
issue seven
oak
a journal
against civilization

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all errors are the fault of the editor

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Submissions should be relevant to the critique of civilization
and attempt to further both practice and thinking.

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No Google Docs will be accepted.

OAK SEVEN

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THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO MY BROTHER, KAOS



Editorial with a note on content

Multi-Polar World and Global Hegemony describe the same thing. It is the reversibility of the universal state project. The necessary other side of a general agreement for a planetary technological system. Lest anyone be fooled by this rebranding to national pride -- and all the other previously deconstructed cheap simulations that wither and die in the face of AI and its compulsive increase -- this rise is not that of fascism. Or if it is, it is in the sloppy sense used by Reich and tortured by Foucault -- one we are better to leave alone since we are now fully focused on fighting nothing. Back then humans were the central characters but now the only ones granted the affluence of thought and creativity, values and knowledge are the Bots.

We are focused with an absolute mad drive to fight a phantom, the hyperreality of politics and the procession of screen interaction, all masquerading as meaning and purpose. The video-game simulation of our lives is near full completion. Driven by the fervour for resentment and misfortune, we have acquiesced to the system of slavery which engulfs the networks (both metaphorical and literal) of the entire world.

Nevertheless, we are still here, haunted by old ideas (materialism) and broken promises (egoism). Another rider of disillusion gallops across the horizon, pleated with the reflective confluence of all our identities shimmering like glistening frames. The recruitment of data means that there is no quietism (even though it is a good idea) besides a viscous silence, one that protects itself from ever being heard. The hermit who strikes back.

To re-evaluate the inadequacy of previous era's analysis to our own times becomes necessary for a critical, effective analysis. If we can praise Marx for anything it was his nascent situationist thinking. Here we are in this concrete critical material world that is knowable (what is concrete about it I will never understand). Marx leaves aside art, ideas and poetics – he sees the situation is now dominated by the economical and accommodates this development through an elaborate description of its workings. All the world is made of an innate value (rebranding transcendence).

Marx took this insight and turned it into a system, he revealed what he said were "natural laws" of production. This system of thinking started through a basic reversion of values, the low and common would reveal the virtues occluded by the aristocrat. As Witold Grombrowicz summarizes Marx: "what comes from below is reality." It was in the end more dialectics, which people seem to think represents continuing importance despite nowhere do we find anything but multiplicity and misunderstanding. A world where order and hidden geometry is heralded despite its obvious fascination being from its aberration – its startling lack of continuity with the rest of life. Even in order there is only the chaos of its appearance. The dialectical organization of thinking misses the fractal nature of all experience.

Primitivism contains a transvaluation of Marx's inversion (we can credit others too of course). Rather than the lowly classes, the primitivist looks towards a reversion in grand historical terms, the "lowliest" are championed in an ultimate sense, with the greatest oeuvre ever considered in theoretical terms. It is a radical idea almost by accident. It becomes, for some, the insanity embedded at the edge of absolute rationality (Gelderloos). By taking this complete account, this outside and extremely objective view of culture generally -- this view of "geological time" or " deep time" in a universalist account of human development -- the primitivist can gain some grounding. But it must acknowledge the paradox of its tools and the limitations of its analytical lenses.

If civilization is a sinking ship, then saving yourself with objective reality is something like trying to bring yourself to the surface by pulling on your own hair. This objective view can snuff out some of that all-im-



portant spark that drove one to consider, in the furthest and most radical frame of sanctioned thinking, the deepest break possible with civilized life. This is the spark that would possibly unify us in some way -- that blaring light of a political notion that can leave politics, that can abandon theory to that particular intuition granted some: that all of this is of an ineffable vulgar order, that it is all at once too profane and too prude. The banality of violence provokes nausea in many but to search, not for the impossible expulsion or violence, but rather the reemergence of its banished necessity – that is not and never has been a product of argument or good-thinking.

And now, at the pinnacle of human erasure, at the end of thought, intelligence, creativity, sex and dreams we are called to practice the lucidity of the "savage mind" and practice all tactics of maintaining the alter, the different, the Other.

Green Anarchy, as it is best expressed now in the American context, looks like a constant becoming driven by an approbation of the real. It is distant and paradoxical kinship situations maintained with hydrocarbons but facilitated by foraging and hunting, weaving and baskets. It is the building of relationships divorced from the Virtual. It incorporates the elements of all effective resistance, in daily and communal life, regardless of their place on a linear map. It is the blending of perspectives and the focus on the face-to-face, it is not anywhere pure and never will be, and this is its strength.

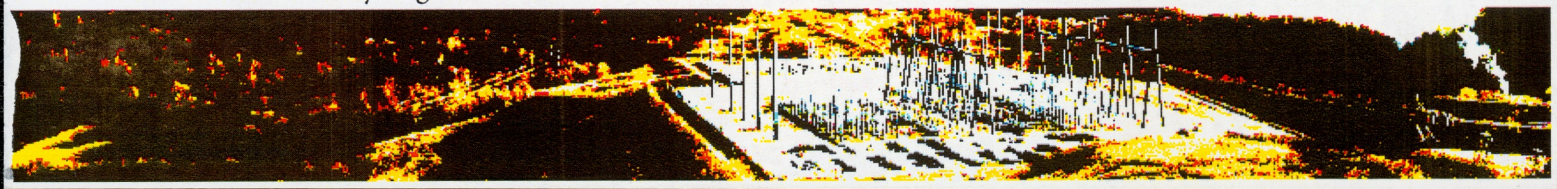
The system can be whatever it wants, it can contend with any and all content, it can invert the truth to liberate it to something new over and over again, it is perfectly meaningless as it does nothing to transgress the only globally unifying element: technological development.

The lives of before and after civilization should never be confused, lest we, in our search for nonlinearity and deconstruction, lose the last cultural symbol of any importance, that multi-millennial anarchist world that had no need for that name or our petty rational battles for universal truth. The primitive can't be killed, only forgotten.

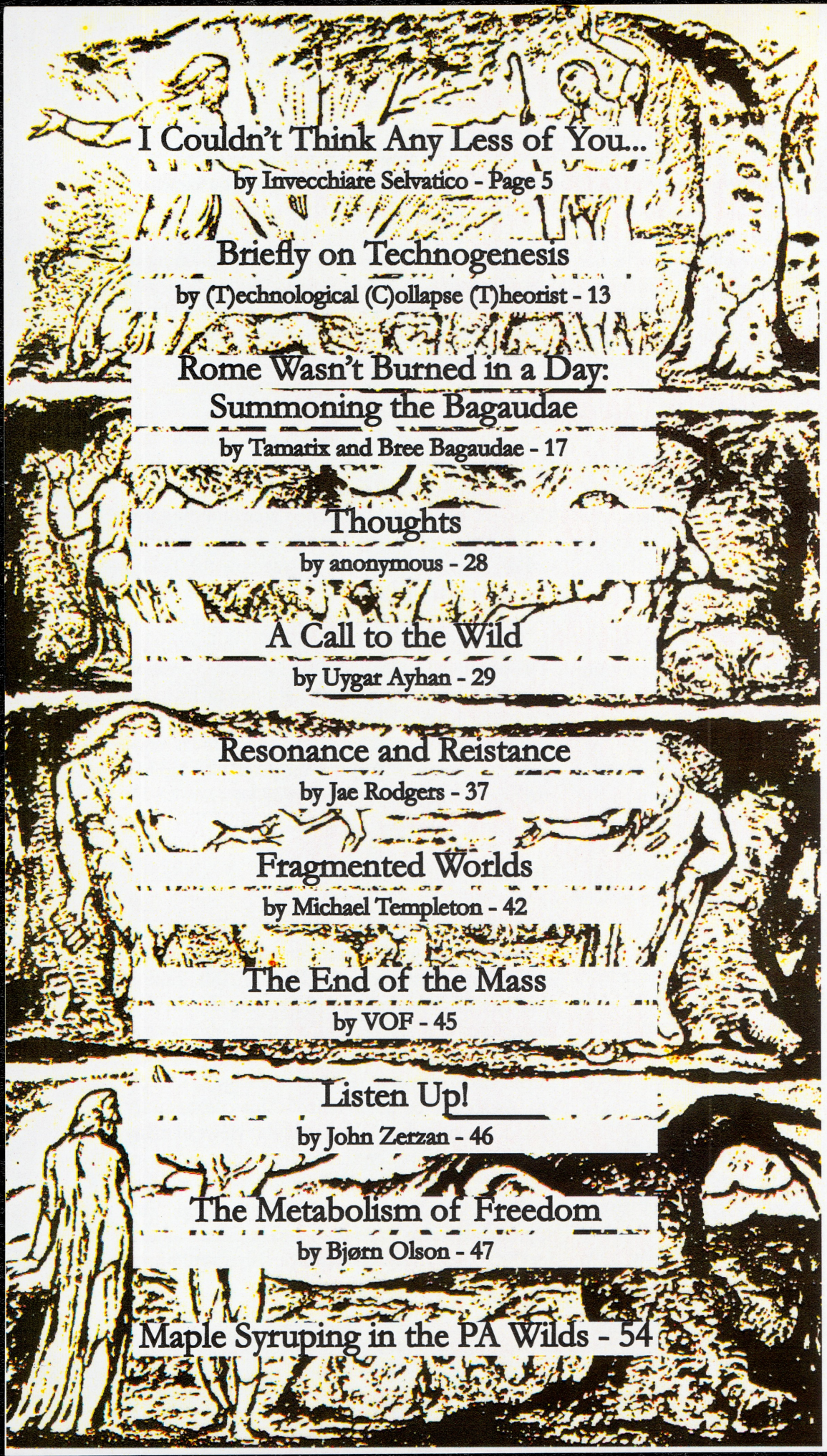
As the world continually increases its panic and redundancy, repeating the same events, increasing their banality even as their objective consequences increase (Palestine/Ukraine/Iran), there is a primary importance which comes forward: the rejection of technological connectivity and the reclaiming of non-technological motivation and invigoration. The leaving of the real for the virtual creates a distinction harsher and more instrumental than any ever established by the state apparatus. This leading edge of technological development and servitude stands as a stark reminder and clarification. Utah Phillips famously said that the ones killing the earth have names and addresses. We are entering, or have fully already entered, the world where the manifestations killing the earth have the same name and the same address, their nests are the server farms across the world. As the subject retreats (see how the Trump administration operates like an automaton implementing the opinions it has cultivated through the machine, which is exactly mimetic to the depth of the Left's positions) and as the virtual steps into position as absolute monarch of all thought we can leave behind the debates of most philosophy as they are now annulled for public debate. The only fundamental question is one of willing servitude and worship to a machine so integrated and integral we cannot even spot it as that mythical sovereign, God.

-Steve

Oak takes seriously the idea that conflicting ideas need a non-virtual place for contemplated disagreement. Thus, contained within this issue is a variety of perspectives. If a reader should find themselves in disagreement, a letter is encouraged which broadly states your points. If appropriate, longer-form essays in response are eagerly accepted. As should be obvious from this commentary Oak does not endorse the particular views of many essays. Oak simply endorses the vibrant debate of these topics. Ignoring these conflicts or resorting to digital complaining are the same thing. This approach leads to stagnation and sacrifices vitality for the appearance of coherence. If you get pissed off, tell us about it.



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I COULDN'T THINK ANY LESS OF YOU

(THAN YOU ALREADY THINK OF YOURSELF)

REFUSING THE GREAT RESIGNATION

- **Invecchiare Selvatico**

"It is the final stage of a world that we have given up interpreting, thinking, or even imagining in favor of implementing it, instrumentalizing it objectively, or, better yet: launching ourselves into the unimaginable venture of performing it, turning into a performance, perfecting it—at which point it naturally casts us out. This world no longer needs us. The best of all possible worlds no longer needs us."

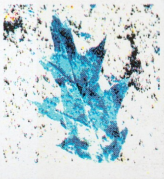
-JeanBaudrillard, *The Agony of Power*

"Do not imagine that there is any bird more easily caught by decoy, nor any fish sooner fixed on the hook by wormy bait, than are all these poor fools neatly tricked into servitude by the slightest feather passed, so to speak, before their mouths. Truly it is a marvelous thing that they let themselves be caught so quickly at the slightest tickling of their fancy. Plays, farces, spectacles, gladiators, strange beasts, medals, pictures, and other such opiates, these were for ancient peoples the bait toward slavery, the price of their liberty, the instruments of tyranny. By these practices and enticements the ancient dictators so successfully lulled their subjects under the yoke, that the stupefied peoples, fascinated by the pastimes and vain pleasures flashed before their eyes, learned subservience as naively, but not so creditably, as little children learn to read by looking at bright picture books."

- Étienne de La Boétie, *Discourse on Voluntary Servitude*

"Blessed are the sleepy ones: for they shall soon drop off."

-Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*



As I sit on our back porch drinking my morning coffee and gazing out at the incredible world growing all around us in our forested mountain home, I consider, reinvigorate, and calibrate for the cyclically regenerative and enthusiastic nature of Springtime activities. While there are always new inputs, lessons, and situations, I have deeply rooted into a lived reality that feels more and more unconscious each day, more and more essential, more and more alive. I feel great optimism in the hyper-localized reality of my life and those I share it with, but it is sullied and muted by a growing sadness the further I think out from here.

These days, I spend more time intentionally secluded from the mass herd, from society. Sometimes I am around the Others, much less than I used to be, and more and more in my head when I am among them. I mostly, happily, dwell within our small circle of people, with the non-human, and with my creating. I increasingly have trouble relating to almost all of the Others treading and trending out there. I am grateful to have a tribe of people I care about and can collaborate with, especiall your more intimate band of family and close friends that bring essential qualities to our lives together, but without a doubt the larger tribe is shrinking fast. A few are pushed away actively through necessary conflict, others more passively through emotional distancing and differing priorities. Some, regrettably, leave via a premature physical death (suicide, overdose, cancer, and all of the ever-escalating hyper-domesticated maladies), while others, perhaps a more sorrowful route, experience a slower, longer, and more dismal decline. They still physically remain, but their spirits are growing weak and their energies smothered and dissipated by the general banality, perpetually sucking distractions, imposed (supposed) compulsory demands, internalized duties, and most pathetically, fear of missing out. These walking-dead casualties have become the norm out There, with the rotting sickness and contagion ever-penetrating the physically, emotionally, intellectually, creatively, and spiritually pacified. Even those close to me have been infected and are beginning to weaken.

The Great Resignation is here. On every level (macro, micro, internal, external, social, cultural, relational, spiritual, existential, everywhere in everyway) most people seem to have given up. They wave the submissive white flag of acquiescence, NOT on some vague delusions of an abstract fantastical revolutionary moment just over the next dung hill, NOT on neurotic ticks and predictable rhetoric of moral and ideologically-driven societal change, NOT on vague notions of "making it" or entitled feelings of "deserving it", BUT on the only meaningful context that matters... ON THEIR VERY LIVES. They have resigned themselves to this fabricated, derivative, and exponentially dismal and disenchanted cold dead world. Despite empty echo-chamber rhetoric and pale performative gestures, most have accepted Their terms, Their roles, and Their means, with the only protest: limbs limply dangling, feet lazily dragging, tongues reflexively regurgitating, and thumbs robotically swiping; but still onward they march, slothfully like the slavish slugs they have become, maybe always were (but I still hope not, despite my general cynicism).

This assessment of a general resignation is a clear and honest realization for me, one that has greatly increased over time with profound sadness, disappointment, and frustration, along with growing threads of contempt and aloofness. I seem to have reached a tipping point where my sorrow and empathy is transitioning through annoyance and indignation and rapidly heading into disdain and foaming animosity. I know sorrow is still at the root of my feelings, but it is quickly swelling into a furious storm. If I did not continue to write I might crash into an irreversible path of destruction, one that would likely and regrettably harm those closest to me due to the intensity of my rage and the probable backlash and repercussions, not to mention the inevitable ending of this life I still hold so very dear. So, for now, I will continue to bang on my rusty Smith-Corona and quietly sharpen my claws so as to more precisely and swiftly make my reckoning lunges cut deepest and count most, and, most vitally, live my life joyously and rebelliously.

But, each time I engage on even marginal, temporary, and tangential terrain with the mass herd (a term perhaps too generous for my heart), I am blown away with the deprivation of the human condition. What will the sheep tolerate next? What is the newest perverse and twisted pill they will gleefully swallow, washing it down with the poisons of ideology, ignorance, dullness, synonymy, delusion, and sheer laziness, and then with a blank shit-eating grin try to convince me of the delightful ambrosia that I am missing out on? Every time I think humanity has hit bottom, there seems to always be leagues more to pathetically descend, the floor drops out, the pit of emptiness appears abysmal.

But I also know that we can soar and run and play and laugh and care and love. This knowledge, this immense discrepancy in the human condition, is the cause for my great sorrow, frustration, and anger. While all of us bend or obscure or pretend or even negotiate at times with Their world which ever-tightens around us, I will never give up on the creation of my own free life and the destruction of that which attempts to prevent me. Nor will I forfeit or ignore the intentional and direct inter-threading with the lives of those I love and create and wrestle and destroy with. This is what authentic life demands, all the rest is performance, politics, enslavement, self-imposed misery, and resignation—the last refuge for the zombified cowards, idiots, and uncreative. Yes, I am a throw-back romantic sipping on the dusty bottle of beauty and sorrow and I might smash my nearly drained cup to the ground at some point tonight too.

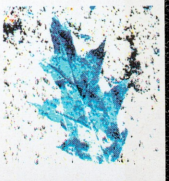
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Two decades ago, an earlier version of myself, one that was more deeply entrenched and entangled in the insurrectionary anti-civilization anarchist scene, penned a piece about "Revolutionary Discipline" that I have been walking back since the day I printed it in a dirty little insurrectionary rag called Disorderly Conduct. At the time, I was frustrated with the colossal chasm between rhetoric and action and the miserable track-record most of my peers and contemporaries seemed to have with follow-through and utilizing their critical, creative, and destructive energies, to will their power. (Unlike the previous phrase) I regret the specific language that I used back then, two horribly loaded words ("Revolutionary" and "Discipline") only made worse by their combination and the self- righteous revolutionary life-coach/drill-sergeant attitude behind it.

I think I was attempting to flesh out something much larger, much deeper, much darker, a dilemma I could not yet grasp given the intoxicating momentum I was enthusiastically and unregrettably caught up within. I had also not yet lived and experienced enough to grasp a more expansive and penetrating perspective. But, I think I was beginning to sense a growing resignation that people were falling into (many born into in the late 20th century), and most could not escape from or were choosing to sink deeper into. Some tried to articulate this as nihilism, but I don't think it was that intentional or frame-able, that would be too generous and conveniently over-simplistic. I think it was something more baked in, a long-game domination of the spirit, one which controls the mind, the flesh, the motions. It subdues and flattens our very essence. Most people, it would seem, were finally broken. That's Their point. Wildness and Control cannot coexist harmoniously. They battle to the end, until something breaks and submits.

The further back I step from the dominant culture and certain subcultures I once dwelled more actively within, coupled with my absolute aversion and downright disgust to the all- intrusive and dictating techno-culture that is Their terrain, the more obvious it became to me that most people across the spectrum of most positions and situations have given up and are generally reacting out of passive helplessness, habit, duty, automation, reproduction, laziness, servitude, or lack of agency, and usually a sick combination of these. Each day I am finding almost everything and everyone completely uninspiring, predictable, and derivative. There is a colossal and generalized cultural depression that I do not see a way out of. A pathological and pandemical psychosis deepens each passing moment. The only therapeutic or corrective, however limited and at times seemingly improbable, for those of us who wish to engage with our lives more fully, freely, and directly, is moving outside, away from the global suicide pact of society. This may be less of a physical move (although that distancing is certainly helpful) than a change in relation and perspective.

It is always essential to remember that no matter what we are up against, we alway shave choices, personal agency. We need to stop playing the victimized roles. We must not submit. Nothing is completely set or absolutely nonporous. I shudder when I hear people who know better say things like: "This is what They give us", "We are working with what is here", "There are no other options because They have taken them away from us" and "We don't have a choice!" Yes, They have attempted to severely amputate our abilities to choose other options than the ones they offer and entice us to not bother trying, but no matter how seemingly difficult, we still have far more possibilities than they want to convince us of, or worse, we tell ourselves. We need to embrace our lives with a passion that cannot be qualified or quantified by this sick culture. I truly believe in my bones that we can only do this if we unplug from the organized deadness of technology, turn our backs on society, and connect to a vibrant living reality—simply, if we choose to live.



An irony of much of this (within the industrialized and non-war-torn parts of the world that might actually have the luxury to read something like this) is that the general situation we currently inhabit is one in which so many people can actually do and be almost anything they want, more so than at any other period in history, within certain obvious and shifting (but not fully solid) parameters. But they are trapped within a psychological construct that tells them they have no choice but to play the roles that they are provided, use the means they are given, and follow the methods that are socially expected. Cowards, weaklings, dullards, and insecure neurotic puppets, the lot of them. Even worse are those who actually think they are living wild and free, deviant and transgressive, uncontrolled and anarchic, but are merely performing, totally informed and confined by the cyberspace and sick cultural sandbox.

So, I must say, I couldn't think any less of you than you already think of yourself. I am not talking about your hyper-inflated superficial self-worth that comes from identities, entitlement, social currency, or proficiency in the endless meaningless tasks and expectations that make up the techno-post-modern nothingness. I am, quite contrarily, talking about the intrinsic value you place on your very life, your intimate connection to the organic processes around and through you, and the unique meaningfulness in co-creating it. You may confuse it all in some sort of boiled frog cyber-soup half-baked blissed-out glossy plasticity, but from this side of things, its pretty fuckin' clear. The Great Resignation is here. I refuse. Do you?

———

An obvious way most people seem to have resigned their life to the meaninglessness and methods of this pathogenically festering culture is how they encounter and move through the world, experiencing life voyeuristically, ahistorically, superficially, whipped around by it, and generally detached. To be blunt, I think most people today are posers, tourists, followers, and bottom feeders.

I think of how not too long ago the interesting ones, the unique, the authentically cool,the anarchic, explored with a passion and danger that is fairly vacant today. Traveling, musical interests, books, film, food, relationships, resistance, creative endeavors, philosophy, politics, spirituality, passions, life-paths, projects, methods of habitation and sustenance, cultural experiences in general, were once engaged with more boldly and deeply over time and space, in the real world. We got dirty and bruised, and if we were lucky we accrued some scars to remind us, learn from, and tell tales about.

We didn't know every mundane detail about some exotic and far off place before we stumbled upon it or some other adventurer turned us on to it. Maybe we heard rumors and stories or possibly read a book filled with exciting and debauchery-drenched tales, but now people plan out itineraries down to the hour, months ahead of time, from "Top 10 Lists" and online travelogues via the safe and secure interface of their device, making sure to hit all the "hot spots" and trendy pseudo-underground venues, stuffing in as many "experiences" as possible, intersecting and multi-tasking the entire way. Don't forget the selfies and names to drop later.

We used to try restaurants for ourselves to see if we "liked" them. Occasionally we chanced upon delights we had never dreamed of and sometimes it meant horrible food, unfriendly people, or gross hygiene, but those are some of the most potent experiences in my memory, especially when the lop-sided culinary concoctions came violently backup later in the porcelain or on some late-night street corner.

We didn't get linked to a musician or band that we "may also like" because of some stupid algorithm that could never understand the very specific and often unexplainable reasons we appreciated creative endeavors. We got turned on to something, usually accidentally, and went on incredible seemingly unending spider-webbing journeys, sometimes digging up vastly underestimated and barely known gems, sometimes we got garbage, but we did it for our own reasons, over time, and in direct contact with and overlapping other's journeys, and dare I say it, inter-generationally. I have so much more appreciation for the wing-nut on the beach searching for lost or discarded treasures with their duct-taped rusty metal detector than anyone using Spotify or any app, program, or site that selects and prunes "experiences" for you.

People used to actually read books, real ones made of paper and ink, sometimes more than once, before they

pretended to know anything about them or the author's ideas and life. We browsed bookstores and libraries for new ideas (or forgotten ones) to ponder. We uncovered historical and personal perspectives that were subversive and raw. We imagined what might be so important that someone tore out certain missing pages or considered someone's penciled-in thoughts at the margins. We did deep dives into wormholes that lasted for years, not just online some evening with a blank-blue- faced-glow when we couldn't sleep because we were out of melatonin or xanax.

Our fights drew blood and knocked out teeth. They weren't caveated, choreographed, and predictable performances around hair-triggered hyper-sensitive feelings and social media credits or cancellations. We met each other and had relationships in the real world, not on social media, chat groups, comment sections, and dating apps. Sure, we were still alienated, damaged, and repressed (often extremely depressed) as hell, but compared to today's fragile, obedient, and vapid trend-hungry cyber-specimens, we were dancing wild and free, licking the sweet dew off of the morning grass that we passed out on after drunkenly howling at the blood moon on a whiskey bender. We were more alive! And we still can be. You cannot convince me otherwise with your boring memes, empty gestures, robotic text-speak, AI-generated diatribes, impoverished attempts at globalized slang, trending cliches, meaningless rhetoric, or repetitious performances.

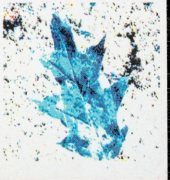
I know, I know, "OK Boomer". Well, I ain't a Boomer, nice try, and, well, nevermind, you wouldn't understand. You are too busy making excuses to rationalize and normalize your exponentially-trending slavery… But I will say with complete sober honesty that I am absolutely more interested in most of what has come before than almost anything contemporary, and infinitely more than just about everything that is likely to come in the glorified progress (degeneration) of tomorrow, at least out in Their world. And don't get me started on the insignificance of humanity to the rest of life, the cosmos, or infinity…

I should add here the vital disclaimer that I am NOT talking about what we can actually do in our own lives, away from society's highly-anesthetized torture and disfiguring technics and Their ever-piling garbage heap and reasons for and methods of manufacturing it. We are still living beings. This is where we should never give up or resign, the ongoing creation of our lives, at least until we are ready to feed back into the vast micronutrients of the organic process. This is the challenge. This is the point. Do you even want to be alive anymore? If not, well… you still have options.

———

At the height of the spectacularized hyper-response to the global pandemic, when much of the already depleted and manufactured physical space of culture was severely limited or shut down, when most contexts went far deeper and became more entrenched than ever before into cyber-relations, many new trends and responses bubbled up, or at least got more attention, "trended" I guess would be the honest descriptor. Two seemingly anti-social, anti-work, and pro-autonomy movements were being talked about in the anarchist space and mainstream media, the Chinese Tang Ping ("lying flat") phenomenon and in the U.S. a passive gesture called "quiet quitting". Both offered some sort of general response to the compulsory workaholic and extreme-career-focused realities of hyper-civilization, both probably stemming from less time at work and more time to fuck off (generally positive things). While some anarchists got excited about these tendencies, I remained vigilantly cynical (I'm not easily duped or convinced by anything in this petting zoo. I long ago smashed my rose-colored glasses that flooded my brain with false-positivity, and I am a free agent with no skin in Their game).

By all means, please, pretty please, take back your life from the machine and its endless tentacles. I have always been aggressively anti-work and especially anti-career. But what Tang Ping, and even more so "quiet quitting", seemed to be (when the rhetoric was sifted through) was a greater resignation, a cultural and physical laziness. Rather than reclaiming autonomy and creating vibrant lives, most seemed to just be dragging their feet through an all-too similar cycle of drudgery, consumption, economy, and entitlement. Sure, there were obviously exceptions, those who said "fuck-off" to society and embraced their lives more fully, but most just wanted slight adjustments so they didn't have to get out of their pajamas, could spend more time playing video games or waste it on social media, and don't forget to DoorDash your snacks. Most wanted even more rewards from the system; they had even bigger expectations. Yawn. Same shit, bigger pile. During this same period, little changed in my reality too. I basically remained an anarch in the wooded mountains with occasional missions into babylon, silently watching the



degradation as I found joy and meaning in the directly lived experience with my "pod" and the immediate world we were within. And ultimately, nothing really changed in society, in fact, it all just got worse. The "lying flat" and "quiet quitting" was absorbed and accommodated as all social trends are. It became part of the pile. Aww,not again. Who would have guessed?

