

# **The Wind Roars Ferociously**

**Feral Foundations and the Necessity of Wild Resistance**

Four Legged Human

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# Contents

A Middle Finger Extended Stiff and Pointed at the Civilized Masses . . .	3
The Process of Hominid Domestication . . . . .	5
Domestication: The Culprit in a Persistently Failed Leftist Resistance . .	11
Indigenous Wildness, Self-Reliance, and Resistance . . . . .	17
Forward into Rewilding Realities: Risk, Hardship, Humility, Community	22
...and through her the bear's spirit of wild resistance lives on. . . . .	28

*I wondered: how free were we if we'd become so dependent on the comforts produced by industry that we couldn't do without them? How free was I, that the first thing I wanted and had been craving for weeks was a sweet and fizzy caramel-colored beverage that came in a bottle with a scarlet label and passed itself off as the Real Thing? May the Arrow People never come to know it. As long as they had streams unsullied by mercury and sprawling woodlands rich with animals, they could remain beyond our reach, beyond the swirling vortex of consumer society and the machinery that manufactures our wants, creates our needs...May they never come to know the squalor of their brethren...who have been sucked in, then spat out and left to wander dusty frontier streets or the hopeless, crack-infested subdivisions on the rez, filthy and destitute, the objects of scorn and derision. What they had could never be measured in dollars...they could never be adequately compensated if they were to ever lose their freedom. The Unconquered*<sup>1</sup>

## **A Middle Finger Extended Stiff and Pointed at the Civilized Masses**

The wind roars ferociously. Cold rain pelts down. The walls shake. Caribou sheds stacked along the outside wall collapse in a crash. A piece of whale baleen, tacked to the door, shoots across the sky and into the adjacent brush, like a giant leaf, dark black foliage. The stack of spruce poles leaning up against an old tree, the ones I use for a hide stretching rack, fall over. A fish spear propped up against the other wall lands with a thud, its prongs impaling the dirt. "Good thing I decided not to go fishing tonight", I tell myself.

The phone rings. "You should go running" she says. "You've got to run up the mountain, it doesn't work if it's flat".

"Why? It's too windy and did you see how hard it's raining?"

"When it rains hard and the wind blows it only makes me want to run more"

For the last several months she's been sleeping on a hard floor. She says it's better for her bones, her muscles, her blood.

She lives on a mountain. She stays there, almost always. A part of that mountain. Sometimes I try to call her at night and there will be no answer. "Where were you"? I ask. "Outside looking at the sky". She'd rather be out even when the temperatures drop below zero than inside under artificial light. "I love being out in the dark" she says. Sometimes she stays out all night, under the stars, with Aurora as her light. She is going feral.

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<sup>1</sup> S. Wallace, *The unconquered: in search of the Amazon's last uncontacted tribes*. Crown Publishers, 2011. Pg. 391

A few years ago, when I was living in a cabin alone, the spirits put one of my arrows through the heart of a moose – a magic Osage bow. I take no responsibility other than some idea of rewilding I had by which my wanderings brought me the gift. But a man without community alone with a moose brought despair, the loneliest I've ever been. Now when my wanderings gift me flesh, fur, fat, bones I share. Wildness is sharing rather than hoarding.

I bring her something. She tells me there is nothing she would rather do than carefully dissect a wild being – a feral connection to her ancient woman genes. When I kill I find myself thinking of her, bringing her the meat, the heart, the bones, the skin. I brought her a caribou. She tried to resist. Perhaps because she thought acceptance would mean a contract, an obligation, so used to men trying to manipulate her in the past she was afraid to trust. But I had to share, my spirit, my wildness urges to me to give what I hunt to a strong hearted woman and to others. None of this matters without others. We hung the caribou legs in a tree on the side of her mountain...

One late October I brought her a bear – fat from a fall spent high in the mountains living on blueberries – brown fur, with a tongue dyed blue. She rendered piles of bear fat that we trimmed and fleshed from the skin. We made medicine. Some of the old people say that a woman should never look at a bear, let alone use her knife to cut into a bear's flesh. I knew it would be powerful medicine but my path to wildness and her feral spirit threw caution aside. We are so far domesticated and wanted to be within wildness so bad, we took the risk. We wanted to make a bearskin robe. She wanted to skin out the skull from the bear, but her knife slipped on the skull. Resistance - a protest from the bear spirit? Or a gift? A lesson? "I think I'm going to faint" she said softly as she clutched her finger and the blood dripped.

"Oh Fuck" I let slip, because it looked bad. "I think it's really deep" she said. Her middle finger cut to the bone, barely hanging on. "I need you to stitch it for me". "I don't think I can" I replied, "I'm taking you to the hospital". "No". She hates the system, industry, synthetic places and synthetic drugs. She desperately does not want to leave her mountain. But I could not do it. Could not stomach sewing up her raw skin with a sewing needle and thread. She tried her best to insist. I insisted we drive to civilization, an emergency room door on a Saturday night. Victims of alcohol related accidents from the city streets and one woman there because of her being overruled by the spirit of the skull of a bear. The doctors sewed her up and gave her some drugs. Severed tendons and heavy nerve damage was the diagnosis. The function of the finger may never return they told her. For the last year sweet bear fat has been one of her staple foods, and everywhere she goes her middle finger has been stuck in one place; elongated, unbendable, and straight...

