

This Time We Fight Back!



#1

Interview: Derrick Jensen

The Witch Hunts

Fighting For Our Lives

Railroad Weeds and Conflict

Healing and Fighting: a False Duality



This time we fight back. We will not settle for privilege and distraction.

For every witch that has burned we will launch a new attack on the systems of control. For every ecosystem razed to build this industrial complex we will tear apart the towers of the rich. Patriarchy will burn and we will dance in the ashes scattering seeds as the forest rises from the gravesites of industrial demise.





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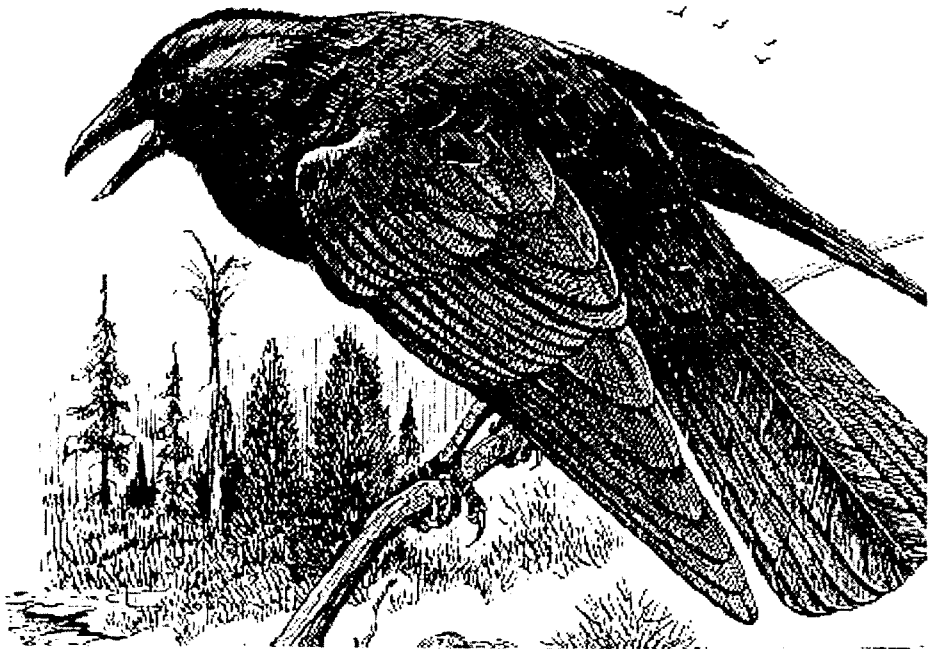
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RAILROAD WEEDS AND CONFLICT

We ramble through the days, subsisting on stolen coffee and dumpstered toast. I'm fucking sick of dumpster toast. Lots of coffee-- cup after cup in that favourite mug and the stomach ache and burnout. It's raining again. We live in a rainforest, though now a forest of concrete skyscrapers and isolation ringed with barren farm fields, sprawl and clearcut. The trees are gone, except for non-native ornamentals lining the streets of the "kinder" neighbourhoods and those pockets they call parks. Senaqw is buried beneath the towers of the rich, the West End. She sang to her land a mournful lullaby, across the water. This is Industrial development.

We're products of capital and assimilation. We're products of the torture of our ancestors, our





mothers, our land. Living amidst the decrepit urban decay of some ghetto and it's more alive than any sterile suburban box. Purge. I feel them build their towers in my belly. It's a battle I fight with fire and flood and wind. This is a microcosm of some entirety-- my body like the mother like the land and I wage the same kind of war, an individual struggle-- within some larger pattern. And we rise, momentum builds. Non-submission and the strength of standing. Tear the concrete, make room for living.

We live like railroad weeds, growing in wasteland, there to heal soil, to tear at asphalt, to mangle the tracks. We grow on old buildings sending roots through the woodwork and cracking foundation. There are herbicides, poison, pigs-- this work rarely recognized because it is not sanctioned. We grow covertly, hoping to scrape by unassailed until our roots are too deep to dig up-- once the sidewalk's been corroded.

We ramble through the days, subsisting on stolen coffee and dumpstered toast, crumbling towers and urban conflict.



FIGHTING FOR OUR LIVES

(and rejecting ideological abstraction...)

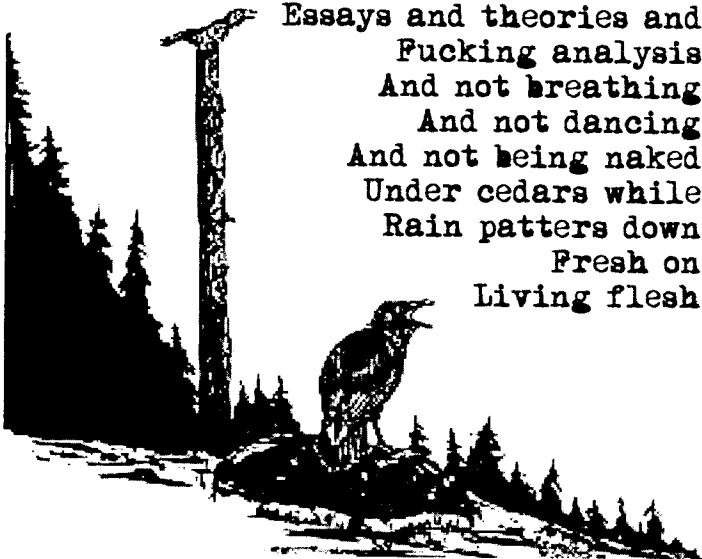
The struggle against civilization is a struggle for life itself. It is not abstract and it is not ideological, it is not yet another cause to identify with. Consciously choosing to engage oneself against industrialism, statism, social control, and coercive institutionalized violence is the act of choosing authentic life despite all the forces that exist in order to prevent such a choice from coming to fruition. In this age in which there is no land uncolonized and no place where wilderness is not threatened or already destroyed, choosing to live authentically involves placing oneself in opposition to the agents of the death machine of civilization. It is no longer a feasible option to simply drop out of society, because society has wiped out that possibility in its endless battle against wildness and the desire of its rulers for total order. It would not be long before the demands of civilization caught up with any drop-out and demanded compliance or death. To live beyond industrial society is to make oneself its enemy.

