is being repealed is being replaced by two more to 'defend the repeal'. And so in the process of liberating people from the arbitrary force of the State, you are increasing the size and power of the State. Of course, many of the rightists calling out the left on this are immense hypocrites, but that does not change the facts.

I am one of those heterodox nomads with roots in the far left who has grown to view Chomsky less as a radical than as a dinosaur. I say that as a sort-of analogy, but his favoured Anarcho-Syndicalism is a good example of how confused leftist Anarchism is. A mass system of direct democracy, common ownership of the means of production, with a bureaucracy of workers councils and a web of labour unions being used to manage and cast judgment. For me it is hard to see why they bother to distinguish this as 'Anarchism', when it is more or less 'participatory' or 'direct democratic' Communism. But after considering myself an Anarchist for some years, I realised that this is the most common approach. If not exactly that, certainly something close to it.

Myself, I cannot follow suit, for this embraces so many of the elements that I find problematic with the current system - fixed ideology, formal government, mass society, bureaucracy, the valourisation of work. To again quote Landstreicher[10] (who was in context referring specifically to Syndicalists), Anarchists of this inclination "may talk of abolishing the state, but they will have to reproduce every one of its functions to guarantee the smooth running of their society." A significant number of those who claim to be against the State are really against only a certain form of State – that of minority rule and minority privilege. If Marx's dream of a functioning 'dictatorship of the

[10] I should note that neither Landstreicher nor Kazcynski, despite gracing these pages with multiple quotes, should be taken as strong influences on this essay. I just happened to be familiarising myself with them whilst I was writing it, and so these particular quotes were fresh in my mind, unlike the many others I could have incorporated.

Metropolis... By Strange Command

A Deconstruction Manifesto

Bad Moon

2017-05-21

tive sin is the prime source of society's ills – not the system itself, which only exists to help us transcend our own personal failings!

Notice, however, how a right wing State can switch this off at their own convenience. If a drugs gang ruin the lives of people around them, they are considered wilful sinners and punished accordingly, if a hedge fund do the same, it is a flaw in the system (which they assure you they will fix, and then don't) and individuals are rarely held responsible. During times of economic crisis in particular, it is often fairly widely recognised that the legal system is classist. We know quite well that the wealthy, the famous, and the powerful more easily avoid or escape unharmed the 'claws of justice'. But every time we put faith in the State to fix this, and every time… they do not! Because they are two hands of the same leviathan.

Returning to the left, though I have been critical of their activism, it would be foolishly ideological of me not to recognise that for many people they will seem, and have in many practical ways been, very successful. If I were a gay man I would surely be quite pleased that I can no longer be imprisoned for sodomy. The attempt to limit the domain of the State (or the 'moral') and expand that of the 'private' is in itself quite in harmony with the logic of Deconstruction. But in reality this has been tremendously inconsistent. The justified complaint against the right (the conservative right, at least) has been that they have viciously encroached upon the private domain. The left's response to this has not been simply to cut back the State, but to turn the State's might back. It has not, using our previous example, turned homosexuality into a private matter, like it thinks it has. Because the policeman, once pointing his finger and saying "you better not be a fucking queer," now points his finger still, saying, "you better not be a fucking homophobe". Is this a lesser evil? Perhaps so, it is not for me to say. But it is quite understandable why even the more 'moderate', classically liberal right should not be happy about it. Every law that

school, holds a respectable job, climbs the status ladder, is a "responsible" parent, is nonviolent and so forth. In effect, however much he may deny it, the oversocialized leftist wants to integrate the black man into the system and make him adopt its values."

As 'citizens' we increase our benefits but also our debts, our complicity bought, our rebellious inclinations quelled. It is the carrot rather than the stick – but their ultimate intent is the same.

It is interesting to look at how the right differ in approach. And I should note I am making some possibly rash generalisations at this point (how can one not when using fundamentally vague terms like 'left' and 'right'). They too recognise, consciously or otherwise, that the division and stratification within a mass system is problematic. But whilst the leftist switches the moral narrative to one of inclusion, the rightist is more comfortable with the use of an exclusive tone. I say 'tone' specifically because the State rarely truly excludes people. The only way to do that is to kill them or to grant them independence – the prior of which is typically a hard sell to the masses, and the latter of which would be to relinquish power over lands and peoples in a way which would ultimately become self-destructive (for the State, not those peoples). But by pushing certain individuals and groups down into a social underclass (with 'sub-human' being an example of a more extreme epithet) they produce some positive results without having to properly exclude these people. A couple of examples: Scapegoating creates what I earlier referred to as the 'artifice of kinship' by setting the mass up against certain imagined enemies. At the same time it serves to deflect blame away from the State or the ruling class on to certain guilty 'outsiders'. The morality of total personal culpability, despite in certain ways being contradictory to the scapegoat approach, achieves the same things by creating an underclass of criminals and sinners who are entirely responsible for their crime and whose collec-

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fabricated, ideological design – they end up working against such a "reversal of perspective" by attempting "liberation of a social role to which the individual remains subject."

In other words, the goal is to change up what exactly it means to be a worker. You will still have billions of people trapped in a set role, a systematic way of life, but that role, that system will invoke less aggregate suffering. Thus the goal is not to liberate the worker from the machine, but to improve his conditions within it. For that breed of people not in their hearts opposed to the 9 to 5 way of life, to formalism and bureaucracy, to the mass polity, etc, this will be enough. For me - and I can only speak for myself – although that seems on the whole preferable to current conditions, it nonetheless falls way short.

This is an important point. The activism of the left consists in attempting to *integrate* disenfranchised parties into the system. This does not necessitate a change in its fundamental workings, only a change of its values to a more inclusive type. To put it in the simplest possible terms, the general goal of the left is that every poor gay black woman can live like a middle-class straight white man. This does mean they are able to make use of certain additional rights, which is what appeals to the more sympathetic character of your average leftist. On the other hand, it also means they are drawn more completely into engaging with the system. They are given their rights on the understanding that they will use them to 'join in'. To quote Ted Kaczynski on affirmative action for blacks:

"They want to make him study technical subjects, become an executive or a scientist, spend his life climbing the status ladder to prove that black people are as good as white. They want to make black fathers "responsible," they want black gangs to become nonviolent, etc. But these are exactly the values of the industrial-technological system. The system couldn't care less what kind of music a man listens to, what kind of clothes he wears or what religion he believes in as long as he studies in

brains, and should merely do what it is told. Don't worry, if you herd as ordered, the farmer will protect you from the wolf! But I ask, *what difference for the lamb between the farmer and the wolf*?

Prophets of efficiency, go to hell!

Beyond Leftism

In my younger years I was allied to the far left. But like other dangerous perverts in the post-left milieu, I have come to see many flaws in even the most self-assuredly Anarchist section. One of the more obvious ones is the tendency towards a narrow 'workerism'. Now, I understand the need to make generalisations, even ones to do with class. I have been doing it throughout this essay. But if this goes without clear qualification it plays into the narrative that the gentrified are comfortable with by subordinating persons to their role within the machine. By so readily embracing your status as 'worker', and narrowing your activism so that you come across as little more than an individuation of a 'class essence', to get very German, you are tacitly consenting to the entire depersonalising narrative in which you are only of interest insofar as you are *employed*. The vision of the 'free man' which comes across is one who continues to exist under the weight of a boring economic drudgery. Most men who ever fought for a Communist revolution and won have found that, whilst some things may have improved, they are still *just a worker*.

To paraphrase Wolfi Landstreicher, the liberation movements of the left are, shall we say, 'counter-individualist' in that rather than breaking down this organicist reduction of a man into a social asset, or a species identity (i.e. an embodiment of some social category), so that he can proceed forward as Stirner's 'unique one' - an individual with his own particular passions and goals which do not have to accord with any pre-

METROPOLIS...

BY STRANGE COMMAND

A DECONSTRUCTION MANIFESTO

A BAD MOON COMMUNIQUE

I am a man in the crowd. Hemmed in on every side by a sea of faces, and yet all I see is strangers.

I am an atheist broken before the altar, tied into a stance of prostration before a god I do not believe in.

I am a fire denied fuel.

It's said that with the contemporary 'western' socio-political standard – that being some variant of classical or social liberalism – we are freer than ever, wealthier than ever. To be anything beyond a qualified disciple of Fukuyama beyond one's starry-eyed adolescence is to be a tragic idealist, a relic of more naive times. I too am a sceptic of a certain form of idealism. We who consider ourselves philosophers love to fashion our own 'best of all possible worlds'. Indeed, it's been something of a raison d'etre at least since Plato's 'Republic' (with its very own philosopher-king, naturally). But these grand visions are always found wanting. The utopias of our ancestors leave us scratching our heads. We do not need another glorious constitution to dribble from the pen of some genius or other, laying out a life into which we can be slotted, we need the space to build our own lives – unmoulded by the hammer of dogma, unpersuaded by the bloodthirsty crutch of certainty.

Then I side with the liberals, for that surely describes what we westerners live under? Oh, if only. This pretence of liberty certainly woos us with her words, but strip back her fineries and she is another monarch, chaperoned by a new aristocracy. Whilst in principle this system allows the individual to think and speak as he pleases, yet as soon as he reaches out his hand in order to act it comes up against a complex and all-encompassing web of barbed wire which few are able to navigate without extreme difficulty and which strangles liberty in any practical sense.

Liberals and libertarians alike often root their philosophy in the idea that the individual has an inalienable right to owner-

purgatories of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. But the lesson from recent history is that too much stick and very little carrot is not a recipe for long-term success. There are more sophisticated ways to keep an established order. Had the Soviet Union been more open to providing a little Yankee Devil style sweetener, perhaps it would still exist.

Although perhaps Orwell's 'Animal Farm' provides a decent metaphor in its farmyard setting. The gentry are the farmers and landowners. Their goal is to continually increase the efficiency of the farm. To acquire as much product from their livestock with the least possible difficulty. Lower class workers are, of course, said livestock – the fat of the land. Alright, more strategic principles:

Increase the system's *productivity*. Increase the system's *stability*. Increase your own *power*. Increase your own *wealth*. Increase your own *security*.

Those inward aims of personal gain and the outward aims of socio-economic efficiency go hand in hand, of course. So when the President earnestly tells you he has the nation's security and the economy's wealth in mind, he is not necessarily outright lying, he just has his own agenda in mind. He may not even be conscious of his hypocrisy if he imagines his own empowerment to accord with the well-being of the nation. Considering the arrogance it must take to think one is worthy of that much power, it would not at all surprise me if there was a general element of deluded bewilderment amongst the gentry at the notion that they might be the 'bad guys'. Indeed, on the rare occasion that popular voting is allowed on actual issues, those for whom the vote did not go their way are surprisingly open about their contempt for the vote. "The public are not informed enough, such a vote should not have been held," some of them will say, with cameras trained on them, apparently quite unaware that, in front of our very eyes, they are unravelling the illusion of democracy. Only farmer and owner are legitimate intellects. The plebeian farm animal has shit for

It may be contended that, hey, that's the free market, it's a limited and desired commodity. Perhaps so. But I believe that the situation is fostered by the State, because it serves the interests of the metropolitan elite by keeping people from self-sufficiency, tying them into the system which feeds the rich and powerful. Notice also how debt – a thing which common sense would dictate to be a negative thing – has become not only acceptable, but a cornerstone of our society. The lenders are delighted with this, because they make more money, and the State is delighted with this because so long as we are indebted, so we must keep working our 8, 10, 12 hour days; and we must keep on the right side of the law, lest we worsen our debt with fines or endanger our income with criminal prosecution.

Even were you in the position to own your own smallholding, even if you were able to minimise or be rid of your power, heating, water bills, you would still be in tax bondage. They will do everything they can to hold on to you. Why? Because only through slaves is the master sustained and elevated. If the slaves refuse to work, the master becomes their equal. In the society with distinct class stratification, those in the upper echelons are praised as 'creators', 'managers', 'employers', 'intellectuals'. And yet, it is those on the bottom who hold the class system up. Any real, large-scale withdrawal of consent (which in practical terms also means withdrawal of labour) would cause the upper classes to become irrelevant and ultimately collapse.

The basic strategy, no doubt less consciously laid out than it is here, seems to be something like this:

Isolate the individual. Disempower them. Draw them into indebtedness and dependency. Misdirect and manipulate them into supporting the system.

If this sounds dystopian, that's because it is. Albeit with a more friendly face than Orwell and co predicted. They could not well imagine totalitarianism outside of the grey industrial

ship of themselves. We could point out some glaring problems with that theory, and it is not one I ascribe to, but let us for our current purposes take it as read. That is all well and good, but the self, as a bodily force, for want of a better phrase, always exists *situated* within *the other*. So whilst I may be more or less free within myself, if my situation, my environment, my *territory*, is not similarly free, that is to say, if I cannot interact with it on my own terms, I am in practical terms a captive. Arguably this is a more cruel fate than being totally 'brainwashed', as I am constantly aware of the tension between my will and my actual powers.

Of course, as a social animal (or, moreover, as an animal), a man must always exist in a state of territorial compromise to some degree. But, as noted, there are degrees. And the sensible compromise is obviously the one which requires me to surrender my powers to the minimum degree. Contemporary Liberalism (by which term we perhaps too broadly cover mass democracy, capitalism, and other elements to be discussed) is by my reckoning not that. In fact, despite on the surface being the negation of dictatorship, it has shown itself to share the tendency towards totalitarianism, not so often by means of explicit command, but by an insidious and creeping *bureaucratisation of everything*.

Total Bureaucracy

We are free, and yet our actions must almost always be *authorised* by the State. People are quite conscious of the more basic elements of this, insofar as they recognise law and its enforcement. But the machinations of bureaucracy have become normalised to the extent that they are often not recognised as an aberration, an intervention in our free associations. Those who would have us approve of the State highlight its more conspicuous interventions against more recognisedly sinister

social phenomena, such as violence and theft. They also highlight its role in providing apparently useful social services and infrastructure. When seen from a perspective through which these aspects of it are heavily emphasised (which is how it wants to be seen), then it seems to most people either highly beneficial or, at least on balance, fairly neutral (as in, it makes up for its negative aspects by the weight of its positive ones).

But this is really a naively simplified view. The State is far more invasive than it would ever take credit for. And I mean the 'ordinary', liberal democratic State, not some feared Nazi spectre. Let us use a little thought experiment to elucidate just how tied our hands are.

A man owns a small piece of land. (I know, even this opening triviality has launched us into a world of fantasy hard for most of us modern plebs to relate to). He decides to build a small farm on it that he might make a living for himself and his family (a most noble pursuit, the State declares!). But there are many regulations about what he can do with this land, 'his' land. He must check that it falls within said regulations, then fill out a stack of forms, register his intent, have it all checked over with a fine tooth comb, etc. Every step must be officiated – and usually at his own cost. Let us cross our fingers and assume that he is able to get through all that. He manages to get a small farm going which provides for his basic needs. But after a while he feels that he'd like to expand somewhat, to attain a little more variety, maybe even a little 'luxury'. So he decides to trade a little of his farm produce at local markets. A harmless venture, one would think. Helpful to his neighbours, even. But, again, these activities must be reported, registered, catalogued, examined against a thousand rules and regulations, taxed, and so on.

Throughout this entire debacle, he is quite free to think whatever he pleases, even to talk critically of the whole frustrating

[1]And by 'wife', let us note, we mean 'partner officially recognised by the

system, or, where necessary, manufactured[9]) – whether it be a recession, a moral panic, or a war.

