

Around the Corner

Kabul

"I come as a thief in the night, my sword drawn in hand, and as the thief that I am, I say: Give me your purse, give it to me, rogue, or I'll cut your throat! I say give it to the beggars, to the thieves, to the whores, to the pickpockets that are flesh of your flesh and that are quite equal to you, those who are ready to die of hunger in pestilential prisons and filthy dungeons have everything in common, otherwise the scourge of God will cut down all that you have in order to putrefy it and consume it."

—Abiezer Coppe, 17th century England

The fire of anti-aircraft guns illuminates the Kabul night, and yet the war did not erupt either today or on September 11, 2001, the day of the destruction of the Twin Towers in New York and a good part of the Pentagon. This war did not erupt in Afghanistan for the sole, valid reason that it had already erupted some time ago; for years, the entire world has lived in a state of permanent war.

We did not want to see how close Rwanda and Kosovo, Somalia and Bosnia, Algeria and Macedonia were to us. But the Boeings of September 11 have brought Jalalabad, Baghdad and Jericho into the hearts of our cities. Therefore, no one can any longer ignore the planetary gangrene that shows no signs of coming to an end, the chosen heir of modernity, of the technological era.

The industrial system has poisoned the earth, rendering it sterile; the opening of global markets has sent the peasant world into ruin; industrial restructuring has dismantled the old productive apparatus; strategic and geopolitical necessities determined by the control of resources have unleashed unending conflicts — capital, heavy with the immense possibilities that technology is providing to it, has broken up every possibility for autonomy, every past form of community in a large portion of the globe. At our latitudes, this same process has brought forth the precariousness that we have been tasting for the past few years, the abandonment of the old certainties and guarantees to which we were accustomed. Distorting the conditions of life for the exploited, capital has removed practical knowledge, the autonomous capacity to create one's existence for oneself. Where it still survives, the means of

subsistence are mere appendages of a technological system that none of the exploited can understand or dream of controlling: no one knows what to do anymore; no one knows how to do anything. Goodbye, then, to every common feeling of the poor, to all collective identification, goodbye to the dream of appropriating this world and driving out its masters.

This is how, over the last twenty years, the planet has increasingly come to resemble a refugee camp. One runs from conflict or from a wasteland, from poverty or from dictatorship; one runs from a world one no longer recognizes. The old ways of life, of being together, have vanished irremediably, and nothing can be seen on the horizon. All that is left is hatred and fear, with more accumulating every day, and it is having difficulty finding an objective, an enemy to fight. This is why — whether hidden or declared — civil war has already broken out, everywhere.

To each their own then, in this macabre exhibition that celebrates the decomposition of an entire planet. Led by their masters, the exploited Yugoslavs' have slaughtered



each other for years, convinced that their next-door neighbors were their enemies. The poor of Somalia and Rwanda have not acted so very differently.

Now the huge powder keg of the Islamic world is exploding. The poor have every intention and utter determination to call in accounts for years of suffering. Deprived of every concrete social connection — apart from precariousness and fear — most superimpose the words of the only common feeling that is proposed to them onto their rage, that of religion. The identification of a collective enemy causes fraternization beyond every boundary and every division; the epic poetry of the struggle against Evil fills History with meaning — it speaks of a future promise and gives a meaning to past tribulations. This is why they wage war against the entire western world and not, instead, against those specifically responsible for their oppression: the masters and governors of the east and the west.

When you read these lines, we don't know what will be happening in Afghanistan or Iraq, we don't know what will be happening in Palestine. The bombs over Kabul precipitate events, increasingly channeling revolt in the Islamic world into the narrow path of religious war. The bombs over Kabul don't just wreak havoc on Afghani civilians, nor do they only cause further surges of refugees, nor do they just set the Middle East on fire: the bombs over Kabul also fall on our heads, finally giving meaning to our fear of the future, putting order into the social precariousness of these times. The hypocritical "anti-terrorist" rhetoric of the western powers terrorizes us and, at the same time, gives a name to our terror; it bestows on us a new enemy against whom we can fight: the exploited of the Islamic world, who are in Afghanistan and in Italy and America, instead of capitalist society, as was beginning to emerge in social conflicts. Therefore, it is not a collision between civilizations that is being fought. It is the realization of the civilization of capital, its ripest fruit — putrefaction, death, war between the poor.

Not a single word of peace makes sense anymore; no mediation is possible when the desperation of the poor breaks through the doors of a world that is falling to pieces. All that we can oppose to the bombs over Kabul is class attack: freeing the hatred that smolders and hurling it against those responsible for our oppression and that of all of the poor of the world. Identifying the common enemy with precision — the masters, the rulers, the technological and productive network — is the first concrete form of solidarity toward the bombed, toward the refugees. Attacking this enemy is the only message of fraternity that we can send to the exploited of the world, the only tool that we have for transforming the war between the poor that is about to set the world on fire into a war of liberation from exploitation and from authority.

— **Strangers Everywhere, Italy**

Welcome to Issue #12 of **Green Anarchy**, our largest issue yet - 32 pages! As we go to print, another war is upon us. We hope that a militant resistance is the response, one that puts the entire system in danger. We hope that the "peace movement", a movement which has shown its ineffectiveness and lack of interest in questioning this system fundamentally, does not attempt to control and stifle resistance. In this issue, which was to have more of a "tactics" focus, we note that a war is always going on, that being the 10,000 year-old nightmare known as civilization. It is a war on life itself, and it will not be stopped by symbolic protest or good intentions. It requires a war in return. It requires a level of seriousness; often lacking in the scene-oriented nature of the anarchist movement. We need to discuss how to proceed tactically and what we are moving towards. We hope these discussions continue to happen, but it is also important to shut up and fight! It is a massive project to undo civilization, requiring a tremendous social and physical transformation. We must deconstruct their institutions and their infrastructure. Good Luck! - **The Green Anarchy Collective**



SPRING FORWARD

Winter is ending in a climate of constant wars, a dying biosphere, an increasingly unhealthy social existence (in fact, a society less and less social and more simply a force-field of the market), and personal desolation.

At the same time, movements of opposition are germinating, joining others that have been going for centuries. Of special interest are those, from Algeria (see p. 19) to Argentina, whose struggles are predicated on a conscious withdrawal of support for the State, **any** State.

In North America (and elsewhere) anarchists were almost non-existent just a few years ago. Now anarchy is certainly the orientation of most who fight for a radical transformation. Even more significant is the swing toward a politics based on indictments of the technological imperative and of civilization itself.

In 2003 even academic journals (usually so reluctant to recognize or discuss disturbing ideas) are paying attention to the primitivist critique/vision. See "The State of Nature" in a recent issue of the U.K. eco journal *Environmental Values*, and "Why Primitivism?" in the U.S. theory quarterly *TELOS*, for example.

As the U.S. Empire plays its last card, the card of force, it's vital to adequately situate our own forces, at home and abroad. To put it negatively, it would be supremely disadvantageous to keep on recycling an approach that has consistently failed, in every time and place. The Left has been a mammoth, universal disaster. To look for a place in the ranks of the Left is to accept that the new movement will go nowhere. Who doesn't realize that something different is urgently needed?

An urbanized dis-embeddedness spreads as megalopolis cities continue to swell, in perfect parallel with the growth of the dis-embodiment of cyber-tech. The "advanced" world hurtles toward its fateful crash like a space shuttle. But leftist holdovers never question why things are headed in this direction, or seek the underlying causes of this suicidal trajectory.

Who besides primitivists (and indigenous insurgents) is truly anti-globalization? Does anyone on the left oppose the industrial-technological Order? To fail to do so is to remain, fundamentally, on the side of capital, coercion, and their universalization. Those are the dynamics that consign people everywhere to the onerous servitude of reproducing the Machine, while pushing all of nature to extinction.

Some go halfway. They grasp the depth of the crisis and the unprecedented quality of what is at stake for our movement. They make very occasional and vague references to civilization, patriarchy, domestication, division of labor, etc. But they seem content to continue with the old patterns. No amount of discourse in any new context will uncover root causes or result in inspiring new directions, unless it strives to do so. We need to see through and past worn-out alternatives, instead of letting them define us.

The pall cast by 9/11/01 is lifting. A new season of contestation is before us. . .

. . . **Let's show what we can do!**

GREEN ANARCHY #12 - SPRING '03



Scrolls of Testimony



“Fear stalks the streets. Promises that nothing evil will befall if the ghetto refrains from undesirable acts. But who knows what is desirable, if we are all — righteous and wicked alike — to suffer the same fate... something seems about to happen. Something is imminent. Something significant hangs over our heads. Hiding places are being prepared. Is it possible? I strive to show the neighbors I am not worried about the future. Really, trouble is enough now... Without noticing you adjust to the mood of your surroundings, you breathe in shock from the air. People’s faces look grim. Eyes look out upon vacancy. Each man inspires dread in his neighbor. I have had enough of enduring my fate. When I am alone there is no trace of fear in my heart. Complete confidence reigns. Is it complacency? No. I want to see clearly, and above all to tell the Jews beyond the ghetto what is happening. How does the Jewish soul respond on whom the heavy hand has not rested? What are the consequences for the life of the community? Will a heavy sledgehammer subdue steel?”

- Zelig Kalmanovitch, July 13, 1943, in the Vilna ghetto

The First Manifesto

“Let us not go as sheep to the slaughter. Jewish youth, do not place your trust in those who are leading you astray. Of the 80,000 Jews who lived in the “Jerusalem of Lithuania,” only 20,000 remain alive. Before our very eyes our parents, our brothers, and our sisters have been torn from us. Where are the hundreds of Jews who were taken to work by the Lithuanian press gangs? Where are the naked women, the children, who were taken from us on the horrible night of provocation? Where are our brothers from Ghetto Number Two? Whoever is taken out through the ghetto gates never returns. Every Gestapo route leads to Ponar. And Ponar is death.* Hesitators! Throw away your illusions: Your children, your wives, and your husbands are no longer alive. Ponar is not the name of a concentration camp. Everyone there has been shot. Hitler is scheming to destroy all the Jews of Europe. It has been Lithuanian Jewry’s ill fate to be first in line. Let us not go as sheep to the slaughter. We may be weak and unprotected but the only answer to a murderer is self-defense! Brothers! It is better to fall fighting as free men than to live at the mercy of murderers. We will defend ourselves! To our last breath we will defend ourselves!”

—January 1, 1942, Vilna, in the ghetto

* Ponar was an execution site where Jews from Vilna were murdered.



“Arbeit Macht Frei!” (German): “Work makes you free!” The cynical slogan of deceit that flew above the gate of the Auschwitz death camp.

January 1, 1942, Vilna, in the ghetto. Silence again in the room. A silence that no one breaks. Yet tears glint in dozens of young eyes. And a wave of feelings washes over their hearts. And fists clench. Suddenly a voice breaks out from the corner. Hushed and slow. The song grips everyone. Freedom is calling to their hearts and unites them all. No longer is one alone in feeling or thinking, for if one sings, sings with all his might, with all his heart, it is as though he filled the words with his own blood: “To stretch out your neck to the sword—no, never!”

It seems our song will shake the ghetto walls.”

—Ruschka Korchak-Marle, *Flames in the Ashes*

Dawn came on us like a betrayer; it seemed as though the new sun rose as an ally of our enemies to assist in our destruction. The different emotions that overcame us, of resignation, of futile rebellion, of fear, or despair, now joined together after a sleepless night in a collective, uncontrolled panic. The time for meditation, the time for decision was over, and all reason dissolved into a tumult, across which flashed the happy memories of our homes, still so near in time and space, as painful as the thrusts of a sword.”

—Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

“Scrolls of Testimony” is a moving chronicle of the Jewish Holocaust compiled by Abba Kovner, who struggled with other Jewish resistance fighters against the Nazis in Vilna and the woods of Lithuania. Kovner’s testimony is interwoven with others’ eyewitness accounts, diary entries, poems, and even last wills and testaments.

The Women Of The West Bank

It is just past midnight and the woman in black is there again, standing alone in the outskirts of the village. As she starts to hurl stones at the soldiers’ jeep, flashlights break the night sky and there is a warning burst of gunfire. The woman vanishes. Ten minutes later, when all is in darkness, she reappears and the stones fly again. She keeps it up for two hours. It is the second night she has performed her solitary demonstration. No one in the village knows who she is or where she comes from.

Civilization is a Death Camp, Resistance is Life

This winter marks the 60th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, the largest Jewish resistance to the Nazi terror to occur. The survival rate among Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto was significantly higher than in most Jewish ghettos in eastern Europe. This stands as a clear reminder, that despite the odds and the brutality of one’s oppressors, physical resistance can be the only significant method of survival. This is not to say that other more passive, but clever, tactics cannot stall or thwart immediate circumstances, but for a meaningful shift in the conditions of horror, direct physical insurgency is necessary. This reality has always been the case. It can be applied to and learned from every liberation movement in history, from slave revolts to the current Palestinian Intifada.

As the U.S. continues on with their plans for “Full Spectrum Domination”, we must not wait until we are on the trains or in the camps before we begin to resist. Their goals are clear, and in fact, are consistent not only with the hegemony of U.S. power, but with civilization itself. The process of domination and control is reaching its ultimate state, and as we look into the face of this malignancy and of the possible end of all life, we must recognize that we have nothing to lose and our lives to save. Protests, rallies, and the petitioning of those who want us dead is not only futile, but naive and absurd. We must resist at all costs, even in the face of certain death, because unless we do, certain death is the best we can hope for. It is important to remember, however, that while we fight against those in power, we must also fight against power itself. Power and control are what civilization is built upon, from individuals to institutions. There are too many examples of an oppressed people becoming the oppressor, of which the state of Israel is only one current example. Unless we challenge power fundamentally, the cycle of violence and domination will always be present, and tear at the fabric of life. As we create a resistance to the current, and likely most deadly, power structure this planet has ever known, we must do so by not only challenging the contemporary faces of civilization, but all that it is built upon.

The blue sky seems to be filled with flying objects—stones and rocks, some catapulted by an expert eleven-year-old, others thrown a few feeble feet by a toddler. Tires are set alight, their acrid fumes burning the eyes and nose. The soldiers retaliate in a rush of gunfire and tear gas. Now everyone is running, but a boy, perhaps ten years old, is caught. His screams rend the air as the soldiers’ wooden truncheon smashes into his back and legs. From nowhere, a crowd of women come running like the Furies at the soldier who has the boy. They surround the pair, and the soldier, frightened, ceases beating. He tries to ward off the women who are all screaming that this is their son. In the confusion one grabs the boy and hurries him away.

There is gunfire and shouting in the camp—the soldiers are here. The mother kicks her eight-year-old son, sitting absorbed in the exchange between his sister and the interpreter. The boy jumps up, red-faced, and runs out. The interpreter explains: “She said ‘Shame, get out and fight with your brothers and sisters.’”

This is the Intifada, the uprising by Palestinians begun in October 1987 against Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. One might be forgiven for thinking that the stones and lumps of rock, which constitute the main arsenal of the fighters, would not qualify as weapons of terror—especially against a well armed and trained army. The Israeli soldiers, however, have decreed that anyone who throws a stone at an Israeli soldier is threatening state security.

The Intifada was temporarily suspended at the outbreak of the war against Iraq, when Palestinians living in the occupied territories were placed under almost continuous curfew. At the end of the war, however, the Intifada was reborn with a vengeance.

When I visited in the summer of 1989, it had been in full swing: everyone appeared to be involved, from stone-throwing toddlers to eight-year-olds, but none more so than the women. “They are worth ten men,” said a camp commander with a rueful grin.

Young girls constituted at least half the shebab—the army of young people that hurled missiles at the soldiers. They were experts in tactics of street warfare and were treated as equals by the boys. In the Gaza Strip, where the unrest began and where the pure white sand was blackened by fire, girls and boys, eight years old and upwards, erected roadblocks of burned out cars, oil drums, and debris from the camps before a demonstration began. Many were dressed from top to toe in black, their eyes gleaming through slits in their hoods. Their weapons were sticks and stones, slingshots and bicycle chains. These small black figures called themselves the “Ninja.”



Someone will say it lasts but a year,
 Three times four months;
 I say those are days and nights
 That are endless.
 Every day — twelve hours,
 Every night — seven hundred minutes,
 Every minute — sixty seconds,
 Each second with its load of pain and suffering.

—Written in Polish by an unknown Jewish girl found at Auschwitz



“The Intifada is my son.”

Palestinian women are well aware that they are on the frontline in every aspect of the Intifada. As the insurrection developed, and tens of thousands of men were detained by the military, women took over the fight. With their men gone, there was no one else to do it, but it was more than that. The women became aware of their importance, and they were no longer prepared to be bystanders or widows. Participation was all.

They recognized, even as they fought, the similarities between themselves and the Algerian women in the war against French colonial rule in 1958-1964. Then, Muslim women also carried weaponry under their clothing and sacrificed their freedom and lives for the cause. After independence was won, however, the men made sure they went back into their home in the traditional role of Muslim wife — even to the extent of being forced to wear the veil once more.

