

Of Indiscriminate Attacks & Wild Reactions

**An Anti-civ Anarchist Engages with ITS and *Atassa*, Their Defenders and Their
False Critics**

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Contents

[a specter is haunting the anti-civ movement or some shit]	3
“The Return of the Warrior”: Code for the Armored Leviathan	5
“The Indiscriminate Attack”: Code for Rape	10
“Misanthropy”: Code for Misogyny	11
Anthropology	14
Morality	18
<i>A Pristine Wilderness... But Whose?</i>	18
<i>Between Corrosive Consciousness and Green Platonism</i>	19
<i>...More Empirically and Less Morally</i>	21
Puritanical Nihilism	24
There is No Eco-Fascism	28
The Only Terrorist is The State (and Its Little Helpers)	35
Green Anarchy (Has Failed a Lot of People)	37
We Don’t Get to Choose What to Be	44
We Get to Choose What to Be	46

CONTENT WARNING: The following essay deals with subjects of rape, sexual assault, misogynistic murder, and patriarchy.

NOTE: The production of this text was precipitated by (and reviews) the publication of *Atassa: Readings in Eco-Extremism* and the works of Pierre Clastres.

Dedicated to the memory of the hikers recently murdered in Mexican territory, and to Lesvy Rivera, Heather Heyer, and Brad Will.

[a specter is haunting the anti-civ movement or some shit]

A handful of years ago, in the midst of fervent and continuing efforts on the part of many insurrectionary anarchists to generalize a critique of civilization itself and to push back against the lack of vision or initiative offered by left-anarchists, Individualists Tending toward the Wild (ITS) exploded onto the scene... literally. Bombs sent to nanotechnology scientists in the territory of Mexico were celebrated by many as impeccably targeted attacks against those functionaries most responsible for the increasingly nightmarish hellworld that would surely result from the innovations dreamt up and sought after by millionaires, military scientists, and statesmen. As always, discussions abounded about the method of attack and the logic within which it is deployed, about the ideas espoused by the group and the channels chosen for their dissemination. We stood then, as we stand now, against their world of colonization, slavery, and ecocide.

Some anarchists uncritically lapped up all of the rhetoric offered by the initial handful of communiqués by ITS. Some have no doubt continued to do so to this day.

Some of us were skeptical from the beginning. As insurrectionaries and heirs to the history of various strains of radicalism from time immemorial, we had acquainted ourselves with the pitfalls that line the path of the clandestine armed struggle group, especially those marked by the use of repeated claims signed with acronyms denoting a fixed identity. Revolutionary leftist guerillas like the Red Army Faction (RAF) in Germany, the Red Brigades in Italy, or the Angry Brigade in Britain engaged in spectacular, larger-than-life battles with the State, their struggles erected as a kind of superstructure upon the insurrectional and countercultural ferment of their time and place. Their politics fell somewhere on a spectrum between authoritarian and libertarian, their tactics either more specialized or more easily reproducible, their countenances that of the hero or the villain depending on the proclivities of their spectators. Later, entities like the Movement to Emancipate the Niger Delta (MEND) and the proposal of a new urban guerilla warfare by the anarchist Conspiracy Cells of Fire (CCF)¹ in the aftermath of the Greek revolt of 2008 could not have failed to arouse strong sympathies and affinities. In a time of a hopelessly resigned, unimaginative, and utterly complicit social “anarchism” in the US, each new transmission by CCF inspired and stimulated, just as egoism, nihilism, and various stripes of post-left thought exerted powerful seductions.

¹ See “The Sun Still Rises” by CCF at <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/fire-cells-conspiracy-the-sun-still-rises>

In the midst of all this, there appeared multiple insurrectionary critiques which took aim in two directions: at the camp of pacifists and movement managers, and at the specialists in armed struggle. The strategic and emotional intelligences addressed thusly were ours. Writings like “Some Notes on Insurrectionary Anarchism,”² “Letter to the Anarchist Galaxy,”³ and more recently “An Anarchist Response to Nihilists,”⁴ informed our perspectives and discussions.⁵

In addition to conditional reservations about the chosen avenue or logic of their revolt, some of us found doubtful (at least) the specific claims of ITS to be a purely wild force of nature, equivalent to an earthquake or suchlike. Simultaneously, the hyper-rationalism, detached militancy, and obnoxious pretension that marked those early communiqués raised red flags. Influences like Kaczynski and Zerzan (both of whom the group would later renounce) were familiar enough touchstones for an anti-industrial critique but, in the case of the former, beg the question of whether those so influenced will pick up and run with the socially fucked convictions of the trans- and homophobic math whiz and scientist, with his background of political conservatism. The world is a complicated place, now more than ever. Not every enemy of the State is our friend. Nor is every enemy of civilization. Nor, significantly, are they always what they claim to be.

In the course of these past few years, I had stopped tracking ITS until seeing that the anarchist publisher Little Black Cart (LBC) was carrying a new title called *Atassa*, a journal about something called “Eco-Extremism” (EE). The webstore synopsis was utterly fascinating. I bit, and soon put it together that this all had to do with the old ITS and the various permutations they’d gone through in the interim. They’d changed their name to Wild Reaction for a time (and then back to ITS?), changed aspects of their ideology, and mushroomed into a multi-cell phenomenon, apparently embracing actors on multiple continents. Could my attention have been any more rapt? Probably not. I read the book in a day and half.

Fast forward a handful of weeks to the Seattle Anarchist Bookfair, which took place a couple weeks ago, and a physical altercation is erupting over the matter of the publication of ITS.

What’s the matter?

Recently published critiques of ITS⁶ have laid bare the hostilities and affinities which mark the unfolding of a situation. On the one hand, the ITS has attacked anarchists, in fact, has tried to detonate a bomb in an anarchist squat in order to kill or injure many of them. They have threatened even more. They have stridently condemned anarchists in word and deed. They have embraced something they call the “indiscriminate attack” and have fully embraced a particular brand of the ideology of misanthropy. They claim that any human is a legitimate target for murder and have recently claimed responsibility for multiple of them: a couple slaughtered for the sin of hiking in some relatively virgin wilderness, and the May 3rd femicide of Lesvy Rivera, a woman on the campus of National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), who the group condemned for being human, for being drunk, and most obviously to some of us, for being a

² <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/sasha-k-some-notes-on-insurrectionary-anarchism>

³ <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/anonymous-letter-to-the-anarchist-galaxy>

⁴ For printable PDF and audio file: <https://resonanceaudiostro.org/2015/09/11/an-anarchist-response-to-the-nihilists-audiozine/>

⁵ See also the book *Direct Action* by Ann Hansen, and an excellent short piece with a regrettably unmemorable title: “On a few old topical questions concerning anarchists, and not only.” This latter can be found here: <https://325.nostate.net/library/escalation1.pdf>

⁶ “There’s Nothing Anarchist about Eco-Fascism: A Condemnation of ITS” can be found at <https://itsgoing-down.org/nothing-anarchist-eco-fascism-condemnation/> and “Not Our Comrades: ITS Attacks on Anarchists” can be found at <https://itsgoingdown.org/its-attacks-anarchists/>

woman. On the other hand, as evidenced by the foregoing critiques of ITS, it seems that left-anarchists are fond of characterizing the nonsense of ITS as symptomatic of any abandonment of the Left and Revolution.

Little Black Cart, publisher of *Atassa*, has issued a statement on the controversy,⁷ doubling down on their support for the editor of the journal—one Abe Cabrera—and his dissemination of eco-extremist ideas in the US. Podcast hosts associated with LBC continue to make flippant remarks about those who have allowed themselves to be manipulated by the outrage over ITS. From the introduction to the journal penned by Cabrera (“This exists, and you have to think about it, whether you like it or not.”) to the latest commentary by LBC, the refrain has been *you must engage with this*.

Without further ado...

“The Return of the Warrior”: Code for the Armored Leviathan

The essay that editor Abe Cabrera considers to be the flagship of *Atassa* is “The Return of the Warrior,” by Ramon Elani, a generous and perhaps all-too-credible reading of french political anthropologist Pierre Clastres. As we’ll see, it is an idiosyncratic, close, and very invested exegesis to boot.

Clastres was the author of *Chronicle of the Guayaki Indians* (1972), as well as the highly influential *Society Against the State* (1974) and *Archeology of Violence* (1980, published posthumously). His work was a major influence⁸ on both the french philosophical journal *Tiqqun* and theorists Deleuze and Guattari, who may never have discussed their “nomadology” or “the war-machine” without him. Clastres broke with the structuralism of his mentor Levi-Strauss, and also with what he called “ethnomarxism,”⁹ to supply vital and critical insights into the nature of hierarchical and egalitarian societies, and was explicitly concerned with the material, ritual, and social differences between life in so-called primitive society and life in the European civilization from which he hailed. In his work, he spoke of a world where tribal chiefs had no coercive power, territorial skirmishes between tribes could serve an anti-authoritarian purpose, and where things like “slavery” and “war” had a significance that we colonials were ill-equipped to truly understand. Elani sums up the main contention of Clastres on page 57 of *Atassa*: “The thesis that Clastres is best known for is simple: the permanent state of war that one finds in most indigenous societies is a strategy, deliberately employed, to retain territorial segmentation and prevent the development of the State or monolithic culture. Tribal war resists globalization.” He goes on to quote Clastres directly: “The war machine is the motor of the social machine: the primitive social being relies entirely on war, primitive society cannot survive without war. The more war there is, the less unification there is, and the best enemy of the state is war. Primitive society is society against the State in that it is society-for-war.”¹⁰

In his introduction to *Archeology of Violence*, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro writes: “Revisiting the classical problem of relations between violence and the constitution of the sovereign political

⁷ <http://littleblackcart.com/why-do-we-publish-such-objectionable-things/>

⁸ Stirner anticipates aspects of Clastres ideas, as in “...war might rather be declared against the establishment itself, the State, not a particular State, not any such thing as the mere condition of the State at the time; it is not another State (such as a ‘people’s State’) that men aim at...” if we want to get egoist about it.

⁹ See *In Search of the Primitive* by Stanley Diamond.

¹⁰ *Atassa*, 57.

body, Clastres advances a functionally positive relation between ‘war’ (or rather the meta-stable state of latent hostility between local autonomous communities) and the collective intentionality that defines what constitutes primitive societies...,” and later: “He saw in both [marxist and structuralist] positions the same fundamental flaw: both privileged economic rationality and suppressed political intentionality. The metaphysical grounding of the socius in production with Marxism and with exchange in structuralism, rendered both incapable of grasping the singular nature of primitive sociality, summarized by Clastres in the formula: ‘Society against the State.’ The expression referred to a modality of collective life based on the symbolic neutralization of political authority and the structural inhibition of ever-present tendencies to convert power, wealth, and prestige into coercion, inequality and exploitation. It also designated a politics of inter-group alliance guided by the strategic imperative of local, community-centered autonomy.”¹¹ Despite the confusion that could arise around the use of such martial language, Clastres basically posited a sort of anthropological politics of egalitarianism. This too is important for our discussion.

The significance of these ideas for any prospect of anarchy unfolding in/around/after/outside a civilized world teetering on the brink of collapse should be obvious, especially for anti-civilization and green anarchists. Furthermore, these points about violence find ample correspondence in several of the essays to be found in the latest issue (#5) of the periodical *Black Seed* (BS), which the editors (among them Elani) have seemingly used as an intermission or addendum between the first issue of *Atassa* and the apparently forthcoming second issue (expected by year’s end). A large amount of space in *BS* #5 is devoted to *Atassa* contributors and other commentary on the controversial EE tendency in a way that makes clear that boosting this current is a definite aim. In “The Way of the Violent Stars,”¹² Ramon Elani very ably conveys a point sorely missed by left-anarchists and aspiring little civil engineers of all stripes: that death, suffering, conflict, and discomfort—in a word, violence—can never be entirely be done away with, and that the effort to do so by some centralized regulatory action is very likely an inherently statist proposition, one that could only achieve “peace” for the colonists of this world at a very high cost to the colonized and excluded. Elani, underneath cloying layers of romanticism about his pet Warrior and his holy Violence (a romanticism decried when applied to egalitarianism by green anarchists, labelled a figment of residual Leftism by ITS/EE), relentlessly floats his Clastrean point: the “violence” of the civilized world and that of primitive society are two different beasts. One could say the former is a centripetal force, confining and soulless, while the latter is a centrifugal force, indeed, is necessary not only for some of the pedestrian vicissitudes of an actually autonomous and sustainable life, but for the preservation of the basic kernel of that life against globalizing (read: capitalist) influences/intrusions.

Whatever insights provided by Clastres, whatever utility or even brilliance his work may prove to possess, it would be silly to base one’s entire framework for understanding civilization, primitive society, violence and war on the corpus or vision of just one thinker, or one academic discipline. For anarchists this is self-evident, a truism toward which the publishers of *Atassa* and the editorship of *Black Seed* are extremely congenial if we judge by the critique of ideology put forth by some of them for years. On a related note, the latest issue of *BS* includes a new and improved version of “Science is Capital” by Dot Matrix which, along with other pieces, quite rightly problematizes anthropology as one of civilization’s sciences. In the section, “Fragments

¹¹ Viveiros de Castro’s introduction to Clastres, *Archeology of Violence*, 12.

¹² *Black Seed* #5, 18.

on Why Anthropology Can't Be Anarchist," she refutes the premises of left-liberal anthropologists like David Graeber while amply conveying that anthropology itself serves the purpose of dividing the studied culture from the one doing the studying. Anthropology has its origins in the maintenance of this wall between "civilized" and "primitive."

Nonetheless, Elani has made his favorite aspects of Clastres the entire cornerstone of his theory on violence and the primitive. Which aspects are these? Before going further there are several nuances of Clastres' work, even on its own terms, that should be understood. Per the above-mentioned critiques of ideology, academic sciences, and anthropology, Clastres was indeed a white intellectual who went to study the "Indians" of South America. He stayed for multiple brief periods of time with people from various indigenous cultures and tribes, and not only with immediate-return hunter gatherers (some of the hunters he stayed with had even been agriculturists in the past). For example, the Yanomami tribe that he wrote about were horticulturalists. By the time Clastres got to them, they had been the subject for a couple hundred years of various incursions by the armored servants of civilization.

In the seminal primitivist essay *Against His-story! Against Leviathan!*,¹³ Fredy Perlman describes the process by which formerly free peoples, in the course of resisting their colonization by the mega-machine¹⁴ of civilization—that is, by a State-based society—undertake to assemble themselves into a counter-force worthy of fighting off their new foe only to end up thereby encasing themselves within the entrails of their own un-living beast, the artifice whose only life is what it steals from them or compels them to give, a monster who Perlman called *Leviathan* but who others call *Capital*. The Yanomami encountered by Clastres likely could not have avoided putting on some of the armor of the Leviathan themselves in their attempts to survive and repel a new and incredibly equipped enemy. A history of attempts at genocide, of slaughter and slave-hunting expeditions against them, and a new order of civilized patriarchy advanced by those colonizing their lands has to be taken into account when contextualizing the things they may have had to teach Clastres (and, through him, us). It is not only the biases of the author and the conditions for his being published that should be borne in mind, but the entire arc of the relatively recent story of invasion.

There is a great deal of variation between the Latin American tribes whose company Clastres kept in those days. Some groups were rather more macho and warlike, a fact that disproves any simplistic grand narratives about peoples who are purely egalitarian by sheer dint of being indigenous. This again raises some objections to a certain essentialism to be found among green and anti-civ anarchists, so-called primitivists, and others who could be accused of advancing a re-packaged marxist structuralism, as opposed to the post-structuralist leanings of Clastres.

Nonetheless, as a consequence of some of the foregoing Clastres failed or refused to distinguish in his category of "societies against the state" between small hunting bands composed of 6 or 7 people and the partially-stratified, in-the-process-of-civilizing, agricultural villages composed of thousands or tens of thousands of people, with their incipient or flagrant patriarchy. Not to mention all the shades of difference to be found in-between. In other words, on a certain level of his analysis, nomadic societies with an insignificant or curtailed domestication component and societies based on agricultural domestication and sedentism were both societies against the

¹³ Perlman, *Against His-story! Against Leviathan!*

¹⁴ "Mega-machine" is more than just a rhetorical flourish but a fairly specific concept in urban studies set forth by Lewis Mumford.

state. Even bringing up these fudged or missed distinctions will be enough, I'm sure, to provoke snickers of condescension or howls of laughter from the nihilists friendly to the EE tendency that I am a "moralist," a purist hopelessly invested in an artificial dichotomy erected by science. If this is puzzling, I suggest you read on.

In addition to whatever patriarchy was found on his travels, it's fairly obvious in reading Clastres that he himself is some kind of male chauvinist, in the good French intellectual style, who occasionally starts blathering on about the ideas of gender and sexuality that he supposedly locates in the cosmology and customs of the people with whom he lived, but without ever really offering the reader any reason to believe that this is how these people understand themselves, or that any of their material practices confirm the sexism Clastres seems so eager to confirm.

"The Return of the Warrior," then, is Elani's paean to what he calls the "most elegant theorist" of the warrior. And what do we find there? What, for Elani, does this elegance consist of? And what has engendered the taste for it?

