 175-203. Totem animals and other Native American religious symbols are encountered frequently, especially among Earth First activists. This has been effectively depicted by Taylor in his video presentation "Radical Environmentalism: Promise or Peril," presented at the "Revolutionary Environmentalism" conference at CSU Fresno, March 13.

45 Each of these references is from Resistance, #3.

46 Linda Hogan, "Sweat Lodge Ceremony," in Native Heritage: Personal Accounts by American Indians 1790 to the Present, ed. By Arlene Hirschfelder, (New York: McMillan, 1995), pp. 227-228.

47 Bron Taylor notes that many wilderness defenders have experienced a variety of spiritual epiphanies while in the places they seek to protect, all of them involving some sense of profound spiritual solidarity to the place and creatures they hope to defend. Panel presentation, CSU Fresno March 13, 2003. Paul Watson's life-long activism to defend whales and other sea life was "cemented by a vision in an Oglala Sioux sweat lodge.... A bison appeared to Watson [and] told him that he should "concentrate on mammals of the sea, especially whales." Recounted in Rik Scarce, Eco-Warriors: Understanding the Radical Environmental Movement, (Chicago: Noble Press, 1990), p. 97. Similarly, Rod Coronado relates an experience on the Great Plains while on the run from federal authorities. His fear of being captured and constantly keeping a gun at his side had brought him to the breaking point. "That's when she spoke. I cannot describe it as anything other than love. A flow of energy that reduced me to tears as I awakened to the spirit around me. 'We are here. We have always been here. We will always be here, but there is nothing we can do for you until you believe in us more than you believe in them.'" Coronado was strengthened by the solidarity he experience with the despised and the hunted and by the knowledge that everything he had been taught in his traditions was true. Rod Coronado, Dzil Nchaa Si An: In the Altar of Our Warrior Ancestors," Earth First!, November-December, 2000, p. 88.

48 Resistance, Unnumbered Volume, p. 3.

49 See "Oglala Metaphysics," in Teachings From the American Earth: Indian Religion and Philosophy, ed. Dennis Tedlock and Barbara Tedlock (New York: Liveright, 1975) pp. 210-211.

50 Subcomandante Marcos in Lynn Stephen, Zapata Lives: Histories and Cultural Politics in Southern Mexico, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002) pp. 158-161.

51 Ibid., pp. 335-337.

52 Marcos, "Second Declaration of *La Realidad*," p. 47.

53 The significance of this spect of the Zapatista rebellion is examined in Courtney Jung, "The Politics of Indigenous Identity: Neo-liberalism, Cultural Rights, and the Mexican Zapatistas," Social Research, vol. 70, #2, Summer, 2003, p. 433.

54 Subcomandante Marcos, "OldAntonio's History of the Upholder of the Sky," <http://www.narconews.com/Issue31/article832.html>.

55 Marcos, "The Second Declaration of *La Realidad*," p. 53.

The Wolf At The Door: Ecology And Ethnoecology In The Proposal To "Restore" Wolves To New York State

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Abstract: The proposal to "reintroduce" *Canis lupus* to the Adirondack Park in New York State provides a case study for the examination of the dominant set of ideas, values, and beliefs about Nature among Americans – a Standard American Ethnoecology (SAE). Thirty-three individuals, scientists and professionals as well as members of the public, were interviewed. Their views, though diverse, nonetheless converge around a core ethnoecological narrative (SAE). The scientific and epistemological incoherence of SAE, more than any other factor, was responsible for the failure of the reintroduction plan. Implications for the development of a new SAE are explored.

On a Saturday in June 1997 a group met at Paul Smiths College, deep in the heart of the Adirondack Mountains, to discuss the potential for reintroducing wolves to New York State. The last wild wolf resident in the state had been shot more than a century before as a part of a campaign of extermination, but in the intervening years a remarkable change had taken place among many New Yorkers. For at least thirty years there had been talk of reintroducing wolves, and for twenty years, not only the state but the also US Fish and Wildlife Service had been exploring the possibility. Now a "Citizen's Advisory Committee" was forming, under the aegis of an international non-profit advocacy group, Defenders of Wildlife. The CAC would provide the vehicle for determining the biological and social feasibility of wolf reintroduction.

The case of the proposal to restore wolves to the Adirondacks and the resulting political struggle raises several interesting issues. First of all, this is clearly a contest about vision and symbols rather than about risks and peril. While it may be that environmental visions are ultimately constituted of notions of what is good and what is perilous, in this case there is no clear sense of danger. Vast stretches of the Adirondacks are not being clear cut; unbridled development is not part of the drama; the wolf is not an endangered species, though it has been

extirpated from the eastern United States. Nor can it be argued, as it was in Yellowstone, that in the Adirondacks the ungulate herd is outstripping its food supply and an effective predator is desperately needed to control the population size. Finally, one cannot even say that the Adirondacks lacks a large-bodied wild canid, since the Eastern coyote, present in large numbers, approaches the wolf in size and increasingly approximates the wolf in behavior.

There is, in short, no clear, purely biological or ecological reason for wolf restoration in the Adirondacks, unless one includes human sentiment and sense of order as part of the ecosystem. In the words of wolf biologist John Theberge,

The wolf, even as a functional ecological dominant, is only essential to ecosystems as we hold the presence of all the native species to be. A complete complement of species is often used to define ecosystem integrity. But complete when? Ecosystems and species are ever changing through their own processes of succession, erosion, disposition, climate variation, fire, and disease. There is no answer from an ecological evolutionary perspective. There is, though, in what people want, in perceptions and attitudes. The wolf was an integral part of the northeastern forests before it was extirpated by humans. It is still necessary for ecological integrity, regardless of the role it plays. (2000, 39)

This is a contest about symbols and meanings. What, and where, is “Nature”? What is, and what should be, the relationship of people to Nature? What is the wolf, and what does its presence or absence mean? What are the Adirondacks? What should they look like and what role should they play in the life of New Yorkers and Americans? What form should human agency take in shaping the Adirondacks, and why?

This case is interesting also because it focuses our attention on the dominant ethnoecology of the Western world, the set of values and assumptions about the earth, about people, and about human-ecosystem relations that guide the goals and actions of significant segments of the populations of the world's most powerful nations. Rooted in this ethnoecology, which I call Standard American Ethnoecology (SAE), are guides to action for some of the most

important national and international environmental movements and programs. The proposal to reintroduce wolves failed. In and of itself that outcome was not unexpected, but the source of failure was. It had been assumed that social resistance might doom the project, but the social feasibility study was quite positive. It was, however, deemed biologically unfeasible by the scientists hired to examine the proposal. I will argue that it was not, in fact, the biology or ecology of the project that was decisive, but the scientific incoherence first of the proposal, then of the examination of “biological” feasibility, and ultimately of SAE. Our ability to examine this ethnoecology critically, along with and in contradistinction to alternative ethnoecological narratives, has policy and political implications for social scientists, ecologists, environmentalists, philosophers, and others in their role as cultural critics and global activists.

In addition to review of public documents and attendance at wolf conferences, my research in this area was conducted mainly through intensive interviews with 33 individuals, including several wildlife biologists; staff members of Defenders of Wildlife, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Minnesota Department of Environmental Protection, and the International Wolf Center; an environmental philosopher; two elected officials in Adirondack towns; an Adirondack forest ranger; a manager of one of the Adirondack forests; and members of the general public resident in the Adirondacks. Despite the fact that all interviewees generously gave their permission to identify them, I will do so only with the two people whose published work clearly explicates their views: Nina Fascione, of the Defenders of Wildlife, and Paul Paquet, of the Conservation Biology Institute.

The Adirondacks

The Adirondack Park is truly a remarkable place. Established as a park by the state of New York in 1892 it has expanded to incorporate about 6 million acres, an area larger than the combined acreage of Yellowstone, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Glacier, and Great Smoky Mountains national parks. A little less than half of the land is state-owned forest, which according to the state constitution, must be kept forever as “wild forest land.” The rest of the park is privately owned, mostly in large forested preserves, and there are 130,000 permanent residents living in dozens of villages and hamlets. The area that is now the park has a history stretching into the early 19th century as a site for “rustication,” that is, camping and hunting expeditions by wealthy men led by guides. The position of the Adirondacks in the emergence of the American romantic idealization of Nature should not be underestimated. Along with Yellowstone and Yosemite, the Adirondacks played a pivotal role as the embodiment and idealization of a place where Nature exists in real and wild form, as yet unshaped by humans, but perennially threatened by the greed and arrogance of our species. Development of the Adirondacks as a rustic tourist destination in mid-nineteenth century coincided with the publication of *Man and Nature*, by George Perkins Marsh (1864), and its popularization of the notion that untouched Nature exists in a state of harmonious equilibrium, and that interference by humans generally leads to degradation and disaster.

