



Communiques
from the
Atlanta Forest
Defense

ATLANTA IS A CITY IN A FOREST

We have the highest percentage of tree canopy of any major metropolitan area in America. Our canopy is the main factor in ensuring Atlanta's resiliency in the face of climate change. The forest in Southeast Atlanta is home to wetlands that filter rainwater and prevent flooding. It is also one of the last breeding grounds for many amphibians in the region, as well as an important migration site for wading birds.

The history of this particular land is deeply scarred. In the 1800s shortly after the land was stolen from Muscogee Creek peoples, it was used as a plantation. In the early 1900s, a prison farm was opened where inmates were forced to perform unpaid agricultural labor, marking the rebranding of slavery into for profit prison labor. The Atlanta Police Department currently uses this hallowed ground as a firing range.

This forest is at risk of destruction as the police and Hollywood make plans to pave over Atlanta's largest remaining green space.

The Atlanta Police Department seeks to turn 300 acres of forest into a tactical training compound featuring a mock city. This project was announced to the shock of community members who had been given no opportunity to weigh in on the proposal. The entire process has been shadier than the forest itself.

Intrenchment Creek is an existing public park adjacent to the Prison Farm. Dekalb County seeks to swap this land with Blackhall Studios (now rebranded as "Shadowbox Studios"), a major film production company. Blackhall wants to clear cut 170 acres of forest to develop into an airport and erect the largest sound stage in America. This project would cement Atlanta as the new Hollywood, making the cost of living in our city outrageous.

We refuse to let our forest be bulldozed in favor of the police and sold out to Hollywood. There are many forms of action and advocacy to be taken. This is a broad, decentralized, autonomous movement. Get involved in whatever ways move you. Take a walk in the forest with your friends.

Retrieved from defendtheatlantaforest.org

Bank of America set on fire in Portland

Posted on January 1, 2023

Last night I broke into a Bank of America in Portland, Oregon and started a large fire. According to news reports, the fire grew quickly and took firefighters more than an hour to extinguish.

I attack for revenge against capital for the hell it creates, to break the illusion of police control that usually protects it, and just because I can.

Bank of America funds the Atlanta Police Foundation and a thousand other projects of control. Earlier that day, the six friends in Atlanta charged with “domestic terrorism” were released from jail. May this fire bring them some warmth in winter.

Long live anarchy!

Submitted anonymously over email

Retrieved from scenes.noblogs.org

A CALL FOR RETALIATION

Posted on January 18, 2023

The worst has come to pass.

An unnamed forest defender has been shot and killed in Weelaunee. Consider this a call for reciprocal violence to be done to the police and their allies. On Friday, January 20th, wherever you are, you are invited to participate in a night of rage in order to honor the memory of our fallen comrade.

Love and rage

Defend the Atlanta Forest

Trees Cut By Goon Squad

On December 22, 2022, around lunch time, we became aware of a large operation taking place in Weelaunee Peoples' Park (Intrenchment Creek Park). Many trees were being felled and more of the PATH (paved bicycle route) was being torn up and replaced with gravel and stones. This is a continuation of a process that has been attempted several times since May, but frequently repelled by activists, community members, or "forest defenders" (as the media calls us). In the past, it has sometimes been enough to use words. Other times, lawyers have intervened. At times, we have had to use stones. In any case, the commitment to defending access to public space and the integrity of the forest has been invariant, whatever the methods of defense.

It is not immediately clear who was felling the trees. Whoever they were, they arrived from the gate of the RC field, and they drove straight across it. Trees were cut near the "gas cut" clearing. The bike path was torn up close to the 12 mile marker. Several trees were spray painted with a purple "O" marking.

Protecting the company, who ostensibly were doing illegal work on behalf of Ryan Milsap (real estate mogul, hedge funder, owner of many companies called Blackhall, and partial owner of Shadowbox Studios), was a single man in a Lithonia Police Department jacket. He did not possess other identifiers that would typically be kept by a cop, such as a badge. He attempted to intimidate journalists and community members, who were intransigent. For assistance, he called someone over who was wearing a "Peace Officer" jacket, and also did not possess a badge or other identifying markers. Neither of them had the tense body language, overconfidence, poor affect, or shifty-eyed incompetence of a normal law enforcement official. It is not immediately clear if these men were impersonating police officers at Ryan Milsaps orders, or if they are real cops badly impersonating their co-workers.

In any case, once a handful of people arrived, the work crew fled in a hurry. They seemed determined to not be seen.

B&H Towing and Wrecker towed away the burned remains of Milsap's trailer bed. It does not seem they were involved in any other capacity.