Right off the bat, Elani describes in adulatory tones the brutal raids of young Yanomami men upon neighboring camps, who beat their mothers back with the paddles of canoes and bite them when the latter try to stop them from embarking. You can feel his excitement. With italicized quotes he stresses Clastres observation that boys in Yanomami society are "*encouraged to demonstrate their violence and aggression. Children play games that are often brutal. Parents avoid consoling them. The result of this pedagogy is that it forms warriors.*"¹⁵ And later: "Fostering this care for violence is the main task of primitive pedagogy and European observers have frequently remarked with horror on the brutal violence that is often done to very small children, who are given to understand this as a prelude to the life of war that they will enter."¹⁶ In fact, Elani approvingly, glowingly, and repeatedly quotes European colonizers as credible sources on the character of the peoples whose destruction they sought, and he writes that upon arrival in the New World, "they were struck without exception by the love of war they found among the people."¹⁷ One of the colonizers whose estimation of the insatiability of an Algonkin warrior is esteemed as exemplary is no less a countenance than that of Samuel de Champlain, "Father of New France," navigator, cartographer, draftsman, soldier, explorer, geographer, ethnologist, diplomat, and chronicler, maker of the first accurate map of the east coast of Canada.¹⁸ I can't think of any self-interested or dubious motive for why these observers would remark with horror, can you? Maybe it's because they had a vested interest in making indigenous peoples look like warlike apes to justify their civilizing colonial ventures. Maybe underlying that was a perceptual bias, that spiritual illness that inheres in the very culture we claim to be trying to fight.

After reiterating that primitive war is a means of preventing radical inequality,¹⁹ we learn that "This is the complexity of primitive society: there are enemies and there are allies [...] Such alliances are created and maintained primarily through the exchange of women, who are also accumulated as spoils of war. This paradox, the exchange of women in securing alliances and the capture of women in war, illustrates, for Clastres the disdain toward exchange economy. Why

¹⁵ *Atassa*, 56.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 67-68.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 73. See also *Beyond Geography: The Western Spirit Against the Wilderness* by Frederick Turner, and *Off the Map* by Chellis Glendinning for more on the connection between civilization, colonization, and the making of maps.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 62.

should we trade for women when we can simply go get some for ourselves: “*the risk [of war] is considerable (injury, death) but so are the benefits: they are total, the women are free.*”²⁰

If these bits of pedagogy and rape culture sound suspiciously rather like modern compulsions, imperatives, and fantasies to the critically-minded reader, you should know that Elani agrees with you. After assuring us that “we can say that primitive man is by definition a warrior,”²¹ he goes on to expound upon the nature of this eternal identity: “Simply put, the warrior’s passion for war stems from his desperate, wild hunger for prestige, honor, and glory. This fact helps us understand the existential dimensions of the act of warring. The warrior can only realize himself if society confers meaning upon him. Prestige is the content of this meaning. The community awards prestige to the warrior in exchange for accomplishing specific exploits, which as we have seen in turn increases the prestige and honor of the community as a whole.”²² And more to the point:

We have said that scalping an enemy is a requisite for entrance into warrior society but it is only the beginning of his path. The warrior, like Hegel’s slave, is always in a state of becoming. Just as he inherits nothing from the glorious acts of his fathers, with each scalp he takes he must begin again. It does not matter how many scalps a warrior has hanging on the walls of his hut. Once he stops taking scalps, his glory is at an end. The quest and hunger for prestige is a compulsion. Clastres, who correctly places the warrior in an existential context, writes, “the warrior is in essence condemned to forging ahead.” He never has enough scalps. His bloodlust is never quenched. The warrior is thus paradoxically a quintessentially modern figure. He is always dissatisfied and restless. He is a neurotic. He is formed and conditioned by conflicted forces, a soul that yearns for glory but is dependent on a society to recognize and reward it: “*for each exploit accomplished, the warrior and society utter the same judgement: the warrior says, That’s good, but I can do more, I can increase my glory. Society says, That’s good, but you should do more, obtain our recognition of superior prestige.*” This paradox is all the more acutely felt as the exploits and the glory they confer are exclusively individual. The warrior does not embody a team mentality. It is every man for his own glory.²³

Here, we are dealing with people who refuse to entertain the idea that the exclusively male warrior/barbarian archetype is arguably more a civilized than an uncivilized figure, but who simultaneously advocate for his ascendancy or eternality as such.²⁴ If this is not enough to show that the hyper-patriarchal drivel of the eco-extremist tendency is an extremely *confused* conflation of the elements of a primitive and of a civilized life then allow me to redouble my effort before we part ways.

²⁰ Ibid., 64-65.

²¹ Ibid., 66.

²² Ibid., 69.

²³ Ibid., 71-72.

²⁴ An adjunct or scrambled version of this can be seen among some of the newer crop of *volkish* fascists like Jack Donovan, Wolves of Vinland, etc.

“The Indiscriminate Attack”: Code for Rape

The essay that follows “The Return of the Warrior” and that gives the collection its name is Abe Cabrera’s “Atassa: Lessons of the Creek War (1813-1814).”²⁵ It is a chronicle of the hostilities between the burgeoning civilization of the United States and the Creek, or Muskogee, Confederation, agriculturalists of the Mississippian region, who by the early 19th century found themselves beset on all sides by the settlements, trade items and technologies of the colonizers, and were part-way through the uneven, multi-valent process of acclimating themselves to this new presence. A nativist, anti-assimilationist tendency took root among certain segments of Creek society, and the Red Stick War (what Cabrera terms “the Creek Primitivist War”) ensued, so-named for the red painted traditional war club, or *atassa*, wielded by the Creek in their attacks.

For those of us who accept that violence is a necessary part of anarchist or liberatory struggle, the aforementioned chronicle is studded with all manner of lurid descriptions that we are bound to experience as righteous. Few things are more stirring than the agitational words of Tecumseh included in the piece:

*Kill the old Chiefs, friends of peace; kill the cattle, the hogs, and fowls; do not work, destroy the wheels and the looms, throw away your ploughs, and everything used by the Americans... Shake your war clubs, shake yourselves: you will frighten the Americans, their [fire]arms will drop from their hands, the ground will become a bog, and mire them, and you may knock them on the head with your war clubs...*²⁶

The section of the essay that follows shortly on the heels of this quotation is “The Massacre at Fort Mims as Re-Wilding,” in which one of the bloodiest attacks of the Creeks is related. Cabrera is certain to assure us: “What followed was a slaughter of exceptional brutality, but well in keeping with the ethos of Creek vengeance in war,” and quotes a number of white Historians and anthropologists (who seemingly don’t all agree on the precise extent to which this behavior was preceded among the Creek) about the “purifying blaze” that would now rid the nation of the apostate Creeks.²⁷ Throughout the piece, Cabrera is certain to demarcate the concepts and the actions that are admirable and in keeping with an ancient wisdom. This mostly takes the form of a kind of inverted Noble Savage proposition that always and in all cases upholds whatever brutality was done by the Creeks of 200 years ago and posits such acts and principles as eternal, salutary, and Wild.

When Cabrera arrives at discussing the fate of the women at Fort Mims, his laudatory tone and narrative is utterly unbroken. With an incipient giddiness consonant with everything he’s written up to now, he quotes at length about the gratuitous mass rape that took place at Fort Mims. Not a word of contextualization of the horrors of civilized war, or of war at all, is proffered. After this—his crown-jewel block quotation—he begins the next paragraph, “Far from being acts of gratuitous or extraordinary violence, what occurred at Fort Mims was well within the cultural and spiritual logic of traditional Creek culture.”²⁸ To prove his point, he quotes another white historian at length.

²⁵ *Atassa*, 77.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 89.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 91.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 92.

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

“Misanthropy”: Code for Misogyny

That is the case of these disastrous ones. Axiomatic fruit of this pitiful civilization that they say they want to destroy. Only in the deepest entrails of this decay can such decaying behaviors manifest themselves. It is in the sewers of this society where these pathologies are nourished and the most delirious fascistoid rhetoric takes shape. That is where these deformations are formed and the irrepressible protagonistic anxieties throw them at the reflectors.

Its roots are none other than the nauseous dung of social dysfunction. After a sad childhood and a frustrated adolescence, harassed by bullying from the cradle and traumatised from their family, they begin to channel their frustrations and all the accumulated self-hatred and project it without ethical mediations. That is the Individualist Tending toward the Wild. His misogynist discourse and his authoritarian actions are the result.

– from “ITS, or the rhetoric of decay” (Joint statement of insurrectional groups in Mexican territory)²⁹

Why is no one talking about the fact that Abe Cabrera, Ramon Elani, and *Atassa* are on a pro-rape mission, and that LBC is enabling it? That people are now getting into physical skirmishes to defend the honor of a rape publication? Why have multiple people on Goodreads given *Atassa* 5-star reviews? Are they not careful readers? Did they just not care? Do they agree with Elani and Cabrera? Or are they only thirsty for material that ostensibly represents the hardcore against civilization, as so many of us are?

Why are people talking about this only or primarily in terms of the physical threat to anarchist comrades in Mexico, but not in terms of the physical threat that otherwise inheres in its pages, the threat that is constantly and ubiquitously operative in this, our late modernity, the one being neatly and deliberately re-packaged in an ill-conceived attempt to retrofit “the Warrior” as the one true antithesis of civilization, yet somehow also “the quintessentially modern figure?” The published commentators have mostly been men, but even the comments that talk about the femicide of Lesvy Berlín Rivera Osorio have not mentioned that LBC is now staunchly defending their right to give a platform to theorists who are *intentionally and actively constructing a justification for a practice of rape*, whose outlook is totally compatible with ITS (who they obviously worship) and treating them as serious thinkers.

Are we supposed to take seriously all these men for whom this is an abstract issue? Who don’t have to worry about being the perpetual target of straight edge misogynist zealots and run-of-the-mill rapists? Who stand around their fire circles casting smug and detached judgements on matters that exist as lifeless objects to them, to be manipulated, doing their own anarchist renditions of legislating about abortion?

²⁹ <https://325.nostate.net/2017/08/03/its-or-the-rhetoric-of-decay-joint-statement-of-insurrectional-groups-in-mexican-territory/>

Why is it so often that those who claim to be “pessimistic about all human endeavors” seem bound to express this alleged pessimism most potently as a hatred of women?³⁰ One wonders at how deeply the misogyny runs in those for whom rape is not part of the reason for their pessimism, their alleged misanthropy, but instead is their stock response to the despair, a check in their own plus column, the form taken by their revenge upon “the world.”

It’s not just that they claim to hate humans but never kill themselves or each other. It’s not just that they dress up “the indiscriminate attack” in the clothes of a serious theoretical proposition as cover for the fact that they increasingly only attack women, faggots and pussies. It’s not only that they profess their hatred for anarchists while eagerly claiming a lineage with Severino Di Giovanni, the Italian anarchist and anti-fascist transplant to Argentina of a century ago, who indeed placed bombs with little regard for the possibility of collateral damage, but never randomly, always targeting the powerful. It’s not only that their fanboys in the US write fawning essays which praise an anthropologically-derived politics of egalitarianism while simultaneously salivating over one of the oldest forms of domination. It’s not just that they took the subdued social reaction of Kaczynski and went big with it. Nor that they approve of ISIS and whatever bogeyman they’ll choose to wow us with next week.

The insurrectional groups in Mexican territory were right to bring up childhood and adolescence, bullying and family abuse, frustration and self-hatred, in their statement on ITS. If the reader will indulge me, I invite you to go back to the block quote above by Elani, the one that describes the Warrior as a neurotic in need of constant validation. Read that quote and the surrounding passages again and ask yourself if the emotional and psychological reality celebrated therein is distinguishable from that of an MRA (Men’s Rights Activist) or pick-up artist? Could this not describe any alt-right keyboard warrior, any Proud Boy, any basement-dwelling tankie or even just your garden variety avaricious businessman or techie scum?

What is it about our civilized culture that renders all of these aspiring patriarchs so endlessly the same while conferring on them (at least for each other) the sheen of gravitas and cool? Why, everywhere that we might seek a portal out of this madness, do we only find a mirror of this culture? Many people have written compellingly on this very subject, but this is probably not the place for a long discourse on the nature of the arrested development of the civilized.³¹ Suffice to say that while I might agree with Scott Campbell on little else in the grand scheme of things, I find one of his descriptions particularly apt: ITS as the jilted ex-boyfriend of anarchy. The one who still calls you baby (although you are more like the mother) and wants to get back together with you but also says he hates you and wants you to die. Wait.. is that him in the driveway now? The US skills for the eco-extremist tendency conjure up a compulsively defiant child, fondling himself or his new toy all the more feverishly for being called “Bad!” and refusing to come to the dinner table.

But these are not actually children and this is not actually about manners at the dinner table of anarchism. These are grown men and this is about them trying to fly their rape agenda under the radar. More accurately, these are *man-children*, who are quite a different creature than either actual children (the patriarchal abuse of which leads to the perpetuation of this kind of domination) or of actually mature men (who we might be able to imagine even if we have never

³⁰ See “How Deep is Deep Ecology? With an Essay-Review on Woman’s Freedom” by George Bradford (particularly the essay on “woman’s freedom”) for a cursory glance at how hatred and oppression of women plays into population pressures and other problems inherent to civilization.

³¹ See, among others, the works of Paul Shepard, Alice Miller, Hugh Brody, etc.

met more than one or two). In a colossal insult to your intelligence they insist that any qualm about the actions of ITS or the publishing of *Atassa* is a screaming example or at least a vestige of leftist morality and civility. They don't get why you feel so strongly.

Writers like Mary Zeiss Stange, Paul Shepard, and others long ago debunked the idea that hunting as a lifeway and subsistence strategy is a simple and natural precursor to rape and war, Shepard referring to the jumble of seemingly-related elements as "the carnal confusion." The confusion is great indeed (and not without reason) and is responsible for the second wave and eco-feminist dichotomy of essence that roughly breaks down along lines of woman = nature = peace = gathering = healing, etc., while on the other hand, man = culture = war = hunting = violence, etc. Those of us against civilization have often been at pains to explain the fallacy that ultimately underlies this formulation and its many poison blossoms, the altered germ that sprouts the gendered nightmare.³² Now we find ourselves stagnating again, choking on the eco-extremists' hell bent eagerness to *confirm* it with the bogus suggestion of some ancient antecedent for their pathetic hurt-boy-lashes-out psychopathology. Meanwhile, ITS is so bad at war, so bad at being the nomadic, cannibal warriors of their own deranged imaginations that all they can muster is collateral damage, the "indiscriminate attack," being their attempt to maintain their aura or nimbus of being the Most Down while actually camouflaging their own letting off the hook of those most responsible (impotence may be too embarrassing of a word to admit). To call their recent claims emblematic of an attack on low-hanging fruit may be understatement to the point of absurdity, an insult added to the injury done to their "random" targets.

It has been said that the crime of passion *par excellence* is murder, not that calculated tool of human domestication and control: rape. However old the precedent for rape may be, we can be assured that it is coterminous with the precedent for *killing your rapist*. Would we not instantly recognize it as ridiculous and deplorable if one were to declare their opposition to civilization and follow it with their declaration of love for the Industrial Revolution and its consequences, or to then argue in favor of a global regime of annual monocrop agriculture, or sing praises of the nuclear bomb or the border? Is it any less ridiculous to jerk off to ITS? To be their platform?

The desires of women not to be raped or killed and of anarchists not to be threatened with death have been dismissed *a priori* by those who have cadaverous mimics named "Wild Nature" and "The Warrior" on their tongues. But if "Wild Nature" told the ITS to murder a drunk woman, if it told Abe Cabrera to write of rape in laudatory tones, if it told Elani to glorify the kidnapping of women and brutalizing of children, what might it tell you to do with the snakes in our midst? And if somewhere there are warriors (or some concept thereof) who sustain our attention or command our respect, it is especially not the case with the Warrior as conceived here by his biggest fans among the postmodern misogynist techno-industrial city dwellers, who imagine, childlike, that he is everything that they are and yet everything that they are not. In the Warrior *they have sought out to cast the very figure who confirms their own deteriorated and destroyed experience in the world, their own schizoid quality of self-renunciation and self-aggrandizement, the pendulum swing of depression and grandiosity, their own original and eternal condition in the world.*

³² See "Against the Gendered Nightmare" from issue #2 of *Baedan*, available at: <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/baedan-against-the-gendered-nightmare>

From our current vantage in this imbroglio of the modern, there is much that cannot simply be trusted. A great many figures may arise in our purview possessing some mixture of both admirable and deplorable qualities, sired by the inferno that embraces them and us.

Anthropology

For now, let's put aside the fact that half of what Elani does is misunderstand Clastres, and half of what he does is willfully cherry-pick the parts most congenial to a misogynistic analysis and make precisely those parts into the basis of his rapey, self-contradictory, abstract, romanticized, and alienated theory of the Warrior and Violence. Despite this firm grounding, after writing "The Return of the Warrior," Elani penned "What Does Green Anarchy Mean Today?," one of two introductory essays for *Black Seed #5*, in which he writes:

While it is certainly true that we rely on anthropological and ethnographic works to give us a picture of how many indigenous communities lived, as green anarchists, we cannot ignore the racism and colonialism that inspired and made possible much of that work. Furthermore, we absolutely cannot put forward a vision for a way of life that depends entirely on the truth or accuracy of these historically-situated anthropological studies. If we put anthropology forward as our main evidence for being green anarchists, that means we are accepting a whole series of assumptions based in fantasies of cultural superiority, hegemony, and scientific objectivity, some of the very pillars of civilization that we oppose. Anthropological works are taken seriously because they are academic and scientific. Ways of knowing that our ancestors have relied on for millennia are dismissed because they are mystical or superstitious. This is an imbalance that needs to be corrected within green anarchy. If we argue and fight against totalizing systemic thinking but uncritically fall back on anthropology as the foundation of our position, then we have a huge problem.³³

I quote this passage at such length because, like the above-mentioned "Science is Capital," by Dot Matrix, it is a succinct and eloquent statement of the problematic (oops!) nature of anthropology, and it makes its argument while putting forth a green anarchist analysis still lost on the defenders of civilization.