By the end of the century, the Adirondacks seemed to cry out for protection. Large sections had been denuded of trees, careless mining and erosion had befouled many lakes and streams, and many of its indigenous species – like moose, beaver, lynx, cougar, and wolf – had been extirpated. Powerful interests in the state were alarmed, partly by the destruction of the natural amenities of the region and partly by the threat posed to the headwaters of the Hudson and Mohawk rivers and hence to New York’s extensive canal and river commercial navigation

system. The result was the creation of the Park, with strong, almost indestructible language (since it requires a change in the constitution, a near political impossibility in New York State) mandating perpetual preservation of the state-owned portion as wild forest.

On early maps, the park boundary was designated with a blue line. Now, over a century later, Adirondack politics are largely defined by whether an idea or a person comes from inside or outside “the Blue Line.” Ably documented by Knott (1998), among many of its residents there is an active politics of resistance and resentment directed towards what they see as the unnecessary regulation of their lives by outsiders. One dimension of this concerns the way the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has chosen to administer the “forever wild” provision of the state forestlands, which is to minimize management and reserve it for non-motorized recreation. To many Adirondackers this is seen as elitist, and it has had the effect of significantly reducing the size of the deer herd (historically never very high in the Park), reducing hunting and the revenue hunters bring. In general, many Adirondackers feel that their local knowledge is devalued, and the amenities and sensibilities of their lives are disregarded in planning for the Park.

The Adirondack Park has enormous symbolic significance for New Yorkers. Even the Manhattanite, who identifies Westchester County as “upstate,” and who might have difficulty placing Buffalo or Binghamton on a map, has images of the Adirondacks – mountains and lakes, winter Olympics in Lake Placid, and perhaps also the grim cold and howling location of infamous Dannemora Prison. To an extent, the Adirondacks play such a symbolic role for much of the populations of the northeastern United States, and its “preservation,” along with the abandonment of millions of acres of farmland in New England and upstate New York, makes this region, according to Bill McKibben (who formerly lived in the Adirondacks) probably the

largest place on earth that is more extensively forested than it was a century ago (2000). The Adirondack Park is New York's "wilderness," a place where Nature is, and where it is supposed to be. This association was made explicit in the report of Governor Rockefeller's Temporary Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks in 1968. The centerpiece of the Adirondack Park was to be its wilderness, defined (in terms later used in Federal legislation) as, "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man – where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." (Terrie 1994, 157-8) Ironically, more than any other factor, this symbolic association of Nature with the Adirondack Park doomed the effort to restore the wolf.

The Case for Wolf Restoration

The report of Governor Rockefeller's Temporary Study Commission is the first statement explicitly recommending the reintroduction of the wolf, as part of a general goal of fostering "a wild Adirondack environment and all the flora and fauna historically associated with that environment." (Terrie 1994, 161) Canadian zoologist and wildlife specialist C.H.D. Clarke singled out the wolf as important to restore. While he allowed that wolves might not be of much "practical use" in the park since they probably would not adequately control the deer population, "their simple presence adds wilderness atmosphere that is a positive value...If wolves were reestablished in the Adirondacks, it would be an enlightened act, much to the credit of the people involved." (Terrie 1994, 160)

The prospect of wolf restoration was furthered by the inclusion of the Adirondacks in feasibility studies for the reintroduction of wolves to the eastern United States by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, beginning in the 1970s. Buoyed by the successful reintroduction in

western states, particularly in Yellowstone Park, in 1996 Defenders of Wildlife commissioned a survey of New Yorkers, which showed overwhelming support both inside and outside the Blue Line (Responsive Management 1996). The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the agency that would ultimately have to approve any reintroduction plan, took a neutral stance until a concrete proposal was made, while Defenders began to hold public meetings around the state and convened the Citizens Advisory Council several years later. The CAC issued a call for proposals for biological and social feasibility studies. Contracts were issued in March 1998 to the Conservation Biology Institute of Corvallis, Oregon, led by wolf biologist Paul Paquet, for the biological study, and the Human Dimensions Research Unit of Cornell University, for the social study.

Meanwhile, opposition to reintroduction began to emerge, centered in sports hunting and farming groups, networks of land rights activists and others who had for long opposed the plans developed for managing the Park, and some local (inside the Blue Line) elected officials. Farmers were concerned about the potential for loss of livestock to predation, and unmoved by the offer of compensation by Defenders. Hunters were concerned about further reduction of the deer herd because of the presence of a more effective predator. This concern was coupled with frustration with the lack of management of the wild forest in a way that would encourage the growth of the deer population, and the closure of much of the Park to the motorized transport and hunting lodges favored by many hunters. Moreover, wolves were seen as yet another device of control of Park residents by outsiders, since as a protected animal residents would be circumscribed in terms of how they could deal with wolves that became a danger or nuisance. Angry threats were made, tires were slashed, and (at town meetings orchestrated to marginalize wolf supporters) ordinances were passed forbidding importation of dangerous animals. In some

instances residents of the Park joined statewide and national organizations that, judging by the ability to move by Internet links from home page to home page, had connections to some of the most strident far-right organizations in the nation.

Wolf restoration also had a number of vocal supporters. Among my informants, the most frequent reason given was the added tourist revenue made possible by the draw of the wolves, as is claimed for the Algonquin Park in Ontario and the Boundary Waters area of Minnesota. Supporters were also drawn, however, to the notion that wolves “should” be present in the Adirondacks because the ecosystem was incomplete without them. This sense of completeness generally referred to two things: the idea that wolves were part of the “original” complement of animals in the Adirondacks, and that the ecosystem of the Park was incomplete without its “keystone” predator. Proponents, therefore, seem to have been motivated by both instrumental and ethnoecological concerns, and while these seem to have operated simultaneously in the same individuals, in most cases the ethnoecological concerns seemed to be the dominant.

Opposition, on the other hand was divided into two positions. One was the hunting-farming-land rights position I discussed previously. The other, however, which happened to be the most common position among my informants, was in support of the presence of the wolf, but in opposition to reintroduction. There were several reasons behind this position, generally related to concern for the health and welfare of the wolves. Several people referred to the angry and potentially trigger-happy response of some opponents, and feared that the wolves would simply be slaughtered. More commonly there was a sense that human interference was misguided. Some people referred to the unsuccessful attempts to reintroduce lynx and moose, and further pointed to the later apparently successful self-reintroduction of moose, drawing a

lesson that “if it is meant to be” wolves would reintroduce themselves, and that humans, having messed things up in the first place, should leave things alone. (No one referred to the very successful human reintroduction of beaver in the early part of the twentieth century.) So opposition, in some respects, brought together the most pro-development, pro-management segment of the community with those who were so convinced of the short-sightedness and ignorance of humans that any management, even ostensibly to “right” a “wrong” done by people earlier, should to be avoided.

As it turned out, the North American wild canids themselves had their own complications to add, particularly that old trickster the coyote. Inconveniently, they raised the question of “what is a wolf”? Apparently all of the species in the genus *Canis* are interfertile and can and do hybridize on a regular basis in the wild. While canid species differences seem clear enough in the Western part of the continent, where large wolves (*Canis lupus*) live next to small coyotes (*Canis latrans*), and hybridization is rare, in the East the situation is much murkier. Everyone “knew,” of course, that there was this creature called the “Eastern coyote” that had opportunistically invaded from the West some decades earlier as a result of the extirpation of the wolf. What was not known until recently was that it was not precisely a coyote, but a coyote-wolf hybrid, with a size and behavior that lies between the two. In fact, the Eastern wolf (so-called *Canis lycaon*), like the wolves of Algonquin Park and probably the original wolf of the Adirondacks, is very close to the Eastern coyote in size and very closely related genetically.¹ (Wilson, et al. 1999) As many of the Adirondackers tried to make clear from their own

¹ The wolf taxonomy outlined here is the one put forward by Wilson, *et al.* (1999), included in Paquet’s – Paquet, *et al.* (1999) and later published by Wilson, *et al.* (2000). Since then several other authors have attempted taxonomies – see for example Nowak (2002) – further adding to the complexity and confusion of wolf reintroduction proposals.

observations of pack hunting (un-coyote-like behavior), size, and successful deer predation, the “canid niche” was already filled. Calling it a “coyote,” in fact, is a mere convention, since it and the Algonquin wolf are much closer to each other genetically than either is to the gray wolf (*C. lupus*). In a way, wolves had been present all along, as at least some Adirondackers attempted to point out:

If we call the coyote a brush wolf there wouldn't be a hassle. It would shed its demeaning name and people would regard it differently. You can't fool Mother Nature -- she put it here and we should be happy with it. It's a very interesting animal. Its scruffy western cousin is as different from it as night and day. (White 2002)

The “problem” this posed for reintroduction supporters was that these were the wrong canids. While for decades there has been a literature devoted to rehabilitating the image of the wolf, from the savage slaving monster of folklore to the image of nobility and ecological wholeness, no one has thought much about the coyote. There is no International Coyote Center, with resident packs, and selling plush stuffed toy coyotes. No Aldo Leopold has written of the “fierce green fire” in the eyes of a coyote. (1987) “Wolf” speaks to Americans of strength, solidity, and a fearsome grandeur. “Coyote” is the stuff of Road Runner cartoons and slinking jackal-like animals, using wiliness to steal their meals from the kill of more noble predators. As Mr. White points out above, “coyote” is a demeaning name. In a more utilitarian vein, wolf proponents argued that coyotes, even as big as the ones in the Park, would not be effective predators of moose. There was some speculation also that, rather than hybridizing, wolves would drive out coyotes from much of the range, perhaps ironically reducing predation of deer.