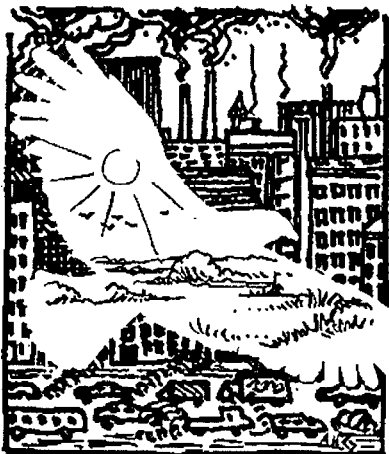
For the sake of clarity I do not mean that it is the -duty- of anyone who wants to be alive to struggle against industrialism. It is not some sort of abstract responsibility to some flimsy ideology. Rather, it has become a necessity. In order to live autonomously and spontaneously one must place oneself in opposition to those that wish to co-opt living and organize it into their limited ideological package, otherwise ones efforts will always be crushed, stolen, contorted. This opposition must include the statist projects of even the revolutionary left and any other project that would sell out the living for the sake of production. We must be wary of those that would take from people

their liberatory projects and enslave it to their central organizing committee (for the sake of the revolution of course, we all must sacrifice!) The class war-- the primal war-- does not require it's warriors to be bound by a sense of duty because our innate passion for the adventure of living is a much stronger motivator than moral obligation ever has been.

This is a battle for life itself and nothing less, and we all need to remember this. We aren't fighting for another righteous cause, or for the correctness of a specific ideological line, life is at stake. I do not advocate revolution so that I can see how my theories might play out. I desire to do whatever is necessary to allow life to flourish unrestrained, human life and non-human alike. Revolutionary struggle is the process of taking back ones ability to thrive and refuse to be turned into (or remain) another commodity on the market.

I got caught up in intellectual hell
Essays and theories and
Fucking analysis
And not breathing
And not dancing
And not being naked
Under cedars while
Rain patters down
Fresh on
Living flesh





ABANDON THE CITY

*(...or the radical necessity of
practical rewilding)*

In the wilderness my physical aloneness, defined by an absence of other people in my vicinity does not include the crushing loneliness I often feel in the city, surrounded by alien bodies and frequently tepid relationships. Here I am currently, quite literally alone but it does not include a pervasive sense of isolation. I feel at peace in this aloneness, settling into the knowledge (and its accompanying sense of freedom) that I'm unlikely to be intruded upon by a passing unsympathetic stranger and that I may sing and dance and experiment without the leering, watchful gaze of conservative, moralistic neighbours.

In the city I am surrounded by thousands and millions who don't know or care to know me and who do not wish to break out of the daily spectacle of urban life. In this wild place I feel an expansiveness, and invitation to dynamically participate in the unpredictable process of living. I'm encouraged by the very nature of this place to open my heart, pay attention to the spontaneous whims of my spirit and to experiment playfully with the interaction between my body and the land.

This means exploring my relationship with individual plants, animals and insects and allowing unique relationships to develop unhurried and unforced with each creature encountered. It involves touching, tasting, looking at, turning over and listening to

the lives I come across. Asking permission to pick parts of them and listening intently for an answer before proceeding.

All of this is essential to my personal manifestation of anarchism. I cannot shut my body, my spirit, my desires up in the city and expect myself to be strong enough and liberated enough to carry on any authentic form of struggle. The city makes me sick. Work (as in a job, not self directed labour) makes me sick. The mentality and corresponding habits of urban life make me completely ill mentally, physically and spiritually due to the self perpetuating cycle of exhaustion, depletion, constantly requisite defensiveness and isolation. The city is not a healthy place to base oneself and ones struggle. It is, however, the belly of the beast and thus a strategically important target but that doesn't mean we have to contain ourselves within it. I consider it tactically intelligent to slip in silently and be out before anyone is the wiser, and base ones life in the wild, out of the ever-watchful gaze of the urban State thugs.

I cannot continue to vocalize anti-civilization rhetoric and not practice and experiment with my own liberation from it. Analysis is not enough. I need to live my own daily life learning and practicing a relationship with the bioregion I am a part of. I need to familiarize myself with this land, constructing integral, healthy relationships from which to launch my struggle. I can't fight if I'm weak, alone and sick. I require direct immersion into wildness to be strong and to survive at all.





Me: I'm interested in discussing the practice of tearing down civilization and the current realities of radical struggle. What current struggles do you find most inspiring?

DJ: I guess the struggles I find most inspiring are those of the salmon and those of grizzly bears, polar bears, nonhumans and a lot of the struggles of the traditional indigenous to maintain their lifestyles, to maintain their own relationship to their landbase. That's the resistance I take the greatest inspiration from. And then of course... I find any resistance where people are putting their lives on the line also very inspiring and that would include the Iraqi resistance to US occupation.

What happens to an American environmentalist? If something really nasty happens to them they got arrested and had to pay some \$200 fine. The Iraqi Insurgents are dying and if they get captured they're put in Guantanamo. I find that inspiring too. Not just there, but all over the world when people are resisting when there is more at stake than just their jobs or their self esteem or something.

Me: So do you think that people in North America are too comfortable and that's what prevents them from resisting on that level?

DJ: What I think prevents most people in North America from resisting is that we're the beneficiaries of this exploitative system. I think this fear is the belief that you have something left to lose. I got a friend who's an ex con who says that any revolution won't happen until people get to the "fuck it" stage. I think it would take quite a lot to get a lot of

Americans to that stage. For so many American activists it's an abstract struggle, it's not a struggle for your very life, and part of that is because we identify so strongly with the system. Where do you get your water? You get your water from the tap. Where do you get your food? You get your food from the grocery store. If you not just cognitively and rationally believe, but viscerally know that if you need to get some water you get it out of the tap and if you need some food you go to the grocery store, if you know that, if you identify with the system like that you will defend that system to the death because your very life depends on that system. If on the other hand your water comes from the river and your food comes from the land you'll defend to the death those things because your life depends on those and that's part of it: we identify so closely and deeply with the system.

Me: Do you think it's possible that people in North America will get to a point where they don't identify with the system that closely anymore? And if so what do you think will bring people to that level?

DJ: What do you mean by people, do you mean a lot of people or do you mean some people?

Me: I suppose I could mean either...