The topic is not new. An older version of the Dot Matrix essay appeared in the "a(nthro)pologies" issue of the post-left anarchist journal *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* (#61, Spring/Summer 2006), along with Kaczynski's skewering of anarcho-primitivist interpretations of anthropology, and a critical appraisal of the (non-) relationship of anthropology to anarchy by Lawrence Jarach called "Anthropology: Want Some Anarchy With That?"³⁴ In the Viveiros de Castro essay which introduces none other than Clastres' *Archeology of Violence*, we find: "For Clastres... anthropology or ethnology is 'a science of man, but not of any man' (Clastres 1968: 77). An art of distances, a paradoxical science, anthropology's mission is to

³³ *Black Seed #5*, 4-5.

³⁴ Jarach's piece available online at: <http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/lawrence-jarach-anthropology-want-some-anarchy-with-that>

See also my essay-review "Anarchism: A Crisis for Art, Science, and Politics" at: <https://subversivebeing.wordpress.com/2013/08/12/anarchism-a-crisis-for-art-science-and-politics/>

establish a dialogue with those peoples whose silencing was the condition of its own possibility as a science—the Others of the West, the ‘savages’ or ‘primitives,’ collectives that escaped the Great Attractor of the State.”³⁵ In other words, in its critique of anthropology *Black Seed* is setting out from necessarily well-trod territory. So it’s funny in a morbid kind of way that Elani thinks we cannot discount the racism and colonialism behind anthropology but is absolutely banking on us discounting the patriarchal (and colonial) ways of “knowing” that produced his favorite hits. However, there are other issues I would like to call attention to.

First, I submit for the consideration of the reader that, simply put, the eco-extremists and their friends are *against* references to anthropology when anarcho-primitivists and other green anarchists use them, and are *for* references to anthropology when eco-extremist’s use them. The same holds true in a parallel set of conversation about “egalitarian politics,” “romanticism,” and “mythology.” Whatever the proportions of the cocktail of contradiction, hypocrisy, and opportunism is responsible for the taste left over after digesting *Atassa* and *Black Seed #5*, it really is that blunt and obvious. What else can you say about one who chastises green anarchists for some amount of reliance on anthropology, striking the dispassionate, removed pose, when his *entire framework* for understanding violence and the primitive is based on a shoddy reading of the corpus of someone who may just be the Jim Morrison of anthropology?³⁶ Elani who relies utterly on Clastres, and to argue that the State is necessary for rape and child murder to not be a part of your righteously primitive and violent (read: quintessentially modern) life? Elani who then proceeds on an eco-fem note to quote Starhawk at the end his meditation on What Green Anarchy Means Today, as if none of us are paying attention? In his other essay in *BS#5* (“The Way of the Violent Stars”) Elani even speaks out against violence toward women! I guess he had to throw a bone to the “closeted leftists” in his readership/own head?

Not only are *Black Seed*’s profuse denunciations of anthropology in contradiction to the underpinnings of Elani, Cabrera, and other contributors (i.e. are selective), but furthermore they fall flat in light of being more-or-less aimed at John Zerzan and Kevin Tucker—the cryptic targets of most every report in this family feud, the Hatfields to *Black Seed*’s McCoys. However valid these critiques may be when applied to the old guards of green anarchy, they just seem strangely implausible when attempting to apply them to any of the anti-civilization anarchists in my own life. The bases for a rejection of civilization are numerous and varied: from the experiential, phenomenological, the social and psychological, to the historical, the material, the anti-colonial,³⁷ to the ecological, the anti-hierarchical, the philosophical and magical and anecdotal, the nihilist and animist, the heretical... The list goes on and on. *New stars twinkle and blaze into life the longer you gaze at this constellation.*

Of course, *disciplines* as such all have their origins, their internal logics (of submission), and their normative uses (i.e. capitalist social control), none of which can be overcome except with

³⁵ Viveiros de Castro’s introduction to Clastres, *Archeology of Violence*, 14.

³⁶ Viveiros de Castro, on some of the pitfalls of Clastres: “A difficult author, then. It is precisely his best readers who need to (re)learn to read him, after so many years of being convinced to forget and forsake him. They must remain attentive as much to his virtues as to his defects: to appreciate his anthropological insights and his sensitivity as a field ethnographer—*Chronicle of the Guayaki Indians* is a masterwork of the ethnographic genre—but also to resist his sometimes excessive finality, rather than timidly averting one’s eyes before his hyperboles and hesitations, his hastinesses and imprecisions. *Resisting* Clastres, but not stopping to read him; and resisting *with* Clastres, too: confronting with and in his thought what remains alive and unsettling.” Elani apparently missed some of this.

³⁷ Recall the opening lines of Stanley Diamond’s *In Search of the Primitive*: “Civilization originates in conquest abroad and repression at home. Each is an aspect of the other.”

the destruction of the whole civilized framework. But perhaps in the case of each of these discrete zones of inquiry, these sciences, the point isn't merely to sit atop a simple for-or-against proposition, closed off in every respect and for all time—even if we *are* decidedly against the separation of these spheres in the first place, the locking up of life within their bounds. (Are we to reject those aspects of anthropology that are confirmed by our own living experience, or by the struggles of traditional indigenous communities for decolonization here and now? What about the aspects that have deepened our hatred for and resolve against civilization, the ones that coincide with our mythic, intuitive, ancestral or animistic ways of knowing? What about the stories told by archeology that are identical to the fate of our own society? What about the parts of politics and history that make me want to fight the police and the fascists, guardians of this order and its extractive apparatuses? Are all these materials completely taboo? Anathema to the true eco-extremist or nihilist? The “monks of this age,” as the introduction to *Black Seed #5* has it?)

Maybe the book-slingers of the Bay Area and the editor of the eco-extremist journal are out of touch (I'm sure there must be some other explanation!), but I don't know a single anti-civ anarchist, especially in the past handful of years, who isn't conversant about the inherent biases and problems with anthropology and archeology (or who wouldn't be if books were their thing). But probably neither would they attempt to maintain that *nothing at all* could be gleaned from them. It might be a little premature to dismiss entirely the potential for anthropology in a certain kind of understanding of the big picture of civilization (as Elani acknowledges) but it would be that much more absurd to refuse to bring the same critical lens to bear on any of the sciences, any of the works of philosophy, history, sociology, psychology, on anything academic at all. For that matter, if we're going to be strict about it, we could question the validity of the existence of publishing houses and internet broadsides and trolling-as-art-form and anarchist scenes and post-anarchist scenes, or of the experience of our own lives lived in cities and towns, suburbs and countrysides.

Still, if you can read *The Other Side of Eden* by Hugh Brody and throw it aside as colonial drivel or the sheer product of a romantic imagination then I probably want nothing much to do with you.³⁸ If you'd cast it over categorically for a riveting and rational history of the Spanish Anarchists who joined the government instead, I might think you're a well-meaning imbecile or maybe not on the same team as me. If you read it and came back with a theory about how awesome rape is, I might think you accidentally read Clastres instead of Brody, but I would most definitely consider you an enemy, with all the wildness anyone could hope to ascribe to that conflict.

At the end of the day, anthropology must go along with all the rest. At any rate, the attack on civilization has no need of it. In fact, the attack on civilization places anthropology in its crosshairs, as we've seen. A thoroughgoing and damning assessment of civilization need not rely on anthropology any more than it does upon “mysticism,” idealism, “reproductive futurity,” or any other of the single issues that people use to throw out the most radically insurgent critique possible.³⁹ Perhaps all of these separate areas of study taken together tell a fairly coherent tale, even if it only amounts to one more catalog of the civilized, the lament of the conscientious

³⁸ I might say the same for some of the work of Richard B. Lee, Eleanor Leacock, Layla AbdelRahim, James Woodburn, Colin Turnbull, etc.

³⁹ Once more, an immediate thorough engagement with every issue of the *Baedan* journal is very suggested.

objector that has never been quite enough to conclude a war. But as long as we're going to be keeping up this literate way of communicating with each other (rather than *doing things we never tried*), if we are succumbing to the tendency toward verbosity among the civilized, putting out our little papers and books and essays from alienated little spheres of life, referencing and citing our little constellations, dusty old men, taxonomies of ideas, then I maintain the importance of understanding how and why the outcome of one's theory could indeed lead to a qualitatively different (and perhaps opposed) practice depending on whether it is informed by one discipline over another, but also by one writer over another, one person, people, or history over another, one set of observations or questions over another, or even one part of any of these over another.

Arguably, the maintenance of this bookishness *does* seem like an increasingly silly, stupid, cowardly, idle, and alienated form of "intervention" as things heat up. Regardless, one wonders: what would have been the result had Ramon Elani based his theories not on whichever Warrior most faithfully mirrored his cold, empty mental landscape, but on the veritable *libraries full* of studies, encounters, tales, anecdotes, documentation, and advocacy for those indigenous tribes—and particularly foraging cultures—who are utterly indulgent with their children, where pedagogy is absent, where gender domination is not a norm, cultures in which terminology is lacking for several kinds of abuse because *they are exceedingly rare or non-existent*, societies in which "someone always intervenes"⁴⁰ in the event that there is an attempt at domestic battering or any taking advantage of the weak by the strong, etc. It has been seen that some forms of play, of gambling, of conventions in the divvying up of meat or other bits of material culture can be as effective as violence in the maintenance of abolition of hierarchy.

But I guess when a journal written squarely in the historical-academic mode of the colonizing culture (and not really in any kind of mythological or mystical vein) describes things that happened 140 years ago (as in, my great, great grandparents could have been involved) as the doings of "the Ancients,"⁴¹ you can't expect too much in the way of nuance. It feels like the editors of *Atassa* and *Black Seed* aren't really casting off anthropology and suchlike, so much as vastly foreshortening their purview, keeping the form basically intact while insisting that it is with *these* journals, with *these* perspectives and actors, with *this* anthropological interpretation that an entire milieu must continue to engage, willing or not. The ones who would take me to task, pointing to the sinful stain of my vestigial leftism (or whichever caricature is convenient at the moment) for romanticizing the peoples and places I've read about, for placing them in some compartmental box of my own anthropology-informed wishful thinking labelled "uncivilized," are the same people who write shit like this: "The shape that looms up before us is a monolith. A vision of death, stasis, calcification. Without movement or energy. But the crystalline soul of the primitive world, cold, hard, and perfect, is shattered, burst open and given life in the flaming heart of war."⁴² Crystalline, cold, hard, perfect. Like a machine. Possibly like Elani's laptop. Maybe like the standards or the emotional repertoire of his mother or father.

It has been suggested that we must avail ourselves of any weapons at our disposal and learn the lessons of the wild and uncontrollable of our own era, and not just pine for an unknowable past of pure foraging that we are ever eager to confirm in every archeology report or dusty an-

⁴⁰ I cannot currently recall the study in which I read this line but I believe this is a phrase of Richard B. Lee, or else some other contributor to the anthology *Limited Wants, Unlimited Means: A Reader on Hunter-Gatherer Economics and the Environment* edited by John Gowdy.

⁴¹ "Lessons Left by the Ancients: The Battle of Little Big Horn," from *Regression #3*, collected on page 47 of *Atassa*.

⁴² Elani again, from *Atassa*, 63.

thropological text that we read. One can surely agree with this (as far as it goes) without missing one of the central ironies of this situation as a whole: it's the eco-extremists and their fan club, advocates and proud echoes of Wild Nature, who are now re-iterating the old charge that anti-civ anarchists are only the latest in a long line of foolish dreamers who themselves invented the categories of "primitive" and "civilized" as a sentimental tribute to a passing and irrecoverable world. Under the guise of being the most extreme eco-tendency, the most intractable, they are in fact the latest in a long line of the resigned who argue, loudly—with communiques and journals, with essays about the Warrior, with explosions and murders—that there is no outside. Their motivations for saying so may require more clarification.

Morality

A Pristine Wilderness... But Whose?

My own version of snatching at low-hanging fruit in this essay is to point out that there are few things more moralistic than the puritanical, murderous fury of those for whom you should *take only pictures and leave only footprints*. That ITS and EE are actually much more extreme than any imaginary militant wing of the conservation movement doesn't change the nature of their clownish fundamentalism, like a cult of passionate recyclers come unhinged. Not only is their hatred of the body and of the feminine anticipated in the hyper-rationalism and iron-clad dichotomies of their very first communiques those years ago, but it clings to every aspect of their claim for the murders of those hikers for being in the woods/world. While pretending to be against humanism, in practice they advance one of the main tenets in the history of its application: that human animals don't belong in the wild. *Oh, we who are not of this world.*

But lest we forget and momentarily think that we are dealing with a sincere tendency here, I'll remind you that it's impossible to tell if ITS claimed responsibility for those murders for the reasons given, or because they were jealous of the momentary happiness they imagined those hikers to possess, or maybe because their grade school crushes didn't like them back. Imagine the most virulent pack of vegan straight-edge⁴³ hardcore bros all gloating over choking a woman to death—or maybe a roundtable of inquisitors and witch-hunters—and you basically have a working pastiche of the worldview of ITS.

That is obvious enough, and even *Black Seed* editor/contributor Aragorn! would call the ITS on their moralism if pressed about it or if he thought book sales depended on it. After all, it *might* prove difficult to defend something that closely resembles a Maoist cadre/religious cult painted green with some ham-fisted Nietzschean elitism sprinkled on top when there is an ever-present critique of "moralism," "morality," "Manichaeism," and "green platonism" to be found in the pages of your publications.

At least Bellamy Fitzpatrick is troubled enough, in a new critique of the ITS appearing in *BS #5* called "Revolutionary Dissonance: Why Eco-Extremism Matters for Those Who Hate It Most,"⁴⁴ (henceforth referred to as "RevDis"), to unequivocally attribute to the group a long slide from being a splinter fringe of anti-civilization thought into their current station as the true believers of a flagrantly self-contradictory and hyper-moralistic theological/spiritual war. He rightly

⁴³ ITS specifically uses "drug user" as an insult, and not in the "it is not my pleasure" kind of way, but in the moralistic denouncement kind of way.

⁴⁴ *Black Seed* #5, 20.

skewers them for advancing the “misanthropic distortion—misanthropy itself being a convoluted form of anthropocentrism, in which reified Humanity trades the role of the lone hero for that of the singular villain.” Although, as we see with Fitzpatrick’s characteristically intelligent and impeccably consistent critique, it is possible to discuss almost every asinine aspect of the group and the *Atassa* project *except* for patriarchy, misogyny, rape, femicide, etc., all of which garner nary a mention in the small masterpiece. Why comment on the air we’re breathing, right?⁴⁵

The same holds true for John Jacobi’s “Eco-Extremism or Extinctionism,”⁴⁶ in which the former supporter of EE tenders his resignation and strays from the party line. Jacobi wrote the essay “Apostles and Heretics”⁴⁷ for *Atassa*, a sort of breathless genealogical outline of the emergence of eco-extremism by a star-struck observer. Once but no more. In his latest, Jacobi’s tolerance is at an end as he parses out a world of contradictions and moralism in the ITS ideology, in sections well-worth reading entitled, “Human Values or Divine Values?” “Nihilist or Environmentalist?” “All Humans are Bad or Most Humans are Bad?” and “Concerned or Unconcerned with Personal Wildness?”... but no mention of patriarchy, misogyny, rape or femicide. None. Of course.

The religiosity. The theology. The contradictions in their ideas. These were just too much for Fitzpatrick or Jacobi to stand by. But the murder of a random drunk woman? The rapey sentiments advanced by *Atassa*? The threats?

Between Corrosive Consciousness and Green Platonism

It’s not fashionable in the post-left anarchist milieu of today to admit one’s belief that everyone, whether they admit it or not, deals in moral concepts, or at least ethical ones, and makes choices based upon them.⁴⁸ But at the risk of heresy I will say that everyone acts, and often transparently so, from a premise that there are some things that are good or right or beneficial to do in the world, and other things that are bad or wrong or detrimental to do in the world. People’s criteria may vary wildly, but, among other things, this tentative dichotomization seems to be a basic ingredient for navigating our physical existence (how to get fed, how to get rest, how to give and receive affection, and other requirements for the human animal, etc.). Like the biological idea of “resilience” which underlies the politicized and patronizing commentaries on the resilience of victims of tragedy,⁴⁹ the mere presence of morality or ethics is hardly deserving of praise in and of itself. And like resilience, a morality or ethics, to be meaningful or useful at all, has to be ensconced within a particular context, has to be *place-based*.

⁴⁵ Fitzpatrick also argues (on p. 26 of *BS#5*) that the ITS killing of random women shouldn’t be morally condemned by insurrectionaries (or “crypto-revolutionaries”) if they hope to be consistent, because similar outrages will be committed in the unfolding of any insurrectional or revolutionary situation. The clash with deputized or actively counter-revolutionary citizens is thereby rendered equivalent to the “indiscriminate” murder of random drunk women by would-be theocrats. Meeting someone in combat, consciously routing them in their attempt to re-impose State control by evicting, imprisoning, or killing you (or even the wasting by attrition of a society based on pillage whose collapse is inevitable) is a little different than random femicide, but thanks for playing Bellamy.