The long-awaited feasibility studies were made public in 2000. The social feasibility study (Enck and Brown 2000) was quite positive, finding that Adirondackers were about evenly

divided in their attitude toward restoration (confounding the predictions of opponents of overwhelming disapproval) and New Yorkers in general were very favorably inclined (60.3%, as opposed to 5.4% disapproving). The surprise came with the biological feasibility study (Paquet, et al. 1999), which was negative. The most decisive factors were concern about whether there was sufficient space *in the Park* to protect the wolves from excessive human disturbance, raising doubts about the long-term sustainability of wolf populations without fairly constant augmentation, and uncertainty about which canid was historically present in New York. These negative conclusions effectively halted forward momentum for reintroduction in New York.

The significance and irony of these conclusions became apparent to me when I interviewed Paul Paquet, the senior author. In many respects, as with Milton's (2000) study of the ruddy duck invasion of Europe, both wolf reintroduction and its denouement are about maintaining boundaries, boundaries between humans and Nature, between natives and aliens, and between species. Humans and Nature are incompatible and incommensurable phenomena to most of my informants. Humans (at least Europeans) are condemned for messing up the environment, and while there is variation among informants in terms of what humans can be trusted to do right, for at least some of them, the less done the better. The prospect of not only reintroducing a species, but of continuing to resupply it, seems un-Natural. If wolves are to be reintroduced, if humans can be trusted that far, then it better be for once and for all.

But a second kind of boundary between humans and Nature is operating here as well: the Blue Line. Where does Nature (and where do wolves) belong but in the Park? As a wolf biologist Paquet knew that the Blue Line would have no relevance to the behavior of wolves, and in fact they were likely to be drawn outside it very quickly because of the far more abundant prey base. He felt that, had he been given the scope to investigate the suitability of New York State,

or even northern New York State, for wolves, rather than confining his analysis to the Park, his conclusions would have been positive. However, his charge specifically restricted the focus. (The request for proposals for the biological feasibility study mentioned the need to investigate the potential for movement of wolves out of the Park, but in context it is clear that this is an expression of concern about boundary maintenance, not about an expanded vision of potential habitat.) It is likely that it never occurred to anyone to speak differently, because for over 100 years the focus of Nature for New Yorkers has been the Adirondacks.

Similarly, Paquet's focus was restricted by yet another boundary -- the one between "original" species and introduced species. The request for proposals spoke only of "wolves" and "Eastern timber wolves," in retrospect, clearly ambiguous terms. Paquet himself works in the West, with populations of *Canis lupus*, and it is fair to assume that his entering orientation was toward this species. The controversy over taxonomy and the identification of the native Adirondack species came to a head during the time he and his colleagues were engaged in the feasibility study, complicating and confusing their task. (In fact, a pre-publication copy of the seminal article on the controversy -- Wilson, *et al.* 1999 -- was included in the report of the feasibility study.) Note, however, the extent to which the controversy is over what canid was original. "We believe that if gray wolves [*C. lupus*] were never present, or existed only in low numbers, or as occasional visitors, then introduction of the species would be inappropriate." (Paquet, *et al.* 1999, 41) That is, this is not simply a discussion of fauna and ecosystems, but about *original* and *authentic* fauna and ecosystems. It is about the boundary between ecosystems "untrammelled by man" and ecosystems that humans have messed up, and about the possibility of transforming some of the latter into something resembling the former.

Finally, there are the boundaries between species, the categories that have been constructed to try to make sense of the nature of Nature. The feasibility study report wonders about the feasibility of ever restoring wolves (the correct wolf, presumably *C. lycaon*) because of concern about the high level of hybridization with coyotes that would probably occur. It points to the red wolf (*C. lycaon*, formerly and occasionally still called *C. rufus*) reintroduction in North Carolina where, “the program has identified hybridization as its highest priority and is undertaking intense management actions to reduce the influence of hybridization.” (Paquet, et al. 1999, 42) Another informant, familiar with the work going on in North Carolina, told me that one option being considered is erecting a fence sequestering the entire reintroduction area (which is on a peninsula, so would need to be fenced only on one side), protecting the wolves from genetic invasion by coyotes. As one wolf biologist put it, maybe we should not reintroduce wolves to the Adirondacks after all, because “if they do interbreed [with coyotes] then, my God, what have we got?” In a more recent article reviewing what we now know about wolf genetics, Fascione, et al. (2001) argue for the “re”introduction of *Canis lupus* into the northeast, in part because of their alleged greater effectiveness as predators of moose, but also because they are less likely to be “swamped” genetically by the endemic coyotes. As Milton (2000) points out, what are being protected here is not the animals, and not biodiversity (since diversity at the intraspecific level is at least as important as interspecific diversity), but the scientists’ own categories. These categories are significant in the minds of these scientists not in their own right but because of their role in defining and defending ecosystemic health, quality, and purity, according to SAE.

Standard American Ethnoecology

Among my informants, both wolf restoration supporters and opponents, there was a strong current of shared values and beliefs about Nature. These are quite similar to the ethnoecological notions identified, for instance, by Dizard (1994), by Kempton, et al. (1995), and many other writers, similar enough that we may speak of them as “Standard American Ethnoecology” (SAE). The basic principles of this belief system start with the premise that humans and Nature are separate. (My informants would more likely say “Man” and “Nature.”) Clearly there is recognition that human origins lie in the natural world, but there is a sense that, somewhere along the line, humans moved into a different realm of existence that makes them special and perhaps problematic.

There appears to be a further distinction between, in North America, humans of European origin and Native Americans, the latter having greater claim to full participation in the natural world (as long as they continue to act “like Indians”). European humans are continually “messing up” Nature, because of greed, arrogance, and ignorance, and therefore cannot be trusted to plan or manage effectively for the health of ecosystems. My informants were divided, however, in terms of whether humans could effectively “undo damage” by, for instance, putting wolves back where they belong, or whether they cannot even be trusted to do this well.

Similarly, there was a strong predilection to see the “natural” and normal, hence “correct” complement of plants and animals in a particular locale as the ones that would have been present in 1492. There was frequent reference to the “original animals,” the animals that “belong,” and to “restoration” as opposed to “introduction.” In this sense, the wolf was the desired canid (at least for proponents), not the interloping Eastern coyote, even though in reality the latter is genetically much closer to the historic canid of the region than the former.

This separation of humans and Nature was so entrenched that I could detect only two systematic departures. One was among some of the biologists whom I interviewed. When pressed they would discuss humans as a part of natural ecosystems, but generally that occurred only after my interrogating earlier answers that conformed to the Human/Nature dichotomy. The other exception was among some of the pro-development, pro-hunting group, one of whom asked plaintively, "aren't we part of the ecosystem too?" While easily dismissed by others for having an instrumentalist, perhaps greedy, orientation toward the Adirondack ecosystem, they saw themselves as living as a part of it, not as consumers of it.

The separation of humans and Nature also involves the maintenance of boundaries, in this case between the Park and the human-centered landscape outside the Blue Line, and within the Park, between the wild forestlands and areas of mixed use. The apotheosis of wilderness and its identification with Nature is a familiar part of American folk culture. Among its other effects, is a tendency to divide up the land into that part that is "Natural" and will consequently be protected, and that part that is to be given over to humans, and will be treated with less care and reverence. As Knott (1998) points out, this segregation plays a key role in facilitating the despoliation of urban and suburban areas by the "reservation" of concern about the natural world to places like the Adirondacks. Or, as one of my informants (a biologist) commented, "here's a park where there are wild creatures; and here's trash land where we can build an airport of something."