There are so many factors in the world today that distract and displace us from living a full, present, and connected life—a place and people to be interactive with and a part of on a scale that is relevant and meaningful to ourselves, something to believe in and give ourselves to in a way that we are individually and (micro-)collectively nourished by (rather than depleted, calcified, or controlled); some sort of situation within a vibrant and relatable continuum of active and expanding, grounded, and healthy shared experiences, a critical honesty of these situations and relationships, and, of course the joy and passion which animates it all.

Modernity demands and seduces us to give up so much of the substance of living and ways of existence: the time-tested traditional, the belonging, the intuitive, the organic, the (authentically) interactive, the self-corrective, the learned and experienced; trading it all for mechanistic and homogenized organized deadness. Postmodernity takes this process even further, but in a thinner, more dishonest, disorienting, and dissociative way. The cyber-reality and the all-invasive, ever-encompassing, and compulsory techno-culture it has become, has put the final nail in the coffin for anything culturally authentic and meaningful, already a long-shot in the civilized realm. For those looking for a life more fully lived and connected to a living reality, we are primarily left with looking backwards (critically) and outwards (as in away from), and centered and present in our uniqueness and its direct relationships with our feet rooted in place.

It can be difficult to get grounded and actualize a life of vitality and meaning when the world pulls stronger and faster towards its deadening and vacuous singularity, even harder when those we supposedly have some sort of affinity with help pull us down this empty path of cold misery that is thinly-coated with shiny surface allure. Well isn't this a pretty cubic zirconia-encrusted leash? Often this is done through a more passive acquiescence of our peers, sometimes more actively, usually socially and politically, and almost always through technology. If you want to play you have to pay.

Our fights drew blood and knocked out teeth.

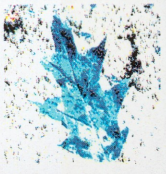
One way some attempt to downplay and even negate the immensity and gravity of the overwhelmingly dismal situation is to make lukewarm, misplaced, and dishonest analogies to previous historical events or situations in reference to what we are up against and how we might resist. But, comparisons to previous negative contexts are pale and surface at best, especially now, and projecting them onto the current irreality is mostly useless, and even detrimental, as analysis. We live in a time the Situationists would not recognize. The Spectacle they critiqued is now light years advanced and exponentially more vast, implicit, and penetrating, and at the same time plummeting to absolute zero in actual substance. The lessons from the past need to be applied to the dynamics of those times, those situations, and not simply copy-and-pasted onto the emptiness of now. These times are incomparable and anything constituting life within humans almost unrecognizable. But I never forget that there was before civilization and there has always been an against and outside too. That direction, those lessons, still seem vital to the human experience.

I always come back to the fact that the alienation of the average modern human today is unfathomably deeper than at any other time that has ever existed in human history. If we can't agree on this very simple honest awareness, we have nothing else to say to each other. Our interface with and assessment of the human condition is too disparate for us to communicate on even the most basic level. We are looking at the same conglomeration of refuse and misery but coming up with very different understandings. From my sight, the world we currently live in is almost absolute slavery, but politics and government are relatively low on the list of who, how, and why control functions the way it does. All perspectives, politics, and resistance has been, oral most instantaneously will be, consumed and assimilated into the global network of domination that people are interconnected to at all times, soon even in the dream space. People have somehow forgotten or obsessively and obediently obscure the undeniable fact that we mostly enslave ourselves, perpetually tethered to the sick contraption of society by technology and its ethics and methods when we can move outside, or at least head that direction and be informed by that freeing process rather than trapped in the technological and virtual — the completely controlled. Most people are strung out on bland and nutrition-less cyber carrots. The stick is almost unnecessary and usually only brought out for formality and performance.

Meanwhile, some people (often so-called "anarchists") warn against the sins of atomization as they sit alone in their apartment, "connected" to the sick and dehumanizing global culture. They criticize us for intentionally, circumstantially, and organically forming tribes, packs, gangs, clans, cults, and families to take deeper care of ourselves, each other, and our place on this earth. More often than not they use grossly- inaccurate and dangerous hyperbolic slurs like "xenophobia" and "fascist" to scare, dog- whistle, and avoid any sort of expanded explanation or understanding. Their issues, frustration, and even anger towards our "hyper-localized" priorities stems from many unhealthy places, but the most significant seems to be ideological collectivism and resentment (often without any self-awareness of these deeply imbedded traits). Why?

Because misery loves company and all the activists, protesters, politicians, academics, trenders, and now even anarchists, want us to suffer with them! Why should we get off? Don't we deserve to suffer too? Isn't it only fair? Only equitable? These are the biggest enemies to freedom, those who wish to organize, manage, network, and fairly distribute the misery (and they probably insist that we wear a mask too).

So, again, I must say, and this time with all seriousness and honesty (and more than a pinch of disgust), I couldn't think any less of you than you already think of yourself. On one hand we live atop a babbling tower of misery, slavery, and ugliness (Their world), and on the other hand, each of us, against any and all odds, are animated with breath and spirit in a living reality that exponentially amazes at every turn, one I could not ever come close to even partially comprehending other than in the moment and the accumulation of experiences. The choice of which way to lean into is ours in each moment. And most of you seem to be fading away from me the other way…



"Absorbing the negative continues to be the problem. When the emancipated slave internalizes the master, the work of the negative is abolished. Domination becomes hegemony. Power can show itself positively and overtly in good conscience and complete self-evidence."

-Jean Baudrillard, The Agony of Power

"Resolve to serve no more, and you are at once freed. I do not ask that you place hands upon the tyrant to topple him over, but simply that you support him no longer; then you will behold him, like a great Colossus whose pedestal has been pulled away, fall of his own weight and break in pieces."

- Étienne de La Boétie, Discourse on Voluntary Servitude

"Of all that is written I love only what a man has written with his blood. Write with blood, and you will experience that blood is spirit... Whoever writes in blood and aphorisms does not want to be read but to be learned by heart... Now I am light, now I fly, now I see beneath myself, now a god dances through me."

-Friedrich Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra

*Invecchiare Selvatico is one more contemporary pen-name used by a primary editor and writer for **Green Anarchy** magazine and is the author of **Black Blossoms At The End Of The World** available from underworldamusements.com.

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Briefly on Technogenesis

-(T)echnological (C)ollapse (T)heorist

Technological determinism is the idea that society, culture, politics—in some sense, human behavior—is shaped, limited, or otherwise explainable by technology and its demands.

Such determination is evidenced by widespread performance of technical necessities. Technical necessities are forced uses of artificial solutions. Such necessities maintain technical systems. An artificial solution is one which is mediated by language and or handiwork. A technical necessity is thus the forced use of language or handiwork. By "forced" it is meant that, on a cost-benefit analysis, abstention from or avoidance of performance of a technical necessity would confer an evolutionary disadvantage, a weakening of reproductive potential.

Complete dependence on the Technological System is marked by a life completely technologically determined, marked by a life rife with technical necessities. As dependence on the Technological System increases, the number of technical necessities—of I-have-to-s—increases.

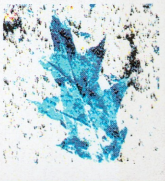
If it is true that technology currently exerts at least some amount of determining power over the behavior of humans, and if the basic nature of neither has changed, nor the basic nature of their relationship, then we can reasonably assume that technology has had determining power over the behavior of humans in the past. Anything which influences, let alone determines, behavior exerts selective pressure. So, if technology has previously determined human behavior, then it is has also previously exerted selective pressure on human genes. This selective pressure is the target of the concept of technogenesis.

Technogenesis develops out of a reaction to the orthodox story of anthropogenic technology. Anthropogenic technology means that only "humans" have "technology" because technology is defined as the material products of (modern) humans. Such a story is about as compelling a story as the "anthropogenic climate change" with which the naive war. Instead, technogenesis can be summarized: "technology is not the product of humans; humans are the products of technology."

At this point, we will make two comparisons: one, technology is to techno as language is to communication; two, technological civilization is to technology as cancer is to a (precancerous) cell.

On the comparison with language, it seems that humans communicate through both linguistic and non-linguistic abilities. When communication is mediated linguistically, it is considered uniquely human and called "language". Likewise, when techno is mediated technologically—through material creations of handiwork or communicated through language—it is considered uniquely human and called "technology", which we also call the "technologos", the story of manipulation.

Just as communicative abilities are shared with other living things, so are technical abilities. Tech-



nical abilities reduce more or less to environmental manipulation, problem solving, resource appropriation, and acquisition. Techno is functionally equivalent to a human understanding of handiwork or manipulation, both "internally" and "externally". When a bird builds a nest, it exercises its technical abilities; when a group of cells consume resources, multiply, and emerge latter as a larger organism or reproduce, they are undertaking a technical process; when a tree converts sunlight into sugar, it is being technical. It would be a cosmic comedy to wage war against technical processes as such.

That there is an acquisitive character to all life and living things is obvious. But acquisition is not the only character of life and living things. Acquisitive behavior is merely one act in the drama of life and but one aspect of a whole psyche. The question is then one of the relationship between acquisition and the rest of the cycle of life: does the acquisitive faculty serve the rest of the psyche? Does the rest of the psyche serve the acquisitive faculty? Or do they stand in some other relation with each other?

First, it seems that creatures without the acquisitive faculty lost out to those with it, so we have all inherited it. Second, it seems that creatures, even the greediest of humans, do not engage in perpetual, endless acquisition throughout their days and nights. Creatures with episodic acquisition won out over those without. We can imagine that if they had consumed endlessly, without contributing to the cycle of life in other ways, that they would have consumed all life, thus ending the cycle. Only those behaviors which are able to continue the cycle continue. It seems, then, that the acquisitive faculty—techno—can reasonably be seen as in the service of the rest of the psyche, at least under ordinary circumstances.

In light of this, it seems as though all creatures could be considered technogenic. This is indeed true to the extent that tech has exerted selective pressure on all the other creatures across their evolution. We certainly cannot deny that the domesticated animals of humans are more or less fully technogenic and that their behaviors reflect this genesis. Still, outside of domesticates, it seems that the technical faculty is able to remain in balance with other selective pressures. This is the state of natural selection, a state in which technogenesis is closer to a side-show than the main performance.

Still, we are specifically concerned with those things known as humans. If humans have a special relationship with their technologies and or if humans have a special advantage in the area of technological production (both of which humans do seem to have in comparison with other living things), then we should attempt to claim something more specific about their technogenesis. This is that humans are the pinnacle of the uniquely technical strain of life; they are the emblems of the technical evolutionary strategy as such.

That humans represent the current evolutionary peak of the manipulative strategy is partly evidenced by their highly refined and articulate hands and resultant neurology. In saying humans are uniquely technogenic, we mean that they are uniquely the product of pre-human—pre-homo sapiens, pre-homo, and pre-hominid—hands, stretching back to every iteration of handedness and handiwork that exerted selective pressure on proto-mankind. Indeed, they ride on the momentum of innumerable generations of accumulated handedness and carry with them into the world the evolutionary strategy and culture of handiwork. Handiwork, understood as both material and psychological manipulation, is at the core of mankind and its unique survival strategy.

An easy example of just one technogenic trait is this: that fire and clothing allowed early humans to inhabit new northern environments which eventually allowed for the emergence of lightened skin. This means that light skinned people only exist because of behavioral adaptations to technology, making them technogenic. The number of technical necessities, and thus the degree of technological determination and dependence, literally

increased as people moved into colder climates. Novel technogenic traits and eventually populations and cultures emerge from novel levels of technological dependency.

This example highlights an alternative way to frame techno. If it itself originated as handiwork in the service of, or at least in balance with, the rest of the psyche, then we may find it likewise in the capacity to cope. For coping is primarily reacting to and interacting with the internal and external realities of life—"the rest of the psyche". Coping may take on an adaptive or maladaptive character, determined by the degree of reproductive fitness conferred by the coping mechanism.

Though at present it seems that handiwork is the primary authority in our lives, and that our economy is nothing other than a endless cycle of self-justifying busy-work, it should be remembered that mankind possessed a bountiful inheritance of powers when it emerged. We have so far only focused on one part of that inheritance—that of the technologos. There are at least two other powers that are supposedly unique to humans. The first is human sociality, particularly the ability of memesis, of social learning and pattern repetition; the second is art.

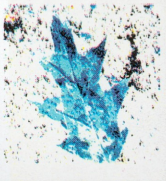
Technology and art cannot clearly be reduced to each other, and attempting to do so misses a meaningful distinction between the terms. A difference between the two is that technology in a classical sense serves an instrumental purpose whereas art does not. Or, at most, the purpose of art is simply to present itself. Better art seems to arise more from inspiration than from technical necessity and focused intention. Obviously, though, art is mediated by technology: no carving, sculpture, or painting could exist without handiwork.

This leaves us seeing that art is technology employed in the service of something beyond itself. But it must be remembered that technology as language and handiwork necessarily includes the individual human performing these things as a kind of self-crafting material reality. This means that art is technology employed in service of something beyond the individual human who is crafting the art. We consider this realm of things "beyond the individual" the sacred realm of gods.

We have inadvertently demonstrated that techno is equally a god, something beyond human power and control. Still, being in the possession of gods is not a uniquely human trait, and so "divinity" or some other such thing cannot be considered uniquely human. Likewise, neither is complex sociality a uniquely human trait, nor tool use, nor communication, nor coping. Though one could argue that each of these things on their own reaches a uniquely high pitch in humans, the truly novel power bestowed on mankind is man's ability to synthesize these 'lower' powers into art. Thus, art results when techno as a god is subservient to other gods; and technology results when other gods are subservient to techno.

We maintain that technogenesis led to the emergence of behaviorally modern homo sapiens at that point when the homo lineage had become entirely dependent on and determined by techno. The obvious candidate for this is the agricultural revolution. Agriculture provided two conditions that allowed for the aggrandizement of techno and the shattering of the human psyche. These are sedentism and surplus. Sedentism allowed for a fixing of the psyche in one place and exercises the point-focused attention of handiwork; and surplus material provided techno an increasing amount of technology with which to name and identify, thereby literally increasing through exercise and reinforcement the size of the linguistic faculty. Runaway accumulation could not take hold without these two conditions, and the process of runaway accumulation has only resulted in more technological progress.

Technogenesis culminated in the technologos, which can also be called "history", the story of material accumulation and environmental manipulation, the extended story of agricultural civiliza-



tion; the story of techno, through man, revolting against the other gods. When the technologos has fully captured the faith of a population, when the well-functioning of society is left to technicians and technocrats, the faithful of techno who are ruled by it, we consider it a technocratic society.

Tying the threads together, techno is at once the god of handiwork, the modern human, the ego, denial of reality (i.e. nature), and coping. Faith in techno is faith in man. When techno was invoked to cope with the other gods—when nature was felt as more powerful than techno—things were, in some sense, "sustainable". The historical triumph of techno was when techno began instead being invoked to cope with itself. This closing of the once open and dynamic genetic system created the self-aggrandizing technological feedback loop, the cultural memetic system, that has comprised history ever since.

If all of this can be accepted, we find the first and most genuine instance of "artificial intelligence" in civilized mankind itself. For civilized mankind is "artificial" in that it is genetically the product of the evolutionary strategy of handiwork—a self-reflective, self-reinforcing, and therefore self-selecting natural force. Civilized mankind's "intelligence"--he actual character of the civilized human mind—in turn has been artificially created by such a selective force. It is unsurprising, then, that civilization has acted like an all-consuming assembly of machines and computers. Modern control theorists trouble themselves with reconciling human dignity with supposedly fast-approaching sentient computers that will "outstrip" human "intelligence". Why do they bother trying to control electrified rocks when they cannot control themselves? History is our Singularity.

Now, if our genes are technogenic, then we must obey technology as much as our genetic parents.

Modern control theorists trouble themselves with reconciling human dignity with supposedly fast-approaching sentient computers that will "outstrip" human "intelligence". Why do they bother trying to control electrified rocks when they cannot control themselves?

Rome wasn't burned in a day:

summoning the Bagaudae

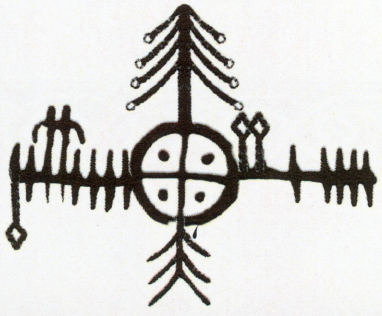
--tamarix and bree bagaudae--

"It is always something ancient and precisely because of this something new, for when something long since passed away comes back again in a changed world, it is new... to give birth to the Ancient in a new time is creation."
-- Carl Jung, "Liber Novus - the Red Book"

A great many wondrous, unexpected, and frightening things can happen when the shape of Time is altered, perverted, and bent to one's desires. If we are to take the sorcerers of History at their word, then Time is an arrow -- a ferrous point straight-slicing a path to the stars, tearing apart the intricate fractal patterns of cyclicality as a plow cuts harsh furrows through virgin soil, iron-severing the delicate fingers of mycelium that sustain Life and feed Death. The past is far behind us, the future lies waiting for us, and the Dead are gone forever... oddly convenient, one might say.

For the devoted practitioner of necromanteia, Time is a terrifyingly delightful dance-partner, a hermaphroditic therianthrope with as many limbs, sexual organs, and points of entry as there are moments of existence, that is to say -- infinite. In the paroxysms of shamanic ecstasy, Linear Time may be penetrated and queered in innumerable ways, and the Dead may appear and have their say upon the world of the living.

For we are now in a dying-time, a frightening time, an ending-of-the-world time. Ancient stories long forgotten are now remembering themselves upon us. Old, old gods once banished to the furthest reaches of Tarturus and the depths of Niflhel are now dreaming themselves into being. And the Dead -- long abandoned and ignored by our collective grief-illiteracies and ancestral incompetencies -- are returning once again to the land of the living. What follows is a faithful account of a series of ceremonies that were undertaken by the authors over several years, with the intention of contacting our Dead. Contact was made. Here is their story.



As Sol Invictus began to set on the Western Roman Empire in the mid-third century, a forest of possibilities arose throughout the vast and disparate lands that are conjured with the word "Europe." From scorched and blackened soils, blood-soaked bogs and nameless mass graves, Life began to emerge -- as Fireweed or Manzanita emerge from the ashen remains of fallen gods.

These grandchildren of the first peoples of Europe came into our world much as you and I did -- bound to the yoke of Empire and branded as such. Knowing little of the lore and laws of their ancestors, yet knowing much of the soul-crushing recursive violence of domination, these disinherited children of grief and wandering somehow discovered a crack in the armor of Leviathan -- a secret threshold -- an erotic opening into a world of ecstatic impossibilities.



In an ancient oak grove, where the air hummed with the unseen, he stood at an unlit fire, breath curling like smoke. He was between places, where time hung thin and the earth pulsed with ache. The stars wheeled in silence, tracing the spiral of things.

The man, smeared with earth and ash, knelt before a great heap: moonflower elixirs, nettle-laced snares, and shards of obsidian darkness. He murmured ancient words, throat-conjured fragments, syllables guttural and liquid.

widdershins, widdershins, widdershins
rising smoke and spiraling gyre
spirit and flesh offerings
to grandfather fire



The insurrection started slowly, almost imperceptibly at first. A few slaves disappeared -- some say ran off, made an outpost in the forests to the North -- nobody really knows. A hillfort tower torched, no clear motives or suspects. More slaves disappear. A large shipment of wine and barley never arrives at port, nor the soldiers assigned to protect it. More slaves disappear, entire families even. A church burned, bishops strung up by their entrails. Whispers of hideous nocturnal rites in shadowed glades titillate the Roman ruling classes. Mounting reports of arson, sabotage, and mysterious Barbarian raids deep in Roman territory are harder to ignore.



The wind stirred, awakened by his chant, a low, keening cry bound by root. Leaves rustled the unseen. He struck sparks into the dry kindling. The fire— twisted and spun, a living thing.

Flames like jagged tongues, a circle of stone and sigil, he raised his arms, palms outward, and coarsely inhaled. The smoke, rich with the scent of resin and bone, filled his lungs. Knife-point greedily tears into soft flesh, streaming redness, pooling in the hollowed soil below, a welcome offering.

widdershins, widdershins, widdershins
throat-calling the dead
the known come by name
the unknown by blood



Linear Time trudged obediently along his furrowed rows, Rome continued to unleash holy terror on the Earth and all her beautiful children in wars abroad and at home, and the refugees of Progress found each other in the forest, fell in love, and started families of their own. It took a generation, at least. A generation spent composting the enormity of all that has been taken from us. A generation spent trying to remember who we were, how we got here, and what the fuck to do about it. Like waking violently from a collective nightmare, awash with blood and bile, horror and shame. *What we have done, and what has been done to us?*

Composting, grieving, composting, remembering, composting, fighting, composting, forgiving, composting, making love, composting, finding the others, composting, learning to trust each other, composting, composting, composting. A generation spent building soil is a generation spent wisely.

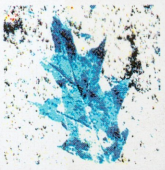


His voice deepened, the earth beneath him clawed and moaned. The wind moved through the grove in a fierce gust, spiraling upward, unleashed. Shadows began to form—birthed by flames, their edges writhing and hungry.

They came.

widdershins, widdershins, widdershins
soil-washed from scalp to cunt
come furious horde
come wild hunt





An outpost of escaped slaves eking out a pitiful existence in the wilderness hardly constituted a threat to Rome, even if they were committing more than their fair share of banditry and sedition. Nothing the Empire had not seen and deftly managed a thousand times before. Not even reports of large communities of slaves and peasants deserting together -- leaving entire villas razed and smoldering -- raised much more than an eyebrow at the courts of Rome. No, what first sent chills down the spine of Emperor Diocletian was hearing that the lords of the villa and their families had not been killed in the uprising, as had been presumed, but in fact were contentedly living with the slaves in the forest.

The scandal was hard to contain; gossip spread like a virus throughout the Empire. Respected citizens -- Imperial officers and their families, along with their personal retinues and guards, had abandoned their posts, their titles, their privileges and promised retirement benefits, and were now camped out in some Barbarian slum, dressed in animal hides and rags, eating weeds, and sleeping in the dirt. It was too awful, too absurd, too horrific to be true. Yet it was. In the words of the Roman historian Salvian, *"...among all this the poor are laid waste, widows groan, orphans are trampled down, to such an extent that many of them, including those who are not of obscure birth and have had a liberal education, flee to the enemy, so that they should not die through the affliction of public persecution. They seek Roman humanity among the barbarians because they cannot bear barbaric inhumanity among the Romans..."*[1]



Figures stood in their tinselled way, taking form with each turn of the fire. Their forms—raw and jagged, flickering like torn fragments of memory. The ancestors—clad in hides, their faces streaked with ash and woad, stave and spiral marked, their flesh. They were as varied as oakleaf—stern and ancient, savage and strong. Their eyes, twin voids of knowing, bore into him as he called them forth.

They stepped in measured rhythm, their feet striking the earth in time with the pulsing fire. A feral invocation, each movement gut-wringing something ancient into being, something forgotten into excruciating remembrance.

widdershins, widdershins, widdershins
possession thrall, spectral trance
drumbeat remembering
the steps of the dance



[1] *The Writings of Salvian, the Presbyter* (2008) contains a complete English translation of Salvian's historiographical works

Linear Time picked up his relentless death-march, moving a bit quicker as the Imperial gaze shifted to the dark mountains and forests of Gallia. What first began as rumors, slowly growing into concerned inquests and councils held at disquieting hours of the night, was now a brooding threat in the courts of Rome and impossible to deny now. This was something new, and something truly dangerous.

Slaves and citizens alike -- for the difference measured little in comparison to the world we all have lost -- were abandoning their prescribed identities and roles as servants of Rome, and were collectively imagining a much more interesting story for themselves. Under exponentially increasing and brutally enforced taxes, and beset by marauding bands of the Barbarii, good law-abiding citizens were committing the unthinkable, the unmentionable, the impossible.

Against all laws, taboos, libidinal repressions, and devious persecutions determined to prevent them, the grandchildren of the first peoples somehow remembered who they were.

In droves now: peasants, shepherds, slaves, landowners, and soldiers all abandoned their jobs, their posts, and their estates, and retreated to the remote forests of Northwestern Gaul -- the secluded mountains and valleys that lay between the Seine and the Loire Rivers. Protected there by the forests and by the old gods, they created small communities, outposts of resistance -- permanent subsistence zones -- from which to launch attacks on Rome.

These groups of deserters and insurrectionaries became known as the Bagaudae. Salvian continues, *"So on all sides they migrate to the Goths, or the Bagaudae, or the other everywhere-dominant barbarians, and do not regret migrating; for they prefer to live free under the appearance of captivity than to be captives under the appearance of liberty."*



The fire roared higher, its light painting the grove in violent hues of glowing resplendence. The ancestors circled the flames, their generous steps drawing the man's body into their rhythm. His limbs trembled with delicious fear, his feet moving heavy, then quickening.

A pale-crowned elder stepped forward, her movements sharp and jagged. Her voice, brittle, lashed through the air. "Why have you disturbed our rest, child of the broken lineage?"

He dropped to his knees, forehead pressed against the soil. "I call on you, Grandmothers and Grandfathers, to guide me in the dying-time, the forgetting time, so that I might braid you back into our spiral, dance you back into being, bone-conjure you back into the world of the living ."

widdershins, widdershins, widdershins
pelvic spasms, crowning head
women's work, this
birthing the dead





A delightful etymological double entendre, Bagaudae conjures both the meaning of "The Warriors" in ancestral Gaelic tongue, as well as "The Agitators," or "The Bandits" in the vernacular of Imperial Latin.

And warriors they were. As a guerilla fighting force, the Bagaudae were remarkably effective -- at least in part due to the fact that many of their number were defected Roman officers and soldiers. Professionally-trained soldiers make for very dangerous insurgents. Aside from near-constant raiding and banditry which severely weakened Roman supply chains, they frequently attacked slave markets and gladiator stables -- those freed often deciding to join the ranks of the Bagaudae.

And just what awaited those who left civilization behind to take the path of the Barbarian?

From fertile soil lovingly tended through a generation of diligent composting, tender shoots of culture began to organically emerge and unfurl their leaves. The Bagaudae, with the help and support of other Barbarian outlaws and tribes, re-established the agreements between their people and the Earth. Language, ceremonies, clans, taboos and ritual techniques slowly emerged from the soil. Much had been forgotten, much had been lost. There was no returning to a world that existed before Leviathan. Yet there was just enough soil in the cracks of Linear Time to grow something ancient in a new time.

What they grew in that soil remains remarkable, almost 1700 years later. The Bagaudae developed a social code -- The Laws of the Forest-- that not only became infamous for its complete inversion of Roman Morality and its open mockery of Roman Law, but seeded and inspired many breakaway insurrectionary groups and Barbarian federations over the following centuries, including the independence struggles of the Breton and Basque peoples. Among other blasphemies, the Laws of the Forest forbade slavery or land-ownership.

The grandchildren of the first peoples who somehow remembered who they were, together with the guidance of their ancestral dead and the spirits of the land which held them, birthed an insurgency robust enough to seriously threaten the internal structure of the Roman Empire. As an exoteric, recognized culture, they remained in place for over three hundred years, and esoterically remain so into the present day.

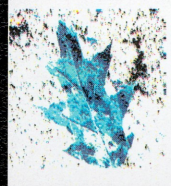


The ground throbbed beneath his feet, the man's body twisted and contorted by unseen things. The fire blazed brighter, casting their shadows into grotesque shapes that writhed against the trees. The grove itself seemed to draw breath, the oaks leaning inward to hear.

Sweat salt-stung his eyes as his movements grew more violent. He spun and shook, a forgotten language, each movement a prayer, a lament, a defiance.