## The Process of Hominid Domestication

*We stopped to visit some ruins of the Hohokam, the ruins of a long defunct civilization based upon irrigation agriculture. Upon approach I tried to envision what might have went on in the minds of the Hohokam, what motivated them to embark on such a path of attempted ecological control, and what kept them desperately clinging to the system they had initiated, despite its obviously diminishing material, social, and spiritual returns. I entered a brick-walled shelter of over a thousand years in age, I sat down inside, the coolness of the shaded sandstone comforting and relieving from the one hundred-degree desert sun. I pondered the structure, the masonry of the ancients; their presence once here in the place I sit, I look to the stone lined food storage pit to my left and wonder about the socioeconomic situations that were spawned from that storage pit; the sharing? The conflict? The hierarchy that evolved as a result of the necessary control of food and nature. The abandonment and the collapse, the disbursement into smaller semi-nomadic bands, the return to living as gatherer hunters and small scale horticulturists, as the Hohokam system of irrigation and production agriculture failed. The realization that the experiment had failed and that it most likely had taken willing individuals to make the choice to break free from the pack and abandon it, rather than continue to be coopted by its grip. Journal Entry, Band Tour, 2007*

*Domestication is a particularly contagious disease. Fire and Ice*<sup>2</sup>

Domestication is a far-reaching topic. Most broadly discussed in relation to the anthropogenic control of non-human flora and fauna, here we speak instead of human domestication, particularly its breaking of an original place-rooted human wildness and liberty, and the resulting material and psychological condition which now holds us captive<sup>3</sup>.

The influence of human domestication on world history has been profound and reveals a reality that the vast majority of once land-based, self-sufficient indigenous peoples have been coopted into mass dependence on power relationships oriented to production and wealth growing psychoses.<sup>4</sup> Whether culturally self-

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<sup>2</sup> L. Luddite and M. Skunkly, *Fire and ice: disturbing the comfortable and comforting the disturbed while tracking our wildest dreams*. Apeshit Press. 2004. Pg. 31

<sup>3</sup> There are biological aspects to domestication, easily discernable in domesticated species of flora and fauna. Views of any mutation in human biology resulting from our domestication are conflicted. A complex discussion/argument can be had regarding the possible long-range effects of human domestication on certain aspects of our biology. For example, does not a few thousand more years of daily life engaged in digital technology present the potential to initiate mutations in our eyes, hands, and brains? This article is not the place for such a discussion. The sole focus here is on the material and psychological aspects of our domestication.

<sup>4</sup> Here 'indigenous' is used and defined as all local once self-sufficient land based peoples and includes not only groups that todays civilized masses would consider indigenous but also the

inflicted or conquered via enculturation, human domestication particularly tends to progressively annihilate a peoples capacity to effectively resist its all-engulfing, tyrannically debilitating forces, including alienation from nature and community, the division of labor, feudalism, militarism<sup>5</sup>, technology, and global capitalism: the overall totality of civilization.

At the non-colonial, and thus indigenous level we witness the process of self-domestication occurring among the more sedentary and high-density resource oriented wild food foraging peoples, often those who specialize in fish and/or marine resources, and/or those who domesticate animals and plants, in their employment of wealth generating control of surplus, hereditary nobility, and slavery<sup>6</sup>. Here, not only do oppressive sociopolitical environments result, increasing population densities generally lead to inevitable ecological complications and social conflicts, further increasing a need for societal control and military adventures, thus continually enhancing and reinforcing both ecological and cultural domestication. From here we move towards production agriculture and even deeper and insidious levels of culturally-induced domestication, an example being the Hohokam (cited above), among countless others which have been heavily documented and discussed by scholars of various backgrounds<sup>7</sup>

In general, once settlement and bondage to elite classes occurs, in order to stay alive, domesticated life for the non-elite masses is essentially one of either slavery or indebtedness and payments of tribute and taxes to the rich. So disempowered and separated from a free life within intact social and ecological communities, the

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forbears of those civilized masses themselves. There was a time when all of our ancestors were land-based, self-sufficient and not dominated by division of labor, production for trade, a time when we were not domesticated.

<sup>5</sup> A category which rightly should include the conquest and domination of other species, in many cases leading to their extinction.

<sup>6</sup> E.A. Smith et al., *Wealth Transmission and Inequality among Hunter-Gatherers*. Current Anthropology. Volume 51, Number 1, February 2010.