There are leads, but it is not immediately clear what company was

illegally cutting down trees.

It is clear they were working for Milsap. It is not clear if his orders were coming from his Social Circle mansion, or his ugly house in Tuxedo Park.

We will find out soon enough.

– Those Most-Affected Local Community Group

Submitted anonymously over email

Retrieved from scenes.noblogs.org

Note: All communiques retrieved from scenes.noblogs.org unless stated otherwise

NS excavator lit on fire by railroad near Welaunee

Posted on November 11, 2022 -

NS EXCAVATOR BURNT ADJACENT TO RAILROAD TRACKS, WELAUNEE WOODS, ATL.

This excavator belonged to Norfolk Southern, a supporter of the proposed Cop City Project in ATL. It was decommissioned by fire. Fire heals all. Fuck northfolk southern railways.

Shadowbox/Blackhall Studios set aflame

Posted on October 18, 2022

Last night a fire was lit in a janitorial closet in a building within the West-side Complex of Shadowbox (BlackHall) Studios. The fire caught onto the support beams and became an inferno.

To us, Shadowbox is a hostile occupation of the Weelaunee-Anarchic-Zone. May this be a warning to them, a small taste of what's to come if they attempt to expand South of the river.

We don't like movies. We don't like screens. We are in the real world: Unseen to the Hypno-Dystopic Civilization around us, Somewhere among shadow and tree;

We move by night.

We watch the enemy.

We plan our strikes.

CONCERNING THE DESTRUCTION OF LONG ENGINEERING VEHICLES, ATLANTA GEORGIA:

Posted on March 1, 2022 -

On Mar. 1st, 2022, FIVE large Long Engineering trucks used to do survey work to help delineate destruction in the South Atlanta Forest were destroyed in solidarity with eco-defenders currently protecting the forest from being clear-cut to build cop city and more Hollywood infrastructure for Black Hall Studios.

There will be NO peace for any subcontractors involved with the planning or destruction of the south Atlanta Forest until ALL contracts with the Atlanta Police Foundation & Black Hall Studios have been withdrawn, & the Forest is safe from any and ALL destruction. We do NOT

differentiate “pre-construction ” & “construction “...

It is EASY to approach vehicles and machinery sitting like ducks in subcontractor parking lots and simply pour gallons of bleach into their gas tanks and render any and all of their equipment used to subjugate

the land completely dead and inoperable!

This is a CALL-TO-ACTION for more eco-warriors to replicate these actions in the name of Defending the Forest and ALL creatures wild and

Free!

Save the South Atlanta Forest! Destroy all of the machines! Tear up all of the roads! There is no “perfect moment” to act on the horizon, the time is ripe!

Fuck your ego and use the cover of darkness to go out and get shit done, for we need more faceless saboteurs to help bankrupt all of these

companies from being able to function.

It only costs \$1.00 for a gallon of bleach and it costs them \$50,000.00 (or more!) Per vehicle...

DEFEND THE FOREST! FIGHT THE COPS! OUR WOODS NOT HOLLYWOODS!

Bite the Hands of Greed,

-The Wolvez-

Tow Truck set on fire in South Atlanta Forest & Mini excavator scared off

Posted on July 31, 2022 - Early Friday July.29th, a tow truck was sent to tow various community members & forest defenders vehicles from the Welaunee People's Park... Several different autonomous groups took action to stop tow truck, one by slashing tires, smashing windows, graffiti, & generally fucking it up, & a mini excavator was also subsequently ushered out of parking lot near woods & cops kept at bay.

Later, another group came through & set that evil thing (tow truck) on fire.

The tow truck is no more, & we hope this serves as a warning to other tow trucks & various machines thinking about entering the forest to evict or destroy the woods, that you will inevitably suffer the same fate.

DEFEND THE FOREST! No cop city! No Black Hall sound stage everrrrrrr!



“We Will Not Be Intimidated” – statement from a squirrel

Posted on July 22, 2022

The continued militarized response to treesitters in the south Atlanta forest shows very blatantly how willing the state is to use violence and intimidation to repress our movements.