Palestinian women are thoroughly determined that they will not meet the same fate once the battle is won... They have the Algerian example, and they know their men. They are not prepared to be soldiers now and second-class citizens later. Their battle for independence as women has to be fought alongside with the Intifada, while they are in a position of power.

On general strike days, which occurred at least twice a week, the girls joined the boys in stoning anyone driving a car or attempting to work. The *shebab* was a fearful force, the girls possessing as deadly an aim with the stone or Molotov as their brothers.

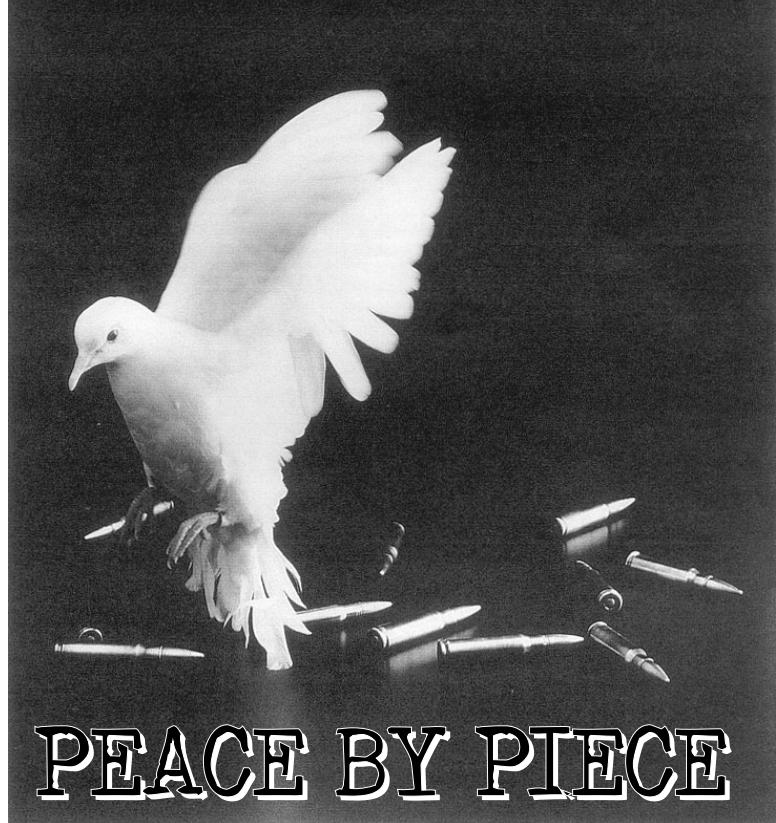
Fatin, a blond, blue-eyed ten year old from Al Jalazoun camp near Ramallah on the West Bank mimed a hand-to-hand struggle she had with a soldier the previous day. Her family had been given ten minutes to evacuate their home before it was demolished as a “terrorist stronghold.” Beside Fatin stood her twenty-year-old sister, holding up X-rays, which showed two bullets lodged in her chest — the result of being outside during a demonstration.

What of men, I asked her (Nadia). After all, there were thousands who had not been detained. She chuckled, “Men, I am afraid to say, by about thirty-five, are out of it: they get scared and they have responsibilities. They like to talk politics, but they are bad at action.” Other Palestinian women said the same thing: that men liked to sit and talk and think they ruled the roost, but in these days it was the women who acted.

Nadia gave me examples of women’s bravery. One old woman went out with the *shebab* on every demonstration carrying a big basket full of stones, which she handed out to the children. Another old woman from Dehaisha camp near Bethlehem, had had her home demolished because she sat on the roof hurling slabs at soldiers. Then there was the tale of a woman in the same camp who saved a four-year-old boy as he fled from the soldiers. The child ran into her house, and she gathered him under her dress. When the soldiers burst in to search for the boy, all they found was a woman sitting on the floor.

“You see, everyone does what he or she can. It is our way of life, and until we have won, there is nothing else that is important.”

This section is taken from the book, “Shoot The Women First”, by Eileen MacDonald, which is filled with interviews with, and stories of, many courageous women from around the world committed to armed resistance. (See the Review Section)



Destroy Civilization?

I assume that all anarchists would agree that we want to put an end to every institution, structure and system of domination and exploitation. The rejection of these things is, after all, the basic meaning of anarchism. Most would also agree that among these institutions, structures and systems are the state, private property, religion, law, the patriarchal family, class rule...

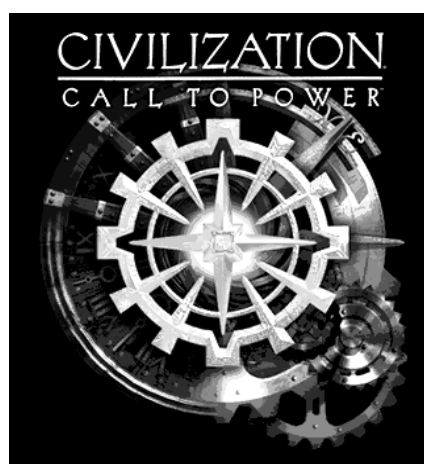
In recent years, some anarchists have begun to talk in what appears to be broader terms of the need to destroy civilization. This has, of course, led to a reaction in defense of civilization. Unfortunately, this debate has been mainly acrimonious, consisting of name-calling, mutual misrepresentation and territorial disputes over the ownership of the label “anarchist,” rather than real argumentation. One of the problems (although probably not the most significant one) behind this incapacity to really debate the question is that very few individuals on either side of it have tried to explain precisely what they mean by “civilization.” Instead, it remains a nebulous term that represents all that is bad for one side and all that is good for the other.

In order to develop a more precise definition of civilization, it is worthwhile to examine when and where civilization is said to have arisen and what differences actually exist between societies currently defined as civilized and those not considered as such. Such an examination shows that the existence of animal husbandry, agriculture, a sedentary way of life, a refinement of arts, crafts and techniques or even the simple forms of metal smelting are not enough to define a society as civilized (though they do comprise the necessary material basis for the rise of civilization). Rather what arose about ten thousand years ago in the “cradle of civilization” and what is shared by all civilized societies but lacking in all those that are defined as “uncivilized” is a network of institutions, structures and systems that impose social relationships of domination and exploitation. In other words, a civilized society is one comprised of the state, property, religion (or in modern societies, ideology), law, the patriarchal family, commodity exchange, class rule — everything we, as anarchists, oppose.

To put it another way, what all civilized societies have in common is the systematic expropriation of the lives of those who live within them. The critique of domestication (with any moral underpinnings removed) provides a useful tool for understanding this. What is domestication if not the expropriation of the life of a being by another who then exploits that life for her or his own purposes? Civilization is thus the systematic and institutionalized domestication of the vast majority of people in a society by the few who are served by the network of domination.

Thus the revolutionary process of reappropriating our lives is a process of decivilizing ourselves, of throwing off our domestication. This does not mean becoming passive slaves to our instincts (if such even exist) or dissolving ourselves in the alleged oneness of Nature. It means becoming uncontrollable individuals capable of making and carrying out the decisions that affect our lives in free association with others.

It should be obvious from this that I reject any models for an ideal world (and distrust any vision that is too perfect — I suspect that there the individual has disappeared). Since the essence of a revolutionary struggle fitting with anarchist ideals is the reappropriation of life by individuals who have been exploited, dispossessed and dominated, it would be in the process of this struggle that people would decide how they want to create their lives, what in this world they feel they can appropriate



to increase their freedom, open possibilities and add to their enjoyment, and what would only be a burden stealing from the joy of life and undermining possibilities for expanding freedom. I don’t see how such a process could possibly create any single, universal social model. Rather, innumerable experiments varying drastically from place to place and changing over time would reflect the singular needs, desires, dreams and aspirations of each and every individual.

So, indeed, let’s destroy civilization, this network of domination, but not in the name of any model, of an ascetic morality of sacrifice or of a mystical disintegration into a supposedly unalienated oneness with Nature, but rather because the reappropriation of our lives, the collective recreation of ourselves as uncontrollable and unique individuals is the destruction of civilization — of this ten thousand year old network of domination that has spread itself over the globe — and the initiation of a marvelous and frightening journey into the unknown that is freedom. - Willful Disobedience

from “the Garden of Peculiarities”

by Jesus Sepulveda
Number 9

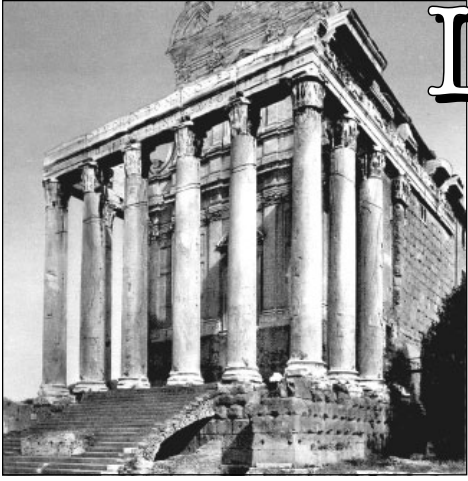


The state exists because it territorializes itself. It builds itself through colonizing territorial expansion. This expansion comes about through the forced deterritorialization of the original inhabitants from the lands that the state has appropriated. This appropriation implies the mobilization of military force that the state can use to expand or maintain its territory. This has meant wars and genocide. But the state also has its experts to write history; they turn the facts around so as to justify their atrocities and obligate following generations to repeat the meaningless official litanies written by the experts.

Education, then, is nothing more than the institutionalization of disciplines of training and domestication, a training ground where children and adolescents are taught to perpetuate the dominant system. There they learn to give way to the dominant order and they begin the process of reification. On these parade grounds or schools of social indoctrination, the ideology that legitimates the system is reproduced. New members of society internalize a false consciousness which inflates in them like a lung until everyone repeats with more or less success the same discourse. Its idea is that everyone says, dreams, and thinks that this is the best of all possible worlds. And if it has its faults, it doesn’t matter because it can be made better. Thinking anything different is to be part of the anarchistic ranks, to go crazy or to call to insurrection. According to Adorno, standardization obliges the subject to choose between mercantilization or schizophrenia. There is no exit from this binary mold.

In this society, preferring the garden to cement is seen with distrust. And depending on the political wind of the moment, this preference can cost one’s life. When the system breaks and sheep escape from the flock, prisons grow with criminal efficiency, as well as coups d’etat, raids, tear gas, repressive measures, war, etc. While all of this is occurring, the state reinforces its propaganda through radio, television and newspapers. And so the state materializes itself in the minds of individuals.

Nation states assemble their repressive apparatus—police and military—to protect the transnationals and expand a lifestyle of standardization based on the reduction of humans into economic units of production and consumption. With this, a new kind of territorialization and labor slavery is produced. The technology and the goods that the global minority dominant class uses are manufactured in sweatshops that operate with the logic of exploitation. Schools and factories are centers of control imposed by the state. In order to abolish the state, it is necessary to abolish factories and schools. The authoritarianism that the civilized order reproduces in these institutions is responsible for ethnic cleansing, political genocide, and social exploitation. In order to construct a world without hierarchies, jails, propaganda, or coups, it is necessary to sweep away the state. And it depends on us to wipe it off the face of the earth.



Lessons from the Fall of Rome

“One day shall come of haughty Rome, a deserved blow from heaven. You will be plundered and destroyed and with wailing and gnashing of teeth you will pay.”

- Cybeline Oracle

In these times I think it is important and inspiring to remember the fall of Rome, as parable and as analogy.

Rome is remembered as the greatest of ancient civilizations. Its accomplishments are celebrated just as the so-called advancements of this civilization, at the expense of the world, are trumpeted. From the beginning, Rome had built its empire by conquest and force of arms. It was ruthless in its lust for power, and “insatiable in its ambition”, defining qualities characteristic of all civilization itself. Rome was an imperialist empire, as they all are, that controlled a great part of their known world and expanded continually through conquest and colonization. The Empire amassed huge armies of slaves needed to build up the monster and on whose backs the empire was founded. But the enslaved and humiliated barbarians were tired of it. As Rome waged its wars of conquest, rebellion plagued the empire and demanded constant repression.

I do not though make a distinction between different or separate civilizations. There are different cultures and societies, different variations, but there is only one civilization. All the civilized societies for the last 10,000 years are all part of the same monster, the same pathology. I only use Rome as an example. For at the time it was the most egregious example of civilization’s destructiveness.

Just like the US, Rome engendered extreme contempt from its neighbors and colonies. At the height of its imperial reign, dislike for the Roman Empire also reached a peak. Resentment festered on the periphery. Not only were people degraded by Rome’s colonization of them, but also Roman officials’ flaunting of their wealth made them contemptuous and jealous. Romans always reveled in grandiose displays of power. They rode gold plated chariots through the streets with gold woven into their clothes attending lavish parties celebrating their excess. Americans drive around in their SUV’s with diamond rings and fancy clothes, all created from the slave labor of their colonies. Americans conquer and slaughter people all over the world, then redirect all their riches and resources back to US corporations. This leaves the people unable to supply themselves with what is left and unable to live self-sufficiently, forcing them to depend on the colonizer. And we wonder why we are hated? We, the Romans, are living in plenty off the blood soaked stolen riches of our conquered and colonized victims.

“I have no more faith than a grain of mustard in the future of ‘civilization’. I know now it is doomed to destruction—probably before very long. What a joy it is to think of, and how often it consoles me to think of barbarism once more flooding the world, with real feelings and passions—however rudimentary—taking the place of our wretched hypocrisies.”

- William Morris

It should be no surprise that the local Roman viceroy parading his riches through the streets would earn the hatred directed against the rulers and governors and all they represent. A later consequence of this was that the civilized rulers of peoples that Rome had colonized grew jealous and demanded that Rome share its wealth. This led several such non-Roman rulers, referred to as barbarians, yet as civilized as any Roman governor, to revolt and attack Rome demanding a portion of its spoils. Coincidentally, this was the situation with the famous barbarian group that sacked Rome in 410 AD that supposedly started the decline of the Roman Empire. The leader of that Gaelic tribe, Alaric, was an intellectual, a thoroughly civilized man who was well read in all the classical works, who spoke Latin fluently and was a great respecter of Rome.



He enjoyed the respect of Roman officials and was thought of as noble by them. He thought he and his people deserved a slice of the pie of Rome’s riches. So he ordered his armies to attack Rome from the north and surprisingly met with little to no resistance. His forces were even welcomed at times, as the poor of the Roman cities/colonies sided with him and his armies hoping for a reprieve from the oppressive Roman order. He made it all the way to the city of Rome itself and demanded huge ransoms of gold, silver, crops, and iron when his protests were not heard. His forces were held at bay outside the defended city until slaves within Rome opened up the gates and let the barbarians in.

It was inconceivable that the very city of Rome itself in the heart of the empire could be attacked and destroyed. Romans thought the capital untouchable and never thought they might be vulnerable or that they could be victims themselves. It awakened Rome to the threat its cruel policies created. This attack was an omen of catastrophe.

As Rome grew so too did the rest of the world’s hatred of it. Just as Americans do now, Rome faced increasing hostility from the rest of the world it sought to dominate. Before September 11th, anti-US sentiment was at an all time high. With America’s new fumbling puppet ruler, son of a former dictator hated for his own bloody rule, America’s arrogance and brutality were brought to the surface and made easier to see for what it is.

With America’s blocking of the Kyoto protocol, which was a world wide attempt to slow down the industrial emissions of greenhouse gasses, (a pitiful liberal reform attempt at using legislation techniques to stop industrialism’s destruction of the planet) world wide frustration directed at the Imperial entity that is driving life on earth towards death rose to a high public pitch. US covert actions and backing of ruthless dictators has earned us the reputation of brutal overlords, and caused great disliking of America for years. Likewise, Rome’s military conquests built up enemies of Rome that grew in ranks as the campaigns of conquest continued. These people fought back, waging more and more attacks on the evil empire. Resistance to Rome became more successful when barbarian soldiers who were forced to serve in the Roman army returned to their home and used their new military knowledge against the colonizer they learned it from.

Nature itself seemed to be conspiring against the empire.

Other things of note brought Rome to its demise. Rome had other bills to pay. The chickens *did* come home to roost in Rome in the various attacks and raids, revolts, uprisings and power struggles. But they also came from nature, which Rome had overtaxed beyond its limits. It was time for Rome to pay up on the debt it had borrowed from the ecosystem. The aqueducts that are acclaimed as so technologically advanced, that earned Rome such high respect from modern civilization and that set Rome apart in history; drained the water reservoirs that once quenched its diabolical thirst. These water sources that allowed so many to live sedentary lives so unnaturally in huge numbers, crowded into cities made of dried earth, eventually ran out and stopped feeding this crazed juggernaut. The natural aquifers had been drained, and the ecosystems that thrived in them destroyed.