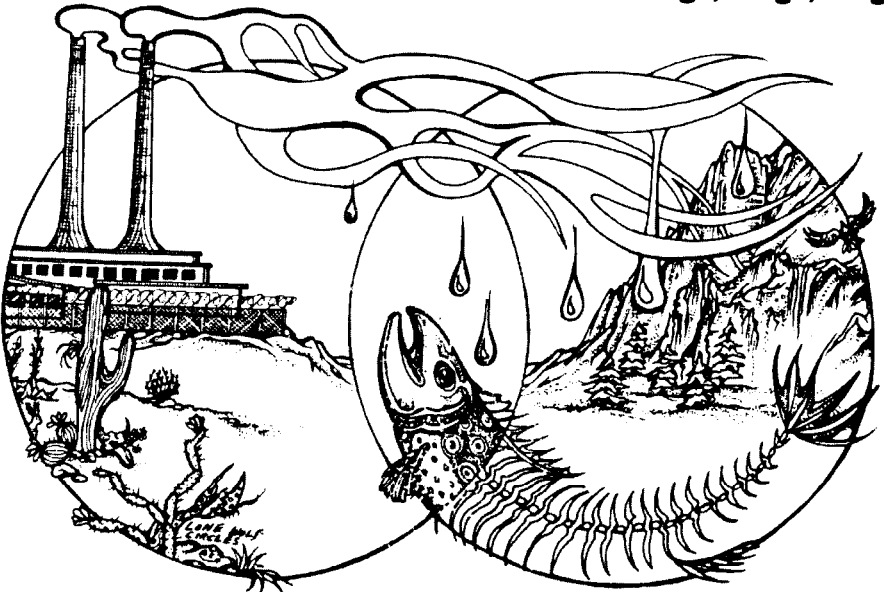
DJ: A lot of people is not going to happen... but it doesn't take that many, I mean there was one person by himself who almost stopped World War 2, George Elser, who no one's every heard of. He almost assassinated Hitler in 1939. Killing Hitler would have stopped WW2 and Elser almost did that by himself, it doesn't always take a lot of people. I think one of the things we need to really think about is if we don't believe there's going to be some sort of mass uprising, which there's not (and that's one reason why I don't really care about appealing to the masses of Americans) it's never going to happen. So one of the things I think we need to think about then is leverage. A lever is obviously something you can use to increase your force like a teeter-totter where you have a little kid who's got a long lever arm and you've got a big adult on the other side and the little kid can still raise them up. George Elser would be one example of somebody using a really long lever and that's something I don't think we've done enough of.

When the military moves into an area one of the things they do is immediately look for the choke point and those are the points where there is a bottleneck. Bottlenecks of production or bottleneck's of movement, an intersection, where if you claim that intersection nobody can pass. One of the things I think we need to think about is what are the bottlenecks that stop us, what are the bottlenecks that would stop them? And this ties back to the discussion of lever arms, how do you leverage your efforts? People say to me all the time "Why aren't you blowing up dams?" and the answer that I have for

that is that I don't know anybody else who is talking so explicitly about the things I'm talking about and for now I'm hoping that this provides me with greater leverage. I just got back from doing a talk in front of 750 people in Olympia and I'm hoping that doing this work, I believe that doing this work right now provides me still with a longer lever arm than if I were to do it myself.

Obviously you can't do both because there has to be an absolute firewall between above ground and below ground people otherwise we may as well go to the police station for recreational mug shots. If you're going to talk about it you've gotta not do it, and if you're going to do it you've gotta shut the hell up. Almost all the ELF people who've been caught got caught because one of the group had a big mouth. Tre Arrow, one of the reasons he's in trouble is because one of the people that allegedly did the actions told his girlfriend who was the frickin daughter of the deputy sheriff and because of that, I mean who knows what would have happened had that person not spoken, but at the very least because of that everyone else gets in big trouble.

I don't think there will be a mass movement; I don't think we need one. That's one of the advantages of the system becoming increasingly centralized, is that diversity is always strength and this is true whether we're talking about a forest or an infrastructure. Right now one corporation controls essentially all, but we can safely say most international communications and that's Microsoft through Windows software. Everybody thinks 'oh hackers are just a bunch of kids messing around,' a few of them are but a lot of the are expressly attempting to point out the stupidity of relying on one corporation to control mass communications and that is a huge, huge, huge



choke point. And we can find all sorts of those, and people can find their own in terms of what they're capable of doing and what they're interested in doing.

Me: Aside from Microsoft, what other bottlenecks do you see, are there any specific examples you could point out?

DJ: Obviously oil is a major bottleneck and electricity is another one. Just think about what things other things rely on... What really nailed the Nazis was when the allies hit the railroad transportation system, because by knocking out the transport system you can't move anything and...you can't build tanks because you can't get raw material... a couple of things about that. One is that a couple years ago in the United States the US economy very nearly ground to a halt because of a dock workers strike on the West Coast. All the big companies could not get their raw materials or their partially assembled pieces. They were sitting in ships off the west coast waiting. And if GM has to shut down their line it's like a million or two million dollars per minute and when the strike was settled they were within a few days of running out of parts. That's a huge bottleneck.

...The Nazis at one point were down to a 7 month supply of industrial diamonds. Without industrial diamonds (not rings, diamonds used in drills) you don't have industry. Diamonds are extremely hard, they are incredibly useful for the whole industrial system. Most of the diamonds at that point came from South Africa which was part of the British Empire. DeBeers, the corporation that controls most of the world's diamonds was of course far more interested in money than in stopping the Nazis so they allowed the Nazis to smuggle diamonds in Red Cross packages out of South Africa or Angola into Germany. Without that the Nazis wouldn't have been able to run their industrial economy.

Oil was a huge bottleneck for the Germans. That's one of the reasons Germany lost against the Russians is they attempted to go for the oil fields down in the Caucasus. That was a major strategic blunder, in fact that was one of the reasons they invaded in the first place is because the Russians were very close to the remaining oil fields and they wanted to push them back among other reasons.

George Bush and Cheney and all of them are very aware of these choke points and that's one of the major reasons for the invasion of Iraq. To control those oil fields as peak oil approaches.

Me: In order to bring Industrial Civilization to an end, what needs to happen, what do we need to do here and now?

DJ: One of the things that needs to occur is we need to get some sort of critical mass of people who deeply know in their

bodies that civilization is killing the planet. I was talking to an American Indian guy fro NW Wisconsin and he said there had been a big conflict between whites and Indians over fish a few years ago. He contrasted Indian warriors with white activists and he said the Indians are ready to die for the fish and he doesn't know very many forest activists (I mean yes forest activists have died) but he doesn't know very many activists of any sort who are ready to die for the trees or the fish or whatever. I think one of the things that need to happen is we need to recognize it really is about our lives. We're talking about the death of the planet.