⁴⁶ *Black Seed* #5, 22.

⁴⁷ *Atassa*, 15.

⁴⁸ Perhaps because a recognition of anything of the sort among the big “names” of the post-left might bode for actually addressing the by-now rampant cryptic or open nationalist, fascist, or racist tendencies to be found among them.

⁴⁹ See the excellent, “Against Resilience: The Katrina Disaster and the Politics of Disavowal,” by John Clark, serialized in issues #4 and #5 of *Black Seed*.

It's hard to imagine an encounter that would seriously shake this conviction, except for one with someone who has completely lost touch with physical reality, someone who shows no understanding or regard for the implications of their actions, a total lack of conscience. If this basic premise weren't true of someone, I might feel compelled to bring my involvement with them to a close in short order. There is no transgressive or incoherent rant, no nihilist tract, no text published by LBC that has ever made me think this was not being fulfilled on some level.

So, what is this "moralism" that so often finds itself under attack in the pages of *Black Seed* and, going back for years, in the screeds of many a post-leftist and nihilist besides? If until now many of us knew and shared this critique in light of the gap between ourselves and those who eagerly claim the mantle of classical anarchism—the so-called "social" anarchists, syndicalists, and platformists, the anarcho-charities, the organizational fetishists, the pacifists and politicians-in-waiting—the waters have been muddied and bloodied by current affairs, the criss-crossed pointing fingers of a whole milieu trying to decide which way the ITS came from and which way they're going, the rage at fresh offenses, the embarrassments and disappointments.

As the most succinct, relevant, and consistent example of the critique to appear recently, we can treat as representative Fitzpatrick's essay from *BS#4* called, "Corrosive Consciousness: How One Might Profane Green Platonism"⁵⁰ (henceforth "CC"). It's not totally clear what the "corrosive consciousness" of the title refers to, but likely it names the "essentially anarchist mode of thinking" and analysis that Fitzpatrick is counter-posing to the morality—the "green platonism"—that he locates in the work of Kevin Tucker, taking it to be emblematic of the ideology of anarcho-primitivism (AP) in general.

Briefly, the philosophical schism pointed out in CC consists, on one side, of an idea that finds its origin in Plato, consequently termed *platonism*: namely, that there exists a real world somewhere out there, away from or beyond or prior to us, which is constituted of ideal forms. Our own lives, strive as we might, are but pale and imperfect imitations of this beyond. For Fitzpatrick, this idea is reflected in the canon of Western thought by Realism, Christianity, scientific materialism, various strains of leftism and, significantly, by primitivism as represented by Tucker. On the other side of the divide stands the minority tendency with which Fitzpatrick identifies, which takes lived experience, or phenomenality, to be primary and dispenses with the reified speculations of platonism. This is the perspective that all-corrodes and all-profanes, the persistent and individualized questioning that erodes the binaristic thought of platonism, against which the latter can only hope to continually shore itself up. This tendency has been called perspectivism, egoism, existentialism, nihilism, and others.

As examples of the platonic morality to be found in AP, the reified dichotomies and ideal forms to which it subscribes, Fitzpatrick discusses at some length the vague, multifarious, and occasionally contradictory definitions that Tucker (and Zerzan) give to terms like "domestication" and "wildness" that have been so central to their analyses, and the simplistic condemnation of the former as the origin of Power and the kneejerk allegiance to the latter expected by these scribes of AP. Longings for a romanticized and intangible prelapsarian existence for humankind are taken to be more of the same damaging, civilized religious impulse against which a more pure critical theory supposedly moves. The specter of Collapse takes over for Revolution or Apocalypse in the eschatology of the primitivist.

⁵⁰ See *Black Seed #4*, or online at: <https://dispossessblog.files.wordpress.com/2016/07/corrosive-consciousness.pdf>

Instead Fitzpatrick, in the Stirnerist/Nietzschean/Foucauldian vein, embraces the “will to power” enacted by each organism or species. He emphasizes the “inescapability” of “high levels” of human-nonhuman “co-creation,” “control,” “co-evolution,” the “symbiosis” which marks the continual shaping of one form of life by another, in a “simultaneous competition and cooperation of power.” Highlighting the surge of interest among anti-civ folks in M. Kat Anderson’s *Tending the Wild* (in which it is shown that pre-european contact California, far from being pristine wilderness, was marked by harvesting, tilling, sowing, pruning, and burning by the indigenous Sierra Miwok and Valley Yokuts) and citing the work of permaculturists like Bill Mollison, Toby Hemenway, and Fukuoka, Fitzpatrick introduces more nuanced and materialist definitions of domestication than those held out by the idealist and closeted leftists of AP. In between mentions of the fact that, among other seemingly senseless and destructive impositions, it was the advent of oxygen-producing cyanobacteria which led to the first mass extinction on earth (also brought up in his RevDis), he gives a fair hearing to the idea that “everything gardens” and may potentially do so without necessarily incurring the “massive biotic denuding, exploitation, and alienation that characterize civilization.”

...More Empirically and Less Morally

Does it need to be spelled out that if you are against something called “green platonism,” the smart money says that you are against it for a reason, that you have some ethical or moral qualm with its basis, that you are coming from a *position* in the world, that maybe you even think it’s *bad*? Perhaps because, for you, it falls abysmally short of an *essentially anarchist mode of thinking*?

For that matter, on what basis can or should one be against the denuding, exploitation, and alienation at all? Fitzpatrick answers: “as a unique, evaluating being, I am fully prepared to say, unhesitatingly, that I prefer certain assemblages to others.” He refers to the interest in permacultural nuances and possibilities for uncivilized uses of domestication as “healthy,” as a salutary or positive influence. He says, “I, of course, agree with Tucker that there is a horrific dimension to many of our human-nonhuman relationships; certainly, he is getting at something important,” and later, emphatically: “... it is *the social and ecological relationships* that emerge from *certain forms* of power exertion that are problematic.”⁵¹

But why? If the furtherance of “egalitarian politics” is nothing but a vestige of leftism, if the cyanobacteria are as capricious and whimsical and uncaring as any tyrant, if it is moralistic to sacralize Wildness whether you are an eco-extremist supervillain or an anarcho-primitivist closet christian, and if it’s just as anthropocentric to choose cuddly aspects of Nature to emulate over the vicious and indiscriminate ones, then what is the basis for the moment-to-moment, individual, rational evaluation of the nihilist?

For Fitzpatrick the utmost importance, the alpha and the omega of his critique, is to “tease out what this horror is *more empirically and less morally*.” (emphasis mine) It’s as if pure empiricism, unlike morality, is somehow impervious, incapable of being put to the service of projects of ecocide, statism, control, hierarchy, or whatever one’s preferences have deemed undesirable in this moment. But is the mere presence of something that we could deem religiosity, theology, or green platonism sufficient to explain the most serious failings of a tendency? What about when

⁵¹ Bear in mind that some critics of *Atassa* have been dismissed out-of-hand by peddlers of the journal for the mere use of this one word. It is the critics of EE who are said to be “moralistic.”

the practitioners of that tendency have swapped out ideology after ideology as justification for a consistent practice? Is it possible that other and potentially more important questions could be posed having to do with the impetus for a given religious or spiritual predilection, with what its impulse consists of or looks like in the present, what its corresponding practice looks like?

Is it possible that the nearly ubiquitous idea that humankind has suffered some kind of Fall is not just the fabrication of a hopelessly bifurcated morality or “spook” implanted by civilization but actually exists because it finds substantial confirmation in the real history of things? In the experience of our lives? How might it complicate the dichotomy that Fitzpatrick is laying out to suggest that both sides of this debate are speaking to different aspects of truth? In “RevDis,” Fitzpatrick calls it understandable to feel an urge toward destruction due to the despair felt at witnessing the mass extinction of species. Does he refuse to admit that this despair might bespeak some human ecological context that has been torn asunder? Can the nihilists really be talking up EE’s attempt to rescue ancestral pagan deities, publishing indigenous authors who come from spiritual traditions, otherwise engaging “platonist” styles of thought, and but pedantically denying something similar if it comes from AP or any tendency that is vocally hostile to ITS?

In fleshing out of some of the alternative readings of ecology that he counterposes to the inherent platonism of AP, in an effort to complicate its quaint adherence to the egalitarian politics of an unacknowledged leftism with its religious fantasies of a Golden Age, Fitzpatrick uses Tucker’s own work against him, citing an interview done for the first issue of *Black and Green Review* in which former ALF member Rod Coronado apparently mentions being inspired by the way predators exert a *domineering* presence. Never mind the myriad other understandings or descriptions of predators that are possible. Never mind that Coronado himself has turned out to be that *other* kind of predator: an incorrigible, serial sexual predator and abuser,⁵² coddled by his eco-defender friends in the midst of controversy, defended in print by the impeccable blame-the-victim, rape apologia of ex-Green Scare prisoner and ego-maniac Jeff Luers, beneficiary of the conspicuous silence of Kevin Tucker.

Fitzpatrick has made much of the difference between the nihilist and primitivist stances, but if you weren’t already asking yourself whether or not these two sides in the debate on morals are really all that far apart in light of their mutual agreement on a certain class of horrors, then how about in light of their mutual refusal to engage with another class of horrors entirely? Heros get passes from the spokesmen of AP, while Villains finally come in for a round of stern criticism only now that they have abandoned the egoist/nihilist footing for their armed struggle and gone religious. Concerns about patriarchy and misogyny, on the other hand, are immaterial. Why is that? What is it that makes these sides *more alike than different*?

It’s a neat trick, really. You get to talk about co-creation and co-evolution, symbiosis and preferences, violence and war, but if someone refuses to obey your inducement to *engage with the rapists and murderers of women*, if someone maintains that this is not merely an abstract matter for men to sell books about and debate in a rational, empirical, and civil manner, if someone insists that people advancing a pro-rape agenda and the publications they use to do it should be kept out of a space... then you (or your friends) get to dismiss, ridicule and lambast them, not

⁵² See the following two Earth First! Newswire items: “Solidarity with Survivors of Sexual Assault and Abuse,” found here: <http://earthfirstjournal.org/newswire/2016/06/21/solidarity-with-julie-and-chrysta/> and “When We Are Silent We Are Still Afraid, We Speak Up to Survive: an interview with Julie” found here: <http://earthfirstjournal.org/newswire/2016/06/24/when-we-are-silent-we-are-still-afraid-we-speak-up-to-survive-an-interview-with-julie/> The comment section on the first link includes Jeff Luers’ thinly-veiled rape apologia.

as the emergence of another kind of warrior opposed to you, who you must meet as your equal, but as overly emotional, PC authoritarians and moralistic leftists. You get to ignore or give lip service to them, or consign them utterly to *shutting the fuck up*. You get to do what all the other resentment-fueled traffickers in manifestos and claims and brands do. You get to act exactly the ways that you hate when someone else acts that way toward you. *There is no outside*. And the inside? ...is a boys' club.

Witness that human beings are apparently capable of turning anything, even a supposedly anti-moralist or amoral position, into a morality all its own.⁵³

Maybe that's just the way war works. Maybe it's a mistake for us to take anyone strictly at their word, or for us to be taken strictly at ours. Maybe it's a mistake to think that any of us are going to forever avoid being whipped into a religious fervor, taken by a vision, whether in the name of Wildness or Nihilism. In a double standard significant and obvious enough to hold its own alongside any other, the desire and the effort to not be raped by the quintessentially modern warring man likely won't be seen by our enemies as an expression of that same will to power that they consider primary, or as our own permissible act of "gardening," or as a righteous volley of primitive arrows aimed at the heart of the matter. It won't be seen as an effort to secure territory for ourselves on such terms as we can accept, but instead will be seen as a naive adherence to egalitarian politics which only annoys and upsets the big boys trying to talk. And maybe none of that matters when talking about those who've been the beneficiaries of our doubts and good will for too long. Maybe there *is* an outside.

For most intents and purposes in the world at large, I *am* a nihilist. There is absolutely nothing on offer in society or in the enclaves of its loyal opposition that I can truly call my own. I find myself in agreement with many aspects of "Corrosive Consciousness"⁵⁴ and maintain for myself the importance of the empiricist's doubt and questioning. Nonetheless, I may still be called a religious person for saying that that's not the whole picture, for believing that, in certain contexts, in the places where I find myself, there are things that are right and things that are wrong, moments when questioning and doubt come to an end. There are visions of worlds beyond that give inspiration and breathe fire. In our criticism of ITS and *Atassa*, we are the living proof that not

⁵³ See the essay "A Posthistoric Primitivism" and other works by Paul Shepard for a different critique of civilized morality.

⁵⁴ While I agree that domestication and wildness are more nuanced or complicated concepts than Fitzpatrick's classical anarcho-primitivist will allow, and that there is a possibility for "wild" forms of cultivation that fall quite short of and operate in a different, fundamentally non-destructive logic as contrasted with full-on agricultural domestication, I have two principal concerns in discussing the matter: a) that in communicating these ideas to a general readership or audience who is either indifferent or latently hostile to the anti-civ perspective, this distinction is tantamount to hair-splitting, and more importantly, b) I would be extremely careful about what kind and how much space we give to laudatory ideas of the "gardening society" in our modern context, lest we forget what has been so importantly illuminated by Zygmunt Bauman in *Modernity and the Holocaust* and by Roger Griffin in *Modernism and Fascism*, and what Walter Darras helped put into practice as he wrote: "He who leaves the plants in a garden to themselves will soon find to his surprise that the garden is overgrown by weeds and that even the basic character of the plants has changed. If therefore the garden is to remain the breeding ground for the plants, if, in other words, it is to lift itself above the harsh rule of natural forces, then the forming will of a gardener is necessary, a gardener who, by providing suitable conditions for growing, or by keeping harmful influences away, or by both together, carefully tends what needs tending, and ruthlessly eliminates the weeds which would deprive the better plants of nutrition, air, light, and sun... Thus we are facing the realization that questions of breeding are not trivial for political thought, but that they have to be at the centre of all considerations, and that their answers must follow from the spiritual, from the ideological attitude of a people. We must even assert that a people can only reach spiritual and moral equilibrium if a well-conceived breeding plan stands at the very *centre* of its culture..."

all of the detractors or so-called “censors” of the eco-extremist tendency are the shrill moralists that LBC would like to make them out to be - and it can also be said that the religious impulse doesn't belong to us alone.

Puritanical Nihilism

It's hard to say if Aragorn! and his ilk know what grand, if momentary, entertainment they have made of themselves by replacing the hated Good vs. Bad dichotomy of the Moralists (which is bad) with the obviously much more desirable Interesting vs. Uninteresting dichotomy of the Nihilists (good). You see, manipulators, liars, creeps, and people with money and/or clout (say, in the publishing world or in an extremely repressed anarchist scene) are all funny things. It can be especially funny when these are all mingled in the same person. Throw in an overdeveloped sense of being an indispensable gadfly and it's a real hoot. Funny... but famously impossible to decipher if they believe their own bullshit, if they're in on the joke they're telling.

And it *would* be good for a laugh if only this transvaluation of values, the precise placement of things into the new and improved boxes labelled “interesting” and “uninteresting” wasn't somewhat alarming: The ITS and pro-rape journals are endlessly interesting. As previously stated, the repeated clarion call of Abe Cabrera, *Black Seed*, and LBC has been **you must engage with this**, not in the sense of “you must confront and destroy this,” but more in the sense of canonical incorporation. On the other hand, almost anything about race, fascism, nationalism,⁵⁵ white supremacy, or patriarchy are not very interesting. Books by black people are mostly not interesting. Books by women are only sort of interesting. Mexicans become interesting when they can be pressed into one's holy war, fighters by proxy against the middle class, white, suburban anarchist values that keep you up at night.

Identity politicking aside, LBC writes and publishes books (many of them quite good) calling for and celebrating attacks on authority, but in practice often seems to condemn the acts of those for whom these are more than just pretty words. The czars and wizards and monks behind the distro tables and screens of spreadsheets have made it abundantly clear that they mostly think it's stupid to actually do it. Despite backpedaling and half-hearted apologies in hastily crafted statements, they have cast unending aspersions on those who care too much for having “boots on the ground.” Like the war- and violence-obsessed Elani, and the ex-marxist-cum-expert-on-the-eternal-souls-of-Creeks Cabrera, *they only write about it*.

Cheap shot. If a raging dose of front-and-center *ressentiment* and a violent but removed elan seem to be what LBC and the more honest boosters of eco-extremism have in common (*so extreme!*), then how are the other extremities of anarchism really any different? We may not all be as enamored of internet culture or as deeply invested in the maintenance of electronic infrastructure, but which tendency among us isn't host to those who spend some substantial amount of time and energy passively consuming, commenting, and succumbing to the drug-like effects of vicarious living, violent fantasies and subdued rage? But even if this is the pot calling the kettle black, then a spade is still a spade.

As for ITS, we know that their former “nihilism” was largely wishful, a figment of an imagination drunk on grandeur, grading into the sham nihilism of a cartel (commonplace in the national

⁵⁵ I was honestly surprised that the rise of nationalism received even a token mention in the LBC statement on *Atassa*.

context in Mexico), just as their current “theology” is largely deluded and contradictory, the punishing theology of Al Qaeda or other fundamentalists. Whatever LBC does or doesn’t know about ITS, however, they make sure to remark with reasonable certainty that their “socio-economic position is not like the people we see passing through.” Ok.