Further, in SAE, Nature has a moral dimension, one that is fraught with consequences for character and wellbeing. To reside in an ecosystem filled with rocks and streams, trees, songbirds, deer, and (perhaps) wolves, or (the next best thing) to reside in suburban or exurban simulacra of such ecosystems, makes one more whole, more authentic, saner, and healthier than

someone who lives in an ecosystem characterized by cement pavement and sewer lines, telephone poles, pigeons, and pet dogs. McKibben (2000) argues that while the wolf is doing fine in much of its old range, it is we who need assistance and a rehabilitation that might be possible if the wolf were present in the wilderness four hours drive north of the canyons of Manhattan. We see this sensibility at play in the attraction felt by Nina Fascione of Defenders of Wildlife (personal communication) for wolf restoration in the Adirondacks because of the juxtaposition of wolf (a symbol of wild Nature and its spiritual and restorative powers) with New York (for most of the world a symbol of urbanity, modernism, and that which needs to be made whole and healthy again).

Yet this shared belief in the moral dimension of Nature can lead to quite different meanings in different circumstances. Many people who use the Adirondacks as a vacation and retreat site feel invigorated by the interaction with Nature, and for some there is a sense of heightened spirituality. Many Adirondack residents, however, feel a (usually mild and genial) contempt for city dwellers who come to the mountains to imbibe the restorative powers of Nature, not because the Adirondackers do not believe in it, but because they do not believe it is something one can pick up in a week or a month. This moral dimension of Nature for Adirondackers includes a quality of relations with wildlife that is directly opposed to such positions as animal rights and anti-hunting sensitivities. Such orientations are seen as the effete products of the disordered and unhealthy life of city people. Nothing is more incomprehensible or contemptible to my Adirondacker informants than a strict animal rights position, and I was told several times that the one good thing to be said about Defenders of Wildlife is that they are not animal rights “fanatics.”

Similarly, the meaning of specific natural entities, like the wolf, is shaped by perspective and residence. To Defenders of Wildlife and their supporters, wolves are powerful symbols of wildness and associated purity, of natural forces that humans must acknowledge that they cannot fully control. They represent the order and stability that inhere to “complete ecosystems,” and their restoration represents putting things right. Like the Saami observed by Lindquist (2000) or the Greek shepherds described by Moore (1994), however, to many Adirondackers “wolf” represents outside forces of control over their lives. To fight against it is one more form of patrolling the Blue Line. The oft-repeated threat to shoot any wolf that shows up in the Park, and the passage of an ordinance in Essex County (one of several counties in the Park) forbidding the importation of “dangerous” animals are some of the specific forms this boundary maintenance took.

The corrupting and confusing role of humans in “messing up” natural systems relates to a preoccupation with purity, authenticity, and intactness. In SAE, Nature left on its own is a marvelous, equilibrium-tending, self-sustaining, ecologically diverse thing. The effect of humans is to de-stabilize, and to make ecosystems less intact and less diverse. Every species has a role to play, and removing one of them leaves a gap, a niche unfilled, that will cause the system to function less and less well over time. As Elder (2000, 1-2) says, “the science of biology has gone a long way toward educating the mainstream of our society about the complex balance necessary for a healthy natural environment.” Nature knows best. We are well advised to tread lightly, disturb as little as possible, and let natural systems take care of themselves. In this vein, the wolf has a special value as a “keystone” species since, as a dominant predator, its behavior has the apparent effect of regulating the size and the characteristics of the population of prey species like moose, and of other species secondarily through the supply of consumable animal

tissue remaining at kill sites. As one informant said, “the elk are as swift and big and strong as they are because of the wolf.”

As Scoones (1999) has pointed out, the “new ecology” has long since moved away from notions of the balance of nature and “intact” ecosystems, as both logical *non sequiturs* and scientifically insupportable propositions. Indeed, our understanding of any ecosystem, or the position of any species in an ecosystem, may be hindered by simple ignorance of the number and sorts of interactions that occur, along with prejudices in observation inherent in our own species condition or in our cultures, like the oft-noted predilection for focusing on large animals, “charismatic megafauna.” Studies by Messier, Rau, and McNeill (1989) and Rau and Caron (1979), for instance, demonstrate that the apparent regulatory role of the wolf may be an illusion borne of inattention to other species and their effects. Wolves are hosts to a tiny species of tapeworm called *Echinococcus granulosus*. These parasites reproduce in the wolf’s body, while doing little harm to the host. The eggs are deposited in feces and eventually consumed by moose and other animals on the plants they eat. While *E. granulosus* is benign to the wolf, it has severe effects on the moose, forming cysts in the lungs that lacerate bronchial tubes and blood vessels, significantly reducing the animal's lung capacity. Infected moose are, not surprisingly, disproportionately taken by wolves, thereby allowing completion of the tapeworm's life cycle by ensuring entry into the final host. Viewed from this perspective the *danse macabre* between predator and prey becomes epiphenomenal, a vehicle for the reproduction of a species that has evolved a mechanism for ensuring that its two hosts are brought together regularly in the right way. Should we feel the need to identify a keystone species here, surely it is *Echinococcus granulosus*, not *Canis lupus*. (See Zimmer 2000)

Kempton, et al. (1995) have demonstrated that the widespread understandings of Nature in the general public are rooted in antiquated earlier versions of science. I found these notions, however, very active in the biologists and environmental “professionals” I talked to, as well as members of the general public. These ideas are deeply embedded in our culture and resonate with culturally constructed explanations of our lived experiences, like the ideology of the market and its proposition that the net effect of a multiplicity of contending forces is the development of a stable best-case balance that maximizes good. To develop an explanation of both the origins and effects of SAE is a project for another time, but it should be noted in passing that its idealization of Nature and its conceptual isolation from humanity can have implications that are complex, contradictory, and at times disturbing. At least as early as 1937, Leo Lowenthal (1985, 319) in his analysis of the impulse toward fascism implicit in the works of Knut Hamsun, noted that, “while the longing for and glorification of ‘nature’ is rooted in a correct response to the experience of alienation and domination in bourgeois society, the escape to a sphere or vision abstractly opposed to it merely reinforces what it seeks to avoid.”

Implications for Study and Policy Formation

Kay Milton asserts that “the question of whether that understanding [created or maintained by cultural categories] is accurate, of whether the categories are ‘real,’ is not an... issue” of concern to social scientists (2000, 236). I disagree. It is true that there are different moments in social scientific inquiry and that, in some, the question of truth or falsity is irrelevant. Ultimately, however, we cannot be indifferent to the struggle to determine the relative truth of our informants’ (and our own) categories. We struggle because it matters in our understanding of the people we study and our evaluation of the extent to which their cultures are

adequate and helpful. It matters that witches and demons do not exist, even though many people believe in them devoutly. It matters when cultural constructions are wrong or misleading, because of their effects on actions. It matters if social science is to function as the critique of culture, not simply its cataloguing.

It matters, for instance, that many of the Western ethnoecological concepts that have guided international aid agencies and world trade agendas and have structured relationships between the West (or North) and indigenous peoples, are unsupportable scientifically. And, if we apply critical scrutiny to Western ethnoecologies, like what I have called SAE, so too must we critically scrutinize the set of assumptions and values about the earth developed by other cultures, and do so under the assumption that all ethnoecologies, like all parts of culture, involve systematic distortions of reality.

There are at least two problems, one political and the other epistemological, that immediately present themselves. Acknowledgement of the culturally specific and contingent nature of ethnoecology entails political risks by giving opponents of environmental protection seemingly intellectually defensible support. I share with Brosius (1999, 222) the sense of irony that “at the very moment that subaltern voices *are* being heard, anthropologists have taken to subjecting those voices to ethnographic scrutiny.” But, subaltern voices are not alone in undergoing ethnographic scrutiny. Movements for environmental protection, rooted as they so frequently are in SAE, are easy targets, frankly, because of their epistemological shallowness and scientific dubiousness. Referring to environmental movements, and in particular to those that involve politically marginalized groups, Brosius says “not only is it unclear what impact our commentaries might have on these movements and discourses but also it is no longer very clear what is emancipatory and what is potentially reactionary, either in the movements we wish to

study or in our own commentaries.” (1999, 288) In my own work, I have concerns about the effect of an “exposure” of the lack of clarity and consistency in the motives of Defenders of Wildlife and other wildlife advocates to a jury of sneering and jaded land-rights militants and “wise use” advocates, who would use every weakness of opponents to assist in their own expropriation of the commons. While Defenders of Wildlife and their supporters are far from being marginalized people, and while the case for the wolf in the Adirondacks is clearly equivocal, is the most likely alternative to such visions in 21st century America really an even more sophisticated and sensitive appreciation of people and their ecosystems, or is it a redoubled effort on the part of the American ruling class to intensify its control and its right to more of everything? In his commentary on Brosius’ concerns, Guha says, “I believe his worry to be exaggerated. Commissars and policemen do not read learned essays and books.” (1999, 293) I wonder. The web pages and publications of wolf opponents that I have perused were remarkably well informed and sharp. We simply no longer live in a world where commissars, or policemen, or oil men do not have access to, interest in, and the ability to understand scholarly discourse if it can be of use in furthering their plans.

