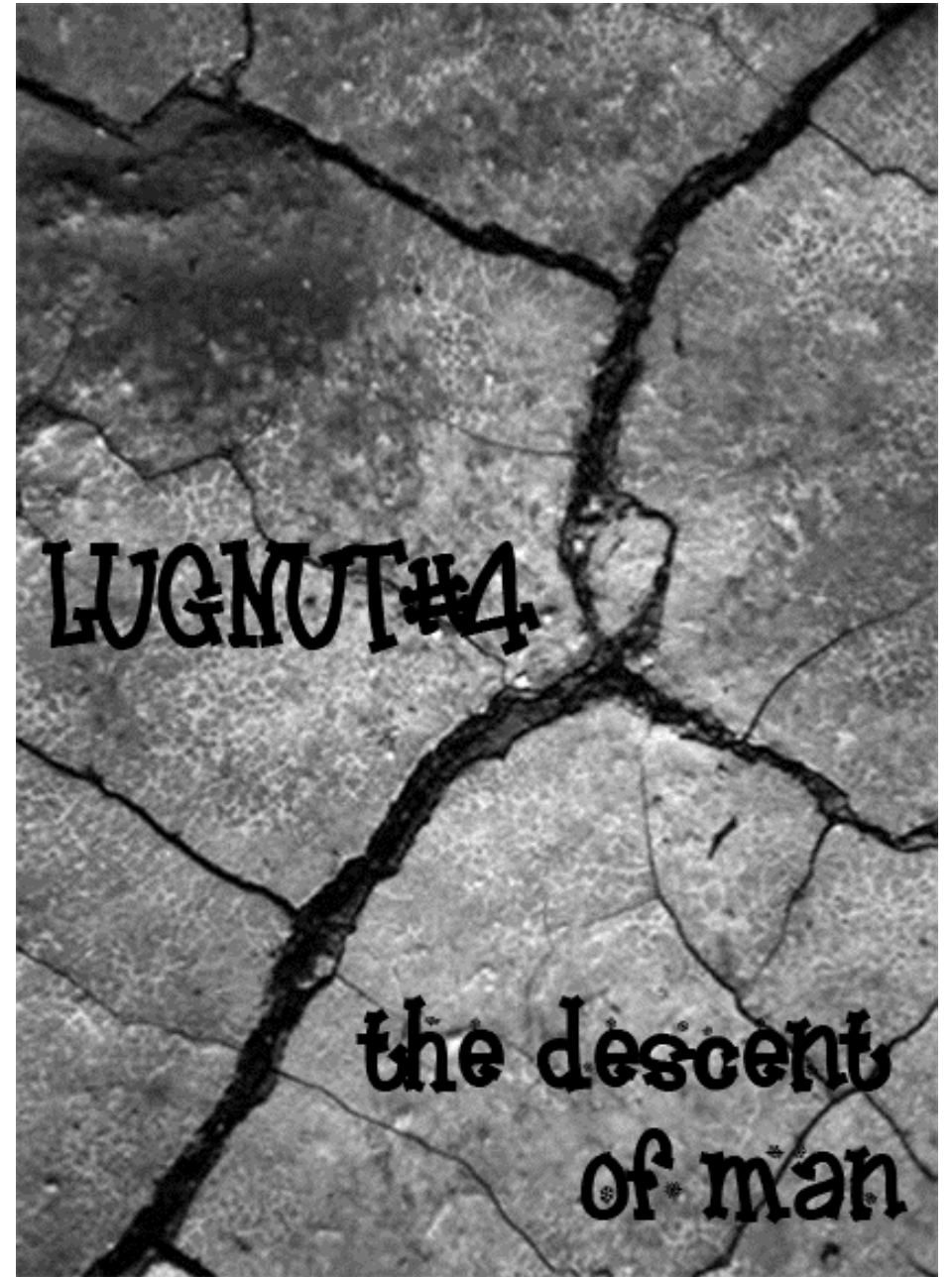


leadrum@yahoo.com 2K6 - to all my poets scribes and dreamers

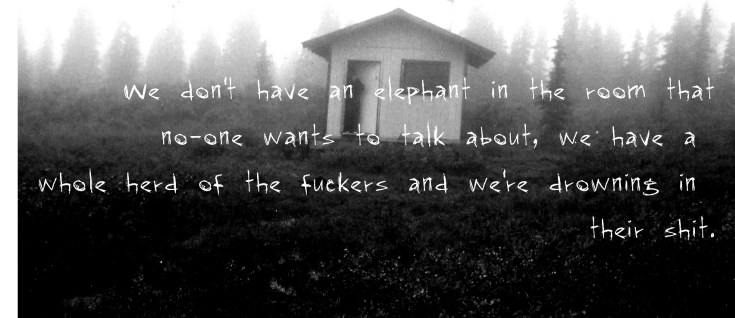


So, indeed, let's destroy civilization, this network of domination, but not in the name of any model, of an ascetic morality of sacrifice or of a mystical disintegration into a supposedly unalienated oneness with Nature, but rather because the re-appropriation of our lives, the collective recreation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

'Willful Disobedience'



My reasons for writing this are primarily to try to expose a few people to the thoughts and feelings that have been wandering through my head over the last while. Most of my friends are punk rockers of one description or another and most of them have anarchistic anti-capitalistic viewpoints, which is great but I don't think that critique of our world goes nearly far enough, and I want to attempt to open up a few areas for discussion/contemplation. I can offer the usual zine editor's apology for it not being exactly what I wanted it to be, but it's being squatting my housemate's hard-drive for too long now. It's basically an intro to anti-civilizationist thought with a bunch of random stuff thrown together at the end. I haven't really touched on the personal aspects of all this. Maybe when I move to that cabin in the woods I'll do another issue.



I hate labels. I despise ideologies. I detest systems. I have no intention of converting anyone into being a Green Anarchist. Repeat after me, we are all individuals. The lumping together of thoughts and ideas into ideologies is pretty repugnant to me. I get my inspiration from where I happen to find it. If I find it in Taoist texts that doesn't make me a Taoist, in a Ninjutsu book, this doesn't make a fucken Ninja for fucks sake, so I don't need to be labelled as a Primitivist, thanks very much. This is just a bunch of thoughts about where we come from, where we might be going and why we're killing this beautiful planet that gives us life, like a spoilt brat throwing a tantrum with the aid of a flame-thrower. Most of this is stuff that's affected me in a way similar to that I felt when I first started informing myself about anarchism or listening to punk-rock. It felt right on so many levels - 'Of course this is what's going on, I just didn't have the words to describe it' kind of a feeling, and relief that there were other freaks like me out there. Maybe I've totally lost the plot with all this stuff, and I could spend the rest of the zine humbly, awkwardly apologizing for my convictions and my fragilely connected theories, but that would get pretty tiring.

If you think that I'm full of shit, at least have the satisfaction that I'm a happier person for it. Hopefully I've written this in an accessible style of writing. I'm not an academic and I don't have years of expensive education to back up my argument-forming and critical examinations. I'm just a punk that works on a building-site, so don't expect to find proper notes and references here. There's some suggestions for further reading at the back if you want them.