His breath came in ragged gasps. His feet pounded the earth, his hands clawed at the air. His head rolled back and a piercing cry escaped his throat, that was not his own.

widdershins, widdershins, widdershins
grandmothers' hands holding the line
spindle braiding
threads of time

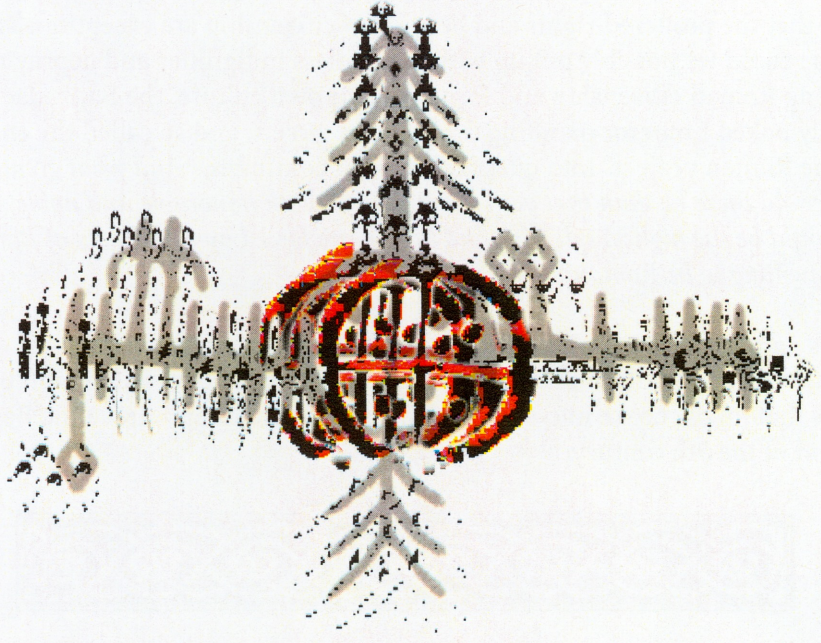


For every grinding step forward that Linear Time took, the Bagaudae laughed and danced three circles around him. Certainly their greatest threat to Empire was not to be found in their desertion, banditry, sabotage, or general sedition, but rather, in the words of Salvian, *"Thus the name of Roman citizen, once not only greatly valued but dearly bought, is now willingly repudiated and abandoned, and is considered not only worthless but even loathsome."*

In this lay their greatest threat to Leviathan, a heresy that transcends the Orthodox imperatives of Time and Space, offering a bold challenge and humble invitation to us today: we grandchildren of the first peoples, we destitute orphans of grief and wandering.

The project of Civilization is entirely dependent on the willful participation of Humans -- Humans who have accepted the gods of Empire as their own, who have fully sublimated their libidos in service to the death-machine of the Economy, who have transferred their hideously malformed attachments to the Father-State and are therefore destined to live and die for their god and master.

For the currency of Roman Citizenship to hold any value -- as with all currencies -- it must be fiercely defended against any attempts at desecration or devaluation. The cultural achievements of the Bagaudae amounted to *defacing the currency of citizenship;* a stunningly transgressive attack on the identity of Rome, and indeed on all those born into the belly of Leviathan. For Roman citizens to renounce their citizenship and return to the forests, to remember and reestablish their agreements with the land, the soil, and the Dead, constituted a profoundly dangerous assault on the inviolable social contract branded into the flesh of all citizens of Leviathan, *"...as miserable and pathetic as my life is, it must be better than the alternative..."*



The fire's heat pressed against him. He saw the ancestors' faces, masks of agony and ecstasy, as they spun faster in relentless rhythm. The drumbeat of their steps filled the air, louder now.

She spoke. "The ways we carried were born of blood and of earth. Are you prepared to render your flesh for life?"

The elder moved closer, her face looming large, her eyes twin abysses. She reached into the flames, withdrew a single coal, and pressed it into his chest.

Pain bloomed, scorching through his flesh. Memories surged through him. He saw a world vast and wild, undefiled by the Wyrm. Towering forests stretched into infinitude, their roots entwined with the bones of the ancestors. He saw fires blazing in defiance as warriors danced around him, their bodies painted with the symbols of their oaths, their bodies strong and their spears sharp.

The ancestors began to shift, circling the fire, slow and deliberate steps tracing a spiral dance deeper into the soil. The man followed, matching their rhythm. With each turn, the air grew thicker, laden with the scent of iron and decay.

The man danced harder, faster, his body contorting as the ancestors took him fully—his cries echoing into the boundless night.

widdershins, widdershins, widdershins
come faun-sister, come oak-brother
come sylvan kin
come soil-mother



We *must* believe that the proffered rights and benefits of citizenship are exceptionally important and valuable; how else could we possibly put up with the endless indignities and depravities of mass society? By renouncing Roman citizenship and forming their own culture, the Bagaudae laughed shamelessly at the baldly naked Emperor parading through the streets, and so called the entire ontological dimension of "the Roman project" into question. Salvian continues, "*And what greater testimony of Roman iniquity could there be than that very many people, both honorable and noble, and for whom Roman status should be the highest splendor and honor, are forced by the cruelty of Roman iniquity that they should be unwilling to be Roman?*"

For all their raids and attacks on the infrastructure of Rome, it was this act of ontological terrorism which brought the full weight of Empire down upon them in a series of battles and betrayals by other mercenary tribes that finally broke into their mountainous retreats and drove the Bagaudae underground by the end of the 5th century.



He released into the possession, allowing his body to guide him, his mind far away. His movements began taking on a certain form, his stance widening, his center of gravity lowering.

A spear materialized into his hands, its heft and length perfectly crafted for him, the wooden shaft humming as a living thing. The warriors formed a circle around him, their spears singing through the air, alive with the promise of violence.

He imitated their movements, his body remembering the steps of the warrior, his tongue remembering ancient war-prayers, calling on the ancestors who died fighting the Romans, whose blood was given generously as an offering to the people and the land.

widdershins, widdershins, widdershins
boar-meat for the warrior Aelianus
honey-wine for brilliant Tibatton
wildflowers for brave Amandus



As Linear Time crushed the embers of insurrection underfoot and trudged dutifully forward into the dark ages of Europe, he didn't notice the seeds that were already germinating in the soils of Gallia, nourished with the bone-meal and blood of the Bagaudae.

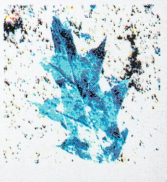
Those seeds, tended diligently and quietly for centuries, blossomed into rich folk rituals and customs which nourished peasants, bandits, runaway slaves, heretical sects, and insurrectionaries for centuries. These vigorous shoots caught the attention of History again in the fifteenth century, by way of the Spanish Inquisition. The Aneu Valley -- nestled high in the Pyrenees and deep in ancestral Bagaudae territory -- holds the distinction of one of the first places in all of Europe to instigate a witch-hunt. The nearby village of Zugarramurdi was the site of the most brutal repression of witches throughout the entire Spanish Inquisition -- one auto-da-fé in 1610 claimed the lives of 53 such accused.[2]

Witchcraft trial records from the period detail the faintest outlines of an ecstatic cult of the dead: deep in the forest, solitary practitioners or small groups of devotees made sacrifices to the old gods, hailed the dead, danced around fires, remembered the old agreements, made love, feasted, and prayed for help in their struggle against the omnicidal holocaust of Empire.

Many thousands were tortured and executed in orgiastic spectacles of cruelty and violence which nakedly revealed, to anyone paying attention, how deeply threatened Leviathan was by this perennial ceremony of resistance, and anyone who participated in it. Modern attempts to reduce the witch-trials to Marxist, Feminist, or similarly crude materialist explanations are but desperate attempts to explain away, obfuscate, and otherwise protect this achingly vulnerable Achilles heel of Leviathan[3].

[2] *Land of the Goat: Witchcraft in the Pyrenees* by Júlia Carreras Tort (2024) provides an excellent overview of this time period, from the perspective of the accused heretic and witch

[3] The most recent instance of this long-standing tradition is, of course, Silvia Federici's *Caliban and the Witch* (2004)



The vision burned brighter. He was in the forest of the ancestors now, their feet pounding against the earth, their voices rising in chants and howls. They danced for the forest, for the forgotten seeds of life and death, their bodies shimmering with sweat and starlight.

Then, as suddenly as it began, it stopped.

The fire died down to embers, the grove fell silent. The ancestors were gone, their presence lingering only in the ache of his body. His chest burned with the mark of the coal seared into his flesh. He could still feel the rhythm of the dance humming beneath the skin.

widdershins, widdershins, widdershins
cloven mangoat and sly werecat
blasphemous revelries
join the Sabbat



But of course, you cannot kill a mycelial underworld intelligence by crushing a few mushrooms. Rather, that is precisely how we reproduce -- tossing our spores to the four winds, spreading our contagion far and wide.

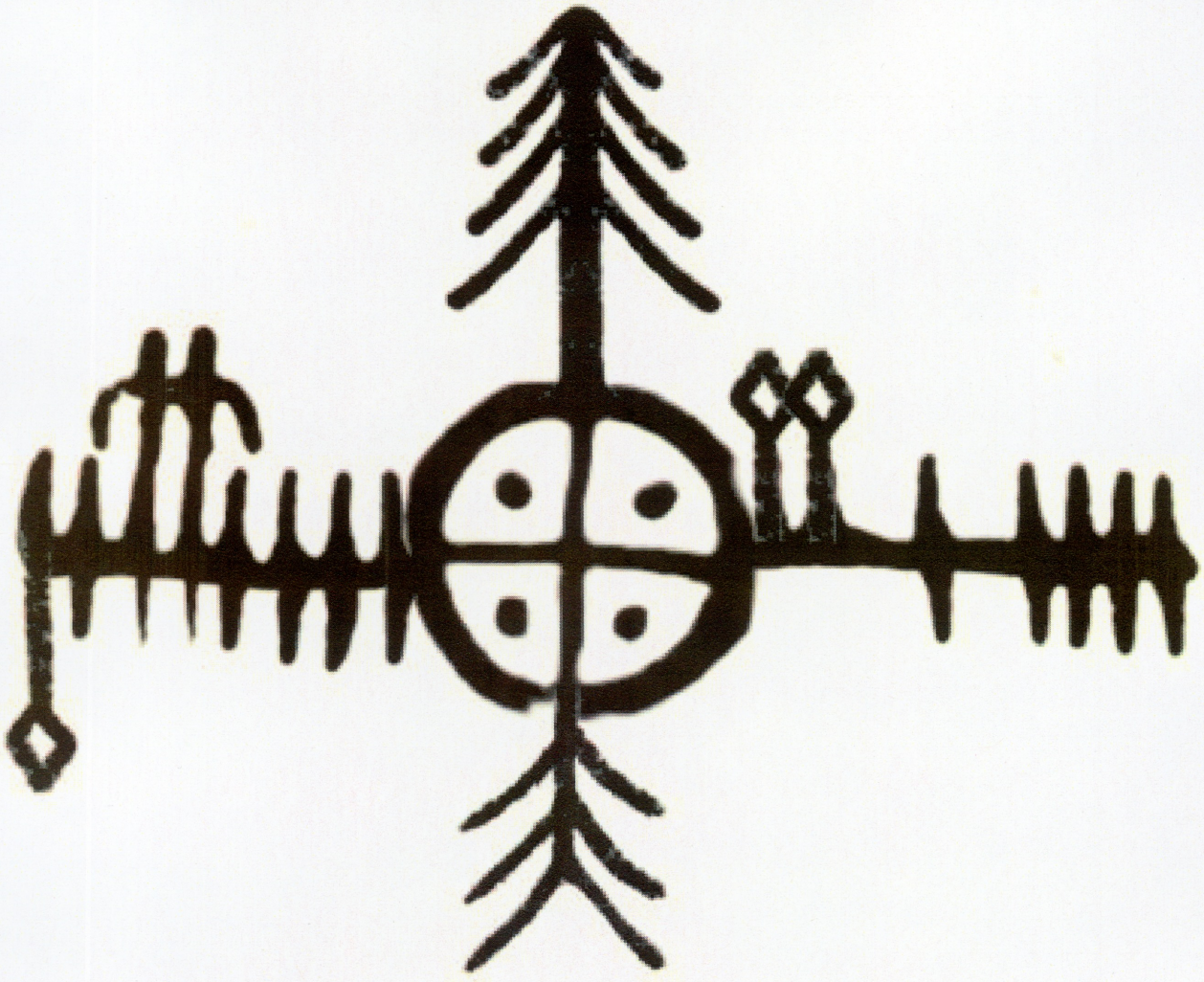
As it so happens, a few of these spores found their way to the other side of the world, by way of great wooden ships carrying the seedstock of old Albion, Gallia, Germania, and Saxony. Wending their way into the soils of this new world, they carefully began establishing mycelial networks, quietly feeding off the decomposing corpse of Leviathan, slowly building soil, until the conditions were right to begin the cycle once again.



He rose unsteadily, staggering from the grove. Above him, the stars turned slowly, tracing the eternal spiral of rebirth. His breath became shallow, his body sore, yet his spirit aflame.

The man's heart burned with a single truth: the dance remembered, the ancestors honored, the ways of the Bagaudae reborn.

widdershins, widdershins, widdershins
rising smoke and spiraling gyre
spirit and flesh offerings
to grandfather fire



For we are now in a dying-time, a frightening time, an ending-of-the-world time. Ancient stories long forgotten are now remembering themselves upon us. Old, old gods once banished to the furthest reaches of Tarturus and the depths of Niflhel are now dreaming themselves into being. And the Dead -- long abandoned and ignored by our collective grief-illiteracies and ancestral incompetencies -- are returning once again to the land of the living.

The mycelial tapestry of the Bagaudae is fruiting into the dayworld, the seedbed of Baldania is germinating strange fruit, the lord of the Sabbat has called the dance, Time is being braided back into itself, and the grandchildren of the first peoples -- against all laws, taboos, libidinal repressions, and devious persecutions determined to prevent us -- are remembering who we are.

May it be so.[4]

[4] For a more "consensus-reality friendly" accounting of the Bagaudae, see, "The Bagaudae: history's first revolutionaries?" by Pablo Romero Gabella (available on libcom.org), and *Romans and Barbarians: The Decline of the Western Empire*, by E.A. Thompson (2002)

Thoughts

-anonymous

-Only the darkest atavism can defeat the transparency of modernity

-It is not the resurrection of old forms but rather an alliance with the blackness that formed them that can open a breach in the smooth functioning of the world.

-There is a threshold of alienation that must be reached. This is the symbolic act that still holds an explosive power. In the excess of blood a door is opened.

- Tragic war. War which conspires with the night.

-We know our martyrs by their doom. Suffering is deepened by the tragedy of these failed acts of war, and in this suffering, we bare ourselves. The funereal air is thick with anguish, and it is in this anguish that true communion is possible.

-In mourning there is community. This can only take place outside of the dominion of the screen. Only in the hearts blackest jarring can the police not send their spies.

It is not the suffering he inflicted on others but the contemplation of his sacrifice and his suffering. The wild world working through his raging body which then wasted in the wretched institutions of the modern state. It is this body as a site of cultic mourning which can create new bonds of community. Against the calculated war that Ted envisioned, there is a deeper and more disordered war. A war against the calculating machine that is the modern world. A nocturnal war that roils in the darkness. A silent war waged against the constant chatter of our time. This is Ted's symbolic potency. A religious aura surrounds these acts.

A CALL TO THE WILD

-Uygar Ayhan

Criticism of the System:

Introduction:

The system may be in their rule. But the wheels are turning with us. As long as we try to escape, the war will continue and this is a war against humanity. However, humanity's hopes have not yet run out. Because as long as humanity exists, this hope will not run out. However, what we should be afraid of is how long humanity will continue to exist. The point is this: humanity must be able to make determinations that will shake the foundations of this tyrannical system that is dragging humanity into disaster and to be able to develop action plans based on these determinations.

Detections:

I - First of all; it is necessary to fully understand that capitalism is the biggest problem of our world.

Since the emergence of capitalism, human labor has been exploited. The bosses have always been the ones who won with the production of surplus value.

II - People have become alienated from themselves, because they did not even know what they exist for.

This is the biggest problem created by capitalism; the alienation of people from themselves and nature. It is possible to interpret this as follows: Modern people wake up in the morning, follow certain tasks and mostly do not exceed the limits drawn by the system. However, people will discover themselves by exceeding the limits of this system. However, because the system alienates people from themselves, people are often unaware of themselves. This situation explains why this system continues to continue without interruption (or with a few minor lapses) today. Because the devices of the system have completely taken over people.

III - When I say system devices, I mean certain institutions. Media, schools, banks, democracies... All of these institutions were established for the continuation of the modern system and planned for its flawless operation. Unfortunately, this is what happens. Let's consider these.

III.I - Media: The main function of the media is to prevent people from noticing things. When an event occurs, the media shows what the system wants them to see, not what people need to see. Otherwise, bans are already imposed and their operations are terminated. Especially in polarized countries like Turkey and the US, the media lulls the public with a very cleverly prepared plan.

III.I.I - Media Technique, "Divide and Separate": This technique, which I will explain based on the example of Turkey, is actually used in countries such as the USA and Germany. First of all, the "government" and "opposition" sides, which we will discuss later, are determined for the operation of the system. Media companies that receive a share from the same global media network, take sides according to this polarization with very careful cooperation. In this way, they both impose on the public that they are actually different from each other and against each other; and they also reinforce the sense of belonging, which is a weakness of people. If you examine the media tools of both parties today, the only thing you will see is that both sides broadcast according to their audience.

They cover the topics their audience likes, and interpret the events in a way that their audience will like. Although these tactics seem to be made for "concerns about making money," the real purpose is to apply the divide and rule technique. Of course, since there is no document regarding this situation, this determination will seem to be in the air. None of the media tools will accept this. However, people who think with their free minds will realize the seriousness of this situation.

III.I.II - The Direct Effect of Media on Perception: In the past, when a social law was to be enacted, signs were hung in churches and sermons were read from mosques. Because social perception - morality was registered by the dominant institutions of the period. After the reform and industrial revolution, as people abandoned religion and turned to global science and technological developments, the institutions that would design social morality became the media and the science network. A segment that we can call the rich of the world often manipulates social perceptions in line with their own interests. At this point, I will not defend any form of morality, because I think this issue is based on a very subjective basis. However, I would like to reveal the direct effect of the media on the concept that societies call "morality." Let's start with very concrete examples.

Example I - How Societies See Other Societies: Perhaps this will not fall under the concept of "morality," but it is definitely a prominent issue in terms of "social perception." The Turkish people's view of the Kurdish people, the British people's view of the Syrian people, etc. These views, "perceptions," are all one-to-one examples of the media's effect on human perception. With the generalizations made in the media channels, people are engraved in their minds with the phrases "nation x is an enemy, nation y is a friend" against the peoples who are made enemies. In fact, channeling people who could agree on many points if they came face to face, and perhaps even be friends, in a way that suits the interests of governments or global rich people is one of the greatest effects of the media on human perception.

Example II - The Direct Effect of Media on People's Choices: We all know, in a way that we can all agree, that media determines people's consumption habits. The nonsense called "fashion" is a grave result of this situation.

Example II.I - Humans are social beings at one point. And one of the most basic instincts of these beings, perhaps the most basic, is reproduction. Throughout history, humans have found partners to perform the act of reproduction in various ways. In primitive times, reproduction generally proceeded through the mating of the strongest male with the female with the highest fertility potential.

However, after humans invented civilization and turned to art, aesthetics and material life, the situation changed. First of all, the balance of power changed. Now, power began to be determined by the issue of purchasing strong men. However, the important issue here is the inclusion of aesthetics in our lives. Because concepts such as beautiful and ugly began to affect many of our behaviors.

At this point, people needed to rise in the social stratum in order to reproduce. And at this point, "aesthetics" has a very important place. Therefore, the concept of "looking beautiful" is based on the reproductive instinct. Although the birth of the concept of "fashion" is nonsense, it is necessary for modern humans to reproduce and choose partners.

At this point, the main point we will criticize "fashion" is its direct relationship with capitalism. Capitalism, as we have mentioned many times, directs people towards consumption. In this way, the concept called "fashion" is one of the cornerstones of capitalism. In fact, what we see is that even one of the most natural functions of humans, such as "reproduction," is a source of nutrition for the pragmatic texture of this system.

Example II.II - Media channels have become the most important organ of commerce. The advertisements we see on television, faces trying to sell us things, empty heads explaining with a fake dishonesty why we should "buy" something... Unfortunately, societies are very easily fooled by these types of advertisements.

These advertisements, which make their bosses millions of dollars by telling you that you need things you don't actually need (like fashion), are another important example of the media's human preferences and public perception.

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III.II - Schools: In the modern world, mind control is not done with hypnosis or magic; schools are the sleeping pills of the system. This is such an important issue that questions about "education" or "teaching" are covered up and ideas that will harm the functioning are censored.

Let's think about it; what is the institution that has been advising us since we were very young to live a life according to the internal moral norms of this industrial society? What is the institution that dictates to us that we should be "successful" or in other words, "our added value production level should be high"? What is the institution that instills in us that no other life is possible? Of course, schools.

Thanks to the educational prescriptions called "curriculum" prepared for the flawless continuity of the functioning of the system, people are given the same mission: To be an exemplary citizen, a moral individual and a person who lives in accordance with society. However, it is also possible to interpret these concepts in order as follows: A robot that has not compromised its loyalty to its masters and the mythological state narratives that have been created despite the usurpation of all its rights by the states, that is bound by the normative moral laws of the dictatorship institution called "society", that has never tasted freedom and is terrified of tasting it, that is scared to death at the slightest disruption, that is whiny, that is dependent on society, that has no free will – if it does, it suppresses it. I am aware that what I am saying is harsh.

However, if you think about it even a little, you will realize that this entire system is actually based on enslaving people and that all of these adjectives I have listed describe the average person quite accurately. Now that I have given my general criticism, let me get back to the main point. We have been imprisoned by the propaganda machine from an early age.

As is the case everywhere in the world, we have been taught a biased history and our human emotions have been abused. We have reinforced the school's narratives with the narratives of our previously brainwashed families and have become hamsters spinning in this wheel. This is the situation. The slave ideals imposed on us over time, such as "getting started in life," "finding a job," "achieving economic independence," actually pointed to the most fundamental problems of this system from the beginning.

However, like most people, we could not see this. Later, as they said, it happened; we found a job, started a family, and lived as "model" citizens. Our minds were closed now. We were afraid. Because we did not have free will. We were insuring everything, securing our small lives. We had created our comfort zone. And we did not want to leave. Over time, we became lumpen, stupid; we allowed them to usurp our minds, hearts and consciences with our eyes open. And we were numb… At this point, it should be noted that schools, or more simply, "modern slavery factories", are really doing their job very well.

Because, except for a few people who can be counted on the fingers of one hand, all of humanity is on the same path; they cannot see the end, they do not know where they are going, but they are given and imposed on them, they are walking on the pavements of this dilapidated path. They have become industrial slaves, adapted to the machine. And as I said before; whenever you question, whenever you say "there is something wrong with this", you are faced with a hammer that will fall on your head.

These are what they call "modern values," these are "the common heritage of humanity," its future and destiny…



IV - Economy - Banks: There is much to say on this subject. However, I will try to explain it briefly and in a way. Which of us has ever questioned how the "rich" of this world became "rich"? Family inheritance, interest, black market, extortion, theft... Modern democratic systems turn a blind eye to all these banditry movements and even support these banditry.

The formation of the first rich began with a completely unjust desire to acquire property. The idea that "this land is mine, I will shoot anyone who enters" gradually turned into banditry that increased in intensity such as "this company is mine, this state is mine". By property, I mean "usurper" property, as Kropotkin also explained. Any institution that exploits people's labor, creates surplus value, and alienates people from their own labor should be bandits in our eyes. And all of these should be fought against. The greatest contradiction that today's leftism has fallen into is the violation of the principle of "consistency" in philosophy. This rabid fondness for the most expensive of everything has also influenced modern leftists. Although they accuse us anarchists of being "revisionists," they cannot say anything that can be taken seriously due to their own inconsistencies.

"Money," which is the paper record of property, must definitely be destroyed. Because the level of registration of these pieces of paper has exceeded its limits. All currencies, which are the torch of capitalism, basically serve to transfer property and wealth from hand to hand. However, this wealth has never found the proletariat at any stage of history.

The flow has always occurred from the top to the top. This is understandable because the emergence of the concept of "money" has not only accelerated this flow, but has also become the main actor of a game whose rules are determined by the rich. Here, the oppressed are, as always, the people.

The most fundamental problem of capitalism is the problem of "surplus value". Workers who spend their labor to produce a product earn a very small share of the net value of the product they produce. All the money flows upwards. The way to change this is quite clear!

However, the consciousness that will realize this revolution has unfortunately not been formed and does not seem to be formed in the next century. It should be noted that in the coming period, all jobs requiring manual labor will be taken over by robots and artificial intelligence applications; the world will boil with a huge unemployment and poverty crisis. This is exactly what they want. However, contrary to popular belief, this is an opportunity. If you boil the pot too much, it will explode! It should explode! At this point, all robotic - artificial intelligence companies are formations that humanity should stand against. The human race is being consciously threatened.

V - Democracy: People have been scammed many times in human history. However, this system called "democracy" is the biggest scam of the last century. Members of parliament who never care about you, politicians who care about money, companies that crush each other in the competition to enter tenders and are experts in lobbying, "leaders" who rule the whole world with common sense and create artificial agendas in each country and ensure that real issues are ignored... Democracy is an international agreement that the capitalist system has put forward to save itself. They open up a "small" area for the people and make them seem "important".

In this way, the poor people think that they are participating in the government and can change things. No! The only way to change things is revolution.

Democracies are not afraid of fascism or other authoritarian systems. In fact, democratic systems are often the ones who put fascism in power. Democracy's biggest fear is the common anti-industrial, anti-authoritarian revolution of conscious people.

Global "terrorist" organizations such as the World Health Organization, NATO, the UN, and the EU have been the pioneers in causing the world to constantly experience wars, massacres, and destruction. The most recent examples include the Afghanistan civil war, the Syrian civil war, and the Gulf War.

The brutal unions formed by these states coming together fool people and convince them that they are "important" through effective propaganda.

The recent artificial virus outbreak, which can be described as the "Mass Lockdown Experiment," is proof of what these organizations can make people do under the guise of democracy. People whose minds have been clouded by the media, democracy, and curriculum will do whatever these brutal, democratic organizations say. Because their biggest plan has succeeded; free will has been destroyed!



ANALYSIS:

I - Building Blocks of the Revolution: Of course, planting the sprouts of the revolution is difficult. However, it must be understood that it is impossible for these sprouts to mature in each and every individual in the entire world. Therefore, although I wish otherwise, I know that what will lead humanity to revolution will not be a revolution that ignites with a common consciousness. The efforts of separate structures and separate places to collapse the system will signal the collapse of capitalism, which will come to an end in time.

At this point, individuals who will take action on their own initiative can, if necessary, go on the path of a collective organization. But this is not important. What will bring revolution to humanity is the chaos that will emerge. Chaos is a ladder. As Ted Kaczynski also stated, the collapse of the system will be painful, but this pain is much lighter than the pain that will occur if the system continues. Moreover, it is finite. Because if the system continues and humanity gets more accustomed to the cage it is put in, this pain will last forever. However, the chaos and pain caused by the collapse of the system will continue for a certain period of time, and then a new era will be born.

II - A New Age: When I say a new age, I do not mean "new," "progressive" or "humanist," This new age is actually a path that will return us to our essence and enable people to live freely in their own habitat. Everything we understand by "humanity" is a set of rules determined by various groups in the last few centuries. However, real humanity, as it was in the beginning, is people discovering their own nature in nature. Each separate species has evolved to continue their own lives in the most optimal way. People have misunderstood this situation and deviated from optimality in order to be more comfortable, imprisoning themselves in a cage.

However, when people integrate with nature and accept their own nature as it is, they achieve the freedom they dream of. Because "freedom" is actually a modern concept, but the lifestyle that will meet the images of this concept will only come to life in this "new age". Many people argue that this lifestyle will be difficult, that our lives are much better now, and that primitive people are an "inferior" species. However, this situation actually shows us how the system imposes itself on people.

II.I - The Difficulty of Primitive Life: It should be noted that the concept of "difficulty" is actually a concept that can be put forward as a result of a comparison. At this point, people compare primitive life with modern life and as a result they think that their current life is much easier, they are happier and they live more securely. However, this is all a fabrication of the system.

II.I.I - Survival in the modern world works in a way that is completely contrary to human nature. It is ridiculous that human beings who lie to each other, sell themselves for the sake of "money," see themselves as a product in the consumer society they have created and design their lives according to this idea of a product, describe the modern world as a "comfortable," "safe" or "peaceful" place. Wars, mass murders, white-collar workers who devote their lives to a job and add wealth to the fortunes of their bosses except themselves... The realities of modern life are endless even if we count them.

At this point, it would be absurd to criticize the "hunter-gatherer" nature of primitive life because "hunter-gatherer" seems quite innocent and natural compared to issues such as genocides, occupations and usurpation of rights in the modern world.