The solution is not to shrink from critical analysis or commentary, nor does it lie in some retreat into the solipsism of the more extreme versions of cultural relativism. Like Brosius, I have no clear solution, save this: when Robert Louis Stevenson wrote a book about his hometown of Edinburgh, and the residents of rival city Glasgow were chuckling over his candid description, he replied, “to the people of Glasgow, I would say only one word, but that is of gold: I have not yet written a book about Glasgow.” (quoted in Furnas 1969) As Kottak (1999, 25) has said, “we cannot be neutral scientists studying cognized and operational models of the environment and the role of humans in regulating its use when local communities and

ecosystems are increasingly endangered.” While it is true that such SAE preoccupations as environmentalism and biodiversity conservation can be in some contexts be hegemonic ideologies, in others they are counter-hegemonic and liberating. This can be determined only through painstaking analysis of specific cases, and only then if the full range of narratives are revealed for assessment, including the narrative of rapacious global greed. If it is not possible for us to know everything with certainty, or to create a plan for the future that will hold for all time, “there can still be no doubt about the task confronting us at present: the *ruthless criticism of the existing order*, ruthless in that it will shrink neither from its own discoveries, nor from conflict with the powers that be.” (Marx 2006[1843])

The second problem is epistemological, and it is the classic dilemma of having no non-ethnocentric position by which to judge beliefs, plans, actions, and results. What is the basis of our judgment that some ethnoecological notions are not accurate reflections of reality? Is it not (merely!) the ethnoecological ideas of the Western scientific community, as firmly rooted in particular cultural histories as any other ethnoecology? Like Archimedes we have no fixed point to serve as a fulcrum for our lever. Our approach must be contingent and partial and mindful of the inevitability of correction. Nonetheless, there is a best candidate: what Scoones (1999) describes as an “extended engagement” between the social sciences and the “new ecology.” In this paradigm biologists, ecologists, and others work to transform an equilibrium-based discipline into one that recognizes change as incessant, agency complex, and contingency and accident a regular feature of all real systems. Among the research strategies necessary for this engagement is the intensive ethnographic study of the multiplicity of ethnographic narratives and of the actual struggle over ideas in the interface between international aid agencies, environmental professionals, and scientists on the one hand and local communities and popular

movements on the other. In the conflict or crisis shaped by this interface fundamental ideas are often laid bare. Likewise, such research has a crucial role in the process of laying to rest the human/Nature dualism of Western ethnoecology, both through demonstrations of the role of humans in shaping the earth through time (in ways that have perhaps been more frequently productive than destructive), and through the direct interrogation the Western narrative, using alternative narratives as a frame of reference. We do this nonetheless mindful of the prospect that all we inevitably create is yet another ethnoecological narrative, but one that hopefully can address directly the crises we face.

Toward a New Standard American Ethnoecology

The first step toward a new SAE is to move away from the fragmentation and mystification of the conception of Nature implicit in its opposition to human culture and human actions. The appearance of culture and language are moments in the process of the evolution of life forms. These traits endow at least one species with certain abilities that make it the most powerful, and perhaps the most terrible, species ever to have lived. Oelschlaeger (1999) argues that, as a result, humans are unnatural because they and their effects are, *inter alia*, “out of scale,” that is, rapid, massive, and disruptive of equilibria. Yet there is no clear reason why any of these characteristics need have the connotation of being unnatural. Despite our folk models, there is no balance of nature. There are processes which have long-term effects and which create some local continuities, but these tend to be ephemeral when looked at with a geological time scale. Ecological systems, like any kind of system, can contain processes of positive feedback, or deviation amplification, just as well as negative, or homeostatic, feedback. These will perforce alter the system but are no less natural for doing so. The point here is that, though humans can

do things that may have baleful effects on themselves and members of other species, including the catastrophic release of greenhouse gases, this does not make us unnatural.

Nature simply is what is. Scientifically there is no basis for the belief that our species' behavior is not natural. As Diamond (1992) has pointed out, it is useful to think of us as a third species of chimpanzee. Clearly we have unique characteristics. Big brains, language, small canine teeth, a strong propensity to kill other members of our species, oddly shaped feet, cultural traditions, and the lack of an estrous cycle are among the characteristics that come to mind immediately, without clear evidence for which have been most important in making us what we are. But all species are unique. Our unique qualities may indeed have made us very dangerous to other species and to ourselves. We may be stupid, foolish, shortsighted, lazy, and clever enough to allow our deficiencies to have widespread effects, but none of that makes us, or our actions, unnatural.

Losing sight of this fact distorts our understanding of the tasks at hand. We are part of nature. We do not sit atop it; nor are we its demonic "other." There may be specific circumstances in which it makes rhetorical or operational sense to distinguish the actions of our species from the actions of other species (just as there may be instances in which it is useful to isolate the effect of beavers, zebra mussels, or malaria plasmodia in particular ecosystems). But what may make programmatic sense under some circumstances should not substitute for a general theoretical understanding.

Success in our relationships with other parts of the natural system does not lie in the apotheosis of wilderness. It will grow out of a discussion of the multiplicity of needs, goals, and desires of the members of our species, including the hope of sustaining resources for our progeny

and the joy of the aesthetic appreciation of “wild” places. Understanding that we are part of Nature should be cause for neither inaction nor complacency. On the contrary, it should challenge us by increasing both our sense of humility and of complexity. It should be humbling because it will help us shed our pretences that, for good or ill, we lie outside of the scope of natural forces. It should increase our sense of complexity because it confronts us with the reality that everything about us is ecosystemic, that urban neighborhoods and industrial wastelands and suburban shopping malls, and what we do in them, are as much a part of Nature as the Adirondacks or the Yellowstone. At the same time, the realization that we are part of Nature can also be liberating in the sense that it can help us finally develop a true sense of “sharedness,” perhaps kinship, with the rest of the natural world.

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Babylon and Beyond:

The Economics of Anti-Capitalist, Anti-Globalist and Radical Green Movements.

Wall, Derek. London: Pluto, 2005.

Derek Wall is a friend of a friend -- when I was living with Walt Sheasby, Walt visited England, and I took care of Walt's house when he was traipsing around England with Derek Wall late in 2004. He is also a comrade of sorts -- Walt, Derek Wall, and I were all eco-socialists and members of our respective Green Parties. Both Walt Sheasby and Derek Wall were perennial candidates for public office, and theorists in their own rights. Babylon and Beyond comes out of that fusion of theory and politics.

What is eco-socialism? Exact definitions will vary from author to author, but generally eco-socialism is the notion that humanity will have to move from the domination of people to the administration of things, to abolish social classes, and to move in a coordinated manner to resolve the oncoming ecological crises caused by an economy based on exploitation. Eco-socialism comes with a time-limit; it would have to become real before the capitalist system dismantled Earth's ecological systems, causing massive die-offs everywhere.

What is the book about? Babylon and Beyond, says its author, is "to explain the economics of (the) anti-capitalist movement and, in so doing, examine how a fairer and more ecologically sustainable world can be created."⁽²⁾ Wall, to his credit, has a liberal idea of what the anti-capitalist movement is. The first chapter of Babylon and Beyond defines the threat to the world posed by capitalism: the expansion of market economies is blamed for widening gaps between a rich few at the top of the economic pyramid and a poor 40% at the bottom, as well as a host of other social ills. The demands of the system spiral upward until there is no environment left to exploit:

Ever increasing economic growth in turn means that more and more scarce resources are demanded, so as to maintain the profit system. Capitalist growth for the whole planet would demand, according to some critics, the resources of four planet Earths, and such resources would have to grow to maintain the capitalist system into the future. Neo-liberals argue that the world is getting cleaner, resources are growing rather than shrinking, poverty is disappearing and democracy is on the rise. The evidence is against them on all these counts. (16)

Clearly, such a claim should properly be justified against the existing data rather than merely being asserted. At any rate, those are Wall's preconceptions.

Chapter 2 has an analysis of the economic beliefs of George Soros and Joseph Stiglitz, who are, properly speaking, capitalists, but who are major opponents of the Washington Consensus that drives global bankers to impose neoliberal trade rules on the world's nations. Chapter 3 is about David Korten's anti-corporatism, which is not really anti-capitalism either, but which focuses importantly on the negative effects of corporate domination of the world's economy. Chapters 4 and 5 are about green localism and social credit, economic behaviors which run contrary to capitalist globalization but which do not offer a thoroughgoing systemic alternative to capitalism itself. The last four chapters are about systemic alternatives to capitalism.