The roads Rome are famous for destroyed ecosystems across its empire. These roads allowed for easy transport of military personnel, trade, and the everyday managing of the empire. They separated intact ecosystems, disrupted animals’ territories, and created artificial boundaries that affected essential animal behavior. Furthermore, they created water runoff problems and erosion. The roads, which allowed Rome to grow and maintain its empire, contributed to an ecological disaster.



collapse

The needle moves inside the vein, piercing the skin, sliding into the artery.

The blood flows around it, and is extracted into the tube filled with the boiled down mixture: part escapism, part desperation, the mixture of misery and loneliness, the search,

The finger pushes down, releasing full force into the lifeblood what takes the place of broken dreams.

His eyes roll back, the relief is moving through her body, the lust for life subsides this is the death of dreams.

Around this body, this frightened and confused soul, is a box: four walls, a ceiling and a floor.

The box is a box within a box. The whole world of this soul is enslaved: without bars, without knowing.

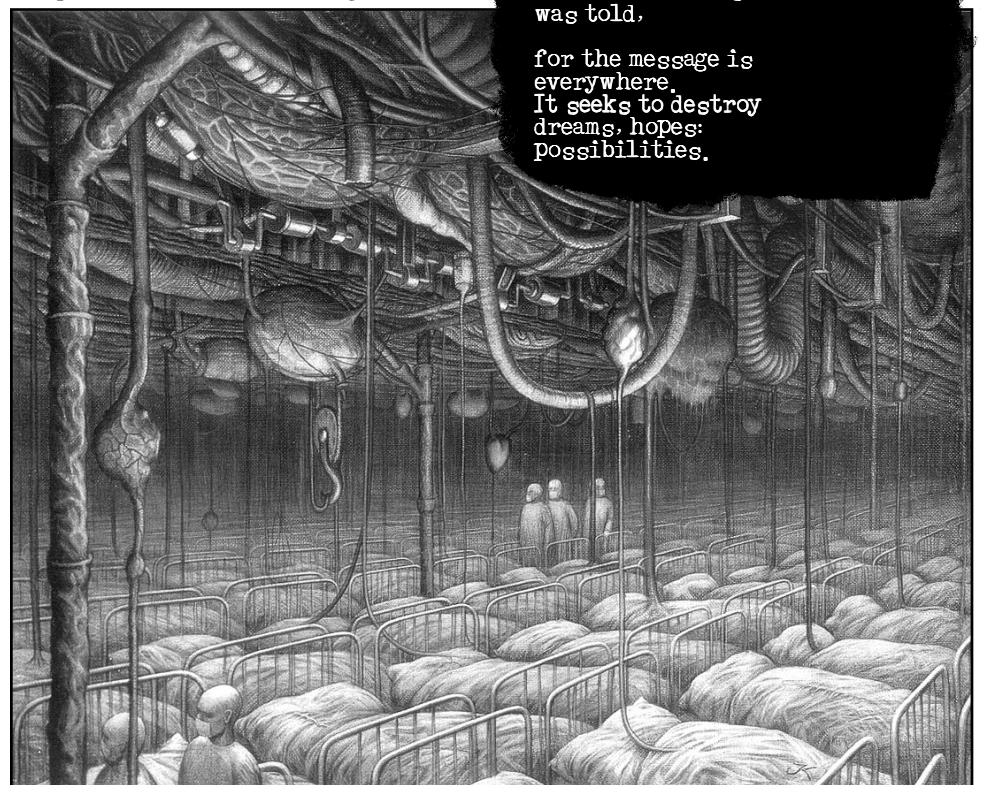
But the soul knows something is there. Bars surround, and the soul knows without knowing.

The soul searches for a way out, But is misguided by what it is told, buried in the Future of the box builders.

I can't say I know what he felt, as she injected a syringe full of lost hope into the desperate veins, of the tattered soul.

I know the box, I know the builders, I know what the soul was told.

for the message is everywhere. It seeks to destroy dreams, hopes: possibilities.



The boiled down
mixture of crying,
fear, confusion, lust,
desire, angst, and love,
is just what
happens to those who
don't share the
(implanted)

"Future"
- in the eyes of the builders.

The message is built into
our minds,
from birth
to death.

To the builders,
death is to be eliminated.
The builders build
so that they will exist
forever.

It pushes down
the dreamers,
so that they will
build for the builders.
It destroys the dreamers
by creating "Forever".

The builders think
only of "Futures."
They fear life,
because life has
beauty in the moment,
and all moments end.

The dreamers dream,
but the dream is not
separate. It is
lived.

The dreamers find a
world of possibilities,
and exist as is.

The builders have
lost their ability
to dream, and so
they search the
"Universe" for
"Answers".

The search does not
end at thought, but
is carried out.
It builds space ships,
satellites, pyramids,
Twin Towers.

He is in another
world now, searching
through a field of
pills, sitcoms,
ten-point programs, school,
excess. . .

She is hoping
to find something,
anything,
to believe in,
because, to them, there is
nothing left in
this world.

(now covered
with concrete,
towers, steel,
plastic. . . .)

The escape flows
through the veins,
the sacred body,
soul,
has been violated.

The eyes roll back,
the body convulses,
desperately
seeking
something.

The stories
he was once told, moved
through healthy forests,
(thicker than imaginable)
under a sky full of passenger pigeons,
surrounded by thick herds of bison,
air that never hurt to breathe,
water that didn't destroy
your insides as you drank it.

To her, this world
is only a tale,
a Disney movie at best.

He was never that hunter
and she never that gatherer.
Their world is much smaller
than that.

The world they had
heard of, read about,
dreamed of:
that place of
possibilities and life
is not here for them.

The builders have
convinced them
that there is no place for
dreams in "real life."

Truly, the heritage of Rome is a desert. It clear-cut the forests in its colonies just as surely as it did its own. Civilization's touch destroys nature wherever it goes. Over-hunting, and agricultural attempts to feed the massive population depleted the "natural resources" (a civilized word for plants and animals). Soil erosion and salinization by agriculture sometimes led to the inability to feed the population, and it contributed in the long run to the collapse of the empire.

"Words cannot express how bitterly we will be hated among foreign nations because of the outrageous conduct of the men we have sent to govern them. All the provinces are complaining about Roman greed and Roman injustice. I remind you gentlemen, Rome will not be able to hold out against the whole world. I do not mean against its power and arms at war, but against its groans, tears, and lamentations."

- Cicero



Rome was the greatest empire in the world because it was ever expanding. It grew to encompass all the land bordering the Mediterranean Sea, into Africa, the Middle East as far as the Caspian Sea. It extended far to the north throughout France and deeply into England. But the empire overextended itself. It grew so big that even with its many tentacles it could not maintain control. The empire had become unmanageable. Its armies could not be everywhere at once, and took too long crossing the empire when needed. It became impossible to maintain order so far from the capital.

Rome, as a large and complex society, had a huge bureaucracy. Bureaucracies reproduce themselves, and are ever growing. Eventually, the bureaucracy grew so large that it became unmanageable, it grew top heavy, and crumbled under its own weight. Getting food and provisions to the armies on the frontier became harder as the frontiers expanded further out. Orders took too long to get to the far reaches of the empire and direct control became impossible. When Rome fell it was waging wars on all sides, defending all its borders. On a parallel note, we are seeing a rise in attacks directed against America and its symbols and monuments of power.

I think something that should not go unnoted are the slave revolts within Rome. Rome's slaves outnumbered its citizens two to one in some places, so great attention was needed to keep them in control. Slaves were feared by the aristocracy who knew that if given the chance, many would slit their throats while they slept. The truth in the situation was expressed in the old proverb "Every slave is an enemy", showing that the Romans knew they were despised by their slaves.

Of course, a huge factor in the fall of Rome was the struggle for power. Late in Rome's history the Empire split between the East and the West. It is worth noting that it was in one of these struggles for power that emperor Constantine reportedly saw the vision of a burning cross in the sky with the words "In hoc signo vinces", "By this sign you will conquer". He had the cross painted on the shield of his army and was victorious against his rival for power in a bloody battle outside of Rome. This was the first in a long line of violent battles fought for power under that sign, the cross. When his armies were victorious he converted to Christianity and declared it a legal religion in Rome, giving it the legitimacy and boost it needed to rise to power and become the agent of destruction that it did. Before this, Christianity was a small unpopular cult. This move to make it legally accepted not only spelled disaster for the world and its future, but also even for Rome itself.

The largest way in which Christianity aided Rome's downfall was the role it played in the bureaucratic split between East and West Rome. Part of the reason Constantine moved the capital to Constantinople was because Rome was still mostly Pagan and not Christian. The division into two empires, really undertaken by Dioclesian, was an attempt to stop the decline of the empire. The split quickened the collapse because it created a large number of additional government officials and bureaucracies. These added to the heavy inflation weighing on the empire. This was possibly the only time Christian missionaries and zealots hurt civilization instead of expanding it.

It wasn't long until Christianity produced the first ascetic monks, which should be no surprise since in this new religion suffering was a mark of holiness. They practiced self-deprivation and a rigid renunciation of desire. It effectively tamed desire and instinct. Christianity directly embodied the values of civilization. Constantine later used Christianity to unify the empire because it preached the values that civilization is based on: obedience, discipline, and monotheism. Constantine ruled with absolute power and saw himself as the thirteenth apostle. Soon there were over sixty decrees outlawing other religions and Christianity took no time developing its oppressive patterns for years to come.

The Western Roman Empire centered at the original capital at Rome fell first in 476 AD, followed a few centuries later by the Rome of the East, which degenerated and then rose again as part of the Byzantine Empire.

**While stands the Coliseum,
Rome shall stand;
When falls the Coliseum,
Rome shall fall;
And when Rome falls
- the World.**

- Lord Byron

With their world collapsing into chaos, the Roman's thirst for macabre distraction grew. Rome celebrated its anniversary and its victory over Romania in the most fitting way, with 117 continuous bloody days of ongoing gladiatorial games in the Coliseum in which 9,000 gladiators died and countless more animals were slaughtered, while barbarians hammered at the walls and rebellion broke out in the provinces. In fact, distraction was a key feature of Rome. Intent to distract themselves, most Romans "did not notice the social fabric shredding around them". The Roman rulers learned early on the value of appeasement in controlling the people, and in keeping them distracted. Rome's most effective means of doing this was "Bread and Circuses". The "Bread and Circuses" was the government giving the people what they wanted, to keep them happy. The Roman government gave out food to the poor to keep them content, a daily ration of food and small sum of money, and provided lavish entertainment to divert their attention.

The great gladiatorial games of Rome were part of Rome's methods of distracting and controlling the people. Even the poorest people could at least look down on those punished in the Coliseum. These games and competitions served the purpose that T.V. does now. Most emperors spent huge sums of public money keeping the people amused. The Coliseum itself was built as a gift to the people, and admittance was free. It was an attempt to buy off the people. The events were ultra spectacles. The gladiators, from the word *gladius* for sword, went to great lengths to keep the crowd entertained and distracted. When the gladiators fought they made it as dramatic as they could to increase the spectacle, making large swings with their weapons when they weren't necessary.

It is easy to see how important the games were to the rulers; there was an amphitheater in every Roman town. In fact, an amphitheater was seen as essential to every Roman city, along with a market place, theater, and courthouse. The word coliseum itself comes from the word Colossus. The famous arena was actually named the Coliseum during the Middle Ages, after the colossal statue of Nero that stood beside it. But its real name at the time of its use was the Flavian Amphitheatre.

The Coliseum held 60,000 spectators, more than most of the modern stadiums. The amphitheater in the city of Pompeii held 5 times more people than its total population. But the immense popularity of this form of distraction is best exemplified by the size of the Circus Maximus. The Circus Maximus was the circular racing arena, also in the city of Rome, where the chariot races took place. It held 200,000 spectators!

(continued on next page)



The builders buried their chance,
long ago.
They started building by
pushing tools into the soil
(the flesh of the earth)
manipulating, altering,
taming, . . .

The builders came from
millions of years
of being an evolutionary,
ecological being:
a part of the community of life
(dreamers).

(collapse)

It's hard to say
why they began digging,
pushing, developing,
owning,
enslaving, . . .
but we are left with
this, their legacy,
their future.

The search for life, dreams,
ends in tragedy,
only to be mocked
by the professional destroyers.

They make movies, sitcoms,
internets, entertainment,

Our pain, our death,
is all potential profit.
We bond to share an
experience, this experience.
We desperately seek
each other,
and with all the high tech
gadgets,
we grab nothing but emptiness
with the mild sense of hope, . . .

The eyes roll back,
the fists move,
the anger is unleashed,
the stranger has just left
the scene, leaving only a
body count, . . .
the professionals are left
to piece together
the "real life" tragedy,

they are only a part of the problem.

The builders start a new thing:
work.
They are now engineers, leaders,
politicians, bosses, owners.
To build an efficient future,
they must dedicate themselves full time.

They start thinking further ahead,
"If not now, when?"
anything is possible, so they will do
anything
to ensure that they aren't affected:
removed, secluded, untouchable: immortal.

What they build are pyramids,
monuments to themselves.
And they crown themselves
and each other, craft
Ideologies, Empires, Philosophy.
All things, all distractions.

The dreamers are a
potential for labor.
There's no benefit in
"allowing"
them to carry on as they were.

They create slavery,
they create slaves,
they justify slavery,
they convince us that it is good,
except this time they call it:
individualism, freedom, quality of life,
they call this dreams.

The builders did more than
just plant instead of forage.
They created a new being,
they tried to stop the world
in its tracks and create a new
thing. hierarchies form. Property
is created. linear is emerging, life
is being pushed aside for future.
lines are put across the
planet, and militaries are created
to enforce them, we stop being one,
and the world is against us. we fear,
we make laws, we enforce them, we go
to war, we make steel tools, weapons,
and we don't stop. we don't learn,
we tear apart this planet, our
home, it starts here.

it continues:

nations are drawn up and
invaded, peoples trying to live are
buried up to their head in the sand,
and a game is made of kicking them
off. whole tribes are torn from each
other and their home, they are
overcrowded on ships and sent over to
be cheaper slaves, auctioned off,
legalized, illegalized (read: renamed),
and sacrificed.

cities are built, people
pushed together so close that they
have nothing left of themselves
anymore. it drives a dreamer crazy,
but the craziness is actually
considered sanity and all the "loose
ends" are tidied up. it is gift
wrapped and gold and exchanged and
taught to say "thank you" and "appreciate"
when something "good" is done.
morals, manners, lessons,
ethics: all fancy names for obedience,
law and order.



Never mind millions of years,
never mind the millions of years
humans have:
co-existed and dreamed and embraced
chaos without annihilating each other,
or enslaving, or oppressing, or creating
systems, governments, cities,
agriculture, fences, schools, roads,
railroads, bikes, jobs, factories, and
all that other "greatness" that comes
with civilization.

nevermind the dreams, . . .

He injects the hope,
she snorts her dreams,
he stops eating
because he thinks he looks fat,
she is suffering from liver damage,
he collapsed coming home from work,
she has breast cancer,
he can't sleep anymore,
she can't take it,
and he beat her up
because he can't take it either.
She is locked up
because her searching wasn't
the right option
. . . in the eyes of the builders.

She knows he is dying,
and she doesn't know what to do about it.
He is confident that her options
are the best.

They are convinced that they
are happy.
So they roll their joy
up and burn it into their lungs,
while their dream world is
burned into their brain,
through their eyes, ears, veins, . . .

He doesn't even hear
the hum of machines any more,
and she plays music full blast
because it's too quiet.

they grasp on and ride full speed,
searching, . . .

The fate of the builders' future
is not hard to imagine.
They can take erode our
dreams, and push us into history,
but we can see where their
story (the anti-myth) ends.

It has happened before,
and it will happen again,
because the builders
aren't capable of stopping,
or wondering, or being,
they push along,
pushing all of us along.

----->

Animals were used extensively in the Coliseum
games. The animals were there to wonder at,
to fear, to dominate, and to die. They were wild,
captivating spectacles from beyond the order
of civilization, captured at civilization's edges.
The frontiers had been pushed out so far that
there was little exposure to the other, the
savage for the average Roman. So when
exotic animals were brought back from
Rome's distant campaigns, it offered a unique
chance to behold that novelty. It seems
that the animals represented wildness
as a whole. Scenery in the Coliseum
would be changed to replicate the world
that the beast was from to reenact the
hunt. This was done to recreate the
process of conquering the wild, the
ritual of civilization.

The crowds had such an appetite for
exotic animals that many of the animals
used for coliseum games were hunted
to extinction. A whole species of
African elephant was among many
others used in the games that were
made extinct. In a humorous letter,
Cicero discusses the shortage of wild
animals to be captured in the province
of which he was provincial governor:
"there is a remarkable shortage of the
animals, and only a few of 'those
panthers' remain". The stench of death
at the coliseum became so over-
whelming that they tried to cover it
up with a system of sprinklers spraying
perfume throughout the stadium. I am
reminded of all the myriad ways in
which the stench of death that
civilization carries with it are covered
over, or ignored.