If you know a bit about anti-civ theory (yes it's poncy but it's handier than seven syllables) you won't find a whole lot of original ideas in here. Most of it is stolen, plagiarized and ripped off in the true spirit of furthering the end of this nightmare from which we struggle to awake.. lol ☺

In case you haven't been paying attention to anthropological theories (shame on you!) the Hobbesian idea of pre-agricultural man's life being nasty, short and brutish (and ridiculously over-quoted) has basically been ripped up and thrown out the window since the sixties. Studies of modern gatherer-hunter peoples has led many to believe that a non-sedentary, foraging existence is an amazingly beneficial lifestyle in terms of work/play, diet, health, fitness, social interaction and general wellbeing and happiness. It is these findings that have laid the basis for the primitivist critique, which basically says that this was as good as we ever had it.

Briefly, hunter-gatherer societies in general, live non-sedentary or semi-sedentary lifestyles, meaning that they roam from place to place in smallish groups, gathering plant material and hunting wild animals for food. It has generally been found that this, as well as tool-making, food preparing, fire-tending, shelter-building, clothes-making, and water-carrying average out at about three to four hours work per day per able-bodied person. Most people in our culture would see these things as hobbies or pastimes and many people enthusiastically devote their spare time to DIY, gardening, cooking, sewing etc. For hunter-gatherers, these are simply the basic things that need to be done to live comfortably and they are done with as much feeling of being forced as a DIY enthusiast hammering together a garden shed on a Sunday morning when you're trying to get a lie-in. There is no concept of 'work' as we know it. While men tend to hunt more and women tend to do more gathering, neither is valued above the other. Plant material tends to make up about 80% of a temperate climate hunter-gatherer's diet. The food eaten is all local, fresh, organic, macrobiotic, and non-processed. Something most of us can only take vague swings at.

The critique of domestication (with any moral underpinnings removed) provides a useful tool for understanding this. What is domestication if not the expropriation of the life of a being by another who then exploits that life for her or his own purposes? Civilization is thus the systematic and institutionalized domestication of the vast majority of people in a society by the few who are served by the network of domination. Thus the revolutionary process of reappropriating our lives is a process of decivilizing ourselves, of throwing off our domestication. This does not mean becoming passive slaves to our instincts (if such even exist) or dissolving ourselves in the alleged oneness of Nature. It means becoming uncontrollable individuals capable of making and carrying out the decisions that affect our lives in free association with others. It should be obvious from this that I reject any models for an ideal world (and distrust any vision that is too perfect — I suspect that there the individual has disappeared). Since the essence of a revolutionary struggle fitting with anarchist ideals is the reappropriation of life by individuals who have been exploited, dispossessed and dominated, it would be in the process of this struggle that people would decide how they want to create their lives, what in this world they feel they can appropriate to increase their freedom, open possibilities and add to their enjoyment, and what would only be a burden stealing from the joy of life and undermining possibilities for expanding freedom. I don't see how such a process could possibly create any single, universal social model. Rather, innumerable experiments varying drastically from place to place and changing over time would reflect the singular needs, desires, dreams and aspirations of each and every individual. I assume that all anarchists would agree that we want to put an end to every institution, structure and system of domination and exploitation. The rejection of these things is, after all, the basic meaning of anarchism. Most would also agree that among these institutions, structures and systems are the state, private property, religion, law, the patriarchal family, class rule...

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In recent years, some anarchists have begun to talk in what appears to be broader terms of the need to destroy civilization. This has, of course, led to a reaction in defense of civilization. Unfortunately, this debate has been mainly acrimonious, consisting of name-calling, mutual misrepresentation and territorial disputes over the ownership of the label "anarchist," rather than real argumentation. One of the problems (although probably not the most significant one) behind this incapacity to really debate the question is that very few individuals on either side of it have tried to explain precisely what they mean by "civilization." Instead, it remains a nebulous term that represents all that is bad for one side and all that is good for the other. In order to develop a more precise definition of civilization, it is worthwhile to examine when and where civilization is said to have arisen and what differences actually exist between societies currently defined as civilized and those not considered as such. Such an examination shows that the existence of animal husbandry, agriculture, a sedentary way of life, a refinement of arts, crafts and techniques or even the simple forms of metal smelting are not enough to define a society as civilized (though they do comprise the necessary material basis for the rise of civilization). Rather what arose about ten thousand years ago in the "cradle of civilization" and what is shared by all civilized societies but lacking in all those that are defined as "uncivilized" is a network of institutions, structures and systems that impose social relationships of domination and exploitation. In other words, a civilized society is one comprised of the state, property, religion (or in modern societies, ideology), law, the patriarchal family, commodity exchange, class rule — everything we, as anarchists, oppose. To put it another way, what all civilized societies have in common is the systematic expropriation of the lives of those who live within them.

Their fitness levels are what you'd expect from people who do a lot of hiking swimming and climbing and their diet, far from being a bland mixture of dandelion leaves and nettles (again) are vastly more varied than ours. As for longevity, many live to be proud, healthy nonagenarians. There are health drawbacks of course, no antibiotics means infections can be life-threatening. Child mortality is high, but then the chances of being run over by a bus, getting cancer or being killed or injured in an industrial accident are pretty remote in the Amazon.



As for social organization, well this is where the anarcho in anarcho-primitivism comes in. Small bands of 25-50 people with little outside influence tend to be remarkably egalitarian. The likelihood of any individual seizing power is fairly remote, if there is no power to be seized. Power comes mainly from property, property from sedentism and not from a way of life where everything you own can be carried on your back and easily replaced. Gatherer-hunter children tend to be pretty self-sufficient by the time they are six or seven, and indeed self-sufficiency is another major attribute. Everything a person needs they can get or make themselves.

There are no specialists and no hoarders of knowledge, again making it unlikely that any authoritarian figure will arise. (sure what's so special about Jimmy there, he doesn't know anything I don't...) I'll look at those last few points in more detail soon. As for population control it seems remarkably self-sustaining and in balance with the available natural resources. So then this (perhaps, don't take my word for it, fool) is where we came from. For 2.5 million years, dated from the first hominid-made tools, we lived like this, not only in lush tropical climates but in deserts and tundra too. Ten thousand years ago we had the bright idea to start farming. That looks a little something like this on a timeline.



Anarchist publications still claim there are no long-functioning anarchist societies to learn from. Oh and hunter-gatherers also seem to have very few hang-ups about sexual relations and their warfare might consist of the lads from one group going and yelling insults at the lads from the other group for a while and maybe throwing a few digs until they all get bored and wander home. Ok, I'll admit that this all sounds suspiciously like romanticization of something we can't have any more. Quite possibly but most of it is based on latter-day studies among hunter-gatherer peoples in the Kalahari, the Amazon, Oceania and other parts of the 'less-developed' world, as well as historical accounts of European contact with indigenous peoples around the world.

We can divide the split into History and pre-History. With the acceptance of History, there is a declaration that what's done is done, a declaration of independence from the land, the past, the people, both living and dead. Most traditional peoples saw time (if they saw it at all) as a cyclical thing.

Did the Roman's ever realise their empire was gone? 'With their world collapsing into chaos, the Romans celebrated victory over Romania with 117 days of games. 9000 gladiators and countless animals were killed while barbarians hammered at the walls and rebellion broke out in the provinces. In fact distraction was a key feature of Rome. Intent to distract themselves, most Romans did not notice the social fabric shredding around them.'