Anyone who thinks the State will save them from the jaws of Capital, I would point out that it is under their rule that it has been allowed to flourish. Capital does not stand on its own, it is the forces of the State which have defended it and will continue to do so. You imagine one exists to keep the other in check. This is how it works in theory, but it is almost never the case in practice. You can write it off as a problem of *corruption*, but I say history has shown corruption to be the rule, not the exception.

Very loosely speaking, this dance of State and Capital - for want of less abstract terms – parallels the dance of political left and right with which we are all so familiar. For this reason, I can side with neither. Both have provided useful elements of analyses, but both have proven themselves ineffective and of too narrow vision. Perhaps the biggest stumbling block for both sides is the inability to imagine social organisation beyond the crowd model. If they consider it, they immediately dismiss it as regressive. And thus they are stuck trying to figure a way forward within a system which by its very nature is a breeding ground for stratification and exploitation.

The Dependent Citizen

I looked into buying land to escape the urban rat race, with the idea of perhaps starting a largely self-sufficient commune. But in my country and indeed many others throughout the world, this is expensive. And once you've bought land, if you want to build any form of residence there you will have to petition the government for permission – which they will look hungrily for reasons to refuse. In most cases, actually useable land is out of the price range of the ordinary working classes.

struggles serve to enrich that new aristocracy who peer down upon us as wolves to lambs. Our strife is their luxury.

The breakdown of traditional community, and of a more communitarian economy has led us into multiple relationships of dependence upon institutions and people who exploit that dependence to increase their wealth and power way beyond our own. The bureaucrat and the boss will tell you that their interests and yours are one, that they want to give you a hand up to the high tables that they eat from. And yet, improvements are few and far between, readily withdrawn when 'crisis' demands it.

Is it coincidence, then, that the lower we sink, the more we struggle, the more readily we will defer to the 'expertise' of our superiors, taking their assurances of benevolent intent in good faith. We place the blame for our continued impoverishment in various places depending on our particular prejudices. The gentry will use their powers as best they can to deflect attention from themselves, typically using the mass media (which they have financial and ideological control of) to misdirect. It does not always work. Sometimes people recognise Capitalism as a source of their disempowerment. They tend to seek resolution in the State. Others recognise the State as a cause of their disempowerment. They often seek resolution in 'the free market'. It's fairly rare for people to refute both on equal footing. And thus, *one hand washes the other*. State and Capital do their dance, tweaking each others noses so that people think history is happening, but little changes. Both sides retain and often expand their power. Any time the lower classes become too self-confident, a crisis will come (born as natural results of a stupid

[9]This should not be taken as an identification with conspiracy theorism. People of that ilk are all too ready to see a conspiracy in any unpleasant spectacle, and all too willing to dismiss the need for their logic to add up. Anti-Statist as I may be, I know that 'non-state actors' are quite capable of atrocities. Do I believe there is a strong element of (usually uncoordinated and indirect) conspiracy though? Certainly.

process. Indeed, he is also free to take out his frustration by going home and fucking his wife[1] in manifold exotic ways – something the poor saps in the tyrannical nation across the border would be arrested for! But how free is he really? It is not merely in his most, for want of a better word, threatening behaviours that he is *managed*, but in the to and fro of the everyday. His every action is dependent upon the *permission of his superiors*. Whenever he tries to spread his wings, a vast web of bureaucracy holds him down and checks him over that he does not step outside the boundaries of 'legitimate individuality'. If he fails to live up to the demands made upon him, he is threatened with the loss of more freedom, more power, even his life itself.

Let's rewind and try another thought experiment. This time, the man has no land. Every square foot of land in the world – even so called 'public' land - is claimed as someone's property. If he wants his own domain, he must pay for it. But he has no money. The only legitimate way for him to get any is to get a job, that is to say, to sell his labour power to someone else – to do something they ask of him in exchange for a reimbursement. That means another layer, multiple layers even, of bureaucracy. Besides having to confess before the State that he may become an officially registered 'citizen', he must undertake multiple interviews, a plethora of forms where he must share personal information, criminal record checks, drug tests, personal references, prove he is qualified with formal certifications, medicals, etc. If he refuses, he is refused – for naturally he is considered guilty until he proves himself innocent. If he succeeds to get through this, and attains to the status of 'employee', he gives up even more freedom because he finds himself servant to another master, inferior to another superior. His time is less his own. For a certain number of hours every day, he is someone else's property. The corporate, hierarchical economic structure

State'.

very much takes its cues from the State, insofar as those who are not at the top of it find their survival dependent on strict obedience and conformity.

Liberals and their kin like to jump on the concept of 'wage slavery' as a myth of the far left. Wage labour is nothing like slavery, they say, for you have a choice about what you do and where you do it. Well, besides the fact that this is not entirely true, seeing as employers *choose you*, not visa-versa, it would seem obvious that having a limited choice in who your master is hardly negates your status as a slave. I'm sure it was always the case that some slave-masters were less cruel than others.

Perhaps it's an unnecessary semantic approach though. There are degrees of serfdom, and for most people 'slavery' describes a specific one of them. The point, however, is that landless people are forced into a degree of serfdom far beyond that of the landed, and that this is typically experienced as a source of unnecessary suffering – as *too hard*. The situation of most people is one of *extreme precariousness, w*here even a person of 'ordinary' wealth can lose their ability so sustain themselves, can lose their home, can lose their whole life, in a very short period of time. But whilst their rhetoric implies otherwise, this precarious form of society is one which elites approve of and wish to uphold because it ultimately serves their interests. A tightrope walker is obedient to orders because he knows that those either side of the wire can shake it, and he will fall. For most of us, our whole life is spent on the wire, and we do what we must in order to stay vertical. Many have adapted to this life and manage to still find a measure of happiness in their various MacGuffins. Many others have not and cannot – it is a constant and unforgiving struggle.

And so we work hard, and we put our faith in those who assure us they have the will and the skills to make our lives better. Their neon slogans tell us a better life for everyone is coming. It never does. Yes, we have a million different products at our fingertips. But we march the aisles of our superstores

seem anywhere near as inclined to this. They are more prone to compliment each other than to tease. I would presume this is because the balance of the sexes has until very recently been such that women were largely constrained beneath men anyway, so there was little danger of them lifting themselves up above other women.

It is this kind of insight that has led some anthropologists to propose that, contrary to the implications of recent history, anarchistic thinking comes naturally to us.

The Dance of State and Capital

I am critical of Capitalism for numerous reasons. The corporate world mirrors that of the State bureaucracy in its phony formalism, standing aloof of the personal and the communal with no regard for them as anything but a deviancy in units of capital. I am a role, a function, and 'beyond my station' I am baggage – an intrusion on economic performance. When we interview for jobs we audition for a part and ring out our personality to fit. We feel pressure to be a version of ourselves more orderly and industrious. Conform to accepted standards, increase your market value! Yes, the Liberal likes to fantasise about how we are born equal, and to note in his speeches that this inherent human equality is inalienable. Commerce says, "not so!"

One does not have to be a Marxist to realise that most people find themselves incredibly disempowered in the workplace. As hired labour power we have little to no say in the venture we are involved in, or how we use our time. We allow ourselves to be repeatedly demeaned for fear that our employer will make good on the ever implicit threat to cast us aside – precariousness, you see. The competitive and impersonal nature of Capitalism means that we are replaceable. Moreover, our daily

In order for sequesterian warfare to function, of course, both sides would have to have enough territory that they were not in direct competition for land and resources. Once that becomes a factor, to destroy or consolidate becomes necessary. It follows that if there were a particularly rich area found desirable by many smaller groups, consolidation may over time balloon the population in that area beyond traditional cohesive sizes. If we look at a historical context such as the 'fertile crescent', that seems to be exactly what we have. This is a swathe of the middle east which was historically very rich ground for agriculture, and is considered the place where agriculture as a standard practice was born. It is also the home of the early 'giant' societies – Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Levant; Comparatively densely populated, metropolitan and stratified – which has led it to be named the 'cradle of civilization'.

Of course, beyond consolidation, a more stable and fruitful environment will likely increase birth and survival rates, and extend lives too. At this point, war begins to become more ultimately pointless in that even if the number killed rises and rises it is closely matched by birth rate such that it does not ultimately serve to keep down community size. Even once we reach the monolith of modern nation states, it still has limited value in psychologically bonding society, but that effect is weak, short-lived, and dwarfed by the suffering concomitant with the violence. More on application of Dunbar's theories later.

Another thing of note that anthropologists have brought to the surface is the relevance of teasing. I cannot say this is true worldwide, but in the societies that I am most familiar with, teasing among male friendship circles is the norm. This is something that has also been observed in more primal, hunter-gather societies. This functions, it has been proposed, as a 'levelling mechanism'; A means by which the members of a group ensure equality, not allowing any member to become so vain as to see his kin as inferior to himself. Women don't

alone among the throng, always looking for novelty to distract us from the absence of strong social and personal foundations. Liberals never tire of telling critics that we are richer than ever before – and yet a peasant farmer of eras past possessed significantly more capital than most of our middle class. And they had community to boot.

Oh, don't get me wrong. I am no proponent of some long lost 'golden age'. I suspect life has been more or less rough since before records began. But I reject entirely the notion that the contemporary Western world is an example of progress in every sense. I may hold to particularly obscure views, but I have a feeling that even the most conventional of minds are sometimes troubled by the intuition that something is very, very wrong.

It is not necessary to imagine the movement towards Total Bureaucracy as resulting from an explicit conspiracy of certain elite powers (though personally I am of the opinion that common interests at the top have combined to create a sort of implicit conspiracy which has benefited a minority very handsomely). There seems to be a tendency in politics, as perhaps with any naval-gazing discipline, to delineation and expansion. In purely aesthetic contexts this has little potential for harm, but in a practical context such as that of politics, where application is at the heart of the matter, idea, theory and opinion quickly become massive hindrances for people just trying to get on with living.

It is easy to imagine how an elementary society could be founded on a few basic dos and don'ts, only for those, over an extended period of time, to be formalised, clarified, protected and extended by an increasing number of rules and regulations, which gets so complex its initial impulse is often totally forgotten and it requires a literal army of bureaucrats and State serfs to oversee and enforce. Eventually you find that your initial plan to set up a few ground rules, so that the guy in the next village over doesn't feel quite so inclined to kill you in your

sleep and steal all your stuff, has resulted in a situation where if you get caught driving a car without the right paperwork, or smoking a plant that you found growing in your garden, you can be assaulted, locked up, and all your stuff confiscated and sold at a bargain price (to aforementioned neighbour) to pay all your fees and fines. If you're hungry and try to hunt a deer, they'll nail you for not having a hunting license, or perhaps a gun license. No money to buy those licenses? Then you better get a job, which will require you to integrate yourself deeply in the bureaucratic system, filling out a stack of forms to ensure your legal 'rights and obligations' are fulfilled, and to give a chunk of your cheque to pay the wages of the guy who spends all day printing out the forms. Got nowhere to live? Well… all the empty houses are private property protected under the law. You could build a shack in the woods though! Nope, that's 'public property', which, contrary to common sense, doesn't mean it is for you to use. Guess you'll just have to sleep in a doorway… Vagrancy, loitering, back to jail you go.

Notice, for example, how an American patriot quacks about the Bill of Rights guaranteeing their liberty. But of course the Bill of Rights does not end with the phrase, 'and this shall be the whole of the law', so that by now even the standardised elementary collection of the US legal code runs to 52 volumes (and growing year on year). Certainly, we are free to *pursue* happiness, in the same way that a chained dog is free to pursue a rabbit.

Of course, I understand that the breadth of human experience means that there is also a sizeable number of ways in which people can be assholes to each other. This seems to be one of the more common objections to any of the political isms

[2]Though even if one ascribes to that argument, it is still bewildering to one such as myself that there are so many people not incensed by the degrees at which a supposedly anti-authoritarian State is willing to stick its fingers into our personal business, undermine our self-determination, and treat us as mere data.

haps it has some hidden or corrupted purpose, and is not desirable to be rid of in its entirety? It has been noted that many indigenous tribes practice so-called 'endemic warfare', which is a state of constant low-level war. Whilst at times this is reminiscent of more modern wars in its violence, it also incorporates heavy elements of ritual and play-acting which are important enough as to often over-ride actual acts of destruction.

It struck me that if endemic warfare is ritually restrained in this way, perhaps it has value beyond conquering or vengeance. Perhaps it exists to keep tribal groups apart. That is to say, perhaps there is a naturally cohesive limit to the size of a social group, and endemic warfare is there not to facilitate the destruction of, or consolidation of one group by another – as would be fairly typical of modern warfare - but to keep groups within that limit. In this way it maintains cohesion through both physically keeping the groups from integrating, and psychologically bonding the group through their warfare ritual. We might call this, *sequesterian warfare*.

The idea that there may be a maximum *psychological* limit to social cohesion was well-stated fairly recently in the so-called 'Dunbar's Number' theory. Some studies on primates indicate that they require a degree of personal contact between each individual, or their society begins to break down. The number of other individuals one primate can keep a 'grooming' relationship with has been measured and apparently differs from species to species. Moreover, the variance has apparently been shown to parallel the size of the neocortex of the animal's brain. Robin Dunbar applied this measurement to humans and deduced a mean size of somewhere between 100 and 230 individuals (a more specific estimate of '148' was given). Supposedly, he went back through the academic literature for any census style data and found many instances of group sizes falling within his estimate. I know little about brain biology, and I haven't studied the data, but the concept makes a lot of sense to me.

the course of history, significantly increased peace amongst men. In fact, the large State is more capable of mobilising enormous numbers of people against each other, and has often done so. When conflict erupts between Micro-States (or clans, tribes, etc), it is limited in scale, and thus in harm. There are fewer combatants, and it is harder for either side to muster the infrastructure or manpower to sustain campaigns against each other. When it erupts between Super-States, its scale is vastly swollen. The size of forces involved means it has much more power to destroy.[8] As for Hobbes maxim that it is still preferable to a 'state of nature': Attempts by sovereign powers to conquer have arguably cost more lives than millenia of so-called anarchy would have.

Besides all that, the lower the population density, the more likely any leader or bureaucratic class are to know those they are sending off to fight. If the life of your kin is on the line, you are liable to think far harder before declaring war. If you are simply sending an indistinct mass of people you are totally estranged from, that is far easier on the conscience. As mentioned before, this principle can be applied in other contexts. For the ordinary person, empathy and concern tend to decrease at distance.

For the likes of the statesman, the historian, the journalist, and the lover of spectacle, these historical dramas often provide quite the thrill. For the people cast to ruin by them, only agony.

Sequesterian Man

But perhaps I am being too dismissive of the idea of war as such. It seems a foul thing, but it is of such antiquity that per-

was accused of atheism.

[8] Of course, technology is another magnifying factor, but I am addicted to my computer, and so not the best person to go into a critique of technology. Please send your queries to Zerzan and co.

which favour a significant degree of, shall we call it, *Deconstruction* – society is broad and complex, therefore to think its governance can be any less is foolish. Convenient as it would be to dismiss this out of hand, there is probably a degree of truth to it.[2] Which is why we cannot stop here. We must extend the concept of bureaucratic Deconstruction out into its greater context - the wider social systems.