An interesting analogy between
Roman culture and American is that
the gladiators were seen as sports heroes
are today. They were admired by children and
some small toys of gladiators were found.
Many statues of famous gladiators had figures
of wild animals as their penis, making clear
the connection between patriarchy, domination,
and conquest.

Tacitus said in the 2nd century A.D.,
"Robbery, murder, are all disguised
under the Name Empire"

As Rome grew, so too did the gap between
rich and poor. "A cruel inequality that would
haunt the empire till its very end". Rome was
booming from spoils of war and nature.
If you were rich
enough to enjoy it,
life in Rome was
indeed like the
Rome we hear of.
But for most, it was
a life of squalor.
Class lines were
rigidly drawn, and
hostility between
the classes was
intense. There
were two main
classes, the Plebian
class made up
mostly of Roman
farmers and the
poor, and the
Patrician class
who were the
high-ranking
nobles. All the
officials in Rome
were from the
Patrician class.
The richest were
wealthy as the
empire itself, but most of the inhabitants were
packed into small multi-story apartments. Behind
the splendor of the Forum where the Senate
met, there were vast areas of crowded slums.

The wars of expansion had brought wealth and
slaves. A half million slaves were taken from
the conquest of Carthage alone. 10,000 slaves
a day were brought in through Rome's main
port. At its peak 1 in 3 people in Rome was
a slave. Until the 5th century B.C. Rome was

dotted by family farms, but small family farms
were driven out by the large estates that started
developing and came to dominate the landscape.
The small farmers couldn't compete with the
large estates that employed slave labor. It was
also common for some peasants to return from
compulsory military service to find that their
land had been bought or stolen by aristocrats.

Soon the peasants were displaced and drifted
into the cities, creating a new urban underclass.
This caused the city of Rome to grow to 7
million people, the largest city in Europe until
the Industrial Revolution. No jobs were
available because the huge slave population
was used to perform the needed tasks. But
thousands of hungry citizens would have been
a threat to the peace of the city. So the government
set up a program to feed the poor called the
"dole", a daily ration of food and small sum
of money. Soon, half the people living in the
cities were given the grain dole. One-fourth
of the grain from Africa was given to the
poor of Rome. 70-80% of the population
relied on one grain.

"Our history now plunges from a
kingdom of gold, to one of iron and rust"
- Eutropius, Roman historian,
end of 3rd century A.D.

It is very interesting that Rome ultimately fell
because of civilization itself. In fact, one of
civilization's most basic tenets led to its
collapse. The characteristic feature of
civilization is displacement. Shut out by the
Chinese landlords, the Huns had no option but
to move west. As they moved they pushed all
tribes in their path west as well. This cycle of
displacement continued and many groups were
pushed as far west as they could go and were
pushed up against Rome's eastern borders.
Expanding civilizations elsewhere displaced
the famous barbarians that attacked Rome
in the last few centuries.

From 235 A.D. to 285 A.D., a strong epidemic,
declining supply of wheat, and barbarian
invasions marked the beginning of the
decline of the Roman Empire. The last
emperor, Romulus Augustulus, was disposed
of the throne. It is very interesting that the
first and the last Emperors of Rome were
named Romulus. The first president of the
United States was named George, the
current president is also named George. . .
might he also be the last?

The fall of Rome was a magnificent event.
An event to be celebrated, as it was the



collapse of what was
at the time the most
destructive, alienating,
and brutal society.
Rome fell slowly, over
a period of centuries.
Civilization is collaps-
ing, ever degenerating.
Sometimes slowly,
sometimes in fits of
ecological catastrophe
and social break-
down. America is also
falling. But America is
much larger an empire
than Rome was, and
all its vices, habits,
hierarchies, and
exploitation dwarf
Rome in destructiveness.
Its obsessions
with ecological
destruction make
the modern techno-
industrial empire all
the more unsustainable.

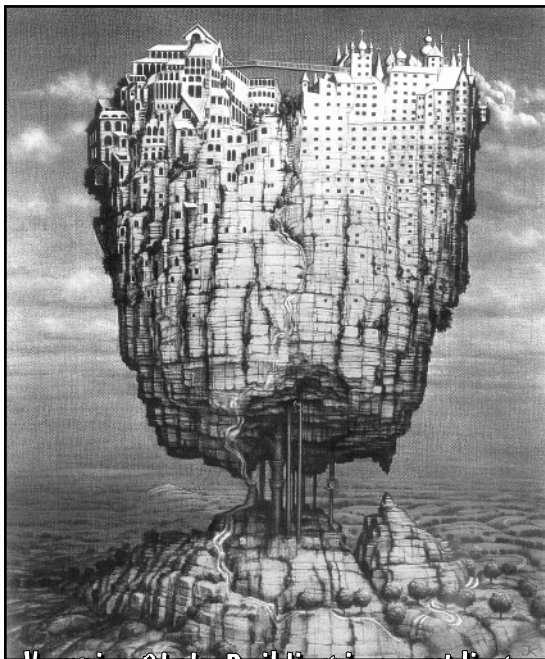
The fall of Rome
should be instructive. The contempt, jealousy,
and hatred from its oppressed and colonized,
the destruction of its ecological base, its
over-extended empire, and top heavy
bureaucracy all led to its fall. I propose that
modern civilization has surpassed even
Rome in all these factors. The only thing
keeping this corpse propped up is its ability,
superior to any variant of civilization so
far, to convince its subjects to maintain
faith in it through over domestication,

and also to achieve more and more technological advances that keep its decaying systems alive. Technological medicine helped fight the plethora of diseases ravaging the citizens of industrial civilization that surely would have ended it and yet will still bring it to its knees. "Advancements" in agriculture, like poisoning the land and water with fertilizers and domesticating and manipulating the genes that make up the very essence of life, have made it possible to feed over-populated human cities with an unsustainable food source that is quickly failing. The list goes on and on. Without these techno-fixes civilization would have ended as it should have, but none of these is anything but a quick fix whose shallow solutions will fail and lose their glossy image. So, yes, this death machine that is western civilization will ultimately collapse, it's just a matter of when.

**Kingdoms fall, cities perish,
And of what Rome once was
Nothing remains except an empty name.
Only the fame and honor of those things,
Sought out in learned books,
Escape the funeral pyres.**
—Florent Schoonhoven

Though there is much to learn from the fall of Rome, my point here is not to warn us that we must change our ways or suffer the same fate as Rome. This is not a warning or plea to change when I say that we face the same dangers as did Rome. I am instead trying to show that there may yet be hope for this awful civilization's collapse!

When Rome collapsed it was followed by the Dark Ages. Although labeled such by the prophets of this civilization for its backwardness and slow technological progress, the Dark Ages were a period of a sort of proto-modern civilization, a horrible era not any better than what followed or preceded it. Will a similar "dark ages" follow the American Empire's collapse? We need to work hard to make sure that when America and the civilization it leads does collapse, we dance on its ashes, to stomp out any and all trace of the tendency called civilization to ensure that an era of freedom and harmony will follow.



Vampire State Building is crumbling.

(collapse) ~~~~~>

there is an inherent flaw in civilization, and that has brought it down before and will again. the builders think that they can remove themselves from *wildness*, our true being. they think because they are capable of manipulation, that it will last. they put up fences, maintain roads, rake leaves, mow lawns, put up buildings, pull out weeds. . . but *wildness* does not stop. it knows no Time, no Future, no Boundaries, and it will continue to seep through the cracks and destroy the monuments and empires.

the silt that brought life to the (once) Fertile Crescent (cradle of civilization) sustained in ways that no Science or "Management" could ever reproduce.

the Mesopotamians thought it could last forever, and so they built, dammed, ordered and directed the flow of the great Nile. just as the hundreds of dams infecting the veins of the earth do now.

Their empires grew and fell, and the soil gave way. It seems Science and Reason can never replicate "Nature," because it has lost the *sacred* understanding of life.

Their domesticated animals inject their hooves onto depraved and overgrazed fields.

Their diseases multiply through their confinement, carrying on throughout the water and infect all of us. (depraved of all immunity by eating chemicals and antibiotics, wiping out our ability to cleanse and balance)

The cancer spreads rampantly and blindly, Destroying anything in its path.

The forests are cleared for more grazing land, the water is destroyed, the soil no longer produces, the people starve and revolt, power changes hands, tightens the leash, and eventually crumbles.

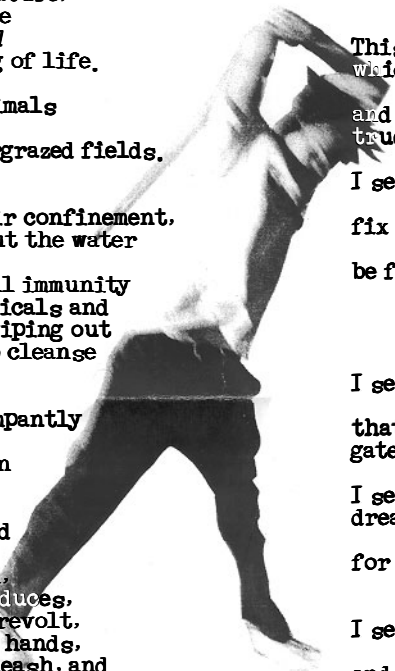
This fate is inherent in Civilization, in the attempt to move from *wildness*.

The collapse is coming through the ecological excess through the deprivation and destruction.

I have felt their loss and confusion, been on their search, seen through their Future.

I have been there as the search for dreams has ended in another box, the coffin.

I have seen the dreamers crushed, for they are around me, and I am of them, and I too still search.



Society is a plastic flower. plastic flowers do not fade. they melt under heat.

I am among generations of potential dreamers, lost to the grinding noise of civilizations' death. And those who are injecting, watching, masturbating, plugging in, shooting off, drinking and eating it, are my brother, my sister, my friend, family, lover, stranger, our planet, our love: my dreams : my life.

I breathe the toxins of (union, eco-friendly) factories, I drink the (piss and shit) water of industry, I eat the (organic) filth of agriculture.

I live the death of civilization, while it devours itself around and of me.

This world, this burden is pushed upon me, is eating me alive, Killing the dreams of children, Sucking the hope of all of us,

This world, which has taken my birth right, my dreams, my life and the community my true being once knew.

I see the slaves themselves trying to fix it, while it can never be fixed, only eliminated.

I see a world of dreams, possibilities, that await outside its gates.

I see millions of dreamers, waiting: dying, for just that one chance to live.

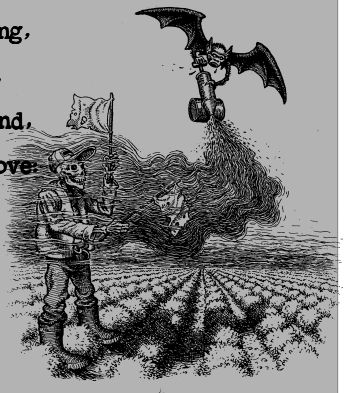
I see this world crumbling and I am told to maintain it, it is my inheritance, (it : Future, Legacy, Progress, Civilization).

I feel the chance (again) to be the human-animal, to open the gates, and I say to the builders, to their slow, painful death, to their nightmare:

burn, motherfucker, burn.

-Kevin Tucker for mike.

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Species Traitor #3

The primary section in this issue is on symbolic culture. We feel very strongly about the subject and feel that it remains a kind of academic or fringe obscurity while it is central to understanding the existence of civilization. It seems that any act of liberation will require a turn on this totalistic world view that we've been domesticated to.

Despite the enormous efforts and focus of anarchists like John Zerzan, a critique of symbolic thought/culture tends to get shoved to the side when talking about practical means of destroying civilization and reconnecting to wildness. When we brought up the idea of doing a focus on symbolic culture, we were criticized for picking a 'timeless' and 'academic' philosophy that had no direct relation to dealing with the problems we face. Obviously we feel the opposite. How can trying to understand and revolt against the way we (the civilized) interact with the world be considered unimportant?

The topic really couldn't be timelier. In this time of State conflicts and seeing how Bush could very well be giving civilization a final shove (albeit on a potentially nuclear level) it becomes all the more important to question what the protagonist may be. It is vital to realize that every bit of propaganda that comes out (and my, *how surreal* that has gotten...) is nothing but a complete show of how symbolic culture functions. While capitalism is the current face of civilization, the spectacle is the current face of symbolic culture. We have the media (consolidated spectacle) contorting the way we deal with others and trivializing our existence and people eat it up so long as we are preoccupied with 'material comforts'.

Our goal here is to draw upon a critique of the totality of civilized thought, symbolic culture, as a pivotal part of our relations and movement towards liberation. The focus here is to expose all the underlying aspects of civilized, and even most 'revolutionary', perception and question at the source. The continued existence of civilization carries on through an infection of the being from cradle to grave (literally). We hope the critiques given here will encourage others to work with these concepts and social relations. To destroy civilization, we must seek it out in its totality. We hope this issue will be another step towards total liberation.

The other sections in this issue are ones we hope will remain constants and that all you folks reading this will contribute to. Those are: revolution and insurrection and explorations of anarchy and anthropology/archaeology. We feel that there is much talk about ideas of destroying civilization, but much of the debate has been in the terms of those seeking to seize state power, whereas we feel liberation will only come through the abolition of power. This section is a starting point to opening up practical ideas of bringing this about.

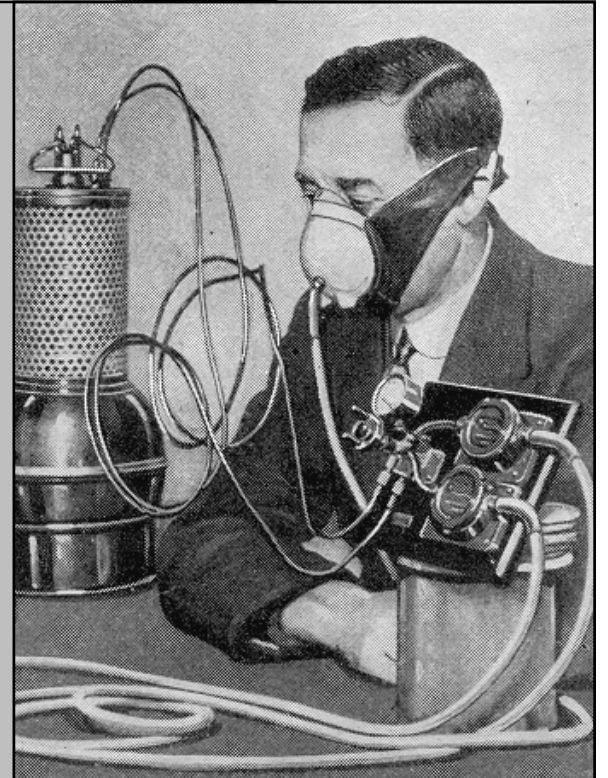
The 'exploration' section opens questions about the 'sacred cow' of anthropology. We realize that the anarcho-primitivist critique of civilization is generally considered dependent upon this field. We realize that anthropology is a science, and therefore shaped by the problems that come with it. This section began with the essay 'anarcho-primitivism beyond anthropology and archaeology' from *Species Traitor* #2, and with an interview with anarcho-primitivist archaeologist Theresa Kintz and some more about the limits and uses of anthropology.

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an interview with film-maker, Godfrey Reggio

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

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



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

Godfrey Reggio: Well, I think for all of us there's a line, even though it's quite crooked, that gives, as it were, some testament to who we are and what we do. In my case, I grew up in a very stratified society of New Orleans. At the age of 13/14, I decided to throw in the towel, that it was all too crazy, not so interesting. I was getting burnt out. At a young age, living in the fat as it were, I decided to go away and become a monk. So I left home. My parents were not too excited about that, and I stayed out for 14 years, having taken final vows as a Christian brother. In effect, got to live in the middle ages during the 1950s and learned crazy things, like the meaning of life is to give, not to receive, that we should be in the world but not of it. All these things I think, certainly influenced me. I'm very grateful for that highly disciplined, very rugged way of life, that would make the marine corp look like the boy scouts. So I think that had a big influence on me. During the course of that time, I saw a film called *Los Olvidados* by Luis Bunuel, the forgotten one, so *The Young and the Damned*, the first film he made in Mexico after being kicked out of Franco Spain. It was so moving to me that it was the equivalent of a spiritual experience. I was at that time working with street gangs. This film was about the street gangs in Mexico City, I was working with street gangs in Northern New Mexico. It moved me to the quick, it wasn't entertainment, it was something that was an event that touched me and hundreds

and hundreds of gang members that saw it. We bought a 16mm copy and I guess I've seen the film a couple hundred times. So that motivated me to look towards film as a medium of direct action. Now, film is usually not seen as that. I don't see it as entertainment in my case, I hope it can be a vehicle for direct action. That's how I became involved, it was also during that time that I had the good fortune to meet Ivan Illich, Illich was a priest at that time, I don't know if you know who Illich is.