Reads -

Against History, Against Leviathan	Fredy Perlman
A Culture of Make Believe	Derrick Jensen
A Language Older Than Words	Derrick Jensen
Against Civilization	John Zerzan (ed.)
The Revolution of Everyday Life	Raoul Vanegem
Fire And Ice	Laurel Luddite and Skunk Munky

My Name Is Chellis And I'm In
Recovery From Western Civilization Chellis Glendinning

Other Writers -

Ward Churchill, Bob Black, Wolfi Landstreicher, Alfredo Bonanno, Susan Griffin, Jacques Camatte

Periodicals -

Green Anarchy, Do Or Die, Anarchy - A Journal Of Desire Armed, Species Traitor, Disorderly Conduct, Willful Disobedience

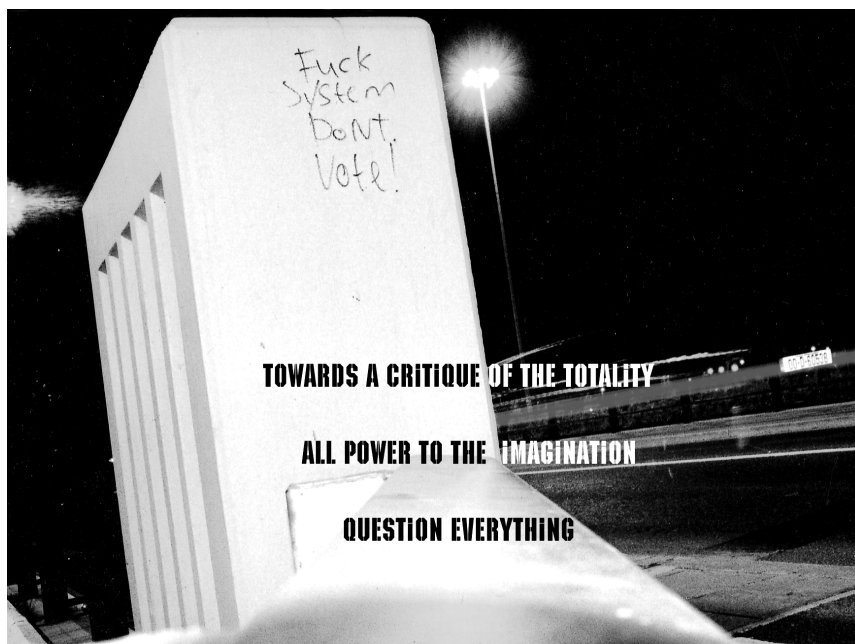
Distros -

re-pressed.co.uk
greenanarchy.org
beatingheartspress.com
anti-politics.net/distro (big list of downloadable pdf pamphlets)

Apologies to everyone I plagiarised, intentionally or otherwise.....

Critics of anti-civ ideas like to dismiss it as utopianism while placing all their hopes in a techno-industrial future that will solve all our problems someday. I think all that needs to be asked is what state our world is in now and what line of thinking got us here.

Needless to say it's hard to sum up the modern world in a few sentences. If you think that things are generally OK and just need a bit of tweaking to fix them, you're as delusional as the people who run this world. The Culture of Make Believe by Derrick Jensen might be a good starting point to begin an honest appraisal of the shit we're in. The rich part of the world lead stressed out alienated paranoid lives surrounded by the trappings of luxury while the poor part of the world lives an impoverished unhealthy violent and precarious existence. The ice caps are melting, the seas are rising, the animals are dead or dying and the forests are almost gone, but no-one wants to talk about it. We push our fingers in our ears and start shouting about jobs and economics and development and progress and how things are getting better because we don't have massive unemployment anymore and what do you want? Go live in Africa for fucks sake and see how well things are there, sure a job in MacDonalds doesn't sound too bad compared with that does it? And how about those celebrities and sports and that new TV series and NANANANANAICAN'THEARYOU...

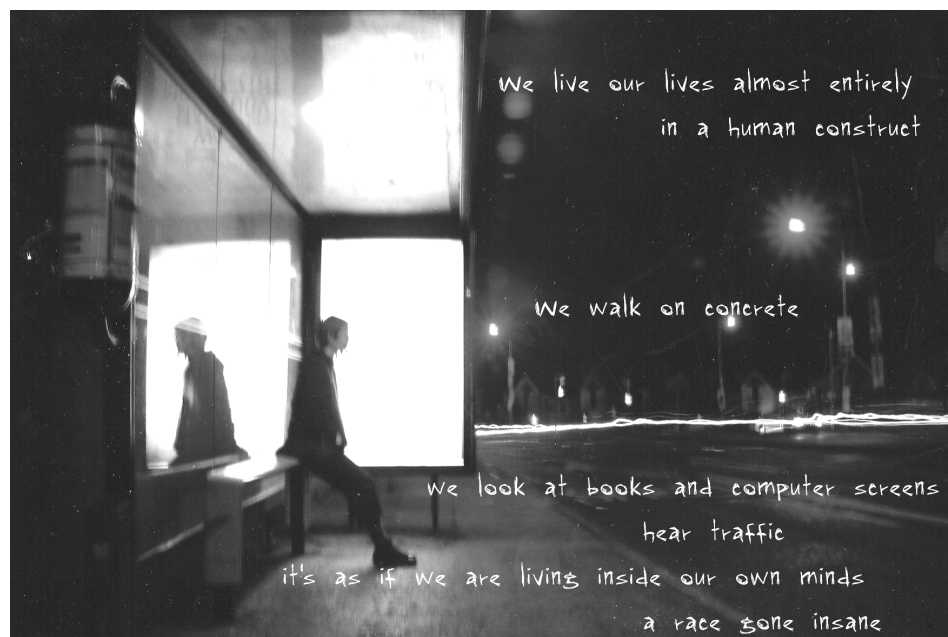


The earth goes round the sun (or vice versa), the seasons change and come back to where they were before, people die, more people are reborn, the circle complete. With the invention of linear time, we have gone off on a tangent from the circle of life, viewing everything as new and different. There is no folk memory here. Just dead time with no connection to the living, changing world.