In “Why do we publish such objectionable things?” the LBC team posits a somewhat hare-brained trifecta of the operative ideological forces in the *post-anarchist moment*, consisting of: the eco-extremists, antifa (and other social struggles), and anarcho-liberalism. This might say more about the boxes into which the author thinks one must fit oneself than it does about reality. For the author’s part, it’s clear that he’s gravitating toward the EE column. When it comes to antifa, LBC affiliates have made it clear in the recent past that they basically think it’s the worst (most uninteresting) thing to have ever happened. And when ending on his analysis of the anarcho-liberal category, it’s made clear that this is the exclusive province of “call-out culture,” before it calls out “raising kids in a radical way, with people you share values with, with straight teeth, humility, and values that are middle-class (although never stated as such).” As if it’s primarily soccer moms who are giving LBC flak about publishing ITS.⁵⁶ Contrast this with the final paragraph of Aragorn!’s introduction to *Black Seed #5*, which comes after an imaginative After The Revolution-style thought experiment about how the Bay Area might be converted into an ecologically sane place via a path inspired by the content of the book *Bolo Bolo* by P.M. and with the help of some Bookchinist social structures (of all things!) among others. Then:

If we are lucky, a future generation of people will come who love the idea of wild nature, complexity, and heresy and who have the power to inflict these ideas upon the idiots and politicians of the world. They will know what our illuminations portray and will not judge us for the fact that we have settled for survival in this shitty world and did not instead choose the quicker end of taking on everything, everywhere at once.

This comes shortly before an edgy piece advocating for the random mass murder of children included in the issue (“Murder of the Civilized” by Mallory Wuornos). So, does it matter whether we understand the horrors more empirically and less morally if we never move to the attack ourselves? Maybe not any more than it matters what your precise definition of domestication is. But if we’re just settling for survival anyway, why not run that piece on mass murdering children and deride our detractors as wholesome normies, all from our techie pulpit?

For all the posturing against, sudden commentary on, and resignation to middle class comforts and perspectives, and attempts to distance themselves from the anarcho-liberal column, what it boils down to is this: either LBC are hiding their affinities in plain sight, snickering to each other out one side of their mouths about getting away with it while claiming out the other to hate, disagree with, and withhold all support from ITS (but Cabrera? Elani?)... or they are legitimately dismayed in the extreme by the latest assault on a truly free Marketplace of Ideas that is the near-unanimous rejection of the ITS brand. This latter explanation would be more obviously in keeping with who they are and what they do (don’t you even know what a book publisher DOES?

⁵⁶ This is probably nothing more than a nod to Aragorn!’s veritable obsession with Olympia, WA, to which he has attributed every evil, an undertow he cannot escape, possibly a subterranean motivation for his continued efforts at publishing, the eternal Other by which he maintains his identity and stature, the Nature to his Culture we might say. See also <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1Yt0xJKDY8>

smh.) but can we really be assured that it's not the former? Moralist that I am! The stake is ready and the coals are hot! Smoke begins to rise into the sky! At the end of "Why Do We Publish..." they even anticipate the hated witch hunt with pisses and moans about those who are "using guilt by (three degrees of) association instead of by argumentation." This nod to free speech and free association is rich indeed, considering its source. This peak liberal genuflection before the social contract also happens to be the current favorite dog whistle of the right, the same shit that fascists who have threatened us have used to shield themselves from reprisal. As if it's all good just because it wouldn't hold up in court, because LBC themselves couldn't be convicted of threatening to kill anarchists or raping people. As if they believe their own bullshit that anyone who "calls out" anything at all is necessarily operating according to such a legalistic logic, which cries now about "guilt by association" while publishing rapey shit by the fanboys of misogynist murderers waging an active war against insurrectionary anarchists. As if it were not precisely their interpretation and their conduct of war, *their associations which are at issue*.

But to hear LBC tell it, it's the mere handling of this contraband that is coming under fire. They portray the act of giving a platform to a clearly fundamental and murderous enemy of anarchists as similar to their publishing of *Nihilist Communism* by Monsieur Dupont, or any material that anarchists might simply happen to disagree with, in effect asking what the big deal is. The suggestion is that there is no way to write about ITS critically, no way to quote the EE tendency that wouldn't be interpreted as complicity and hence incur the blind wrath of these McCarthyites (the *real fascists*). Never mind the glorifying and dignifying enterprise represented by *Atassa*. I mean, have you closet leftists never read about the fucked up things that Malcolm X did?

This obfuscation signals more than just the usual incoherence-as-virtue we've come to expect from postmodern culture generally and from the more puritanical of our nihilists in particular—the Anarchists Without Content who jeer at the vague, multifarious, contradictory definitions of other tendencies before disappearing behind their own curtain. What we see is a deflection, a willful confusion of the issue, the election of irony over sincerity in order to mask a blow. The lingering stench in the atmosphere of "What's the matter, can't you take a joke?" is the instantly recognizable signature for many of us, the ambient frostbite of a situation that drains our power and may not be safe to get out of.

With a level of transparency that is almost surprising, the LBC statement winds down with a classic denigration of expressions of "emotionally-laden conclusions as if they are facts," while in the same breath admitting that they are "glad *Atassa* is inspiring this kind of emotional reaction." Oh good, they're glad. But here, the casual reader could be forgiven for a failure to keep up: what gladness is this? Is it the gladness of one watching, satisfied, as a civil but spirited debate unfolds about issues that will never affect them directly? The gladness of that deviant and lascivious child who delights in his own censure and the aghast look in his parents' eyes? Or the smug, secure gladness of telling your girlfriend to calm down, manufacturing your victory-by-default when she explodes as a result and you call her crazy?

(Oh, and are you sure you haven't MISTAKEN LBC FOR ITS? FUCKING DRAMA QUEENS.)

Again, if this language calls to mind an abusive father or alt-right fuckery, it's because it's a dead ringer. The reliance on gaslighting is almost as complete as that of the avowed chauvinists of Western culture.

Once upon a time, it seemed incongruent to us that the original nihilists of Russian lore were so fanatically in favor of Science, believers in the bright light of Reason and its perfect applica-

bility against the ossified priorities of church and nobility. But far from being canaries down the mine of fresh ideas wielded against a stagnant world, duped by some ensorcelling novelty of an age whose aesthetic gave us steampunk, unaware of the evils that would fly from the Pandora's box they sought to pry open, the nihilists were, in fact, late to the game, the world wrought by science and its application through industry having already taken hold, long since commencing to take its place next to and above the old pillars, setting about to deepen the desert. The nihilists stood one foot in a world in which they were iconoclastic radicals against old oppressions and the other foot in an emergent, disenchanting, atheistic—and equally patriarchal—late modernity, as its conservatives.⁵⁷

This pedigree is not without consequence. The pedantic rejection of non-rationalized or non-proven assertions is still with us. The constant refrain of *We Are Amoral And You Are All Moralists* is the echo of Pure Reason asserting its jealous dominance over the Unreasonable. The divorce from the body, from the feminine, from magic, from the voices that ask, beg, or shout for them to stop. The attack on “emotion” as is as victorian as it sounds.

The (crypto-) rationalist strain in post-leftism is alive, if not well. It flops about weakly in the rising waters which ensure its own diminishing relevance. Of course, it's insistence on the pure Non-Stance conceals a stance, or perhaps only a pure opportunism in the logic of the troll. In a digital capitalist age when *interest* is the primary currency, the goal of this brand of provocation is tantamount to getting the most “likes,” and it will seize upon increasingly shocking or edgy content to get them. Flaunting, from a perch amid a pantheon of electronic projects, that one's newspaper is print-only (or print first) does nothing to avert this, or to slay new incarnations of that old beast who seeks to make only headlines. This type of “post-anarchist” mutters about the useless *ressentiment* which primitivists direct against “the domesticators,” alternately pitying and castigating them for their insufficiently original re-branding of this class of “*nouveaux-bourgeoisie*.” This he does while tuning in to the reactionary bombast of indiscriminate or suicidal killers in order to feel the rush of transgression that the old anarchy just can't deliver any more, gliding through the internet looking for something so lurid that he's not yet desensitized to it.

In the throes of his thirsty searching for negative attention, he may well be the only one who misses yet another central irony of the situation: paternal admonishments to stoic forbearance aside, *the puritanical nihilist is clearly operating on the level of emotion just as surely as anyone else*. Not only will he stir up and hold center stage in the drama he pretends to disdain, but he will become indignant if someone violates his safer space egregiously enough or doesn't pay for damaged merch. Like Elani stretching Clastres' Warrior to be exactly what he needs him to be, or like the kid in the corner of the classroom carving swastikas into his desk with a catatonic

⁵⁷ “One characteristic of the original nihilism was its absolute rejection of Christianity and any superstition or nonrational belief, and, as such, a strong adherence to rationalism. In this matter, far from being radical, they were embarrassingly out of date. At the time, Christianity was already being replaced as state religion by science itself, by the very rationalism the nihilists fetishized. To put it another way, their desire to seem very radical surpassed their capability to arrive, through critical thought, at a truly radical analysis that could identify the roots of the system they hated. Today, one notices the same pattern. The nihilists hate (and with plenty of justification) the Left and anything that resembles—even just a little—the Left or its practices. But they have not noticed that for decades already, the Left is expiring. Currently, it is the Spectacle that holds much greater importance in carrying out the function of recuperating struggle. Ironically, but faithful to their origins, current nihilism is the most spectacular of anticapitalist struggles. Its greatest impact is in virtual space: on the internet and in the media.” —from “The Nihilist Recuperation,” one of two essays collected in the pamphlet, “An Anarchist Response to the Nihilists.” For printable PDF and audio file: <https://resonanceaudiodistro.org/2015/09/11/an-anarchist-response-to-the-nihilists-audiozine/>

glare, maintaining that creepy blog before actually becoming a nazi a few years later—like most of us who traffic in archetypes and ideas—LBC’s criteria for what to publish or what to defend isn’t some purely empirical matter but includes the question of *what resonates*.

Repeated declarations of “You need to engage with this!” aren’t any more convincing than suggestions that it must be you who’s uptight if you don’t want to go to a party with your rapist or the murderer of your friend. This refusal to take no for an answer forms a curious juxtaposition with repeated declarations of “We’re not interested in convincing anyone!” Of course. There’s not a proselytizing bone in the bodies of this publishing house.

The “refusal to engage” trope is an opportunistic lie peddled by salesmen and fakes. It’s a cerebral version of street harassment for the anarchist milieu. It’s the fair and balanced catcall of those who spit upon anarchist graves, relayed to us with relish via supposed comrades. It’s a canard that our enemies (in friends’ clothing) are floating to see who’s inclined to buy it, to see who they can count on in the event that they need a place to lick their wounds, a quarter in which they may comfortably complain that these moralists *haven’t even read the book*.

The declarations need not be consistent as long as they are functional, as long as they do the job for which they are meant: concealing the fact that *we have engaged*, that we are the *vitaly interested* and *it is for this reason that we feel so strongly*. Of all those who might have been receptive to a new message condemning the civilized, opening new paths for revolt, we are those whose ears perked up first and highest. We are the contemporaries of that struggle and the correspondents of that eternal doubt which erodes all artifice. And now, again, we are those most sorely disappointed for it, those whose disillusion is most poignant. Who was more capable or willing than anti-civilization insurrectionaries—at times alone—of receiving the nihilist tidings with a welcome and a deep bow? Who now would insult us with claims that we have “mistaken LBC for ITS” rather than recognized it as the platform it has made of itself in this latest turn for the worse?

It is with sincerity and not a trace of irony that I address myself to those who would be free of civilization and its moral universe. Our fire has been betrayed by those who claimed to share it.

There is No Eco-Fascism

ITS. Ecology. Fascism. The ideas represented by these words and their various interpretations have a relation to one another. What might that relation consist of?

Firstly, if I say that *ITS is not fascist*, it’s not to say that there is no relation. It’s not to say that they are any better for it. It’s not to give them a pass. It’s not to take a single thing away from the necessity of opposing them.

This qualification is apparently necessary for reasons both regrettable and eminently understandable. The strength of conviction and the depth of feeling involved in contemplating or encountering fascism or its opposite is great in a land whose governance is intimately dependent upon the brutal and gratuitous violence of colonization, racism, and white supremacy. Nobody who has been the target of one can fail to understand the colloquial use of the term “fascist” to denote any kind of virulent and highly repressive social atmosphere or personal philosophy

which is shaped indelibly by settler-colonialism or whiteness, by the cult of the leader or the inclination toward totalitarian control, or by obsessions with purity. We use the catch-all term “nazi” in a similar way—as shorthand for *the worst shit ever*—when addressing ourselves to normal people or when disengaging the hairsplitting function used in tracking the astounding diversity-in-sameness that is white nationalism and its cousins.

But outside of this vernacular usage and the imposing realities from which it arises (that is, from a comfortable and somewhat abstract remove), fascism is not a superlative designation. It is possible for ideologies which are not fascism to represent socially repressive forces that are more-or-less equal to it, however rare, unlikely, or unnecessary this may prove to be. An abiding, even specialized, interest in fascism as an immediate threat, as one of the most horrifically consequential ideologies of the last century, and as one of the increasingly operative and potent forces in the contemporary moment should not mean that our analysis absolutely privileges the tree of fascism to the trivialization or exclusion of all the other growth in the forest of right-wing and reactionary populism, or the totalitarianism which arises in more leftist hues. The statement, “ITS is not fascist” is not a ranking in a hierarchy of the dastardly. It is not a concession nor a capitulation to ITS, to fascism, or to puritanical nihilists.

Fascism is an ideology whose particular manifestations differ, which is eclectic (and, I would add, evolving), but which is characterized by a fairly specific mythic core: that of *populist ultra-nationalism fixated upon the rebirth* (following a period of perceived degeneration or decay) *of the Nation or the People as conceived, usually, as a racial entity*. Ultra-nationalism is distinguished from the nationalisms of both liberals and conservatives by its characterization of the Nation as a natural or organic entity. It is not a nationalism which posits the rational individual as a citizen of an agreed-upon polity, or the subject of a social contract, equal with all others before the law. On the contrary, it’s avowed populist aspect is the same one that gives it a legitimately insurgent character (and certain resemblances to anarchism) when not in power: the People who belong to its Nation are like cells in a biological body. There is something *essential* about their national belonging. Roger Griffin has written that the this rendering of the Nation “connotes an organism with its own life-cycle, collective psyche, and communal destiny, embracing in principle the whole people (not just its ruling elites), and in practice all those who ethnically or culturally are ‘natural’ members of it, and are not contaminated by forces hostile to nationhood.”⁵⁸

Correspondingly (and in deep contrast to most anti-civilizational ideas of the social), the central metaphors used by the classical fascist regimes of Italy and Germany in their re-making of the world were derived from gardening, architecture, and industrial medicine—with their exemplary weeding, design, and surgeries applied socially. Many practical variations on the mythic theme at the heart of fascism are possible, and are not limited to these. To give some idea of the flexibility in practice, it’s possible to have a fascism that is not white, or one that is not straight. It’s possible to carry out its priorities (or attempt to) with state-of-the-art technology, with machetes or simple tools, or with bare hands. It’s possible to have a fascism that lives in the halls of power, or one that wages insurgent guerilla warfare from the mountains or in the streets and prisons as a gang, or one that lives elegantly and without hate in the hearts of northwest folk musicians and herbalists, or Bay Area vegans.

It’s not nitpicking to point out that ITS falls a bit outside of this purview, with its insistence that none of us belongs, that all of humanity must be destroyed, that it is not a rebirth that we

⁵⁸ Griffin, *Fascism*, 3.

deserve or that we have to look forward to, but a death without morrow. On the other hand, the duplicity and incoherence of the group, its coded hyper-patriarchy, has already been analyzed. The fact of the ever-shifting content of the ITS ideology bespeaks a political opportunism that is indeed reminiscent of the early Italian fascists and their figurehead Mussolini, whose superficial, chameleon-like qualities as a theoretician were among his hallmarks. One can imagine current ITS positions, like prior ones, being thrown over in short order in favor of more fascistic ones. The resemblance could conceivably prove to be something more than incidental.

If I say that *ITS is a proto-fascist phenomenon* it is not, again, to place them below fascism in a hierarchy of egregiousness. It is not the anticipation of a linear or teleological movement or development from its prelude as an inchoate thing into a more true or mature form. A proto-fascist is not necessarily about to become a fascist, but nor is he necessarily any better than one. Despite the efforts of the ITS to reduce us to terrified spectators, we are not caught in the suspense of a dark promise made, but are contemporaries of a phenomenon that should be examined and confronted in its own rite.

As discussed earlier, the neurotic, insecure, competitive social fabric of late modernity and its legions of malnurtured and battered man-children is a humus which nurtures the apparent iconoclasm of several political (or anti-political) genera with overlapping qualities. Hyper-masculinized and/or indiscriminate violence, exalted as means and end, coupled with a mythic spiritual ideal is in line with proto-fascism, especially that of ex-anarchists who take their aim primarily or exclusively at “reds,” egalitarians, queers, women, etc. It’s easy to imagine that Elani’s Warrior possesses qualities resembling the ideal of warbound Aryans and eager *Freikorps* a century ago, or any number of young neo-fascists of today. Before the name change to “Wild Reaction” and their intensifying spiral of bigotry (hearkening back to the positions of former leading light Kaczynski) there were already strong authoritarian commitments evident in this group who so badly wanted to see its name in lights in its contest with the establishment, a fight now recalibrated to hone in on those most hated targets: anarchists and random women. Furthermore, their identity could shift to an explicitly ethnic one, their rhetoric could become suffused with a heroic folkish realism, and their spirit could end up falling closer to the Traditionalism of arch-fascist philosopher Julius Evola.