SkI: I do.

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

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

GR: Yes I do, now let's talk a little bit about his critique. This was a man who was not accepted by either the organized religions of his day or the left of France.

He was persona non-grata from the left and the right, much like Wilhelm Reich was persona non-grata of the left and right of Germany. Here was a man who, more than any single individual, has contributed to our understanding of the nature of technology not as something we use but as something we live. For Jacques Ellul, technology is the new and comprehensive host of life, the new environment of life. The problem with that statement is that our language hasn't caught up to the profundity of the thought, our language has become assumptive and no longer, in my opinion, describes the world in which we live. Ellul bore great criticism, if not persecution for his ideas, from the left as well as the right, because like Ivan Illich, who made statements like "Freedom is the ability to say 'no' to technological necessity", Jacques Ellul described our greatest act of freedom as to know that which controls our behavior. So both of these men were on very similar tracts, both of them were way outside the sphere of organized right and left, both of them were way to the left of the left. His ideas on the environment, you could call them Christian, but I wouldn't, certainly he was a theologian and he wrote many books on the word of god from his own point of view, but his stuff can certainly stand. His book for example, *The Technological Society*, his first book, 1949 I think it was really written and released here sometime in the mid 50s, that book is a solid philosophical, sociological text about the nature of technique. It's light years beyond anything being written now. I think, if I'm not mistaken, the University of California at Berkeley has acquired the rights to his full library, all of his notes, his books, and they have in there a great gem.

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

GR: Street gangs for many years, as a brother. I became convinced that, while there are a few loonies that probably would hurt anybody under any condition, most people are good. I believe that, it's my experience that most people are good, it's not something I believe, it's something I know. If you tell somebody they're a shit, they'll probably behave like a shit. If you tell somebody they're great, they might achieve greatness. I think that's the fragility of who we are. We live in a world not of this or that but this and that. So after working with street gangs for quite a long time, I realized that the context in which people of poverty have to try to work out how to live in this society is very cruel. I didn't start this project to set up an institution that would live forever. It was a response to an immediate situation, and I left to pursue film as a form of direct action, now by that I mean the following; since people are at the public trough of cinema, either through television or in the theater itself, I felt, what better place to put another idea out? Not in the form of language, but in the form of image and music. Let me explain that it's not for lack of love for the language that my films have no words. It's because of my, I guess, tragic thought that our language no longer describes the world in which we live. Through Ivan Illich, I had the good fortune to meet Paulo Freire, in Brazil, in Sao Paulo, before he passed on. I had a good time talking with him about this enormous book that he wrote, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. In that, he says that the single most important thing a person can do is to begin to rename the world in which they live. This was his form of literacy, not teaching one how to read a book in the traditional sense, but to rename the world, because when you name something, you in effect create it. My own thought is that our language is bound with antique ideas, old formulas that no longer describe the moment in which we are. Therefore, that statement, "A picture is worth a thousand words," I tried to take it and turn it on its head, and try to give you a thousand pictures that can offer the power of one word. In the case of each of the three films, *Koyaanisqatsi*, *Powaqatsi*, *Naqoyqatsi*, words that come from an illiterate source, a primal source, a wisdom that is beyond our ability to describe the world. A wisdom that says that all things we call normal are abnormal, all things that we call sane are insane. Now I realize that this is a pretty intense point of view, but that's the point of view I ended up with from my own experience, not from academia but from being on the line in the '60s, trying to see the world from another point of view.

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

GR: Well, you know, it's hard to say that. I wouldn't want to exempt myself from anything, all of money is dirty money. Whether I got my money from an angel, and I don't know how you get your money but it's as dirty as the money I got. The events that I'm talking about are way beyond capitalism and communism, which is its flipside. Both of those 'isms are much closer together than most people believe. They both share the same point of view about the instrumentality of life, the mass society, the industrialization of society, their only difference is who controls it. In the case of capitalists, it's individuals who have accumulated wealth on the backs and the injustice of millions of people, literally. In the case of the soviets, it's a new class of administrators, bureaucrats, who created a class, in my opinion, just as ironclad and unjust as the capitalist class. Both really want the same thing, they are just concerned about who controls the means of production. My question is not who controls the means of production, but the nature of production, as such. The question is not whether or not workers have an equitable pay and a healthy work environment, which is the interest of organized labor, or the left that works with organized labor. The question, more profoundly, is,

what is the effect of the automobile on society and should we have that in the first place? So, we're dealing more with fundamental questions. It has become my experience, sadly, that human beings become their environment. We become what we see, what we hear, what we taste, what we touch. Anything that we do without question, in an altered state, we become that environment. If the environment that we live in today, as Ellul says, is a technological milieu or environment, if we no longer live with nature, and I'm not parenthetically talking about going back to teepees and caves etc., if our environment itself is technological, if we don't use technology, if we live it, breathe it like the air that is ubiquitous around us, then we become that environment. In that sense, whether you're communist, capitalist, socialist, primitive, an outsider, an artist, a revolutionary, if you live in this world, all of us doing that, we become this world. In that sense, all of us now are cyborged. 'Cyborg' is not something for the future, it is already here.

We live now in both worlds. The old world, the world that 'nature' replaced, old nature, held its unity through the mystery of diversity. So there are many languages, many different environments to live in, there's tropical, there's semi-tropical, there's mountain, there's desert, there's savannah, there's salva etc. There's not one flower, there's uncountable flowers. Not one animal, a zillion of them, not one human being, many. The mantra of the old world was divided we

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

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

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

GR: I don't believe, I think it's a pure myth, right, left, upside-down, backward, to think that we control technology. I think that's a joke. Technology is in the driver's seat. I would go to the very radical writing of Mary Shelley, not the Hollywood version, but her original book *Frankenstein*,

where we've empowered something that's not in the organic realm, we've organized and allowed it to exist, and now it has its own life form. Now, that's very hard for us to get our mind around, because we give ourselves more credit than we're due. We think that our greatest attribute is our mind, actually our greatest attribute is what is our action, our act, what we do everyday. It's what we've become. Marx has this great adage, I think Marx says, "Is it the behavior we have that determines our consciousness or is it the consciousness that we have that determines our behavior?" And of course the answer for 8 out of 7 people is that it's the behavior that we involve ourselves in that determines our consciousness. The only way to avoid that is to do what Joseph Brotsky did, to become an outsider to society, all of us have to live in this world but we don't have to be of it. Brotsky decided not to be of it. He became, for me, a revolutionary poet, though he's not seen that way in the communist world.



stood outside, answered Marx's questions. He said consciousness, or removing oneself, being in the world but not of it, would be a way of having your mind determine your behavior. So, the thing that I'm railing against, technology, is something I use. Some would say this is hypocritical or contradictory, let me agree with them, that it is contradictory. In the sense I'm trying to communicate, and wishing to do so in the contradiction of a mass culture, then I have to consciously adopt the tools of that culture or the language of that culture in order to communicate. So it's the equivalent of fighting fire with fire. In that sense, I see the work that I do as direct action. Though I certainly use a very high-tech base, using that in order to make it available to raise questions about the very thing I'm using.

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

GR: Well I grew up in urban civilization, in New Orleans, then I came out to New Mexico which is one of the highest deserts in the world. Here, the sky you don't look at, you breathe it. I've lived here now 44 years. I consider myself fortunate to be out here, it's like the Siberia of America. In this magnificent beauty is this enormous enigma, and the evil demon of nuclear technology that sits, as the crow flies, about 14 miles from my window. So it's a place of inscrutable beauty and unbelievable demonic energy. I'm sure that's had an influence on me, being here, breathing the sky and having the presence of this monster. It allows me to have another point of view of the world in which I lived. When I shot *Koyaanisqatsi* with my collaborators, the way we did this film was eliminate all the foreground of what is a normal theatrical film, the plot, the characterization, the acting etc. When you don't have the foreground, what's left is the second unit or background to the story. Stripping the film of all that foreground material, we take the background or second unit, and make that the foreground. So, in this case, the building becomes like an entity, the traffic becomes like an entity, something that has a life of itself. The whole purpose of this film was to try to see the ordinary, that which, let's say, we are basted in. Being marinated in the environment that we live in, it all seems very familiar. And I was trying to show that that very thing that we call familiar is itself a techno-fascistic way of living. So I tried to see it from

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

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

GR: My answer would be simply, yes. The whole point of view of *Powaqqatsi* is that through the dogma/religion point of view of progress and development, which again, parenthetically, is not only a capitalist agenda but also a Marxist agenda—that very paradigm consumes, and eats, and pulls out of the sockets people who live a handmade life. I was criticized when I made that film by leftists in Germany, for romanticizing poverty, for trying to eliminate industrialization and, therefore, a better way of living. Well that's in a point of view, if that's how they see it so be it, but that's certainly not my intention. My intention was to say that standards of living are ephemeral. The standard of living of the world is based on first world norms, of consumption, of the institutionalization of life, of giving up your own control to the control of others. The very opposite is true in the so-called third world or Southern hemisphere,



where really, the heritage of the earth exists not only in nature but in human development. Small, convivial, decentralized societies of handmade living, where things can be uniquely different, valley to valley, plain to plain. The world that we're trying to throw, through the IMF etc. on the southern hemisphere, is a world of homogenized value. A world where Los Angeles, Jakarta, Hong Kong, the Philippines etc. all look the same. This is in diametric opposition to the nature of the development of the South, which is disappearing right now because of the norms of development. The very founding, for example, of the United

Nations, was founded on the dogma, on the theology, on the philosophy of promoting progress and development around the world as our guarantee for world peace. Now what crazier thought could you have? All of us buy in, in some way. Many people buy into the United Nations, but their very purpose is to produce this homogenizing event all over the world. For me this is the essence of techno-fascism, and it's another example of how the Northern hemisphere is consuming, without question, the Southern hemisphere. The Northern hemisphere has consumed most of its own resources already, the Southern hemisphere is where the nature bank of our world still exists. If the north has its way, that will be consumed to create and further develop the technological order, which for me, is a fascistic venture. (continued on next page)

more of an interview with Godfrey Reggio

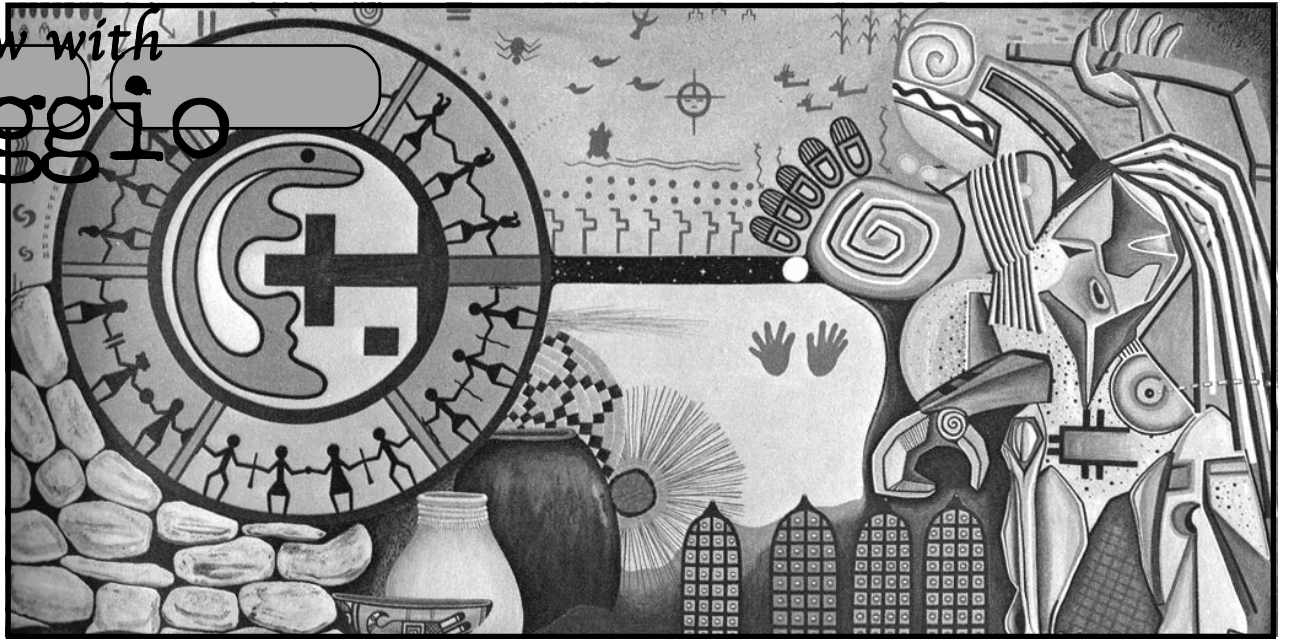
Skj: The latest film, *Naqoyqatsi*, has shifted the focus directly to digital technology and its violent consequences. What societal changes, observed in the bridge between *Powaqqatsi* and *Naqoyqatsi*, did you want to integrate into the new film?

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

We spoke a bit about the computer, because it plays a central role as an entity in *Naqoyqatsi*. From my point of view, the computer is the new divine. When I say that, it portends supernatural powers. The computer is not just something we use again, it's the very vehicle that's remaking the world to its own image or likeness. If one were a Christian theologian or a Catholic theologian, the highest form of magic in the Catholic universe is the sacrament. The sacrament is different from a sign in that it produces what it signifies. Unlike a sign, like if one is married and wears a ring, that ring is a sign of your fidelity, of your union with your spouse. But it doesn't produce it, it only reminds you or others that you're married. In the case of a sacrament, the sacrament produces what it signifies. So if there was a sacrament of unity, it produces that unity, it's the very highest form of magic. So I'm saying that the computer is the new sacramental magic, it produces what it signifies, it remakes the world to its own image and likeness. In that sense it is the very driving force of what I would call, the techno-fascistic world. As the swastika was the image of fascism in the 20th century, and there were many other images as well but that one prevailed, the new image of techno-fascism is the blue planet. Not the reality of the earth, but the image of the blue planet. That, to me, is the ubiquitous image of techno-fascism.

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

GR: Well, first of all, let me say if there's a course of action that someone would recommend that would be right for anyone, that very rightness for everyone would make it fascistic. So anything universal for me is fascistic. I don't pretend to have the answers, but I know that the question is the mother of the answer. Rather than presenting answers to people which I think is a fascist modus operandi, it's much more important to present questions. The question becomes the mother of the answer, that which can change things more fundamentally than anything is the power of a community example. The power of a community in direct action or living an alternative. I'm not talking about utopias, I'm talking about a community in struggle, that wishes to present an alternative to the



slavery to which we've all subjected ourselves through mass society. That would be a way out. If you look at it from a more comprehensive point of view, perhaps there is no exit from technology. This is, itself, a tragedy. On the other hand, I believe that there is no destiny that human beings can not overcome. How that is done is up to the individual, it's not up for any of us to give answers to others as to how to remake their world.

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

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

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

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

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

GR: I don't like to give advice, but I'll say what I think as to what we can do. I think our greatest opportunity is to live a creative life. Often that means to reject schooling, rejecting organized education. For many of us, our diploma from college

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

Skj is a self-identified anarcho-primitivist living in Los Angeles, CA. The DVD double pack of *Koyaanisqatsi* and *Powaqqatsi* is now available. More info on the Qatsi films and Godfrey Reggio is available at www.qatsi.com



REVIEWS

Armed Joy

by Alfredo M. Bonanno

"People are tired of meetings, the classics, point less marches, theoretical discussions that split hairs in four, endless distinctions, the monotony and poverty of certain political analyses. They prefer to make love, smoke, listen to music, go for walks, sleep, laugh, play, kill policemen, kill judges, blow up barracks. Anathema! The struggle is only legitimate when it is incomprehensible to the lead ers of the revolution.

Hurry comrade, shoot the policemen, the judge, the boss. Now, before a new police prevent you.

Hurry to say NO, before the new repression convinces you that saying no is pointless, mad, and that you should accept the hospitality of the mental asylum.

Hurry to attack Capital before a new ideology makes it sacred to you.

Hurry to refuse work before some new sophist tells you once again that "work makes you free." Hurry to play. Hurry to arm yourself."

- from the text

In the spirit of insurrection that is now exploding around the globe, we want to take the time to plug this short but potent pamphlet by Alfredo Bonanno who - as well as being someone who lives his beliefs - is one of the more cogent insurrectional writers and thinkers. This particular pamphlet addresses a wide range of topics, from the banality of commodity culture to the pre-fabricated false "happiness" that capitalism tries to sell us. It also rips into and rejects "production," the "economy," factory life and factory fetishization, reformism, organization and all the lies of the capitalist/statist spectacle. The insurrectional analysis that Bonanno puts forth in this pamphlet - on the poverty of work and the illusion of all external authority - clearly distinguishes *insurrectional anarchism* from leftism, which it has been inaccurately accused of resembling by some.