Interspersed throughout the book are examples of the effects of capitalism each group opposes. Each of the anti-capitalist trends dealt with in Babylon and Beyond offers a counterpoint to an unsavory capitalist practice. Soros and Stiglitz decry the fact that the ideology of the "free market" is merely a cover for imperialism. David Korten and Naomi Klein attack predatory corporate practices. The Green localists defend the small producers against market flooding, resource privatization, and local pollution. The advocates of social credit and

debt reform attempt to pull the world's economies past the IMF/ World Bank "debt crisis," wherein many of said economies are in permanent debt peonage to international bankers. Marxists are, of course, against capitalism's production of social classes. The autonomists are in favor of anarchist modes of revolt against capitalist oppression and control; for them, workers need to infiltrate capitalism in order to sabotage its most oppressive aspects.

Most productively, ecosocialists can put together organizations that are, in Joel Kovel's (2002) words, "prefigurative" of a new, ecologically sustainable society. Much of Wall's wisdom about ecosocialism seems to rest upon Joel Kovel's The Enemy of Nature, and its evisceration of the inhumanity produced by the system as a whole. Much of Kovel's theoretical framework is quoted in Wall's book.

The rhetorical approach given in Babylon and Beyond can be illuminated in comparison with a similar book, Robert L. Nadeau's (2003) The Wealth of Nature: How Mainstream Economics Has Failed The Environment. Like Wall's book, Nadeau's The Wealth of Nature is a survey of economic thought, undertaken in order to square said thought with ecological realities which "mainstream economics" has ignored to its great peril. Nadeau, however, starts with pro-capitalist assumptions:

The intent here is not to denigrate the virtues of the free market system or to argue that this system should be displaced by another system. It is to make the case that the only way in which we can hope to preserve most of the substantive benefits of free markets is within the framework of an environmentally responsible economic theory. (Nadeau xi)

But when it comes time for Nadeau to explain what these substantive benefits are, he becomes quite vague: "This (free market) system tends to enhance individual initiatives, promote creative endeavors, and encourage rapid economic development." (Nadeau 11). Now, arguably, these

"benefits" would exist anyway in human society (though less so in authoritarian societies), and capitalism would merely take credit while channeling creative initiative into the form of capitalist business. Unlike Wall, Nadeau starts from a slippery pro-capitalist premise, and in the end, Nadeau's journey through the land of the economic thinkers winds up in a yet-to-be-devised theory of ecological economics, a theory that would square capitalism with ecological sustainability. And this theory, as it turns out, has (for the capitalists) a rather scary caveat:

One concern here is that the costs of doing business in the global environment in the initial phase of implementation of the new economic theory could be so high that they could easily cause a breakdown in the global economic system. For example, several recent scientific studies have indicated that in order to achieve the goal of a sustainable global environment, material flows in industrialized economies may have to be reduced by roughly 90 percent, or by a factor of ten.

(Nadeau 199)

It boggles the mind to imagine how 90% of the material economy is going to be phased out in a way that preserves the "substantive benefits of free markets." Nadeau certainly isn't talking about "rapid economic development." In short, Nadeau's pro-capitalist readers are likely to be disappointed after finishing his book; having expected a defense of capitalism, they are instead asked to assent to its radical transformation. Wall's readers, on the other hand, may flinch at his "anti-capitalist" premises -- especially if they can think of defenses of the capitalist system which he hasn't addressed. But, if they can get past the proclamations of the first chapter, they are likely to be satisfied.

Does Wall do any better with an anti-capitalist approach? As noted above, Wall avoids the trap Nadeau falls into, starting from the premise that the capitalist free market needs to be

preserved, only to find an enormous caveat lying in wait at the end of the search for an ecological economy. Wall's approach treats everyone outside of the ruling elites as a potential anti-capitalist, even though the public is likely to count itself in the other, pro-capitalist, camp.

He is polite enough to grant credit where credit is due, even while noting the shortcomings of many of those he quotes (from an eco-socialist perspective). Wall, like other eco-socialists, criticizes those who expect capitalism to save the world from problems that capitalism has created. But he is also especially good at picking apart the marxist legacy. For Wall, Marx is at some points an advocate of globalization, viewing more production as an unalloyed good, and marxists have gone along with that, and at other points Marx is an opponent of globalization and a proponent of an ecological approach to the critique of capitalism. "The dilemma with Marxist accounts from Marx onwards is that they provide a mixed message: imperialism, capitalism, and globalisation are both good and bad," Wall says (111). Part of the difficulty is that marxists such as Alex Callinicos or Robert Went tend to recommend "transitional demands" out of a recognition of the difficulty of making a global revolution "from scratch," but Wall is unclear as to whether or not "transitional demands" in themselves strengthen or weaken capitalism.

In the last chapter, Wall's recommendations are lightly prescriptive. He suggests that 1) we adopt communal modes of practice that 2) attempt to preserve a "commons" available to all but preserved by all against degradation, and 3) adopt daily habits such as "ital," "slow food," and "zen," which aid people in living healthy lives under low-consumption circumstances. After all, it might be reasoned, this is what human beings will have to do when capitalist overexploitation forces a massive drawdown in available resources. The bigger issue, though, remains unresolved -- whether or not any of these practices, or even a thoroughgoing "eco-

socialist party" complete with political candidates and direct action and all, will save civilization from neoliberalism.

Eco-socialist books are not a dime a dozen. This one is easy-to-read, persuasive, and forward-looking even if it doesn't have all the answers. Derek Wall is to be commended for that.

Standlea, David M.
Oil, Globalization, and the War for the Arctic Refuge.
Albany, NY: SUNY P, 2006.
by Samuel Fassbinder

There is a master narrative of the fight for the preservation of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). The villains are familiar: Don Young, Frank Murkowski, Ted Stevens, the Reagan and Bush-Cheney Administrations, and the oil companies. Their ideology is familiar; neoliberalism, corporate rule, conquest, colonization, Manifest Destiny. The heroes are familiar: the environmentalists and their lobbying groups, the native peoples of Alaska, the religious community. Their ideology is familiar: sustainable living, wilderness as an intrinsic value, social justice. The struggle is cast in polar terms: prophets vs. profits. In Oil, Globalization, and the War for the Arctic Refuge, David Standlea situates that master narrative against the history of the ANWR, so the reader can see what is at stake in that narrative. Standlea is a true believer in the master narrative; his true belief gives him many opportunities to critique the ideology of growth but few opportunities to lay out an alternative in any detail.

However, superimposed upon the master narrative in Standlea's book is another narrative; that of neoliberal civilization in decline, besieged by environmental and economic dangers. Standlea opens the book with this premonition:

The battle is on for the earth's remaining natural resources, and unprecedented expansion of human population coupled with an American-style propagation of an unlimited economic "growth paradigm" is forcing a critical historic transition. This epochal change or transition may become portrayed as a descent into ever-expanding violent conflict, chaos, and anarchy fueled by ruthless competition over Earth's remaining natural resources. It is unlikely that the current state of affairs and rate of greed and acquisition, especially characterizing American economic competition, will prevail at this pace without forcing severe environmental and social conflict and chaos. (3)

Unfortunately, such a hyperbolic description of the current state of affairs is likely to receive its acid-test in a political description of the battle over the ANWR. Standlea explains his prognosis by pointing to the state of affairs in Iraq, and to the imminent end of the Era of Cheap Oil. Indeed, "energy derived from oil and gas will soon begin to decline by 2 percent a year, causing massive direct and indirect economic and social hemorrhages to industrial society." (5) The end of the book discusses further evidences of civilizational decline. Government is becoming a vehicle for manifestations of private power. Global warming threatens Earth's ecosystems.

Somehow, prophecies of Iraq and oil crisis, private government and climate change seem more central as determinants of our grim future than the discussion of ANWR. Readers might wonder, as they peruse Oil, Globalization, and the War for the Arctic Refuge, if they are reading a dramatization of an epiphenomenon, and if the real drama isn't somewhere else. They may end up agreeing with the energy director at Public Citizen who argued that ANWR "is being used as a diversion" so that the environmental organizations will look the other way while government sells out to the oil corporations. (101) And Standlea briefly mentions (42) that ANWR may not be all that profitable to the oil companies.