Territory and the Crowd

Before we go any further, I ought make a note on a certain element of my perspective. I will talk a lot about the importance of community. But this should not be taken as a negation of the individual. I am in fact a philosophical individualist – but in a purely ontological sense. That is to say that I start as a sceptic and conclude I can be sure of nothing but my own existence, ala Descartes, and from there refuse to accept any attempt to subsume me within a greater essence, in relation to which I am somehow either less real, valid, or important. I would even go so far as to deny myself as a 'member of the human species'. Certainly I have a high degree of biological similarity to other humans, in that regard we can be considered 'of a kind'. But the species as such does not exist, it is an abstract idea in the mind, and therefore to raise 'humanity', or 'society', or any such thing above myself makes no sense to me. Having said that, I recognise the enormous value of community, of social cohesion, to *myself*. Therefore at the same time as being an ontological individualist, and even something of a philosophical egoist, I remain socially conscious and largely lack that inclination to ruthlessly exploit others for one's own gain which is often associated with the philosophy of individualism.

It seems to be quite widely believed that there is a uniform solution (and therefore a single true utopia) because of the existence of a 'human nature' which makes humans fundamen-

tally the same. I don't disagree that there appear to be many 'common' elements, a lot of which are probably inborn. The psychoanalyst in me particularly notices these in common unconscious behavioural mechanisms.

But whilst I don't consider it a lie to say that we are all fundamentally the same, it's just as true to say that we are all fundamentally different. Imagine we are like a computer built on millions of lines of code. It would seem that in all but the most rare cases our basic programs work about the same, that we have the same code in certain key places. But each individual has many unique lines of code. Those small differences can by degrees have massive consequences. When you screw with the chemicals in your brain by taking drugs you can feel wildly different. No doubt had that slight change in the chemical balance existed from birth, as part of your code, you would have lived your life differently, be a different person.

Some thinkers choose to dismiss or downplay our individual differences as something not politically or philosophically relevant, because of their refusal to be abstracted into a convenient universal which the inner ideologue can build with – or at least that's my take. In other words, where the unique individual begins, philosophy ends. The philosopher wants power over things. He wants to be able to take apart reality and rebuild it. For these intellectual exercises his imagination is more or less dependent on abstraction and universals. The uniqueness of individuals is a domain which we cannot really penetrate, cannot know as our own. Perhaps that boundary on our ability to relate as individuals represents for us the greater boundary of our limitation as a phenomenon. If our approach to death is anything to go by, this is something that causes us anxiety. To really accept the freedom of others you have to come to terms with your own fundamental limitation, and reign in your will to control. We all have the TV on but we're watching different shows. Our hearts beat to a different rhythm. That is the way of things. Forgive me, I'm rambling.

on paper but simply doesn't play out in practice. Rulers have doled out cruelty as a matter of course and unnecessarily led their people to ruin enough for the history books to be full of it. Hobbes seems to accept a bad sovereign as a possibility, but finds it acceptable because he judges that even arbitrary or corrupt authority will lead to better results than the natural way, which is the aforementioned 'perpetual war'.

It also might be interesting to note that, whilst he spends plenty of chapters yacking on about religion, when it comes down to actual philosophical descriptions of the world he claims, "To this war of every man against every man, this also is consequent; that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, have there no place. Where there is no common power, there is no law; where no law, no injustice."[7] From this perspective it can be considered that, because there is *no* right and wrong without the sovereign, it is the sovereign's role to *determine* right and wrong. Which means that, by definition, everything the sovereign does is right. I can't help but be reminded of Richard Nixon's famous comment that, "When the president does it that means that it is not illegal."

Ultimately I would go along with the idea of a lack of such absolutes in nature, and man in his natural state. But instead of attempting to forcefully negate conflicting ethics and lifestyles, I propose adapting society to such conflict so that men can disagree without having to be at 'war'. Liberals think they have done this, they have not. If people want control over their own locale, give it to them. Maybe they will never be able to overcome the urge to conquer. But if there is to be an attempt to overcome this regrettable facet of human intercourse, the metropolis is not the place for it.

And here perhaps the most powerful argument: It doesn't appear to me to be the case that large, powerful States have, over

[7] This and other statements show why he, like David Hume a century later,

ated a platform for large scale co-operation and communication. He also makes some other good points and the occasional compelling argument. But we can certainly show up some of his more famous suppositions as misjudged.

For one thing, if you read his rationale behind the above statements, and consider the limited information regarding 'primitive' societies he would have had to work with in mid 17th century England, it seems his representation of the "natural condition of mankind" is actually based entirely on metropolitan man, and an abstract reasoning which takes as a given the estrangement of individuals. In this light, some of his arguments make more sense. The society he is basing his philosophy on is largely, I believe, his own – England during a long civil war. He makes brief mention of Native Americans and dismisses them as an example of human brutishness (something Benjamin Franklin might have taken to task). More recent anthropological research has taught us that, whilst warfare has indeed been an issue for tribal societies, many prehistoric or at least pre-industrial, more or less anarchistic societies were adapted to their environment quite successfully. Not only would it be unfair to paint them in a dystopian light, but it could be argued that they often had more reasons to be cheerful than we do. They had their many weaknesses, of course, but alongside not inconsiderate virtues. Thus the contrary, albeit equally unbalanced conception of the 'noble savage' which would come to pre-occupy other minds. My point being that his description of the natural condition was not the natural condition at all, but the *crowd condition*.

Secondly there is the problem of acceding that much power to a single authority when there is no guarantee that it will show any concern for the well-being of the people. Hobbes supposed that monarchs in particular will tend toward the public interest because their strength is dependent on the strength of their people, their wealth on the wealth of their people, etc. This is one of those arguments which seems to make sense

The question of space, or territory, is central to my concept of Deconstruction – a term I employ to avoid the argued over patronage of more traditional terms such as Anarchy[3] , meaning, ultimately, an enemy of the formal and the fixed, the monolith. I am not as such interested in some coup or revolution where one system is replaced by another 'more just' one, but rather in uprooting these rigid leviathans altogether that much more spontaneous, fluid and personal forms of society may flower – in interrupting the amalgamation of the multitude ways and tendencies of men into an anodyne mass cultural-political whole where the ideal of integration has drained said ways of the vision, personality and potency which made them worthy of pursuing, of taking as our own.

This may on the surface have a ring of right-wing nationalism / culturalism / racialism. Whilst there is conceptual crossover, I have always found those perspectives to be rooted in abstract bonds which have little to no practical value. As an Englishman, I may indeed be able to relate to other English people in certain unique ways, but that does not translate into any meaningful sense of kinship. I have met many people who fit into the same 'traditional' categories as me, for want of a better term, that I would quite happily have nothing to do with ever again. On the other hand, I have made acquaintance of people at something of a cultural distance from me that I would be delighted to have as my neighbours and social colleagues.[4]

I am supposed to show fidelity to the Nation State in part because it is built of 'my people', but how many of us really

[3] Although because it is the philosophy mine is closest to, I will refer to Anarchism when it is more convenient, just know it is in a qualified sense.

[4] The attempt to elevate one race above others is in part at least a transparent attempt to elevate oneself. No racist ever claimed another race to his own was superior. What a racist unwittingly reveals is self-loathing, for he is so disappointed by the quality, or lack thereof, of his own personality that he has to take something as arbitrary as his skin colour and turn it into an excellence he can claim.

consider it so? Even those most dedicated to the idea of patriotism seem to feel enmity toward an abundance of their fellow citizens. Left-leaning variants of this 'abstract identity' politic may be less divisive but they are similarly removed. Humanism, feminism – nice ideals which frankly count for very little once you get down to meat and potatoes. All these things create an *artifice* of kinship, which in practice is shown to be flimsy and not fit for purpose. Notice how Nationalism, for example, becomes most potent through a common enemy, a scapegoat, a war footing, necessary in order to manufacture a sense of kinship among disparate people who would not feel it naturally.

The dominant form of society in our era is that of the *crowd*, what is often referred to as 'mass society'. For most people, for most of human history (by which I include so called prehistory), the norm was to live in more or less small kinship groups – the tribal band or small settlement. People lived within a fairly consistent and familiar environment for their whole life. They grew with the people and the place. This way of life is undermined by urbanisation.

The urban develops around a ripe nucleus – probably a small community that is strategically placed for either agricultural fertility or commerce by way of travelling traders. As more people congregate around this centre, so more industry is required to support them, and thus opportunity builds upon opportunity, so that over time these nuclei continue to grow until they reach the proportions of modern cities. From the perspective of industrial-technological progress, one can see how the city has played a crucial role. Indeed, as an *industrial* space, a place for large scale collaborative projects, the city has been a success. But as a *living* space, it has been a disaster. In kinship society there is typically a sense of closeness, of real community. There is almost a familial relationship among neighbours. Groups of families are bonded over generations. In fact, let's allow a graceful tongued but anonymous cyber anthropologist to sum it up for us:

cluding some which had re-asserted themselves, but the environment had been radically altered.

Nationalism had been growing in Europe, and no doubt the ease at which Napoleon had smashed through the territory converted a lot of people to the belief that a larger, united State was needed in what after the wars had already become the 'German Confederation'. Over the course of the century this happened. To many a modern mind, this will be seen as progress. But consider the upshot. In the 20th century, the united Germany, alongside the other grand power to come out of the process, Austria-Hungary, dragged millions to their deaths in the two World Wars which they are often considered to have been the main instigators of. Anyone viewing the German Nationalism of the Nazi era, with its particularly religious and deferential approach to the concept of 'Nation', would assume that Germany as a nation had existed for centuries! And this particularly virulent Nationalism would turn out to be catastrophic.

This largely undermines the traditional defence of the State as laid out in Thomas Hobbes' 1651 tract, 'Leviathan', which contains within it what might be considered some of the founding political ideas of modernity. For those not familiar, Hobbes famously held that the natural State of men was one of "bellum omnium contra omnes", or war of each against all, and that the life of those existing outside the administration of a powerful authority was "poor, nasty, brutish and short." The only way, he held, to create a stability and security which would allow life to flourish was to establish a sovereign power which was strong enough to hold down any individual or group which might wish to interrupt the peace.

Although many of the specifics of Hobbes' idea have been more or less disavowed (and some of his arguments are truly Orwellian), the basic logic is still the backbone of modern metropolitan political thinking. Hobbes may be right in his supposition that large States can facilitate significant increases in industrial and cultural output. After all, historically they cre-

ally sovereign small and medium-sized secular and ecclesiastical principalities and Free Imperial cities, some of which were little larger than a single town or the grounds of the monastery of an Imperial abbey. Estimates of the total number of German states at any given time during the 18th century vary, ranging from 294 to 348, or more."

Large parts of the territory were caught up in the European wars of religion during the 16th and 17th centuries. Martin Luther himself was born and developed his theology in Saxony, then a Statelet. These wars were ended by the 'Peace of Westphalia' in 1648 which guaranteed freedom of religion and general internal sovereignty to the Statelets. The period that followed was largely peaceful, although some of the larger States, particularly Prussia, would continue to involve themselves in conflicts.

Almost all of the Statelets of the period have not gone down in the history books as great powers. They had little engagement in big global events, they mostly kept to themselves. For this reason, they are taken as 'unremarkable', which to the historian means 'worthless' and to the politician 'inferior'. But this political smallness did not hold back culture. During this period the Germanic territories were strong purveyors of the so-called 'Enlightenment'. Many new and now famous literary, artistic, musical, and intellectual movements flourished. Such names as Bach, Schiller, Goethe and Kant were born and raised in the region. But that is not actually my argument for the benefits. No, for that we need to look at context.

One of the first great steps in demolishing the relative peace of the Kleinstaaterei was a Napoleonic campaign which swept through large parts of the territory. A majority of the Statelets were forcibly united into a much smaller number for easier administration by the French Empire. Some of the larger and more traditional States in the region attempted to fight Napoleon's armies, but were quickly defeated. By the time of Napoleon's defeat, there were still Statelets in the region, in-

"The first major change in settlement patterns was the accumulation of hunter-gatherers into villages many thousand years ago. Village culture is characterized by common bloodlines, intimate relationships, and communal behavior whereas urban culture is characterized by distant bloodlines, unfamiliar relations, and competitive behavior."

Our social space is saturated by foreign elements, increasing population density further and further beyond the limits of cohesion. Our society has increased the pressure on individuals to compete, to 'succeed', and at the same time has wildly diminished the communal foundation which has historically been a source of support, strength and stability. In some cases this is compensated for just enough by a stronger than usual family and friend circle. In many, though – I would argue more, but it may be my bias - alienation is the order of the day. Crowd loneliness and neurosis plague modernity. And yet liberals will hold that it is fundamentally a good system, and that a little job creation here, a few laws there, and everything will be right as rain – or at least, as right as it could possibly be.

I should clarify that I don't consider these problems to be modern as such. They will have existed to some degree in places of over-population since antiquity. In fact, a massive amount of recorded history is a record of the urban and the social conflicts ultimately resulting from it. The sick society is more interesting to the historian and the story-teller than the healthy one because it has more drama to offer. Tales of intrigue and war have a more potent emotional impact on us than those of harmony and leisure (aside, perhaps, from sex). This sad but relatable inclination to consider peace 'boring' has probably just aggravated the wound.

Urban estrangement was easier to avoid in times when city living was not the norm, and when there was enough geographical space for smaller communities to go about their daily lives without regularly rubbing up against each other. With Capitalism, globalism, and the consistent expansion of the industrial

into even the most isolated communities, the problem of estrangement has increased in brevity. We can walk down the street every day and (sometimes exclusively) see people *we have never seen before in our life.* They do not recognise us, they avoid eye contact. Most of us do not know half our neighbours. Even when we manage to become somewhat intimate with our surroundings, the Capitalist lifestyle often demands that we are shifted to new environments, new people. As adults we are typically rendered from the people and places of our childhood, bonds long forged broken. And our labour has no sense of community. I no longer work with and for my people, I work with and for strangers. As a web of alien elements, economic empathy is at a minimum. There is an unhappy, formal, disconnect. It is often said during times of unrest that rioters are fools because they burn and loot their own communities. But they know in their hearts what we now communicate to your head: These are not our communities.

The Metropolis Doctrine and the Insolence of Indigeneity

I do not see a solution to alienation, disempowerment and their many associated maladies in the direction which we find ourselves moving, which is apparently deemed by most to be the right direction. Oh, people disagree on lots of things. One thinks abortion should be illegal, the other does not. One thinks the rich should pay aid to the poor, the other does not. Differences of values (particular or systematised) are common as muck. But so far as I can tell most people either explicitly support or take as a given certain elementary contemporary social relations – i.e. the State, urbanisation, the systematic prostitution of labour. In fact, let's be obscenely reductive and coin a little slogan for the underlying norm:

chist whether one stranger intends to live in a socialistic union, and one in a market; whether one approaches this 'new society' under an organisational platform and another through egoistic acts of insurrection? Anarchy as 'an-arch', no ruler, surely undermines its own logic if its solution to the problem of social hegemony is a different social hegemony. One of the redeeming qualities of the idea of anarchy is its ability to encompass many ways of life and empower people to transcend the limits set by the State. Any Anarchist who wishes to tell me that I only have the right to live in one particular manner is a covert statist. For what difference does it make to me whether I receive my orders from a military junta, a parliament of ministers, or a 'people's free assembly'.

The 'free communities' model will be widely seen as totally unrealistic. I understand some of the reasons behind that – I know I am thinking well outside the box. One does not have to go quite as far as me though, if one is not so radically inclined. There have been some other thinkers who have followed a similar line to me but stopped at the concept of small nations which still resemble the nations of today, only much more limited in size and power. Even this is typically sneered at, according to the argument that the large, industrialised nations have typically progressed further, are wealthier, more secure, wield more influence on the world stage, and so on.