One of the smartest things the Nazis did was co-opt rationality and co-opt hope and they did this by making it so that every step of the way it was in the Jew's rational best interest to not resist. Would you rather get an id card or would you rather resist and potentially get killed? Do you wanna go to a ghetto...get in a cattle car... take a shower or would you rather resist and potentially get killed? And every step of the way it was in their best interest to not resist and it's the same with us. What we end up doing is say lets just save this little scrap of land and this way they won't kill me, they won't put electrodes on my testicles...

The first thing we need to do is decolonize our minds. It is so wonderful to read the speeches of Tecumseh and some of the other Indians who really recognized that you can never make peace with civilization. It's like Chitsika said—the whole culture is a monster and what it needs is land. We need to recognize that those in power will stop at nothing and that they will kill the planet unless we stop them. They'll kill every living thing on the planet and they're running on a death urge. We need to really understand that and then there



Resisting Jews caught during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

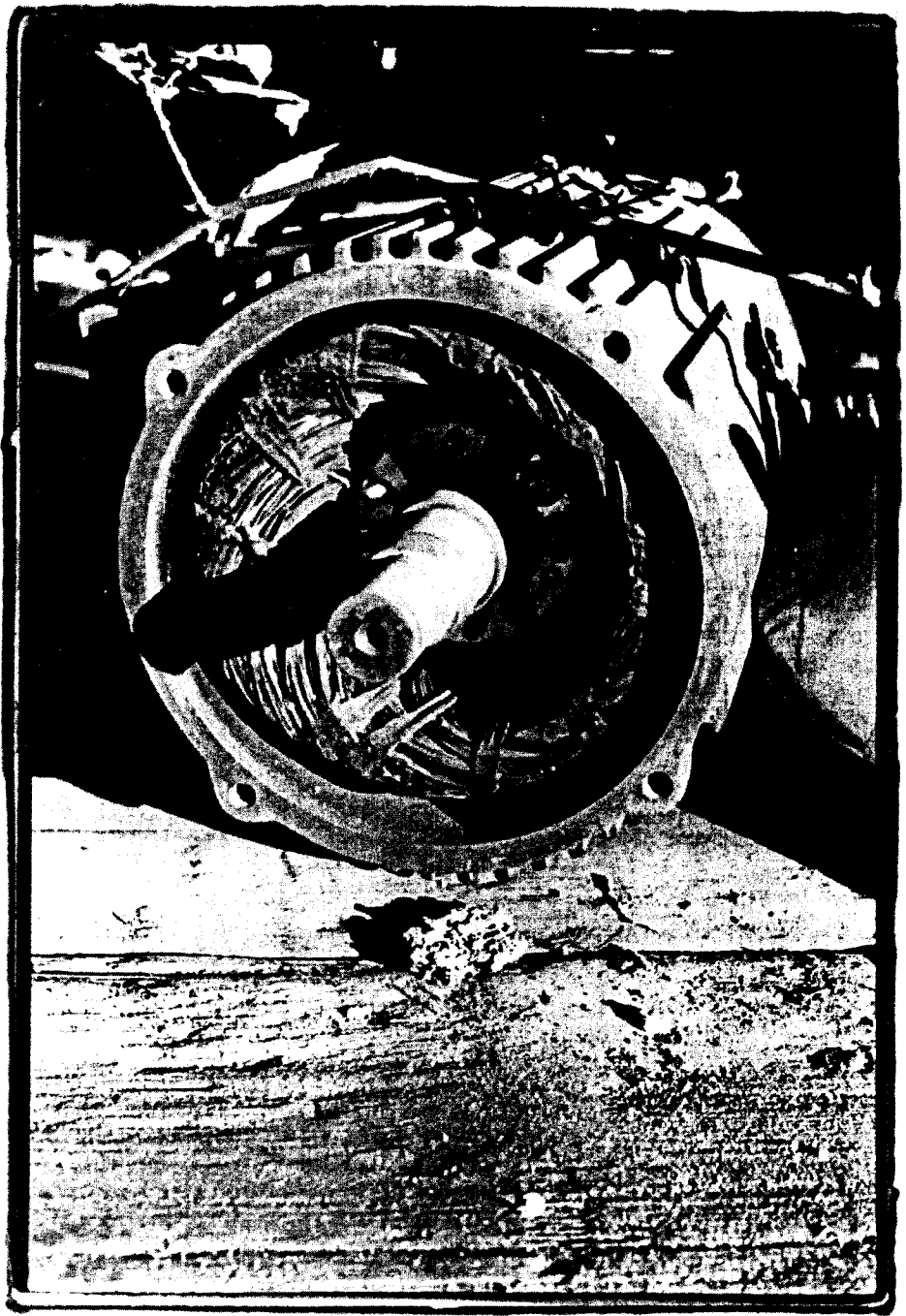
need to be enough of us that understand that that we can start to effectively fight back... and then we're going to skip a level here because I don't know how to organize.

I recognize that we need to have more than just leaderless cells and we need to have a larger scale organization but I don't know how to do that and my proclivities don't run towards that so I'm going to skip that step for now... We need to have a large scale resistance and by that I don't mean a hundred thousand or a million people marching and that's all you do. We need to get really serious about this. I mean, what do salmon need to survive? Salmon need 5 things, its really straight forward. They need dams removed, they need logging stopped, they need industrial fishing stopped, and they need industrial agriculture stopped because of run off. They need global warming stopped which means they need the oil economy stopped. If you don't do those the salmon will die.

...Dams need to come down, undergoing structures need to be taken out but that's not all that needs to happen. People need to learn what the plants in their homes are, what are the edible plants near where they live. Civilization is going to crash whether or not we help bring it down. A lot of people are going to die. If you care about those humans who will live through the crash and if you don't want to [help] bring down civilization then one of the things that you or anybody who is in that position needs to do is to start putting in community gardens now. Start figuring out how they can do water purification systems, how they can start doing all that stuff. So my point is we need everything. That's one of the great things about everything being so fucked up is that no matter where you look there's great work to be done. We need people to take out dams, we need people to stop deforestation, we need people to make ecovillages to help people survive the crash. We need everything.

I think a lot about the military tactic that Robert E. Lee used in the battle of Chancellorsville, its called hammer and anvil. Part of is army there is the anvil and he sent the other half of his army around as the hammer to smash the enemy in between...