At any rate, most of this book is a dramatization of the first master narrative mentioned above. Chapter 1 is an introduction. Chapter 2 offers a historical overview of the battle for the ANWR. Chapter 3 offers a history of the oil companies' involvement in Alaskan oil. Chapter 4 is a discussion of the interweaving of corporations and the state in the attempts to open the ANWR to drilling. Chapter 5 is an exploration of corporate public-relations spin on the ANWR story. Chapters 6, 7, and 8 are about the environmentalists, the Gwich'in (a group native to the ANWR area) and the Alaskan religious community, all of which oppose ANWR development. So the details of ANWR politics are thoroughly exposed in this book, from every angle. This, after all, is a thorough study in political ecology, a landmark study, a must-have for all whose business is political ecology. The oil companies, according to Standlea, stand to profit (although not much) from the opening of ANWR. Their real interest is in global oil, which they pursue "under the radar screen of the American public," for which ANWR is a "national poster child of

environmental 'success.'" (42) In the corporate state, Senator Ted Stevens is the lead man for the fight to open ANWR to drilling. The fight to close ANWR to drilling "succeeds" with corporate Democrats like John Kerry, Tom Daschle, and Joe Lieberman, as well as attracting "insider" environmentalists in Washington DC. (101) The natives, the Gwich'in, complain about global warming, oppose drilling in ANWR (113), and do not support the concept of "wilderness" because they are interested in living off of the land itself. (111) The religious community supports them.

The central puzzle of this political ecology, however, is the connection between the two narratives, the one narrowly focused on ANWR and the second of global significance. This reviewer's considered interpretation runs as follows: the dichotomy between profit-hungry corporations and scattered cadres of conservationists and native peoples is held as being *symbolic* of the choices faced by humankind. Preserving the ANWR is an environmentalist "success"; doubtless capitalists hate that success, and would like to invade ANWR just to take it away. Standlea's use of the narrative of decline is to "portray a corporate state out of control, where massive amounts of money determine political decision making and affect the poorest people at the local level, destroying natural environments as well." (140) Nevertheless, the environmentalists are capable of pooling a "convergence of interests" in order to marshal the political power necessary to forestall the granting of drilling permits in the ANWR, at least for now.

However, Standlea predicts that this may change any time soon, as he is profoundly pessimistic. "Change will not occur until economic catastrophe affects the middle class and the average citizen and they are absorbed into poverty-stricken levels of class." (157) Standlea's advocates a "political ecological revolution" that will "bring together diverse forces under a common umbrella of progressive values" for the sake of "firm alternatives and ideas to be placed into action." (157) But this is all exceedingly vague. If ANWR is to be preserved, world society will have to end its habit of 83 million barrels of oil per day, every day, and to do that we would

have to end the capitalist system as a whole and embark upon the construction of a global sustainable society. Nothing less will do.

The business of writing and publishing books demands that we specialize; research paths require us to find all the particulars of a specific phenomenon. Standlea's text on the political economy of ANWR, reviewed here, does that well. It is in attempting to move from these particulars to the generality, and from the "preserve ANWR" movement to revolution, that the Standlea meets his frontier.

The Way of Compassion: Vegetarianism, Environmentalism, Animal Advocacy, and Social Justice. Martin Rowe, Edt. Stealth Technologies, 1999.

As the full title to this book suggests, *The Way of Compassion* is a collection of essays and interviews touching interrelated areas of moral concern, and includes well known authors such as Jane Goodall, Maneka Gandhi, John Robbins, Roger and Deborah Fouts, and Carol J. Adams. (These well-known individuals are accompanied by excellent essays from lesser-known writers.) The book is divided into five sections: “Philosophical and Religious Reflections,” “Vegetarianism,” “Environmentalism,” “Animal Advocacy,” and “Being an Activist.”

The first section, “Philosophical and Religious Reflections,” consists of interviews (rather than articles), mostly with people of different faiths, including Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Jainism. Several interviewees are from India, or are scholars of Indian language and culture. Muni Nandibhushan Vijayji of India notes, “Our stomach is not a burial ground for dead bodies.” As a Jain monk, he believes that “it is best not to interfere in the lives of animals” (26). He goes on to speak more broadly of *ahimsa*, usually translated as “nonviolence,” or “not to harm.” We should “be concerned not only for the well-being of people, animals and bugs, but also for the well-being of the soil, the water and the air: *ahimsa* extends to all of nature” (26).

Maneka Gandhi, also of India but from the Hindu spiritual tradition, started an Animal Welfare Department in the Indian government, and acted as Minister for Environment. She talks about the link between her work for animals, and her work for the environment. India, she notes, is “a cow dung economy” (30).

If you remove the cow, you need buses to bring things to market... If you remove the cow, you need gas cylinders to cook on.... If you remove the cow, you need pesticides and fertilizer. If you remove the cow you need something other than milk. Everything ties in right back to the cow, the buffalo, the bullock, the horse, the camel, the elephant, the dog—which is one of the biggest scavengers of the city—and the vulture, another big scavenger.... I thought that since nobody else is going to do it, I must bring animals into the environmental movement (30).

The interview with Shelton Harrison Walden falls on the philosophical side. Walden hosts the radio program, *Walden’s Pond*, that has pioneered media coverage for animal right, the environment, and human rights. He speaks of a turtle he loved as a child, his gradual move to a

vegetarian lifestyle, and his difficulties with the animal rights movement as an African American. He notes that the largely white animal rights movement, has failed to reach out to “people of color” (50). He comments, “being an African American helps me understand manipulation and abuse. No one should be exploited or abused.... We need a standard of respect and civility, and that should include animals and our environment” (50).

The next section, “Vegetarianism,” offers short articles on diets: vegetarian, vegan, fruitarian, whole foods, and raw foods. It includes a fascinating article dispelling the myth that Hitler was a vegetarian, and an interesting piece by Matt Ball of Vegan Outreach. He writes about his experiences educating others on the topic of veganism. He advocates *ahimsa* that is “positive, life-embracing,” and inclusive (rather than purist and spiteful). Not that he is a stranger to anger: “When I see pictures of videos of what is done to animals, I get very angry. When I hear people say, ‘But I like meat’ as their final argument, I find the idea of hating them very appealing” (73). Yet Ball remembers that he, too, ate meat at one point in his life, and that the change to a plant-based diet came slow and hard. He remains “glad that the vegetarians [he] met didn’t react... with anger and hatred, but rather with gentle prodding and education” (73). Matt Ball now tries to educate others, whom he refers to as “compassionate individuals” who “just don’t know” the environmental costs, or the suffering that is inherent, in a flesh diet (73).

“Environmentalism” includes a series of articles that take readers to Ladakh in India, Maasailand in Kenya, to a piazza in Sicily, and a landfill in New York City. This section questions the notion of development, advocates local food markets, and explores whether or not the Galapagos Islands can survive tourism. A particularly thorough and informative article attacks the automobile, and auto-based cultures. “Car Culture and the Landscape of Subtraction,” by Philip Goff, examines how the U.S. became a car culture, and what Americans lost in this transition. Short-sighted profits lie behind the rise of the auto, and “has left us with a mountain of debt, a sprawling suburbia, polluted and crumbling inner cities, and a landscape devoid of farmland and forests.... What started out as a promise for a better life based on unlimited mobility has become a modern-day obsession, as solitary commuters idle in endless traffic jams” (100). Goff notes that the primary financial cost of our car-dependent culture is building and maintaining roads, including bridges and tunnels, “to the tune of \$140 million every workday” (104). Meanwhile, public transport is under-funded. “In 1991, over \$28 billion was spent to build, widen and maintain roads in the United States, while only a fraction was allocated

for rail improvements” (106). This especially hurts the elderly and poor, who must exist without cars in a car-culture that does not support a reliable public transport system.

Goff reminds that all of us bear the cost of auto dependence, and he presents a laundry list of associated contemporary problems: The U.S. spends billions of dollars every year to protect oil tankers in the Persian Gulf, engages in warfare to protect nations like Kuwait or destroy nations like Iraq, and maintains questionable ties with oil-rich countries like Saudi Arabia. Many health care costs are linked to auto accidents; US law enforcement spends untold hours ticketing speeders and attending accident sights—hours that could be spent tracking down dangerous psychopaths. Oil spills, air pollution, and the paving of America are all part and parcel of U.S. car culture. Goff notes, if motorists had to pay the true cost of their autos, bicycles and public transport would be much more attractive alternatives. Instead, the U.S. government heavily subsidizes motorists, including not just the costs of roads and bridges, but traffic lights, street signs, guardrails, and parking. Many of us do not know that “[e]mployers are allowed to deduct from their taxes the expense of providing parking for their workers, and receive tax benefits for providing company cars” (104). Goff imagines a world without autos, a world built for humans instead of cars, a world where parking is used for better purposes:

Real estate values in urban areas are costly, yet motorists are allowed to use up to 100 square feet of public space for the storage of their vehicles. What reserves the side of the street to be used for the sole purpose of parking cars? Could one use the space for storage instead? To put a trampoline, maybe? Could one open up a futon in a parking space and sleep overnight? What privileges car owners to eat up such valuable urban space, when others pay hundreds of dollars for apartments hardly bigger than a parking space? (103)