To the state we say this “We will not be intimidated.” Your “aggressive posturing” will not scare us away. While you depict us as almost mythical creatures capable of terrifying things, skulking through the woods, we enjoy a world filled with relationships built on trust and intimacies deeper than you can imagine. group meals, music around the fire, real talk, a life richer than most anything to be found in civilization, built with the scraps of your world. There are many of us, with many different analyses, but we hold one thing in common, we have seen what is possible, and we stand in total opposition to this world and its cops. For a world without police or prisons or asylums, a world without gender, a world without civilization

-squirrel

-Received Anonymously Over Email

Retrieved from scenes.noblogs.org



BEAVERS GNAW DOWN 40 FT WOODEN SURVEILLANCE POLE IN WELAUNEE FOREST installed by APD & City of ATL:

Posted on July 7, 2022

...We noticed that police escorted a white work truck with boom lift affiliated with The City of Atlanta to install a very large & approximate 40 foot wooden pole on Key Road near the prison ruins in south Atlanta yesterday, for what appeared to be a high altitude surveillance tower...

Us beavers just so happen to LOVE a good hardwood pole, & will surely gnaw down more if you bring them!

Thanks for the snack APD!



We saved some leftovers for you on the side of the road in what also appears to be a mounting pile of broken surveillance cameras...

In Solidarity with Forest defenders holding it down in the South Atlanta Forest,
The Beaver Gang

-Received Anonymously Over Email

Retrieved from scenes.noblogs.org

FUCK COPS//JOIN US IN THE FOREST

Posted on January 27, 2022 -



The time is now! This is a call from some of us living in the Atlanta Forest; We invite you to join us in its defense. The forest, which is stolen Muscogee land, is slated to become a mock-city for police training. We have no intention of allowing this, nor of limiting our efforts to tree sits and lockdowns (already there have been 2 arson attacks, damaged machinery, home and office visits, barricades, etc.). The more people there are staying in the forest, the more options are open to us. Living in the forest gives us ability to immediately respond to any threat the forest faces. We must not allow them an inch without meeting opposition. Not one blade of grass. As it stands, the forest feels autonomous and the police are reluctant to go deep within it. Help us keep it that way. Come now to defend the forest, in struggle against the police and the civilization that needs them. Check out <https://scenes.noblogs.org/> for more info/past communiques and email atlforestfriends@protonmail.com or atldtf@riseup.net to get in touch if you're interested in coming.

-Submitted anonymously over email

Retrieved from scenes.noblogs.org

More Trees Spiked in the Welaunee Forest

Posted on June 29, 2022 -



Last night we randomly inoculated dozens of trees with steel and ceramic spikes to protect against felling by chainsaw. Signs were posted in English and Spanish to alert workers. This process is harmless to the trees, but poses a serious danger to machinery and workers should they choose to ignore the warnings. Cops have been seen in recent weeks entering the forest with chainsaws, ignoring the stop work order and cutting down trees in an unskilled and dangerous manner at the site of current and former treesits. They should stop. Since we know the tree-sits ALONE that have been publicized may not prevent logging by themselves, we have taken it upon ourselves to go the extra mile...

“The earth is not dying, it is being killed, and those who are killing it have names and addresses.”—Utah Phillips

The draws of “society” & the “civilized” & ‘developed’ world cannot surpass the sounds of swallows in trees, humming of insects & bees, & the liberation of laying under the starry skies.

-Railroad Workers Union Local 1312

Atlanta Police Foundation's "At Promise Center" Set On Fire

Posted on May 27, 2022 -

"The "At Promise Center" is a "youth center" funded by the Atlanta Police Foundation. According to a report in corporate media, a window of the building was smashed, and the side of the building was set on fire. The following is a communiqué, submitted anonymously by email:

On the morning of the 27th we set fire to the Atlanta Police Foundation's Westside "At Promise Center".

This was the day before the two year anniversary of the burning of the third precinct in Minneapolis.

Fuck The Police."

Logging Trucks Destroyed in Ozarks

Posted on January 15, 2023

Happy New Year to the crew of the 4 tree-killing machines in Ozark. For days the noise was the only goddamn thing you could hear in the forest. We emerged from our nests and holes and severed the infernal racket with tooth and claw. We found all machines unlocked with keys still in their ignitions!

We chewed through wires and cables, filled fuel tanks with sand and soil, drained the machines dry, and restored the forest to perfect winter silence. It was a beautiful night, just right for stargazing (and sabotage :))

In solidarity with the Atlanta Forest (STOP COP CITY!!!) and forests under siege everywhere. You woke us up and there's more to come!

– Pissed-off locals

Bank Attacked in Solidarity with Yintah Land Defenders and Atlanta Forest Defenders in Pittsburgh, USA

On the night of May Day, 2022, I realized I hadn't really done anything to welcome the coming of spring, and so I decided to smash out the windows of a Bank of America here in Pittsburgh.