<sup>7</sup> In BAGR issues 1 and 2 I have previously written about other aspects of what I see as the process of our domestication. This essay is a necessary further elaboration. See *The commodification of wildness and its consequences* in Black and Green Review, Issue #1, Spring 2015 and *Written in stone: maladaptive symbolic alienation vs. functional liberty and temporal continuity in stone tool design* in Black and Green Review, Issue #2, Fall 2015. There are dozens of references on this topic. For example see P. Shepard, *Coming Home to the Pleistocene*. Island Press: Washington DC, 1998., P. Shepard. *The tender carnivore and the sacred game*. Scribners, New York, 1973. P. Shepard, *Nature and madness*. University of Georgia Press, Athens, 1998, J. Zerzan, *Origins: a John Zerzan reader*. FC Press/Black and Green Press, Milwaukee and Greensburg. 2010, K. Tucker, *For wildness and anarchy*. FC Press/Black and Green Press, Milwaukee and Greensburg. 2010. For a non-technical story book narrative which aptly describes much about the process and consequences of human domestication see D. Quinn, *Ishmael: an adventure of the mind and spirit*. Penguin Random House, 1995. For the story of the Hohokam see Crown, P.L. and J.W. Judge, eds. *Chaco and Hohokam: prehistoric regional systems in the American Southwest*. School of American Research Press, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1991.

domesticated mind often can no longer envision life outside the shackles of the totality. By about 2,000 years ago this was the predicament for the vast majority of humans in all of the civilized regions of the world. For example, for the Ch'in Dynasty peasantry in 1st century AD China:

*Livelihood came from farming their individual plots and they could not afford to leave them for more than a short period of time...those who stayed on their land might dream of a better world, without toil, hardship and famine. But they depended on the state administrators when it came to irrigation and flood control, the provision of iron tools, and access to the goods which they could not grow themselves. They could conceive of a world in which the administrators behaved better and the landowners did not squeeze them. But they could not conceive of a completely different society run by themselves.*<sup>8</sup>

This total loss of self-reliance and the concomitant failure to conceive of any alternative is a highly accurate description of the conditions of human domestication within the totality of civilization, not only for the poor but also for the elite programmers of civilization themselves. Enslavement was, in many cases, a necessity for the surplus production which fed the elites. For example, in 5th century BC Athens the only value of the peasantry for the elites was in “how important they were to producing the surplus, for without this there could be no life of idleness for the ruling class...the ruling class owed its position to the control of land cultivated mainly by slaves, to such an extent that the classic Greek writers and philosophers saw the ownership of slaves as essential to civilised life.”<sup>9</sup>

Within civilization, survival for the ultra-alienated lifeways of the controllers and programmers depends entirely upon a deliberately developed hierarchy and a continuously self-reinforced domestication. During the 10th century, for example, so enslaved by such arrangements were the citizens of the Byzantium Empire that tax collectors travelled the countryside accompanied by soldiers. Those who could not pay were jailed or tortured, and in some cases had hungry dogs sent on them.<sup>10</sup> During the 2nd millennium AD, the arrangements of European feudalism, which ultimately spawned global colonialism and industrialism, were essentially the same – as domesticated dependents there was no freedom for a commoner to leave the farm, the village, or the authority of the lords. The domesticated lords could do nothing on their own, and were dependent on the peasants they held

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<sup>8</sup> C. Harman, *A people's history of the world: from the Stone Age to the new millennium*. Verso, London and New York, 2008, Pg. 61.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, Pg. 65. Also see *To produce or not to produce?* (Pg. 179-185) and *Revolution and/or insurrection* (Pg. 186-200) in Tucker, 2010.

<sup>10</sup> Harman, 2008

in bondage for food and on middle-tier specialists for wine, silk, spices, and iron weapons and tools.<sup>11</sup>

In Western Europe, 1000-1300 AD, the production of excess surplus, and growth in trade with the Far-East, in tandem with the lords' increasing need for trade goods allowed some from the lower rungs to break-free from the destitution of the fields and establish themselves as middle-class traders. In order to facilitate this, these merchants relocated to settlements, initiating a further domestication of the populace as increasing numbers of people became oriented to life inside of cities.<sup>12</sup> In this manner "the humble bagman could transform himself into a respectable trader, and the respectable trader into a wealthy merchant"<sup>13</sup>

As the colonial activities of kings and empires expanded and the kings and lords became more and more dependent upon the merchants for goods, the merchants became increasingly wealthy. All the while, "to obtain money to buy luxuries and arms, lords [needed to] encourage serfs to produce cash crops".<sup>14</sup> With the establishment of these arrangements arose the increasing emphasis on international trade which fueled European colonialism for centuries.

Throughout this time, as more and more markets emerged, the demand for labor in the non-agricultural sectors continued to grow thus further transforming, across many parts of the world, once self-sufficient land based peoples into members of a new working class who increasingly immigrated to cities.<sup>15</sup> The dream for a new life has always remained elusive for many of these emigrants. Vagabondage emerged early-on among city dwellers who could not obtain employment. In 1570s Britain, King Henry VIII made the persecution of vagabonds' official policy, whipping and imprisoning them due to their being viewed as a threat to order.

All-in-all, mercantilism and its resulting middle-class consciousness spawned the so-called economically independent, free-willed average-joe capitalist trader attitudes and arrangements which have shaped much of how the domesticated masses perceive and live in the world today.