Some of my primitivist collaborators exhibit a profound lack of understanding with regard to what the insurrectionists are saying, which is "Rise Up, Take Back Your Lives, This long nightmare needs to end NOW!" and I would strongly encourage them to actually take the time to read the writings of the Italian, Spanish and Argentine insurrectionists before they make any more uninformed, sweeping condemnations of what has always been one of the most hopeful and inspiring currents in our movement. I think they'll find that there is very little in the writings of Alfredo Bonanno that stand in direct contradiction to "primitivism," the anarchist ideology that so many anarchists now support and promote. There are many insurrectional anarchists who consider themselves at war with civilization, and this is because they've read and been influenced by the primitivist critique. But primitivism is ultimately just a critique, while insurrectional anarchism is a *practice*, or an approach, as well as a philosophical and political stance that certain anarchists have taken in regard to all

the barriers and institutions that stand between us and our freedom. The two currents - primitivism and insurrectional anarchism - are complimentary in my mind, and anyone active in the anti-civilization movement would do well to learn more about insurrectional anarchism, if only for spiritual and strategic inspiration.

Available for \$2.00 from the Green Anarchy Distro, PO Box 11331 Eugene OR 97440

Shoot The Women First

by Eileen MacDonald

"Shoot the women first!" is the advice given by "intelligence" agencies to law enforcement, paramilitary squads, and anti-terrorist teams dealing in armed-conflicts with revolutionaries and terrorists. It is implied by the author that when women take on the role of a revolutionary, as in other roles in society, it is done so more deeply and meaningfully than by men, making them more dangerous to their enemies. Eileen MacDonald, interested in the dynamics of women and armed conflict, travels through Europe, the Middle East, and south east Asia to interview and understand women involved in armed-resistance movements. She talks to women engaged in activities including hijacking, bomb-planting, rock-hurling, gun battles, assassinations, bank robberies, prison breaks, community organizing, and social support. She offers a peek into the perspectives of women involved with the E.T.A. (an underground Basque separatist group), the Palestinian Intifada (see page 2), the Irish Republican Army, the Red Brigades (an Italian armed Marxist group), and the Baader-Meinhof Group/Red Army Faction. The author's goal is not to judge the actions or ideologies behind them, but instead, understand the lives of women who are moved to the point of becoming armed combatants. She draws many interesting parallels between the various fighters, but is also clear that the specifics of their motivations are deep, historical, and personal. Except for Kim Hyon Hui of North Korea, who claims to have been brainwashed from early childhood by the repressive and cult-like Kim Il Sung regime, all of the women interviewed had been, and many still are, involved in liberation struggles. The women interviewed speak about their actions, machismo and sexism in their groups, motherhood, their thoughts on personal and revolutionary violence, and the particular aspects of being a woman in a revolution. An interesting re-occurring discussion is the view of armed women as "double-deviant," not only breaking the mold of "good citizen" by taking up arms, but also the breaking of the role of a "good woman" and all the patriarchal societal expectations which go along with it. Despite the datedness of the book (1991), and the feeling that the author may not be as tactically and morally down with armed-struggle as your typical GA reader, it is a very interesting and recommended read.

Available at most book stores and libraries.

Rogue Primate: An Exploration of Human Domestication by John A. Livingston

I became interested in John Livingston's book after reading his interview in Derrick Jensen's *Listening to the Land*. His theoretical progression had really caught my interest when I read that he had spent 20 years as the president of the Canadian Audubon Society, and other big name conservation groups, to come to terms with the overall insignificance and pettiness that the conservation movement is really all about. He chose to seek out more of an encompassing understanding about the relationship between humans and the natural world. His resignation took the form of the (hard to find) thesis, *The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation* (1981).

He begins this book by talking about this move and the opposition he faced in making this turn, and from there talks of this book being the outcome of his realization that he has spent his life observing and commenting on other species, and that it was time to do the same for his own. His conclusions advocate a radically different (at the time) understanding of the human animal, and how things got this way and ends with a very optimistic hope for a return to the wildness that dwells in us all.

This gives a glimpse into the realm of human self-domestication and the domestication forced upon others. Livingston feels strongly that human domestication did not simply begin with agriculture (the domestication of plants and animals), but more so with the taming of fire. I think that something like this makes it more important for an understanding of what led to civilization, and what we should realistically be targeting; this holds true for all critiques of symbolic thought. I can't say for sure that Livingston is actually suggesting that we give up fire, but I think that it is safe to say that is not his objective. He does articulately say, however, that his goal is to recover the wildness that has been domesticated and encaged inside us.

Livingston's approach is all the more impacting, as he is as critical of attempts to "undo" domestication as he is of the domestication itself. He takes a very understanding approach to topics such as animal liberation and offers ways to truly liberate the community of life from civilization. He holds no punches back on reformist, legal movements and even offers substantial arguments against the petitioning for extended "rights," and the downfall of "rights" movements/advocacy.

He offers up examples of "exotic transplants," the planned exportation and importation of plants and animals, which feeds the destruction of environments, and that comes with the expansion of civilization. He offers examples of intentional and unintentional destruction at the hands of enlarging agricultural and industrial societies. He speaks about the "wrecking crew," the group of domesticated animals that have taken on such civilized traits that, like civilization, they can destroy entire ecosystems. This group includes cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, horses, donkeys, dogs, and cats. He gives examples of the kind of hell that has come with these animals even as they have gone feral. This raises a very pertinent question in regards to going feral: how do we know that we won't wreak just as much havoc as our domesticated selves? To this, Livingston offers up some examples that we should be taking interest to.

Livingston's background is academic, but he really found a niche for himself in writing this book. It is far more accessible than his other similar attempts, such as *One Cosmic Instant*, and discusses situations that need to be addressed in the project of moving beyond civilization. He at times takes a misanthropic/deep ecologist slant, but he is conscious of such, and often reminds the reader that this is by no means his intent. The truth of which couldn't become any clearer than in his closing: "Look at a child gently holding an unfledged young robin that has fallen from its nest. Look in that child's eyes. The sweet bondage of wildness is recoverable."

Rogue Primate was published by Roberts Rinehart Publishers in 1994 (hardback, 229 pages) and is now out of print.

(Try combing the used bookstores - hunting and gathering is fun!)

Send us your zines, books, or music to review, or a review of your own of an anarchist, anti-authoritarian, or anti-civilization project. Our space is limited, so please be brief. Thanks

Trespases vol 1. A Journal of Speculative Cartography

Trespases is an annual journal of interdisciplinary writings, visual art, and audio-works. The editorial process is guided by a strong critique of colonialism — particularly its settler state forms — capitalism and all forms of oppression. Experimental and marginal works from outside canonic orthodoxy are a priority, as are those voices commonly silenced in mainstream discourse.

The spaces of the settler state are without place, without language and without a past. Its history is one of forgetting; a cover-up across time. Sometimes it's a photo found in the archives, without documentation; or a scrap of graffiti seen on a passing freight train where hobos have been hiding the last hundred years; the images of warriors in camouflage regalia at a road block defending the people as they reclaim their territories; or words and drawings that cross the prison walls to convey the horror and hope.

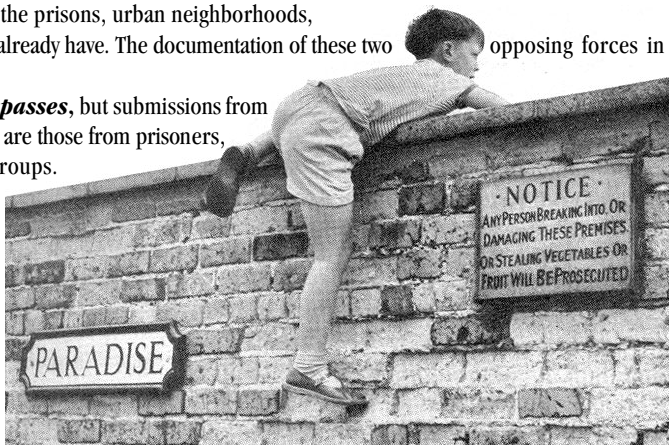
Atomization and alienation characterize contemporary society and are found everywhere. However, attacks on the apparatus of repression and micropolitical alternatives to it are as old as people and are proliferating. Within the prisons, urban neighborhoods, reserves, rural communities, etc. eruptions are taking shape — or already have. The documentation of these two opposing forces in the contemporary and historical contexts are the task at hand.

The geographic area known as Canada is the primary focus of *Trespases*, but submissions from across the Americas and the world are welcome and encouraged, as are those from prisoners, women, queers, indigenous peoples and members of racialized groups.

Being published north of the 49th parallel orients the content towards those places claimed by the Canadian state, however no Canadian content restrictions or borders will be imposed on submissions.

The deadline for all submissions is June 1, 2003.

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OUR JOB IS TO PUT THE BASTARDS OUT OF BUSINESS

BY CRITTER

My intent for writing this brief article is to explain what I feel is the inseparability of the animal and earth liberation movements. I would like to think that the connection between these struggles is obvious. I would also hope the connection between these movements and the struggle against an ever increasingly technological society would also be painfully obvious, but I fear this is not so for many.

No matter how many animals are rescued, no matter how many trees are saved, if the current technological state progresses or even carries on at the rate it is currently destroying the ecosystems all life depends on, life on this planet is doomed. Civilization as we know it depends on the domination and exploitation of every type of "resource" (whether living or habitat for the living) and cannot exist without such exploitation.

Humans were once mostly nomadic, with few exceptions, only settling into permanent villages as plants and animals were domesticated. The exploitation of these life forms allowed the populations of these beginnings of civilization to increase which in turn called for the "need" to further exploit the plant and animal populations and the ecosystems which these lifeforms need to survive.

Flash 10,000 years into the future... today. There are very few places on earth where humans have not tried to (for the most part successfully) form a dominating relationship over the lifeforms which dwell there. The vast majority of the so-called civilized world has been scarred and/or covered over with concrete. The current rate of extinction rivals that of the dinosaurs, and while saving a particular grove of trees or all the hostages at a particular farm is a noble cause, it is like trying to use a band-aid on a sucking chest wound.

If we could save every animal in the world from suffering in factory farms and laboratories, in the long run, what good would it do if there were no wild places left to free them into? Conversely, what would be the point of protecting the last wild spaces if the animals were all domesticated, their wild spirits broken? These struggles are inseparable. All the different aspects of civilization conspire against all that is wild. It is the totality of it, not just one element, that dooms life... that is, if we allow it to continue unabated...

Our struggles cannot ever hope to be effective as long as we each only focus on one aspect of the disease of civilization. We must attack the totality of it every single day. We must be relentless in our struggles, for civilization is ever-progressing on its death march and we cannot allow it to continue to trample over every existing lifeform. We must challenge the assumptions that are integral to the everyday existence of industrial society. We must attack the hubs of the wheels of oppression. The majority of people fighting for the liberation of one lifeform unknowingly or unthinkingly support the oppression of many others everyday. No? Well then it's safe to assume you don't use electricity? I do realize there are necessary evils if we want to be effective in our struggles, such as the use of petro-fuels in igniting huge bonfires in which we can watch corporations go bankrupt, but we must be aware of the negative impacts our actions (and tools) have on ecosystems (both local and distant). I hope I don't sound as if I'm condemning these activities, by all means, burn the fuckers to the ground, just be aware. We cannot carry on with our lives in the manner those who condone civilization (and its inherent destructiveness) have taught us and ever expect to end any form of domination. Civilization from its inception has been rooted in domination, it is dependent on it for its continued survival.

We can continue to debate each other about which being's oppression is most valid to fight against, or maybe we should realize single-issue politics feeds into the divide-and-conquer of our movement(s). Each of us must face the totality and decide whether we want to continue to strike at the fingers of the beast that has all life in a chokehold, or if we need to strike at the head. Don't get me wrong, biting off one of these fingers is never a bad thing, but unless it is part of a larger strategy it is not going to put an end to the human domination of animals and nature.

We will never succeed in convincing corporate interests to stop the exploitation of animals and the earth, it is against their "nature". We want to protect life at all costs, they want to protect a way of life no matter what the cost. Their job is to make as much money as possible regardless of the suffering, our job is to put the bastards out of business because of the suffering.



ARTWORK BY CRAIG "CRITTER" MARSHALL

Towards An Effective Praxis:

Moving Beyond the Violence/Nonviolence Debate

Praxis-practice, as distinguished from theory; application or use, as in knowledge or skills

This article is written in the spirit of sharing, learning, and opening up dialogue amongst people around the effectiveness of certain direct action tactics and strategy. If a movement is unable to critically examine itself, then it will stagnate and fail. It is a hope that others will write articles in response and addition to this one, furthering discussion around such important issues.

All too often, when people critique the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) or other direct action groups, the criticisms center around the sacredness of property and the "violence" of destroying this property. It becomes an issue of righteousness based upon a morality that has been learned from the oppressor. This violence/nonviolence debate has reared its ugly head to the point of sheer redundancy and is not only stuck, but actually holding back a dialogue which needs to happen:

In issue #8 of the zine *Antipathy*, the effectiveness issue is raised, and this is where this article gains its inspiration, even though there are many disagreements. In an article entitled "*Burning the Church of the Sacred Arsonist: a few reasons parts of the ELF can kiss my ass*" (BCSA), the author states, "The only question for those who REALLY care for Earth is: Effective or Ineffective?" and brings up five critiques of the ELF, while making it clear that the actions against the genetics industry have been successful and are not what is being discussed.

On the Effectiveness of Arson

Most opponents of arson hold property sacred and because of that, are unable to ask important questions such as: Did the attack accomplish its goal? Was the goal to shut a place down for good? Is this simply symbolic? The whole violence/nonviolence debate helps create a situation where public proponents of arson (or any tactic) may not criticize it so as not to come across as anti-ELF or anti-direct action. This is a major obstacle in looking critically at tactics and strategy so as to develop a praxis that is effective.

BCSA argues that the torchings of Vail, Superior Lumber, US Timberproducts and Boise Cascade did not really slow any of these companies down, while helping to fuel anti-environmentalist sentiment and the destruction of the Earth. This is based on the idea that these companies are insured and will just rebuild and go on with their practices while communities will be even more pissed off at enviros. Much of that is true. Isolated arsons, like most tactics, are like pissing into the sea. There's a ripple, but then that ripple is absorbed. Where some of that could change is if every time a business was rebuilt, it was torched again to the point where no insurance would cover it. Some fur farms have been hit like this and closed, but some have stayed open too. While BCSA brings up many good questions no solutions are proposed.

Other questions that are relevant are: What tactics do slow business/corporations down, or better yet stop them by destroying them while not alienating everyone around? Is it possible? Until there is a strong enough underground movement, the effectiveness right now may lie in inspiring others while doing major damage to earth killers. This might not be the most effective strategy, but what is?

The arsons mentioned earlier did cause major damage and inspire more action which then caused more damage, which inspire more actions...and so on with the hope that enough could happen to bring down the industry. Can an industry be brought down within the bowels of capitalism? Will it be bailed out by the government, like the timber industry receiving huge subsidies? Yes, there are and *will be* bailouts, but that doesn't mean a tactic is ineffective. The oppressor will do whatever it takes to keep industry churning and crush inspiration and action. This translates into promoting the ELF as unaccountable to the people, a fringe group, lunatics who are costing taxpayers money. People who are already alienated can have a scapegoat to be angry at, never asking what the exploitation of the planet is "costing" or who has the boot on their necks. Which is why it is so important for both the underground and aboveground to communicate in ways which are as non-alienating as possible.

Communiqués/Press Releases Are a Broken Model

BCSA says the idea of people caring what "terrorists" have to say is flawed because people don't give a shit and the communiqués sound like some rich college kid from Connecticut. This part is not given much attention and seems to fall into a defeatist attitude that no one would be inspired by the communiqués. Some of the problem surely lies in the content of the communiqués, while much of it lies in how many people even read them, not just the media's extracted portions. There is a whole planet of people who have had enough of being exploited and its quite possible some words may resonate with them. How this could be accomplished seems like a good question for those writing communiqués and those speaking publicly to be asking themselves.

Media Obsession Reinforces Apathy

This is an interesting concept which begs the question: Is the ELF obsessed with the media or is the media obsessed with the ELF? This is not mutually exclusive. ELF actions are capitalized upon by the media which promotes the dichotomy of performers and spectators that is already so prevalent in society. It is always someone else who is acting; a hero who will save the day. Which is why it is so important to dispel the myth of direct action being done by some highly trained commandos (while encouraging security and refinement to stay out of jail!). Can ELF-style actions occur in a way that doesn't play into the media? The media loves arson, but stays very quiet around crop pullings, tree spiking, and other sabotage. Asking why that is and how actions could play into sensationalism needs to be discussed.