In their statement on *Atassa*, LBC’s itemizes the supposedly novel contributions of the eco-extremism tendency to the hoped-for green anarchist discourse to follow, in which the pro-civilization or left-anarchist may discern several of their favorite smoking guns. They are:

- 1) Pessimism towards human endeavors
- 2) Wild Nature is the primary agent in the eco-extremist war
- 3) Listening to the call of the ancestors against the destruction of a way of life
- 4) individualism against mass society
- 5) indiscriminate attack as an echo of Wild Nature itself.
- 6) Nihilism as a refusal of the future
- 7) Paganism/animism as attempts to rescue ancestral deities.⁵⁹

None of these is enough, alone or in combination, to constitute fascism, especially if interpreted in a dynamic which is opposed to it. To recognize this is not to sign off on the eco-extremist interpretations of these things: their reification of Wild Nature, its theological use in consecrating the eco-extremist version of Holy War, or the only relatively new proposal here—Abe Cabrera’s

⁵⁹ “Why do we publish such objectionable things?” at <http://littleblackcart.com/why-do-we-publish-such-objectionable-things/>

consummately silly, noxiously masculine, strategically worthless, self-degrading, and laughably disgraceful “indiscriminate attack.” The references here to ancestors, paganism, animism, and deities will make the mechanistic atheist and the progressive chafe. Similarly, statements made by leftists that describe the desire to “go back” to a non-industrial form of society as a figment of an inherently right-wing or “reactionary” ideology beg the question: how they will explain the presence of the same desire among traditional indigenous peoples who fight against assimilation even now? For that matter, how would their indeed delusional humanism, based as it is on alienation from *living in place*, survive the encounter with their own animal bodies and spirits? How will they maintain their progressive, cosmopolitan society without access to the spoils of colonization?

If I say, finally, that ***there is no eco-fascism*** it’s to take the piss out of the stock Leftist responses to the critique of civilization, that reactionary litany belonging especially to them. A bouquet of puffed up progressivist inanity and deep-seated delusions about the basis of civilized culture is enjoying something of a renaissance since the most recent election season, finding fertile ground in the realm of the meme, the stock-in-trade of Instagram culture warriors who’ve settled on authoritarian communism (along with a half dozen other of the worst ideas from the dustbin of history) as the alleged opposite of Trumpism.

To say eco-fascism doesn’t exist might invite a heap of infamy, but it shouldn’t. If characterizing someone merely as an “eco-anarchist” doesn’t tell you much about their politics (Primitivist? Bookchinist? Nihilist? Liberal? etc.) then why should we consider eco-fascism any more of a useful term? Scott Campbell’s attention-grabbing headline, “There’s Nothing Anarchist about Eco-Fascism” notwithstanding, I am hard-pressed to think of an instance in which the addition of the modifier struck me as particularly useful to an analysis of either ecological problems or fascism.

One of the main usages of the term *eco-fascist* to be found outside of the anarchist milieu is as a pejorative hurled by the opponents of environmentalism *as such*, the same people who want to run over protesters blocking a highway, or who call antifa “the real fascists.” The term has a parallel use inside the anarchist milieu, to be found among those who recycle, hate injustice, and talk intelligently about agricultural science and habitat restoration. For a time, one of its main applications seems to have been for “social ecologists”—fools like Janet Biehl or Dave Orten—to identify any anti-civilization or anti-industrial theories, as well as any advocacy for extra-rational or intuitive ways of knowing, with a subterranean link to the history of the green wing of the German Nazi party and the culture of volkish nationalism that fed it. Following in the footsteps of their ethnocentric, statist mentor Murray Bookchin, they made clear their considered opinion that peoples living in a primitive manner were “lacking in evolutionary promise.”⁶⁰ They refused to engage with the reality of slavery, colonization, and ecocide which underlies not only their ideal of the ancient Greek *polis*, but our current global set-up. In good orthodox marxist style, they maintain that any recalcitrance in moving forward into the future of updated (green) modes of production is latently or secretly reactionary or fascistic.

Matters, of course, are greatly complicated by the fact that by now there is no lack of evidence for the detractors of green anarchy—understood roughly as a brand or monolith—to point out in support of their claims. What indeed can we glimpse in the volkish nationalist utopias of

⁶⁰ See, among several other book-length anarchist rebuttals, *Beyond Bookchin: Preface for a Future Social Ecology* by David Watson, a joint release of Black and Red with Autonomedia.

generations ago, or today? What are we to make of the the unique contributions of Richard Walther Darre as Hitler's Reich Minister of Food and Agriculture and main ideologist of the *blood and soil* refrain in fascism? The nazi doctors who ostensibly sought to correct the evils of "civilization" and waged their war on cancer? Eugenics? What of the left wing of the party represented by the Strasser brothers, liquidated in the Night of Long Knives, whose death serves as a wellspring of inspiration for Third Position fascists as well as the ecologically-concerned and ancestrally-obsessed swaths of neo-folk and martial industrial keepers of the flame? Who gave neo-fascist Douglas Pearce the name for his Death in June project? The occult roots of nazism? Esoteric Aryan essentialism?

What about Evola and his nominal *Revolt Against the Modern World*? What about his Olympia-based neo-fascist devotees Sadie and Exile and their frothing transphobia and anti-Mexican racism, their profuse propaganda efforts? What about Richard Hunt, former editor of UK journal *Green Anarchist*, expressing support for nationalism, or the former *Green Anarchy* collective member who turned fascist? The low key (white) American nationalism of Dave Foreman and others of the formative generation of Earth First!? The "white tribalism" and "voluntary separatism" of National Anarchists? Troy Southgate using primitivist internet forums to boost fascism? The terrifying, *androphilic* "anti-civ" fascism *par excellence* so ably promoted by Jack Donovan and his Fight Club-esque clones⁶¹? Wolves of Vinland? The fascist sympathy and/or rampant denial which spangles the expanse of big post-left names? Lawrence Jarach saying boneheaded shit about burning black churches? Zerzan being a little too into Spengler⁶²? Odinism and the Asatru Folk Assembly? The Charles Manson race war and its slogan of *Air Trees Water Animals*? The racist co-op members up the street? Chauvinist tree-sitters and serial rapist eco-defenders? People who think eating Paleo is resistance (and who can afford to do it)?

What about the free fall into transphobic bigotry and authoritarianism of DGR?⁶³

What about ITS?

Verily I say unto thee: we have a *Big. Fucking. Problem.*

And the signs of it are everywhere.

It's the same problem that underlies the possibility of pointing out Mussolini's origins among the socialists and syndicalists, or the workerist character of National Socialism, or the existence of National Bolshevism, or the double life led by white South African anarchist/fascist Michael Schmidt, co-author of the syndicalist history *Black Flame*. Redneck Revolt shaking hands with MAGA hats because they claim not to be outright fascists. The State collaborationism of *Aufheben-gate*. White pacifist liberals who speak in the name of indigenous people, defusing all social antagonism toward capitalism and attempting to stop any anti-infrastructural direct actions. The thoroughly colonialist, capitalist framework involved in the idea of collectivizing a factory, mine, or farm. Soviet terror famines and mass rape. The attempted extermination and/or assimilation of traditional indigenous cultures by an array of governments, both left and right. The irrecon-

⁶¹ If you want your head to spin or to acquaint yourself with the game to beat in the realm of anti-civ-ish iconoclasm, read the excellent article "Jack Donovan on men: a masculine tribalism for the far right" by Matthew N. Lyons, found here: <http://threewayfight.blogspot.com/2015/11/jack-donovan-on-men-masculine-tribalism.html>

⁶² On the other hand, the Zerzan essay often touted as a smoking gun, "Rank-and-File Radicalism within the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920's," at last check is not actually any kind of endorsement of the KKK but a historical meditation on left-right crossover and the appeal of various radical causes to an otherwise racist base.

⁶³ Hopefully the subject of an upcoming essay.

cilable anti-black racism and imposed *social death* which undergirds civil society and western civilization as a whole.

The problem which serves as the bedrock or substrate upon which all of the above are founded is the same that bodes for an implacable hostility toward the culture of civilization.

Fascism, like the modernist social and political phenomena that preceded it and against which it jealously asserts itself as latecomer (socialism, anarchism, communism, liberalism, conservatism, nihilism, etc.), is ultimately a response to the traumatic rupture of the *imposition* of modernization, the *intentional* tearing asunder—for purposes of control and profit—of the world that was. The Industrial Revolution, Leopold Roc's "pure bourgeois lie,"⁶⁴ was a society-wide counter-insurgency program as well as a round of primitive accumulation of capital. The sheen of Progress was stretched over the undertaking to mystify its basis and ordain its mission, but this campaign was not the natural result of human ingenuity and curiosity, nor the spontaneous outgrowth of some innate will to dominate, nor the inevitable outcome of the forward march of time or maturation of productive forces. It broke up and re-constituted social structures, annihilated traditions and customs that had ensured some measure of autonomy, reciprocity, and the "levelling impulse" in a radically unequal feudal world, and broke such bonds with land, seasonal rounds, and numinous presences as could be still spoken of at its outset—and much more. All of this is the picture if we're only looking at the industrializing countries, sparing no glance at the farther-flung lands and peoples whose subjugation was the condition for it all, who would find themselves torn from their context and borne along the trade routes of a globalizing system that would use them as raw production material, draft animals, entertainment, and scapegoats.

The universal malaise and anomie that resulted from these liminal conditions—this brave new world of the bruised, poisoned, starved, enslaved, miserable, discarded and atomized, the playground of the opulent, decadent, capricious, avaricious, and brazen, the object of reformers and radicals, innovators and atavists, tinkerers and visionaries—crescendoes and seemed to climax in the unimaginable, abyssal horror of the first World War. The fully rationalized, unending slaughter of millions, the shell-shocked denuding of the Earth into a hellish blood-drenched moonscape, the irreparable scarring of the survivors (a cross-section cutting across a great proportion of the "europeanized" world), and disillusion with the complicity of almost all levels of society including assumably benevolent elders and leaders, initiated the desperate, hemorrhaging grasp for a meaning to match the madness, an idea adequate to the experience. This disaster signals a soul-destruction of such world-ending proportions and consequence that we are still living in the thrall of its aftermath.⁶⁵ This is no trivial matter.

In their attempts to address the apocalyptic cataclysm, the ideological-political specimens which have sprung into life in the whirlwind of the past couple hundred years—the children of the *century of camps* which we have not departed—are a mottled bunch. Fascism, in addition to being one of the most anguished, may be the most syncretic among its siblings. Like the others, in

⁶⁴ See "Industrial Domestication: Industry as the Origins of Modern Domination," by Leopold Roc, collected in the booklet *A Crime Called Freedom: The writings of Os Cangaceiros, volume 1*, available here: <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/os-cangaceiros-a-crime-called-freedom-the-writings-of-os-cangaceiros-volume-one>. See also Part 2 of John Zerzan's *Elements of Refusal*, particularly the labor history essays "Industrialism and Domestication," "Who Killed Ned Ludd?," and "Origins and Meaning of WWI," as well as Silvia Federici's *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation* and Arthur Evans' *Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture*.

⁶⁵ For indications of the mythological and psychological resonance of these cataclysmic events and their significance both for the history of western civilization as a whole and for the rise of fascism in particular, see *Modernism and Fascism* by Roger Griffin.

its various permutations (or occasionally in the same iteration), it straddles the divide between affirmations and condemnations of modernity, between politics of “left” and “right,” between the tastes for socialist conviviality and provincial primitivism, between proclivities toward the sanguine hues of heroic mythology and the cold glare of scientism, technophilia or biophilia, and on and on. The social support for fascism is heterogenous. Its metaphysical justifications and spiritual affinities are multiple and shifting. Its anti-rational aspects are self-conscious and applied toward its chosen goal. Its compulsive use of religious language and trappings is opportunistic, the hallmarks of a “charismatic” form of modern politics offering a panacea to the woes of contemporary society. These trappings “do not signify a literal regression to an earlier age of religious certainties (in which the nation as the focus of populist energies and the concept of the State as the creator of the ideal society did not exist).”⁶⁶ Ultimately, it seeks an alternative modernity, a rejuvenated civilization.

As we see, fascism doesn’t mean all of the same things for all of its advocates. Furthermore, as we well know, fascism does not always say what it means. The presence of one or some of these aspects does not a fascist make. The factor which differentiates the fascist appropriation of these elements and unifies them in a coherent project is the same that unites the many outgrowths of its content: the longing for a new order, a regenerated racial (or otherwise culturally homogeneous and pure) national community, to be ushered in by acts of creative-destruction against a degenerate status quo.

The rhetorical resemblance to anti-civilization discourse and green anarchist thought are there for anyone to see. Just change a few terms around—drop the “racial” and “national” and maybe replace them with something like “human”⁶⁷—and you’re getting warmer, right? Politically, there’s a shared hatred for neoliberal capitalist democracy; philosophically, a related rejection of Enlightenment values and a deliberate embrace of myth. It’s an overlap partly responsible for the havoc currently being played with affinities in the ensemble of deep green and anti-authoritarian milieus, and the near-complete demolition of confidence in the ability, much less the inclination, of the anarchist scene to clean its own house, empty its closet of skeletons, or even take an honest look in the mirror.

For the would-be enemies of the current social order to leave it at that is a cop-out. Even (or especially) at this late hour, I maintain that the differences are more important than the similarities. Certain resemblances between fascism and anarchism have obviously to do with the common historical heritage outlined above, and with the exigencies imposed on each by a broadly shared (if *vastly* differing) status as outliers or underdogs. But while some of the resemblances are proving absolutely critical, certain of them are surely incidental. Just as it’s facile to maintain, for example, that race and gender function in exactly the same ways because they both serve as axes of oppression,⁶⁸ it’s a mistake (or at least premature) to consider *race* and *nation* in their fascist formulations as equivalent with the human animal or the living world discussed by green anarchists. These are in fact crucial differences of terms and analysis (and not the only ones) which render us not only distinct from, but opposed to the Jack Donovans in our increasingly hot, crowded, and chaotic world.

⁶⁶ Griffin, *Fascism*, 5-6.

⁶⁷ Although, the afro-pessimists are onto something in locating an inherent anti-blackness in the category of the Human in western thought.

⁶⁸ And hence, that *trans-racial* and *trans-gender* are equivalent terms, for example.

What, then, is the secret ingredient in the recipe that turns a primmie to a fash? And what combination of spells might we cast that will render this cheerless alchemy impossible, a non-starter?

Perhaps it's true that there is no eco-fascism, properly speaking. There are only fascists who are more concerned with the earth, and those who are less so. ITS, this enemy warband with the disturbingly familiar visage, is arguably not either. But does it really matter when they might as well be?

The Only Terrorist is The State (and Its Little Helpers)

Also implicit in fascism's mythic core is the drive towards totalitarianism. Far from being driven by nihilism or barbarism, the convinced fascist is a utopian, conceiving the homogenous, perfectly co-ordinated national community as a total solution to the problems of modern society. Yet any attempt to expunge all decadence necessarily leads to the creation of a highly centralized 'total' State with draconian powers to carry out a comprehensive scheme of social engineering. This will involve massive exercises in regimenting people's lives, and the creation of an elaborate machinery for manufacturing consensus through propaganda and indoctrination combined with repression and terror directed against alleged enemies, both internal and external, of the new order.⁶⁹

—Roger Griffin, *Fascism*

For his part, Bellamy Fitzpatrick is content to say that a lack of statism means it's not fascism. In his studied critique of eco-extremism, his man-to-man chat with the wayward sons of the anti-civilization tendency, he scolds the stupidity of leftists like Scott Campbell who hurl the epithet without so much as discussing what the term means or how it relates to ITS. The most he offers in the way of rejoinder can be found in a footnote that reads, "Through such epithetic usage, 'fascism' has of course been almost entirely bleached of meaning; yet one would think its meaning is not yet so exhausted that it would still, at minimum, require statism, which ITS, whatever their other faults, are obviously not embodying in either thought or action."⁷⁰

Fitzpatrick's answer to this lack of definitional integrity is to offer almost none of his own. His glib and carping reply to the admittedly sloppy and vapid use of the label sounds like a parody of what is coming to be seen as the token snappy reply of crotchety post-leftists to these and related allegations, evading rather than addressing. The idea that fascism necessarily espouses some form of statist politics at any given moment is just as stupid as the charge to which it replies. Fascism can exist not only as a regime, but possesses legitimately insurgent forms which seek to remake society from the bottom up, or from the outside in, gathering up the disaffected lone wolves and veterans of grisly battles unto itself and giving them a vision in which to believe. Not only did classical fascism begin its life in this fashion, but its various contemporary permutations in the realm of neo-fascism are breaking new ground in the postures of iconoclastic resistance as we speak, occasionally throwing over statism altogether, at least rhetorically. It can do this while reblogging pictures of Hitler's face. It can do this while seeking alliances with Black nationalists.

⁶⁹ Griffin, *Fascism*, 6.

⁷⁰ Fitzpatrick, "Revolutionary Dissonance," in *Black Seed* #5, 26.

It can do this while swooning before images of counter-cultural serial killers. At any rate, until seizing power, being destroyed, or dissolving, fascism's hardcore necessarily involves itself in the constant casting of denunciations on a morally or otherwise bankrupt state system in the context of a generalizing loss of faith in its institutions, or its accelerating collapse. It may do this while nonetheless benefitting from the protections of the state, sharing in some of its priorities, and advancing parts of its legitimating narrative. It can do this while talking about Wild Nature or sending bombs.