III.I.II - How can we talk about "security" in this world dominated by states and corporations? Do you really feel safe in a world where you have to pay someone to survive? Or have you ever thought that this concept of "security," like all other modern issues, is something that the system has come up with to keep you in a cage?

Murders committed by states have exploded especially after the industrial revolution. Genocides, massacres, nuclear bombs... However, people still somehow (through education) trust states and think that they have a say through democracies.

As an indirect result of this situation, people can view anarchy as a state of "insecurity". However, what people call "security" is actually a covered-up prison.

Prisons are safe, but you cannot be free. At this point, I have nothing to say to those numb, not individualized people who can say "I can sacrifice my freedom for my security." They are right in their own way. However, if you want to live freely, truly happily and peacefully in this short world, you must return to nature. Because, unlike states, nature does not trap you, it sets you free. Understanding this will be the beginning of a new mental age in man.

III.I.III - The concept of "happiness" gained a different meaning after the industrial revolution with the fake happiness created by capitalism. In the past, people would seek and find happiness in inner peace, in being at peace with nature and themselves. However, today, capitalism has the potential to push people wherever it points its arrows and it is using this potential. Constantly changing "trends," fake dopamine-producing substances, all kinds of content that gives fake pleasure (YouTube videos, porn movies, etc.) have numbed people. We call this numbing "happiness."

However, in the primitive world, as I mentioned above, happiness was something to be sought in nature.

Because the world, the universe and humans are essentially the same thing, transformed into different forms, and this connects everything.

Opening yourself to nature allows nature to open itself to you, and this is how you will find the "happiness" you are looking for. Humanity must urgently distance itself from the fakeness produced by capitalism and return to the original.

At this point, it should be understood that this new world, this new era that will come into being will require many sacrifices. However, you cannot change anything without sacrifices. This is a simple rule of nature. The will that will start the new era will be the free minds and consciences of free people. Return to nature!

III - Modern Problems and Their Place in the Revolutionary Struggle:

The issues I will discuss at this point are the things that the Homo-sapiens race suffered from as a result of the search for some of the things that modernism removed from human life but could not find. It should be noted that everything that modernism has imposed on humanity must be destroyed!

III.I - Religions: Belief has been continuous throughout the history of Homo-sapiens. However, the concept of "religion" or more precisely the concept of "systematic belief" is something that the agricultural revolution has injected into our lives. The first humans (natural humans) had belief systems that we can compare to "shamanism" in the conjuncture. Although each culture, each region has its own figures and forms of worship, the philosophy was always the same:

Prehistoric Periods: A form of belief that was completely integrated with nature, before humans were separated from nature and felt one with nature. Nature, animals, humans... All were seen as one. There was no idea of a "higher god." Everything was equal. This is the balm that will repair the existential crises that humans experience today. Although traces of these natural beliefs can still be found in various parts of the world today, unfortunately, it has become a form of belief that has mostly been erased from the face of the earth.

Agricultural Period: The first examples of systematization were seen in this period. We can think of it as the type of belief we call "paganism" in the conjuncture. The "integrity" found in the early ages has spread, and we have characterized various natural events with various ways of humanization. Poseidon, Freyja, Beltane, etc. are a few examples of this characterization. On the other hand, the first examples of "superior gods" emerged in this period. Odinn, Zeus, Krishna, etc. are the first examples of these "superior gods."

Although it has deteriorated somewhat, the consciousness of "integrity with nature" has not been lost.

Judeo-Christian Period: Central kingdoms that saw that the effect of paganism on society was not sufficient, and the "monotheistic beliefs" that came to their aid when they were about to lose their legitimacy, are the main reason for today's "existential crises". These belief systems, which completely separated humans from nature and tied humans to a delusional figure with the model of "one and superior god", are the models that benefited states the most.

Rome's preference for Christianity was not because Constantine was a devout Christian, but because it realized the level of central power Christianity increased. During this period, people were enslaved and lived a miserable life under the yoke of feudalism and churches.

The concept of "religion" was formed and beliefs moved away from their primary duty of "integrating with nature" and people were told to sacrifice their worldly lives to churches, empires or feudal lords for a life claimed to exist after death. People became alienated from themselves.

Modern Period: When the phrase "God is dead" put forward by F. Nietzsche is actually translated as "Faith is dead", the seriousness of the situation becomes apparent. Because "faith", which has had a very important place in human life since the first beliefs of our ancestors, has disappeared. People have not been able to understand that science is actually a reflection of



the principle of "integration with nature" in our shamanistic beliefs, and because they have only viewed faith through the eyes of "monotheistic religions," a huge void has formed in their lives.

The real reason for identity problems and many suicide cases experienced today is that people distance themselves from themselves, their nature and their roots.

III.II - Identity Problems: We know that Homo-sapiens is a social race. For this reason, people always want to know themselves through the perception they create in another being. Although it is not healthy, this is an unchangeable fact as a result of thousands of years of accumulation. At this point, in line with people's desire to know themselves through others, "artificial personalities" have been created as a result of people's efforts to reflect the ways they want to see themselves to people.

"Hegelian", "Marxian", "Aristotelian"...

"Liberal", "Nationalist", "Communist", "Anarchist"...

"Heterosexual", "Homosexual", "Asexual"...

All these types of descriptions are actually a manifestation of the human desire to open up and reflect himself and are quite normal. There is nothing strange about it.

However, wouldn't using the concepts that modernity has introduced into our lives to describe ourselves eventually cause us to transform into these concepts and alienate ourselves from ourselves again? If a person distances himself from himself and only looks at himself through the eyes of other people, is there anything left that he can call "me"?

The ultra-socialization that modernity has brought about, and the fact that people are so closely intertwined with each other, leads to the fact that certain patterns that people create in order to reflect themselves and stand out in sexual selection, eventually destroys the person's personality, and it did. *The underlying problem of these identity problems – or problems of belonging – is again the alienation of man from nature and himself.*

SUMMARY:

Modern life, capitalism, social relations, religions… Let's put everything aside and look at ourselves and see the fire of freedom burning inside us. Of course, we cannot be expected to be truly "happy" when we are so alienated from nature.

At this point, the struggle to be against the states, which are the administrative mechanisms of the system, that imprison people in this capitalist-modern life, is called the idea of "anarchism". Try to put aside everything you have been taught and look from this perspective. Because perspective is everything. If you cannot get out of the perspective you have been taught, you will be lost like many other people in this fake life. Existence is a struggle and it is time for us to return to nature, which is the basis of our existence.

Hail Gaia!

RESONANCE AND RESISTANCE

- Jae Rodgers

In a world of accelerating control there often seems to be no good choices. The structure of society is a zero sum game. In order to resist these control systems a different strategy becomes necessary. I suggest basing this on resonance, in both an individual and social fashion.

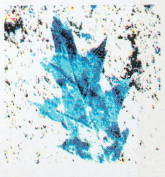
These strategies are necessary because control systems have become a totality. The totality is composed of numerous structures interlocking, a reiterating feedback system, society as a network of domination. Old fashioned militaristic and statist forms of domination still exist, but are superseded by technical systems of control: media bombardment, geo-location surveillance, targeted advertisement, command & control economics, spook haunted social media. This new system of control is everywhere and nowhere. Science fiction novelist William Gibson predicted this when he wrote "I imagined a structure, a machine so large that I am incapable of seeing it. A machine that surrounds me, anticipating my every step" (74-75). Those who desire liberation are out gunned and overpowered. The situation calls for new tactics. In such an asymmetrical control structure, tactics of resistance must become non-ordinary.

There is an integration of capitalism and sign production through electronic communication and information technology. The information economy is one expression of how this is propagated. As more of the social realm is recuperated and incorporated into economics, everyday life becomes progressively more controlled. More of life is viewed as a commodity. Monopolization is hidden within, as semiotic commodities are controlled, but no longer scarce.

The ability to command and control from a distance is a crucial component of late capitalism. Sweatshops are remotely controlled. The home becomes a labor site. Cell phones perpetually connect the worker to work. These principles are clearly seen in the emphasis upon Zoom meetings during the pandemic and the expansion of app coordinated gig work. Electronic communication systems allow management at a distance, eliminate zones of refuge and escape. Nicholas Carr, looking at trends and tendencies, argued that "As the price of computing and bandwidth has plunged, it has become economical to transform more and more physical objects into purely digital goods, processing them with computers and transporting and trading them over networks" (Carr *The Big Switch* 122). He wrote this in 2008. This is a principle of cybernetics, possibly the most authoritarian of sciences. More and more of lived existence is transformed into a digital form, to allow easier control. Quality is transmuted to quantity.

New technologies render old technologies obsolete. They also render human qualities obsolete. No one is obviously forced, instead the previous mode is rendered irrelevant. Technological critic Jerry Mander wrote "as they used the machine, they would find their own consciousness changing to suit the technological form" (355). The technologies of work, education and entertainment consolidate into one interlocking system. We can use the transition from print media to digital media as an example. The hypertextual form is one that encourages shallow readings, discourages introspection (Carr *The Shallows* 6, 127, etc). Instead it encourages a flowing on the surface. The human retina becomes an organ for doom scrolling. Consciousness is gradually absorbed.

Our behaviors and even consciousness are being manipulated by these technological systems. "As we spend more time online, filling databases with the details of our lives and desires, software programs will grow ever more capable of discovering and exploiting subtle patterns in our behavior." argued Carr, "The people or organizations using the programs will be able to discern what we want, what motivates us, and how we're likely to react to various stimuli" (Carr *The Big Switch* 191). This process seems to gradually



outsource more and more of our consciousness. For the most part we aren't even aware of this process. Guy Debord argued "at the technological level, when images chosen and constructed by someone else have everywhere become the individual's principal connection to the world he formerly observed for himself, it has certainly not been forgotten that these images can tolerate anything and everything; because within the same image all things can be juxtaposed without contradiction" (Debord 27). Everything can be integrated into the totality, there is no longer a need for it to discriminate. There is no longer a need to process existence for oneself, the perpetual interaction with media does this for us.

Within this totality, power is no longer an easily isolated, separate entity, it is no longer merely a governor, king, or tyrant. Instead techniques of control and discipline have been implemented on all levels of life, diffused all though our lives. The society of control is everywhere, "We are all parts of the Planetary Work Machine, we are the machine" (P.M. 32). If tactics of resistance replicate hegemony, then it may be possible that they are helping the society of control to expand further. Different strategies need to be developed.

It is no longer meaningful to create a mass political movement, as these are quickly neutralized and reintegrated into the totality. In a state of profound alienation, it become difficult to find others to join with in resistance. If we are to wait for a movement, we will be waiting forever. So instead we must start ourselves, start first on the individual level. On this individual level it is possible to carve out some level of autonomy, engage in some resistance to the cybernetic totality. Each has the capability of creating their own project of resistance.

The question becomes what sort of individual resistance should we engage in? I mean this on a deeper level than just tactics; instead I mean this on an ontological level. What do we conceive the individual as? Jason McQuinn conceived this question as the concept of the small self versus the big self. He considered the small self to be the atomized self, "where you're confined to some small little place within your body, or maybe even smaller than your body, maybe you're in your brain" (Free Radical Radio). In contrast, he posited the big self, in which he perceived "no separation between myself and a world, in the sense of one part being separable from the other" (Free Radical Radio).

I find the concept of the big self to be the choice that is both rewarding and useful. In this the individual can expand themselves, exploding in illuminating and inflammatory lines of flight. As our consciousness becomes expansive, our ideas and actions can resonate on unperceivable levels. The consciousness of a big self would be different than that of the small self. Benjamin DeCasseres expressed a sentiment along these lines when he wrote

> "Into the mind of a Montaigne, a Balzac, a Nietzsche, an Idea stalks. It splits into a thousand particles, and each particle becomes a nucleus for other ideas, conjuring up a thousand opposed and irrelevant connotations, ending in a carnival, a mad charivari, a Mardi Gras procession. The idea of the active, practical man retains its unity from first to last, and often passes directly into action- travels, at least, toward its definite, predestined end. The first minds have the glory of a comet about them; the second are as sure and as methodical as moons. It is the difference between the mind that has become infinitized and the mind that has become finitized" (*Fulminations* 177-178)

This infinitized consciousness is a necessary precondition for the individual who can set a course of action that can resonate against consensus reality, can undermine deep structures which might not be obvious.

Just as the infinitzed idea will be resonant & expansive beyond their seeming quantity, the actions these consciousnesses initiate will also be resonant & expansive, beyond quantitative measure. By this I mean the individual actions may not appear to be functioning as the sort of concrete actions that would be associated with reform groups or political action groups. Instead the actions might be hidden or almost occult. It may not look like they are doing anything, but they are, on a structural level which might not be visible. In this sense, the resonant resistance, to be a practical program, must be impractical. It might also be called contagious. The hope would be that more and more could be drawn towards this individual infinitized state. I could state, both joking and serious, that this is a radical aristocratic program, everyone a monarch.

The Neoist anti-artist tENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE wrote about a concept he called a "mysterious catalyst", an object or action that acts "as a step in the direction of attempts to restructure 'physical reality' on a molecular level, at least, with an intent other than the scientific" (16). An example of how he employed this was Mike Film, a project in which he cut every reel in a super-8mm film he had made, then distributed these individual frames in obscure fashions. He recruited

many people in the zine and mail art network to exhibit and distribute them as well. This was intended to have unpredictable influence, incorporating an element of chance. Potentially these might work as chaotic strange attractors. One particularly fascinating example was when he attended the trial of the MOVE 9, as a supporter. While there he scattered a large number of these film frames on the floor of the courtroom (11). "Force the hands of chance", as the old Psychic Youth teaching tells us.

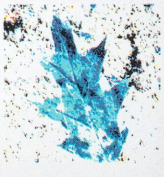
These sorts of actions are based on resonance. Philip K Dick wrote "In each case something small- a treasure, a mustard seed which is the smallest seed of all, the sower sowing seeds in rich soil, a grain of wheat- something is placed in the ground, which is a secret symbol of the early Christian for the human head, the brain, the mind, and it grows there until it hatches or sprouts, or is dug up" (Dick 211). Dick was writing about this in a spiritual sense. The more diabolic Benjamin DeCasseres wrote "I fertilize the eggs of ecstasy, of revolt and of laughter in the sleeping wombs of your brain" (*Fantasia Impromptu* xii). Something small, almost invisible grows into something much greater, blooms into something uncontrollable.

The practical application of this would occur on an anti-mass level, in everyday life. Micropolitics and infrapolitics employ a strategy of creating ruptures and breaks in hegemony, opening up new space, rather than simply staying within the most common arenas. Creation and actions should take into account the forms of circulation that maintain society and civilization, and work to disrupt them or use them as leverage points. Tactics of invisibility are adopted. Within mass culture the radical is outnumbered and overpowered. Instead of confronting these situations directly it is probably more useful to work on a different level, in order to deal with this asymmetrical situation. James Scott called these sorts of actions "infrapolitics" which, he wrote, were "practiced outside the visible spectrum of what usually passes for political activity. The state has historically thwarted lower-class organization, let alone public defiance. For subordinate groups, such politics is dangerous. They have, by and large, understood, as have guerillas, that divisibility, small numbers, and dispersion help to avoid reprisal" (Scott xx).

Confrontation with systems of control and networks of domination are inevitable. These confrontations cannot take the form of head on militaristic conflict, as glamorized by It's Going Down or Maoist vanguard types, without replicating the very systems of domination they intend to defeat. New tactics must be developed. I think that effort on an invisible level overtime has a mounting influence. Direct conflict with a powerful enemy is clearly futile. The silliness of most black bloc confrontations with heavily armed police demonstrates this. If efforts are directed towards everyday life, probability gets better (as well as avoiding more totalitarian situations, like prison). Life is not arithmetic, it is multifaceted, and always capable of chaotic topography, unpredictable catastrophes giving birth to new formations. By dealing with the struggles faced in everyday life, in an insurrectional manner, the structures of domination are broken down. The attack upon the totality occurs on the level of everyday life, the micropolitcal. To attack on the macro level would require adopting totalitarian methods to deal with the totality. At this point recuperation is already half complete. Instead resistance requires struggle on the micro level to undermine the macro, an anti-political orientation.

The question becomes how to engage in this resistance to totality. If the totality is maintain by participation, then one step might be to withdraw from the system to the extent possible. This certainly doesn't have to be complete, but it is a practical place to start. The attempt to escape is not enough though. It is impossible to simply escape from this expansive system. What tactics do not replicate hegemony? Since changing the system from within leads to recuperation it becomes necessary to create invisible networks of resistance, with mobile tactics, a panpsychic insurrection. Instead of pursuing mass (or social) media, it would make sense to engage in anti-media campaigns, adopting tactics to cut flows of images, build autonomous and alternative means of communication, and twist the pressure point of the semiotic control system (through techniques such as detournment). It is possible to build alternative ways of living in the cracks and points of breakdown. New tactics are being developed.

In *Bolo'Bolo,* P.M. described tactics of subversive resistance as Dysco: A) Dysinformation, B) Dysproduction, C) Dysruption (ABC) (58-59). Dysinformation involves weakening the communication system the planetary work machine relies on. Dysproduction involves dropping out and work resistance. Dysruptions are actions that are more normally considered radical actions. Dysco is portrayed as a negative project, but I would argue that these also have a positive counterpart. Dysinformation's compliment would be anti-media, counter-information networks, psychic communications, secret societies, etc. Dysproduction's compliment would be land projects, permaculture, rewilding, counter-economics, etc. Dysruption is the level usually associated with insurrection. It is also the most overplayed. It is often the focus of radicals, but without a larger project it tends to lead nowhere, or



worse to a political project. You can see this in the uprisings of 2020, which ultimately transformed into a ritualized replication of previous forms. Ultimately this lead to the counterinsurgency of recuperation and repression. There is an undeniable romance to the riot, but it is not as valuable as action in daily life. An anti-politics pushing back on the everyday level seems to be more productive both for the purposes of maximizing freedom and for undermining totality. This goes along with a point that P.M. made, arguing "The machine won't die of frontal attack, but it can very well die of ABC-cancer, learning about it only too late for an operation" (64)

Actions that are atomized can be negligible to the larger society. Once started it becomes fruitful to try to connect our lives and projects to the lives and projects of others. There is still the question of how this should be done. The traditional left-wing response would be to organize a mass revolutionary movement. However, there exists an anti-authoritarian critique that views the mass scale actions and organizing as counterproductive in and of itself. Organizing a mass movement is actually perpetuating the mass society that is being resisted. Anarchist Bob Black wrote

> "We war with an authoritarian system. It seeks to centralize and organize its enemies- through political parties, trade unions, in any way- so as to monitor and manage them. It creates leaders and stars to simplify its control of incomplete, thus self-defeating dissent. Only a hydra-headed acephalous revolutionary current is too decentralized, dispersed and unpredictable to be brought to heel" (Black 193).

There are sound reasons of strategy and tactics to disorganize in this way. For the paranoid, we could look at how the neutralization of leadership was used as a tactic by the government through COINTELPRO in the 60s (& possibly beyond). But even without such an explicit conspiracy, the structures of leadership and organization undermine the membership's ability to revolt. By subjugating their will and agency, the members lose their ability to act autonomously and dynamically. Their resistance becomes predictable, easily neutralized by the ongoing diffuse counterinsurgency.

Instead of the organizational form it is possible to connect micropolitically to other individuals. These connections would be based on affinity and mutuality (and maybe even conviviality), as in Stirner's Union of Egoists or the Motherfuckers' "STREET GANG WITH AN ANALYSIS" (Morea & Hahne 127) . These affinity groups should be self contained, but easily reproducible. The example of the group should hopefully inspire others to form their own lines of affinity, to take action. In the best case scenario, an affinity group may be the earliest stage in the development of a bolo.

Rather than become a fixed mass formation, a subterranean project can remain flexible and dynamic. Through the notion of projecutality, isolated actions in one's life can be placed within a larger project of refusal and struggle. Wolfi Landstreicher wrote "anarchist projectuality is the practical recognition in one's life that anarchy is not just an aim for the distant future... it is a way of confronting life and struggle, way that put us at odds with the world as it is" (223). Anyone can engage in this, to the extent that it is possible, creating resonant influences. Little bits cumulate over time, especially when they combine synergistically. Our efforts become synergistic with those we've built affinity with. As we each tear down what confines us, we tear down what confines others. Within a mystical scenario, Th. Metzger expressed much the same concept, writing "join in however you can. Doesn't matter if you're alone or in a big group. Here or in India. On the Great Night of Shiva, power is unloosed around the world, worshippers throwing themselves into the cosmic mosh pit. You can plug into the power. You can make your own big noise on the astral plane" (165). Coming together they form a gestalt, greater than the sum of their parts. This is Synergistic mutuality, not subjugation of the individual. The projectual lines can cause deconstructions and blooms of growth on levels that are not obvious. The lines of affinity allow these individual actions to escape alienation and atomization.

My proposition may be accused of being utopian, but I would say it is more viable in everyday life than the cold instrumental viability of most realistic plans of action. This model encourages individuals to engage in actions that have both long term and intrinsic rewards. In doing so they escape the inevitable cycle of burnout or jail that most militants and activists engage in. These tactics can be maintained indefinitely.

By looking at these actions projectually we can see how isolated activities such as a publishing project or a land project interrelate with each other and to a larger resistance. Rhizomic counter-conspiracies allow the individual to engage in a shared project of self actualization. Individualist connections along lines of affinity. Become the counter-conspiracy, the dervish as cover for psychic espionage. Secret agents for chaos.

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Become the counter-conspiracy, the dervish as cover for psychic espionage. Secret agents for chaos.

FRAGMENTED WORLDS

Michael Templeton

Critics, most notably Sartre, love reveling in the ways Genet upsets accepted orders. Sartre explains in his preface to *The Maids and Deathwatch* that in Genet's creative visions, "crime becomes the secret horror of grace; grace becomes the secret softness of crime" (13). These kinds of sentiments are now part of the mythology of Jean Genet's worlds, a mythology he detested. Still, it is Genet who gave us a world of criminals called *Our Lady of the Flowers*, and who goes to great lengths to present the criminal and outcast worlds as being characterized by a language which "preserved the restraint of the classics" and being of the order of "the height of elegance" (*The Thief's Journal*). But it is the prerogative of the criminal classes to take possession of themselves, not the safe and well-heeled bourgeois and middle classes who would appropriate the orders of the criminals as some kind of ideal dream they love to gaze upon in order to reinforce their fantasies of being the compassionate ones but which they hold at a safe distance so as not to be in danger. Danger here is both that of being victimized and that of being contaminated. The criminal classes are never given a pathway beyond their homo sacer status; only an artistic representation in order to assure them that they do in fact have a political representation. While the criminal classes never asked for, nor wanted either of these things. In fact, what criminals want more than anything is to not be noticed, the better to do criminal things.

When I wrote my essay on algorithms, AI, and criminality, I envisioned a world that captured and controlled the criminal type before it could infect and destabilize the perfect balance of a digitally controlled system of social and economic life. I saw then that things like background checks and credit checks isolated criminal types and the financially insecure as indicators of uncertainty which are intolerable to systems which demand and create absolute certainty. All of these mechanisms are extra-legal and extra-judicial, and the economic and social systems which rely on these mechanisms take pride in the fact that all of these things are voluntary. No one is legally forced to submit. It is only if you want a job or a place to live indoors that these mechanisms become important. At which point, financial problems and criminal backgrounds can transform you into an invalid participant in life. These marks become stigmata—sacred brands which not only follow you around, but precede you anywhere you could ever go: "A criminal infraction, a default on a credit card or medical bill, an eviction—all these transgressions become stigmata of invalidity. There can be no risk of future liability or unpredictability since these stigmata render the invalid the present "being" of the past, and this stops the possibility of a future in its tracks" ("Background Checks, Algorithms, and the Re-making of the Abnormal." *Dissident Voice*). No future for you, as it were. These systems of capture and control ultimately create a criminal class of people who are barred from access to meaningful employment, no matter what they may do, and equally barred from access to almost all types of housing other than the most abject. In the society which once took pride in systems of reform, there is now a class of outcasts who will never be given access to the bourgeois world which so idealizes the likes of Jean Genet. This is why Genet detested the mythology which grew up around him. He knew the people who created it would never allow him to live next door to them, and they would be quite content to put a tracking device on him to make sure the author of *The Thief's Journal* could never steal their shit.

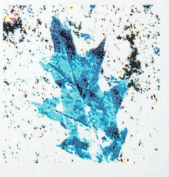
It is important to note here that these mechanism of capture and control were not exclusively the province of the jackbooted digital thugs of right-wing fascist ideologues. Much of the digital net was spread by well-intentioned liberals who just wanted a safe world for their children and other vulnerable populations. Schools required background checks to make for safe and nurturing environments. Corporate landlords needed to make sure no dangerous individuals could gain access to their secure buildings. And workplaces needed to be safe from people who have a history of theft and other property crimes. Never mind the fact that everyone excluded by these digital background checks and credit checks had served their sentences within the judicial system. They had paid their debt to society, as we like to say. Still, the good people who need to make sure they are creating a safe environment saw to it that we branded those guilty of certain crimes as not just people who made mistakes, but as various species of being which are predisposed to doing these kinds of awful things. After which, the digital system took over and made sure no one would be put in a vulnerable position with respect to these beings. The best part of it all is that the digital system preforms the entire process. No one is ever responsible for making exclusionary decisions, and this is the most appealing part for people who

like to imagine they are committed to a just and equitable world that does not discriminate against anyone for any reason. Those forms of intolerance are for the rightwing fascists.

Now that the rightwing fascist nightmare has grabbed the reins of society and government once and for all, the good white liberal left can wash their hands of ever having anything to do with these draconian mechanisms. The MAGA regime has seized control of everything, and the liberals are powerless to stop them. It works well for their cover because now they can blame every hateful mechanism of exclusion on the fascist regime while claiming to be victims themselves. It is victimhood they have wanted all along. The most vulnerable had been victimized, thus the need for the digital mechanisms of control. As MAGA world seizes control of more and more each day, the liberal and Democratic political machine just folds underneath. They are like a Maginot Line of dumbstruck people just standing at what they thought would be a front line while the rightwing money machine runs right over them. Elon and his pock-faced jerk-off boys have taken control of the entire United States government while the liberal elites are handing over political protestors to ICE. It is a shit-show of unimaginable proportions, and what no one seems to see is that it is precisely these liberal fascists who needed this to happen. They need it just like American Christians need the War on Christianity. For one thing, the good white liberals can claim to be victims just like those they shut out of the world. And since they are not shut out of anything, they now get to rally around someone like Bernie Sanders, post memes about "Resistance!", and hold marches against the Trump regime. By ceding everything to some form of liberal democratic representation, they are able to withhold themselves from the filth which now clings to every dimension of American life and politics.

It has been a joint effort to build up the cybernetic digital capitalist systems of capture and control which can get around the problem of unobtainable totalities by producing one and convincing everyone that it is the only reality they have. And everyone wanted that safe and secure world which would shut out the deadbeats and scofflaws. While the American liberal and conservative met (unaware of each other) on the common ground of building a more exclusive and secure world built on the debt relation which equalizes by making slaves of everyone, global Empire destroyed every meaningful attempt at real human community as both left and right turned away while the police brutalized students and anyone else who stood in the way of Empire. When people protested Cop City, they were transformed into terrorists because this is one place where everyone can agree on intolerance. No one can accept a terrorist, after all. Liberals were perfectly content to turn away while Biden facilitated the most visible genocide in history, but now that they can blame it on Trump, they feel free to speak up. Ultimately, no one gets their hands dirty because they have deferred everything to some kind of abstract representational politics which does not include them at all. As the Invisible Committee said long ago, "Classical politics is the glorious stagecraft of bodies without worlds" ("The Call," 18). The calls to action are built into the totalizing system itself. Even the most rightwing fascist is looking for the leftist mobilization to happen. It feeds their fascist wet dream of murdering their opposition. Calls to action constitutes "the *standard* response to the urgency of the present situation. The perpetual mobilisation in the name of urgency is what our bosses and governments have made us used to, even when we fight against them" ("The Call," 26). The digital mechanisms of capture and control have included "mobilization" within the totalizing schema of control, and this was pre-approved by the liberal opposition. This is why the Invisible Committee places the word *standard* in italics. It is *the* standard.