Where the whole spokesperson/media thing becomes worrisome is when people begin thinking that only ELF-style actions/direct action are worth anything. So unless you are going to engage in these actions, you may as well not do anything or promote others to take action. Direct actions in and of themselves, isolated from any sort of movement, would probably accomplish nothing but jailtime. That being said, it is questionable that such actions would even occur without a movement. When people in the radical scene dismiss anything that is not militant direct action (as defined by them) as liberal, which is equated to worthless, it becomes an excuse to not do anything at all. The whole question of "what is radical" needs to be redefined in terms other than "what is the most extreme action". How many times has it been said: All the tools in the box, and certain tools for certain jobs?!

Regurgitating Past Failures

Here BCSA focuses on tree spiking. This is a tactic that has publicly reappeared in the last year or two in various parts of the country. It seems very fitting to reopen dialogue about tree spiking. BCSA brings up "the fact that tree spiking itself has never stopped a timber sale in the US and was really only an effective public scare tactic directed against radical environmentalists by the wise-use/timber industry tag team." It goes on to say that since ALL timber mills in Oregon have metal detectors, trees can be felled with spikes in them, and tree spiking alone has NEVER stopped a sale, that "tree spiking is undeniably a tactic with little or no efficacy whatsoever in preserving ecosystems."

An example is given where in March 2001 the Judie Sale outside Cottage Grove, Oregon, was claimed spiked by the ELF, demanding that the Forest Service cancel the sale. BCSA states that since the feds have NEVER cowed to the demands of terrorists, they'd be more likely to push the sale ahead. Or Seneca Jones, the mill who purchased the sale, will file a lawsuit, which will lead to a replacement volume sale, which will have even older trees and be a larger size than the Judie sale. Which means the ELF helped "sound the death knell for the ecosystems unfortunate enough to be within the marked units of the Judie sale and potentially for ecosystems further away from the reach of the urban centric activist scene." Wow! Those are some serious charges.

This brings up many questions and analysis. The first is that tree spiking ALONE has never stopped a US sale. What tactic alone, in and of itself, has? Lawsuits? Not without some pressure from somewhere outside the courtroom. Blockades? Treesits? Not without help from a lawsuit. Why is tree spiking vehemently deemed ineffective because it supposedly hasn't stopped a sale on its own? How is it known if tree spiking works or does not? It is very difficult to find any info on spiking that is not totally pro or totally against. What about times where it may work?



Earth Liberation Actions

"If we are trespassing, so were the people who broke down the gates of Hitler's death camps; If we are thieves, so were the members of the Underground Railroad who freed the slaves of the south; And if we are vandals, so were those who destroyed forever the gas chambers of Buchanwald and Auschwitz." - Anonymous

November 26, Pennsylvania: The ELF Claims Credit For Two Anti-Genetix Actions in A Joint Communiqué

In late November 2002, the ELF released a forceful communiqué taking responsibility for a series of powerful and effective actions against the fur industry. Although we reprinted that communiqué in its entirety in the Winter 2002 issue of *Green Anarchy*, we didn't realize that in an attachment to the main text, the ELF also claimed responsibility for an earlier chain of actions against genetically-modified food crops. Since there haven't been all that many specifically *Anti-Genetix* actions in North America lately, we thought it would be worth publishing this brief statement:

On behalf of another anonymous cell of the Earth Liberation Front, we are also claiming responsibility for the destruction of two GMO corn tests / demonstration crops in northwestern Pennsylvania. Both crops (BT and Roundup-Ready) were destroyed beyond usefulness, and kept from producing seed for future planting. The proliferation of Genetically Modified Organisms and the increased deployment of toxic pesticides into our bioregion presents an unrivaled threat to the biological integrity and diversity of our ecosystem, and has begun to be met with appropriate resistance. ANY GMO/ GE crops planted in this area from this day forth may be targeted by eco-activists.

December 23-24, 2002, Massachusetts: Vandals Target SUVs in Campaign against War and Environmental Devastation

Newton: Someone spray-painted 16 sport utility vehicles with anti-war and environmentalist slogans. Police said they have no leads about who left messages such as "no blood for oil" and "I'm changing the environment" in red and black paint on the cars. The vandalism started on December 23 with eight late-night incidents. Each of the vehicle owners who reported vandalism owned SUVs, including a GMC Yukon, a Lexus SUV and a Chevy Blazer. Each phrase was sprayed on the rear of the vehicle. "No Blood for Oil" was sprayed on each of the first eight cars, but as Christmas Eve rolled around, the vandal(s) expanded the sloganeering. Phrases ranged from "No Oil" to "Gas Guzzler" and "I'm changing the Environment." According to police reports, the vandal chose two vehicles in each specific area to vandalize. For example, the vandal painted a 1995 Chevy Blazer with "No Blood For Oil" on the rear tire cover on Clarendon Street early on the morning of December 23, and a 2000 Honda CRV with the same phrase the same night. On Pulsifer Street, also in the early morning, a white Ford pickup truck and another Honda CRV were painted with the same phrase. Police said the only plan of attack would be to increase patrols. The vandal, according to police reports, is suspected to be an anarchist. Sprayed on two cars, an Acura utility vehicle and a Chevy Yukon, was the letter "A" with a circle around it: the sign for anarchy. Similar incidents were reported in Bloomington, Ind., in 2001 and in Richmond, VA, in November.

December 28, 2002, Pennsylvania: ELF Targets Housing Development in Northeast Philly

Philadelphia: In what was likely its final act of 2002, the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) has claimed an action in Northeast Philadelphia targeting urban sprawl and the development of "luxury houses." Construction vehicles and a show home were damaged by "long-time residents of Philadelphia...who are tired of seeing the earth destroyed for money." The ELF Press Office received the letter of claim (see below) via a Philadelphia newspaper. Although the letter does not claim this as an ELF action, graffiti at the housing development site indicates that this was the work of the ELF. This action took place December 28th, 2002. The following is the letter sent to the media: *Greetings. Recently, we visited a housing construction site in Northeast Philadelphia, along Rhawn St., to give a Christmas present to the developers. There, what was natural land - and a home for birds, squirrels, deer, et cetera - is now a sprawling pit of mud. Others' attempts at stopping this devastation failed; we felt the only thing we could do, and the thing that felt right, was to fight back for those who can't. So we went to the site and attacked construction vehicles however we were able to - glued locks, sugared gas tanks, disconnected hoses, spray painted vehicles, broke windows. Also we attacked the "sample house" on Rhawn St. - the first house built, to attract buyers. We covered the walls in spray paint, glued locks, and broke many windows. We are not "terrorists." We are not teenage vandals. We are middle-aged, long-time residents of Philadelphia/the suburbs who are tired of seeing the earth destroyed for money. New housing units (and these are "luxury houses," starting at \$200,000) are not needed; tens of thousands*

of housing units in Philadelphia are vacant, or for sale. There is no excuse for the terrorism of developers, destroying the little bit of natural land left for money. We will not sign our names, but we want to. If construction is stopped and the woods allowed to grow back, we will turn ourselves in gladly. We pray the destruction of developers in Philadelphia/the suburbs is stopped - and that our kids don't grow up in a concrete world, built over ashes of the destroyed earth.

**- "Sally and Peter"
Philadelphia/suburbs**

January 1, 2003: ELF Torches SUVs in Erie, Pennsylvania!

The Earth Liberation Front, an international underground movement that uses direct action in the form of economic sabotage to stop the destruction of the natural environment, has taken credit for their first North American action of 2003 with the destruction of several SUVs at a Pennsylvania auto dealership. Reprinted below is the full communiqué that was released on January 2:

At 5:30 AM on January 1, 2003, the Earth Liberation Front attacked several SUV's at Bob Ferrando Ford Lincoln Mercury in Erie, Pennsylvania. At least four vehicles were entirely destroyed and several others sustained heavy damage, costing an estimated \$90,000.

Despite decades of popular environmental activism, the mainstream environmental movement, which began arguably in the early 1960s, has failed in its attempts to bring about the protection needed to stop the destruction of life on this planet. In many ways, it has served only to accelerate this destruction. Its occasional "victories", reforms or small concessions, have fostered hope in a means of social change that has proven unable to produce tangible protection of life, time after time.

By focusing its energy on temporary "solutions", they have altogether ignored the roots of the problem at hand. Western civilization, with its throwaway conveniences, its status symbols, and its unfathomable hoards of financial wealth, is unsustainable, and comes at a price. Its pathological decadence, fueled by brutality and oceans of bloodshed, is quickly devouring all life and undermining the very life support systems we need to survive. The quality of our air, water and soil continues to decrease as more and more life forms on the planet suffer and die as a result. We are in the midst of a global environmental crisis that adversely affects and directly threatens every human, every animal, every plant, and every other life form on the face of the Earth.

There is absolutely no excuse for any one of us, out of greed, to knowingly allow this to continue. There is a direct relationship between our irresponsible over-consumption and lust for luxury products, and the poverty and destruction of other people and the Natural world. By refusing to acknowledge this simple fact, supporting this paradigm with our excessive lifestyles, and failing to offer direct resistance, we make ourselves accomplices in the greatest crime ever committed.

Time is running out—change must come, or eventually all will be lost. A belief in state sanctioned legal means of social change is a sign of faith in the legal system of that same state. We have absolutely no faith in the legal system of the state when it comes to protecting life, as it has repeatedly shown itself to care far more for the protection of commerce and profits than for people and the natural environment. Clearly, the State itself causes and profits from many of the various atrocities against life that we must struggle against. To place faith in that same state as though it will act in the interests of justice and life is utter foolishness and a grave mistake.

Therefore, the ELF will continue to fight to remove the profit motive from the killing of the natural environment, and to draw public attention to that which is deliberately concealed from them by the forces that control our lives and destroy our home.

We urge our sisters and brothers—let us strive to become the revolutionary force we've always spoken of being, and begin to take control of our lives out of the hands of those who would destroy us.

**NO COMPROMISE
Happy New Year Bob Ferrando - ELF**

Editors note: The ELF has been cleaning house in the Pennsylvania bioregion for over a year now, beginning with (to the best of our knowledge) their March 17, 2002 action against a road construction site (see *Green Anarchy* # 9 for more details.) It would be nice to see ELF actions start to increase in other bioregions, though, to take some of the heat off our unknown comrades in the northeast. Remember, decentralization and unpredictability are the greatest advantages we have over our enemy!

What would those times be? Like so many tactics, spiking is one more tool that can be used to slow down, and if all goes well, stop trees from being felled. Maybe in time, people will see how spiking affected the Judie sale, and other sales, rather than condemn it right off without knowing what will come about in time. Just because a sale is spiked does not mean a lawsuit cannot be filed on behalf of that sale. Other tactics can possibly work in conjunction with spiking.

Blaming the ELF for the destruction of ecosystems because Seneca Jones or any earth destroyer would push ahead with a sale is ludicrous. When would they not push ahead when challenged? And how is the ELF responsible for actions taken by Seneca Jones? Many times replacement volume sales are awarded after sales are "saved" by lawsuits, blockades, and tressits. And why can't people go and spike the replacement volume sale while other people publicly denounce replacement volume sales and all timber sales? It is similar to the comment about mills having metal detectors which means spiking is ineffective. Maybe using metal spikes would be ineffective if they were all found in the forest, and cut around (which costs a considerable amount of money) and the detector at the mill found all the spikes. So how to foil a metal detector? Use non metallic spikes. The information is out there on how to do this. These would get through metal detectors and break blades, if the trees were even logged. This is not an attempt to promote a tactic that may not work, it is looking at why tree spiking has been discredited and promoted. Yes, it pisses people off. That is certain. But just look at what the Bush administration is pushing in regards to the forest: death. Does that not piss people off, too? So where does one not act because people may be pissed off?

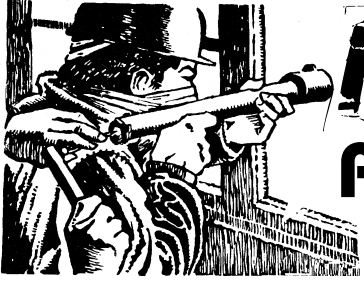
Ineffective Actions Have Landed Comrades In Jail

BCSA says that comrades are going to jail for ineffective actions that are not worth it. That is such a bold statement which really gets to the heart of the questions this article is asking regarding effectiveness. How is it measured and defined? Are people in jail for actions that seem ineffective? Yes and No. People are being stolen by the State because their actions spark something inside people that scares those in power: rebellion, which has the potential to be revolution. Whether those actions themselves are effective has been mentioned already. Another effect is that people will question why someone who torches SUVs gets more prison time than a rapist or murderer. It is such a loss to see comrades go to prison, taken from their communities. So instead of saying what they did was not worth it, creating a movement that makes it worth it is much more appealing, because it must have seemed worth it to them at the time since they undertook the action.

Wrappin' It Up

Having a dialogue about the effectiveness of ELF-type actions that moves beyond the violence/nonviolence debate needs to happen. It is important to abandon the rhetoric and ask challenging questions which lead to creative answers so that effective actions will happen. Do people really know what is effective? How? There are many ideas on what works and what does not, so what are they? Our lives and the lives to come depend on it.

Editor's Note: We hope that this article will help people to think more deeply and critically about the effectiveness of various forms of direct action, tactics, and strategy. While we feel the author of this article brings up many valid criticisms of "Burning the Church of the Sacred Arsonist: a few reasons parts of the ELF can kiss my ass" from issue #8 of the zine Antipathy, we feel that they were not nearly harsh enough. In the past, Antipathy has had some interesting anarchist analysis and personal reflections, but it has always had a (sometimes humorous, but usually annoying) self-righteous, dismissive, and "know it all" approach, without offering anything but ridiculous ideas on how to subvert authority for an insular and nauseating punk scene. The name of the zine could easily be changed to Apathy and most of its inebriated and self-centered following would not even notice. While some are attempting to build a resistance to the death culture, Antipathy seems more interested in building a portfolio as an anarcho-critic and gigolo, while dismissing all meaningful action.



REVOLUTIONARY WRATH!

Anarchist Resistance From Around The Planet

"The days of this society are numbered; its reasons and its merits have been weighed in the balance and found wanting; its inhabitants are divided into two parties, one of which wants this society to disappear." - Guy Debord

Anarchy is not another post-Enlightenment European philosophy nor is it a utopian political system born out of "liberal" thought. Anarchy bears no resemblance to the theories of Marx, Engels, or to the "Jeffersonian" values that are so celebrated by bourgeois historians. Anarchy is, rather, a mode of existence characterized by the absence of government, the absence of rulers, the absence of domination. The anarchist struggle is one between rationalized order and revolutionary chaos, between automated technocracy and uncaged wildness. It is a power struggle between a mechanistic, efficiency-oriented, and profit-g geared system and a positive, liberating nihilism aimed at breaking down the barriers of machines, laws and social customs that divide humans from all other organisms around them. It is, in short, a war between free life and the forces of control and extinction. All political ideologies have failed us, leaving only the growing anti-political anarchistic battle for the future of the planet.

January 17, 2003, Italy: Anarchists Smash ATM Machines in Solidarity with the Victims of Repression

Sixty ATMs in dozens of locations throughout northern Italy were vandalized. Messages claiming the attacks appeared sporadically at the sites of the attacks, sometimes in anonymous messages to the Digos (special political police). The flyers claiming the attacks spoke of the repressive nature of prisons, solidarity with people arrested at anti-globalization demonstrations, and various other matters. The actions are attributed to individuals of "the extreme area of the anarchist archipelago, that to the insurrectionists."

January 18, 2003, California: Two Thousand Anarchists Go On Rampage During Anti-War Demo

San Francisco: Thousands of protestors marched, danced and sprinted through the streets of San Francisco shouting slogans against war, racism and capitalism. The protestors were part of a breakaway march from the larger permitted rally organized by A.N.S.W.É.R. (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) which brought out approximately 200,000 demonstrators. After the permitted march got to its destination, about two thousand demonstrators broke off

and proceeded on a militant and well-planned march through the streets of the city. Throughout the march, they targeted a number of symbols of the current capitalist war. They stopped at the building that holds the *San Francisco Chronicle*, a major newspaper, notorious for its right-wing slant. Masked speakers on a megaphone pointed out how the coverage from this newspaper, and from the capitalist media in general, serve to bolster the US war effort at the same time as other masked protestors conveyed this message by tagging the building with "weapon of mass destruction," among other messages. Next, the building that houses the British consulate was tagged, with protestors stressing the international nature of the struggle against war and capitalism, and calling for similar actions by the people of Britain against the capitalists there. Protestors are well aware that Tony Blair is, as one person at the event put it, "Bush's Poodle." Protestors punctuated their message by smashing a number of windows. One spray-painted slogan read "UK out of Iraq! Burn the State!" The breakaway march wound its way through the city, using a number of sophisticated tactics to out-manuever the police. As they moved along, more and more newspaper boxes were knocked into the street, and through the windows of a Starbucks and a Victoria's Secret. The high point of the demonstration was in attacks on the building that houses the Federal government's Immigration and Naturalization Service. Numerous windows were broken and a cement pylon and a newspaper box were thrown through the INS building's glass front doors. After September 11 of last year, media, critics and politicians gloated about what they saw as the death of radical street protests in the United States. The more conservative elements of the anti-globalization movement were frightened by a possible confrontation or worse, saw it as a time to stick together

and offer "critical support" to the United States government. At the same time the radicals were targeted with stronger and more aggressive policing, and international financial institutions such as the World Trade Organization held their meetings in countries with repressive regimes that do not allow protest. But the radicals in the anti-globalization movement were never just protesting "globalization"; they were opposed **to capitalist globalization**. This analysis has transferred easily into anti-war organizing. Maybe smug critics and politicians were wrong. We are witnessing a rebirth of the radical street demonstrations in the US. As one black-clad and masked protestor said that day, "The anti-globalization movement is dead, but the anti-capitalist movement is alive and well."