Onwards and upwards. I've managed to squash millions of years of human history into the first few paragraphs. Forgive me if I've left something out. So, about ten-thousand years ago, in present day Iraq, in what was called the fertile crescent (not so fertile now) some people had the bright idea to settle down and raise the kids somewhere nice like Baghdad or Fallujah. This has never been a particularly good idea and wasn't then either. For whatever reason (no-one seems to have sorted this minor detail out yet, so far be it for me to startle the GA world) they decided that instead of wandering around with the seasons like any right-minded person, they would set up house and stay put and try to live off what they could grow. It seems quite likely that they were deviants of either a non-nomadic HG group or a horticulturalist variant. Non-nomads live in settlements where year-round vegetation and animal-life provide adequate nutrition, horticulturalists being people who encourage the growth of edible plants by spreading them in areas they'll be passing through at the time they'll be edible. So someone decided they would have a piece of land with predictable crops on it and suddenly, crack! The whole oneness of humanity with nature starts to fall apart. Cue eerie Batman title music. (And not the Adam West Pflow! kind)

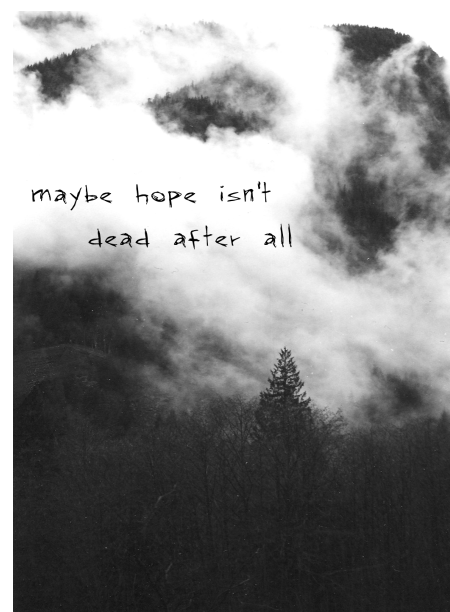
So as soon as crops began to be grown in cyclical cycles they needed to be tended. More tools were needed. And places to store them. And weapons to protect the valuable nutrition from thieving little hands. If you put all your eggs in one basket, or all your food in one field there are immediate disadvantages. The crops might fail, you're only likely to be growing a handful of different types and a disease or drought might cause them to fail for the year and be disastrous for your group. They might be stolen by wandering groups of foragers which would be pretty annoying, kind of like a group of foreign crusties foraging the entire contents of your kitchen before you wake up. So these things put you on edge, make you paranoid and protective. So you start to make weapons, a big pointy stick or something, to fend off evil-doers, and start planting more and more crops so you can survive potential problems, and becoming more protective of your stores because it becomes a bigger potential loss. Pretty soon you're scheming up ways to make the pesky foragers disappear and you keep eyeing up the next villages grain store, wondering who's going to make the first move...Lo and behold, all of a sudden we have property (yay!) and warfare (double yay!!)

So what happens when you build a fence around something? Immediately there is a distinction between inside and outside, mine and yours, us and them, or I and Thou as some would have it. Separation. This to me seems one of the most important moments in humanity's history. This is the moment when we stopped being at one with the world and started being apart from it. We no longer had an all-encompassing understanding of our place on this earth, but suddenly it was something that we would spend the rest of our existence struggling against, fighting for domination, forcing it to submit to our will, and ultimately, I believe, losing.



The key to understanding this break with a sustainable non-hierarchical earth-based way of life is domestication. It is the subjugation of various forms of life to serve humans and their logic. Starting with the planting of crops and the erection of fences, it continues with the enslavement of other animals and the subordination of humans. This type of relationship demands a totalitarian relationship with the land, a mindset of demanding production as opposed to the acceptance of what the earth provided. It also enslaves the humans who think this way, laying the foundations for compulsory work, precocity of existence, reliance on a non-varied diet and a hoarder mentality that worries constantly about the future. The end of sharing and the invention of private property, fences and walls, them and us. Inside - the boundaries of what is controlled and controllable. Outside - the unknown, the wild, the uncontrollable, the scary.

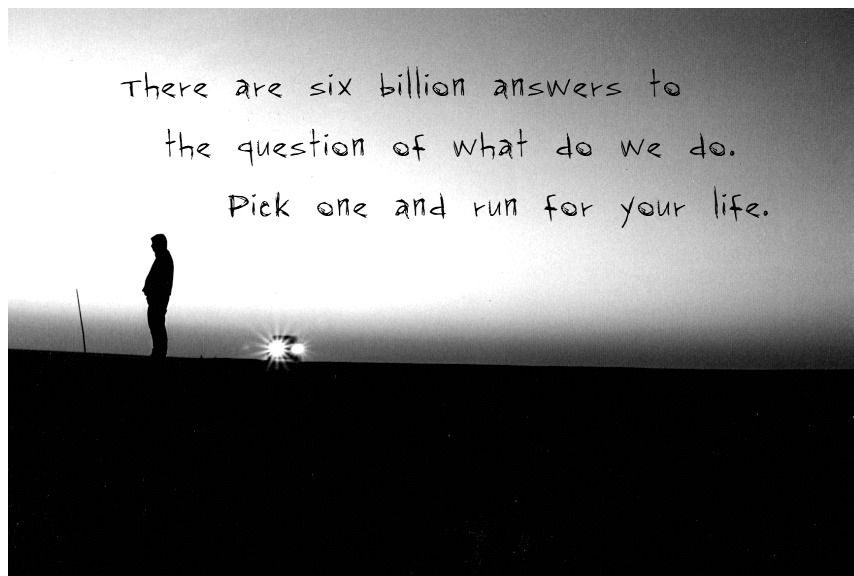
Outside the city there's an old railway bridge over the river, the bulk of it gone, the tracks and sleepers removed, and just the rusty girders left to give shape to the memory of superseded technology. On sunny days the light streams through the holes of a monument to ruin. I like it there beside the river that looks so much healthier than further downstream in the city, surrounded by earth banks and trees instead of stone walls and yuppie flats. A little further out there's the new motorway bridge high above the river. Behind the incessant hum of the traffic I can hear the wind in the trees, and in the concrete the weeds have come through the cracks and have started flowering.



The interest in hunter-gatherer lifestyles can raise a few eyebrows among people who are surprised at a vegan advocating the killing of wild animals. Better wild than domesticated I say. I am totally against modern animal farming methods, mass mechanized killing and the reduction of animals to products for our consumption. I don't see that this contradicts the hunting of animals in a respectful way. The point being that it is the slavery and domestication of animals that I object to as opposed to the actual killing of them. You can have meat without slavery but you can't have milk. Fuck dairy, that shit's messed up.

The chances of anyone, let alone everyone living off non-domesticated plants and animals in Ireland is very hard to imagine, but rather than see this as a limitation of anti-civ ideas I see it as further condemnation of the pro-civ argument. We have destroyed our ability to feed, clothe and shelter ourselves from our local environment. We have cut down all the forests (at 7% we have the lowest forest coverage in Europe. 85% of this is commercial conifer plantations of non-native species and almost nothing remains of old-growth) and turned our countryside into a chemically-green wasteland. The bears, wolves, elk and others have been made extinct long ago and we have the highest ratio of roads to people in Europe. But never mind all that. Forward! Progress! Industry!