I wanted to contribute this small gesture of solidarity with the frontliners currently facing down the fucking disgusting projects that the bank is funding: the Coastal Gaslink Pipeline on unceded Wet'su'weten land, and "cop city" in the Atlanta Forest.

Solidarity means attack.

Death to civilization!

Long live anarchy!

Happy May Day!

– some kid

Received by email.

COMMUNIQUE: Reeves Young Machinery Attacked

Posted on January 19, 2022 -

Today a bulldozer and three employees (One being Alan Williams, the project manager with the APF) attempted to destroy the forest.

A group gathered to stop the destruction under the call of "Not One Blade Of Grass!".

The group approached the construction workers and some led them outside of the forest while the machinery was attacked leaving broken windows and mangled machinery entrails.

The group escaped with zero arrests.

1/18/2022

-Received Anonymously Over Email

This communique is part of a series of autonomous actions that took place on Tuesday, January 18th in response to Reeves Young's use of machinery to harm the forest.

Bay Area ATMs Sabotaged

by Anonymous

Sat, Apr 23, 2022 4:48PM

Two bank ATMs were vandalized and put out of commission in San Francisco in solidarity with land defenders in the Atlanta Forest and across occupied land. You can do it too!

The week of so-called "Earth Day", autonomous hooligans super-glued the card readers at two SF banks. This echoes anti-bank and anti-civ actions across other occupied territories (see Philly, Quebec and Chile) in strikes against capital and those funding the destruction of human and nonhuman animals alike.

ATMs are a visible face of banks. Many "oppressed" people like us might get inconvenienced when their neighborhood ATM doesn't work, but we aren't the parasites demanding rent or cash for food. This sabotage breaks normal bank "consumer" operations and that's fantastic. Card readers at corporate or leasing offices, bank ATMs, fuck it--even gas stations are all vulnerable. Smash a window too! The fires we light burn hot, and even tho we might get burned, **blessed is the flame.**

Shit on a Tesla!

Fuck Bay Area business-as-usual!

Til society is ash!

~ *The Sticky Vandals*

GET STICKY

- Gift cards and non-corrogated cardboard have worked equally well in our experience.
- Steal all your supplies (obviously) in a way that doesn't leave fingerprints, and wipe down any supplies/cards with rubbing alcohol.
- Cover your face and any identifiable features (hair, face, tats, piercings), wear cotton gloves and clothes not linked to you that you can then trash (not in your hood), but dress to blend into the area and choose a time when there's still people about who might use ATMs.
- Read up on digital security and use encrypted messaging and Tor.

Banks Attacked in Solidarity with Atlanta Forest Defenders

Posted on March 26, 2022

This month we sabotaged card slots of Wells Fargo and Bank Of America in Center City, Philadelphia. This attack was done in solidarity and complicity with those disrupting the construction of a police training grounds in Atlanta. Cops in Atlanta want to cut down a forest to build a mock city to practice squashing uprisings. In response, individuals are occupying, protesting, and sabotaging. People have started staying in the forest and fucking with the construction. The Atlanta Police Foundation is being funded by Wells Fargo and Bank Of America. We are excited to hear about construction workers being chased out and construction vehicles being messed up.

As proponents of self-directed revolt we decided to target the banks contributing to building the cop city. We hope that by communicating our action others feel encouraged or inspired to attack and disrupt the social order in their own context. While it would be preferable if the police project in Atlanta collapsed, for us destruction is an end in itself. We take pleasure in disrupting capital.

Our sabotage involved collecting plastic cards, which we cut into thirds. The purpose of this was to prevent the cards from easily being removed. Before going out we wiped down the pieces with gloves on and dressed anonymously. We inserted the pieces into atm and door card readers after putting a strip of super glue onto them. One benefit of this action is that it fucks up the machine without making a lot of noise or seeming out of place. We feel this is relevant to point out because the cop city is an example of the police preparing for mass unrest and we feel it is strategic to be able to act discreetly in light of increasing policing and surveillance.

Fuck cops

Fuck banks and money

Solidarity and complicity with the feral anarchists in Atlanta

Death to civilization

Long live anarchy

Chaos forever

Boyette Brothers Equipment Rental Service Machines Set On Fire

Posted on June 7, 2022

The Earth destroying machine that entered the forest yesterday, along with a few others, has been torched. To Boyette Brothers (rental service) + anyone who tries to help build cop city, our message is simple: "If you build it, we will burn it."