Expanding globalization is often portrayed as solely originating in the west, neglecting the significance of the rise and influence of non-globalist indigenous capitalists around the world as colonial capitalism spread. Countless populations of

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. The emergence of Islam in 7th century Mecca resulted from nomadic herding families who began to settle as they acquired wealth through trading. Trading seems to be a major impetus for all former nomads who have chosen to settle and organized religion an associated manipulation tool used by the elite classes for social control. For further analysis on the necessity of organized religion and priests in maintaining these arrangements see *Toproduce or not to produce?* (Pg. 179-185) in Tucker, 2010.

<sup>13</sup> Harman 2008, Pg. 144

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, Pg. 144

<sup>15</sup> As continues around the world today.

3rd world poor peoples have been victimized by clever and manipulative members of their own cultures who learned how to play the games of domestication, exploitation, and overall tyranny.

Throughout this history and continuing into this century, wild and free peoples were crudely subjugated via their initial experiences with wealth and modern technology, marking “the beginning of a gradual seduction, a growing dependence on the manufactured goods that invariably bedazzle technologically primitive aboriginals”.<sup>16</sup> For example, the Huitoto Indians of the Putumayo River region of the Amazon “[who] initially venerated steel axes as divine objects that conferred fertility and abundance”, once entranced and dependent, “willingly swapped orphans or low-status members of their clans to obtain the goods from slave traders”.<sup>17</sup> Another example comes from Australia, where “the introduction of steel axes by missionaries among Yir Yoront aborigines led to the complete collapse of their ancient culture within a generation. Trade relations disrupted, taboos violated, myths shattered, age and gender roles overturned”.<sup>18</sup>

As a means to conquer and subjugate the remaining wild peoples in the Amazon jungles “the allure of...magical objects – mirrors, machetes, phonographs, cameras – lay at the strategic core of campaigns waged over decades to attract countless tribes...from the bush...by [government agencies], missionaries, oil companies, road builders, adventurers”.<sup>19</sup> In some cases, such as with the Yanomami groups of the Orinoco River region in Venezuela, this led to relocating themselves away from their traditional homes in the highlands to mission posts along the rivers in the lowlands simply to obtain access to trade goods. In other cases, the results were even more deleterious, such as with “some isolated tribesmen [who] were...known to launch attacks to gain access to manufactured goods [which] they...developed a taste for but could acquire by no other means”.<sup>20</sup> In Brazil this included the Kayapo, who “raided settlers time and time again during the 1950s with the express purpose of taking their guns and ammunition, which they used in turn to gain an upper hand on their traditional tribal enemies”, and also the...

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<sup>16</sup> Wallace, 2011, Pg. 226

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, Pg. 226-227. Also see C.M. Mann, *1491: New revelations of the Americas before Columbus*. Vintage Books. 2006 who notes that when missionaries and anthropologists provided steel tools violence increased amongst Amazonian tribes. Prior to steel axes many forest dwelling Amazonian groups did not bother to clear forest and plants gardens because it was impractical to cut down large trees with stone tools. For these groups steel axes allowed agriculture and they became highly prized by those groups who desired to settle. Some became warlike in order to obtain these axes. Also see endnote *xlvi*.

<sup>18</sup> Wallace, 2011, Pg. 252

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, Pg. 226

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, Pg. 232

*Arara and the Parintintin who made off with knives, machetes, and axes from the tapiri de brindis<sup>21</sup> [having] no idea what taking the bait would immediately lead to. Epidemics were just the beginning. Once they were crippled by demographic shock, their lands were easily overrun. They often lacked the will or the strength even to feed themselves, let alone resist. The survivors were soon corralled on marginal parcels, bereft of the traditions and know-how that had sustained them for thousands of years, despised by the society that hoodwinked them with a boundless flow of gifts and promises of a better life.<sup>22</sup>*

There were also the Kanamari, who “reduced to utter dependence on [government agency] paternalism for manufactured necessities, such as shotguns and shells” ended up “caught between the ancient ways they were forgetting and a world of fast-moving boats, planes, and commerce that was passing them by [and thus] no longer knew how to hunt with bow and arrow, much less to make them.”<sup>23</sup> For the Marubo “only the...elders still knew how to make the stiff but supple long bow and the fletched cane arrows tribesmen had hunted with for eons” and shotgun shells thus became a commodity essential to a Marubo man’s ability to provide for his family.<sup>24</sup>

All of the above represent examples of an essentially global event throughout history since the beginnings of domestication, as virtually all land based peoples have become dependent upon the world system, leading generally to the enhancement of ever more hideous levels of human domestication. In their manifesto, Marx and Engels summarized the societal shifts associated with global capitalism as leading to the masses becoming merely “a class of labourers who live only so long as they can find work”.<sup>25</sup> Certainly, for the vast majority of humanity, survival is now entirely dependent upon involvement with the forces of technology and production, and along with that, survival is now dependent upon furthering our alienation from the natural world and maintaining our own state of domestication – this is the ruling paradigm. Self-domestication continues to reign over us all as most of the lower and middle classes the world over, rather than reject the growth of markets, urge them on, further domesticating themselves, separating communities, driving thousands of wild species to extinction, and deepening overall human estrangement from direct relations with the real world. Furthering these processes offers no semblance of a way out, and any modicum of a future socioecological restoration and sustainability continues to be utterly annihilated.