When you say what do we need to do, that means everything and that includes working at rape crisis hotlines, it includes the discourse work you're doing right now. The only thing that matters and the only way by which we will be judged by those who come after is by our effect on the landbase. I was talking to a longtime activist the other day who was saying that so many people are burned out and they want to be able to say to the salmon 'at least I tried' and I said that's not good enough for me. I don't want to try. I will make sure the salmon survive. So what do we need to do? One of the things to do is listen to the land. We need to ask the land 'what do you want?' we need to go sit by a river and say 'what do you want me to



do?' 'How can I help you?' We need to say to the salmon 'I love you, and you know how to live here so you tell me, what do you want?' and then we need to do it.

Me: I find that a lot of people tend to spend a lot of time bickering over theory and devote all of their energy to denouncing other people's ideas which I think is a total waste of time..

DJ: Yeah, it is. It's like this guy approached me after a talk I did in the Bay area not long ago. He was an old Commie, by which I mean capital 'C' Commie and he said,

"You know I agree with some of your stuff and I agree [that] we gotta take out the State and everything but I can't go with you on the other stuff."

And I said, "Look, that's great. Why don't we have this argument after we've taken out the State?"

Right now it's all theory. I love this story. I was way back in the woods when I lived in Washington, I was out getting firewood one day and my truck got a flat tire and my spare was also flat. Thumping along the road for about two hours and I come to this guys house and I asked him if he's got a pump and he doesn't but he gives me a spare tire so I go home and the next day I bake him a cake and take back his spare tire and I give it to him and as I'm standing there he says 'would you like some firewood? I got plenty of wood out back. I said sure. So we got there and he's holding a chainsaw, it's really clear he's a logger and he says, "So what do you do?"

And I'm thinking oh shit, "I'm a writer."

He says, "What do you write about?"

And I'm thinking science fiction, fantasy, anything because you know loggers and environmentalists are supposed to hate each other. I said "Right now I'm writing a book about how the big 4 timber companies got their land illegally from the public domain."

And he starts swearing and turns red in the face and I'm looking for a break in the fence and I'm thinking he's gonna kill me. Then it takes me about 10 seconds to realize that he's an independent logger whose been put out of business by Plum Creek [a major logging company in the PNW] and he's swearing at them not me. And he hates them even more than I do which I didn't think was possible. It takes us about another 20 seconds before we've got our arms around each others shoulders and we're swapping atrocity stories about Plum Creek.

And what we came to, I said "look, I'm against all industrial

logging, not just big corporations. So after we take out Plum Creek, Weyerhaeuser, Potlatch and Boise Cascade I'm coming after you."

And then he and I both laughed because of course that's just theoretical.

You see what I'm saying right? So all this theoretical difference, you know some people get so jazzed about whether the beginning was domesticating plants, whether that was the beginning or whether the beginning was cities. I sort of go with cities, but I'm against agriculture too, but right now we're in a hell of a mess. It's like if [you were to] wake up in the middle of the night and there's this homicidal maniac in your house who is now charging up the stairs with an axe and you and somebody else are in bed arguing about whether they came in through the kitchen window or the front door. It doesn't fucking matter. Well, it actually may matter but it doesn't matter right now. Let's talk about this tomorrow once we got rid of the maniac. We can argue for 6 hours over this and that'll be fine but right now I got something else I gotta do. So I don't have much patience for that stuff.

You would not believe the amount of email I get attacking me, it's so funny. Almost none if it is from right wing people. It's almost exactly like what you're saying. "I love your work" they say for one sentence and then they go on for two pages about God knows what. I just don't have any patience for that. I don't attack ostensible allies. I mean there are activists I don't think much of but if they don't attack the things I believe in



I'm not going to attack them, because it's pointless. I'm going to use my energy to take down Monsanto instead of them.

Me: Bringing it back to the point you made about people not realizing that the struggle is about life itself, how would you go about breaking down the abstraction... what do you think would make people realize that fighting back is not part of life, but that it is necessary if life is to continue at all?

DJ: ...One of the things I do, one of the things I talk about is I try to find the areas in people's own lives where they already recognize how bad things are. For example, talk about a wage job, so many people hate their jobs; ask them what do you think about this way of living where you work in a job you hate? Or you can ask what do you think about living in a culture where so many women are raped, or where women can't walk unafraid down the street, I mean how weird is that? Or where a woman is not really allowed to have bodily integrity. So let's start from there.

Another thing I do at my talks is say how many people here have loved ones who have died of cancer? Usually about 70-80%. And that's one of the things I say: if we're not going to fight back (and of course cancer is a disease of civilization) if we're not going to fight back when the people you love are dying and when your own body is rotten with chemicals... like, give me a threshold... ok the salmon's not going to do it for you, the whales aren't going to do it for you, how about [something else.] Give me some threshold at which you'll finally start to fight back. So you're not going to fight back when your uncle dies of cancer and your mother dies of leukemia and then your brother gets Hodgkin's disease, so maybe you'll fight back if your lover gets cancer?

Me: Or maybe they'll just rely on the industrial system to create a cure for its own diseases...

DJ: Right, exactly... but that's one of the things I try to point out, that's one of the things I try to do to get it out of this abstract question. What will it take for you personally to fight back? And another question-- what do you love? What is the biggest most pressing problem that you can help to solve? What are your gifts? If they can't figure out their gifts, if they don't want to try to protect something they love whether it's a stream or a woman's bodily integrity or whatever, I mean if they can't find anything to do I don't waste time with them. There's not enough time in the day to deal with people who are that distant. I don't write for fence sitters. I don't write for people who sort of think that maybe they might send \$10 to the Sierra Club if somebody really pushes them. I try to encourage people to go harder and to move things forward. I write for people who already recognize how messed up things are and I want to give them the courage to be even more radical and more militant as some writers have done for me.