The section titled “Animal Advocacy” presents material on the use of animals in science, mad cow disease, philosophical arguments based on marginal cases, and stories of those who have worked closely with animals or who are actively working to protect or save these slighted citizens of earth. (The latter includes working with animals as diverse as chimps, dogs, and cattle.) Martin Rowe’s article on mad cow disease reports, “[i]n one year in the United States, 93 million pigs, 37million cattle, two million calves, six million horses, goats, and sheep, and a staggering eight billion chickens and turkeys are killed” (176). The next article, by Lorri Bauston of Farm Sanctuary, talks about just one of those pigs, Hope, who was “dumped at a livestock market because she had a crippled leg and was no longer ‘marketable.’ Hope was just

a baby, barely two months old” (178). Bauston remembers how frightened this little pig was, and “how frantically she crawled away” (178). This abandoned piglet had never known kindness, and was rightly terrified of people, but once captured and wrapped in a blanket, she “let out one small grunt,” then nestled into Bauston’s arms. She also tells the story of Lily, a hen, found on the floor of an egg farm. “She was standing in a corner, trying desperately to keep from falling onto a mound of feces and decaying feathers and bones.... She was covered with sores and her left eye was swollen shut” (179). Bauston next describes egg farms:

To produce eggs, four to five hens are crammed into a cage about the size of a folded newspaper. The birds endure this misery for two to three years, unable to stretch their wings, walk or even lie down comfortably. After months of intensive confinement, the birds lose most of their feathers.... Eventually, their skin becomes covered with painful bruises and sores. When hens become too sick or injured to produce eggs at peak levels, they are literally thrown out of the cage and left on the floor to die slowly from starvation” (178).

Bauston leaves readers thinking that maybe Matt Ball is right, we eat eggs and milk, fish and chickens, because we do not know the suffering entailed in an animal-based diet.

The final segment in *The Way of Compassion* engages the reader in the thoughts of activists who are working on the front lines, rescuing pigeons from gun-toting “sportsmen,” pressuring large corporations to dispense with cruel and unnecessary practices, and standing between loggers and old growth forests. This section provides insights into cutting-edge moral debates on what constitutes complacency, sabotage, and violence. Are the bad guys the ones who release abused and exploited animals, or those who turn and walk away? Who should be in jail, those who cut old growth forests, or those who spike trees? Ben White writes, “Civil disobedience—breaking the law of the day to argue for a greater goal—has been used as a form of activism for many years” (220). White reminds readers that laws are set by humans, and can be changed by humans—can and must be changed.

The Way of Compassion encourages us to be part of much-needed change. We are encouraged to reconsider what we eat, how we travel, what our spiritual beliefs require, and whether or not it is morally acceptable to respect laws that prevent activists from acting out against those who profit at the expense of the earth and other creatures.

The Dominion of Love
Norm Phelps
Lantern Books
2002

Reviewed by Lisa Kemmerer

In *The Dominion of Love*, Norm Phelps uses scripture to demonstrate that exploiting and harming other creatures, whether little wild fishes or much-maligned domesticated cattle, is inimical to the Christian faith.

Phelps acknowledges at the outset that one can find a biblical basis for animal exploitation if so inclined. In fact, Phelps notes that one can find scriptural justification for many forms of oppression, from slavery to ethnic cleansing. The Bible “tells us that God approved, or even commanded, conduct toward other human beings that today no civilized person would countenance” (13). But the Bible, Phelps concludes, also provides “a stirring call for kindness, compassion, and mercy for everyone regardless of race, religion, nationality, gender, or sexual orientation. It is long past time for us to recognize that the Bible issues that same call in regard to every sentient being, regardless of species. Animals are God’s children no less than we” (12).

Phelps grounds his work on what he calls “prime directives.” “Both Judaism and Christianity teach that a virtuous life stands upon two pillars: love for God and love for one another” (33). God, he notes, is not dependant on our good will or kindness. God’s creation, on the other hand, is. When we treat creation as our plaything, our tool kit, or our dinner plate, we fail to show good will and love toward other beings, and we fail to show respect for the creator—we fail to show love for God. When we use creation for our purposes at the expense of creation, we “pridefully put ourselves first and relegate God to second place” (39). “It is not sharing a common humanity that makes us neighbors,” Phelps writes, “any more than it is sharing a common race, religion, or ethnicity; it is possessing the same living soul and sharing a similar ability to experience suffering and joy.... All who share with us the divine spark of conscious life, given by God at creation, are our neighbors. All fall under the protection of the commandment to love” (41-2).

Phelps explores what it means to be created in the “image” of God (Genesis 1:26), and what is likely expected of human beings. Instead of imagining that our special status offers us license to exploit, Phelps notes that our role is one of servitude. We are called upon to tend those who are weaker and more vulnerable. He reminds readers of the “hierarchy of service” in which the more powerful love and nurture those who are weaker. This, Phelps notes, is what dominion is all about. We are to rule over creation as we expect rulers of nations to “use their authority for the benefit of the people” (51).

Phelps argues that God’s covenant includes animals, that all creatures share the essential and critical breath of life that endows living beings with souls, and that all animals share in salvation and the future peaceable kingdom. He also discusses the big hot-potato: diet. Genesis 9 permits Christians to eat flesh, and Jesus ate a morsel of fish after he was resurrected. Can Christians in contemporary Western societies rightly eat other creatures?

Phelps covers the topic of fish, fishing, and the eating of fish thoroughly, including a discussion of Jesus’ likely diet, the apostles as fishermen, and the miracle of the multiplication of fishes.

Phelps focuses on God's original intent. He notes that Genesis 1 records God creating a vegan world, a world that God called "good." It was good in the sight of God, Phelps asserts, "because there was no violence" (91). By Genesis 9 God overtly permits human beings to eat flesh, but nowhere does scripture suggest that such a diet is preferred, or even good in the sight of God. Interestingly, in Genesis 9 Phelps finds a reiteration of both the original vegan diet, and of the prime directives. Phelps challenges Christians:

"Why—even if permitted—would anyone who is trying to reflect God's love and compassion... want to eat meat, eggs, or dairy? ...[T]he raising and slaughter of animals for food and fabric causes intense physical pain, emotional distress, and premature death to ten billion animals every year in the United States alone. This entire system of torment and death exists solely for those who consume animal products. If it were not for them, no animals would be confined on factory farms and no animals would be slaughtered. Not only does using animal products violate the Bible's Prime Directives, it violates universal concepts of simple human decency. Why would any person of good will—regardless of their religion—want to be responsible for so much innocent suffering and death?" (100).

Phelps notes the "obscenity" of offering thanks to God before we sink our forks and spoons into "suffering and death" lying inert on our plates. He includes a joke whereby a man in the clutches of a bear prays that the bear be a Christian so that he might be spared. As the frightened man peeks up from the ground, he sees the bear "with folded paws and bowed head. 'Lord,' the bear said, 'I thank Thee for this food which I am about to receive'" (11).

The Dominion of Love takes on the topics of animal agriculture, hunting, and fishing. Phelps reminds Christians that we are not bears of the forest. We have options and must make choices, ones that either do, or do not, reflect our spiritual beliefs. Given that the flesh industry is remarkably cruel, Phelps notes:

Tormenting and killing God's sensitive living souls is not an ethically neutral personal choice. It is a quintessentially ethical and spiritual question whose answer is dictated by the Prime Directives. We have no moral right to make choices that destroy the happiness and steal the lives of helpless beings who are absolutely at our mercy. 173

Phelps also discusses passages of scripture that might be used to support the status quo, such as the prominent place of animal sacrifice in the Old Testament, and New Testament stories that include pigs, dogs, oxen, and sparrows, especially in the works of Paul. Phelps notes that killing animals for God was not only accepted in Biblical times, but desirable, according to several key scriptural passages. But he also notes that scripture questions this deadly blood-letting; the prophets themselves challenged these ancient, gruesome rituals. On the issue of sacrifice, Phelps concludes: the "Bible forces us to choose" (82), and the prime directives summon us to choose life rather than ancient rituals of death.

The Dominion of Love includes two excellent appendixes, one that suggests further reading, and one that lists relevant biblical passages for a host of animal issues. The latter is a full twelve pages long, and is divided into helpful topics such as "animals possess souls," "meat eating," and "hunting."

Phelps's book ought to inspire those of faith to revisit scripture, and to reexamine the effects of our daily choices on creation, on nonhuman animals. *The Dominion of Love* calls Christians back to a life of love and compassion. Phelps leaves no important biblical passage unturned, and no sentient being unprotected. In a world where Christians are seldom associated with animal rights, or a vegan lifestyle, *The Dominion of Love* provides a much-needed challenge to the status quo.