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<sup>21</sup> Rubber tappers

<sup>22</sup> Wallace, 2011, Pg. 299

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, Pg. 337

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, Pg. 363

<sup>25</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei*. London, 1848.

## Domestication: The Culprit in a Persistently Failed Leftist Resistance

*The sense of shock had gone by the 20th century. People could still be amazed by individual innovations, like the motorcar or electric light. But they were not shocked any more by a society built on competition, timekeeping and greed. Capitalist society was all that people knew. Its characteristic forms of behavior seemed to be 'human nature'. People no longer realised how bizarre their behavior would have seemed to their forebears. A People's History of the World* <sup>26</sup>

*I've wasted too much time being motivated by shame and guilt. I know now who my enemy is...it's not the cops, not the feds, not the president, not corporate CEOs, though I'm not trying to say they aren't worth pushing off a cliff. My enemy is civilization and the collective insanity it stems from. My enemy is domestication. Fire and Ice* <sup>27</sup>

At all costs, the vast majority of us seem to be highly contented with a continuation of the domestication process. Those who question domestication are often labeled as radicals and activists of all stripes seems to have great difficulty in coming to terms with the fact that, when compared to the vast majority of human history lived in wildness, it is domestication which is actually "bizarre" and "radical". Yet the long history of failed attempts at resistance and defeat by the totality, the failure to change our circumstances any decisive degree, has resulted to a large magnitude from living within a state of both physical and psychological domestication<sup>28</sup>.

World history, since the dawn of civilization, can be characterized as both continuous bondage and continuous class struggle against resource theft and hierarchical power, which, over the course of time, not one entity has ever successfully risen to overthrow. Nowhere on the planet today does the totality not exist. Its overall long-term trajectory continues and propagates daily largely because our domestication amounts to physical and psychological dependency. World history shows that the maintenance of the totality requires that the common masses are continuously swindled into becoming dependent on landowners, successful traders, religious elites, and the state. Moreover the role of the middle-class, including those who identify as anti-capitalist pro-environment leftists, has been fundamental in

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<sup>26</sup> Harman, 2008, Pg. 384

<sup>27</sup> Luddite and Skunkly, 2004.

<sup>28</sup> Some of the BAGR editors were recently accused of being "anti-action". We take none of this lightly. Each and every detailed analysis the BAGR editors embark upon and relay has a core purpose of cultivating and maintaining effective cultures of resistance against civilization with the long term stability of resilient AP communities in mind. We ask our accusers to communicate more clearly and specifically the level of analysis and action they are embarked on (?), so that we might better understand our supposed shortcomings.

the effort to maintain domestication in the form of privileged lifestyles associated with progress, industry, and overall techno industrial expansion. Civilized humans, both Left and Right, will do just about anything to maintain their domestication.

Domestication is so immensely powerful it has kept billions of humans timid and enslaved throughout known history. Local, small-scale native people are not exempt as they have often proven just as gullible in their desires for wealth<sup>29</sup>. At whatever cultural scale, wealth has always been generated by, an often willing, mass of commoners in service to an elite. Depraved and shameless, capitalism is essentially a deception of the masses into a reified need for a product or a service that can be extracted or produced by one group and sold back to another group by the trading and owner classes who benefit. Once obtained, the benefactors have always viewed the preservation of their privilege and profit as primary; no matter how compassionate, caring, and liberal, whenever they are backed against a wall they have chosen to side with domestication.

A review of all the great revolts against tyranny in history reveals either movements which were crushed by the more powerful, or victorious ones which promised a new society but simply ended up reproducing all of the destructive tendencies and oppressions of civilization<sup>30</sup>. This trend will continue, no matter how hard those who resist fight back, as long as the wealth and power of the elitist domesticators and programmers depends entirely on our direct compulsion in the game of wage slavery, production, commodification, mercantilism, and technology.

The risks involved with authentically breaking this pattern and thus doing away with our domestication run deep. Civilizations have a long history of using strong handed tactics, including police and military violence, against those who threaten mass compulsion in their domestication scheme. And ever since the programmers of surplus production coaxed us away from dependence on immediate return wilderness, the domesticated elitists have generally always controlled the food, albeit in an acknowledged state of paranoia and vulnerability.

With the almost total dependence on mass produced cereal grains for survival, both elites and commoners became keenly aware that any social or ecological glitch which caused a substantial harvest failure would equal starvation<sup>31</sup>. For this

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<sup>29</sup> This is not to deny whatsoever the fact that domestication has been forced and not voluntary for thousands of indigenous cultures. But a major problem is that once the process sets in, all of us, no matter what our backgrounds, seem to end up more than willing to surrender to it and help it along in our daily decisions.

<sup>30</sup> I'm not going to take space up going through the litany of examples here. Review Harman 2008 for a very clear picture of this reality. Also see *To produce or not to produce* (Pg. 179-185) and *The failure of revolution* (Pg. 201-210) in Tucker, 2010.