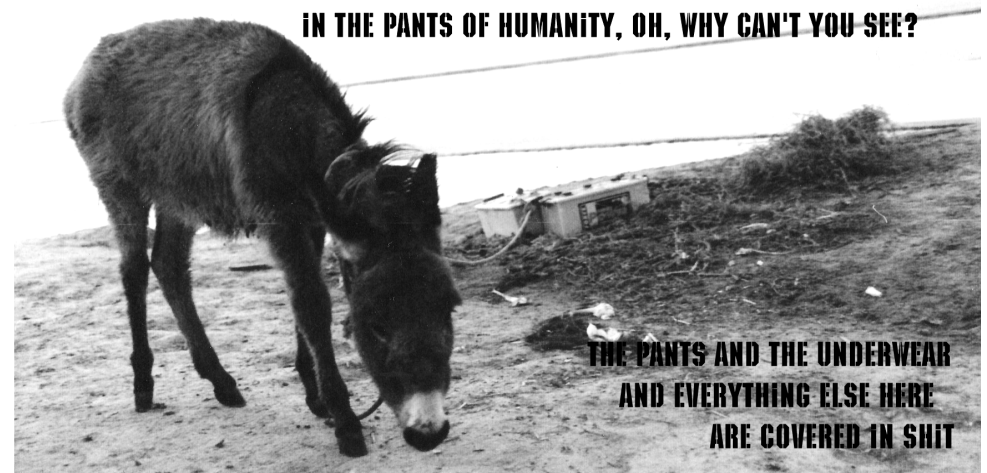
I could start shiteing on about rewilding and reconnecting with nature but that wouldn't be very truthful to my own experiences. I can only wonder how much better my mental state would be if after spending a couple of hours walking in the hills clears my head and my lungs and makes me feel infinitely better, what would it would be like to spend my whole life like this, to never have known anything different? The two ideas I get most out of anti-civ theory are that we have lost something beautiful and that our reliance on and acceptance of technology have set us on a course of total destruction. My honest feelings about our way of life is that we are headed for a collapse. All empires fall, this one as surely as the rest. With the idea of collapse, a gradual rotting process instead of a revolutionary model, where does that leave us in the meantime? I think it means building relationships and communities to help bear the brunt of the collapse when it comes, and preparing to live among the ruins of a fallen system. I think it also means understanding that it may never come in our lifetime, and rejecting millenarian ideas of a coming salvation but rather taking the fight against this system and fighting for our lives against those that would domesticate us, now and always.



The ideas of a return to a more basic way of life intrigue me a lot. Civilizations have come and gone throughout history (although Civilization has not). The Mayan empire may have fallen apart because the farmers on the outskirts lost faith and/or patience with the social structure and wandered off into the forest leaving the crops to die, the soldiers to go hungry, and the jungle to reconquer the cities. Mississippian civilizations covered much of the south-eastern US but had faded into obscurity by the time of European conquest. Likewise the Coliseum and the Sphinx lie as reminders of experiments that ended in failure.

The tending of strains of plants, mirrored in the selective breeding of animals establishes control of the organic world. Animals are reduced to dependents of humans, unable to fend for themselves. Their intelligence is vastly diminished. Social relations controlled. Life itself is cut short to ensure maximum productivity.

**YOU'LL NEVER CHANGE THE WORLD BY INVESTING IN AN ETHICAL FUND
YOU CAN'T JUST CHANGE THE BITS AND PIECES
IRONING OUT THE CREASES**



Farming results in a large increase in tools and implements for storage. This could have been the origin of craft specialization. Some individuals could have concentrated on the production of specific items which they realized they could trade in return for goods or services, and realized they could acquire more goods and animals, a surplus wealth necessary to set minds at ease about an uncertain future, that could be passed on from one generation to the next. Wealth begets wealth, surplus can be used as loans to be repaid with interest, distinctions arise between rich and poor. The poor become more indebted and have to work more to ensure survival. Their indebtedness may include service in the form of labour or as combatants against other groups.

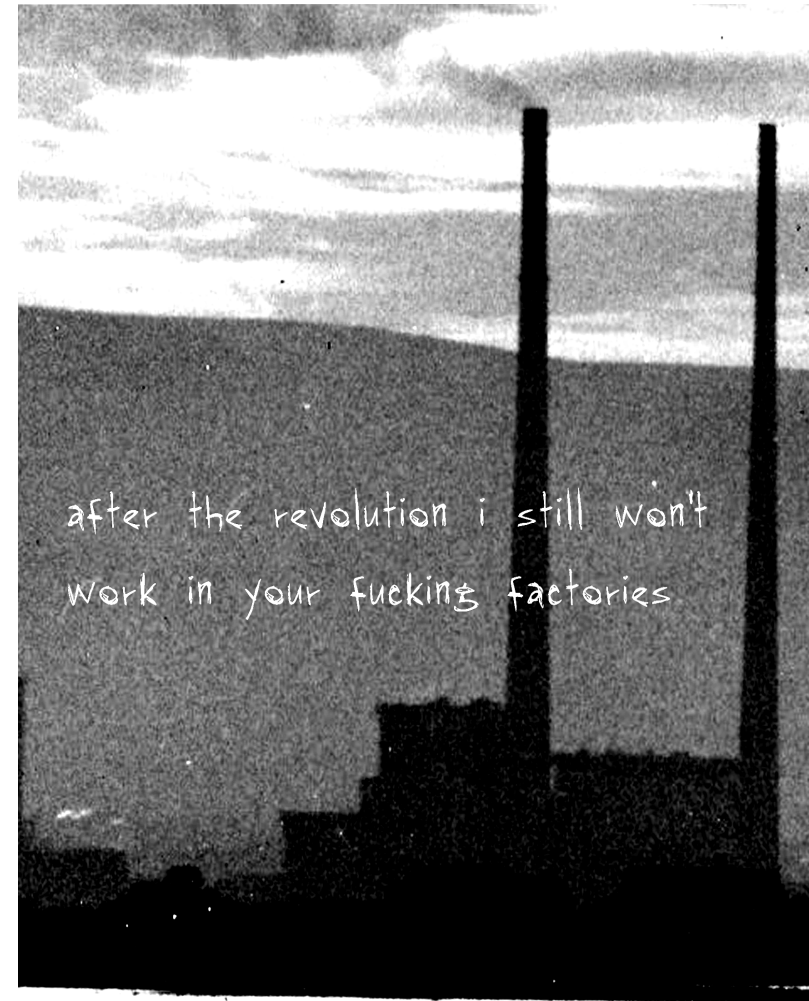
Armies are formed for the conquest of neighbouring areas or the defense of lands against invaders. Armies need food and can't be expected to grow it themselves. More land is required for domestication, for crop growing and animal rearing. More land to be worked by more people, captives from a raiding expedition maybe. More land to be defended by more soldiers, more land to be owned and rented, more wilderness to be tamed and controlled, more wild people and animals to be driven off or destroyed, more wealth, more power, more specialization, more inventions, more weapons, more dislocation and alienation, more greed, more debt, more and more and more.

The virus is implanted into the body and starts to kill healthy cells.

With the rise of sedentism, population begins to rise rapidly. In wild animals, rapid increase in numbers in an area is seen as a sign of the balance of things being seriously out of whack. Often it is seen as an emergency response to deteriorating conditions. Things are getting worse, chances of survival are slimmer, produce more babies to increase likelihood of continuation of the species. With the increase in offspring, more food is needed to be produced. Local populations rise above the sustainable level and a process of trying to acquire more food is initiated. With a wild environment, nothing can be forced into being, but armed with the tools of agriculture and the weapons of expansion, agriculturalists can command the trees to die back, the ground to split itself open and the crops to germinate in compact rows, producing the food necessary for the sustenance of the offspring. All for a price of more labour, more indebtedness and a policy of continual expansion.

The virus eats the healthy cells and replaces them with vociferous replicas of itself, each with a hunger to control and destroy.