- *Received anonymously over email*

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Brasfield & Gorrie Site Attacked

Posted on August 26, 2022 -

Friday, August 26th appeared to be a typical Atlanta morning for general contractor Brasfield & Gorrie's construction site located at 760 Ralph McGill Blvd NE. Another summer day of building on stolen Muskogee land. There were habitats to destroy, a boutique hotel/ retail/ office building to assemble, a "neighborhood" to be constructed for yuppie gentrifiers.

But when workers attempted to turn on their machines, they encountered problems. Four of their large destruction vehicles had been tampered with. Wires cut, locks glued shut, water valves and exhaust pipes clogged with foam, etc. And written in red paint across the glass walls was a clear message: STOP COP CITY. Some wondered, how could this be? The site undergoes 24 hour surveillance. Maybe they aren't as invulnerable as they'd like you to think....

Brasfield & Gorrie will not be granted a peaceful morning until the contract is dropped and their colonial violence across both Atlanta and Turtle Island is halted.

Submitted anonymously over email

EXCAVATOR TORCHED AT MICHELLE OBAMA PARK

Posted on September 14, 2022 -

Several weeks ago, we lit an excavator at Michelle Obama Park on fire, effectively & fully decommissioning it. This was for revenge for the greedy capitalists who turned what was once a beautiful forest into a barren lot approximately 18 months ago— this barren lot plan being the police & black halls hopes for the rest of Welaunee.

The police are trying to silence arsons in the area in hopes they do not continue it seems....

Sorry to say, any time a machine comes anywhere near the forest, expect fire mother fuckers.

The best “poetry” in this movement is a machine on fire. Shut your mouths & let the flames do the talking.

For those that secretly want to be “known”, tell your ego to simmer & go do the damn thing— defend the forest & protect your friends.

-Submitted anonymously over email



Rail Blockade in Lenapehoking in Solidarity with Wet'suwet'en!

On the night of November 5th, 2022 a small group of Anti-colonial Anarchist settlers in Lenapehoking blockaded a chokepoint of a high frequency railway in Solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en resisting drilling in the Wedzin Kwa and all those resisting colonial capitalist development and infrastructure all across Turtle Island and the World!

It was a very simple and easily replicable action using commonly found blockade materials that were near the tracks already.

We hope to inspire many more and frequent railway blockades as an effective action to disrupt colonial and ecocidal infrastructure all across Turtle Island and Globally.

Shut down Canada, Colonialism, and Capitalism everywhere!

Copper Wire Method

– You can use this method when engaging in group NVCD to immediately send a signal to stop all train traffic.

The steel rails of tracks act as part of a track circuit for something called “automatic block signalling” (ABS). A very low voltage is sent through the rails to track sensors to create a loop in sets of geographic blocks. When a train moves along them, the train axle disrupts or shortens the circuit and sensors pick that up to indicate the block is occupied, automatically closing traffic in that area to other trains.

By using a high gage (thick!) copper wire and wrapping it around and then across the rails one can replicate the tripping of the circuit sensors. Note: you don't need to locate and connect the actual block sensors.

TIPS: the copper needs to be touching areas on both rails that are NOT rusty/oxidized and still conducting. HIGH gage copper wire is necessary. Have a lookout for trains and security patrols. Have a plan before you start wrapping. You may need a small tool to clear some crushed rock under the rail before wrapping the wire. Find a good spot, dig out both rails, and wrap one rail first. Remember as soon as you trip the circuit by connecting the wire to both rails the ABS will be tripped indicating something is up. Get out as soon as you can. Burying the cable with crushed rock, snow or dirt will make it harder to find/spot within the block. - from north-shore.info



Symbiogenetic Desire: An Egoist Conception of Ecology

Bellamy Fitzpatrick

An Unfortunate Silence

Egoist anarchism has regularly had criticism leveled against it for its relative silence on issues of ecology. This criticism is well-placed: other than a few references to how non-human animals are exemplars of egoism due to their seemingly unalienated relationship with their desires[1], egoist literature is sorely lacking in this regard. This lamentable absence likely has to do with the proclivities of its authorship more than anything else, as an egoist analysis is readily applicable to ecology.

The identity eliminativism – the denial of oneself as having an essential self, a perspective that will be defined and developed further in this piece – implied by egoism is the basis of this ecological worldview, as one's sense of self expands to subsume and be subsumed by one's habitat and symbiotes. Through such an analysis, one steers clear of the twin alienations of, on the one hand, the tiny self, that is, the self as an independent, enclosed, free-willed subject who remains relatively stable through space and time and who interacts with a world of objects; and, on the other hand, the reification of the nonhuman world, that is, the construal of nonhuman organisms as a more or less unified whole that acts collectively for the Good and into which one can dissolve oneself or to which one can swear allegiance. Eschewing both of these alienations, one finds oneself able to experience a symbiogenetic desire that unites a love of oneself with a love of one's ecosystem.