<sup>31</sup> For more on the consequences of dependency on storehouses see *To produce or not to pro-*

reason European feudal kings were constantly worried about peasant revolt or any rejection of exploitation by the masses of common farmers – not only did their power, but also their lives, depended on peasants playing the game. They capitalized on the fact that the poor masses were domesticated, unable to fend for themselves, and chained to the fields and used this bondage to redirect any despair, anger, and revolt. For instance, in 12th century Constantinople, the rulers of the Byzantium Empire, “afraid of any class emerging whose closeness to production might lead to it diverting some of the surplus into its own pockets”<sup>32</sup> found security in the fact that “lacking an independent base, the poor could not act as an independent force. They could cause brief mayhem by rioting. But even their bitterness was all too easily manipulated...utilised by aristocratic forces”<sup>33</sup>. Throughout history, in their own self-imposed desperation, constantly terrified of any unrest which might result in forcing them down into destitution, mid-level aristocrats have always played along.

Moreover, in order to oppose any radical shifts which might undermine their positions on the ladder, the propertied liberal classes have always, when then the system is faced with any threat, tended to unite with fascistic right-wing forces.

Typical of the fantasies and psychoses of middle-class liberals everywhere today, was the cowardice of the liberal bourgeois social democrat leaders of pre-WWII Nazi Germany, whose ultra-domesticated fear of economic collapse contributed greatly to the rise of Adolf Hitler. “Nazisim...was the product of an already mature industrial capitalism. The German ruling class saw the only way to escape from a deep economic crisis was to hand political power to a totalitarian movement based on the irrational fantasies of a middle class driven mad by the crisis”<sup>34</sup>. The evolved comfortable dependence of the liberal bourgeois on the domesticated order has always meant that they shall never put their careers at risk, even if, thoroughly enlightened of the actual problems via their privileged educations.

As a result of their own enslavement to the arrangements of production and their personal comforts resulting from their position within the totality, middle class intellectuals, including university professors and civil servants of all stripes, even if keenly aware of these patterns in history, generally always seem more than willing to toe the line for the totality. The contemporary postmodernist surrender

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*duce?*, Tucker, 2010.

<sup>32</sup> Harman, 2008, Pg. 121

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, Pg. 212

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, Pg. 511. Reference to the global economic crisis of the 1930s. A similar situation is faced in the US today as the number of right wing militias grows, right wing illusions regarding the actual causes of impending collapse remain prolific, and right wing 2nd Amerikkkan Revolution fantasies are leading to fascistic political candidacies with totalitarian mindsets. Take heed of the looming threat of enhanced totalitarianism in the 21st century.

of left wing intellectuals is entirely rooted in their own domestication and fear of breaking free of it. It should be clear, at this stage, that allowing the forces of passive and comfortable bourgeois liberalism to be a guide in any manner means certain defeat for humanity and for the planet.

For their part, the lower-level urban working classes are almost equal enemies to planetary ecology, wildness, and self-reliant indigenous lifeways. As the blue collars struggle for their piece of the pie, and thereby internalize the struggle for income equality and ‘economic justice’ as a priori, they position themselves as willing exploiters and decimators of both ecosystems and non-capitalistic land-based lifeways<sup>35</sup>. Particularly disheartening is the witness of increasing numbers of indigenous peoples with the most direct connections to free and wild ancestors of any populace on the planet willing to sell away everything while claiming allegiance to an indigenous culture, in an effort to somehow separate themselves from the overall imperial ideology, a measure to comfort them in their cognitive dissonance and overall psychological despair<sup>36</sup>.

For the domesticated, rather than step away from the totality and attempt a return to a stable social and ecological lifeway, belief in a better future via technology and shifting societal consciousness becomes a fundamental guiding force. The idealization of progress has always been fundamental to leftist thinking – ‘some day we can get there, we just need to keep pushing on and the dreams of advancement for all can finally be fulfilled’. Total faith in science and reason continues as a product of all this, as most, rather than come to terms with the reality of human domestication, cling to faith in the future as if it were a god, marching onward down the pavement staring into and poking away at their screens passively chanting ‘the future can only ever be better than the present – modernity can only mean improvement’.

The entire notion of a progressive movement to a finally just world has been a massive failure for all of its believers, but has worked well as another scheme of the cunning for growing their wealth and power – from the long ago incubation of the first indigenous civilizations through till now. This forward march to progress has given rise to all the devastation which has occurred, and thus, now, any true re-

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<sup>35</sup> See *Class struggle, commodification, and modernized society* (Pg. 166-178) in Tucker, 2010 for more in-depth analysis on class-struggle ideologies being barriers to actual resistance.

<sup>36</sup> This observation is by no means meant to overlook the role that colonialism, governments, and corporations have played in these events, nor is it meant to discount indigenous efforts at resistance. The point here is to focus on how we self-domesticate and how this softens us and thwarts effective resistance. I do not include mention of the indigenous role here lightly. My position stems from years of on-the-ground observation in some of these cultures. The main point here is that, at this stage, very few of us are exempt from the process and that activists need to dig deeper and stop blaming only the western empires ect. for the problem and start paying attention to other primary factors such as domestication and technology.

sistance movement must first and foremost reject solutions that involve ‘progress’ in any shape or form<sup>37</sup>.