HEALING AND FIGHTING:

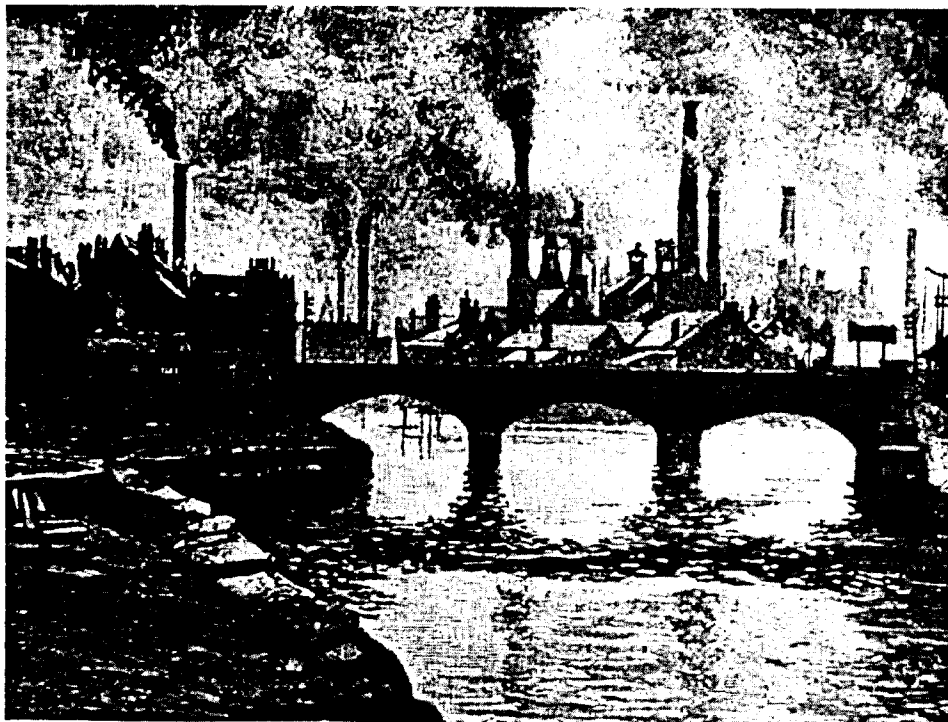
a false dichotomy

Healing from the pathology of industrialism is a lot like healing from any other disease. If we view our bodies as a microcosm of an ecosystem, or the Earth in totality, there is a close correspondence. This is a connection that civilization has made us forget and it is one that is necessary to remember if we do indeed wish to heal on any level. Eco-feminist philosophy is based upon the premise that the oppression of women (as well as race and class oppression) is intrinsically linked to the destruction and abuse of the Earth. If we take this relationship to its inherent conclusions, then healing the Earth would be similar to healing our bodies -- neither will benefit from the mechanical approach of industrialism.

Industrial medicine tends to deal with illness by pumping the body full of poisons in an attempt to kill invading organisms, it "cures" symptoms by temporarily masking them. The allopathic concept of prevention is vaccination which falls drastically short of finding the source of any problem, and often causes problems itself. Vaccinations can be held accountable for allowing viruses to become even more powerful, and even more elusive to the immune system. Industrialist revolutions never healed anything either, simply replacing one boss with the other and relying on the patriarchal obsession with progress and production. This is essentially the patching of symptoms without even recognizing where the source lies, let alone attacking it.

The revolutions of productionists have failed brutally because they have failed to recognize that human oppression is based in and supported by the exploitation of the land. Thus they have failed to realize that the only true liberation-liberation without the compromise or sacrifice of impossible dreams, would put an end to all forms of exploitation, not just that of the industrial proletariat.

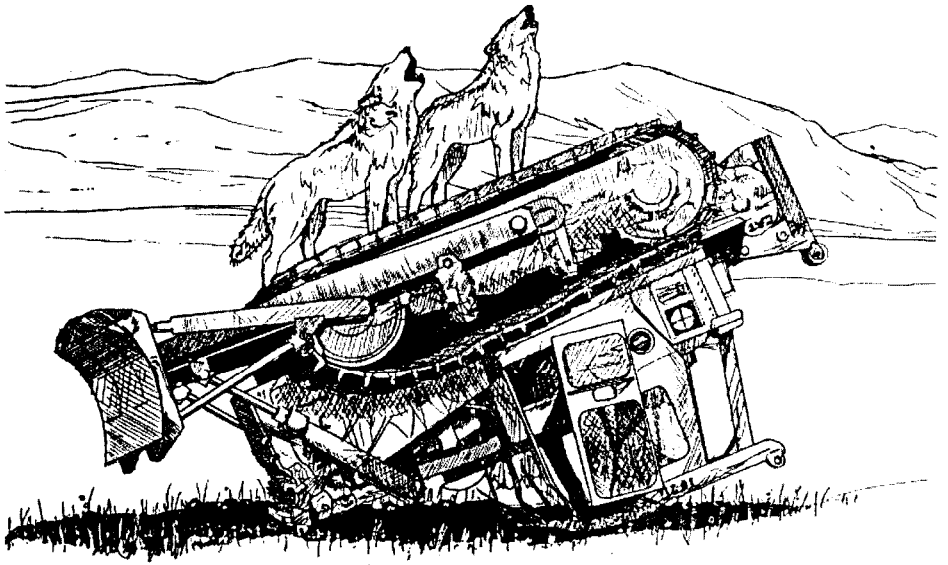
In revolutionary circles we tend to cling to a false duality between healing from and attacking the systems we oppose-- with many of us taking sides. Such a duality doesn't exist. It is impossible to heal without attacking the source of illness, and it is equally impossible to fight on infinitely without nurturing our physical, emotional and spiritual need for rest and care. A lot of radicals seem to maintain the attitude that once they've healed from their personal wounds, then and only then will they be strong enough to fight back. I maintain that fighting back is an integral part



of the healing process; it is essential for the act of taking and maintaining autonomy. Healing is struggle. The struggle is a process of healing.

Take the example of the flu I have right now. Industrial medicine is incapable of doing anything to help it at all, although some doctors might moronically prescribe antibiotics. That approach would do absolutely nothing to help-- but rather leave my intestines stripped of all the beneficial bacteria I need for proper digestion, my lungs still full of phlegm and my body completely burned out by its own unsupported struggle for health. I am currently taking a traditional approach to healing my own flu. I attack the virus by taking herbs and eating foods that strengthen the immune system. I have been skipping work to sleep, spending my days reading, sleeping and taking hot pine oil baths in order to allow my body the focus it needs to fight. This approach promotes the body's natural responses which manifests in beneficial symptoms such as fevers and chills, sweating it out, the expectoration of phlegm (rather than suppressing coughs and runny noses this involves making it all come up in productive coughs and lots of nose blowing.) This method urges the body to step it up a notch and fight even harder, because it has been given the support it needs to maintain the necessary struggle.