There is a nice historical example which I think might show why I consider this logic at least partly flawed. A lot of people will not realise that the nation of Germany was not actually founded until 1871. Prior to the first quarter of the 19th century, that area of the world was referred to as 'The Holy Roman Empire'. Now, that sounds like another national colossus, but in practice it wasn't. The term later coined to describe this period (pejoratively, of course), was 'Kleinstaaterei', or 'small-statery'. Although it was nominally ruled by an Emperor chosen by the Pope, the territory was throughout most its history composed of, and I quote from Wikipedia here, a "large number of virtu-

Deconstruction contains within it much ambiguity, but intentionally so. The negation of the State is equally a negation of uniformity - contrary to the accounts of a good number of Anarchists. There is only one thing I wish to deny you, and that is your power to control my life. If you have, for example, a morality that is wildly different from my own, I have no desire to impose on you. In separation of our domains, we allow ourselves to more closely follow our will or conscience without the need to compromise.

The intent is not to dismantle the State only to build on its ruins another neatly pre-fabricated system. No, the State is to be tossed out as *clutter*, hindering our freedom of expression and activity, opening up spaces to experiment with living, to build and burn as we see fit. With the rigid formal order untied, society has the potential for a fluidity wherein different people can try different roads according to their own inclination, because it is not necessary that any way of doing things become 'national' or 'official', and thus universal and inflexible. Each group is its own nation, to to speak. And the degree to which they co-operate with others, even compromise with others, and how they decide such things, is entirely down to them.

This approach is not dogged by a teleology of progress, by which I mean the assumption, conscious or otherwise, that there is a historical imperative or evolutionary process directing us toward a 'best of all possible societies'. Certainly this idea of a right path appeals to human frailty, but it is also the foundation for a wealth of tyranny. Anarchism and its associated libertarianisms have stumbled into this hole by getting caught up in arguments over structural and methodological questions which are in the end matters of preference. What *must* the world look like without the State, how *must* this new order be achieved? All sides are guilty of this sort of pontification, to some degree (whilst I try hard to avoid it, I'm sure I am still guilty of it on occasion).What should it be to the Anar-

'The State must be wise, the Citizen must be righteous, the Economy must be fair, and the Nation must be united.'

You see why I said reductive. I could have worded it differently (for example, the Economy must be 'productive' might be more representative in the long term) but it gets across my gist in a snappy way. The correct meanings behind 'wise', 'righteous', 'fair' and even 'united' are the sort of things debated endlessly among disciples of the ten thousand ideologies worldwide. But statism, citizenship, industry, and nationhood in themselves – these criterion go largely unmolested outside of very radical (read 'extremely niche') circles.[5] Even grand revolutions mark and formalise a transformation in dominant values and a shift in socio-economic roles, but still have an element of conservatism insofar as they do not challenge what I'm going to dryly call the 'Metropolis Doctrine'.

The Metropolis doctrine is a way of looking at social organisation from an urban perspective. This is the perspective largely represented in historical philosophy because the philosophers have always been city folk. I doubt tribal and rural peoples have over the centuries had much need for political philosophy, because they have not perceived any essential social crisis. Their small-scale, communitarian, local systems have usually functioned quite acceptably for them. From economics to ethics to conflict resolution, they have had their own ways of doing things which for us in the so-called 'developed world' are often tacitly dismissed as, if not 'primitive', certainly 'traditional'.

As certain settled areas became particularly population dense, and the city was born, problems naturally arose – problems which have and will further be discussed throughout this

[5]With occasional exceptions. For example, there is a desire among a significant minority, such as many European Union bureaucrats, for the State to swallow up nations (in a manner not dissimilar to the US federal state, which whilst it is forced by the constitution to give some recognition to the sub-States, would prefer to negate them entirely to more empower it-

essay. Population had passed the point at which a natural coherence can cope. The social environment was becoming less intimate, less truly 'local', and evolving into a constant to and fro of strangers - an aggregate of alien and changing elements. It's no great leap to assume this significantly affects human thinking and behaviour.

Metropolitan life is a life of constant crisis because it is continually dogged by the question of how to resolve the disputes and make it function correctly or ideally – based on the assumption that it *can* actually do so. Besides that, it is by its nature a perpetual stumbling block in our need for intimacy because it has as its foundation *strangeness*. In fact, we might literally say that it is 'organised estrangement'.

The Metropolis Doctrine has been spread widely across the globe, often by the sword or some more subtle form of coercion, and usually under impetus of imperialism or colonialism. Where indigenous identity could not be stamped out, it was more-or-less integrated. Christian missions,[6] for example, when attempting to convert local populations from their religion, often allow apparently un-Christian beliefs and practices to remain as traditions so long as they are subordinated to Christianity.

The industrial revolution (among other things) was a more recent factor in accelerating urbanisation, as it refocused production away from rural areas, villages and small towns, to large towns and cities. Although that's not to imply there had been no shift to the Metropolis Doctrine taking place before then. But the city was turned into an economic hub way beyond what it had been, causing even more people to flock to them, and a concomitant increase in density.

self), which could be construed as a less niche 'radicalism' which in part goes against my depiction.

[6] I have particular recollections of it in Christian contexts, though I'm sure other religions have done the same. Muhammad's 'satanic verses' episode might be considered an interesting example.

they are not a nobody, a statistic. Their cry is heard among their kin, the effective power of their will, at least within their home locale, is increased. Secondly, it restores cohesive community and the positive effects that bestows on individuals, without requiring a radical negating of their individuality and personal uniqueness.

The substance here is to ameliorate the contradiction between the individual and society which is in my judgement the crucial problem of political philosophy and of great import to other problems of philosophy (and psychology) beyond. The common response has been this: Limit yourself for the good of society! A proponent of Deconstruction says: Limit society for the good of yourself!

I recognise that for a minority of people, gentrification, urbanisation, globalisation, capitalism, and other facets of estranged society are favourable. Some can adapt to it and play it to their advantage. The rest, I propose, will find that, whilst certain elements hold appeal to them, they find themselves and their lives overall much diminished. They sense themselves daily to be, if not outright slaves, certainly subordinates. Despite the abundance of neighbours and choice of possible partners, a sense of loneliness is common. Neurosis circulates like a plague.

Perhaps I am mistaken, however, and it is just a few of us who are over-sensitive. Perhaps almost every reader will find the sentiment of this essay unfathomable and its logic perplexing. In which case, it is a marginal interest - but an interest nonetheless, and a contrary one. Thus in your own rejection its logic is illuminated. Our kind must secede. We have, perhaps you might say, feral hearts. Whether you judge us to have the *right* to secede is not our concern – we never made any contract, we are not immigrants to your order. If you judge it foolish, then let us be fools. If we are denied land and liberty, we will attempt to take it *by forbidden means*.

another day? Human life would collapse entirely in a groan of despair.

So, whilst cold-bloodedness and guile can surely help a person rise up the social hierarchy, we should not assume the lords and ladies of the world to be any unique form of bastard. I don't believe in the saying that power corrupts. These individuals merely wield an inordinate amount of power which enables them to express the same sort of selfish disdain that ordinary metropolitan folk worldwide display every day, but in a more broadly effective and so philosophically recognisable way. I am not casting moral judgement. Were I to do so, I would doubtless find *myself* guilty. An inquisitor looking for un-Christian behaviour in this world would find his torture chambers never sated. To think that the solution to the 'social question' is a matter of rooting out bad seeds seems like quite the hiding to nothing to me. The soil ought instead to be improved… To coin a very trite analogy.

Distopia: For Feral Hearts

So what I propose is a change of direction, from more and more integration, cohabitation, and conciliation of power, to a breaking up of both social spaces and power structures. To reduce dominion, disempowerment, and estrangement, not by hyper-regulation of a complex mass system, but by breaking down that system to a more personal scale. In practice, this means the dismantling of the central State and rigidly statist concept of Nation, and a return to a smaller, clan style of community living. To word it another way, interrupting the tendency toward homogenisation and disbanding the impersonal mass into smaller, reconciled kinship groups. This carries, in theory, a two-fold benefit to the life of the individual. First, they find themselves to have a greater control over their social environment, because it has been brought back to a scale where

Whilst the convenient notion that we have a duty to 'civilize' indigenous and isolated people has waned in its more vulgar forms, it continues in the belief that we do the righteous thing by spreading Western style liberal-democracy and Western values – moral, economic and social - to the rest of the world. Of course, even when it is born of war, it is not seen as imposition, it is seen as giving them something that they have an innate desire for. In some cases, the desire is indeed present, particularly in moderately industrialised nations with a history of totalitarian rule. But the Metropolis Doctrine is not god-given, is not a proven, infallible, universal ideal, and should not be envisaged as such. Naturally it suits State and Capital that the rest of the world should follow along because then they have more pockets to dig into, more lives to control, and more friends to play with. But the average Afghan farmer who finds himself in the middle of a war for his soul could give as little of a fuck about liberal democracy as he does the salafism of the Taliban. He just wants to be left alone.

As a general rule, small and intimate communities – we'll call them… 'clans', for want of a better term - do not require any grand constitution to govern their relationships. We all know this from experience of our friend and family circles. Conflicts arise, and because they are on a clan level, they are dealt with privately, and typically mitigated by the compassion and understanding born of intimacy. Even in the absence of a wider support group, i.e. a neighbourhood who take an interest in the well-being of other residents, it is still comparatively rare for family or friend groups to ask for State intervention in their affairs. I say comparatively because of course it does happen, particularly in cases of more extreme behaviour (and also when the State has already weaseled its way into the relationships, such as through the institution of marriage). If your friend or family member had broken a law, and you disapproved, you would either talk to them about it or simply respect their choice because you have love for them. Turning them over to the State

would be the last course you'd want to take. But that is exactly what the State demands. To paraphrase Ted Kaczynski, it requires that all personal or local loyalties are subordinate to loyalty to the system. The official decree is not merely that you desist from protecting killers and rapists from justice, but that you turn your children over if you catch them with cocaine or stolen goods. But how many of us would do that? In effect we are all more or less Anarchists when it comes to our kin.

It is different when we are dealing with strangers. There is no intimacy, it is much harder to empathise. It is much easier to rat out someone else's kin because there is no local effect, so to speak. The consequences are born by someone else, in some other locale. Many people will understandably consider this a mere fact of human nature, and follow through that it makes sense to have an impersonal arbitrator (if you accept the State as that) dealing with what could be considered impersonal conflicts. In fact, part of the logic of the law, in the eyes of lawmakers, is that it is in a certain sense unbiased. A murderer is dealt with the same (theoretically at least) whoever he may be, whoever he may know. From a purely metropolitan perspective, I understand this approach.

But, if one considers this disconnection of judgemental power from the individual and the clan an acceptable compromise, or even a favourable arrangement, it ought be noted that the same problem which gives arise to this need for formal arbitration – strangeness – also leads to a host of other social problems. Let's be predictable and take Capitalism as an example. Even if one rejects the concept that Capitalism has something inherently exploitative and predatory about it, I don't think it will be argued over that there have been innumerable cases in corporate history of very nefarious and 'unethical' practice. Sometimes the victims have been employees, other times customers. The basic narrative which unites most of these cases is an individual, or more often group of individuals, in positions of trust and authority instigating policies and undertaking practices which they know will hurt or in some potent way negatively affect a lot of people, but will enrich and empower themselves.

The same is naturally true of politicians. In the first place it should be obvious to all that they cannot truly represent all the people they claim to. If they were to do that, they would have to live in a state of constant self-contradiction. They cannot be the kindly father we wish for them to be, because there is a total lack of intimacy. Half of the things they enact on the public they would not dream of putting their own family through. They are 'out of touch' in a more thoroughgoing way than the term is typically used to imply, because they are entirely lacking in any sort of relationship with most of the people they are tasked to represent (and, if we're honest, rule over), let alone intimacy. But then, if they really cared, how could they do their job? Back on Kaczynski's point, a degree of dis-passion is required for the system to function.

And there is no fundamental difference here between a Stalin and an Obama. They can both issue orders condemning people to death, whether guilty of some great crime or totally innocent, because these people *are nothing to them*. And I don't mean this in a moral sense, rather a very practical one. Equally, for example, starving African children mean next to nothing to me. If I ponder it as an abstract idea, I recognise it as a horrible thing, certainly. But if I open up in all honesty to myself I see that it does not cause me noticeable concern, it does not weigh heavy on my mind, I am not moved to lend immediate assistance. People will say that I must be a sociopath, and I say those people are full of shit. It is really just a matter of that old saying "out of sight, out of mind". One is simply less affected by the *unfamiliar*, because one is emotionally separated from it by a *gulf of estrangement*. It is futile to feel guilty about, for if we felt the agony of strangers as potently as we feel that of ourselves and our kin, how could any one of us go on living

Bad Moon
Metropolis… By Strange Command
A Deconstruction Manifesto
2017-05-21

Directly on behalf of authors.

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proletariat', a majoritarian State, were properly realised, a lot of Anarchists and libertarian leftists would consider it a quite acceptable outcome. Of course, within philosophy semantics is typically the big sticking point. For some might say that majoritarian rule is a negation of the State as such. Others might hold that any form of collective governance counts as Statism. Most, I suspect, would fall somewhere in between the two.

The question of how you hold together a rigidly egalitarian system without a State is one that rather haunts the 'urban' libertarian leftists like Chomsky and co. A common approach, as Landstreicher hinted at, is to play semantic dodgeball so that what a more traditionally red Communist would consider a type of 'Workers' State' becomes a 'People's Free Council' or some such jargon, to the end that what is functionally the same as a State is denied as such.

It's true of any mass system that to be maintained it requires one of two things: Either a spiritual unity, so to speak, in which all embrace the system as coincident with their best interests; or the employment of overwhelming force to keep people within the lines laid out by that system. It is worthy of note that the Marxists reconciled both of these insights in their roadmap to 'True Communism'. For Leninists, the precondition of the 'withering away of the state' was always the evolution of 'Communist Man', that is to say, the mass adoption of a deeply-entrenched communist morality or mind-state. Initially, a repressive 'dictatorship of the proletariat', or Workers' State, would be required. The State could only disappear when each man *embodied* the ideals of the State. To quote Lenin, "…People will gradually become accustomed to observing the elementary rules of social intercourse… without coercion, without subordination, without the special apparatus for coercion called the state." What this really means is that (in the context of a mass system, at least) the pre-condition for the disappearance of the State is that every man must have the State in his head (and I mean *the* State, not just *a* State), to which he is,

shall we say, spiritually obedient. 'Big Brother' is then truly always watching, for he is the Freudian Superego - "a garrison in a conquered town." Thus the logic of indoctrination. There have been plenty of attempts to push towards this, all of them thus far with limited (albeit by no means insignificant) success. I hardly think it smart to depend upon this, nor do I think the idea would appeal to anyone but those already enamoured with and / or prospering through the system in question.

The warmth that the popular left shows toward bureaucracy in general strikes me as wildly misguided. Bureaucracy by its very nature tends toward hierarchy. It's a built in and essential feature. If you are in favour of egalitarianism, why would you so enthusiastically vote for a system of leadership? The European Union is popular among British leftists. Ultimately I think the blind spot lay in their emotional attachment to the concept of 'union'. The approach is always marked by a desire to bring everyone and everywhere together, and the current logic is that the only practical way to do that is through bureaucratic State systems. Thus you vote for the EU thinking you are increasing unity. Maybe in some very limited way you are – symbolically at least. But you are also voting to expand the size, reach and domain of the bureaucratic, ruling class. If you want equality, surely smashing hierarchy is the right approach, not acceding to it more.