Through its history of fits and starts over the last few millennia’s, the momentum of leftist oriented resistance is picking up in this second decade of the 21st century: Occupy, Black Lives Matter, Climate Change, Anti-fracking, Anti-Pipeline– yet none of this is fundamentally different than left style resistance of past centuries<sup>38</sup>. In fact, by necessity against the most powerful state paramilitary police forces in known history, it is fundamentally more passive than any of the more forthright armed leftist revolutions of the past. Ultimately, hemmed in by domestication - dependency on the industrial supply chain, digital communication, and corporate health care - none of what is occurring now will bring us or the planet out of annihilation by the totality, as long as the primary agitation in such activism is a fight to be more of an equal part of the system rather than a call for the disenfranchised to voluntarily cease acting out their traditional roles as surplus producers for the domesticators. As time plays out, the revolts of the 21st century will continue and even expand, but as the historical track record shows, such movements will always be co-opted unless those revolting choose to abandon the industrial system itself and develop a new world of actualized community self-reliance<sup>39</sup>.

Do they owe us a living? Why keep producing for them? What compels it? Domestication.

What if rather than fighting for equal treatment, just wages, and better working conditions the producers instead just stopped playing the game? Is it really a matter of survival? Or is it actually a matter of reified dependencies?

One of the fundamentals of liberal intellectual theory regarding the obviously approaching dark times for modern civilization is the notion that it is the poor who will continue to suffer and the rich who will prosper and survive. For all classes who rely on producing inputs for the global machine this will certainly be a reality, yet the impotence of the ultra-domesticated who now live the most privileged lifestyles should not be underestimated.

As the belt on the dominant economy and culture continues to tighten and the numbers of disenfranchised grow, the elite shall find themselves at their most vul-

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<sup>37</sup> See *The failure of revolution* (Pg. 201-219) in Tucker, 2010, which points out that many anarchists are certainly not exempt from such faith in progress and that, in fact, the historical leftist and anarchist belief in progress has been a major factor in failed revolutions of the past.

<sup>38</sup> I have refrained from discussing resistance in the forms of various types of direct actions here, including attacks against the infrastructure of civilization. For various reasons, this article is not meant to be particularly about those forms of resistance.

<sup>39</sup> For more on the leftist obsession with redistribution and failed leftist resistance as a result of reliance on production and thus the need to reject our roles as producers and begin building communities in order to mount effective resistance see *To produce or not to produce* (Pg. 179-185) and *The failure of revolution* (Pg. 201-210) in Tucker, 2010.

nerable. In the face of their frantic paranoia and their access to police and military enforcers our challenges will remain extremely formidable, no doubt. But there is a fighting chance if rather than remaining in bondage to technology and capital we can build self-reliance while simultaneously resisting and attacking these supposedly inviolable institutions.

During the 1930s when the US stock market collapsed, igniting the Great Depression, the implications were felt worldwide. US and European banks collapsed and world industrial output fell almost by half, devastating 3rd world countries and peasants across the planet “whose economies had been tailored to produce food and raw materials” for the colonial world markets:

*Suddenly there was no market for their output. People only recently pulled into the world of money were deprived of access to it, yet they no longer had any other means of obtaining a livelihood...those who were least ‘advanced’ in capitalist terms – subsistence farmers still barely integrated into the cash economy – survived best. Those who relied on selling their labor power had nothing to fall back on.*<sup>40</sup>

Obliterating our dependency on selling our labor power, whatever it is we produce, is an absolutely key element in resistance.

Civilization is life lived off the production of otherness – as long as we remain domesticated we all ultimately live off the backs of otherness –this is where your smartphone comes from. The history of civilization is not simply class struggle; it is essentially the sapping of communal self-sufficiency by self-domesticated elitists and, in many cases, the simultaneous surrender of communal self-sufficiency by commoners who end up in a state of desire for their own piece of the pie. This is the actual dialectic – surrender of our wildness and liberty in exchange for dependency on reified needs and desires represents the opposing forces annihilating us through time via self-domestication. As a first step a once primal wild and free peoples fell prey to the promise of an easier life via surplus production – an initially innocent human impulse that has ultimately become the undoing of our species and the global ecology which supports us.

Taken as a whole, and in proper temporal context, the 21st century can be described as an episode of impending confusion and socioecological destruction resulting from the continuing surge of mass capitalism, colonialism, and industrial technology with the masses generally following along and/or coming up with untenable solutions as result of their own domestication . We witness the momentum of this psychology today, but confidence is waning and the ridiculousness of the proposed solutions is apparent as time and space for their implementation quickly runs out.

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<sup>40</sup> Harman, 2008, Pg. 469-470. In the impending 21st century crisis, most wage workers around the world will face similar circumstances, including those in the more industrialized ‘prosperous’

All of the upheavals of socialist oriented rebellion across Europe, Asia, and Latin America during both the 19th and 20th centuries are representative of the same very confused attempt to make correct what went so wrong. Both then and now the ideologies which drive most efforts of resistance have been without the necessary historical, anthropological, ecological, and psychological context – self-domestication so deeply entrenched that all of this effort at resistance and revolt has simply been banging fruitlessly on an impenetrable wall – billions of people dying all in desperation to find security in industry, technology, government, military force, agriculture, economics – in sum – to find security in our domestication.