Moreover, ITS is now taking on a portion of the dirty work of the Mexican state, and Fitzpatrick ignores this. They are zealously threatening and attacking the most intransigent of anarchist insurrectionaries, attempting to bomb their spaces and discredit their projects, all while doing their level best to associate resistance to civilization—in the public mind as well as among radicals—with indiscriminate attacks and murders, vitriolic misogyny and homophobia, a deranged and impossibly puritanical nature ethic, and more. Lately, in issuing a fresh threat to Scott Campbell, they have even gloated over the murder of US anarchist Brad Will by government-aligned paramilitaries during the 2006 uprising in Oaxaca, making abundantly clear on which side of the barricades their sympathies and affinities lie.⁷¹

The first ever ITS communique, dated 27 April, 2011, began with the line *If you think I am a pessimist, than you have not understood anything*. They offered solidarity to the anti-civilization prisoners of Mexico, the Chilean comrades, the furious among the Swiss and Italians. They analyzed the horrors of nanotechnology and condemned the echelons of capitalist alienation and destruction yet to be reached. They lamented the destruction of the biosphere, the torture of millions of animals, and the reduction of human beings to appendages of the Megamachine. They spoke of abandoning the cities. They sent bombs to the responsible and yet acknowledged the smallness of their efforts. Between grandiose and snide individualist musings they entertained just enough humility to consider their own exploits something short of *striking powerfully at the system*, writing, “some think that this is pessimistic, think that we have fallen into defeatism—but no, if we had fallen into these traps of civilization we would not be making explosives for technology staff—we say this rather because it is the reality and we know that reality hurts.”⁷²

Behold. The fall into defeatism is complete. The trap of civilization claps tightly shut. Leviathan now speaks its words through the mouths of those who sought to resist it. The willingness to truly face a reality that hurts ebbs away. The sincere experience of grief, of mourning—the only conduit by which vitality may continually re-enter us and keep us real—is choked off and replaced with a hollow pose to conceal the pain.

In that impeccable logic of armed struggle, the passive spectators of this drama will be tempted to wonder what happened to their team, and pine with Fitzpatrick and Jacobi for the days when they had a horse in the race who wasn't such an embarrassment.

Others will speak of the trajectory of ITS as a slide from legitimate forms of resistance into the realm of *terrorism*. But like the starry-eyed spectators of the armed group, those who seek to preserve a station of legitimacy for themselves by denouncing “terrorism” (or “eco-terrorism”) are playing into the narratives of the State and reproducing the dynamics it hopes to secure.

As Clastres knew, fundamental to the definition of the State is the monopoly it maintains on the legitimate use of violence. The term *terrorism* has been definitionally constructed by it for this

⁷¹ <https://itsgoingdown.org/its-attacks-anarchists/>

⁷² <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/individualists-tending-toward-the-wild-communicues>

end. What is *terrorism* but the State's attempt to create and delimit the the necessary conditions for its necropolitical ends,⁷³ broadening its ability to mobilize either a "just war" or "extreme prejudice"?⁷⁴ It never behooves us to adopt the counter-insurgency terminology deployed by the State, just as the haste to draw a line between the "innocent" and the "guilty" in the courts of the system, calling attention to the supposed innocence of its hapless victims, is to earmark as legitimate prey any and all who can't or won't achieve the status of innocent.⁷⁵

In our dealings with friend and foe alike, we would do well to bear in mind that *the only terrorist is the State*. That old nemesis. Administrator of the ecocidal armageddon. Arbiter of the domestic, gendered nightmare. The friendly face of the colonial white power structure. The guarantor of every capitalist bastion. The bosom companion and counterpart (and often coordinator and financier) of every top-billed bogeyman who by contrast makes its own order sparkle and gleam with an appeal to the resigned.

Green Anarchy (Has Failed a Lot of People)

Because, really, it all began with us and can only end with us. Human oppression began with the erosion of the indigenous communal societies and men's ownership of women and 'his' children that we reproduced. That was their first captive labor force, which by sacred male custom even the poorest man is supposed to be entitled to. Women were the first subject people categorized by biology, the first oppressed race, it all leads back to us.

Which is why in any social upheaval, any cracks in the patriarchal order, women break out, begin being 'crazy' and changing themselves. Oppressors are thrown into confusion when this happens, but soon recognize it with hatred as the most fundamental challenge to their being.⁷⁶

⁷³ See Achille Mbembe's "Necropolitics" at https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/currentstudents/pgmasters/modules/postcol_theory/mbembe_22necropolitics22.pdf

⁷⁴ From a friend, roughly: "It is similar to the creation of RICO laws to target the mob or the myth of Cultural Bolshevism in that it is created to target a specific enemy of the ruling order...The Islamic State and ITS have both used this to create a subjectivity for themselves which allows them take on the label and be the 'bad guy' or the death-seeking 'holy warrior.' Where labels like *anarchist*, *queer*, or *nihilist* were also often first used by our enemies the difference here is that the cons outweigh the pros of adopting *terrorist* as a moniker or using it as pejorative, especially as a pejorative in the current climate. Sowing fear into authoritarian hearts can be a desirable outcome, but terrorizing our enemies is akin to torturing our enemies and that is not something most anarchists (including the like of Stirner or the modern insurgent theory-minded) would find ethical or strategically necessary. The aim of the *attentat* is to destroy or at least attack (however futilely) our enemies and demoralization can play a part in these stratagems or aesthetic campaigns, but that is not necessarily to enact 'terrorism.'"

It is wise to adopt names that are unadoptable by civil society, for these names refuse to be incorporated into the damage control and the biopolitics of civilization, but just because a name is frowned upon by the polite ones does not make it desirable. On the other hand, playing into the narratives of polite morality by using these loaded names is also very undesirable, especially in the case of *terrorism*.

⁷⁵ For additional insight on this matter, please consider reading in its entirety one of the best essays to appear in any radical milieu in the past several years, the *afro-pessimism* inspired "Against Innocence: Race, Gender, and the Politics of Safety" by Jackie Wang. Found here: <http://www.liesjournal.net/volume1-10-againstinocence.html>

⁷⁶ Butch Lee and Red Rover. *Night-Vision: Illuminating War and Class on the Neo-Colonial Terrain*. 79-80. It should be noted that despite the incredibly astute and damning analysis of global civilization to be found in this book and its refreshing lack of prescriptive pre-packaged solutions, indications are that the preferred practice of the authors,

—Butch Lee and Red Rover, *Night-Vision*

“*Anarchism has failed a lot of people.*” Truer words were never spoken. This is the lament of the nihilist author of the LBC statement, but it is not his alone. It touches a nerve and pulls on heartstrings. It is a looming apprehension, this universally-felt let down, which the bookseller uses to frame his ruminations about the advent of *the post-anarchist moment*, the dawn of a new era, a rebirth from the ashes. It is the maudlin sentiment which the publishing powerhouse hopes to harness, to parlay into a fierce and unprecedented reckoning with the meaning of the anarchist legacy, and sweep away the detritus of the quaint adherence to “egalitarian politics” leftover from an age of degenerate failure.

Those who are doing everything in their power to ensure that “eco-extremism” is at the center of this reckoning are affecting the posture of wanting simply to begin a dialogue. Like some of their peers, they want their rights to free speech and free association to be respected. They want a safe space, a civil exchange in a marketplace of ideas, in which to publish their pro-rape journals, and bolster the most Interesting of tendencies. Anyone who won’t abide them reveals in advance their failure to adhere to the true and essential anarchist mode of thought, to escape the clutches of the Left and “social anarchism.”

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

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

Under the aegis of being detached, objective nihilist egos floating bubble-like through hostile terrain, insulated from anything that might make them into moral creatures, they are in reality among those most concerned with condemning and controlling how others think, fussing over the details of the inner lives of those who are really just followers, customers, and commenters to them.

Before putting any boots to the ground, they would like a more thorough accounting of “where the enemies end and where they begin.”

As I began writing this section, a news item appeared called “‘Eco-Fascist’ Groups Applaud ISIS, Murder of Heather Heyer, and Publishers.”⁷⁷ It relays the findings of some US anarchists critical of ITS who have taken it upon themselves to translate two recent statements by the group. In these latest statements, ITS tells us what we already know: Abe Cabrera and LBC are not neutral parties, nor mere objective reporters of the facts. ITS praises the progenitors of the *Atassa* journal to high heaven as the American advocates and counterparts of eco-extremism, the heralds

somehow, is to build the Revolutionary Party and follow the wise Leader. Once more, it’s possible to presciently argue the impetus for a generalized assault on all of the institutions of civilization for the end of taking the reins oneself.

⁷⁷ <https://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2017/09/13/18802882.php>

of its rising hegemony, helping to strike urgently needed blows against the anarchist movement in the north, putting paid to any lingering doubts about where the affinities lie. They do this amid celebrating the murder of Heather Heyer by a fascist-aligned motorist as she participated in an anti-racist demonstration in Charlottesville, VA on August 12th.⁷⁸ ITS was sure to condemn “both sides” of that conflict in language that exactly mirrors the equivocating statements of white nationalist Donald Trump. In the course of this commentary, ITS also continues to represent itself (and its friends in the US) as the figureheads of the struggle against humanist anarchism, reaffirming its status as sole torchbearers of the ancestral spirits against atheistic leftism. Since the release of this article, LBC has responded by placing *Atassa* on sale at a 50% discount.

“There is a painting by Klee called *Angelus Novus*. An angel is depicted there who looks as though he were about to distance himself from something which he is staring at. His eyes are opened wide, his mouth stands open and his wings are outstretched. The Angel of History must look just so. His face is turned towards the past. Where *we* see the appearance of a chain of events, *he* sees one single catastrophe, which unceasingly piles rubble on top of rubble and hurls it before his feet. He would like to pause for a moment so fair, to awaken the dead and to piece together what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise, it has caught itself up in his wings and is so strong that the Angel can no longer close them. The storm drives him irresistibly into the future, to which his back is turned, while the rubble-heap before him grows sky-high. That which we call progress, is *this* storm.”

—Walter Benjamin, “On the Concept of History” (manuscript completed shortly before committing suicide while fleeing persecution in Nazi-occupied France)

We are for a different post-anarchist moment, a different ensemble of post-left agendas, a different deployment of nihilistic sensibilities. We sense and are the co-creators of a different syncretism, a different use of mythology, the weaponizing of a different history. We speak to another emotional resonance, with distinct affections.

We too are for a blast of alterity into our current straits, a multiplication of the multiple.

Anarchism has failed a lot of people, but there are worlds of difference—and conflict—in interpreting that statement. Our interpretation of the failures of anarchism starts from our shared disappointment with the culminations of left-anarchism and horror at the death-trip of civilization, but from there reaches conclusions that could not be further from the eco-extremists.

From sea to empty, poisoned sea, from the besieged tropics to the melting arctic circle, across every biome and all manner of once-thriving terrain, and in the urban centers and cascading monotonous sprawl that require the fouling and subjugation of all the rest—Turtle Island is striated with the codes of white supremacy and criss crossed with its agents. Most of us who are firmly nestled in the colonizing culture don’t even know what the land looks like or how it acts, what it wants from us here and now.

⁷⁸ Quote the ITS: “as the humanist anarchists in the U.S. were run over by neo-Nazis (both groups are cocksuckers), the Islamic State finally struck in Spain where you are, you son of a thousand whores! While it’s true that neither of these acts were carried out by eco-extremists, it’s a sign of the wild curse that has fallen on you and your loved ones for defaming us. Be careful, shitty atheist, the ancestral spirits roam free and will torment you until your death!”

Race as we know it—the color line fabricated by police, schools, unions, and hospitals, mandated by coiffed, liberal business people and crass, surly survivalists alike—might be *the* American monument to civilization and its management. It was conceived in those early transoceanic voyages of globalizing empires, weaned on the experiments in governance in their rickety colonial ventures, and grew up in the same fertile seedbed with Manifest Destiny and Thanksgiving dinner. It proceeded apace with the mass extirpation of species, the founding of the prison-industrial complex, and the proliferation of digital technology. It was the westward thrust of the Anglo peoples across so-called North America that later served as a beacon to Hitler and the burgeoning Nazi movement. It was American scientists who invented eugenics and directly provided the template and the inspiration for Nazi experiments in socially controlling all reproduction.⁷⁹

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

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

But the current upshot of several histories of white power—on global, national, regional, and local levels—have made it clear that this idleness has been in grave error. If it has had to wait for the events of the past handful of years for insurrectionary anarchists to renew their commitments to anti-racist struggle, it might just as easily be chalked up to the creeping insidiousness of the problem, its lack of responsiveness to any antidotes on hand, as to any lack of vigilance on their part. The recent explosive urban uprisings surrounding police murders, the resurgence of white nationalism, and the pervasive crypto-fascist influence in radical “counter-cultures” of several kinds have prompted many to reconsider the role of colonialism and race in the maintenance of the social order, and to re-evaluate the relationship of anarchists to the Left.

The quagmire of deep green and apocalyptic thought on this continent, with its subterranean pipeline joining the anarchists to the fascists (evil twins spinning in the rogue’s gallery with us), owes its existence to our shared mantle as heirs to the history of colonized and colonizing people. The most consequential of the resemblances between us, the little threads of correspondence out of which they are woven, stem from this. But what is the substance or nature of this colonizing culture?

If the appearance of this, the most racist and destructive of societies yet dreamed of, has its roots in the colonization of a people and a land by an invading culture, we might ask in turn from whence that invasion springs. It has been one of the contributions of green anarchism to seek not only what makes a people into colonizers, but to ask what force has colonized them in the first place. To ask who that first captive labor force was. To inquire into the origins of that essentializing force which results in the poor man with his back against the wall who yet makes himself into the enemy of liberation.

⁷⁹ See *Dixie Be Damned* by Neal Shirley and Saralee Stafford

In word and in deed, there are anarchists who have been fighting against civilization and against fascism for the same elongating stretch of our adult lives. In settling for one whenever we couldn't get our hands on the other, or else smarting under the blows and wasting under the humiliations of a seemingly imperturbable, omnipotent, and abstract foe, somehow it has been all too easy to capitulate, in practice if not in spirit, to the going view and conduct of these struggles as unrelated fights, to miss the aspects of the one residing in the other, rooted there.

Before riots, occupations, blockades and massacres were monthly or seasonal fixtures of national life, before world-renowned news outlets published definitive essays on the certainty of global ecological collapse and college activists and syndicalists reposted them on social media, the nagging awareness of these two enemies—enemies that usually no one else was talking about—had emerged in our lives simultaneously. It has not been the result, as it has often seemed, of an accident or an idiosyncrasy on the part of those so doubly engaged, caught between two worlds of radicalism each with different sets of priorities and lexicons, different casts of allies and adversaries, opposite visions of liberation. But the dual calling has been no coincidence.

Against civilization. Against fascism. It is increasingly clear that it is an *anti-patriarchal, anti-colonial* critique that forms a bridge or a web of sinew connecting these two tendencies, possibly the most vital in these end times. Against capitalist modernity and its false opposition, there is a continuous perspective, a panoramic sweep which rejects with equal ferocity the democratic lie, that great middle ground which spawns one (fascism) as the deeply mistaken answer to the other (civilization). It is a perspective which rejects all that we see, all politics and all currently-existing institutions of society, a rejection most often characterized as nihilistic, unrealistic, and juvenile.

It's also a rejection that can be said to characterize at least a few of those derided as Leftists, "social" anarchists, and antifa. The Left-Right political spectrum originated in the seating arrangement of the National Assembly of the French Revolution of 1789. Its contemporary usage, with relatively specific ideologies associated with the terms "left" and "right," solidified much more recently, only a little over a century ago. The Left is that repository of politics into which all nominal concerns about "egalitarianism" are funneled, whereas the Right is strongly representative of hierarchy and entrenched power structures. This is why we find affinity with at least some on the Left, but with no one on the Right. Ours is not the post-leftism that seeks to throw out the "egalitarian" baby with the bathwater of "politics," but to rid ourselves of those shallow conceptions which are enthroned in our era, indelibly shaped by these colonialist and statist political structures. Egalitarianism existed before the Left, it exists outside of it, and it will exist (if anything does) after it. A lot of people find their way to the Left for the same reasons that many of us initially did before leaving it behind: they want to fundamentally change everything, to destroy it all, to fuck shit up, and the Left happened to be the closest they could get. In this light, it is just as silly to become obsessed by transcending all traces of Leftism as it is to strictly identify with it. When the Left increasingly becomes the *only* thing that you hate, in all likelihood you are moving rightward. On a certain level, anti-fascism is nothing more than self-defense in a shit situation imposed by a world of enemies. In anti-fascism there is nothing to stop one from opposing the world in which "humanity sits upon a throne."⁸⁰

The old balance of ideological forces, the shaky anarchist scaffolding which has bolstered a vague sense of irreconcilability between the attack on civilization and the attack on fascism, is

⁸⁰ I oppose a politics in which all enemies of democracy are fascist and fascism sits at the absolute pinnacle of evil. But very few committed antifa I know has actually advanced this idea as part of their practice of anti-fascism.

coming to an end. Nothing is guaranteed and anything can happen. The mosaic is ours to re-tool, the elements of refusal and desire awaiting propitious re-combinations.