With the expansion of population comes a sexual division of labour. With more children to feed and take care of, and the children requiring more and more attention due to their alienation from a natural environment to grow and develop in, women are increasingly housebound, tied to a radius of immediate care to the little rugrats that keep appearing. Meanwhile the men are increasingly toiling in the fields and fighting in the armies. Practices that give rise to attitudes of self-importance and aggressiveness. The grain-growers and bread-winners demand production from the child-producers and food-preparers as they demand production from their fields. Time previously spent gathering wild foods and contributing to the group's food-supplies is decreased and with it the level of respect afforded them.



The two most important attributes of punk culture I find are a rejection of consumerism and a refusal of work. (Massive generalisations to be sure, but anyway...) The disruption of a standardized producer/consumer mode of existence must be a basis for any attempt to take this fucker down. Any asshole who rejects all this as lifestylism doesn't understand that the first thing that has to go is our lifestyle. It is everything that drives our current version of the machine. From the rejection of workerist attitudes - produce - consume - buy - sell - profit- trade - we may have a hope of finding a way through the mess we have made.

It should go without saying that anyone hoping to institute revolutionary change and maintain our standard of living is living in la-la land. Industrialism and anarchy seem to me to be blatantly self-exclusionary. Industrialism requires massive specialization, division of labour, and control over the lives of those who do the work in order to continue the cycle of expansion. I think (possibly naively) that given the choice most people will not choose to spend the majority of their working day contributing to the production of the unnecessary crap that dominates our modern existence. If we manage an anarcho-syndicalist revolution on this island somehow, do we still import everything we do now? At the same cost? At fair-trade prices? What if no-one will trade with us? Where do we get our copper from? Our kiwi-fruits? Anything envisioning a post-revolutionary high-tech society is dreaming. Our wealth is their poverty and that's not very anarchistic is it? At the very least we would need to construct (evolve to?) small localized autonomous self-sufficient neighbourhoods/villages. Anything else (and this as well in the long term) is leading us towards annihilation. And this is possibly the main split between red and green, the belief that anarchistic organizing of mass society is possible (see Barcelona, 1936) and the belief that it isn't (see Barcelona, 1937)

The syndicalists will tell us with smiles how much more efficient the factories and transport in Barcelona were. Dear god, more production, more destruction, more work, more pollution and resource extraction. And this is revolution. I don't want a bigger piece of the cake, nor do I want the right to be able to decide how much cake I should get, I want to throw away the cake because it's poison and tastes like shit. Mmmm, cake.... Honestly, anything that fights this shitsystem, from people scribbling crap on the walls of the city to towers falling down is better than nothing. So good luck in your quest for freedom through widgets and doo-dads.

On the green end of things there are of course as many different interpretations of things as there are people. On an immediate practical level, the notion of six billion people becoming hunter-gatherers overnight is as absurd, say, as a system of infinite expansion based on finite resources. Except possibly a little more immediately flawed. Personally I'd like to see a voluntary mass sterilization program instituted. Perhaps mobile phones will render us all impotent. I can only dream, but the ideas of where we came from can only serve as signposts to where we might try to go. The allegations of utopianism and impracticality seem very like those leveled at anarchists by realistic liberals. I see civilization as a system of domination, as exemplified by domestication. The appropriation of one life by another for its own purpose, as a system of hierarchies, institutions and structures for the controlling of all life... the state, class rule, capitalism, patriarchy, racism, private property, organized religion, blah, blah, blah, and to this end I want to destroy civilization.

Women can be seen as inferior and dependent upon the labour of the males. Efficient warriors gain prestige and influence. Power follows shortly and the rise of the warrior-king. Endlessly proving his fighting abilities in order to control his inferiors, fearful of the day unknown when his importance will be tested from within his own ranks.

Patriarchy demands the defeat of the feminine and the control of the wild. It defines our relationships to each other and to nature and limits our scope of experiences. Patriarchy and civilization go hand in hand towards the total domination of all life.

Ownership, control, predictability, order-giving and order-taking, whether over women, slaves, labourers, plants, animals, or land are the fundamental constructs of civilization.

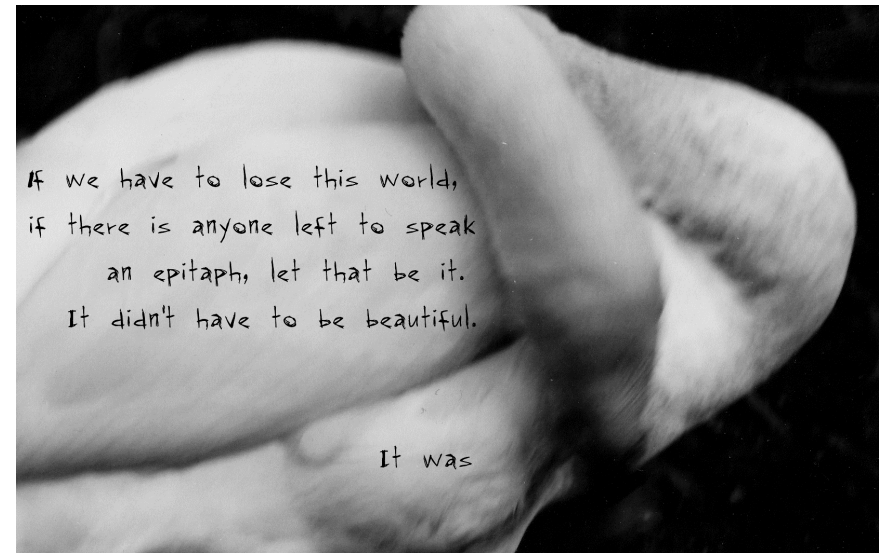
The spread of these ideas was not by persuasion but by coercion. The rise of animal husbandry coupled with sedentism, the build-up of pollution and the start of mass societies led to a massive increase in both number and voraciousness of diseases. As was the case with the conquest of the Americas, diseases radiated out rapidly from any point of contact between civilized and uncivilized peoples, spreading waves of biological devastation far in advance of the physical encroachment of the new settlers. The documentation of the genocide that the colonists inflicted upon the indigenous peoples of America from 1492 onwards can serve as a possible blueprint for the way ancient civilizations spread outwards into territories occupied by the ancient indigenous peoples of Asia and Europe. The enforcement of ideas by superior weapons wielded by organized armies of men with hierarchical structures took place against peoples decimated by unknown diseases, unknowing of greed, avarice and pointless deaths, their hunting and foraging grounds encroached upon, and their way of life seen as an impediment to progress.

Agriculture sees the beginning of timekeeping with its strict ordering of the year. Calendar dates, and named, ordered, standardized days, months, years are crucial to the organization of civilized life. Agriculture and the trade of surplus produce also gives rise to writing in the form of record-keeping. By replacing autonomous images with verbal symbols, life is reduced and brought under strict control. With the advent of civilization, the rise of symbolic thought occurs. Numbers are invented as a way of keeping track of property, livestock etc. Many primitive peoples are said to only know of 1, 2 and many. Time becomes linear instead of cyclical and standardized with the introduction of labour. It needs to be counted and controlled, valued and traded. The use of symbols to signify other things leads to their standardization.