Likewise, the State and its Industrial apparatus are unlikely to simply wither away on their own. If we desire to heal ourselves and the Earth from the incredible devastations these institutions have caused we will require a broad approach. Some people advocate simply "dropping out" and creating alternative subcultures, assuming that the rest will naturally follow. As if missing a few people would cause capitalism to crumble. This line of thought leads many people to such work as building beautiful gardens, writing enjoyable music, opening fair trade vegan cafes and riding bikes



they fix themselves. All of those are beautiful, nourishing things but if our goal is to fully heal from the pathology of industrial civilization this work must necessarily be supportive of defensive and offensive attack. Alone it will only ever serve to create comfortable distractions from the reality of the oppressions every living thing faces constantly. These comfortable distractions can include thriving but insular diy punk, activist or back to the land scenes among others. Not only that, if we single-mindedly devote all of our energy to building without fighting to defend what we've made we will quickly lose all we've done. It is necessary to fight for space, to dismantle all that would prevent our autonomy before we can feel safe in the relative permanence of our victory.

On the other hand, if we spent all of our energy throwing ourselves into constant battle with the institutions of the state, fighting cops every afternoon and bombing exploitative industry every evening we'd all burn out very quickly--making all of our battling largely ineffectual. We require rest and the support of enduring, nurturing relationships with our friends and

our land. If our goal is to heal everything, we will not accomplish it by making ourselves ill with stubborn, duty-bound perseverance. It is as important to take care of ones need for rest and beauty as it is to defend that space by struggling against what would destroy it. And maybe even more important than that-- if we don't grow gardens, and build nurturing relationships with both humans and our bioregions now, what will we do when we've collapsed industrialism and are literally starved in every aspect of life for lack of foresight?

Rather than taking any unbalanced, dualistic approach it is important to recognize that all aspects of struggle rely heavily upon one another and that healing is a broad and complex process, especially when pathology is as deep and pervasive as that of Industrial Civilization. If we wish to heal ourselves, our land, and our relationships to all aspects of living we must remember that diversity is essential. Healing often requires interesting combinations of attack and rest, nourishment and deconstruction, and is generally most effective when it is decentralized and based deeply in the bioregion in which it is occurring.



THE WITCHHUNTS,

Assimilation and the Creation of the Capitalist Nation State

The Burning Times occurred between 1400 and 1800 C.E. and it is estimated that as few as 40,000 and as many as 9,000,000 people were executed, 85% of whom were women. This historical campaign is often referred to as a women's holocaust by feminists and neo-pagans. The vast majority of accused and convicted witches were women, and the most well circulated written work on the subject, the *Malleus Mallificarum*, blatantly stated that women were inherently more susceptible to the charms of the devil. In order to fully instill patriarchal ideology in the people of Europe it was necessary to defame and destroy women's traditional power. However, the ideological motivation of the Witch Hunts stretches beyond that. It was not only an attack on women, but on the traditional land based cultures of Europe in their entirety, which were generally non-patriarchal and which the peasantry still clung to in a Christianized form.

The Witch Hunts were strategically utilized by the State and Church (which at the time did not even present the veneer of separation) to suppress any remaining vestiges of the old pagan cultures of Europe, in which women played powerfully important roles. It was an instrumental approach in the transformation of European society from its relatively decentralized, locally and tribally rooted heritage to a centralized, bureaucratic and eventually capitalist conglomeration of Nation States. It was a later stage in the process of colonization and assimilation which had carried on

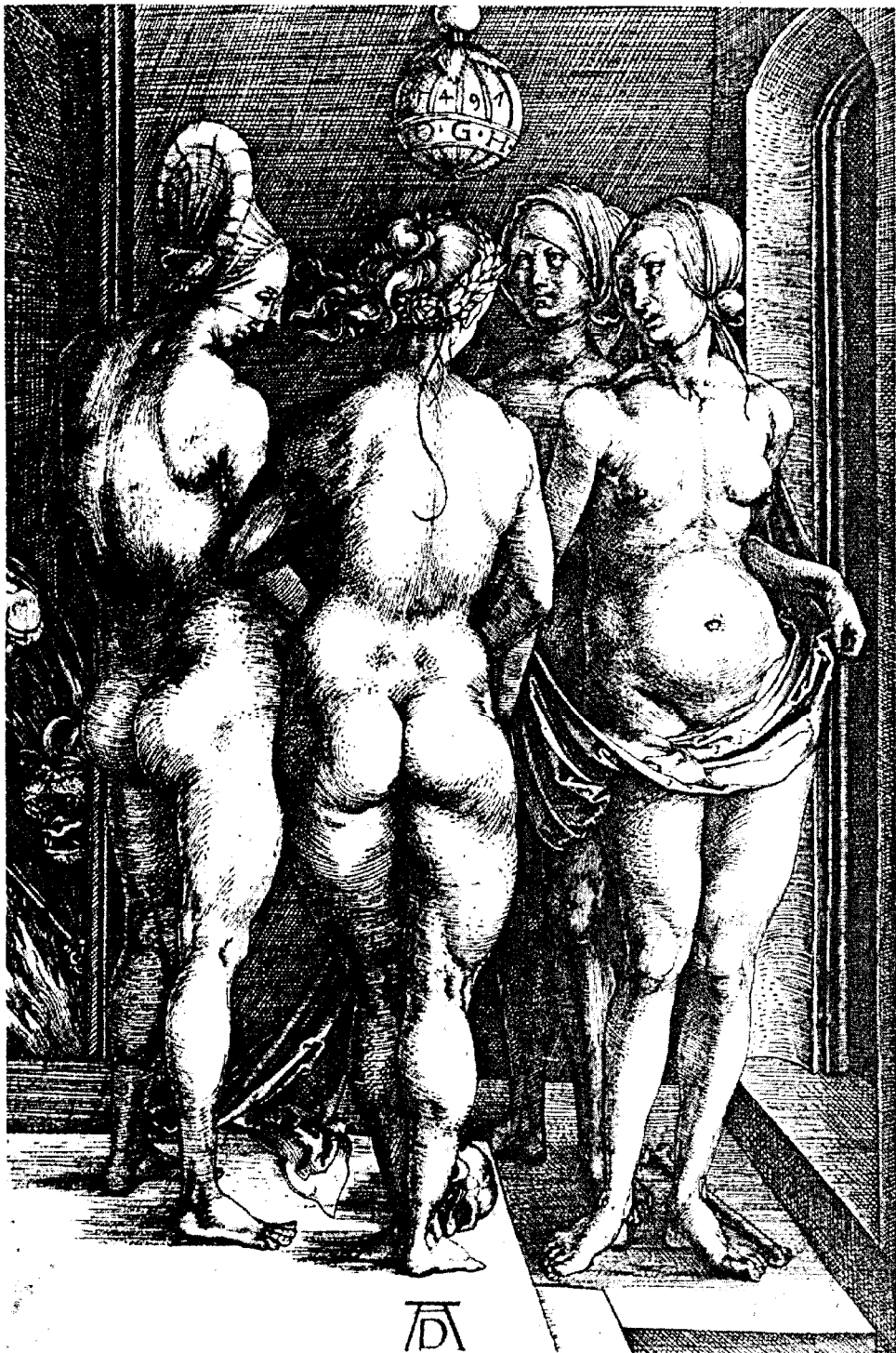


for several centuries by that time. Accusations and trials often directly followed peasant rebellions and insurrections. The witch hunts were necessary in order to assert the power and validity of the state. This is demonstrated in the following quotes by Jean Bodin, an early advocate of free trade, whose ideas contributed significantly to the development of capitalism.