I've put a similar point to a leftist friend who, after a little prodding, announced that it was a matter of the lesser of two evils. The left-wing bureaucrat may not be good, but he holds back the capitalist, who is worse. The farmer keeps the wolves away! As I have said, I don't consider the two so contradictory, but that is of course debatable. I say even if you believe that, keep in mind that you are supporting the expansion of enormous systems of control. They will never be open to giving up that kind of power. People almost never go along with their own demotion. And it can be turned on you in a moments no-

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average for U.S. representatives of about three quarters of a million each.

would be useful in the achievement of near-term goals, even if, ultimately, it stands in contradiction of the philosophy. Or perhaps you might consider it helpful to get involved with a Libertarian party, or to institute systems of direct democracy. Hardcore Anarchists will tell you not to do that, that it's counter-revolutionary. I say, use your best judgment. I can't pretend to know a right road. Put plenty of thought into it though. And try not to come to conflict with each other over such differences, as has so often happened in radical circles.

When it comes down to more immediate groupings, however, I propose keeping things below Dunbar's number of about 150. If things expand significantly beyond that, consider splitting the group somehow. To whatever degree more bureaucratic elements have to be employed on a higher level, this base grouping is the heart (outside of you, the individual, that is).[16]

Who, if anyone, will form the frontline of Deconstruction? My heart says: Outsiders, the unintegrated, mindful misfits. But that is biased toward my own experience. These things tend to take much more practical shifts and permutations to get off the ground. So perhaps it will be young, idealistic programmers, who have been taught that they can build something to suit any function. Even without politicisation, they may clip away at the wings of bureaucracy merely to improve efficiency. We will see… or we won't.

Who are we?
We are **BAD MOON**.
If you are in solidarity with us, you're welcome to use this alias.

[16]Even if something as unsavory as representative democracy were found needed, some of its worst elements could be diminished by a delegate only having to represent 100 or 200 voices. Compare that to the current

tice – more so than it has already - and you will have consented to give them all the guns.

For many Anarchists the great evil is hierarchy. This may be stating the obvious, but my concern is not with hierarchy *as such*, but rather with subjugation, which is to say, enforced hierarchy. Not with authority, as such, but with authority by violence. It seems sensible to say that any particular venture or project might require some sort of organisational structure wherein a lesser or greater degree of deference is given to those judged to have superior experience, skill or knowledge. If I am in, say, a boat building team, and insist that I be given an equal say on the method of construction, I'd be a fool, because I know jack shit about building boats. Of course, this sort of logic is often applied to representative democracy. We do not have the skills and learning to govern, therefore we must defer to people that do! Aside from the more general problems with democracy, such as real world issues of scale (one million people deciding the fate of another half million, surely obscene) it must be remembered that you do not simply entrust these 'representatives' with an organisational role, you grant them real power over you. You say, "this is the person, these are the people I would like to be able to decide whether I am rich or poor, whether I live or die." We are cattle voting on which farmhand wields the prod. Even if you are willing to follow Hobbes in accepting the risks as collateral of a necessary evil, surely you would like to expand your choices, to increase your odds, to have more power over your life? Is your imagination really so stunted that it cannot penetrate beyond the status quo? I accept that many of my ideas are and will probably remain too radical for the vast majority of people. But there are stops on the path to those ideas which far from being radical just seem like common sense.

An element of the logic of Deconstruction is that you should never invest too much power in one place. Even what appears the most benevolent institution may turn and use that power

against you. The god that saves is cut of the same cloth as the one that damns. Most of us have at some point been betrayed by one or more of those closest to us – family, friends, lovers. How much easier, then, for someone who does not even know our name? Although checks and balances may seem a way to take the risk out of this, they are vulnerable to the same criticism. They are equally remote. And they tend to be overseen by the peers of those they are there to keep in line. Whilst a steel worker may think that a Democrat represents his interests more than a Republican, it is usually the case that such 'rival forces' have more common interest with each other than with those they are tasked to represent. If you allow a class of 'superiors' to develop, they will probably tend to bolster their positions, increase their power. No Illuminati conspiracy is needed.

So, it turns out that despite holding leftism at a distance, I am a proponent of *class war*. It makes me a little nauseous to use a term like that, to be honest, because, like a number of my contemporaries, I am sick of Marxism. In case it has not been made clear though, I shall restate (or perhaps state for the first time) some crucial points to distinguish my approach from old left ones. I do not, as such, feel any strong class identification. As an individualist, I refuse any attempt by old school class war academics to subsume me beneath the 'cause'. I am not interested in sacrificing my life for the good of the 'proletariat' (unless my life is already so hopeless that I am ready for suicide anyway). Rather, I take it to be in my self-interest – that is to say, I take up this 'class interest' as *my* interest. It is not a thing to which I bow, as a Christian to the commandments of his God. Rather, I am master of it, never letting it use me for its own ends, instead using it to strengthen myself. Whilst the interests, the cause, may be 'common', that is not to say we participate in them as something 'greater' than ourselves, only that we recognise certain equivalences in our individualities.

I think land-acquisition crucial. Buy your own, or, in order to increase the amount of land and its mutuality, crowd fund it through the community. Perhaps in the short term it will be possible to acquire land in rural, remote or abandoned areas and attain an effective, albeit insecure autonomy. I am personally inclined to very softly support any regional independence movement insofar as it chops States into more manageable pieces.

Only when a law is generally obeyed, or infractions well hidden, does it have any hope of being enforced. For the lone individual, civil disobedience carries with it a sizeable risk of punishment, because the justice system is built to cope with rogue elements. If civil disobedience is carried out publicly and on a large scale it overwhelms the systems capacity, and insofar as the law cannot be enforced it is undermined. It becomes a laughing stock. Form civil disobedience action groups.

Remember informality. You are supposed to act befitting of your social role and station. From the top to the bottom there is a cognisant design… in fact, let's get creative with language here. There is a *Fascismo in our collective consciousness.* Perhaps what Freud called the 'superego', that accumulation of voices which tells us what we are *supposed* to do, and which attempts to impose a cultural order on us, redirecting our hearts. Don't act *possessed*. Don't be a bureaucrat. Guard your deference.

Anarchists debate amongst themselves to what degree organisation is legitimate. Again I'd say it's ultimately a matter of preference. Seeing as Deconstruction is not, in my formulation at least, a moral philosophy, the means do not have to be consistent with the ends. Which means one does not have to scrupulously avoid bureaucratic structure when this becomes a stumbling block. Having said that, bureaucratic attitudes need to be ditched. If you turn back to thinking like a Statist, you may as well abandon Deconstruction.

For example, perhaps an international Deconstruction organisation, with elements of fixed, semi-hierarchical structure

guably diverge here from the traditional Anarchist line in that I consider process inevitable and crucial. Less radical undertakings can form a bridge to a more radical future. Not to say, on the other hand, that I side with the Marxists and their 'dictatorship of the proletariat', which predictably proves counterproductive. But I am open to gradualism in some form. Which doesn't mean that radicalism has to be put on hold. The arsonist, the black marketeer, the hippie and the direct democrat may all turn out to be allies in the long term. As needs repeating, the particular approach is entirely up to you. This chapter is no platform.

Some of the transformations to be wrought will have typical economic value, as in the case of local and counter-economics. But let's not forget the call for grooming. The average 'community centre' in any town is just a government owned building that is hired out – a commercial venture. Create real community centres. Take over an empty building and turn it into a walk-in social hub. Put on free festivals. Get high with strangers. Share your skills. Exchange favours.

Those are attempts to increase bonding within the crowd. But ultimately that is a transition which can only go so far. It has limited efficacy in the empowerment of the individual. Sooner or later what is required is the sequestering of autonomous spaces, which can be used either to found particular intentional communities, or for some other general Deconstruction related enterprise or activity which, under the auspices of State and Capital, would either not be allowed or would be exploited. Of course, any time communes or enclaves which attempt to actively shirk the State are created, they are often targeted, and easily broken. The Branch Davidians at Waco are a famous modern example, though it has no doubt been an issue throughout history, i.e. the Church's putting down of numerous anti-clerical sects, such as the Brethren of the Free Spirit. Considering the purview of the State is currently… everywhere, this is inevitably going to be a long term goal. Still,

Where an agenda deviates from my desires and needs, I will unashamedly dismiss it.

The typical fanatic – shit, probably most people with a political philosophy – like to concern themselves with *justice*. They are always arguing over what is objectively the *right* thing to do. I ask, whose right? I admit of my own philosophy: I judge it right for me. But in the same breath I would quite accept that, in some regards at least, Capitalism is right for the Capitalist, bureaucracy is right for the bureaucrat; In the same way that theft is quite right for the thief and rape right for the rapist.[11] That is why these things exist. What really is injustice but the begrudged disadvantage of the aggrieved? It is a concept created by victims. I consider myself a victim (as we all do in some regard), but I will not cry out injustice, and rifle around for arguments from 'natural law' or 'inalienable truth'. I will simply state, "I do not like this! I am suffering, and I wish it to stop!"

Words like 'egoism' and 'selfishness' are not to me dirty words. The left has tended to demonise them because they are judged to be the motivating forces behind Capitalism, the State, etc. Thus, the logic goes, the way to be free of them is to free the world of egoism, selfishness and certain other corollaries. But as far as I can tell, I am an ego, I am a self. Even people who come across as selfless only act so because they get some sort of psychological satisfaction from it. Could it not, in fact, just as well be argued that the 'lower classes' ought become *more selfish*. They outnumber the gentry by a huge margin. If they simply decided "I want more power for me and mine, and I shall take it from those who have the most," how could our current extreme divisions of power stand? It is this kind of ruthless selfishness which allows people to join the gentry, and it is this which can destroy them.

It is also important to note that many of the qualities popularly associated with selfishness are not inherent to it. For ex-

[11] I was not meaning to directly parallel those two with Capitalism and bu-

ample, fucking other people over in order to get ahead. That is not something fundamental to selfishness. Rather, that is selfishness within the context of a highly stratified, highly competitive society. It appears to be a more or less adaptive drive which is in and of itself amoral. Speaking for my own selfishness, it calls out for community. I dislike conflict, my selfishness demands peace. I find competition stressful, my selfishness wills co-operation. At the same time, however, I resent being powerless. My selfishness hungers for love, recognition, sexual satisfaction, other fairly standard human needs, perhaps some quite unique ones. Although I consider myself to have a generally kind and friendly nature, when faced with frustration, I recognise the potential for my selfish drives to boil over and lead me into committing 'anti-social', 'immoral' acts.

I feel this sort of self-knowledge leads one to a better understanding of humans generally (ahh, more of that dangerous generalising). It may be necessary for me to shoot an oligarch. It may be necessary for a community to lock up a child molester. But to consider any of these predatory characters a 'monster' or somehow fundamentally 'evil' is naive. I quite recognise the potential for all these things in myself, given the right context. No doubt if I had been born into the gentry, I would not be writing this now. I am sure that part of the reason I am in favour of Deconstruction, or anarchy, is that I am weak. Other weak people might (do) use a different logic and conclude State Socialism is in their interest. That is how it works. None of us is absolutely right, because there is no absolute right. We are forced to best approximate what is right for us. We may turn out to have misjudged. We can only learn this by practice – theory only goes so far.

We are really in need of a new breed of 21st century urban rebel. The radical fringes of left and right are overly nostalgic, each with their saints, and their captivation with militant chic.

reaucracy. I just picked two things very commonly considered 'wrong'.

ture, I am not willing to dismiss it in the way the Primitivist does (not yet, anyway). I can envisage how automation may ultimately liberate us from work, for example. But its power to negate freedom, dull the wits, and escalate alienation should also be kept in mind.

Seeing as it is not in our philosophical nature to conquer power, as such, we must *undermine* it by on the one hand disrupting and weakening it, and on the other supplanting its infrastructure with informal, small-scale or decentralised alternatives.

For the typical right-libertarian, to weaken the State automatically invokes its 'civic' replacement through market mechanisms and private interests. But I have to lean to the left on this one and say that's not necessarily a great improvement. The private forces with the most established ability to step in are mega Capital, those with extraordinary wealth and reach, and thus, or so it seems to me, you pull back one hand of the gentry only to push the other forward. In effect both 'public' and 'private' are almost always forces of alienation for the ordinary individual. What is required is a third realm, which is to a high degree localised, communal, personal – I can't think of a perfect word for it… 'familiar', perhaps. Co-operatives might typically be considered an example of this, but I am sceptical. From what I have seen, usually all that constitutes a co-operative is a more equal balance of pay and the occasional vote on business decisions. That makes it more democratic, which may well be an improvement (individuals being moderately more empowered), but it is not as intimate as I am imagining. Although what I imagine is arguably very impractical, at least for the time being. What I think is ultimately needed (in work as in community) is the decline of alienation to the extent that the yawn between individuals is nowhere near so gaping.

In initial instances this will have to be adapted as best as possible to a mass context, because that is what is at hand. I ar-

that are unaffiliated but move in the same general direction. Examples include anonymous browsing and P2P messaging, distributed networks, digital currencies, dark markets, online whistle-blowing, ethical hacking, data piracy, home 3D printing, open source software, and similar projects.

Much of the time explicitly political terminology is kept to a minimum. And thus there is no single developed ideology behind the movement. But there does seem to be a general desire for increased personal privacy and liberty, freedom of information, as well as a sense that the prevailing political and economic paradigms are in the process of shifting and are doomed to become more or less obsolete. The explicitly anti-State section of this movement have been dubbed 'Crypto-Anarchists' (crypto as in cryptography). This approach strikes me as the most immediate source of hope and empowerment for those inclined to Deconstruction.

Whether or not technology more generally will be a help or hindrance to the Decon minded is an open question. Blockchains – that is, distributed digital transaction ledgers – such as that employed by Bitcoin could be used to pare back bureaucracy, but could also theoretically be used to track people in a 1984 style dystopia. I once worked a job where I was given a scanning device which made part of the job somewhat easier, but it was also rigged to track our progress and calculate our average speed. If we did not work at an unreasonably rushed pace, our wages were automatically docked. Sadly it was not big enough to wedge clogs in.

Lest we forget the tyranny of the alarm clock. It has those amicable uses which we we do not resent it, and yet it is also an essential precondition of a greater slavery, the secretary of Capital. I could use a gun to shoot my masters. But the 'executive investment fund' will one-up me with rocket barrages. I cannot hope to muster such power. And frankly, better for almost everyone that I don't. Technology empowers us in one breath only to ensnare us in another. Because of this complex dual na-

Certain stereotypes exist which are well-worn, idolised, and thus comfortable to inhabit, but that bring with them a host of prejudices. Not to speak against hindsight, a valuable tool, but it is easy to become a reliquary of summer's long since passed.

With my many criticisms of leftist thought, I cannot consider myself a leftist, although I may make points, such as in my critique of Capitalism, that seem traditionally leftist. I also sometimes say things which have a right-wing tenor, but I am not a rightist either. I may to most appear as an obvious Anarchist, and yet for many Anarchists I would not be accepted as such. As a person with a proclivity for analysis, I cannot in good conscience ascribe to any particular philosophy aside from my own unique synthesis / genesis, for which there is no specific name precisely because it is, as of yet, mine alone. My hope is that the basic principles of my philosophy are such that you will find them easy to make your own, to adapt to your unique insight.