The Expansive Self: Identity Eliminativism

An egoist conception of ecology begins with the notion of the expansive self. The expansive self regards the inner world, our thoughts and emotions, and the outer world, our phenomenality or sensory experience, as inseparable, as each reciprocally informs and defines the other. Insofar as identity can be said to exist, it is our perceptual totality, shifting from moment to moment. When we walk through the world, all that we touch and perceive is an extension of ourselves; conversely, there is no I that exists separately from our phenomenal experience. Thus, the self subsumes and is subsumed

by the world, annihilating this subject/object dichotomy that alienates us from other beings and places.

If our language sounds strange here, it is because we are trying to talk about the ineffable. Perception is the basis of existence, but it is also profoundly difficult to describe with words: the qualitative always eludes the symbolic; however circumspect and technical or poetic and pithy the phrase, it can never completely capture the real of our experience. The phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty, while not an anarchist egoist (actually, for at least part of his life, a Marxist! gasp), nonetheless beautifully described how perception is neither subjective nor objective but a gestalt from which the two are artificially rendered:

“The visible about us seems to rest in itself. It is as though our vision were formed in the heart of the visible, or as though there were between it and us an intimacy as close as between the sea and the strand [...] What there is then are not things first identical with themselves, which would then offer themselves to the seer, nor is there a seer who is first empty and who, afterward, would open himself to them – but something to which we could not be closer than by palpating it with our look, things we could not dream of seeing ‘all naked’ because the gaze itself envelops them, clothes them with its own flesh.”[2]

What is traditionally called the object of perception, then, is as much a part of ourselves as what is traditionally called the subject of perception – we are so accustomed to think only of the latter as being truly ourselves. With the dissolution of transitivity of identity, the importance of perception to identity becomes clearer still. David Hume is instructive on the point of identity eliminativism, when he observes that there is no essential substrate, no fixed and quintessential I, that exists behind his phenomenality or the thoughts and feelings he has about it; instead, his sensory experience and his reflections of that experience are the whole of his being. We are not merely a body, which is only part of our perception, but instead everything we perceive, everything with which we interact. And among that with which we interact are of course other beings, meaning that our consciousnesses are inextricably intertwined.

We are therefore experiencing at all times the ultimately ineffable phenomenon of nigh-infinitely many mutually co-created

consciousnesses. When we encounter one another, human or nonhuman, being or place, each becomes forever a part of the other - whatever beauty, strangeness, or upset that encounter might bring, we know, as those feelings pass from immediate intensity yet leave us permanently changed, that we have only encountered a new and stimulating aspect of ourselves with which we were previously unfamiliar.

The Tiny Selves: The Reification of Identity

To highlight my meaning with a foil, opposite to the expansive self are various conceptions of what Jason McQuinn has taken to calling “the tiny self”[3] – the self as mere body, the self as the free-willed bourgeois economic agent, the self as social role or identity, and so forth. Each of these is a reified self, an idea of who and what we are that comes from giving undue weight to one aspect of ourselves, to hypostatizing one part of our experience and imagining that it is all that we are.

The expansive self is diametrically opposed to these conceptions of self that characterize the dominant culture: the Cartesian self that sees its distinctiveness as self-evident or the bourgeois self that imagines a separable entity that is self-willed and therefore morally entitled to and responsible for its economic success.

To take just one case here, as I have discussed this issue at greater length[4] elsewhere, Descartes’ cogito ergo sum (“I think; therefore, I am”) contains, like every ideology of domination, a subtle presupposition: “I”. Stirner rejects out of hand the Cartesian split by describing himself as “creator and creature [Schöpfer und Geschöpf] in one.”[5] – he does not presuppose himself as a separate entity of his phenomenal perception but instead recognizes that subjectivity and objectivity are simply synthetic conceptual frameworks, sometimes useful instrumental constructions that have no existence beyond our moment-to-moment imagination of them. Nietzsche similarly repudiated this atomized self as a linguistic fiction, a mode of thinking imposed on us by the subject-verb-object structure of our language.[6]

Nature: The Platonic Residue

Yet the expansive self is also the very antithesis of any conception of Mother Nature, Gaia perspective[7], or other reification of the

nonhuman — it is not advancing the notion that there is some transcendental whole we could call Life that we might dissolve ourselves into or act on the behalf of for the Greater Good. While there is certainly a great deal to draw from the observation that organisms often are deeply enmeshed symbiotically, that the niches in ecosystems are often mutually reinforcing; these phenomena are counterposed by the fact that, at times, organisms also demonstrably act inimically to the stability of the biosphere: take cyanobacteria, photosynthetic microorganisms whose evolution might have annihilated most life on Earth 2.3 billion years ago by filling the atmosphere with oxygen that was toxic to the anaerobic majority of life. Considering contradictions like this one, what can it mean to act in accordance with the biosphere?