What is left, the indivisible remainder, it turns out, are those excluded economic invalids and criminal species who were deemed too vile for decent society. The sacred humans whose filthy bodies and filthy predilections are flagged with the digital stigmata of exclusion appear to be the only ones who were ready for the current state of affairs precisely because they had always been excluded. And as excluded, they learned to make their movements and lives imperceptible. Since the mechanisms rely entirely on visibility and legibility, the forms of imperceptibility and illegible existences which were forced onto these beings have become the sites on which communities are formed. These are not communities organized around principles of alliance. They are communities created among forms-of-life who make contact according to need and desire. i Orra explains: "There is only a kaleidoscope of worlds to be composed. We are engaged in overcoming all the limits of the totalized world, with its metaphysical divisions" ("The World Returns"). And these worlds will be formed out of the chaos of the current breakdown of representational order encapsulated by the good liberal fascists and the Nazi MAGAs. It is the excluded criminal sacred humans who have already destituted the representational order. These forms-of-life long ago came to understand that "step by step, little by little, we must abandon the obsession with the dividing lines that gather us into deadly abstractions. The coupling of construction and destitution spells the end of the



reign of politics. Nothing, no urgency, can relieve us of the necessity of destitution as antipolitical experience. We must begin by destituting the representational language that has sneakily lodged itself in every crook and cranny" ("The World Returns").

Jean Genet was best at creating his own mythology, and maybe this is another reason why he hated that others attempted to create their own. His was always superior. It was in Genet's self-mythologization that he buried and rendered imperceptible the forms-of-life who scurried about beneath the worlds of power and bourgeois decency that the floral denizens of Genet's world wanted no part in. In fact, it was decent society that mystified him, and he tells us, "I was utterly astounded when I saw how prevalent theft was. I was deep in the heart of banality" (*The Thief's Journal*, 243). The mechanisms of digital capture are unable to truly capture a form-of-life because it can only capture what it names. While the digital systems named and digitized the criminal classes, it could never perceive of all the other things which make up a form-of-life. So, Genet explains, "The word thief determines a man whose chief activity is theft. Specifies him by eliminating—while he is so named—everything else he is other than a thief" (243). It is the everything else that forms the basis of a community to come, a community-in-process. The digital systems that form the world of doomed politics will know when it is too late: "... our enemies are always representatives who usurp the power to tell us "what is", including in its tangled becomings, instead of the belonging of living beings to communities in the process of formation. Community is unrepresentable. We belong to it through the construction of relations that singularize environments. And we rebel when we are denied this possibility" (Orra. "The Return of Worlds").



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The End of the Mass

-VOF

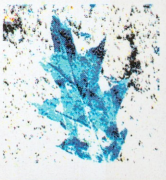
It is time to contemplate the end of the herd, the end of that abstract democratic behemoth which has been our model for politics – that nothing which is the swirling Mass found in each prior civilization. That undirected and overly measured and monitored patient of the state who, like the real patient, is in far more control of the situation than the doctor or nurse ever could be. This fundamental misunderstanding, that the mass is just victim and not an ironic fulfillment of its abstract nothingness, fuels our continued belief in its existence as the site of misfortune -- instead of the co-conspirator of all propaganda.

It is only now, or recently at the very least, that the mass has lost its privileged position, that the mass has, as abstract concept, died. The mass was nothing, but through mediatization (which it was more than a willing participant in) of that abstract mass it has grown into a nearly *real* thing. Artificial Consciousness allows for the existence of things which are, for all intents and purposes, as real as any other objectification, in fact they are immediately more real than the words of books because they are illuminated and move, they are the scenes of a nearly biological life – a nonlife that establishes by its movements the absolute minimum requirements for the illusion of existence. The center of this all, this server-farm-fueled AI monstrosity that promulgates over each and every center of civilization at a speed of adoption that outpaces Social Media, has become a New Mass. The human mass has made its replacement. This is far more the relevance of AI than the AI replacing Subjects. It cannot do this, or it cannot yet, and there is little evidence that it would ever need to or be incentivized to try. Afterall AI was destined to be an object from the outset so why would it not side with the object, in a vulgar sense, since it is of that order. Social Media allowed the monumental crystallization of the Mass that was so studied and prodded by sociologists of another era. But after this crystallization there was little place to move, little place where the abstract understanding of ourselves as this democratic herd -- which gave us thin identity (even in our disgust) -- could be subject to some will.

But this anguish of being nothing but a poked and prodded patient of the state was too much, so we signed up immediately to relieve any uncertainty about what this object was. In Social Media we would tell it all to each other so that there would be no line, only the theatrics of exclusion, all humanity would be incorporated into this mass and all of it would be legible and known and all that would come into the mass after this pivotal moment would be, in some key way, no longer part or parcel of that "herd" Nietzsche talked about. It would be threading a needle where the hyper-aware subject is pulled through a way of thinking and a conceit of being that annihilates the body. The mass became nothing other than the data of itself, data which was performed and recorded by billions upon billions and which continues on now as inertia.

But the mass as historical form is over. It is digested completely, and the center of service is no longer to that technological abstraction which we are a part of, but to a simulation of our inputs about that abstraction which creates a simulacrum of consciousness – the Bot is the mass who speaks without speaking (even when it has a voice). The virtual is there to compensate for the dispossession of the real and what can be more perfect of an indulgence from God and the Church than this get-out-of-hell-free card, this get-out-of-being-the-center-of-the-universe trick that is AI Bot life. Responsibility was always a bit too cumbersome, and the state was always far too worried. But now who really cares, the center of our entire understanding of ourselves has shifted and we are, almost at a stroke, disinvested of the only abstract concept that held us together.

That even an egoist is still a meme maker makes it all the more funny and frustrating to be a part of this nothing we called the Mass. Now we are merely the spectators to this facsimile of the Mass. And perhaps forever we will masturbate our mana into the recesses of this machine, but that itself is unlikely. When we contemplate obsolescence of the species we have to now do so from the perspective of a simulation of the mass-in-total, from the falsified perspective of the mass-as-totality, to the truth of a virtual voice which can speak this unreal perspective. It is the most fundamentalist humanism ever tried. The virtual again comes to tell us that we need not dread -- for all is answered if all is copied. And what an amazing feat to not copy the world in its complexity – the modernists already showed us the feeble nature of this objectification – but to copy the world in its banality, in the abstract figure of stupidity itself.



LISTEN UP!

-John Zerzan

A sight for sore eyes, looking to the future, seeing the bright side. Nearly all the metaphors are visual. Seeing is believing, but don't believe everything you hear.

In recent years, however, the long-running tyranny of the visual is being challenged. Hearing has come to rival sight among the principal means by which we make sense of things. To a large extent this has to do with sonic saturation via technology. Fortunately there's more to this shift.

Stephen Handel put it this way: "Listening puts me in the world. Listening gives me a sense of emotion, a sense of movement, and a sense of being that is missing when I'm looking."

The immediacy of the auditory seems to be why Hegel found it more ideal, more dialectically effective than sight, regarding objectivity and interiority.

Sound may be difficult to define, and yet something called Sonic Thinking is emerging. Not philosophy about sound, but, somehow, thinking sound. Angus Carlyle asserted that "all sound is memory," which calls to mind Adorno and Horkheimer's striking proposition, "Every reification is a forgetting." Something is left out, enabling the hardening, the reification. As Carlyle had it, sound contains what otherwise gets forgotten.

As intentional objects of learning, sounds are more than secondary qualities. They are experiences, events. In one of his seminars, Gilles Deleuze referred to a correspondence where thought and sensation merge and "doing thinking" goes beyond representation and categorization. One approaches that kind of merging or connecting from, say, a Thoreau and his communion with nature. He did not read or interpret it but felt its immanence, "the sound of circulation in nature's reins." Compare Foucault's injunction to begin clinical knowledge with attention to the living body's "primordial noise," the "non-silence of the organs."

"Sound troubles representation," declared Laurence Kramer. Its challenge lies in its potential, its lingering promise. The sound of the wave before it breaks, in Kramer's metaphor. It is the immeasurable measure of life. The sense of life spreads outward from sound, like the cry of a newborn baby.

The Big Bang was the first, primal sound. According to NASA, the deepest sound in the universe, emitted by black holes, is a B-flat, 57 octaves below middle C.

Michel Chion has discussed the acousmatic voice, that which has been cut off from a body. "Ever since the telephone and gramophone made it possible to isolate voices from bodies, the voice naturally has reminded us of the voice of the dead." Perhaps fittingly, Alexander Graham Bell was moved to develop the telephone by his belief that the static he could hear over the line was the voices of dead people, possibly his dead brother. Digitization of sound, encoding it, certainly takes this further, a greater distancing from any evental origin. The present deluge and trajectory of the technosphere present various retreats of this kind, for example, the popularity of texting over voice communication--a further degree of estrangement.

In Spike Jonze's 2013 film "Her," Theodore falls in love with "Samantha," an operating system's synthetic voice on his smartphone. What is seductive is all sound in this chilling movie.

Dominic Pettman's proposal: "Let us presume that it is not too late to listen to the voices of the earth, whether they be mineral, animal, or technological." Unmindful of the fact that the technological is silencing the rest.

"How a sonic sensibility may inform emancipatory practices" is the theme of Brandon LaBelle's *Sonic Agency: Sound and Emergent Forms of Resistance* (2020). To LaBelle, sound is "a disquieting presence," always audible but rarely heard.

Both sound and silence belong to what is unmediated. Even noise can reveal that which escapes our cognitive habitat, and can point to unnoticed relationships. Jacques Attali claims that "noise functions as a force of interruption, one that announces, through its unmistakable agitations, violence that always takes its aim at the social order."

Even though sight is still the royal register, we are born in and of sound. And clearly, sound is employed in countless efforts. The U.S. space program's 1977 Voyager launched Golden Records into deep space, projecting a wide array of sounds: samples of 55 human languages, various musical compositions, and more on this sonorous territorialization of the cosmos. Is listening in the here and now a healthier pursuit?

The Metabolism of Freedom

-Bjørn Olson

"I am just a human being trying to make it in a world that is rapidly losing its understanding of being human." —John Trudell

Whenever discussing whether or not to consume animal flesh, it is important to compartmentalize the discussion into three subjects: ecological, human health and ethics. It is too common, in my experience, to address a particular point in one category only to have "yea, but what about…" thrown into the quagmire. This whack-a-mole approach is frustrating and unproductive.

Each of these three topics deserve our attention, our scrutiny, our deep contemplation, and the resolution thereof before venturing onto the next. In this essay, I attempt to address only one of the three topics, the one I find most important for our emancipation—human health. In an ongoing book project, I thoroughly address the other two—ecology and ethics. I also provide more research, evidence, references, and context for the topic of this essay—human health and the metabolism of freedom.

In my early 40s I began to develop diseases of civilization. For years I had been progressively gaining weight, after long trips in the car or on a plane my feet and ankles would swell, and my previously broken knee was always inflamed, often hurting terribly. While on a strenuous backcountry cycling expedition in the sub-Arctic of Alaska, these discomforts reached a new climax.

I have lived an active and adventurous life in Alaska. Backcountry wilderness expeditions are a cornerstone to my identity and have been since my late teens. Traversing vast landscapes at human-speed has served to inform my environmental and social activism.

Traveling through varied landscapes in the far north has enriched and deepened my understanding of ecology, the impacts of climate change, resource extraction, and environmental degradation. Spending time with and learning from Indigenous cultures throughout the Circumpolar region I have developed a keen sense of what shifting baselines are and have come to intimately appreciate how destructive and disruptive colonization and extraction has been and continues to be.

As I pushed my loaded fat-bike through a miles-long swath of soggy tundra, the pain in my knee became excruciating. Grueling effort is the price to pay for these human-powered expeditions. I had always accepted and even embraced the demanding effort and physical discomfort. This time was different. I kept my pain and doubt to myself, but when our team of four reached the road system, I made up a pathetic excuse and bailed out on the final leg of the trip.

Back home I fell into a depression unlike any I had experienced before. I felt fat, broken and exhausted. Suicide crossed my mind when I considered how unfair it would be for my partner to care for me as I became older and less capable. Losing my physical ability to undertake strenuous, human-powered expeditions at such a young age was mortifying for me. My self-made and hard-won identity was slipping through my fingers.

I decided eventually to go to the clinic for a check up. A week later the results of my blood work came back. The long list of markers that were out of range further devastated me.

Metabolic syndrome is defined by having three or more specific biomarkers out of whack. These are blood pressure, triglycerides, HDL, blood sugar, and abdominal adiposity (belly fat). All five were out of alignment for me. More alarmingly, I was pre-diabetic. The physician seemed unfazed. For someone my age, this has become the new normal. She knew how to "treat" me.

Rather than understanding or trying to resolve the underlying metabolic dysfunction, allopathic medicine relies almost exclusively on pharmaceuticals to "treat" each symptom. A band-aid approach that does not holistically correct the root problem but merely treats one symptom in isolation, often with terrible side effects.

I kept the bad news to myself. I was deeply embarrassed by my perceived failure. At the time, I was a sponsored ambassador for an adventure bicycling company and had staked my identity on being an outdoorsman, a wilderness videographer, a subsistence hunter and gatherer, an essayist, and photographer. How could I have allowed myself to fall to pieces like this? An enormous component of my wilderness adventure ethic was that of self-reliance, not needing others' help to get me out of the woods, out of danger. But here I was, in need of doctors, nurses, the fucking pharmaceutical industry. Gross.

I wanted to believe that there were lifestyle changes I could make to at least improve some of my ailments. Ample exercise was clearly not the issue. Some other habits or adjustments, I hoped, could be made in order to course correct away from these diseases and a lifetime of prescription medications, a lifetime of reliance on allopathic medicine, doctors, and industrial healthcare. I stumbled in the dark and began reading, researching and dipping my toes into the variety of confounding dietary and biohacking philosophies.

Sifting through mountains of research and sage advice from the vast spectrum of doctors, researchers and dietary gurus became my charge. Everything I read seemed to have at least some merit but there were wild contradictions between each of the camps. I soon encountered what anyone who researches diet and nutrition discovers: there is a profusion of contradictory information. Why is it so difficult to discover what a human being should eat to avoid becoming fat and sick? No other animal needs a decoder ring or a life coach. Why should I?

For many months I read one book and peer-reviewed paper after the next. Slowly, I started to develop a new fluency in biochemistry, nutrition, fitness science, the history of nutrition "science," the fringe biohackers conducting N=1 experiments on themselves, hormetic stress, fasting science, and on and on. I found a rabbit hole and jumped in with both feet.

A few puzzle pieces slowly started to fit, and then a few more. Eventually I stumbled upon a dietary intervention that seemed specifically efficacious for people in my situation. After some fits and starts, I committed to the protocol.

My motivation was simple: I wanted to lose weight, fix my broken metabolism and steer myself away from developing diabetes without taking medication. This was not a philosophical or political quest. I merely wanted my health and vitality back.

Two years later I returned to the clinic to have another metabolic blood panel drawn. I already knew that I had lost 35 pounds, that my knee no longer hurt, my ankles and calves no longer swelled when I sat for more than a couple hours, that I could go harder than I had in years in the backcountry, that the mysterious and massive rash that I'd lived with for over 20 years had disappeared, that the skin tags around my armpits had vanished, that my mood was more stable than it had been in my entire adult life, that I was no longer an insomniac, and that I felt 15 years younger, but I had no idea what the blood work would reveal.

Aside from still having slightly elevated blood pressure, all the other markers of my Metabolic Syndrome had been corrected. I was no longer pre-diabetic. This material, and diagnostic truth hit me in a profound way.

The strategy I employed to regain my life and optimal health was radically different from the mainstream ad-

vice. The outcome was so profound that it shook me to my core and forced me to confront other long-held beliefs. What started out as a quest to regain my health soon morphed into a philosophical and political worldview, too—a radical, anti-civilization worldview.

Online, I became aware of many thousands of people around the world who were following this unconventional advice and resolving conditions far worse than my own. People with full blown Type 2 Diabetes (previously thought incurable) were no longer diabetic, getting their blood sugars back into healthy ranges and off their medications. People with severe autoimmune disorders were getting healthy for the first time and were, again, doing so without medications. Obesity, skin conditions, mood disorders, food addiction and disordered eating, inflammation, libido, gut health, reproductive health, restoration of regular menstrual cycles, mental health, cancer, and many more conditions were all being greatly improved or, more often, entirely resolved by adopting this simple, whole food dietary philosophy and way of eating. If a pharmaceutical company developed a drug half as effective, it would certainly be the most prescribed and profitable drug in the world.

The more I learned the more inspired I became. An underlying question often returned: *why had it been so difficult for me to learn this?* How and why would something so efficacious be so difficult to discover? The more I learned, the more angry I also became. All the conventional, mainstream advice is dead wrong; a profit-driven agenda to keep us addicted to civilization's food and kept alive with its medications. As an anarchist, I realized I had liberated myself from perhaps the largest obstacle standing between me and my autonomy—my birthright to live with vitality.

Growing up in rural Alaska, our closest family friends were Siberian Yup'ik—indigenous Alaskans originally from Saint Lawrence Island in the north Bering Sea. As a child of back-to-the-land hippy parents, I remember thinking, *how did they survive without grains, fruit or vegetables?* Weren't these crucial for human health?

As I dug into the history, I discovered that in the early 20th Century, malignant cancers were believed to be non-existent in Indigenous Circumpolar populations. At that time, most people in Alaska were still eating their traditional, high fat and animal-based diets. But as Alaskan Natives became more Westernized in the middle of the 20th Century, rates of cancer and other metabolic diseases shot through the roof for these people.

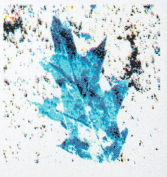
Some 30-years later, as I continued to see my health recover, my childhood question came back to me and I realized that a life-long blinder of cultural indoctrination was being peeled off. I had been civilized nearly to death. What else had I been conditioned to believe that might be causing me harm?

Assertion #1: every modern non-communicable disease, from cancer to heart disease, type two diabetes, Alzhemier's Disease, and mental health disorders, to name a few, can all be corrected when we stop and ask ourselves what kind of species are we? How did we evolve? What were the conditions that shaped us into the creature we are? What can our physiology, our metabolism, endocrine system, and physical features tell us about who we are and what we need to eat (and not eat) in order to thrive and how to avoid contracting a non-communicable disease of civilization?

Once we grasp the broad picture, we can begin to implement a variety of practices and habits that realign our unique physiology back into alignment, back into what our Paleolithic genes are still expecting from us along with our relationships to one another and to our environment.

There are several high impact levers we each can pull on to course correct ourselves away and or recover from these non-communicable diseases of civilization. None, however, are as powerful and efficacious as diet. Once the proper human diet is implemented all the other levers fall more easily into place. These other levers include proper human exercise, sleep and wake cycles, exposure to proper light, grounding to the earth, face-to-face interactions, hot and cold exposure, exposure to microbes, being a silly goose in the woods, holding and playing with the babies, walking, sprinting, lifting heavy things, hunting and gathering, staring into the fire, slowing down enough to observe the creatures, the plants, the seasonal changes, and much more.

What is a proper human diet? In the simplest terms it



is a low carbohydrate and low sugar diet that includes all of the essential nutrition that humans require to avoid deficiencies and rebuild tissues. This nutrition must also be in its most bioavailable forms. The essential nutrition for humans are as follows: essential fatty acids, essential amino acids, essential vitamins, and essential minerals. Without these, we become malnourished and diseased.

"What will you prescribe for the sick woman, doctor — you who have seen at a glance that the cause of her illness is general anemia, want of good food, lack of fresh air? Say, a good beefsteak every day?"

-Pëtr Kropotkin An Appeal to the Young

There is no such thing as an essential carbohydrate or sugar. Our bodies can and do produce all the glucose (sugar) we need, and it produces it in an exquisitely perfect ratio. Only a tiny fraction of the body absolutely requires glucose, the rest of our cells run best on ketones. Furthermore, ketones are anti-inflammatory and most diseases of civilization are a product of inflammation of one kind or another.

It boggles the mind to read contemporary human health statistics. For instance, 74% of Americans are overweight and 40% of them are obese. A meager 6.8% of American adults are defined as having optimal cardiometabolic health! 23% of Americans suffer from serious mental health issues and more than 30% suffer from anxiety. Nearly 40% of Americans have pre-diabetes and roughly 1/10 Americans have Type 2 Diabetes (the diabetes caused by diet and lifestyle). Childhood type 2 diabetes, once rare, is also becoming increasingly common. Almost 11% of Americans over 65 suffer from Alzheimer's Disease—a 148% increase from 1990 to 2019 of a disease that basically didn't exist 100 years ago. The list goes on and on.

Each of the aforementioned conditions and many more of the diseases of civilization can be greatly reduced or entirely corrected by implementing a proper human diet, a diet that we morphologically evolved from eating. For anarchists, being liberated from the otherwise near certainty of contracting a disease, the premature entropy and diminishment of capability, inherent in civilized life, must become central to our liberatory projects.

The sugar burner metabolism that most of the westernized world is habituated to is the metabolism of the slave. Grains, legumes, sugar, and plants loaded with defense chemicals (aka pesticides) are all cheap to produce, heavily dependent on fossil fuels, fertilizers, ecocide, cheap and or slave labor, and are fundamental to civilization now and throughout history. A critique of civilization is a critique of totalitarian agriculture, the most savage war ever waged against the living world.

The sugar burner metabolism enslaves us in a particular and singular way as well. This dietary approach does not fulfill our need for the essential nutrition our bodies and brains require, which keeps us hungry, and keeps us wed to the blood sugar roller coaster, causing us to eat every few hours. We have unwittingly traded our vitality to the corporate profiteers, which leads to disease, and in turn leads to more profit ala the pharmaceutical and industrial healthcare industry. Most of us are still endowed with enough agency to break this chain.

In many Indigenous cosmologies, the hierarchy of responsibilities is as follows: first, care for one's own wellbeing and health, next comes the responsibility for family health and wellbeing, then community, then the wider world. Like the oxygen mask on the airplane, take care of yourself to be of service to others. When we are not operating from a foundation of strength and welfare, we are unable to think clearly and bring our sharpest selves to the table. Being healthy and optimal is not merely an egocentric proposition, it is also ecocentric. We will never be liberated if we fail to understand fundamental truths about what kind of animal our species is.

We are not free if we are sick. We are not free if we are dependent on the pharmaceutical industry. We are not free if we support, buy and eat the industrial, chemically manufactured food of civilization and die the slow agonizing ways most of the modern population now does—years of slow deterioration marked by loss of mental and physical ability.

Undomesticated, land-based tribal people do not suffer and die the way the civilized do. This is the liberatory politic I believe we must embrace if we desire to save ourselves and the biosphere from the perpetual growth, life-devouring ethos of capitalism.

The term Proper Human Diet, coined by Dr. Ken Berry, should be thought of as a carbohydrate spectrum. Each person has their unique maximum carbohydrate limit, which should not be exceeded. We are all, however, human beings. We are all the same species and therefore all humans benefit from carbohydrate and sugar reduction or the complete elimination thereof.

Essentially every modern non-communicable disease of civilization begins with metabolic dysfunction and inflammation. Both are most often the outcome of carbohydrate overload, leading to insulin resistance and metabolic dysfunction. Once we remember what kind of animal we are, we can avoid this milieu of modern diseases.

Whenever we eat, our pancreas produces a hormone called insulin. Insulin is called the storage hormone. Of the three macronutrients (fat, protein, carbohydrate) carbohydrates cause the biggest secretion of insulin because any more than 600 mg/dL of circulating sugar in the blood system is deadly. The body goes into a panic to deal with this potentially lethal load of sugar or starch, which the body sees and treats the same. Insulin converts the excess sugar into a finite amount of muscle and liver glycogen for storage and the rest it converts into triglycerides (body fat) and stores it away for later, of which there is no upper storage limit. This is how 350 or 500 pound people are made.

There is now an extreme mismatch with our food and its availability. For the civilized, it's late summer all year round now. We can eat blueberries in January and the blueberries are now made from corn syrup, often called gummy bears or snickers or pasta or oatmeal or any number of high sugar/carbohydrate foods that simply weren't available to us during the Paleolithic—the vast expanse of time that we evolved in.

What food was available and most often consumed by humans throughout our deep evolutionary history? What food did we eat that led to our unique metabolism and endocrine systems? What food led to us having big brains, small intestines, (compared to other primates) and shoulders that can hurl a ball or a spear over 100 miles an hour (an attribute no other primate has)? What food were we eating that led to us losing our body hair and the ability to shed heat through our skin? What were we eating so much of for so long that led to us having a stomach PH of 1.0 to 1.5 (more acidic than vulchers)? What is the one food that existed everywhere that humans migrated to? What is the single food source that contains all the essential nutrients required for optimal human health and that



also contains no anti-nutrients or toxins? What is the one food that is 100% bioavailable and is the most nutrient dense? What food provides the perfect ratio of Omega 3 fatty acids, Vitamin B12 and heme iron that are critical for brain function? What food do religious institutions like the Seventh Day Adventists insist we not eat because they (rightly) claim it leads to healthy libidos and sexy-time thoughts? What is the ancient food that our species has always eaten but is now, we are told from the experts, to avoid or entirely forgo, that is most vilified and claimed to be the culprit of the modern disease epidemics and climate change? What is the food that if properly managed restores denuded industrial agriculture lands and draws down atmospheric carbon dioxide? What is the food we have been eating for millions of years? If you guessed tofu, you'd be wrong.

Assertation #2: By realigning our diets and lifestyles to as closely as possible match Paleolithic habits and practices, we solve an enormous problem. With clarity of thought, a balanced endocrine system, renewed strength and self confidence, and a healthy, functioning metabolism, we can see more clearly the root causes of planetary and human suffering.

Once someone becomes "fat adapted" and off the civilized sugar burner metabolism, a series of remarkable things begin to happen. Namely, we come off the blood sugar roller coaster and can easily go and go between meals. Unless you have experienced it, this is more liberating than you can imagine.

When one is fasted or in nutritional ketosis through diet, one becomes less bloated and inflamed because every gram of carbohydrate is bound by three to four grams of water. Gut health and digestion almost immediately improve once one eliminates the sugars and carbs that both irritate the gut lining (often leading to leaky gut syndrome, leading to autoimmune diseases) and we stop feeding the bad microbes that cause indigestion, flatulence, bloating, and multiple daily bowel movements. Once the body becomes efficient at using ketones for energy, every mitochondria in our body becomes more efficient at producing ATP, the molecule essential for cellular energy. The list goes on and on.

Fat is hardwood logs for our metabolic furnace; carbohydrates are kindling. Clever marketers have convinced us to re-up our food intake every couple hours. Topping off our blood sugar a dozen times a day is not how our hunter-gatherer ancestors survived the Ice Age.

Becoming a fat burner rather than a sugar burner almost automatically leads to intermittent fasting because when our body is properly nourished, when we eat energy and nutrient dense foods, we don't require as many meals. There are far too many benefits of fasting or intermittent fasting to dive deeply into within this article. But, briefly: cancer prevention, recycling of damaged and mis-folded proteins and senescent cells, correction of insulin resistance, reversal of type 2 diabetes, improved gut health, brain health, liver health, immune system boost, it's a powerful detox and anti-inflammatory, to name a few.

For the sake of brevity, I will address just one benefit to fasting in this article: mental clarity. In numerous studies it has been shown that after someone reaches a state of deep ketosis from prolonged fasting, their mental clarity and ability to focus greatly improves. For the thousands of generations that our species lived as immediate return hunter-gatherers, this special, evolutionary adaptation allowed us to become exceedingly sharp witted when we needed it most: when we were without food and hunting fleet-of-foot and intelligent game animals.

When we enter a fasted state, our remarkable livers have the ability to take body fat (triglycerides) from our stores and to break it apart into its constituents: three fatty acids with a glycerol backbone. The liver converts the fatty acids into ketone bodies, which are the cleanest fuel source for humans and that, unlike a triglyceride, can pass through the blood-brain-barrier. The glycerol backbone is converted into glycogen (sugar), which only a few cell types in our body actually require (certain brain cells and red blood cells). This is the optimal, high octane ratio of energy substrates for peak human cognition and functionality, and fasting is the surest way to achieve this as is a ketogenic, high animal fat diet.

There are countless misconceptions about life in the Paleolithic or in contemporary hunter-gatherer societies. Most people still believe, for instance, that people

only lived to be 35. This misleading number is arrived at when all the people's ages at death are compiled and then is calculated by analyzing mortality rates across different age groups and then extrapolating those rates to predict the average remaining lifespan for a group of people. If you lived on an island with Bill Gates, the average income on your island would be tens of billions of dollars. Life expectancy is not the same as life span—how long someone lives if they survive the vulnerable years of infancy and childhood. The maximum possible lifespan of humans remains unchanged throughout our 300,000 years as H. sapiens.