"There are two means by which states are maintained in their weal and greatness--reward and penalty: the one for the good, the other for the bad. And, if the distribution of these two be faulty, nothing else is to be expected than the inevitable ruin of the state."

"...if the role of ecclesiastical leaders is to ensure that the true religion is not stained by superstition or impiety, it is also the role of the magistrates, who hold the reins of the State, to ensure that the youth do not forsake the one, unchanging religion to follow other, diverse beliefs. In this manner we may conserve the semblance of a State."

The old ways, in a plentitude of regional




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manifestations, were intrinsically linked to the land. European spiritual tradition was heavily focused upon direct experience and inspiration and a personal relationship with the land, its spirits, deities, etc. Rather than the abstraction of "faith" or "belief," it required exploration. The kind of world view intrinsic to an earth-centered spiritual tradition is not cohesive with the kind of mass mentality necessary for the existence of the rigid structure of the Nation State. I do not mean to suggest that pre-Christian Europe was non-hierarchical or some kind of egalitarian utopia as that would be a blatant lie. However, it is accurate to say that in order for Empires to be built it is necessary to divert the attention of the masses from their land and their own direct experience and fill them instead with the abstractions of faith and patriotism. They must shift their identification with their direct relations to an identification with the ideology of their own oppressors, God's representatives and the State. Witch Hunts were a means to achieve this mass psychology because those that had not yet been accused would likely become caught up in the fervor of proving their Faith. They were convinced by the clergy that there were witches among them, responsible for the suffering they experienced who received such power supernaturally through allegiance to Satan.

The European Witch Hunts were an intrinsic part of the colonization of Europe and the assimilation of land-based cultures. Without waging this specific campaign against the traditional culture still pervasive in Europe, the Nation State and capitalism would not have been able to develop as they did. People must be stripped of their connection to their land and their traditional community, and have their direct experience replaced with the abstraction of faith and the fear of dis-order in order to submit to the ideology of being controlled. The Burning Times were a major turning point in the trajectory of culture and society and its influence can be seen in many aspects of contemporary culture.

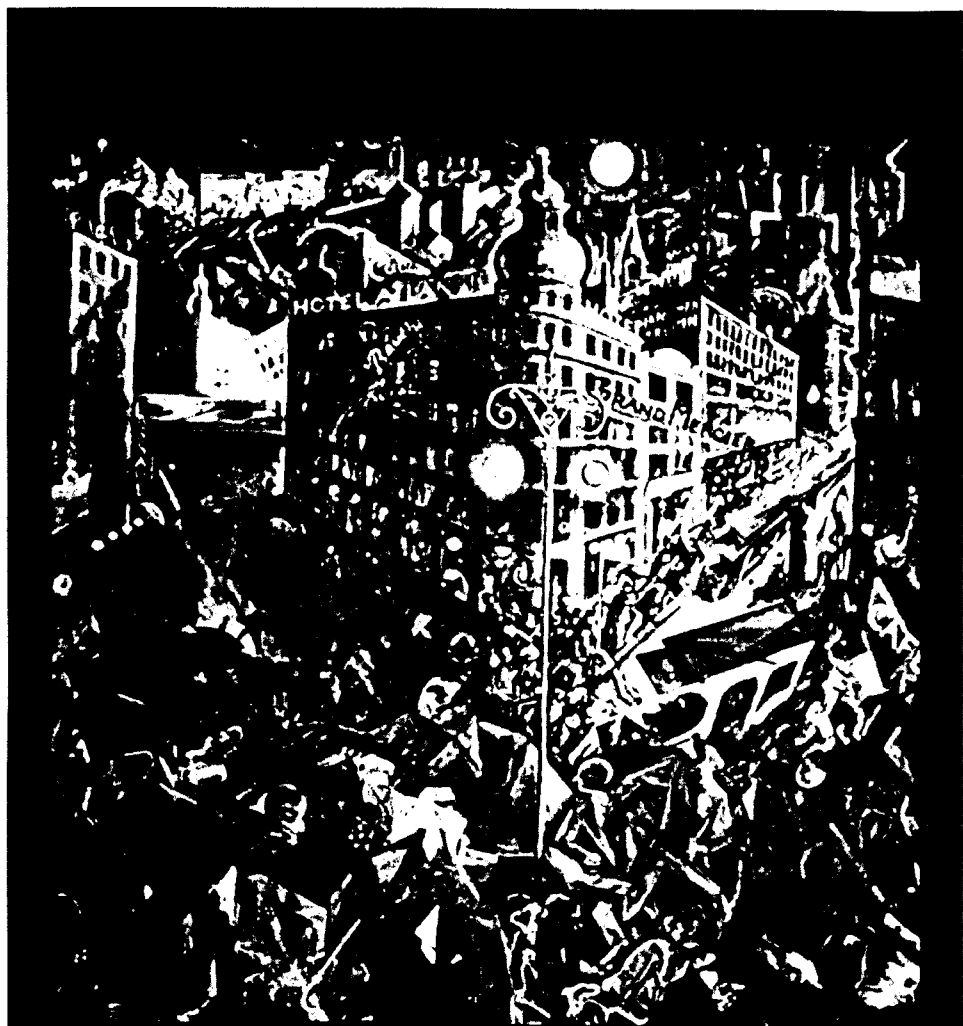


B. Lanning



We have always fought back. What other option exists? When all of life has been co-opted to serve the suicidal religion of civilization the only way to be passionately alive is to place oneself in total opposition to this monster with every moment, every breath. To live beyond it, to take each opportunity to sabotage it... For the sake of desire and the inherent wildness of spirit...

We will always fight back.



Write us:

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