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

A recent meme made by Abe Cabrera impeccably showcases his *A Clockwork Orange* geist via use of a popular format showing a couple walking hand in hand, distracted by a passerby. The man has lost interest in his current girlfriend named “principled direct action” (represented by Kevin Tucker’s *Black and Green Review*) in favor of a new flame dubbed “senseless and indiscriminate violence” (represented by *Atassa*). The meme is an attempt to show two paths diverging, when really, in the words of a friend, “there are many ways in these woods.”

It’s been hard to write parts of this essay—the multiple overarching and persistent themes of *becoming what you hate* and *sexual assault* are difficult to take for those who have experienced them, or for honest people who aren’t obsessed with irony. The eco-extremists seem almost like a caricature meant to discredit anti-civilization discourse and actions. They’ve had plenty of help. But the critique of civilization has been borne out by events and analyses of staggering variety and import. It’s fucked no matter who is or isn’t saying it. The stolid and staid adherents of the political Left can point to their garish foils in the ITS and it doesn’t redeem a thing. Again, it’s what we do with this knowledge that matters.

Many insurrectionaries greeted the arrival of *Black Seed* with open arms. A publication taking the end of *Green Anarchy Magazine* as its starting point and resuming regular publication of new anti-civilization materials seemed to fill a conspicuous gap in the anarchist periodical literature.⁸¹ The inclusion of more indigenous voices among the contributors was an exciting development. The idea of an “old new green anarchism” which avoids the pitfalls of its predecessor remains extremely necessary. I even liked most of Aragorn!’s intro to the new issue, and I can say the same about significant portions of Elani’s contributions. Furthermore, a single re-printing of *Killing King Abacus, Desert*, or an anthology of *Do or Die: Voices from the Ecological Resistance* gives better indications for revolt and is more welcome than three quarters of the AK press catalogue.

But treachery is treachery. To go from a generally favorable disposition toward the project to wondering whether these ideas and people even deserve to be dignified with a response is

⁸¹ Issues #2 and #4 are generally excellent. See in particular, “The Roots of a New Practice: An Interview with Knowing the Land is Resistance” and “Two Steps Back: the Return of Nonviolence in Ecological Resistance” (from issue #1) by Oxalis, “Anarchy on the Scorched Earth” by Balora, “The Issues Are Not the Issue: A Letter to Earth First! from a Too-Distant Friend,” “Against the Green Left: A Debate About Affinity and Identity With Neal, Panagiotti, & The Ex-Worker,” “The Undying Appeal of White Nationalism” by James Joshua, etc., etc.

saying something. At a potential turning point for anti-civilization anarchism, in a time of sore need, they have used their influence only to countenance more confusion, bad faith, and ill will. Anarchists no longer have only to worry about the State and the fascists, but now also unhinged proto-fascist nihilists with a murderous grudge, and their supporters.

Patriarchy manifests itself everywhere as that background against which all legitimate human drama unfolds, while any attempt to deal outright with the patriarchal context itself betrays one's unseriousness, an unforgivably frivolous and dramatic nature, an unfitness to be one of the talking heads of anarchy. The existence of this essay is itself symptomatic of a context in which it takes dozens of pages to explain to overly cerebral men what many grasped immediately.

Two (of the many) areas of inquiry that speak to how and why the continuum between fascism and democratic, humanist civilization unfolds are an analysis of (*neo-*) *colonialism* and the ideas of *afro-pessimism*.⁸² These also happen to be two areas of inquiry mostly and conspicuously missing from the LBC canon, though they recommend themselves more than any ITS rant in understanding the social corollaries of civilized domination and the failures of predominantly white radical subcultures (along with all the others) to halt the Leviathan on this very recently stolen land. The secret rendezvous between anti-civilization theory and various concerns related to race, colonialism, white supremacy, and indigenous and black liberation needs to be nurtured. It can be discerned in iterations of a Black Nihilism that offers its own critique of hope and humanism, an analysis of the category of the Human which might prove a badly needed complication for simplistic deep green politics.

If in the hands of egoists and edgelords the project of *getting rid of ourselves* has taken a turn toward the bad parody of "eco-extremism" and a puritanical nihilism that won't die, in the hands of anti-colonial rebels and anticiv insurrectionaries it may yet serve as the only coherent and actionable program.

We, too, remember the words of Tecumseh and the burning of forts. We remember the visions and sacrifices of the members of the MOVE organization who took aim at their enemies manifested as Science, Medicine, and Technology, who fought for a wild and untrammled existence right in the heart of the un-living beast, advocating for a life based on hunting and gathering. We recall the positive reviews of anti-civilization literature written by Mumia Abu-Jamal, Howard Zinn, and others who set us on our path of resistance. We share the love and the rage of those for whom white power and fascism are faces of the absolute enemy.

We, too, are for the attack and the conspiracy. We rejoice in the striking of terror into the hearts of the responsible and support the phenomenal assaults against the infrastructure that sustains this travesty we call our way of life. Every wasted cop, every kneecapped boss, every trounced fascist brings us happiness. Every incorrigible rapist who knows to look over his shoulder from now on and every jock who has had to learn the hard way that some queers bash back are tasting the beginnings of another war on civility. To extend and elaborate this war is our dream.

Like some comrades in Barcelona responding to the nihilists a few years ago, we say that "the attacks against the system are essential to our struggle. But we've fooled ourselves. A struggle does not consist only in attacks. The attacks are not more important than the need to care for

⁸² See "a very short intro to afro-pessimism" at <https://belliresearchinstitute.com/2017/02/23/a-very-short-intro-to-afro-pessimism/> and "We're trying to destroy the world' — Anti-Blackness & Police Violence After Ferguson: An Interview with Frank B. Wilderson, III" at <http://ill-will-editions.tumblr.com/post/103584583009/were-trying-to-destroy-the-world>

ourselves, to preserve and spread our collective history, to create relations based in the gift, solidarity, and reciprocity, to imagine new worlds and new struggles, to confront our isolation and establish subversive and honest relationships with people outside of the categoric and political ghetto in which the Spectacle hides us.”

Like some who came before us we, too, believe that “revolt needs everything: papers and books, arms and explosives, reflection and swearing, poison, daggers and arson” and we, too, ponder over that most interesting of questions: *how to combine them*.

And like the comrades now fighting against the spectacular attempts of the ITS to assume a hegemonic role and thereby domesticate all revolt,⁸³ we say: No platform for rape glorifiers, for the cheerleaders of the State and the fascists, for the deadly enemies of anarchists.

We Don't Get to Choose What to Be

As I finish this writing, the sun appears beet red through a veil of smoke descending on this town from nearby forest fires, the worst yet in this land that is increasingly a tinder box. News reaches me of terrible floods and hurricanes rocking the shores of Texas, Puerto Rico, and the rest of the Gulf.

The eco-extremists are right about one thing: the world IS coming to an end. Irrevocably and totally. The Progressive narrative of human society has finally yoked the world to its inevitable conclusion in omnicide. It may even be true that the increase in the frequency and severity of natural disasters, these seemingly “indiscriminate attacks,” is one of the only things prompting larger numbers of people to consider the consequences of civilization and its demon engines. The death sentence has been carried out. Our lives are playing out in that final moment between the last heartbeats and the flatline. We sleep in the seconds between a swing and a hit.

The understanding that anarchy will be green or it will not be is yielding to a new horizon of horror that *it will not be*.⁸⁴ We have failed to avert the worst. The collapse is nine-tenths over with. The apocalyptic tidings to come will overshadow that style of consciousness which both precipitated and had to cope with the unfathomable carnage of world wars and genocides. The hope that we would somehow avoid being reduced to a bottom line on the ledger sheet of the bloodiest century on record, a name on the growing list of casualties, has been a fantasy, the haze of a drunken hour, now evaporating.

The world in which (some of) humanity sits upon a throne is in its twilight, once again spawning a multiplicity of too-little too-late desperate illuminations, pangs of twisted conscience and longings for rebirth, competing visions of ecological balance gone awry and just deserts dealt

⁸³ “We only have to look at the struggles of the ‘60s and ‘70s to confirm that the press—and as such, the State—don’t like to be confronted with a decentralized and chaotic struggle without a well defined enemy. That’s why they fund the academics: to always define their enemy. In each case, when an armed leftist group arose that considered itself the head of the spear and wanted to lead the entire heterogeneous struggle, the press responded immediately, converting the group into a symbol of the whole struggle, fixing them up with a central protagonism and a strong mediatic presence. Put another way, there was a strong confluence between the strategies of the press and those of these groups. Groups like the FAI or the CCF, while they act like the most radical, are really returning to a form of struggle that belongs to the revolutionary Left, and relying on the media to give them their repercussive force.” —“The Nihilist Recuperation,” collected in “An Anarchist Response to the Nihilists.”

⁸⁴ If you have not yet read *Desert*, I strongly suggest you do so after finishing this essay: <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/anonymous-desert#toc4>

out. And like a century ago, it's not only among those who would make anarchy on the scorched earth that it is so.

The darkest shade of green need not be abandoned to the fools and cowards who would manipulate us into a lane of more of the same. The catalogue of horrors has been assembled and broadcast before, updated too many times to count. I doubt you've made it this far into this essay if you think it's ok to kill off the indigenous people from a piece of land, destroying everything about it that made it what it was, replacing its former repertoire of plants, animals, and living beings with an annual monocrop farm to feed a mushrooming population of urban vegans. I doubt we have all that much to collaborate on if you think 7 billion human beings is an even remotely sustainably number of our kind to expect the earth to bear.

Contrary to the entire trajectory of western civilized ideology, we don't get to choose what to be. Our "nature" is not infinitely malleable, though flexible we may be in a great many regards. We are not merely egos with a selection of choices of what-to-be, appended to ourselves or our society. The idea that we can do so without consequences is itself the product of minds whose experience has been destroyed, their ontogeny interrupted just as surely as any animal abused and captive from birth.

Hunting, that special case of gathering that helped usher us into being and kept us humble and small for thousands of generations, is not warring. It is not a precursor to war or social predation except for in the logic of the civilized. This is something that is lost on the eco-extremists (who embrace the alleged connection) as well as on second-wave eco-feminists and vegans (who reject it as the mark of an irredeemably violent sex or as the vestige of a barbaric past). Hunting has been made into something that it is not by the same culture holding a gun to all of our heads. Some want to talk about war without acknowledging what agriculture does to the land. Others want to talk about warriors and cannibals without mentioning that they have arisen primarily in situations and places where we have not been able to obtain our needs by hunting and foraging. Cannibalism, sacrifice, the genderizing of the environment⁸⁵ which crystallizes in conceptions of a "Mother Earth" or in the misogyny of a punishing and fatherly Sky God ("Wild Nature") and his loyal warbands. These are the monuments of agricultural and pastoral societies, those who have had no large game and either non-existent or twisted societal recognitions of personal growth, marked by an inadequate cultural facilitation of the passage from one phase of maturity to the next.

The world is ending. Nothing can stop this now. No one is saying we won't have to become nomadic cannibal warrior people in a strange and possibly terrible refraction of our wild heritage. But the devil is in the details.

⁸⁵ "We may ask whether there are not hidden imperatives in the books of [romantic agrarian] Wendell Berry obscured by the portrayal of the moral quality, stewardship syndrome, and natural satisfactions of farm life. He seems to make the garden and barnyard equivalent to morality and aesthetics and to relate it to monotheism and sexual monogamy, as though conjugal loyalty, husbandry, and a metaphysical principle were all one. And he is right. This identity of the woman with the land is the agricultural monument, where the environment is genderized and she becomes the means of productivity, reciprocity, and access to Otherness, compressed in the central symbol of the goddess. When the subsistence base erodes, this morality changes. Fanaticism about virginity, women as pawns in games of power, and their control by men as the touchstone of honor and vengeance have been clearly shown to be the destiny of subequatorial and Mediterranean agriculture. [...] there are reasons to wonder whether the metaphors that mirror agri-culture are not infantile. (For hunter-gatherers the living metaphor is other species, for farmers it is the mother, for pastoralists the father, for urban peoples it has become the machine.)" —Paul Shepard, "A Posthistoric Primitivism."

We Get to Choose What to Be

The impossibly long sweep of human prehistory has determined much, but it hasn't determined everything. The same can be said of the indelible scars of our own botched childhoods, or mistakes made in what seems like another life. The past has its claims, and it settles them sooner or later. The memory of the cosmos is interminable. Trauma, process, observance, and respect are facts of life that do not disappear for having been suppressed or deferred. Whether humans will be angels or demons, their realm heaven or hell, can never be determined in advance by a formula or blueprint. This is our blessing and our curse: we get to choose. We get to fight for what we want. There is no fate but what we make for ourselves.

Our (anti-) politics are what we make of them. They are mosaics composed of the interplay of discrete and re-arrangeable elements. As with ecosystems, human cultures, and genomes, the continued existence of the whole is not contingent on the presence or absence of any piece in particular. Introductions, exchanges and substitutions are possible, and not all of these carry the same consequences.

The mosaic of cultural elements which constitutes civilization has unavoidably given rise, along with ecocide, to qualitatively new kinds and unprecedented amplitudes of oppression and hierarchy. But there is no guarantee that any given uncivilized culture will necessarily be an egalitarian one. The prevention of state formation and other civilized institutions—starving them of the esteem and materials necessary for their launch—is a good start. But ecological wisdom, a way of life that will not ravage the land, is capable of finding practical expression in ways that co-exist with or are predicated upon social domination.

Patriarchy is one of the oldest forms of hierarchical power, and one that is not strictly reliant on the stores and surpluses of agricultural domestication and its offshoots, however much of a boon these have proven to be for it. It can manifest in any small group. In the culture we share with Ramon Elani, it often does: the promise of the benefits of successfully performed manhood is a potent motivating force, either when the benefits are accrued, whetting the thirst of the rewarded, or when the culture fails to live up to its promise, leaving the bitterness of supercharged entitlement seeking an outlet and its own confirmation in external representations and in deeply held metaphysical principles.

The eco-extremists find solace and exoneration in the existence of patriarchal practices in the societies they claim to want to emulate, in the seemingly spontaneous quality of its arise. From a kind of basic compatibility of these practices with a life lived in Wild Nature, they extrapolate a self-serving justification for the sexism and the fetishization of brutality instilled by our own culture. Their alleged rejection of humanism is spurious, and is bound up with their refusal to confront patriarchy, femicide, and rape. Those whose talk of war is imbued with the enthusiastic overtones of war on/for women are seeking to live the fantasy of the perpetual adolescent, an illusory prestige that is difficult to imagine actually achieving in our own society, even if it has been the one to imprint it. It is a psychological grounding that is just as much the product of the rational humanistic society as any nanotech scientist or hydro-electric dam, any university or airport.

If Elani imagines the ideal world as “crystalline, cold, hard, and perfect,” it might constitute one more link with the fascistic worldview that sees maleness as innately self-denying and de-

structive, opposed in its essence to the dreaded and hated chaos associated with the feminine—the fluid, warm, soft, and vulnerable.⁸⁶

There are infinite possibilities in the expression of the content we may give to basic social forms. From the versatility of the human cultural mosaic we may extrapolate something quite at odds with the eco-extremist view, their projections, cop-outs, and excuses. Living in reciprocity with a landbase may not guarantee egalitarian relations, but neither does it bar them.

The only “guarantee” of a society in which patriarchy is thwarted is the institution of the cultural element of an *aggressive egalitarianism* within and between us.

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

There is a “grown-up” critique of moralism, as it were, made by those who seek to transcend rather than succumb to civilization’s permanent stall out in juvenile contrarianism and hero-worship.⁸⁷ Unlike the discourse (or the society) run by childish adults—civilization’s loyal opposition—it’s one that hears a different timbre of tragedy in the cries of the warrior. It listens, and hears a warrior who would bring an end to war as we’ve known it, making war on certain of its conventions. Warrior as partisan of that sociality in which weakness and vulnerability are not held in contempt, but are treasured and protected. The warrior as contingent and transitional figure—a warrior who does not rape—may not be able to avoid putting on the armor of the Leviathan or to avert apocalypse, but may die in the attempt, for what we do in life echos in eternity. Hidden within every experience of great suffering there is a secret passage.

What might be called the post-anarchist moment could be marked by the emergence of something that looks like a third wave of anarchy. There will be a different New Old Green Anarchy found in the mix, donning the mask. It likely will not be troubled by some amount of vestigial “leftism” in its constitution, not afraid to incur the insults of enemies while seeking its accomplices.

Who are the pretenders writing and tabling eloquent pro-rape theories, devotees of an armed struggle group moving ever rightward, gloating about the killing of Brad Will and Heather Heyer? If random people by this description moved in and set up shop, what avenues of resistance would recommend themselves?

Anti-civilization anarchists and insurrectionaries are no strangers to being transgressive beyond recuperation. Not everyone who is opposed to the eco-extremists is opposed to the constitution of war-machines, or looks with only regret upon the “meta-stable state of latent hostility between local autonomous communities.” If in primitive society we may discern “the political control of the economy and the social control of the political”⁸⁸ then it may indeed be the pretentious chief seeking to assert economic control of the political and the political control of the social who finds himself butchered by the recalcitrant, with a smile.

⁸⁶ See *Male Fantasies* by Klaus Theweleit

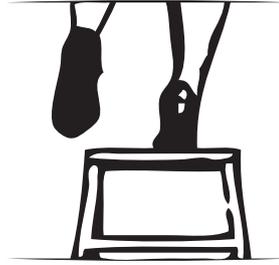
⁸⁷ Tbh, please read Paul Shepard.

⁸⁸ Clastres. *Archeology of Violence*, 13.

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