In many respects, for example, the word tree is ridiculous. It claims to represent billions of different life-forms, each one unique and ever-changing, in a series of scratches of ink on paper or a one syllable utterance. This type of thinking aids a system of thought that seeks to control and commodify everything. It simplifies existence and more importantly it introduces a barrier between human and everything else. Instead of real direct experience we are given indirect symbolic representations. Instead of climbing a hill we talk about doing it or paint a picture of the action, instead of hugging our friends we sit slack-jawed and glazed-eyed in our armchairs watching a cathode-ray image of two people hugging, and instead of living our lives to the fullest possible experiential reality we can, we consume books, films, tv shows, computer games, music and other representatives of real life from the comfort of our living room. The acceptance of the symbolic form is the basis of our alienation from the natural world.

The cancerous spread of civilized places wreaked havoc with its expansion. As an ever-expanding entity its requirements needed to be met by a continual assault on the natural order of things. Forests were among the first victims as the trees fell to provide space for the ever-expanding fields and timber for the growing number of houses, fortresses and ships. The need for space and timber combined with a need to overthrow the dark wildness hiding within the forests and replace it with regulated pre-planned human constructs, square fields with rows of crops, roads to connect settlements. Always an ever-expanding replacement of the wild with the civilized. And in settlements the increasing power of the warrior-kings with their hoarded wealth, stratified societies into ever more hierarchical divisions. The assumption of god-like qualities among rarely seen regents together with the military might of paid foot soldiers kept the poor in line, producing food, labour, objects and wealth to be ever sucked upwards to the homes of the elite. Wars of conquest expand chiefdoms into kingdoms, kingdoms into empires and empires into dust.

The specialization of skills and the accumulation of written knowledge of manufacturing feeds the rise of technology. A fearsome weapon in the areas of warfare and domination. Controlled and directed by the elites, technology serves only to reinforce their positions and increase reliance upon the knowledge-keepers as any sense of self-sufficiency is eroded. Domination is increased as every new device is invented, requiring the construction of more technologies to build, maintain, repair and replace the original technology, thus increasing the division of labour and exploitation of human animal and mineral resources. It rapidly takes its own form, demanding a mechanized environment to facilitate its smooth orderly functioning, destroying the natural world to make way for its increasing efficiency.



There exists much acrimony between proponents of 'red' and 'green' anarchism. To be honest I don't really see what the big fucken deal is but I might as well try and sum up some of the differences between the two camps. My interest in green anarchist ideas was probably first piqued by the knee-jerk knicker-twisting reaction by workeroid platformist dullards to anyone mentioning the word primitivism. The hair-tearing and teeth-gnashing by the ideologues of official anarchism led me to assume something was touching a nerve. I had assumed that most anarchists in general would be fairly open-minded about critiques of society, but it seems like if you already have the answers worked out (look, for god's sake I've been reading bearded old dudes for years and I have all the answers written down in my revolutionary manifesto, so would you young pups shut the hell up or get out....) then anything that threatens your analysis (prestige?) can get your goat. If your whole ideology centres around a 19th century model of organizing workers in factories, and someone comes along saying they'd like to burn the factory down instead of taking it over, maybe that'll give you cause for concern that maybe the workers who spend most of their days as organic cogs in the machine in dull repetitive jobs might want to burn the fucking thing down too.

With the decline of Luddism and other unregulated, autonomous wild-cat actions, sabotage, property destruction and physical confrontation, came the rise of trade unionism. With spirits broken and no spare time, it must have seemed far easier to delegate responsibility for industrial relations instead of trying to organize among your fellow workers on the factory floor. The labourers had been debased into parts of the machinery. Every part of their day monitored and controlled. Order imposed upon chaos. Domestication wins another battle.

With the factory system came another massive division of labour. The worker becomes weaker and more dependent. Less sure of his ability to take care of himself.

Technology is seen as a neutral idea, dependent on the user to instill its values in it through its use, and not the producer of the technology through its design. To take email as a quick example. Often touted as a boon to activist organizing, email allows massive instantaneous transferral of information among the corporate managers. How much quicker can the decision to clearcut that section of forest be taken, problems ironed out in hours instead of weeks. How much more efficient does this make the transformation of everything living into dead?

As society gains more and more gadgets it is increasingly cut off from any real experience. Doors open as we approach them instead of requiring us to push them open. Everything happens at our god-like touch of a button. When we finally get hardwired into the circuitry of our houses we will be able to will things to happen. This dislocation increases our dependence on the machine, on the system. The options for breaking the links seem more and more horrific.

Revolution will be a terrible catastrophe that will take away all our dishwashers, our celebrity magazines, our plug-in air fresheners, our mobile phones, our cars, our stuff. Without our possessions what are we if not lost infants unable to take care of ourselves? Catastrophe. We must avoid it at all cost and cling to the machine and defend it with our lives. There Is No Alternative.

Its ultimate ideal is the destruction of all life. From obvious examples of clearcuts and strip-mines to the standardization of food production, worker efficiency and the reduction of everything to 1s and 0s.

As societies become increasingly reliant upon specialized goods, their autonomy disappears. A city reliant upon imported foods has a lot to lose if those imports are disrupted. Trading increases the potential for the accumulation of wealth by an already wealthy elite but also increases the precocity of trading partners as their economies are dedicated to mass-production of certain goods. Standing armies are formed, ready to fight any disruption to the continuing accumulation by their masters. Wars of conquest to secure resources. The expansion of trade routes to increase the possibility of profit. The whole becomes enmeshed together like a house of cards. Instead of growing food to feed the locals, whole regions are converted to monoculture cash crops. Lives spent working to buy the necessities of life.

With industrialization, the accelerator is pushed down. The mechanized system of production requires genocide, ecocide and colonialism to clear the path. The standardization of life is more efficient and more profitable for the chosen few. Cultural assimilation, forced labour and ecological destruction are necessary for the smooth running of the machine. With everything standardized, everything can be priced. The commodification of life. Resources are needed and colonialism is its outcome. Rationalized racism clears the land for exploitation and forces the natives into toiling for the system's upkeep and expansion. They must be made dependent upon their new masters. Indoctrinated, their spirits broken, their memories erased, their bodies enslaved, their ability to feed and clothe themselves removed and their ranks split into classes with the denial of knowledge to the majority. The damage done to the humans is magnified in the damage done to the environment as forests are cut down, soil is drained of its nutrients, the earth torn open for minerals and coal, the air filled with the burning of fuels and the rivers and seas the dumping grounds for all of civilizations wastes.



Implicit in our culture is a notion of progress, developed from linear thought and the construction of time, a concept that has very little relevance to people living in an abundant comfortable natural environment, confident that nature will provide enough sustenance. Such people live in the now, man, neither dwelling on things past or on an uncertain future.

Following the age of exploration and conquest, another major step forward for progress was the appearance of industrial production. Its first major introduction was into the textile industries of Britain, one of the most important economic areas of the most technologically advanced country of the time. Prior to the introduction of mechanized work practices, the weavers of the country worked in their own homes at their own speed for a few hours a day, dictating when they took their breaks and finished for the day. With the invention of mechanized forms, the capitalists saw they could reap greater profits from enforcing a longer working day in regimented conditions and thus the birth of the factory.