Work Harder, Spend More

Steal yourself into any contemporary protest movement and chances are you will find one of their core demands is 'more jobs'. It is as if what every person wants in their heart is just to have a job, or be paid a bit more. It does not often strike anyone that we might instead try and overcome the exhaustive industry that consumes so much of our lives. Certainly this may be considered a utopian enterprise, far less practical than making the economy a little 'fairer'. But even the least ambitious reaches, a small decrease in daily working hours, for example, remain marginal demands. It will be argued that working hours have been falling since obscene peaks in the 19th century. But the eight hour work day became a norm in the first quarter of the 20th century. 100 years later it remains so, despite increases in productivity and major technological developments.

Of course, not everyone wants to be *free* of work, but most would like some major change to the form of our economic life, whether to be self or co-operatively employed, to work less, to have the security to flit between jobs at will, or to be at liberty to choose their own hours without being tied to a rigid and repetitive '9 to 5' style contract.

It apparently requires some intellectual maneuvering to think outside of the paradigm of our era, the paradigm of *ever-increasing productivity*. The work ethic is one of the cornerstones of our society. Try telling someone you have a strong distaste for work, even just 'hard' work, and you will be glared at like a leper. Every good citizen must work hard, no matter what kind of nonsense job he might be doing. And yet, at the same time, we have recognised and used hard labour as a form of punishment. One, in fact, too cruel for more progressive prisons.

Among the left, to be anti-work is usually considered 'bourgeois', necessarily parasitical. In my estimation this too readily buys into the mainstream narrative of Capitalism – progress and well-being is dependent on economic growth, and any job contributes to this. Thus, we are led to believe that to work, and then to work harder is valuable to society whatever it is you may be doing.

Every few years we are told that our productivity has significantly improved our lives. Every generation is told it's better off than the preceding one, even when experience tells us otherwise. Even Millenials, clearly fucked over by comparison to their parents, stuck in a life of debt, to whom the idea of owning a home is now a luxury earned through decades of labour, are led to believe that, even if things seem bad, they are overall 'better off'. There is always some set of figures that can be pulled out to justify this. But they are usually abstract figures that don't truly reflect the everyday realities of our lives.

Of course, it is in the interest of the gentry that we believe such myths. So long as we believe the system is working for

down certain thoughts that I have played with in my mind as potentialities…

What is most useful about you to the gentry, what is it they most require of you? At this juncture my mind says: productivity and obedience. Therefore, rescind both. Contribute to the official economy as little as possible. Every officiated transaction enriches and empowers the corporate State. Do not assume a small business is necessarily outside the paradigm. Engage in counter-economics, black markets, tax avoidance. When convenient, use barter or direct trade. Online anonymous marketplaces currently exist to sell drugs, fake ID's, credit card information, etc. Expand them to include all types of legal goods. Use untraceable digital currency. Be your own bank. Steal from the rich and powerful. Counterfeit currency. Break copyright. Ignore patent. Bootleg. When you see a monopoly, split it. Find new and creative ways to disrupt the world of finance.

For me crime is in some sense inextricable from any such radically libertarian philosophy. You can make the choice to avoid committing any actually legislated crimes, but in consciously turning against the State, you become essentially criminal by virtue of your rejection of those who make and enforce the law – not merely the particular persons, as the democrat would, but the stations. You become, for all intents and purposes, an 'enemy of the State'.

The anarchistic, libertarian movements of the 19th and 20th centuries have waned to the extent that they are no longer even fringe, but a fringe within the fringe. There are, however, new forms developing under the surface. The current hotbed of such tendencies is an online movement which so far as I know has gone unnamed, but which stands broadly speaking for decentralisation and distribution.

There are a growing number of attempts to use the internet and computer software and technologies to replace traditional power structures, sidestep central control and surveillance, and undermine monopoly, by many groups and persons

consider it a heroic act, a just act! Put this bully in a police uniform, have him carry out the exact same actions, and the response would be different, because we have been programmed to believe that, however much it may *seem* otherwise, the police officer exists to help us and make our life better. This is simply *not true.* A cop is an enforcer. What he enforces is whatever he is told to enforce. Note how the police keep doing their job in the most brutal of dictatorships, following orders that are transparently repugnant. But we are blinded by that vision of the State as somehow essentially legitimate. We see the uniform and we bend our knee. Like royalty of old, we accept that they have a right above and beyond.

The policeman says, "do not resist arrest." I can think of few demands more demeaning. I say, *resist arrest*… in the broadest regard! For what is more right to a person than the free exercise of their own powers, and what more natural than to resist attempts at their coercion.

Undoing the Knot

My language in the above few paragraphs will give away that I got rather fiery for a moment in a way that will no doubt chase more meek readers away. But as noted previously, there is no necessity that we agree on this. If you are on board with the idea of Deconstruction, you can apply and pursue it in your own particular way. Which makes it rather difficult to neatly tie off this essay. Usually a writer might discuss his thoughts on the correct way to apply the theory. For us I'm not sure there is a correct way, as such, only choices. But in that light, I may as well express a few disjointed thoughts on method. Albeit the practical side of things was never my strong point. In order to save us later blushes, I ought clarify that I am not actually recommending anything herein to the reader, only noting

us, and will work for our kids, we are to a large degree politically neutralised. Equally, recall how the culture of debt, which even a political incompetent can see to be a stupid idea, not only goes largely unchallenged, but is often promoted by supposed experts. It is the norm to be terminally swamped by bills and taxes, often living day to day (unable to accumulate our own capital), always in a precarious state. But this means that we cannot afford to rebel. We cannot shun work even for brief periods, for we need a constant stream of income to pay off the debts which every month are guaranteed, no matter the situation we find ourselves in. Similarly, to attempt to challenge the law by negating it carries risks of building up even greater debts and obligations on us (that is, legal consequences intended to make our life harder as a form of punishment). But no matter how indebted we find ourselves, we are still encouraged to spend, because to spend is to contribute to the economy, to the national productivity, and so ultimately to enrich ourselves. Debt enriches!

The open secret about this absurd schema is that whilst we fuck ourselves, someone is always making money off of our debt. Every hour we work, every dollar we earn, and every dollar we spend, State and Capital will take a percentage. If we work harder, work more, spend more – more for them! If we borrow, we borrow from them, and pay them interest of course. But as we are forced to over-extend ourselves, they themselves need not follow in kind. Obviously 'work harder, spend more' is not a healthy life philosophy. But this is exactly the economic philosophy of modernity. That's because it is one of the pillars which bolsters and enriches the gentry. The law of the land is…usury!

When it comes to the issue of workload, I'm of the opinion that even if we are relatively conservative it is not difficult to see how our hours could be significantly cut without affecting useful production. The constant calls on politicians to help 'job creation' show that there is already not enough work to

go around, a fact which is made up for by creating more and more pointless jobs just so that people are drawn up into the rat race. Every job created is the creation of *work hours*. Alternatively you could stop forcedly inflating the number of jobs and simply share out the work hours, which would lower the number each man had to work. You'll notice how during times of what is considered high unemployment, such as the financial crisis of recent years, there is rarely a noticeable lack of goods and services on the market. Even with businesses shutting down, the issue that concerned people was lack of jobs, not lack of desired products or services. Which means that any job created to solve this 'crisis' was ultimately unnecessary.[12]

Aside from the issue of forced inflation, there are many jobs, as David Graeber has pointed out, that only exist because people work too much. Firstly there are those specialists who spend a lot of their time cleaning up the emotional problems of over-worked and socially deficient people, such as therapists and drug manufacturers, as well as all the physical wear dealt with by the medical professions. More extensive still are the number of jobs which do things that people don't have the time or energy to do for themselves. Childcare providers (a job only necessary because of another job, that of the parent), fast-food workers, dog walkers, house cleaners and gardeners, decorators, and so on. Not to say these would entirely disappear if people had more free time, but no doubt demand would fall.

Then there are those jobs which, whilst they wouldn't be made obsolete simply by a lowering of workload, are largely, shall we say, 'systemic'. These are those jobs which serve State and Capital but are generally either pointless or poisonous

[12] This issue is not limited to Capitalism, being fostered by the old Communist states under their own ideals of full employment. The one virtue in the latter instance is that it was so hard to get fired that lazy work and truancy were commonplace, something which the authorities attempted to clamp down on, but with limited success. A common joke in Soviet factories was 'We pretend to work, and they pretend to pay us'.

A thought experiment: A source of your own personal happiness stands before you. A uniformed man walks between you and it, and says, "you can't have that, it's not permitted." Do you feel duty bound to have an endless debate with him about why you should be allowed to have it, whilst he looks down upon you as an inferior? Or do you put a hole in him and climb on through? Even if it were to turn out down the line that he had a knowledge you didn't, and that the thing he was holding you from was ultimately going to hurt you, to lose his head would still be acceptable remuneration for his sheer *arrogance*. Remember, he is not a simple bystander, casting judgement upon you as you pass. He is standing in your way, asserting his control of the situation, his superior judgement and might. In doing so, he is *inviting* you to challenge him. An armed, uniformed police officer is not a friendly neighbour or elder offering you guidance or helping to resolve a dispute, he is a symbol which says loudly, "What the fuck are you gonna do about it?" If a person responds to this by lashing out at him, I'd need a good deal of convincing to find that unreasonable. His existence is dedicated to the negation of human free choice. He should have become a fireman instead. Then again, many people saw the Rodney King footage, saw the not guilty verdicts, and then thought the LA riots 'disproportionate'. What do I know?

I would approach it differently if there was any real sense that we were dealing with a genuine disagreement between equals. But it is a simple order. A person who questions my actions, challenges them, is welcome, often even helpful. If someone wishes to negotiate with me over a point of contention, that may be acceptable too. But a person who simply decides what is valid for me is a tyrant. And if history is anything to go by, Caesar will not be talked from his throne, he must be dragged.

If you see a bully get a taste of his own medicine, chances are you will applaud it. It is a satisfying thing to see. You might

desire to be *recognised*, nor to be *integrated*. I wish to sequester myself with like-minded folks and be left alone. Insofar as I am forcibly stopped from doing that, I am myself a victim of violence, of the iron grip of the State, and I do not consider it irrational or immoral to retaliate. If violence is 'never the answer', how is it that the State employ it as a matter of course so very effectively (and so often unquestioned by the same people who preach that violence is wrong).

I used to approach the police with a fairly forgiving attitude. "They are just ordinary people like us," I would say, "and they think they are doing the right thing." They are just gullible, I would think, so to particularly target them would be unfair. I have turned 180 on this. Now, everybody knows that cops sometimes do helpful things. Occasionally they are the foot-soldiers of an appreciable kind of justice. But compare this to the amount of time spent in enforcement of stupid, trivial, and downright oppressive laws.

For every child a cop saves, for every horrible murder he helps solve, he beats up, kidnaps, extorts many, many other people for minor and non-violent crimes. If you see an article about a hero cop and start to feel admiration, keep in mind that if you sparked up a joint in front of him he would probably throw his arm around your throat and choke you to the ground. He would then go home pleased with his days work and sleep like a baby. Any person willing to actively and violently encroach on someone else's business like that needs to be stopped. Whether they truly believe in what they do or are just a jobs-worth makes no difference to the mother who loses her kids over some petty offense.

I'd say the majority of people believe that the police enforce 'unjust' laws. But they let them off so far as they are judged to also enforce 'just' laws. And yet, would the court let *us* get away with a crime if we also provided them with evidence of good deeds? No, we are not forgiven our trespasses, so why should they be?

to you and I: PR companies, financiers, bankers, professional lobbyists, advertisers, lawyers (particularly corporate), speculators, consultants and a fair number of managers, administrators, civil servants and general paper-pushers, etc. Bureaucracy and money are industries in themselves! This sounds in part like a leftist hit-list, and I do fear I am being overly cliched here, but I suspect most readers, whether anti-Capitalist or not, will agree that these sort of professions are more detrimental than they are useful to all but a few. One of Graeber's measures to judge how important a profession really is to us is to imagine what would happen if those workers went on strike. If farmers or nurses stopped working en mass, we would certainly notice, if management consultants were to do the same… I'll let you be the judge.

There are no doubt other areas with the potential to shrink. For example, one can't help but think that elements of consumerism are driven by a mixture of the marketing industry and a lack of more traditional satisfactions linked to land and community which industrialisation and urbanisation have diminished. We covet our gadgets, our entertainment and our fashions more than our friends.

This is naturally a lot of speculation, but nonetheless, I honestly don't think it requires a great stretch of the imagination to envision half of all jobs disappearing without creating any great social crisis. Concurrently, that means half of all work hours disappearing, meaning that it is quite conceivable for the average person to have a 4 or 5 hour working day. And that is without considering the increasing complexity of robots and potential for automation in this age of the algorithm, which is less and less an idea consigned to science fiction. Primitivists are invited to tick the opt-out box here.

Of course, for those who enjoy devoting their time to industry, it need not be that they are left bored. They can create their own work, personal and community projects which, whilst having in certain regards the visage of 'employment', yet

they undertake freely and require no reimbursement. Labour of the heart, a delight! Labour of the stomach, a curse!

I should clarify that I am not intending to take an old school Communist line here. I do not think food and shelter alone are enough to satisfy the human heart. Even after adding the restoration of community with its many benefits, I have no agenda to limit peoples horizons in the sort of manner often ascribed to Primitivism (although I sympathise with said philosophy in many regards). People want culture, they want entertainment, they want information, they want art, etc. These are not trivial things. It is not my place to say what should and should not exist for you, in your domain. I only offer up my thoughts, which tie back to issues of mass society and Deconstruction in one way or another.

I'm by no means well-educated in academic economics, but I suspect one of the no doubt many problems with my proposals is the complexity of our economic system, and the way economies are globalised and tied into each other. Global trade is not merely a matter of international co-operation, but of international economic war. Any country which took the step to intentionally shrink its productivity would, I presume, find its currency rapidly devalued. For any nation heavily reliant on international trade, that would be problematic. Only a country that was already heavily self-reliant could weather it well. The same would be true of any community within a national economy, insofar as it is heavily tied in with the latter. No group would want to be the first to take the plunge in shrinking its economy, because its buying power in relation to other groups is likely to go down, unless it has something very unique about its economy which makes it highly valued.

This is one of the things that goes unsaid about a competitive economy. The theory goes that competition in the economic realm generally creates improvement, greater quality and better conditions. Even the most fanatical Pinko should be able to admit that in certain regards this is true. Monopolies al-

fine propaganda of the deed? As *presenting possibilities through deliberate interruption of authority and norm*; or perhaps more concisely, *inspiration through disobedience*.

Exactly what form such a deliberate interruption takes in practice will depend on the personalities, thoughts and feelings of those who create it. Not every way will make sense to everyone, because it is not intended to express and promote a universal way of life, but rather the liberation of the multitude ways of life, authentic living. For one person it may be something as simple as doing a dance in the street, or making a joke of something serious; for another planting bomb-making manuals in women's magazines, or giving out free food; for yet another hacking into and defacing a corporate website, or burning down a factory. It could range from something apparently quite innocuous to something extremely shocking: From eccentricity to assassination.

Some will note that this idea could be used as justification for terrorism, to which I would say, yes, I suppose it could. But then in the same breath it could be used as justification for feeding the homeless. Its libertarianism makes it adaptable. I don't myself agree at all with the kind of indiscriminate violence employed by the likes of Al-Qaeda or Shining Path, but I must say I do not dismiss violence as a tactic.

I am no natural warrior. In fact, I am rather a gentle creature. The sight of real violence usually upsets me. But I believe the commitment even of many supposed radicals to non-violence, to protest by purely 'legitimate means', reflects a norm that has been fostered by the gentry in order to *neutralise* the polity. The activism of marches, banners, and the pressure group has to a significant extent been integrated into the system such that resistance is now largely expressed in means that are 'manageable' by State forces. That is not to say these methods are worthless, but by themselves they achieve little.