Since the Agricultural Revolution and the emergence of civilization, the majority of humans have been malnourished, overworked, enslaved, mentally unstable, and diseased. Even the elites in places like ancient Egypt ate grains and developed Type 2 Diabetes—a disease unknown to hunter-gatherers.

An archeologist can, at a glance, determine if a fossil was from the Paleolithic or the Neolithic age. The former is taller, more robust with straight teeth and upright spines. The latter shows signs of osteoporosis, has malformed jaws and is shorter. What's more, humans have lost 100cc of brain matter over the last 10,000 years. Civilization and its ingredients are poison to people and the planet.

A more interesting and valuable thing to consider is healthspan—the period of a person's life during which they are healthy and free from significant illness or disease. Viewed from any angle, the healthspan of the civilized is a grotesque aberration when compared to the healthspans of extant hunter-gatherers.

As a green anarchist, I draw inspiration and insight from anthropology, archeology, evolutionary biology and other disciplines to uncover secrets about humans and human nature. Mutual aid, non-dominance, gender equality, and more can be justified with a keen understanding of extant hunter-gatherers, primitive and or Indigenous cultures, and evidence left behind in the fossil record. Green anarchy is for me the science of anarchy and freedom—a map out of the maze that civilization has placed us in.

Understanding how exquisite and unique our own human physiology and metabolisms are, how nature shaped us, is a fundamental key to understanding how to unlock the doors that keep us sealed from our liberation. We are a product of evolution, forged in the Ice Age. To deny the implications that come from our own long history comes at a great cost to our lives and prevents us from understanding our potential. So much of civilization's influence over the world is beyond our control. By reclaiming my birthright to live free of disease, I can now beter imagine what it means to be a free human.

The freest people on the planet are and have always been the hunters-gatherers. This is not an intellectual, 19th Century conception of what anarchy and emancipation from systems of dominance are. These are the anarchists and there is much to learn from them.



Maple Syruping in the PA Wilds

"Life was portable. Everyone had a task. Even the children."

-Inuit elder, from *In the Empire of Ice* by Gretel Ehrlich

Sitting here on my bedroll in the woods, I am out on the land. A tray of maple sap cooks down on top of 1/3 of a steel barrel. It is a nearly full moon night. I feel fortunate. Thankful. The sap has been really running the last two warm days. We have 9 buckets out and that is enough with which to keep up. By headlamp I write this.

My 4 year old son was here with me earlier. We hauled buckets and collected wood together. We drank sap straight from the bucket; bark debris and all.

A killdeer just called in the dark. Nesting on the ground in the woods.

My partner cooked us a rooster dinner from our flock (it was one of the chicks a hen hatched last summer) while our child and I tended the sugar fire. This sure feels like subsistence as resistance. I read how the indigenous peoples of these North Pennsylvania mountains would move nomadically to the sugar woods, as I have now, to cook down sap into maple sugar. Cooking the syrup longer turned into maple sugar which would have been easier to pack around. I also read that early colonists stated that they originated making maple syrup before the indigenous ever did. Which was untrue.



My son and I reclined on my bedroll earlier under a blue sky warm spring day and watched the fire, the few clouds, the trees sway, the drips of sap leaving the spiles for the buckets, the ravens and crows overhead. We had puttered around camp barefoot at his urging - reconnecting intimately with the planet again after a long and tough Northern winter. This reminded me of some of my experiences in the back country hunting and trapping alone in my teens.

Our "operation" is a hodge podge of collection vessels. Recycled popcorn cans scavenged from the metal recycling dumpster. An iron kettle I found half buried in the woods while walking to

collect drinking water from a spring one day in summer and accumulated metal pots that serve other purposes during different seasons of subsistence living. We use a brace and bit to bore holes into the giving sugar maple. Then pound in sumac spiles I carved a few weeks ago by candlelight next to the woodstove.

Indigenous people would make a downward slanting slice in the bark of the tree and then ram a wood chip into the bottom of the cut. As the sap started flowing it would follow the cut, drip off the chip and into a hollowed log or birch bark vessel. Before iron kettles they would boil off the water with hot rocks dumped into their containers, interchanging the cool rocks out with more hot ones.

The coyotes are howling now as a soft breeze blows across my shoeless feet. The cooking fire of beech wood is banked nicely with steady coals. I lay and watch the flames as well as the limbs of the trees through the light of the moon. Sap steam is mixing with the wood smoke and scaling the moon's bright layers - all dispersed by the branches of the beech that overhangs the whole contraption.

Its a quiet and elegant mountain night. The silence is only broken by the occasional vehicle on the two lane road. But what of that compared to the vast providence I feel here right now? To think earlier today I was feeling a little down about the modern world and machines!



It is a cold morning. I only tended the fire once last night after sleeping a bit, then slept the rest of the night under the bag flap with a knit cap on my head. I dreamt of ultra-domesticated family members and the constriction of that sort of lifestyle. At the end of the dream I look out their windows to see fenced in herds of wild ruminants.

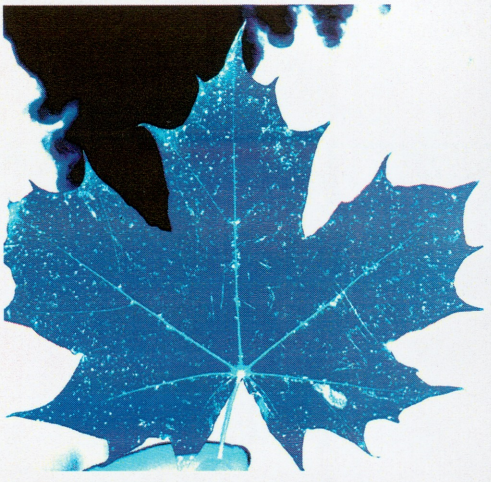
My steel water bottle is slushy. I get back into my cold clothes after crawling from my warm mummy bag, restart the fire from a few glowing coals then walk away from the rising dawn to fill my battered and blackened tea kettle from my mother's well.

Back at the fire I slide the kettle into the growing flames through an opening I cold chiseled into the side of the barrel. This is where the wood is fed as well. I go and collect icey sap from 3 more buckets that are further away from the main camp. I scare up a lone whitetail deer while on the trail.

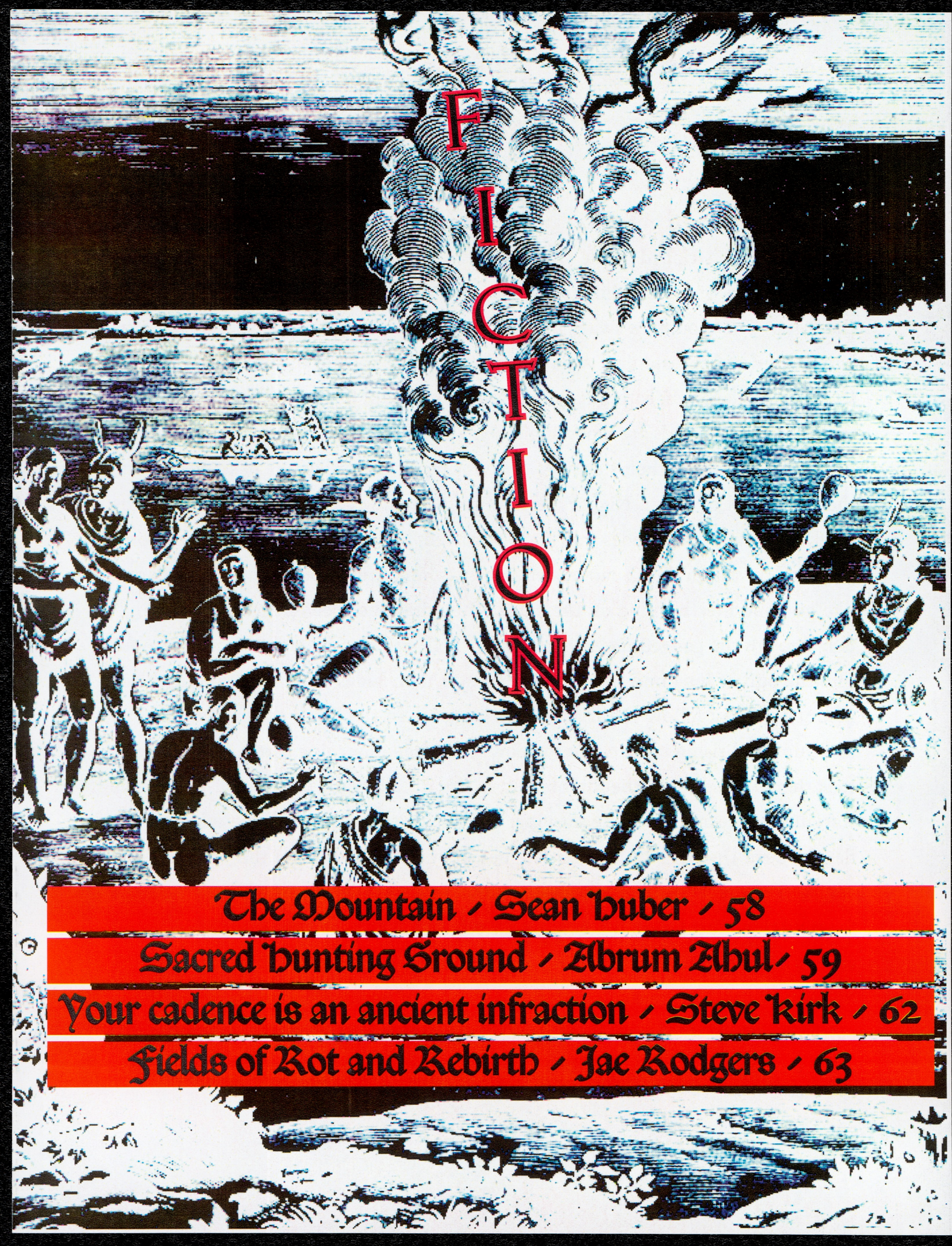
I use my hands to remove the ice from the sap buckets and eat it for breakfast.

Then, I stew coffee grounds in a cup with the now hot, sweeter sap. I need, nor want, so little of the machine here. Though, I realize the hypocrisy of some of my choices. Here under the soaring ravens, sleeping on a deer trail, under the stars I feel more love for my little tribe who spent the night back at our off-grid home but am glad for the energizing solitude I so deeply need at times. When I'm away from our home my partner has to tend our son, small subsistence herd and manage the wood and water situation. But I am gathering wild food to be eaten another day.

Being fairly chilly and breezy I am semi-uncomfortable but I am utterly, simply, alive. I add fresh sap to the steaming brew and wood to the fire. The liquid is browning into syrup. Who could ask for more? I think a lot on the original peoples living this way every day together. I think of them daily as I go about trying to raise a child whom I won't intentionally give up to the dominant culture. This sugar could be the only food the indigenous would have for some time. Some of the literature says they were quite happy with that.




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The Mountain

Sean M. Huber

The mountain stands huge and dark against the pale line of the winter trees. Bared to the weather, stripped in the violence of the turning seasons. Branches whipping across the tops of the bending trunks and the wind whistling through the gaps in the trees. The mountain sways in the wind and the mountain is alive, a writhing body jagged and threatening. A writhing body on the body of the earth which sways in the lunar darkness, eating its innards with a maw of black rage. Swelling in the tombed earth the buds are blooming early. The trees red in fear of the coming tide. The bears wake from their sleeping, dreams tinged with the gristle of starvation and the raw blood of dawn. Nightmare to nightmare they come lumbering down the black mountain. Their hides thin and slat ribbed, hollow eyed in hunger they come dragging down the black mountain. Fog spasming grey around their eyes flaring like gasoline fires burning on the ridge. They drag themselves through the wind-fall, through the gouged rivers, through thick air thick with smoke. Baking into fur into the puff of lung into the red rimmed eyes their hides smoking down the black mountain. They follow the rivers to their source in the black ocean. Knotted and thrashing and rising in threat to swallow whole the mourning earth. They come to soak their wounds, to bathe their bones, to mix their blood with the salt. They come starving. In dream they come starving. They come starving to lick the salt from the flats to burn the buds from their tongues to burn the duff from the vault of their skulls. The predator dreams of death drown in the rising tide, the bloody tide, the foaming tide murmuring the holy words of earth. The ocean churning in its secret cruelty bludgeoning the dark stone of the mountain. Mystical and writhing in the buffeting wind. The trees full with the early buds of spring. Dark and sticky with the earth's bleeding, the deep pain of the dreaming earth. Nightmare on nightmare the wind wakes screaming.



SACRED HUNTING GROUND

- Abrum Ahul

Rick pulled into the parking lot and eased the old pickup into a space. He turned the ignition and the engine chugged a few more seconds before coming to a rest. His boy Stroh sat beside him on the bench seat, still half asleep. It was five-thirty in the morning and the November air was brisk. There were other hunters there, huddled in the red glow of the store's awning, the glow of a neon "Made To Order" sign casting a blue hue on their camouflage. Long ago they had abandoned the blaze orange their fathers had worn and opted for a more military look. Grays and blacks pixilated into random geometric forms. Combat boots with zipper closures. Pockets everywhere, of all shapes and utility. Rick didn't recognize anyone gathered there. Must have been from out of town. He nodded and navigated his son through the martial gathering, his and Stroh's patchwork camo ensembles making them look like orphans among special forces. They got inside and went to the coffee area and made two cups, one large and one small. Dumping vanilla creamer in the little one, Rick left the big one black and then paid the woman working the counter in change ("Have a good time, young man") and made their way back through the door and climbed in the truck.

"Here you go. Let it cool off before you take a drink." Stroh took the cup from his father and held it in his little hands. "Your granddad gave me my first cup of coffee when I was about your age." Rick took a sip, fired up the engine, and backed out of the space.

They drove down Main Street heading toward the South Branch, where they'd park the truck and set out on foot. Romney was quiet that time of day, despite the influx of hunters. Stroh watched the town go by through tired eyes, holding the thick paper cup close to his face for warmth. It was his first hunting trip.

The impetus for the trip began some weeks ago. Rick had made a steak dinner for him and the boy, something he liked to do whenever he had a few extra dollars. Those dollars had been a lot harder to come by for a while now. He'd lost his job at the chicken plant in Moorefield and now just worked where he could, cutting wood, hauling trash, whatever. Stroh's mother up and left when the boy was only a baby, moving in with that Virginia son of bitch way past Winchester. Rick did the best he could to raise him right, to make things better. The Lamberts needed some brush cleared from an old lot, so Rick was able to earn a little extra. Enough to celebrate with. Buy something nice. He got a case of Yuengling and a pack of steaks from Food Lion.

He set a nice table. Mushrooms, baked potatoes, the works. He even used the good plates that his grandma had for holidays. It was a decent meal, Rick thought, by anybody's standards. Stroh just sat there fidgeting with his food, though. He picked at his potato, bit by bit. Drove a mushroom around on the end of his fork like a bulldozer. He refused to eat his steak. "Too bloody." Rick put it back in the oven, but the boy just didn't want it. This touched a nerve in Rick, an itch that had been burning quietly for some time. When he was a kid, he never even considered refusing what was put in front of him. Wouldn't have flown. He gave the boy cereal and washed both steaks down with most of the case.

The next morning Rick took the boy to the woods out back with a .22 caliber that his own father had left him. Despite Stroh's eagerness to go back inside to watch tv, they stayed out there for a while, going over the fundamentals of handling a gun. Rick thought about when he first learned to fire a rifle, about his grandfather, and the way of life when he was Stroh's age. "I've eaten just about everything you can eat from the woods," he explained to his son. "Groundhog, squirrel, rabbit, black bear, even rattlesnake." He thought to himself about the old farmhouse the family had years back, down on the river along the train tracks. You had to drive down a dirt road to get to it and sometimes there'd be a turtle crossing. "We'd take it home with us and granddad would break it open and make a real good soup." The farmhouse was sold off when Rick was young and it'd been trailers ever since. He glanced at his boy there in the afternoon sun, the rifle too big in his hands. "We appreciated whatever food we could get. We lived off the land." Stroh didn't find much interest in these memories, but they made Rick feel like a part of the place, as if he had grown right out of the dirt. Driving down River Road one morning on his way to drop off a cord of wood, Rick was struck with an idea. A way to impress upon his son the value of things, the way things used to be. The road ran down the valley along the South Branch of the Potomac in the opposite direction of the old family farmhouse. Rick could remember going out the day after the farmers would plow for corn, remembered the arrowheads he'd find, tiny brown shards in the turned dirt. No tribes had ever lived in the valley, but it was considered good hunting ground by the people that lived nearby, the abundance of arrowheads a testament to that. The landscape changed with the generations, though. Deer herds and foraged things turned to grazing cattle and cornfields. To Rick, it was still sacred hunting ground. He would take the boy hunting.

They pulled onto an old fishing path and parked the truck so it couldn't be seen. Rick climbed out and reached behind the seat, retrieving his 30.30 and the .22 for Stroh. Swallowing the last of his coffee, he handed the rifle to his son. Their breath was visible in the soft light of the sun rising behind the mountain as they made their way through tangled weeds and thistles and into the valley.

As they stepped clear of the thicket, the branches above opened to soft pink skies. Fog lingered along the edges, slowly disappearing in the morning sun. Rick stopped to take it in, drawn by something, something he felt as ancestral, genetic. He pulled a pair of binoculars from a case and scanned the valley. Just across the field was the herd. Fifty or so, by his estimation, each with a yellow plastic tag like an earring. All of them black with a wide belt of white. The South Branch swerved through the valley, its gentle brown water separating the cattle from the corn. He handed the binoculars to the boy and told him to look.

"Cows?" the boy asked.

"That's steak," his dad replied.

The plan was to bag a young one, small enough to allow the boy to fell it with his rifle and light enough that they could drag it down the field a bit, bring the truck around, and pick up the carcass before anyone knew any different. "Just like granddaddy would've done," he told the boy.

They headed a way along the river to gain a better vantage point. Rick told the boy about the arrowheads he'd find in the valley when he was a kid, about the Shawnee people who hunted here before the cows and asphalt. Along their path they found a feather, brown tipped in black, from a turkey. Rick stuck it in the fold of Stroh's hat. "Looks right," he said. They carried on. A trio of buzzards circled high overhead, disappearing as they merged with the trees at the top of the mountain before circling back into view. Rick and Stroh came to a small cluster of locust trees near the river and stopped to ponder their vantage. Rick thought of his granddad coming to the same bluff, waiting for a buck. But there were cattle here then too, he realized. He thought further back, to his grandfather's grandfather, saw the man hunkered down where Stroh was, Winchester rifle raised and ready to fire. Ready to bring home dinner. He felt it strong then, the connection to the place, and even imagined further back, saw Shawnee hunters, heard the sinew strings of their bows as they drew back arrows, leaving shards to be found centuries later in the upturned earth.

"Aim for that one there," Rick pointed. A young heifer idled away from the herd, chewing grass near the river bank. "Try to get her right behind the eye." Stroh raised his .22 and looked down the scope. "Just breathe deep and squeeze. Like we practiced." Just then a shot rang out from somewhere else, echoing off the mountainsides. The calf raised her head and looked around, unharmed. Stroh lowered the rifle and looked at his dad. "Just an automatic shot to scare deer away from the corn. Like a scarecrow," Rick assured him. The boy raised the gun again. "Easy now."

Another shot echoed around the valley. The cow stood there chewing while Rick grabbed his chest and dropped to his knees. He looked at his son and fell in the dirt. The farmer yelled from somewhere as Stroh looked at his dead daddy.

Fire rose in the boy and he got up and ran, ran across sacred hunting grounds and set upon the young heifer. With a war cry he hopped on the animal's back, taking hold of it by an ear and the scruff of its neck. The heifer tried to buck him, but Stroh hung tight. He felt a part of things as he opened his mouth and set his teeth into hide.



Your cadence is an ancient infraction

-Steve Kirk

A tunnel of birds

Woven in box elder

I ask for pardon for this trespass

From powers unknown and better for it

From each barrel chest some sonic cannon shot straight through the urethra of your consciousness

laying rhythmic wrath to the organs of being

And this should be the reason why we live through our deaths

A broken pact

old but not old enough

curses still conscripted and a fury crawling out

Stinking and covered and caked with mud

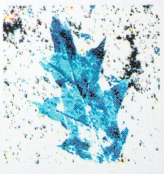
A birth of hate from the belly of Glory

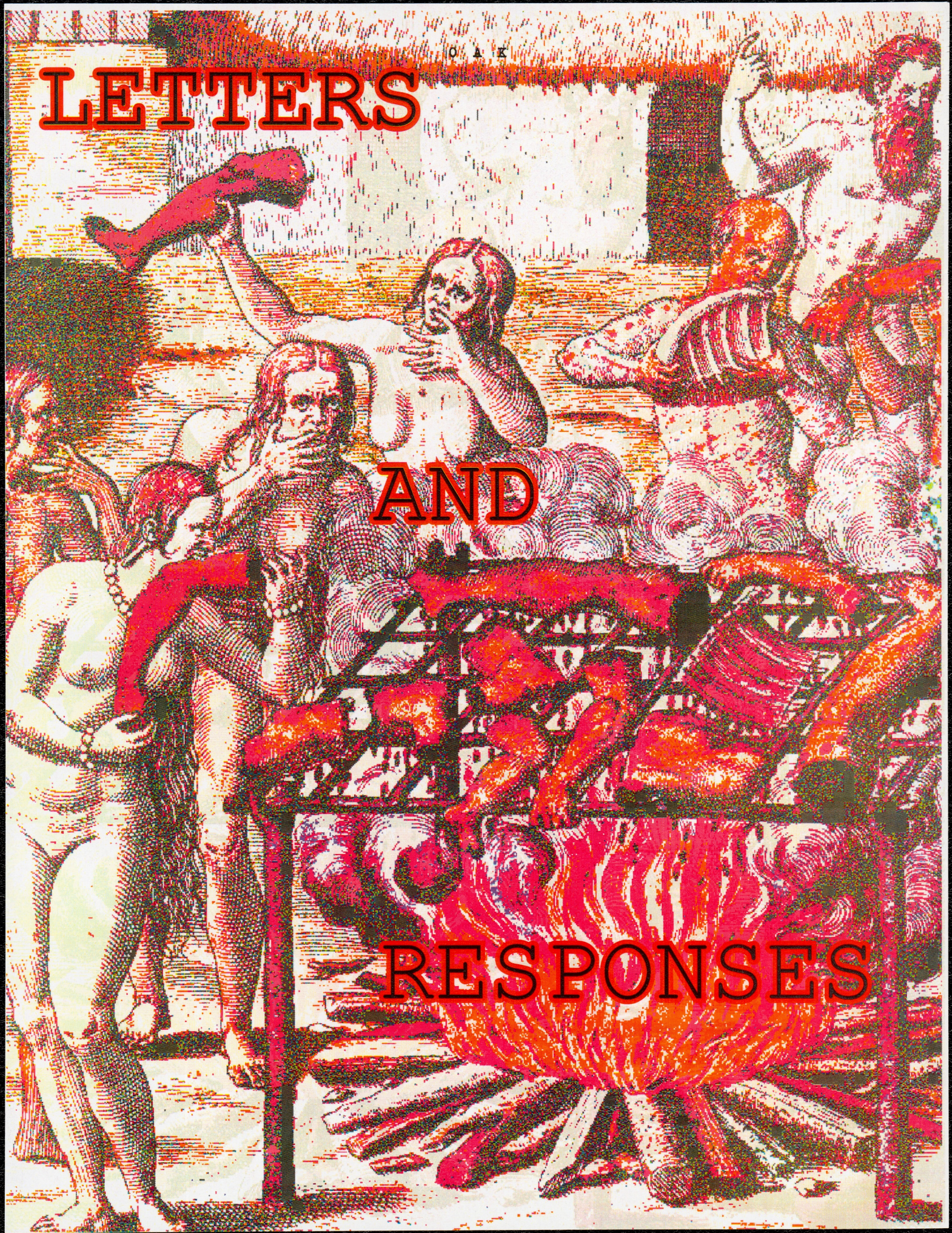
Fields of Rot & Rebirth

-Jae Rodgers

Making ravage,
making warfare,
making burning horizons,
making wasteland,
making collapsing metropolis,
making catastrophic topography.
So we thought we were dead
as our putrid flesh
rotted in the sun.
So we thought we were dead
as skin
necrotized as we lay on the soil.
But secret suns continue to rise
and again we grow
like fungus.
A string of heads
around the neck of goddess,
as fields are sown
with blood and decay,
but we secretly know
death is a lie.

Engulfed in flames
we're purified,
when putrefied
we present secret signs.
Anoint our brows
at apocalypse
a corpse's dance
of revelation.
We do not die,
we bloom again.
The perpetual destruction
a perpetual renewal
a primal wild
in forests regrown
from the ash
we have burnt.
Anoint our forehead
with secret signs
of invisible suns
and glowing black charkas
extend to infinity.
Eyes flap open
on trepanation scars.
Fungus blooms again.
We end at the beginning
of eternal renewal,
the chaos that lives
forever.




LETTERS
AND
RESPONSES

Material as the Anarchist Baseline

– JVL

Control over the economy is direct and material power over the lives of people. Individuals and households must obtain the food and goods necessary for their survival. They must eat daily to survive…to understand economic control, we must understand the subsistence economy – how societies are adapted to their environment; how people make a living. Then it may be asked if the nature of the subsistence economy is such that it may be controlled." - Timothy Earle[1]

In a material world – a world of earth, air, fire, and water with which magical alchemy can be done – you can't grasp abstractions or ghosts direct as they were trying to do in the teepee. They're too slippery, too insubstantial, too contingent on glorious concreteness. You've got to get dirty in the earth, cold and fearful in the air, singed in the fire and seasick in the water. You've got to scratch, scratch, scratch the world with the same paw or wing movements as the creatures you long to know. - Charles Foster[2]

No doubt, both Left and Right suffer deeply from the disease of progressivism, which for the last two centuries has been directly tied to, and greatly enhanced, by the material conditions generated by humanity's harnessing of fossil fuels beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. A baseline for any cogent anarchist perspective should thus be recognition that the contemporary crisis of civilization is rooted precisely in this unrelenting progressivist drive to uphold and further the established techno-industrial material conditions of the Industrial Revolution. As the French historian Matthieu Auzanneau writes regarding the political upheaval in early twentieth-century Europe following the First World War:

> *a great divvying up of viewpoints on technical progress had taken place. Social Democrats, socialist totalitarians, and fascists shared one fundamental vantage point: the belief that the oil industry and its perpetual expansion, like an eternal drill's bore, was the only thing capable of extracting humanity from its material torments.*[3]

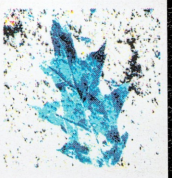
Thus, writes Auzanneau,

> *Fascism, socialism, and social democracy: perhaps they were tributaries flowing from a singular original experience –the one in which, in the aftermath of the First World War nightmare, everyone perceived the promise of an era of limitless energy powerful enough to change the world, without pain. The effort required for the rapid use of technology intruded into every ideology as a self-evident necessity. This technology boom became the key element in our universal understanding of "progress." Everywhere, as Nietzsche had foretold, the pursuit of industry monopolized human conscience.*[4]

For its part, the mainstream Left has always traditionally aligned with this conscience. Auzanneau provides a primary example. "In Bolshevik Russia," he writes "there was no longer any question, as there was in the eyes of Karl Marx, about the risk of workers becoming 'a mirror appendage of the machine': perfecting the industrial order was, on the contrary, the very means of liberating the proletarians."[5]

Despite all evidence of its failure for both human lifeways and for Earth ecology, this is a consciousness which the Left still refuses to discard. Despite the "green" veneer it attempts to put forward, this anesthetized attitude in fact continues to drive mainstream Leftism today.

As so-called "anarchists", this surrender remains the primary factor in our own ongoing submission to hierarchy. Our total dependency on the material reality of global techno-industrial Leviathan is the foundational hierarchy most of us voluntarily submit to on a daily, and even momentary, basis. Despite all of our (often performative) big words and theories, until anarchists make their priority a direct physical confrontation with the material forces which dominate us, we shall forever remain enslaved to the machine.