Even were this not the case, the identification of a Gaia or Life would be yet another case of self-alienation – we do not experience a biotic/abiotic totality except in cases of adventurous imagining; and, to whatever extent there is one, we are surely as much a part of it as anything else, meaning our desires are its desires. It thus cannot grant to us any metric of value. Unfortunately, a pernicious desire to recapitulate this reification of the nonhuman, for "life [to be] about something bigger than ourselves", [8] persists in anti-civilization theory today.

The Platonic urge is strong: insofar as we put our weight in recent archaeological findings [9], the very beginnings of Civilization may be characterized by believing in things “bigger than ourselves”, things greater than actual and particular beings or events, things vast and eternal. Whether it can be said to be an essential human characteristic is unclear, but it is certainly an urge of present human beings to reify aspects of their lives, perhaps due to a relationship with enslavement [10] or depression [11]. Though some seem to think an ecological perspective entails reifying something great and beautiful and leaping into it with outstretched arms; an alternative lies in persistently refusing reification, rather than simply choosing which is ostensibly the right one.

Symbiogenetic Desire

Biologists, most famously Lynn Margulis [12], employ the beautiful term symbiogenesis (etymologically meaning something like origin of life together) to describe the phenomenon in which two or more

ostensibly distinct organisms become so closely intertwined in their lifeways that they more or less merge into one creature.

By way of example, certain termites are able to digest wood through having their guts inhabited by protist (complex single-celled organisms) symbiotes who, in turn, are inhabited by bacterial symbiotes; up to one-third of a termite's weight can consist of these creatures, each of which is dependent on the others for survival. Other species of termites have their massive nests inhabited by a fungus that acts as a kind of external stomach for the insects, enabling enhanced digestion. The fungus occupies a larger volume of the nest and possesses a greater metabolism than the termites themselves, and it possibly influences the behavior of the insects through chemical signaling not unlike the kind that happens among differing organs of the same body.

In the same vein, an immensely distant ancestor of our cells may have been formed similarly, through smaller and simpler cells fusing into larger and more complex ones. Margulis' Symbiogenetic Hypothesis posits that at least some eukaryotic cells – the complex cells that, in this case, make up plants and animals – came about through larger cells engulfing smaller cells, the latter becoming organelles of the former.

A parallel, then, can be drawn between this biological understanding of inseparability and emergence in the organic and the gestalt sense of identity - or, perhaps better, lack of identity - described above. Recognition that each of us is constituted by every other being we encounter entails a perspective of intimacy, a desire to live as deeply and vivaciously as possible. As an ecological perspective, then, reveals itself as one that treats all organisms, humans and nonhuman, as potential symbiotes, cocreators with whom we can have various relationships.

Just as one might have a close and intimate, a friendly, a cordial, a neutral, an antagonistic, or a hostile relationship with a human, one might have any of those relationships with a non-human. One might therefore strive toward unions of egoists among the organisms in one's habitat, maximizing mutualistic interactions and minimizing antagonistic ones through Stirner's understanding of infinitely revisable collaborations among beings who combine their powers toward the pursuit of cooperatively achieved, but individually

recognized, values. Even non-animals, surely, experience something, possess a phenomenality, and have some notion of value, one we can often infer through interspecies communication; though surely their experience of value is unspeakable and ultimately incomprehensible to us. Through such unions, we become symbiotes of one another; our sense of self expands to encompass the bodies, lives, and values of others through symbiogenetic desire.

Practically, an interspecies union of egoists would surely entail the abandonment of agriculture, a thoroughly stultifying practice that homogenizes experience and squelches the diversity of mutually co-created consciousnesses. Subsistence through some combination, varying with bioregion, of foraging and horticulture/permaculture would mean not only a richer and more diverse habitat; but also would entail an intimate relationship with it through regular interaction. In this way, we truly inhabit our ecosystem, enriching ourselves as well as our symbiotes from whom we are inseparable. Similarly, the abolition and destruction of the homogenizing and toxifying institutions and infrastructure characterizing civilization follow from such a perspective, as they could only limit and stultify ourselves and our connections.