I am in favour of violence insofar as I am not interested in *convincing* the State that I am worthy of being heard. I have no

tion of authority and the authorised norm. Arguably crime is always in some sense a rebellion against the State, although it's usually not seen in those terms. That's not to say it's therefore to be delighted in. Many crimes are stupid, cruel, or arbitrary. But we cannot deny that the criminal and their crime are often sources of fascination and even excitement to us. And the anti-hero often a more potent figure than the hero.

Also carrying interruptive potential are things which, whilst no legal offense, yet remain for some 'offensive'. These are usually things popularly considered immoral, shameful, or in some way perverse. For example, if a man puts on a dress (for his own satisfaction), most will look at him with some degree of disdain and disgust, but they will all look. It's a shock to how things are 'supposed to be'. It flips convention on its head. Of course, the open secret is that in our hearts we most of us have something offensive about us. But shame is a powerful weapon - and a weapon it is.

Of course this is just to describe a phenomenon. What value can the interruption have for us politically? It can stand as an example of possibility: First, that it is possible to stand up to power. And second, that it is possible to act in a more free, self-determined manner. The narrative of authority says: "This is how it has to be." The interruption counters, "It does not have to be like this." The norm tells us who we must be, how we must act, what we must believe, etc. But the interruption opens up for us our ultimate choice by being a very visible contradiction of that. A norm has no power if we do not believe it. Equally, the only natural authority a man has is in his own body. Therefore, we owe no obedience.

In order to go along with this 'libertarian' approach, one does not have to believe in free will in the philosophical sense. I am personally inclined to a fairly hard determinism. But it's not a problem because our purpose is precisely to *present possibilities*, giving people a broader basis on which to found their choice. So in the light of my reinvention, how would I now redefine

low for abuse because choice is removed, and one-upmanship and greed *can* lead to innovation and evolution. But as many will suspect this is only half the story. Insofar as we are competing with each other, we are constantly trying to exceed each other, which means keeping our heads as far as possible above the 'common line'. Because for landless people their well-being depends on it, they, to coin a phrase I used earlier, over-extend themselves, and so keep that common line equally over-extended. A man with wealth or capital would not for a moment dream of taking the shit that the lower classes take from employers on a daily basis. And if he felt he was working beyond his energies (or his want), he would simply stop. This is the logic of the basic income movement (which although I oppose to the degree that it continues to embrace the State and mass society, I appreciate the basic logic behind). This is also why poor men invented trade unions, to increase their weight by using their pooled labour power as leverage. As many improvements as they have made for workers over the years, they are a known quantity who play by the rules laid out for them, and they do not have the intent of challenging the basic narrative which the gentry push, nor the general framework that we live and work in. Though of course there have been intellectual visions of trade unionism over the years which have been more consciously revolutionary, such as National Syndicalism and Anarcho-Syndicalism. But neither suits our purpose.

My concern with transcending our status as Homo Economicus is just another aspect of freeing ourselves from the behemoth of fixed structures. It is a matter of restoring agency to individuals, psychologically and physically. To be against the State is not for me, as the crude pastiche of the Anarchist and radical libertarian perspectives has often implied, to be against *any* kind of order, but about transforming all orders, whether they be administrative, economic, moral, or what have you, into things firstly fluid, always open to renegotiation, secondly limited in their domain and influence, and thirdly subservient

to actual persons, no longer deferred to as higher forms which we must serve, but recognised as creations, which we can abandon as we see fit. For me it is quite acceptable that even those orders and those ideologies which I personally consider most objectionable and foul should exist and be practiced, so long as their power is limited to a domain in which it is overwhelmingly welcome. Fascism would not have been a problem were it confined to Fascists. It is the attempt to spread it over others, to monopolise power that turns it into a problem. Then again, for some such philosophies it might be argued that concepts of dominion are central to them. Insofar as that is the case, they cannot be considered compatible with Deconstruction. But where they are willing to be humble and accept their own contingency, they are welcome. This is at present rare, in no small part due to a sort of general neurotic need among people to believe they are in the right. To accept one's own strongest beliefs as not of global or cosmic importance only seems palatable to that rare breed who are far less troubled by issues of self-esteem – whether that be because they have a kind of relaxed self-confidence which does not need to assert itself *against* other people, or because they have given up on the grand prancing of the ego through some form of nihilism or conscious self-loathing. One of the great lessons of history is that there are always plenty of people who would rather go to war than accept that they are not God's chosen children.

A contemporary example of a group of people who have taken the choice to separate is the Amish. Although like any Christian they judge themselves to be the most righteous, their approach to proselytism has been weak, and they have tended to more or less isolate themselves and live self-sufficiently. Whether or not you judge their lifestyle to be contrary to your own, you are probably not worried about the Amish attempting to seize power and bring you under the cosh.

On a related note, it is to me rather absurd that the Jews have been a group so highly hated and oppressed in recent times. Af-

adaptation to the system. It enables us to let off steam which otherwise could be wildly destructive and anti-social. The more horrific sobriety, the more imperative its negation. And the system we have built for ourselves simply weighs on us too much. We recognise just how intolerable it often is, and we most accept it as a matter of necessary evil. But usually it isn't.

The Interruption

I always found the Anarchist notion of 'propaganda of the deed' confusing and problematic because of its apparent counter-productivity. Then I found a new way of looking at it. Whilst walking in the street I saw the people around me moving from A to B, predictably, as if they were following set paths. Ordinary daily life, the way of the rat race, I thought, is more or less an arranged performance. It rarely troubles the parameters, it does not spike, it stays within its grooves. It is relatively predictable, and that's how authorities like it. It is in interruptions of this vein of complicity that we become aware of the circumscribed frontier placed upon our lives. They are a strike through the boundaries, a breaking loose (or a breaking in, depending on how you look at it), a stepping out. They help us realise that it is possible to live differently, that the norm can be bent or broken.

These interruptions need not necessarily be intentional political acts. Although they can express an agenda, or an ethical stance, they can also just be something strange, shocking, thrilling, even frightening. The unexpected and out of the ordinary event which momentarily causes a rumble in the formal order. Madness or genius, beautiful or ugly, it will stop people in the street and break the habitual flow of daily consciousness. Well, that's the theory anyway.

It would be disingenuous to deny that this is often particularly palpable in crime, because a crime is a very explicit nega-

role. Schooling prepares the child for bullshit bureaucracy and the repetitive and stilted drabness of the 9 to 5. I personally recall being repeatedly punished for my preference of socialising over work. And once we reach a certain birthday, we are made itinerant and cast out alone into the labour market with a 'goodbye and good luck'. What does a good education do? It makes you a more valuable commodity! Through the rest of our life we are caused and cause ourselves much weal and woe worrying about our 'worth'.

That is really what is essential to adulthood as a state of mind, rather than a mere biological process: Acting and, as far as possible, thinking according to a determined mode and in line with your social station. We can't really write this off, as one might expect considering our line of thought, as something created by Statesmen to keep the plebs in line - though they may well foster it for that reason. But Statesmen too are expected to act in a certain manner. The Prime Minister must act in a 'Prime Ministerial' way. Even the gentry are not free from certain expectations carried in the cultural status quo (or one of the competing ones). Of course, this becomes suffocating to anyone, and so we all of us, from top to bottom, have times where our persona slips. The public and private self are frequently in conflict. Sometimes we are quite cognisant of that, other times we employ various neurotic or even psychotic mechanisms to bypass the conflict. There is a general loose awareness of certain basic insights of psycho-analysis as they relate to individuals. The amount they effect society as an accumulated thing seems to be widely overlooked. But I fear we're going a little off-topic.

It is no wonder that certain drugs, sex, and the like are made legal at the same age at which adolescents are dragged into the adult world. Whether they are 'mature' enough for such things is immaterial – the law does not care for such complex variables. If these vices were not made available, cases of nervous breakdown would expand a hundredfold. Intoxication dulls the pain and the cancerous banality and thus helps us through our

ter all, despite, as their holy books and some of their traditions show, being a group historically obsessed with rule and ritual (an unappealing quality which Muslims are currently the greatest religious proponent of, not to minimise the contribution of other religions and ideologies), they are a group comparatively non-aggressive, and have for some centuries had a general policy of not proselytising or attempting to convert non-Jews to Jewish religion or culture. A very light reading of Hitler seems to imply that those character traits which I find most amenable are some of the ones he found most disgusting. That they had allowed their culture to become 'weak' and 'diluted', had not sought to fashion a Jewish State or States, but instead fairly successfully integrated within other cultures and nations, and did not display a sense of racial, cultural or even religious identity so strong that they would heroically sacrifice themselves for it as an ideal. No doubt there was also a degree of resentment that, despite negating to a greater or lesser degree most of the things a Nazi considers paramount, Jews tended to do fairly well for themselves. It was not difficult thereafter to tie the Jew in with the Bourgeoisie (despite the recognition of 'Jewish Socialism', i.e. Bolshevism), for the latter too are considered to have put aside race, culture, nation, ideology – in short, transcendent and social ideals – in favour of an apparently vulgar self-interest. For the Nazi the crime is one of infidelity, of betraying blood and soil. Even military enemies, such as many of those Hitler fought in the first and second world wars, were more admirable if they had a sense of national identity which they would wage war to preserve.

The Nazi, like any totalitarian or indeed metaphysician, is not content in himself, and so must seek self-esteem in an abstract identity which is bigger than himself – he is aware of how small he is and it troubles him. This, I would propose, is the cause of many of the worlds ills. Egomaniacs and fanatics are compensating for an identity crisis. We are all at risk of this. I just recently found myself talking to a man who would

flit from obvious misery and self-loathing to bragging in the blink of an eye, in a way that was so transparent it was a wonder he did not catch himself at it. Psychological compensation seems to be something that comes hand-in-hand with strong self-consciousness. Whether it has been there for the entirety of human cultural history is debatable. One could argue that as soon as religion makes an appearance, then there is compensation occurring. But perhaps very early religion had other causes. Certainly, however, once notions of 'salvation' start to show up it displays that men have a sense of themselves as pathetic creatures who need to be rescued by something 'beyond'. Earlier shamanic cultures also show some concern regarding death and employ prayer or spells in an attempt to solve much more immediate problems such as ill health and poor food acquisition. But it seems that the problems of loneliness and alienation from the world which later come to be emblematic of religion are absent. I consider it probable that these are problems of urban man. But then I would, wouldn't I. It fits my narrative.

The Anxiety of Individuality

The racialist is looking to answer the same problem as the rest of us, that of communal cohesion, or the reconciliation of the individual with his world. Individuality to the racialist represents modern mass society insofar as it is an exceedingly complex blending of alien influences. Unique identities can never be fully reconciled, there will always be something dividing them. But when individuality is stripped away further

[13] Which typically shows up in the apportionment of love and hate by these ideological parties. Although, whilst the hippie who believes in universal consciousness claims to love everyone, we know that practically this can't be true. Just in the same way that the anti-semite claims to hate all Jews, and yet may not have even met a handful. It's much more abstract concepts that they are relating to in such a way than actual persons.

sensible place to start is in any mutual activities that cause pleasure – done with regularity, perhaps in a ritualised manner.

The goal is to dismiss the uncomfortable sense of strangeness. Having said that, it is of course possible for intimate relationships to become stifling if they become excessively exclusive, closed, or controlling. There is clearly a balance to be found between the need for cohesive community and the need for personal freedom. To be isolated from community is one tragedy, but to be totally assimilated or otherwise diminished by it is another.

Considering our concern with empowerment of the individual, to *surrender* to community seems unwise. As noted earlier, the reader should not assume I'm taking a collectivist line of self-sacrifice for the greater good. In fact I approach it from a quite selfish position in that I am *greedy for intimacy and mutuality*. If I did not think community was in my self-interest, I would not make it such a central feature of my philosophy. The question is what form of community is required to best satisfy me. Other philosophies of society create vast antagonisms where I am required to give far more than I receive, at which point society becomes largely burdensome. A balance which overcomes those antagonisms is necessary, something I think likely impossible to achieve in the context of crowd society. I'd be happy to be proven wrong.

I envy children. I suspect that most readers will remember their childhood fondly. The simple life of play, the freshness of youth, freedom from the demands of adulthood. We both treat children more gently and insulate them from our reality. Of course, the irresponsibility (and inexperience) of the child is a luxury nature does not afford us forever. We must and do grow up. But perhaps too much. We are preached maturity by the dour priesthood of adulthood. Our wild nature is tamed, we are taught many rules of social interaction. An urban coming-of-age is a rather merciless process wherein what we really learn is how to compete, how to be a subject, and how to fill a

or how these changes are politically important. No doubt our own great grandchildren, when doing their reviews of the 21st century, will see many things we could not.

Excess Thoughts

When checking out Robin Dunbar's aforementioned ideas on the limits of group cohesion, I noticed he employed a word which I had never applied any philosophical interest to before: Grooming. The word as commonly used merely means taking care of personal hygiene and appearance. For us humans this is a largely private pursuit (except insofar as we use it to 'present' to others). But in many animal communities it's a group activity by which bonding and cohesion are nurtured, by which intimacy is propagated among the individual members.

Dunbar had a theory that human language may have originally developed as a unique form of grooming. Now, I don't know about that, though it's certainly a theory worthy of consideration. What really inspired me was the idea of expanding the concept of 'grooming' out beyond typical hygiene behaviour, to use the phrase more generally to indicate group bonding behaviours and activities. Other terms might well be available, but none so evocative to me. It emphasises the primal and functional aspects of certain such interactions and why they might still hold great value for us as humans.

Exactly what form adequate inter-grooming would take in human communities, though, is hard to say. For our nearest ancestor, the chimpanzee, touch appears to be the basic foundation. This may also apply to humans, as hugging and similar more or less intimate forms of touching have been shown to release oxytocin in the brain, which has a major role in social bonding. We cannot take it as the only means though, seeing as people seem quite capable of bonding without ever touching. Whether or not it can be explained purely chemically, I feel a

and further, it becomes much easier to see a primordial commonality. It is merely a matter of to how far one feels the need to strip. The Nationalist takes one step less than the racialist, who takes one step less than the humanist, who takes one less step than the… 'monist', for want of a better word.[13] It is *the anxiety of individuality* which motivates us all, from Anarchist to Fascist.

Saying this I realise I have basically just explained away all ideology. Obviously there are more intellectual elements, which smart people the world over have spent innumerable words discussing. But when it comes to the neurotic heart of ideology, it is the attempt to *anchor one's being* in some nucleus. It is assumed by intellectuals that proving the best ideology is a matter of showing how it lives up to its practical claims and goals. Thus the Marxist will argue out why his system overcomes the problems of class division and therefore poverty and so on; and the liberal will argue why his system balances out to the most perfect degree possible the principles of 'freedom from' and 'freedom to'. These are all perfectly valid forms of argument, obviously. As an essayist, I do it all the time. But on a personal level, beyond academic dispute, is how it makes us feel (something which secretly affects even the most academic mind). Christianity judged on a practical and intellectual level scores low, but on an emotional level - for most who indulge, at least – it scores fairly high. Which is why, however many nails may be driven into its coffin by rational minds, it lives on strong - much like the crucified Christ!

This should not be and is not a new epiphany. Certain nineteenth and twentieth century intellectuals, and leaders influenced by them, realised the continuing relevance and importance of irrational or semi-rational (insofar as they have an emotional rationale) forces in the lives of the masses. These insights were often used, however, to manipulate them into self-negating and self-destructive acts which did little but glorify said figureheads.