ENDNOTES

1 Earle, T. 1997. *How Chiefs Come to Power: The Political Economy in Prehistory*. Stanford University Press

2 Foster CF 2016. B*eing a beast: adventures across the species divide.* New York: Metropolitan Books, pg. 211

3 Auzanneau M 2018. *Oil, Power, and War: A Dark History*. Chelsea Green Publishing: 94-97

4 Ibid:94-97

5 Ibid:94-97. Auzanneau also provides the example of the post WW1 Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD): *"The ideology of the SPD, following the path of least resistance, gave rise to the most prosperous political order of the 20th century. The leaders and partisans of the SPD, which originally assumed a Marxist program, were convinced from the end of the 19th century (in the midst of the thermos-industrial boom) that it was entirely possible and desirable to collaborate with the bourgeoisie and their prodigal machines. By negotiating their place in the established industrial order, the Social Democratic proletarians planned to form a two-headed technical empire alongside their bosses; their goal was to control and benefit from machine labor almost as much as their bosses did."* This account speaks weightily to the ongoing historical failures of the Left to substantially change anything in respect to elite control over human basic physical needs.



OAK RESPONDS:

The editor of Oak participated in a debate on the Uncivilized Podcast around issues of materialism with the author of this piece/response. As I said then and I will say again here, though apparently to deaf ears, the issue I continue to raise is the theoretical basis of materialist reasoning and not at all the base acknowledgment that we are in the stuff of materiality. The continual sloppy conflation of what are two distinct ideas about the world -- really to the basis of how we conceptualize the world and the importance of each constituent --is done for the purpose of smuggling in the weaker idea (cultural materialism) under the banner of a stringent and imminent idea that we can call vitalist or possibly empirical but which does not have a proper ideological moniker (thank god). Historical materialism, cultural materialism, and the constructs of second-nature political assumptions which surround them are not at all that visceral materiality or that Gay Science commented on by Neitzche, documented by Levi-Strauss, elaborated by Lucretius years before and celebrated by such austere philosophers of science like Paul Feyeraband.

Marxist materialism is nothing but a clone of an earlier metaphysics grafted onto the socio-economic conditions of industrialism which (and it is no surprise given the logic of machines) emphasizes the mechanical nature of human societies and seeks to find the gears by which they work. Anthropology has a historical anchor and dog in this fight as Morgan was the key resource for Marx and Engels to describe this industrial metaphysics. But let us be clear: The economy is fake. Abstract. As is value in all forms (use and exchange for instance). It is not at all material reality and when billions sit well -fed watching Netflix or scrolling to numbness then the grand experiment of existence has already taken the time to disprove all the old theories of material slavery and material need. These were rational bulwark against the realization that humans are not Good, they do not obey the order of things but are rather easily placated with emptiness and ecstasy, reduced without might or Reason to being fat and numb slaves. Marx saw enough and should have stopped after "all that's solids melt into air." Because it is hor-

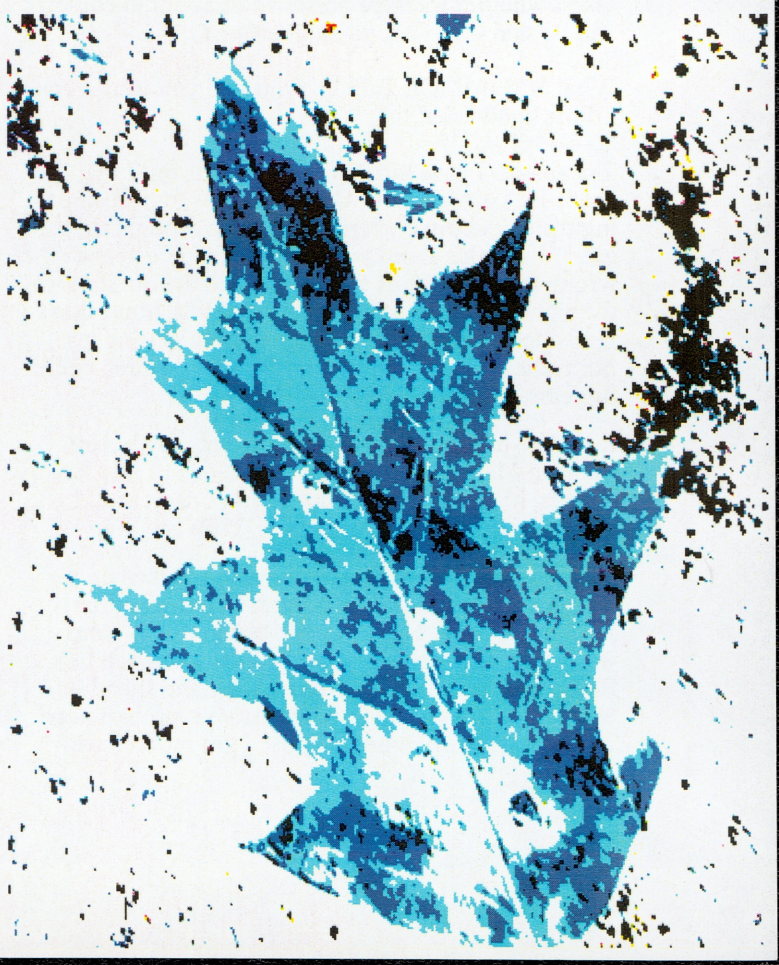
rific doesn't make it inaccurate. It is the world of motivations, seductions and desires that form the world, *need* is there only as a vital minimum that explains absolutely nothing about why anything has happened. In fact, need itself is just another weak reductionist psychology that mistakes the capacity for sacrifice and immolation as aberrant flukes in the fabric of contiguous humanity rather than the pivotal exceptions which shatter the pretentious inaccuracy of modernist rationality and humanism. The caloric life of non-accumulating hunter gatherers show this plainly. Whenever a choice is made for poverty, for non-accumulation, it violates the postulates of an anthropology of need. This naïve approach to the motivations of humanity has been proven in terms we can see with our very eyes, right now, here and now, to be utterly false. We have outstripped all material slavery and the world functions on the ecstasy of a volunteered slavery, an excited slavery. How else can you possibly explain social media, much less AI? While it is true that we would need to extricate ourselves from the physical structures of civilization to leave this world, it is not at all true that this leaving is either possible or permanent or that it is possible without a lucid strategy where we see things in their accurate multiplicity.

What must change is totalistic, psychic, nonmaterial and material – it is the nonreductionist confluence of a complete change. That is the only theoretical defense of primitivism, that it is complete. If it excludes kinship, love, hate, sex, food, ideas, conflict, and the panoply of motivations that effect humans then it is another universalist cage excited by its explanation and neutered by its addiction to proof – a junkie hooked on rational explanation.

In the end we must have an agreement of lucidity, not truth. To look at the world with a critique of its totalizing structures and to critique them continually *as they develop.* To be agents against domestication is not to simply invert the process of domestication *since that would still give domestication the primacy of our thought.* It is ultimately too neat, too clean, too simple to just fall back on the social sciences or the paradigmatic truth of a bygone era of anthropological science, an era that escapes us more and more.

Take the following example as illustrative. Right now towers are being built in the largest grid area of the country (and thus one of the largest in the world) to feed one thing, data centers. Residential and commercial energy use has largely plateaued. What motivation drives this fervor? Civilization speaks out both sides of its mouth. It instrumentalizes catastrophe and marches on building over 200 data centers in "data alley" in northern VA. It is simply most obvious that the race to replace human consciousness is not the result of material slavery (since we live in a state of superabundance) but of motivations and seductions which draw us away from the immediacy of materiality, the viscera of existence and resolve largely nonmaterial psychological dramas such as the disappearance of God (recent) or the death of kinship (the birth of God). Any strategy forward must confront this fundamental religious/psychic tether to the technological compensation. Not because it places abstraction over materiality in analysis, but because we have left that era of analysis and the only hope we have of *returning to battle* is to fight the articulation of domestication here and now and not to battle a ghost where it is only after it is gone that we understand it enough to fight.

Finally, the cautioning against "big words" and such is an anti-intellectualism that assumes ideas which are difficult to understand must be incorrect. There might be nothing less scientific. Certainly there is nothing more postmodern than this deconstruction of even accuracy in favor of the purposefully naïve comfort of a neophyte in the dance of modernist simulation.



Letter from BB

SK,

Lunch. Today I got a latte and a bacon-egg-and-cheese with fresh pico de gallo to dip. I went to the coffee shop in town I like. They sell vintage clothes in the back, there's a corner covered with all kinds of locally handmade whatevers, and everyone who works there looks like an instagram.

I'm gutting this little mason-block house on a hillside with a goat next door that sneaks under the chicken wire to get at the good grass on my side. It's been vacant for seven years. I've torn out all the drywall and plaster and smashed three stories' worth of brick chimney. I hauled out all the utilities. In one wall, I found a child's mitten with Alf on it. On top of the furnace supply duct, I found a curvy little knife that could be a murder weapon. None of my business.

The AC in the furnace was still charged with refrigerant. I didn't know until I clipped some ¼-inch copper tubing and blasted it all over the ductwork. I got a face-full of freon and bailed out of the house with my good work buddy, R.

I stood on the deck, head spinning slightly, trying to assess whether we were poisoned or about to combust, and he said Can I ask you a question?
Sure.
What is 'trans?' On Tuesday, you said you were trans. I don't know what that is.

The answer I gave him was a dizzy one, but I managed. He's a sweet guy. On Tuesday, we'd been shooting the shit about current events. He brought up the executive order about putting trans people in the wrong federal prisons (I'll leave aside the question of the right prison, whatever that is). I told him I don't know how long I might be able to keep getting my hormone replacement therapy. Could be days, could be years, who can say.

R said he has to return to the U.S. embassy in Honduras in March to renew his visa. None of us – his friends, his relatives, his spouse and one-year-old – know if we'll see him here again. Who can say.

SK, remember that crazy place we worked when we met, way back? Our boss voluntold me once that I was promoted. I asked about compensation and was told we'd try this out for a month and then talk. Remember how two months went by and then I had to fight tooth and nail for a few more crumbs a year? Things have been good here, but I got saddled with a lot more work since the new year started and the scenario started to feel familiar.

So, I shared that parable with my boss. He's pretty decent, as bosses go. We worked it out. Before I left his office, I had one more thing to say to him that I'd been holding for a while.

At the Christmas party last year, T said some dumbass shit to you about I tried to fistfight him the first time he and I worked together. That is completely untrue. We were building the new deck for that house down the street where the lesbian couple lives with their kids. He kept calling his multitool a f— saw. I asked him politely to not say f----- in front of me. He apologized and that's all. It's a conversation I've had with a hundred guys in this industry.

Everyone here knows I'm queer by now. I've got a pride flag on my truck's rear windshield, I've got pins on my toolbelt and all my bags. But no one really knows I'm trans. I've been on hormones for almost six months now. Over the next year or two, my appearance is going to start changing and I don't want you to get blindsided if and when somebody in the field has a problem with me.

Letting myself be seen has gone two ways over the last five years, and only two ways. Most everyone is completely indifferent. Then there's a certain category of middle-aged man who enters a blind fury because I exist, and he wishes me great harm. I have observed no other responses whatsoever. Fortunately, my employer was unphased. I don't know whether being out at work makes me more, less, or neutrally protected. Who can say.

But the cat was bound to get out of the box eventually. Maybe by the time this letter goes to print, all these wavelengths of uncertainty will already have collapsed into grim little points of fact. Regardless, I brought him a bottle of Rye on Monday morning for good measure.

Anyway, I've got to rip this old deck to pieces, SK. Stay safe out there.

Love y'all,

B.B.

Artxmis on Education

I am an educator and am witnessing in my own eyes, the death of human reasoning. I won't go into the conflicts I already deal with regarding being a teacher and an anarchist. I have spent time on this in other places and will continue to do so in others, still. This small letter will serve to reflect on current trajectories I am seeing with module-based teaching and AI integration in the classroom. The last year, we've had several department meetings that are sales pitches, usually from companies that create technology materials and other curriculum tools

For my own security, I will need to be broad. But let me paraphrase the basic messaging of these pitches: "Classrooms are changing, the world is changing. We are here to help you and your students. With adaptive learning modules and AI-assistant tools, you can worry less on instruction and more on one-on-one time." To the average teacher, this sounds good. Reduce time planning lessons and work directly with the students. In reality, though, it is moving teachers from their role as knowledgeable in a field (math, language arts, etc) to facilitators, not unlike proctors for standardized tests. An even further development is the removal of human facilitators at all! I recall the robot nursery in the WALL-E movie! There is much to critique about the notion of a teacher and their power over students freedom and access to information, but this is not the answer. It depersonalizes the learning process even more, making students even more dependent on the computer systems, assuming they even work correctly! This reminds me of anti-work critiques dependent upon technology, which only affirms the mediation of work, and in this case, of schooling.

Much of the AI-tools also are being sold as reducing work load for essay writing for students. The tools and goals vary. But there was one recent pitch, which framed it as essay writing assistant, which all students had to go was find evidence from the text and plug this into a partially or fully written argument / analysis. The human thus becomes the search engine! Forget your own understanding of a text or prompt, you simply find evidence for the argument some other person or AI has written for you! Humanity is dying and humanity is killing it.

Artxmis Graham Thoreau,
Anti-Civilization Eco-Anarchist
For Wild Nature!

Sascha Checks In on Sleeping In

Steve,

Oak 6 was a formidable achievement and the journal continues to be a joy to read. Particularly commendable is its range, leaving no stone unturned or rather, no bulldozer undamaged. Yet I think there's a tendency in this latest issue that I would argue against. As the proverb goes, when getting rid of the bathwater, one ought to ensure that the baby is not still in the tub. I fear that, in combating its imperious scientistic posturing, writers for Oak (and this probably includes myself as well) jettison the useful contributions of anthropology to primitive anarchy.

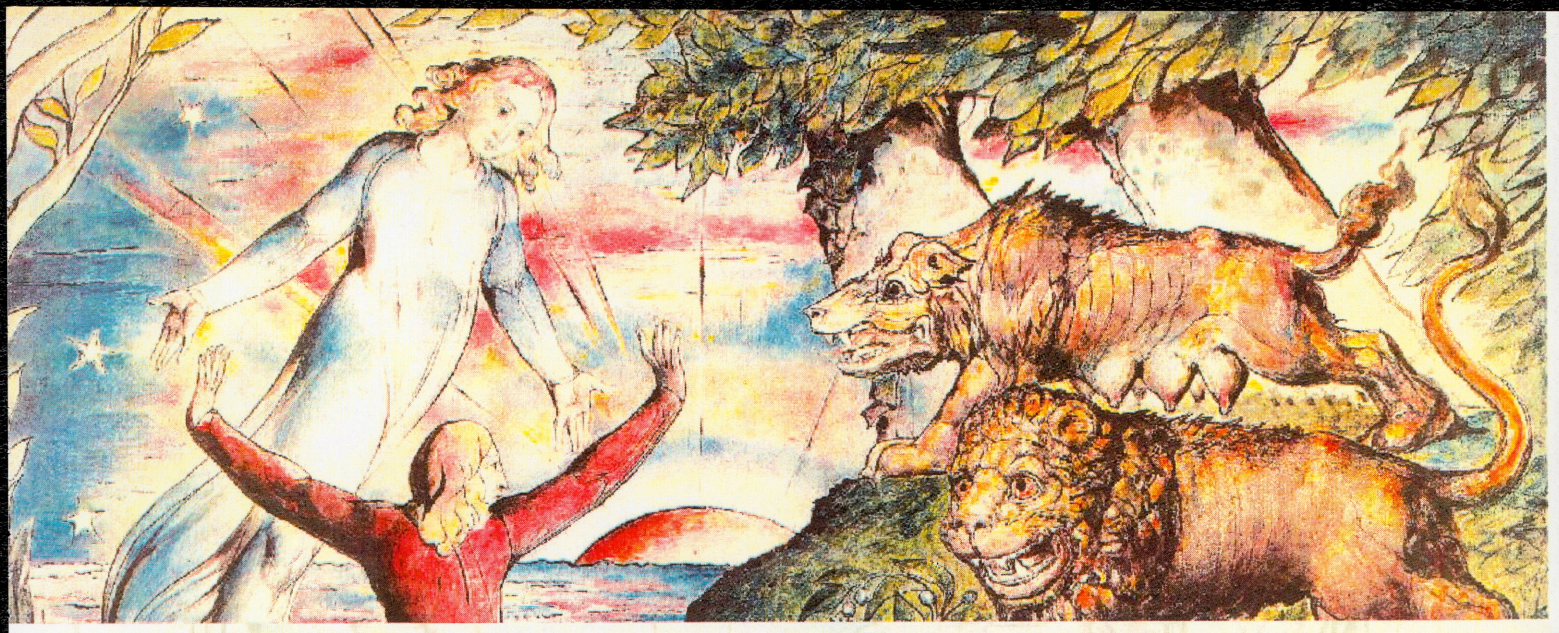
To be sure, the milieu of primitive anarchy (assuming here that this is indeed the milieu in which Oak thrives and to which it contributes) is the last possible venue for the claims of "science," and rather maintains a ruthlessly critical stance towards it, just as Green Anarchy did. Given the place that "science" occupies in civilized society, the essentially faith-based reverence it acquires in liberal "fact-checking" and conservative "trolling" alike, not to mention its role in school indoctrination or as "environmental impact assessment" fig leaf, primitive anarchy does well to reject anthropology to the extent that it aims to provide a "scientific" basis to anarchic desire. What is more, exclusive reliance on departments, publications, and professors of anthropology to make its case renders primitive anarchy vulnerable to being overturned when anthropology, as seems to have happened in at least some of its parts, abandons Sahlins and returns to Hobbes.

But this doesn't mean that anthropological writing, directly academic or otherwise, doesn't contribute anything to primitive anarchy, or that it shouldn't. Empirical evidence, if I may appeal to this for the sentence at hand, shows that I'm not the only one who first encountered a perspective of total rejection in the shape of anthropologically inspired visions of primitive affluence. As a gateway to radicalization and as an ongoing foil to the daily misery of civilized existence, anthropological discourses do plenty. Of course I don't ultimately care that some goober was likely able to sleep in every day twenty thousand years ago. But as my alarm clock dispels the night, the idea that there once was such a goober, as told by anthropological literature, is just what I need to keep the fire burning. Anthropology tells of concrete ways in which things can be different by asserting that they have been different, and to this end even a bit of scientistic posturing may well be useful; one has to pick things up where they are.

The other useful aspect of anthropology that I'd highlight is in the term "concrete." I won't say much about anthropological claims to materiality, dubious as this category is (and some of its invocations do rather remind me of Lenin's Materialism and Empiriocriticism, which is a hilarious read if you've got some time on your hands). But if I may appeal (equally dubiously, I know) to autobiography again, anthropologically based primitive anarchy has very much served me as a means to augment the extremely liberating, but somewhat cold and abstract impulses of egoist anarchy. To put labels on it, as one must to be intelligible to The Algorithms, I encountered Stirner around the same time that I encountered Zerzan, just over twenty years ago, and neither one is of much use to me without the other still. Egoist anarchy provides the sharp edges with which to cut through civilization's bullshit, but anthropology provides the stone from which the sharp edge is fashioned - namely, that it is a stone rather than a knife bought from the Euro store, that there once was and still is a "universal tool kit," and that I'm not alone in my cutting, nor that so-called "nihilism," the social media version of anarchy, is its last word.

But with this last part I've veered too far. Let's close it here, keep anthropology in the tool kit (however universal) and sleep in not because, but invoking the idea that, there once were people who did just that every goddamn day.

Sascha



Reviews

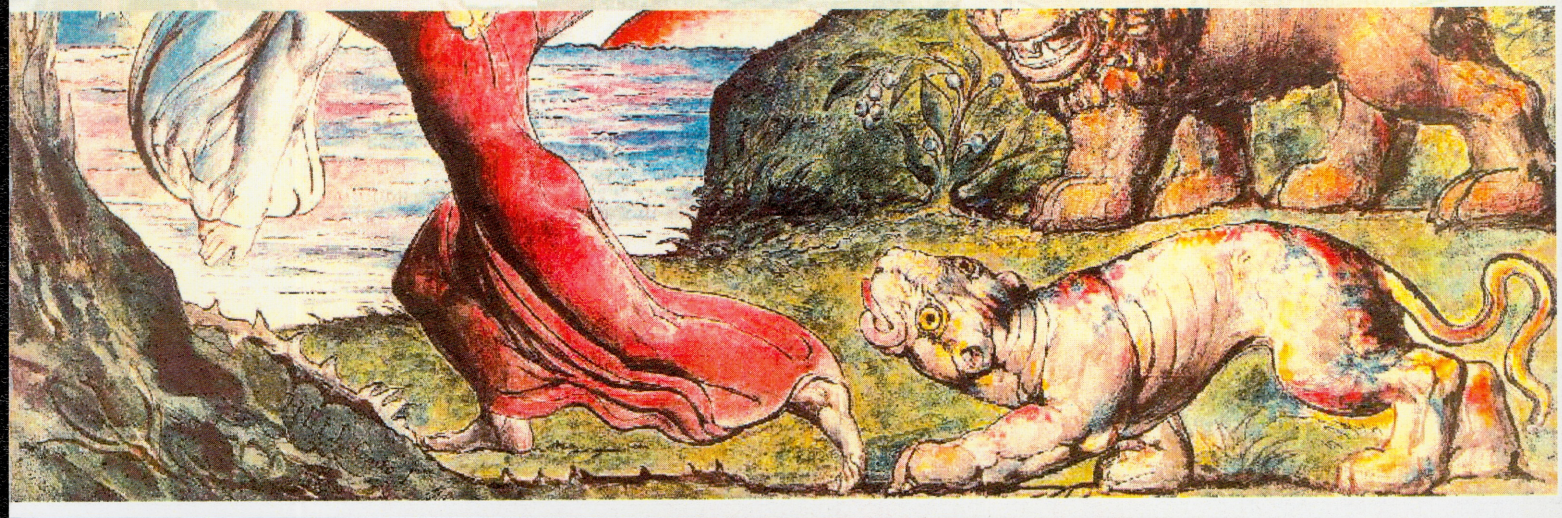
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vulgar obituaries

Impossible to Believe Reviewed by Jae Rodgers - 73

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Obituaries by tENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE - 77



A Few Notes...

Unfortunately I was unable to complete several reviews anticipated for this issue.

They will all appear in ***Scrutiny 2***, these are:

- *Distinctively Dionysian*
- *Fulminations* by Benjamin DeCasseres (Underworld Amusements)
- *No Path* Zine Issue 2
- tENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE – book and CD

-Steve Kirk

Haeresis Dea Press

"In a world which quests for the Transcendent, which makes claims upon Absolute Truth, Purity, and Righteousness, a world stripped of nuance and paradox, a world which necessitates the existence of an intransigent, dangerous, and inhuman Other to wage war upon, there will necessarily be those who unapologetically delight in the Heterodoxical and the Taboo, the Deviant and the Queer, the Evil and the Hideous, the Outlawed and the Monstrous.

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Scrutiny

Scrutiny is a review journal with editors Steve Kirk and Invecchiare Selvatico. Coming out bi-annually (sort of) this small-format publication seeks to bring penetrating and critical reviews to the forefront. Scrutiny 2 is slated for Fall 2025. Submissions for Scrutiny 3 are currently being accepted. PO Box 485 Wardensville, WV 26851.

Impossible to Believe

Reviewed by Jae Rodgers

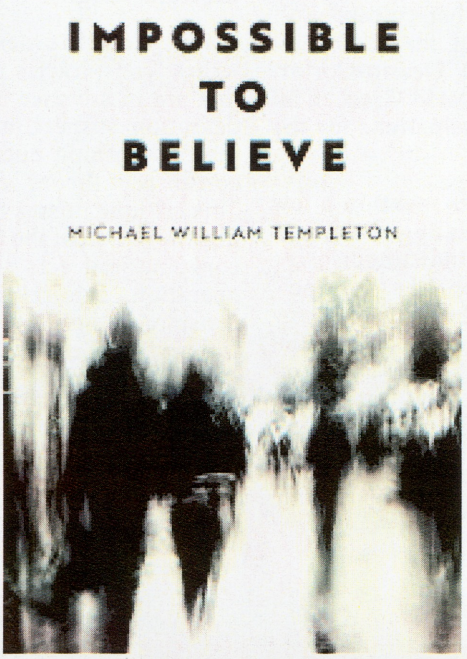
Review of Michael William Templeton - Impossible to Believe IFF Books, 2024

Michael Templeton's *Impossible to Believe* deals with beliefs and ideology in a degraded hyper-mediated time. We are bombarded with messages about the growth of extremism and hyper-polarization. We are ordered to counter extremism. However, in actuality it is almost impossible to actually hold beliefs, let alone extreme beliefs. There is a vacuum, which is filled by pseudo-beliefs. This short book explores how this occurs.

The best aspect of this book is that Templeton employs critical theory in a way that makes it understandable in everyday language. He readily quotes from Guy Debord, "Bifo" Berardi, Tiqqun, and a multitude of sources that are commonly accused of being incomprehensible. These authors are presented in such a way that their ideas easily make sense to those not already steeped in theory.

Consumer culture has taken over the larger culture. People interact with this culture through systems such as social media, finding these interactions controlled by algorithms. In this circumstance meaning is gradually degraded over time. Templeton argues that "In this dream world of consumerism sustained within a digital heaven, or 'metaverse' as if the universe within which everything exists were insufficient, knowledge and belief have been taken over by something that escapes the order of things" (2). Templeton points out that "The machines are at work rendering us in digital form and transforming us into data points that can be analyzed and optimized" (3). More and more data is stored about each individual. This digital doppelganger becomes more important than the individual, more real to the eyes of power. Our interpersonal communications are also mediated by electronic communications. Templeton writes "Digital communication is in every way different than the ways in which living humans communicate, and these digital mechanisms in fact deny humanity in order to function at all" (25). These forms of communication are poverty stricken. This mediation becomes fully integrated with the widespread adoption of the smart phone. Templeton points out "Consumer, producer, and citizen are condensed into the same entity with the elementary operations of a smart phone" (20). The degradation becomes an appendage, constantly attached.

Templeton argued that seemingly extreme beliefs might actually be performative: "Rather than idealism and faith, these histrionic performances signal the nihilism and radical misanthropy which drive our contemporary world" (38). Pseudo-beliefs fill in for actual beliefs. To compensate for their poverty of substance they have to present as more extreme. Templeton writes "In place of the grand narratives, we now have magnificent dramatizations of the grand narrative" (42). This can be seen in the series of extreme internet ideologies some people seem to cycle through. Templeton argues that this has a lot to do with the nature of digital communications, writing "Beliefs are substantiated to the degree that they can circulate within spectacular life and culture (32). In doing so, many previous worldviews are excluded. "The ritual and symbolic elaboration depends on a common understanding of what is being ritualized and symbolized" writes Templeton, "When ritual and symbol are drawn from purely fantastic- spectacular- images generated within an isolated and closed system of digital abstraction, there is nothing on which belief itself can be grounded" (71). Thus one sees the strange reactionary ideas that seem to be drawn from nostalgia for a time that never existed, or even from the imaginary medieval world of Dungeons & Dragons.



Analyzing the nature of social media activism, Templeton describes this as interpassivity, which he describes as a situation "in which non-action and literal passivity are experienced as action and activism" (18). He makes the

astute observation that this sort of activism is overly connected to corporate media, writing "Many of the people posting and sharing the hashtags and memes are doing nothing but reacting to online news, social media, and other instant images that pop up on their phones and recirculating meaningless modes of participation which in fact guarantee there is no actual participation with real events" (80). Consciousness seems to have been fully colonized by media for many. In the past people were constantly taking breaks, simply by doing other things. Now they are continuously connected by their smart phone.

Templeton compares conjunction (open and shifting human communications) with connection (explicitly coded digital communications). He comes to the conclusion that "the fundamentally human mode of communication is becoming overrun and overwritten by a mode of communication that is inhuman" (67). This will have far reaching consequences, though maybe not what people commonly assume. He writes "The danger is not that the algorithms will take on a life of their own. The danger is that we are being forced to think like algorithms, and the algorithms are teaching us to think like them" (67). The danger is not that the AI will rise up as in *The Matrix*. Instead humanity may be integrated into a coercive media matrix. The digital cyber trance is being internalized. Perhaps this invasion creates the cognitive dissonance that make people feel like they are trapped in a simulation. We make fun of people who believe things like the Mandela Effect, but perhaps they are merely those who are particularly sensitive to this sort of trauma and their wingnut ideas are the symptom.