Anti-Civilization Egoism

The gaze of the rapacious capitalist objectifies the biosphere, treating it as an object to be plundered by whoever has the tenacity and guile to best exploit it. The paleoconservative or libertarian gaze romanticizes it, regarding it as the wide-open terrain of rugged individualism on which one might live off the fat of the land. The liberal or conservationist gaze spectacularizes it, transforms it into a thing that should be cherished and preserved for its beauty. Again, all of these perspectives are iterations of alienation predicated on reifying the subject/object dichotomy; they merely dress it in different skins. As M. Kat Anderson writes, “These seemingly contradictory attitudes—to idealize nature or commodify it—are really two sides of the same coin, what the restoration ecologist William Jordan terms the ‘coin of alienation’ [...] Both positions treat nature as an abstraction—separate from humans and not understood, not real.”[13]

But the egoist perspective dissolves this alienation. It refuses the notion that our selves are limited to this little bag of skin; it insists that we extend our bodies to encompass our perceptual horizons. I am every person I have met, however fleetingly; every river I have swum in lovingly or passed by, barely noticing; every mountain I have climbed or merely glanced upon while driving; every intoxicant I have consumed; every advertisement to which I have been subjected. The habitat in which we choose to live thus becomes not merely a logistical-economical choice, but instead one of whom we fundamentally want to be.

The anti-civilization insurgency thus takes on an irredeemably personal character. We do not resist civilization because it is “innately wrong”[14] or because it is “the domination of nature”[15], we resist it because it is an absolute assault on ourselves. There is no need to mediate such a desire through an unfounded claim about transcendental goods and evils or a conceptualization of the nonhuman; it is one immediately felt.

The flattening of living ground into dead, uniform parking plots is the flattening of our affect. The mediation of our lives through representations is a stifling of creativity and dreams. The denuding and toxification of the biosphere is the restriction of our lives and the narrowing of possibilities. Our sorrow and rage is not directed at some essential metaphysical Other that attacks Nature; it is directed at an immediate mutilation of our experience, of ourselves.

[1] Stirner writes, for instance, when imagining a conversation with people who feel they need absolute values to guide them lest they merely follow their instincts and passions and thus “do the most senseless thing possible. – Thus each deems himself the – devil; for, if, so far as he is unconcerned about religion, he only deemed himself a beast, he would easily find that the beast, which does follow only its impulse (as it were, its advice), does not advise and impel itself to do the ‘most senseless’ things, but takes very correct steps.” Stirner, *Max. The Unique and its Property*, trans. Wolfi Landstreicher. Berkeley: Little Black Cart 2012.

[2] Merlau-Ponty, Maurice. “The Visible and the Invisible: The Intertwining—The Chiasm”.

[3] “Interview with Jason McQuinn on Critical Self-Theory”, Free Radical Radio, 02/27/2015.

[4] See my “In Defense of the Creative Nothing” at bellamy.anarchyplanet.org

[5] Stirner, Max. *The Unique and its Property*

[6] Nietzsche, Friedrich. “On the Prejudices of Philosophers”, *Beyond Good and Evil*.

[7] Note that by Gaia Perspective, I do not mean to refer to the Gaia Hypothesis advanced by James Lovelock

[8] Hayes, Cliff. “Slaves to Our Own Creations”, *Black And Green Review*, vol. 1.

[9] Consider the recent claims by archaeologist Klaus Schmidt – leader of the excavation of Gobekli Tepe, the earliest known human monument – that a human turn toward religion was the beginning of Civilization as its construction precipitated, perhaps necessitated, the domestication of plants and animals in order to furnish the sedentary lifestyle dictated by the construction, maintenance, and worship of the monuments. The monuments themselves display symbols that might be interpreted as the human domination of the nonhuman (humans holding, perhaps controlling, various animals that might be considered dangerous) and the triumph of patriarchy (phallocentrism).

[10] Rosset, Clément. “The Cruelty Principle”. *Joyful Cruelty*.

[11] Real, Terrence. *I Don’t Want to Talk About It: Overcoming the Secret Legacy of Male Depression*.

[12] A number of biologists dating back to the early 1900s have discussed variants of this theory. Margulis put forth the modern version, still controversial but widely accepted, arguing that animal and plant cells first formed through the unification of simpler cells. She has since argued, more controversially, that symbiogenesis ought to be considered a major factor of evolution, influential on a par with selection by competition.

[13] Anderson, M. Kat. *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources*.

[14] Tucker, Kevin, *Black And Green Forum*.

[15] Zerzan, John, “Patriarchy, Civilization, And The Origins Of Gender”.

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