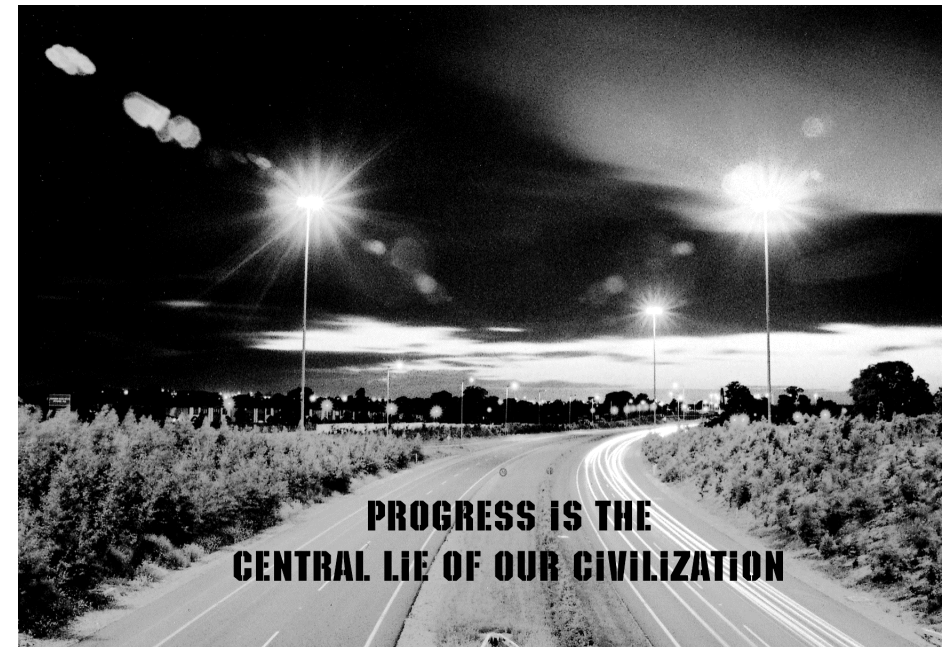


Riots, arson and insurrection were the order of the day as the weavers tried to defend their casual way of life. With a regulated, time-measured workplace there would be no stopping for breaks when a neighbour called by or just because the sun was shining and you wanted to sit outside. Indeed inside the new factories, modelled after the poorhouses and prisons of the day there would be little chance to even know that the sun was shining. The Luddites came slightly later, smashing apart machines and burning down factories seemingly as a response to the demand that they produce inferior quality goods, in a widespread and massively popular movement. After the introduction of the factory conditions, much longer working hours were introduced, primarily to increase profits but also it would seem to break the spirits of those herded into them. A twelve-hour day being more likely to wear down a recalcitrant worker than the threat of a policeman.



It's all gotten very mixed up with successive waves of invaders displacing natives who wander in search of new homelands. It happens on a globalized scale now, as everything does, with refugees and economic migrants dispersing worldwide, fleeing the results of an unsustainably greedy lifestyle that needs everything cheaper, faster, now. These victims of economics will lose their connection to the land they had inhabited for untold generations like those before them. We have become a world of homeless people.

We are all descended from indigenous hunter-gatherers. With such an intimate connection to the land came a deep-rooted understanding of the way things are, solidified by hundreds and thousands of generations of knowledge and connection, the foundation upon which the remaining indigenous cultures base their spirituality and connection to the land that they see themselves as belonging to. With colonization and everything it implies - mass murder, cultural and physical genocide, indoctrination, slavery, punishment and assimilation - comes a severing of these ties, and our hearts are cut from the earth like undesirable weeds.



The idea that things are getting better. In our lives we progress from lower classes in school to higher classes, from lower levels on the career army to higher levels if we just try hard enough. These artificially constructed levels signify how much of a grip the machine has on our lives. The progress of technology where we increase our ability to transform the world to our liking like a society of Dr. Frankenstein's. Faster! Better! Cheaper! But the price paid is an ever-deeper dislocation of our relationship with life itself. And with this disappearance of our connection comes an increasing ability to abuse, destroy and pollute that which sustains us, and a greater ability to lie and deceive ourselves about the damage we're doing.

In reality, my version of it anyway, nothing gets absolutely better. Relationships change. For every material comfort we enjoy, we trade it against the pollution of the river we swam in as a child, or a new incinerator where we used to pick blackberries. In economic terms for every rise in our standard of living in whiteyland, some other set of poor bastards in the darker regions of the world get a new military regime, civil war, aids epidemic etc. Our wealth is their poverty. As if that needed pointing out again.

In the areas of the earliest civilization the desert quickly followed the plough, barren rocky hillsides replaced forests as unsophisticated farming techniques quickly denuded the soil, leaving it unproductive and causing the collapse of local societies unable to acquire their food from elsewhere. Today we pour an increasing amount of artificial fertilizers into the earth to try to maintain production levels. We consume these chemicals and deny their link to cancers and other diseases. The rise in cancer rates and the use of agricultural fertilizers herbicides and pesticides as well as the manufacture of synthetic plastics and other materials seem to match up pretty well. But I'm not a trained scientist so I couldn't possibly postulate on such a connection. Agriculture takes more from our earth than it gives back, a basic analogy for our relationship with the world where we will demand more and more until there is nothing left. Maybe by then technology will be able to make stones bleed.

Everything can be rationalized. From our driving of SUVs to our wars for oil resources, from our gadgets and whatchamacallits to endless wars in Africa, from battery hens to Auschwitz, Vietnam and Hiroshima, enough nuclear weapons to kill us all hundreds of times over, the cultural extermination of any alternative way of life and the reduction of everything living to a commodity to be valued, traded and killed. None of which in any way goes against the principles of rational logical argument. Forgive me if I've lost faith in rationality and the people in white coats. They've replaced the big man in the clouds as another sick joke to keep everything running smoothly. You can rationalize my enjoyment of jumping into breaking waves on a sunny beach as being a change in the chemical balances in my brain. Doesn't mean I have to listen to you though. I suppose what this boils down to is the old rationalist/romantic split, the head/heart, reason/emotion struggle. Far too complicated for me to get into here. Robert Pirsig has a lot to say about this in *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, where he tries to formulate an idea of Quality occurring at a brilliant joining of the two trains of thought, or at the base of the two ways of seeing before they split, and this giving rise to things like craftsmanship where care is embodied in the things we do and produce, and the reason why our modern world is so cheap has to do with the erosion of a romantic train of thought in our modern culture. Fascinating stuff but I don't really want to get into it here. Read the book.

I do what I feel like. - Bart Simpson



The traditional view of colonialism defines it as a process of discovery, exploitation and assimilation by western European powers upon inhabitants of the rest of the world from the fifteenth century onwards. An interpretation of the colonization of Ireland a few centuries previous to this opens the idea to a wider definition. The Romans for example colonized most of the Mediterranean and Western Europe, subjugating local populations and instilling in them the values and attitudes of their civilization, of civilization itself. Colonialism can be seen as the subjugation and more importantly the assimilation of all indigenous peoples throughout history into the service of civilized superiors. We are all indigenous somewhere, but most of Europe has been colonized by the ideas so long ago that the people can't remember when it was different, and we have become even greater colonizers in turn. Instead of Germans, why not Goths and Vandals, Franks and Bretons instead of French, Basque or Galician instead of Spanish, Welsh or Scottish instead of British. And instead of all these useless labels, you could be you and I could be me.