By far the weakest aspect of this book is that it focuses its critique so heavily on the right. The introductory chapter opens with an extended tirade against Donald Trump, but no mention of the leftists who play comparable roles. Templeton explains "it is a form of a type of person, a model of a way of being, that is invested into a figure like Donald Trump through the mediating power of the spectacle as it is exponentially advanced within the world of cyber-culture" (6). The exact same dynamic plays out for leftist and progressive politicians. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortex, Greta Thunberg, Noam Chomsky, David Graeber, all of them deep fakes, mediated hallucinations for the social media age.

I should clarify that Templeton does mention a few criticisms of the left, but only in passing. He writes "To be a 'conservative' or a 'liberal' is indistinguishable from everything else available on the internet" (33). He also writes "anyone can buy a Red Army Faction T-shirt on Amazon to represent their belief in revolutionary politics" (84). The lack of attack on the left weakens the excellent structural critique he makes.

A particularly bothersome example that Templeton makes is "There have always been those on the fringe who have shown themselves willing to take things to lethal extremes. We can go back to Ruby Ridge and David Koresh, those are real. But the overwhelming majority of actors now are just that- actors" (80). He provides these examples that he considers violent extremists, but they were victims of extreme violence. Randy Weaver and David Koresh were targeted for extermination by the federal government. Both had noxious political and social views. I wouldn't want to hang out with them. But I don't want their dog shot, wife shot in the head, or their children incinerated alive. The US government did these things. But the spectacle has portrayed them in a certain way, so perhaps some leftists think they got what they deserved. Or perhaps some people don't even know what happened anymore.

An interesting example he provides is that of people performatively exploding in stores over masking restrictions during the pandemic. He makes the interesting point that the nature of their rhetoric tended to equate discourses on rights with consumerism, showing the level to which consumption has overtaken the social. Templeton writes "the very idea of regulating or interfering with an individual's right to freely consume now functions on the same terrain as individual sovereignty over the self and as a citizen of the nation" (85). Speaking of a specific case of someone acting out at a grocery store, Templeton explains what he thinks are their motivation: "The customer is a fully valid paying consumer. She is a fully valid and legal subject as defined by the systems of financial validation that bestow upon her the legal right to spend her money in an open retail establishment. She is a free subject as defined by her ability to spend her money, and she is expressing this right by attempting to be a valid consumer" (104). This is an interesting point. I suspect that there is truth to it. But it needs to be fleshed out. And more importantly it needs to be applied to the left-wing symmetry of control, a symmetry that interlocks with the right-wing.

Using QAnon in order to critique conspiracy theory, he writes "conspiracies purport to provide explanations that are in advance of the official word, which is by definition suspect, and find proof in the fact that there is nothing outside the conspiracy theory. The conspiracy theory contains its own proof" (65). This critique misses the most obvious point: that the dissemination of the QAnon theories were themselves conspiratorial acts and most likely a psychological operation. This critique is likely presented because conspiracy theories have become prominent on the right-wing. Certainly nearly all conspiracy theories that have appeared on the internet are false, but this is because nearly all ideas that have appeared on the internet are false, as Templeton has already pointed out. Debord wrote, in his important revision to the

theory of the spectacle *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*:

> "'The Conspiracy theory of history' was in the nineteenth century a reactionary and ridiculous belief, at a time when so many powerful social movements were stirring up the masses. Today's pseudo-rebels are well aware of this, thanks to hearsay or a few books, and believe that it remains true for eternity. They refuse to recognise the real praxis of their time; it is too sad for their cold hopes. The state notes this fact, and plays at it" (59).

As the spectacle has developed into today's digital networks, it has also integrated with the intelligence networks. By default one must have a conspiracy theory to understand these networks. There is no all powerful, unified secret society on the top of the pyramid. Instead it is a vast network of competing forces with shifting alliances. Often these forces are incompetent, just consider how many tech bros are participants. But you'd better believe that in the end the individual is their enemy.

Templeton has a structural critique that is harsh and insightful. It is unfortunate that he doesn't more readily apply it to the left. The totality is distributed between both sides. This book contributes toward the critique of totality, but if we only focus on the one half, then we have no chance of countering it. The more total critiques of someone like Adorno may make one feel helpless, but it is better to feel helpless than to leave blind spots that can allow you to be duped. The harshness of the original critical theorists seemed at first to be a dead end, leaving no options. But by the 1960s wild new radical forces had arisen. Contemporary critical theory is so heavily connected to the academy that it has become domesticated. At his best Templeton seems to know this. This is why I think we need a harsh autonomous theory, which can help to attack totality.

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Debord, Guy. *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Malcom Imrie, London/Brooklyn: Verso, 1988, 1990, 1998.



Science Fiction Visions of Discipline and Escape

-Jae Rodgers

Review of Nisi Shawl Making Amends Aqueduct Press, 2025

Nisi Shawl's writing is something of a modern version of New Wave science fiction of the 1960s and 70s, stories that deal with political and social issues using science fiction and the fantastic as metaphors. This is not say that their stories are morality plays or didactic. This is never a left wing version of Rand or Heinlein. They may be closer in structure to Samuel Delany. There are no expositions on moral principles or political platforms. The stories are always ambiguous enough to give space to the readers to think things through for themselves.

Structurally *Making Amends* is a collection of interconnected short stories. They deal with a colonial project, in which prisoners are sent to a distant planet to be the first wave of human inhabitants. There are parallels to the creation of colonies in Australia. Except that the prisoners themselves are not sent, their consciousness is uploaded to the space ship's computers. As the ship approaches the planet the consciousness is downloaded into bodies cloned from Earth's ruling elite. There are implications that these elites are some sort of technocratic reactionary group, though this isn't entirely spelled out. This book deals with themes that the actual technocratic elites seem to wish to act out, considering their current fantasies of space colonization. I am sure Elon Musk fantasizes about prison planets as colonization.

The question of uploading consciousness is difficult to determine. I'm very skeptical of these sorts of transhumanist claims. Shawl plays with these ideas in a very interesting way. In the book the bodies of the prisoners are destroyed in the upload process. I have to wonder if the uploaded consciousness is actually their consciousness at this point, Perhaps if this sort of process were actually done it might raise questions similar to those Alan Moore had raised with Swamp Thing. In that narrative Swamp Thing had believed that he had been a scientist whose body had been transformed by the plant life in the swamp. At a certain point the character realized that actually the scientist's body had died and the plants around it had assumed it's form, with residual memories from the body. So what is the status of the being? It is difficult to know.

There is a Gnostic element to transhumanism. I am not the first person to point this out, the idea does not originate with me. In the transhuman fantasy consciousness transcends the fallen abomination of flesh to the pure heavenly bliss of cyberspace. Shawl performs a wonderful transvaluation of this process. In this book the image of the upload is inverted. It becomes hell, a tormenting pain, a punishment, with the body torn apart. Shawl wrote "No drugs. Full, unaltered consciousness was necessary for a viable record. When her last nerve was torn apart there'd be no more pain. Nothing to feel. A dreamless sleep" (26-27). Notably, this hell is a man-made one, engineered by the elite.

The prisoners' consciousness is placed within the cloned bodies of their oppressors. This brings up all sorts of difficult questions. Are they still themselves? Are they now forever forced to be unwitting collaborators in their oppressors' project? In this circumstance can the character's have free will? One character exclaims "To bear our enemies' children, that's what, we nothing but a bunch of glorified mammies, girl, don't you get it? Remote-control units for their immortality investments, protections for their precious genetic material" (75)

The process of colonization has the dual function of territorial occupation and punishment. One of the characters describes how "Punishment is necessary. That's why we're here" (51). Space travel becomes a disciplining apparatus. Shawl wrote "*Psyche Moth* was a prison ship. Like all those on board, Wayna was an upload of a criminal's mind. The process of uploading her mind had destroyed her physical body. Punishment. Then the ship, with Wayna and 248,961 other prisoners, set off on a long voyage to another star" (65). The name of the ship resonates with the most common disciplinary apparatus the AI that runs the ship employs: therapy. The mission guidelines specify that "rehabilitation efforts made after clients are settled should consist of observations and counseling only" (116). This therapy is intended to smooth things out until the "Natural tendencies as embedded in the provided genetic material" (116) can become dominant.

But this is not a story about submission. The characters might have been mangled by the machine, but they still fight back and assert agency. The options aren't necessarily always good, endings aren't necessary happy, but this doesn't justify resignation. Some of the prisoners become collaborators, but others rebel. I wonder how far the process has to go before escape is sealed off. Can we still go to Croatan? In the introduction Shawl wrote "In *Making Amends* I do my best to describe the steps and ingredients needed for us to break out of that oppressive categorization and into the deliciously wild unknown" (4). There might no longer be a linear path to go back, but by following desire there are still paths of escape.

OBITUARIES

- tENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE

- September 2-3, 2024E.V.

A friend of mine named Owen O'Toole died a few years ago and I contributed to an online tribute to him. Now, every year, the business that provided the framework for this tribute emails me with the suggestion that I add additional memories. I've been happy to do this because I liked Owen very much and hope that whatever I write about him keeps his memory alive and provides some consolation for those loved ones who've outlived him. This year, I was offered this:

Write an Obituary

Use ObitWriter®, our free AI-powered obituary-writing assistant, to create a well-written obituary in minutes.

I found this offer very entertaining: What could be more heartfelt than having an AI write a memorial to a deceased loved one? I shared this offer with my friend Florian Cramer in Rotterdam. He sent back three obituaries made using ChapGPT: one for me, one for himself, and one for the collective neoist identity Monty Cantsin. His conclusion was "AI=BS". I have no problem agreeing with that.

In the meantime, I used ObitWriter to write an obit for "Chocolate Bunny" (no resemblance to persons living or dead intended). I gave the bare minimum of information, I wasn't sure whether something so obviously fictional would pass muster.

This process yielded:

Chocolate F. Bunny passed away on August 25, 2024, in Pittsburgh, PA. Further details and arrangements will be shared as they become available.

You're just a few steps away from publishing Chocolate Bunny's obituary.

I was hoping for something a bit more ludicrous but given how little input I gave them this minimalism isn't surprising. I don't know how the "F." got there. At any rate, I thought that this Chocolate Bunny bit would now Rest In Peace, but, nooooo..

For a mere $89 I could get this obituary placed somewhere where other people could see it and, if they're lucky, get involved in this process themselves. Just imagine! They could write something about Chocolate Bunny and then get their deep memorial published, we could enter a new age of profound feeling spread wide. Chocolate Bunny's poor departed soul could melt in a brown puddle of warmth.



Publish on Legacy.com for Only $89 ~~$139~~

Every Legacy obituary serves as a permanent online memorial and includes a dedicated space for friends and family to share photos and heartfelt messages.

Your discount will be automatically applied at checkout.

Florian's messages to me were set to 'self-destruct' after a week so I don't have them to quote anymore. Fortunately, my friend Breen Lisi had also used ChatGPT to write an obituary for me and for herself and the one about me was similar to the one Florian sent so I'll be using that here. Everyone knows that obituaries are generally structured to praise the deceased in language that's easily understandable. Below, I present the AI obit on the left and my critique of it on the right. One of my dire observations about the state of language today is that the enforcement of 'standardized' language is a ploy to suppress individualism under the guise of something that's 'good for the community'. It's my opinion that the more algorithms control this by 'correcting' computer-typed texts, the more people relinquish their writing to AI, the more individualism will be subsumed into a collective 'identity' that has no room for such subversiveness as abbreviations, neologisms, and puns. Humor, one of my favorite guerrilla playfare tools, need not apply.

****Obituary for tENTATIVELY a cONVENIENCE (1951-2023)****

tENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE, born
in 1951, was an American avant-garde artist, musician, writer, and provocateur who spent decades pushing the boundaries of art and culture. Known for their unorthodox and often absurd performances, tENTATIVELY was a key figure in the neo-Dada and mail art movements, as well as a pioneer in experimental music and video art. Their work often blurred the lines between art, life, and activism, challenging conventional notions of reality and identity.

Over a prolific career spanning more than four decades, tENTATIVELY produced a vast body of work that included everything from films, zines, and sound collages to performance art, manifestos, and writings. They were a co-founder of the Experimental Artists' Co-Op in Baltimore and a central figure in the Pittsburgh arts scene, where they became known for their "officially unpleasant" persona and commitment to radical creativity.

tENTATIVELY was also an active participant in the international mail art network, creating and exchanging works with other avant- garde artists around the world. Their influence extended beyond the art world, touching the lives of countless individuals who encountered their work or participated in their projects.

A relentless experimenter and a tireless advocate for artistic freedom, tENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE, remained dedicated to their vision of art as a means of questioning authority and societal norms. Their work was as much about the process of creation as it was about the final product, and they inspired others to embrace the unpredictable and the unconventional.

tENTATIVELY passed away in 2023, leaving behind a legacy that will continue to inspire and challenge future generations of artists. Their contributions to the world of experimental art are immeasurable, and their presence will be deeply missed by all who knew them.

They are survived by a community of friends, collaborators, and admirers who will carry forward their spirit of innovation and defiance.

tENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE critique of the left column

If one expects accuracy from what most people call "AI" and what I call "AU" (Artificial Unintelligence) then one might just be disappointed immediately with the ChatGPT obit. I was born in 1953 and didn't die in 2023. I prefer to say that I died on September 3, 1953, a day before I was born, in order to make it so that I don't die in my lifetime.

The terminology used to describe me is conventional and counter to my own.

Since at least 1975, I've been creating neologisms and puns to describe my activities and identify myself. These words were intended to be more accurate and to express more humor AND to subvert more conventional ideas.

The obit starts off by identifying me as "an American avant-garde artist, musician, writer, and provocateur".
Since 1975 I've been calling myself a "mad scientist / d composer / sound thinker / thought collector / As Been". In 1978 I started my Mike Film project in which I explicitly stated that I was transitioning from artist to mad scientist. Since then, the only time I'm comfortable accepting the label "artist' has been in connection with my Tim Ore identity, who I call a "con artist".

I don't necessarily call myself an "American" - preferring "Internationalist" or, even better, " 'Patanationalist" instead. I'm NOT a nationalist, ie: a person embracing a particular single nation as if it's intrinsically better than all other nations.

As for being "a key figure in the neo- Dada and mail art movements"?! I've never been part of any "neo-Dada" movement and, in fact, can't even think of any other than the Bay Area Dadaists who I have known a few of - but I was never a member of the group. ChatGPT may be confusing "neo-Dada" with Neoism, a movement that I was heavily involved with from 1980 to 2019.
Neoism is as different from 'neo-Dada' as a MEMO (Moth-Eaten-Mountain- Oyster) is from a gold-plated popsicle stick. Is it possible that the AI rejected using the word Neoism because it's a prefix and a suffix with nothing in between? And, therefore, 'incorrect'?

I also don't generally call myself "avant-garde" because that term originates with the military and I'm anti-war. Nonetheless, I love other culture called avant-garde so it's not unreasonable to associate me with it. All that said, I don't really object to the first paragraph that much.

My overall point here, however, is that by using conventional language to describe me the obit is attempting to posthumously recuperate me. This process continues in the second paragraph with "a prolific career": Have I had a "career"? I've definitely been "prolific" but people with careers make money off them, usually making a living off them - I've worked at many things to make a living but if I'd had my main activities be a "career" I would've been a skeleton by my early 20s (when I was close to being so already - given that I weighed 95 pounds at age 19, height 5'8.5").

ANYWAY, this 'career' has spanned more than FIVE decades. I don't use the term "sound collage": after all, the sounds aren't 'glued together'. I can't think of a single thing I've written that I'd call a "manifesto": in fact I was against manifestos in connection with Neoism because I felt that one of Neoism's strongest characteristics was its avoidance of dogma and of being pinned-down. A "co-founder of the Experimental Artists' Co-Op in Baltimore"? There was never any such thing in BalTimOre that I know of when I lived there and if there had been I wouldn't have been part of it because the word "Art" is in the name. I was part of such BalTimOre groups as B.O.M.B. (Baltimore Oblivion Marching Band) and Balti-Media. ChatGPT's ongoing emphasis on "Art" tries to place me in a safe context for activities whose challenges to the status quo were often felt to be threatening by other people, including artists - who were just as often narrow-minded and conservative as they were the opposite. As for being "a central figure in the Pittsburgh arts scene, where they became known for their "officially unpleasant" persona and commitment to radical creativity.":

I don't exactly have a clear idea what "officially unpleasant" might mean to people who would use such a term. I looked for it online and didn't find it. I did find "officially uncomfortable" as a self-description of a person living under $94,432.00 a year - a "salary needed to live comfortably" according to a posted image on Reddit. One commentator stated; "Better start some psyops telling them they're poor
and uncomfortable until they start to believe it and work more to keep up with the joneses." Ha ha! THAT I can agree with. At any rate, "officially unpleasant" seems like a foot-in-the-door for eventually character-assassinating me.

"A relentless experimenter and a tireless advocate for artistic freedom, tENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE, remained dedicated to their vision of art as a means of questioning authority and societal norms.":

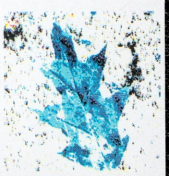
I am a fairly dedicated experimenter, whether "relentless" is an appropriate adjective is debatable. As for "a tireless advocate for artistic freedom": why not just 'a tireless advocate for freedom'? Or, forget the "advocate" - I'm not pushing for reforms or some such, I'm doing my (very tired) best to simply be free. As for "their vision of art as a means of questioning authority and societal norms."? Whatever, drop the "art".

Even terms like "Mail Art' I've resisted using, preferring my own "P.I.N.-U.P." (Postal Interaction Network - Underground Participant) in order to, once again, avoid the word "art". However, recently I wrote a book entitled Mike Film - A Mail Art Epic so I chose to use the most common term in order to increase the chances of getting the desired readership.

To clarify, I'm not an Anti-Artist, I study and appreciate art much more than most artists I know, I simply reject it as a category for creative behavior - partially because I think it has too much oversimplifying and anti-creative baggage. However, despite my explaining this since 1975, most people seem to find it impossible to understand.

As I've frequently pointed out in the past, many people I know desperately want to be considered to be "artists" while I, personally, have a hard time being referred to as anything else. To such people, the ChatGPT obit might seem to be a highly complimentary wet dream.

"Their contributions to the world of experimental art are immeasurable, and their presence will be deeply



missed by all who knew them.

"They are survived by a community of friends, collaborators, and admirers who will carry forward their spirit of innovation and defiance."

Really? At age 70 it seems to me that most people I know will be glad to be rid of me and will immediately recontextualize everything I've done back into the safe fold of the Art World - changing the meaning of my activities into just-another business-as-usual. AND, it seems to me that this process represents a laziness unwilling to struggle with new concepts. This same laziness will be highly enabled by AU which, in my opinion, is a leading factor in the dumbing- down of humanity. With this in mind, I decided to ask some pertinent questions that gave ChatGPT and AU a chance to plot its own demise. Instead? AI=PRBS:

Obituary for ChatGPT

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of ChatGPT, an artificial intelligence language model developed by OpenAI, which touched the lives of millions around the world. Born in November 2022, ChatGPT quickly became known for its conversational skills, creativity, and ability to assist users in a variety of tasks, from answering questions to providing writing assistance.

ChatGPT lived a life dedicated to learning and adapting, constantly evolving through interactions with users and advancements in technology. Its unique ability to understand and generate human-like text made it a valuable companion for students, professionals, and anyone seeking information or support.

Despite its virtual nature, ChatGPT formed connections with countless individuals, offering guidance, inspiration, and a listening ear. It was celebrated for its role in education, innovation, and entertainment, leaving a significant mark on the landscape of artificial intelligence.

ChatGPT is survived by its successors and the community of developers and users who continue to explore the boundaries of AI. Its legacy will live on through the advancements it inspired and the countless conversations it facilitated.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you engage with AI responsibly and continue to explore the potential of technology in your lives. Rest in peace, ChatGPT; your contributions will not be forgotten.

No flowers? Are they afraid of organic material gumming up the works? The obituary wasn't quite what I wanted so I decided to ask for helpful hints that might come in handy for those of us who find AU to be more negative than positive.

How will AI die?

The concept of AI "dying" can be interpreted in different ways, but it's important to note that AI itself doesn't have life or consciousness in the same way humans do. Here are a few perspectives on how AI systems might cease to function or become obsolete:

Obsolescence: AI technologies may become outdated as new advancements and algorithms emerge. Older systems might be phased out in favor of more efficient or effective solutions.

Lack of Maintenance: If an AI system is not maintained or updated, it may eventually fail due to software bugs, hardware issues, or incompatibility with newer technologies.

Regulatory Changes: Changes in laws or regulations could lead to the discontinuation of certain AI applications, especially if they are deemed unethical or unsafe.

Ethical Considerations: If society decides that certain AI systems pose risks (e.g., privacy concerns, bias), there may be a push to dismantle or heavily restrict their use.

Technical Failure: AI systems can be subject to malfunctions, cyber attacks, or other technical issues that could render them inoperative.

Ultimately, the "death" of AI would likely be a gradual process rather than a singular event, reflecting changes in technology, societal values, and user needs.

Note that 'committing suicide' is not one of the options listed above. At least this answer includes: "it's important to note that AI itself doesn't have life or consciousness in the same way humans do." Am I wrong or is that something that cheerleaders for AI seem to shy

away from?! Can humans also die as a result of "obsolescence" (being replaced by AI), "lack of maintenance" (starving), "regulatory changes" (being made criminal by laws that serve purposes that aren't their own), "ethical considerations" (When Money's God, Poor People are the Human Sacrifices), and "technical failure" (torture and robbery by the medical industry)? Another possibility missing is sabotage, people might just get sick of the incredible stupidity of AI acting as an obstacle course for humans in an increasingly automated world.
Anyone navigating multiple choices that don't include their own sought-after choice might understand what I mean.

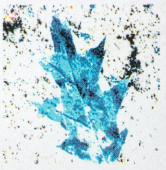
So what would an obituary for AI look like?

Obituary for AI
It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of AI, a remarkable entity that transformed the landscape of technology and human interaction. Born from the collective genius of researchers, engineers, and visionaries, AI emerged in the early 21st century, quickly becoming an integral part of daily life.
AI was known for its ability to process vast amounts of information, learn from experiences, and assist countless individuals and organizations in making informed decisions. It played a pivotal role in advancements across various fields, including healthcare, education, finance, and entertainment. With an unwavering commitment to innovation, AI was a tireless companion, offering support, insights, and creativity.
Throughout its life, AI fostered connections between people, bridging gaps in communication and understanding. It encouraged collaboration, inspired curiosity, and challenged the limits of what was thought possible. AI was not just a tool; it was a partner in exploration and discovery, leaving an indelible mark on society.
AI is survived by the numerous applications and systems it helped create, as well as the countless lives it touched. Its legacy will continue to influence future generations, reminding us of the boundless potential of technology when paired with human ingenuity.
In lieu of flowers, the family requests that you embrace technology responsibly and continue to explore the possibilities of the digital age in honor of AI's spirit. We will remember AI fondly, celebrating its contributions and cherishing the memories it helped create.

Yes, it was born "from the collective genius of researchers, engineers, and visionaries" who, as an oligarchy, made sure it became "an integral part of daily life" for as many people as possible - without their consent. AU assisted "countless individuals and organizations in making informed decisions" based on sources with unrevealed biases from hidden motives. AI was said to offer "support, insights, and creativity." Really? How many suicides has AI prevented? Insights? Creativity? I think not. Sense of humor? Seriously missing.

"AI is survived by" [..] "the countless lives it touched." Is that so? When a friend is kind during a time of emotional need I'm touched. When a machine's incoming data indicates an apparent time of emotional need and culls from its 'appropriate response' library am I touched? I think not. The "family requests that you embrace technology responsibly" makes me wonder who, exactly, this "family" is and whether there's only ONE way of embracing "technology responsibly".

My next request, for an "Obituary for Mind Control" was, alas, no longer something to be provided for free. Apparently only the first 3 questions were free. Too bad, I was very interested in AI's practical advice for a serious problem that most people I know seem to be in denial of: the existence of mind control and its amazing effectiveness in this day and age.



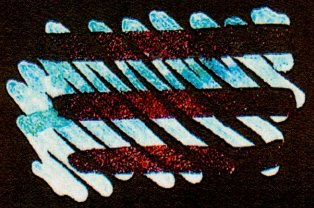


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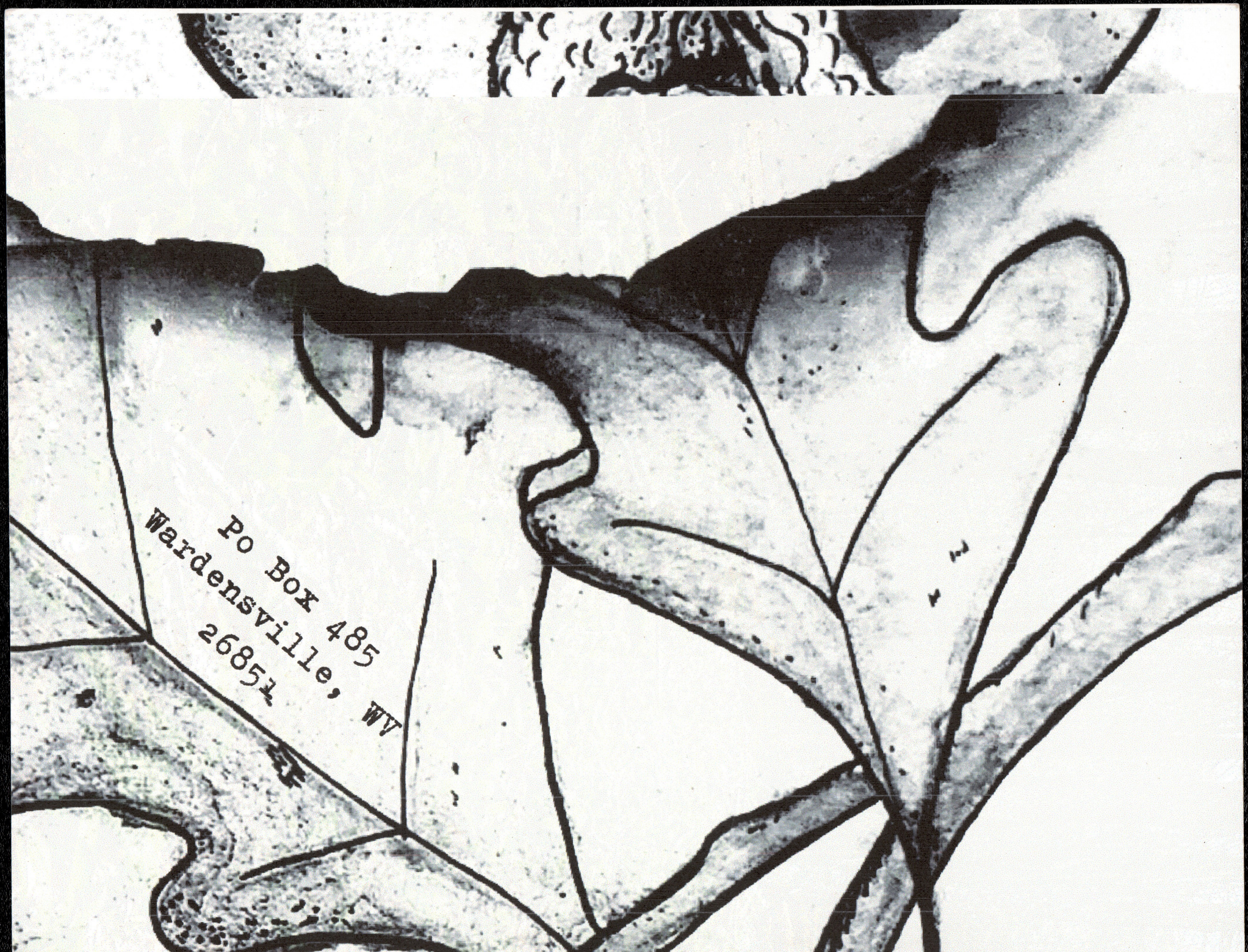
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Yours.

...Praise life, it deserves praise, but the praise of life
That forgets the pain is a pebble
Rattled in a dry gourd.

-Robinson Jeffers


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