January 19, 2003, Italy:

Open Season on Ski Resorts

On January 19, a fire devastated the chairlift of a notorious ski resort in Abetone, Pistoia, Italy. Ninety cabins burned. Damages were estimated at \$7,000,000. A slogan spray painted at the site said, "Fire to Destructors — Free Marco!"

A communique sent to news agencies claimed the action in defense of the mountains and in solidarity with ecodefence prisoner Marco Camenisch, now on hunger strike in his jail cell in Switzerland. Marco Camenisch has been jailed for blast attacks against the nuclear industry in Switzerland. He was imprisoned but escaped to Italy where he was recaptured after several years. He was then accused of damaging powerlines. He has been transferred back to Swiss jails to finish his years of imprisonment and to await trial where he is accused of murder of a border guard.

On the same night, two more actions, a bomb at a large TV antenna and the torching of a mobile phone tower, were claimed in solidarity with Marco.



A gasoline bomb explodes near Greek pigs at anti-war protest in Athens on Feb 15, 2003.

Direct Action in Navarre's River "Irati" Region

We write to all Green Anarchists from a certain valley in Navarre (Basque Country) as activists of the local land squatting scene and as supporters of I'aki Garcia Koch, an earth liberation prisoner, who has been in prison for 18 months in the city of Pamplona.

Around 1943, General Franco's government in Madrid finally threw out the last traditionally producing peasants from these mountains. Before this date, the vast majority of campesino families and clans had as little contact with modern 'progress' as imaginable in Western Europe. Economically the village communities had definite pre-capitalist subsistence-crop systems. The State could not be felt in these places. On the other hand, the Catholic Church, as the only institution that managed to get control over the individuals living there, damaged seriously the traditional Basque self-government on the level of village councils.

After 1959, the WMF and World Bank started to give credits to the fascist government under the condition of the Spanish State producing cellulose (and permitting direct investment in Mediterranean tourism). So, the valleys abandoned by the humans were filled with pine trees. The fascist development program also included megalomaniac infrastructural projects in the Pyrenees, in our case the huge "ITOIZ" dam project, which the following governments finally started to build in 1985. The water reservoirs in the Pyrenees are supposed to deliver uncontaminated water to the Mediterranean coast, parallel to the stinky heavy-metal river Ebro, where Irati's water is heading to naturally.

Since 1980 we have been squatting in these villages, which were abandoned for decades without human attention, in the former buildings founded in the 11th century, now ruins. In the 90's a second generation of mostly urban socialized anarchists started up six more land squatting projects. As we are now re-building the ruins and re-opening the gardens, we try to live anarchist communism - recovering pre-capitalist sustainable production modes. We want to live using technologies, but only together with the struggle for independence from petrol companies etc. This means that we understand, install, and repair technologies by ourselves, without paying money to anybody. The big exception to this are some old vans which we use for transports, and that are legally registered.

Since 1999 we have had eviction orders and the declaration of Navarra's government that they will be willing to destroy the squatted villages entirely. So far this has not been carried out.

Since 1994 we've seen direct action against the Itoiz dam project, in addition to the legal campaigns run since 1985. After a series of non-violent and public actions in construction sites, offices, and monuments, on April 6th 1996, 8 "Soliarios con Itoiz" cut

some 800 m long steel cables with Rotaflex motorsaws. The action caused costs of millions of Euros and paralyzed the project for 11 months. The activists were filmed during the whole action and stood on the site waiting to be arrested and for police boots in their stomachs.

The politics of public action can be understood in the permanent climate of the War against Terrorism which absolutely dominates the media and the repression (torture and isolation) of the Spanish State. The 8 activists were condemned to 5 years of prison each by a judicial farce. They went underground after the long court process ended in '99. The group then started an action tour to prominent monuments in European capitals. 7 are still in exile outside of Spain.

Only I'aki Garcia Koch was caught in June 2001, classified as a terrorist ("FIES-3") and held in isolation for 12 months, until the campaign and the lawyer fought the re-classification. There is a campaign going on for his freedom and for canceling the 8 penalties.

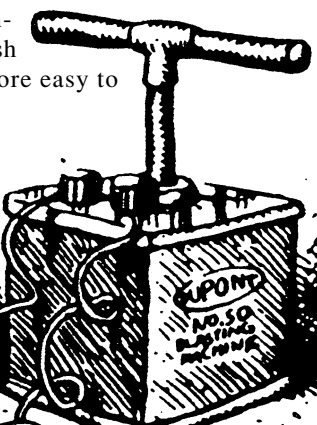
Meanwhile the concrete walls near Itoiz are finished. The government is deaf to prominent engineers' serious warnings that the dam will BREAK when they fill the reservoir, putting thousands of beings in serious danger, as well as the "ASCà" nuclear power plant downstream the river Ebro. The next steps are the finishing of new roads, the cutting of 1 million trees on the 1,100 hectares of the planned reservoir, and the eviction of the last 2 of the 9 villages that are supposed to be underwater. All this is accompanied by the largest militarization per inhabitant that is known in Spain, while different forms of social-ecologist protest are going on.

We definitely would like to have more exchange and mutual solidarity with other movements. The best for us is collaboration with the long-term empowerment of our squatting communities. All Green Anarchists are warmly invited to get to know our valley. Although it is honest to remind you that our communities function in Spanish (and Basque) and that it'll be more easy to organize in these languages.

If you want to distribute the SOLIDARI@S CON ITOIZ action videotape, or for any other comment, contact to us.

FREE IYAKI! POR ITOIZ NO PASARUN!

Grupo de Apoyo a I'aki (GAI) Iyaki support group address: GAI, Apdo. 35, E-31430 Aoiz (Navarra)



Every morning I wake up and wonder what I should do...

February 15, 2003, Oregon:

Anarchists Attack Army Recruiting Station

Portland: From the communiqué: *In the wee morning hours of Saturday the fifteenth, a small group of anarchists targeted the huge conglomerate recruitment center on SE 82nd Street. Undaunted by the bright lights of the shopping center, the group threw bricks at the windows and spray painted "no war but the class war" on the concrete. The action was in solidarity with the millions of people rallying worldwide against the war on Saturday, and served to draw attention to recruitment's fascist targeting of minorities, young people and people living in poverty. The anarchists feel that military recruitment is a large and highly ignored part of US imperialism, and as we speak recruiting centers are sucking the bio-mass from poor neighborhoods near you and feeding it into the war machine. The action was autonomous, spontaneous and unaffiliated with any group.*

February 15, 2003, Greece: Anarchists Up The Ante At Anti-War Demonstrations

Athens: Riot police fired tear gas at demonstrators who threw stones and several petrol bombs at them during a rally against a U.S.-led war on Iraq. Dozens of masked anarchists splintered from a main body of up to 50,000 demonstrators gathered in the Greek capital, smashing several windows and burning a parked car. In the main northern city of Thessaloniki, protesters threw stones at the U.S. consulate and police also used tear gas. In Athens, the violence broke out in the main Syntagma Square across from the Greek parliament, where the windows of several banks and shops were broken. Two newspaper offices were also attacked. Police fired volleys of tear gas, which wafted through the area sending shoppers scurrying for safety. In Patras, 4,000 people demonstrated against the war and a block of about 300 anarchists threw yogurt and eggs at the British consulate, the courthouse, a bank and a local government building. The majority of people in Greece strongly oppose American imperialism and military action against Iraq.

February 15, 2003, England: Anarchists Breach World Service Headquarters

London: The BBC has instigated a wide-ranging security review after up to 50 anarchists barged their way into the headquarters of the World Service. Some members of the group were said to have roamed around Bush House in Aldwych for some time before being rounded up. World Service managers are said to have been aghast at the intrusion, which came less than two years after the Real IRA detonated a bomb outside BBC Television Center in west London. The incident raised concerns that the World Service could be the target of a violent attack. The security response to this recent incident, which had been kept secret until the BBC was contacted by the *Guardian*, was described as "woeful". Sources say 40 to 50 intruders entered the Bush House early morning, easily overcoming

security guards. They are said to have penetrated deep into the building, including the offices of one of the foreign language services. One source said some managed to get on to the roof and replace the BBC flag with an anarchist black flag. The ease with which the intruders overcame "minimal" security at Bush House has caused alarm at the BBC. Security measures at the BBC Television Center at White City were tight before the Real IRA bomb: glass security doors replaced turnstiles after an intruder entered the television newsroom in 1999.

February 16, 2003, California: Anarchists Go On the Offensive During International Day of Action Against the War

San Francisco: A group of demonstrators broke away from the huge crowd at the SF Civic Center area at the end of a huge anti-war march and



Car set ablaze at anti-war demonstration in Athens on Feb. 15, 2003.

clashed later with police during a 4-hour confrontation marked by hit-and-run acts of destruction. Members of the group broke windows at several businesses and on a pair of police cars during their rampage. They spray-painted buildings and other objects with graffiti. They burned trash, climbed onto a

cable car, and later tossed bottles and other objects at mounted police who were trying to control them. At one point, the group - which began with about 1,000 people and dwindled to about 200 - took over several busy streets in the financial district. Police said two officers were injured during the confrontation and taken to the hospital, where they were treated and released. The breakaway crowd was mostly made up of an anarchist Black Bloc. The group pulled out of the Civic Center area when the main demonstration was all but finished and many of the original participants had left the area. Around 4 p.m., a group that estimated at around 1,000 began marching into the financial district. Individuals from the group broke windows at McDonald's and Old Navy, as well as the window front at Abercrombie & Fitch in the SF Center. A dozen or so protestors also ran through the main entrance to the mall and threw rocks at some stores to try and break windows, without success. The protestors also broke out the windows of two SFPD patrol cars. Using bullhorns, police declared the gathering an unlawful assembly, warning people they would be arrested if they did not disperse. Some protestors left and others began throwing objects - bottles, sticks and garbage - at police on horseback. The terrified horses began bumping against each other and finally, the mounted officers galloped away to cheers from the crowd. The dwindling group was boxed-in by police into the center of the intersection, and police began arresting some of them and placing them in sheriff's vans.

A SWARM OF BUTTERFLIES: A FIERCE DEFENSE OF CHAOS IN DIRECT ACTION

Despite the tremendous successes we've had in the past few years, several recent anarchist mobilizations have been hijacked by a shrill minority that wishes to impose permits, routes, parade marshals (e.g. peace police), zones of actions and other such nonsense, turning our rage and creativity into a well-ordered media spectacle: or worse, mass arrest. The constant and insincere calls for "solidarity" and protecting others have turned our once raucous resistance into an exercise of well-organized crowd control.

But it hasn't always been like this...

Just a few years ago the military's pet think tank RAND organization wrote: "Anarchists [in Seattle 1999] using extremely good modern communications, including live internet feeds, were able to execute simultaneous actions by means of pulsing and swarming tactics coordinated by networked and leaderless 'affinity groups.' Rather it became an example of the challenges that hierarchical organizations face when confronting networked adversaries with faster reaction cycles. This loosely organized coalition, embracing network organization and tactics, frustrated police efforts to gain the situational awareness needed to combat the seemingly chaotic Seattle disturbance."

RAND concludes that there is little that hierarchical organizations like the police can do to deal with such chaotic tactics. In addition, they sound the alarm that our types of groups facilitate rapid evolution of tactics and promote greater recruiting opportunities than traditional demonstrations.

We gain nothing returning to the tactics of ten years ago: the scripted, bland and boring traditional leftist demonstrations of parade routes, leaders, speakers, and marshals. What we need is creative, decentralized, and most of all, chaotic action.

One tactic used in Seattle and elsewhere that utilizes chaos is "pulsing." Pulsing is the ability of groups of people to come together, disperse to safety and reform in new groups. While this is similar to the guerrilla tactic of "absorption," there is an important difference.

Ché's notion of "absorption" is simply when a "force attacks the enemy for a period of time and then breaks off the attack being absorbed into the community or environment" from where it came. Pulsing is a constant flow of people joining, breaking up and rejoining, often in new combinations of groups. The most successful way this can be done is through small decentralized autonomous groups (e.g. affinity groups) that have the decision-making power to decide for themselves when and with whom to interact.

RAND points out that pulsing makes crowd control very difficult because it keeps "rearranging the threats" and that there is no prearranged pattern that police can analyze and neutralize. This unpredictability is the cornerstone of chaos theory.

A biological example beloved by chaos theorists is bacteria. Bacteria function in pulses, creating ever-new patterns of connections. Chaos thinker Planc wrote, "Each pattern is organic and results from random forces in the environment. The ever-changing collection and density [pulsing] of bacteria makes their organizations very durable and adaptable."

"Swarming" is another way we can inject chaos into our actions. Swarming is the tactic of hitting a number of targets at the same time without following a pre-set pattern. Decentralized swarming frustrates law enforcement's ability to protect targets and disrupt our activities. They are forced into "reaction" as opposed to their goal of "controlling the agenda for protests." Again, the only way for this to work with thousands of people is for us to organize in a radically decentralized manner; decentralizing work and actions by the channels of affinity groups to be utilized best, so that the groups select actions that match their interests and abilities.

In demonstrations, hierarchical organizations are quickly overwhelmed when their central nervous system is confronted by the chaos caused by unpredictable, pulsing swarms. Anarchists can take advantage of these matrices of opportunity opened up by autonomous groups, giving us a huge advantage over slow reacting, hierarchical groups like police.

Both pulsing and swarming inject the crucial element of chaos into our demonstrations. Police are repulsed by chaos, as are all hierarchical organizations, and thus are slower to react. These tactics provide affinity groups opportunities that they could have never planned for: like liberating an unguarded dumpster next to a checkpoint that can be turned into a battering ram or finding an unlocked service entrance into a hotel where IMF delegates are staying.

Chaos also allows small actions to be multiplied and expanded on. Even small initial changes can accumulate quickly creating profound and unlikely changes just as a butterfly flapping its wings in Argentina may cause a hurricane in New York.

We are not robots, we are not pawns of organizers: we are a pulsing swarm of creative and free butterflies. We are fighting for our lives and dancing to be free.

**Curious George Brigade
International Anarchist Cabal**

*This article is from the Cincinnati anarchist publication
The Female Species; copies can be obtained by writing:
thefemalespecies@hotmail.com*



VIOLENCE AS NECESSITY

Throughout the prison camps known as schools one often hears the age-old adage "sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." This assertion that words do not hurt operates as a front — a façade which domesticated people use as defense when bullies cut them down.

Sticks and stones do not hurt much in comparison to the psychological damage inflicted by name-calling. People should resort to violence more often as a way to avoid psychological beat-downs for a couple of reasons; they are the following: 1. When you are in a fight your mind slices through the social conditioned crap, thus you revert to the primal way of life, becoming an animal (as you know all animals are vastly superior to any civilized human). 2. Your senses become enhanced and your mind gets cleansed.

One must be fully certain that his or her target deserves the act of violence that s/he commits. When violence is just, it's beautiful, but when it is not deserved, it's uglier than sin. One must also realize the repulsiveness of institutional violence, such as the military; people who serve in the military go to far away places and kill people who they do not know. In these cases violence is not used for self-defense, but rather as a method of smoothing problems out in order for the system to run more effectively. For example, the U.S. shall attack Iraq for oil, the main resource that keeps the techno-industrial system running.

Pacifism serves as a tool of the system; the more people are pacified, the better the system operates. Violence, when used properly, attacks the all-encompassing system. Bear in mind that any success through pacifism (such as Indian resistance to British rule) occurred in an entirely different context than today.

So, if you desire to fight the powers that be, train yourself in the usage of deadly weapons, and other survival skills (e.g. know the wild edible plants in your bioregion). This isn't hard to do. Go to gun shows, check out some useful books — more importantly, train yourself, because reading material pales in comparison to actual experience. If your library (basically the only good thing that a democratic regime produces) does not have any good books, you should use what is called an interlibrary loan. Also, get plenty of exercise, and eat healthy. In short, prepare for the fall (it's coming soon). - Pat Rock