Presence

The sensible approach is surely one which manages to meet practical, intellectual, *and* emotional needs in a sustainable way. This is no easy task. Plus, due to differences of character, there is no guarantee – in fact, it seems highly unlikely – that one approach would work for everyone. Any attempt to impose a 'best system' on millions at a time is – when not utterly bad-faithed – tremendously arrogant. Time after time, history has shown that rulers are just as likely to lead a nation to desolation. In fact, look back through the history of your own nation and you will probably find most of the developments you might consider 'progress' were brought about not by statesmen but by civilians or civilian movements - albeit bureaucrats being the only ones who can make cultural changes 'official' will often end up taking the credit, even when it has taken them decades to catch up with popular sentiment.

Why then, do we continue to put our trust in them? Even in times when opinions of politicians and of 'experts' are particularly low, most people will complain to their colleagues at lunch about what a bunch of liars they are, but then jump on board when some other politician rides in playing on the popular sentiment and telling them he or she is different, 'a leader for the people'.[14] What keeps this absurd cycle going? The obvious answer is that people believe there to be no real alternative. The Fukuyama Liberals might tell me, "sorry captain utopia, but they're right." Maybe. But I can't help think it is at least partly based on misconceptions, at the heart of which is a certain concept, that of precariousness. Now, we talked about a more personal aspect of this earlier when discussing property, debt, and so on. It is perfectly real. Likewise, there are some other aspects to it which seem legitimate concerns. However

[14]It's interesting to note that the early ancient Greek tyrants were generally bought to power on the back of a popular uprising against the political classes. History repeats.

imagination. This has meant that the more recent rebellions we have seen have either been fairly directionless outbursts of rage, or have attempted to return to a nice, well-worn 20th century way of doing things. Sometimes this comes with qualifications to try and make out that it's not just a revival of our great grandparents mistakes: I'm a right-wing Nationalist, but I'm not a racist; I'm a State Socialist, but I'm not a Marxist.

For people with heads deep in ideological and social history, it seems like 21st century minds are particularly lacking in forward-thinking creativity. Maybe the flurry of entertainment and technology has them distracted? Maybe they have been successfully brainwashed? Possibly, or it could just be that the jigsaw of this century is only just beginning to fall into place, and we will not be able to to see the next revolution until it is upon us. I understand many people will accuse me of attempting to dodge the possibility that liberalism has genuinely vanquished any real competitor. I simply don't believe it, because immense social tensions are still readily apparent. There is a ton of outrage and despair out there, it is just not being directed in a focused way. Thus you see a massive movement such as Occupy which is essentially an outcry against the system, yet has no real sense of what to replace it with or indeed to what degree it needs replacing. This should not necessarily be seen as a bad thing. Better to express, 'something's wrong, but I can't figure out a solution', than to just jump on the bandwagon of some prejudice or other.

Naturally I would hand my essay out and say 'read this'. But I would not really expect most people to run with it. I am hypersensitive to things in a way that only a card-carrying outsider can be. I do not claim to represent the general public (to the extent there even is a general public). Any more immediate change is likely to be something very practical which by its presence changes the narrative. The obvious big development in recent decades is the internet. Although we are well aware of this as changing the world, it is not entirely obvious to us if

newsrag A supports the Democrats and newsrag B supports the Republicans, and both have differing approaches to and stances on many issues, shows that there is no 'ultimate conspiracy'. But unless you are already hostage to the ruling ideas of this generation, you must realise that this is a rather narrow dichotomy, that the difference between the two is a matter of being separate on the spectrum but of the same colour. The narrative of the great conflict between liberalism and conservatism or mainstream left and mainstream right is over-stated to make it seem like a real choice. Not to say there aren't differences, there obviously are, and ones which can affect your life and you might consider worth voting for. But when it comes down to the fundamental architecture of the system and of social organisation, they are all quite happy with things as they are. Which is why when one party takes over power from another there is no great disruption. No great revolution is necessary, they simply slot into the gap and on a day to day basis most people don't notice the difference.

An organisation like the BBC is often praised as among the most unbiased. This is not true, because they are wildly biased to liberal democracy. They are only 'unbiased' in a post-Fukuyama sense, i.e. "well, with the fall of the Berlin Wall we've all agreed on representative democracy and 'managed' capitalism, we can finally move on from such elementary questions, now let's take an unbiased look at the details of government policy". I hold that, in fact, no, we have not solved that problem. People grew tired of the great ideological wars of the 20th century, and temporarily settled on the one which seemed the lesser evil. But any sense of victory that may have been felt by the generations caught up in the cold war cannot be fully transmitted to their children. And the unspoken agreement to shut the fuck up about Capitalism, Communism and Fascism is starting to slip as new generations realise that we never really solved the problems which led to that global conflict. So far no fresh analysis has really pushed its way into the mainstream

nefarious one might consider the gentry and their enforcers, we are still perfectly aware that there are a sizeable number of ordinary people who have nastiness and ruthlessness in their heart and would use the deconstruction of the State as an opportunity to do harm.

Three points. Firstly, this problem of 'bad guys', whilst it may to a degree just be a fact of life, has been compounded by, among other things, the disintegration of community. In a traditional smaller social setting, everybody is likely to know each other, either immediately or at least by only a narrow degree of separation. If one member of the community starts acting in a distinctly anti-social way, word is liable to spread through the community, and the offender will find that he suddenly meets with the disapproval of the people he associates with on a daily basis. To alienate oneself from the community in such a way is something that the average person would try to avoid when it's not absolutely necessary.

Secondly, a person in favour of Deconstruction or anarchy does not imagine that every profession and activity currently associated with the State would or should disappear. If a family heirloom is stolen, or a friend is killed, I will naturally want a skilled detective to investigate. If a community fears for its safety and security, it may want a trained militia. I may find it preferable to participate in a larger scale socialised or co-operative medical system. Most of the useful things people currently enjoy could be replicated on anarchic terrain. "But if you are just going to recreate something we already have," you may ask, "why bother?" Because there is a very important difference: These organised endeavours are not forced on a mass polity from above and controlled by an elite. They are *ours… if* we want them.

Finally, the fear of more anarchic social relations being more prone to lead to conflict does not fit the facts. We are fed the line that it is strong nations and wise diplomats that keep global peace. And yet, who starts the majority of wars? Diplomats.

Between whom or what are the most destructive wars fought? Strong nations. Put a group of ordinary Russians in a room with a group of ordinary Americans, and they will probably have a nice informal chat or sink a few drinks. Switch them out for bureaucrats and we all expect there to be an austere formalism veiling a thick slime of scheming, suspicion, self-righteousness and power-games. The cold war had little to do with Russians and Americans, and a lot to do with the Russian State and the American State. I am of course greatly over-simplifying, but I hope that you will understand the thrust of my argument.

I am not a utopian. I don't imagine a Deconstructed society would be a problem free one. I don't think it will in itself stop killing, poverty, misery. But it returns society to a scale where we can have some control. A scale that grants us greater *presence*. Now it's come to my mind, I'm going to cling to that word, even though its meaning may not be entirely clear. The goal is for the small individual to become politically and socially *present*. To engage 'on the level'.

'Agency' is another useful keyword for our purposes. There is a nice gamer analogy that I once saw in an online cartoon which struck a chord. It featured a man working a checkout job who, after serving a customer, has a horrified look come across his face and bursts out with a phrase, something along the lines of, "Oh god, I'm an NPC". An NPC is a 'non-player character', that is to say, a computer character which only functions within the set limits of its programming, it follows a set course laid out for it within the algorithmic constraints of its environment. The idea that we are passengers in a prescribed life felt like a profound realisation. The sense that we have no control over our lives is a great source of anxiety – albeit it could just as well be argued against this, ala Sartre, that liberty too can be a source of anxiety. There's a nice basis for your counter-essay, dear reader.

If we say that the gentry empower themselves whilst disempowering the masses, we are still recognising them as dealing with those same problems, only from a much more partisan perspective than they claim. Their strength and their security increase exponentially. Ours does not. Anytime someone has a lot to gain by lying, there is a strong chance they will do it. The man who is scrupulously honest and unequivocally moral is a true saint, and I think we all know sainthood to be exceedingly, exceedingly rare.

But I am rambling again. My point was meant to be that arguably (to accidentally paraphrase Marx) the ruling ideas of any period tend to reflect the attitudes of the ruling class. What this means is that it would be wise to cast suspicion upon our own thoughts and ask, 'just how much is this thought mine'. That sounds obscenely paranoid. I don't mean that we are somehow having thoughts beamed into our brains like this was an episode of 'The Twilight Zone'. But most of what we are, including our opinions, is rooted in our experience. Obviously there are a dizzying array of contributing factors. But the gentrified have a lot of money and a lot of power. It is hardly conspiracy theory to say they have the ability to get their shit into our heads. How much and what kind of influence it has will differ from person to person, but it will have some. Consider the breadth of it, from the school curriculum to the mass media, advertising, public relations, even the melding of the corporate world with the arts. You might be a pretty laid-back liberal who considers a philosophy like mine an experiment in histrionics, but it must be obvious to you that a minority of rich and powerful people *do* have a lot of influence on what we are exposed to, and *could* potentially use it to further their own agenda rather than one that was non-partisan, in the public interest, or whatever phrase you think appropriate.

Everyone senses this to a degree. But it is generally not considered excessively sinister because whilst the particular bias is usually glaring from one source to the next, the fact that

as an anchor. You can challenge one version with another – as a protestant debating a catholic - but to make any moves which question its absoluteness in itself is taboo. On a personal level, the fear of undermining morality is a fear of spiritual drift. On a social level, the fear relates to a collapse of order. Indeed, it is the same fear that applies to Deconstruction more generally. Even if we have no real intention of practising a moral, we can still make use of it as something symbolic, as something which provides comfort in moments when a sense of human freedom would cause us anxiety (as a 'crutch'). Hypocrisy in moral matters is quite natural because we wish freedom for ourselves but a significant degree of control over our environment, and thus we often want what we don't want.

In fact, whilst we have mentioned an 'anxiety of individuality', as something relating to community, we might expand upon it by noting a more general fear of *lack of control*.[15] Uncontrolled things are, in a sense, free. But because I have little to no power over them, I can develop a sense that they are attacking *my* freedom. Thus, freedom is for the individual a double-edged sword. The term can express to me either empowerment or endangerment depending on its direction. To take a more conservative, moralistic, or authoritarian political line is, we might suppose, to approach human freedom more as a factor to be negated than achieved.

Once one strips away all the complexity, it is a very primal issue. As living beings there are two things we particularly crave: Strength and security. Politics, morals, religion – I can't help but see all these pursuits (and a fair amount of art and culture) as more or less offshoots from this primal conundrum of 'organism', being a thing among things.

[15]You might say that the fear of death is the final step in this little trinity of terror insofar as it is the enemy which cannot be defeated. Which, whatever system we employ, however mighty we are, kicks down our most sophisticated defenses as if they were nothing.

Back to the original point, whilst I do think many of the fears are quite legitimate - and that the reason a person like me is more inclined towards radicalism is partly because I have little to lose - I also think the powers that be peddle a narrative of super-precariousness wherein violence and danger are constantly bubbling under the surface; That the State is the 'thin blue line' between order and chaos. People will swallow some awful shit if they think it is protecting them from something even worse. The media in particular is far more successful at spreading terror than any Islamist militant group. And it is all aimed towards breeding a sense of dependence. And it's worked, to the extent that even people who are extremely cock-sure are convinced that in the absence of strong and complex government their lives would go to pot (no pun intended). Sometimes it is incredibly simple to show this up as unlikely. That old concept of, well, who would collect the trash, who would repair the roads, is easily dismissed with the quite obvious answer: the same people who do now. Government doesn't really *do* these things. Bureaucrats merely pool our money and then use it to hire people. It is quite obvious we could do that just as well ourselves, on a communal or inter-communal level. But then, the destruction of community has been an absolute boon to the State because it means the mere concept of communal activity is becoming more and more alien to us. The State can thus push even deeper into our lives because we do not have each other to rely on. For example, whereas in the past an elderly person would be looked after and supported by family and community, they are now often thrown on the mercy of the State. The more it mediates or oversees all our activities and relationships, the more it possesses us, like a Hegelian God.

This may be an easier way for those in the more devotedly 'anti-socialist' sectors of the right wing to come to grips with exactly why their equivalents on the left so often display a sense of genuine fondness for the big State. It is because it has asserted itself as in a paternal relationship to the 'citizen'. And

even if it is often an abusive parent, it is for many people the only recourse. The idea of income redistribution, for example, is considered either suspect or frankly sinister by most of the modern right. Why should the money I sweated for be forcibly taken and given to strangers? Quite! The problem is, we have built a society of orphans. Communities have perished and incomes stagnated such that families cannot afford to support their own. The left perceive the State coming to the disenfranchised as a gallant hero, because they do not consider the role the State had in their disenfranchisement. Babylon gives with one hand and whilst attention is misdirected she takes with the other. This is her great trick.

Consider, for example, the corporate world. For the left, the strong State is necessary to keep control of powerful corporations and ruthless businessmen. What is overlooked is that it is the State who defends these corporations in the first place. Most billionaires will have gotten the bulk of their fortune quite legally, that is to say, in accordance with the rule of the State. Who is it that enforces the property laws which allow these canny types to make money hand over fist, to acquire excessive power, and take their place amongst the gentry whilst the 'employee' lives hand to mouth? It is the State! The best way to challenge the corporate world is not to expand the State, but to dismiss it and take them on alone. If the workers in a company go home with a pretty meagre paycheck, but see their bosses taking home massive bonuses, what can they do about it? To march into head office and say "no, you will not be receiving that money", this is something most people would consider, shall we say, 'just', but it would be *illegal*, and the State would arrest those involved for some sort of theft or coercion. This can and will be defended philosophically. But there are times when the veil slips and collusion becomes obvious. The State is light on both white collar crime and on 'corruption', typically refusing to convict individuals (a courtesy they would never show, for example, a street drug cartel). The occasional light

sacrifice hardly hides the fact that the Police spend the time they aren't out hunting disobedient proles acting as personal security and enforcers for the corporate and political world. To consider them a 'Blue Mafia' would in many regards not be at all unwarranted.

But when those lower in the social hierarchy attack those higher, they will be accused of resentment. It is really a matter of jealousy, which is dishonourable, a 'wrong' feeling to have. Well, why should the weak not resent the powerful? Piss on your self-serving morality. I do not wish to be a lesser creature. I must reconcile myself to those weaknesses that are personal. But if the law disempowers me, yet lifts others to a position of superiority over me, be damned with it!

Whose Is Mine?

This is another possible element of Deconstruction, the deconstruction of morality. To take an ethical stand is your prerogative. I do not consider it my place to lecture you on right and wrong. But we have a habit of not questioning those moral principles instilled in us, because it is much more comfortable, much easier on our self-anxiety, to assume we are right (and if we do not wish to be responsible for our ideas, we will take on intellectual patrons and vaunt them as right). So most people who hold a moral stance do not stop to ask, firstly, 'what is the purpose of this?', and secondly, 'who does this serve?' Is this morality, far from elevating me and mine, keeping us down? If the reader cannot imagine how this might apply to their own view, let them apply it to someone else's, or to an old historical status quo.

This is a problem with morality. It is considered by definition (at least in the popular consciousness) to be separate from self-interest. Moreover, it is considered something holy. Even atheists who have dispensed with God tend to cling to Morality