The only hope forward is feral, a return from our captivity to a state of wildness – the middle-ground compromises of past and present resisters take us nowhere but further into enslavement and ecological despair – further into domestication. Rewilding is the antithesis. Only a feral return to self-reliant non-technological community will be adequate. The crucial calling is for the masses is to discontinue producing, stop trading, to band together on land and as a communities, Occupy farms and forests – not city streets: to grow<sup>41</sup>, steal, scavenge, forage and procure the necessities, begin to unhinge domestication, to stop playing the game<sup>42</sup>.

## Indigenous Wildness, Self-Reliance, and Resistance

*I shared the evening campfire with men who in this lifetime had believed jet aircraft to be supernatural beings. But they had evolved a way of life perfectly suited to this harsh realm. They'd known how to survive in it, even to thrive in it, with nothing of our complicated technology. Every one of them at one point or another had stood face-to-face with a jaguar in the forest, armed with only an arrow or a stick, and come out on top. Did the bearer of a SAM-7 missile, who with a squeeze of a finger could shoot one of those ancestral spirits out of the sky, possess any greater intelligence than a flecheiro who knew how to stalk prey silently in the forests and whose people had managed to arrive at the third millennium still free from civilization's*

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nations.

<sup>41</sup> As will be explained in more detail below, even while 'growing' is domestication, in specific contexts it is a valid strategy providing it does not become a baseline but that instead it is done as a tiered step to get further and further away from domestication and into wildness. Also see endnote *xlvi*.

<sup>42</sup> This is not to be mistaken as a call for isolation and simply escaping, even if that was actually possible. This is a call for all resisters to incorporate into their pathways relentless actions towards community self-reliance and rewilding and to reject dependence on the machine to the furthest extent possible.

*relentless efforts to subjugate them, dispossess them, and have at their resources? The Unconquered* <sup>43</sup>

*They are a reminder that it's possible to live another way. They are the last free people on this planet. Brazillian National Indian Foundation agent Jose' Carlos Meirelles to a BBC journalist on being shot at in an airplane with a fusillade of arrows from the bows of the Indios Bravos when flying low over an encampment in 2008.*

Recognizing the reality of our debilitating domestication requires that we now must define its opposing condition; a feral world of wildness and self-reliance, inspired by examples of actualized wild liberty and resistance.

It has been estimated that today in the last primal vestiges of the Brazilian Amazon exist up to 43 uncontacted indigenous tribes, *Indios Bravos* or The Arrow People. Often characterized as 'uncontacted', the more likely reality is that these Amazonian bands consciously choose to live in isolation and evade interaction precisely due to a deep intergenerational knowledge of the calamitous consequences associated with their ancestors and their neighboring indigenous brethren becoming domesticated and civilized:

*Willful determination, or rather self-determination...seems to attend all the isolated tribes still roaming the forests of the Amazon...Indigenous groups living in isolation are isolated because they choose to be. It's not for complete lack of contact, but precisely because previous experiences of contact with the outside world proved so negative.*<sup>44</sup>

Not only have The Arrow People been refugees fleeing from the violence and conquest of European and mestizo colonialism and the associated global economy for 500 years, many of them likely originate from small scale cultures which were effectively evading the evolving tyranny of South American indigenous groups which began to settle and domesticate the region around 2,000 years ago<sup>45</sup>. As

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<sup>43</sup> Wallace, 2011, Pg. 233

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, Pg. 225

<sup>45</sup> Mann. 2006 (Pg. 319). In 1542 when the Spaniard Carvajal travelled down the Amazon River his party reported to have encountered complex agriculturally based native settlements extending for hundreds of miles at a time and that "there could even be seen some large cities". This was disputed by early archaeological work done in the Amazon which concluded that due to the bioregion's poor soil it would be too difficult to produce the surplus necessary for complex culture. However, later archaeological work took notice of large tracts of *terra preta* a highly fertile soil which was often filled with pottery shards and was determined to be established through anthropogenic composting methods. This discovery suggested that the Amazon basin was densely populated long before the time of Carvajal and that Amazonian agricultural practices were likely as intensive and complex as those in Mesoamerica. Cultural groups identified include the Arawak, who migrated into the southern and central Amazon basin around 2,000 years ago and subsequently pushed further into more remote areas of the basin. In some areas highly elaborate built environments, including large plazas and defensive ditches have been identified. The Arawak speaking peoples likely represent an expansion out of the Andes region, home to the earliest known complex cultures in the Americas – where domestication was being practiced around 5,000 BP. As is well known, there

these indigenous empires and foreign resource extractors invaded further and further into the depths of the Amazon, The Arrow People developed a successful lifeway which incorporated continuous evasion from the turmoil of civilization, effectively keeping their cultures and their wildness intact up until today<sup>46</sup>. They have voluntarily isolated themselves and “developed a heightened resistance to contact – refusing all gifts, spurning all overtures, fleeing deeper and deeper into the jungle”<sup>47</sup>. With a legacy of two millennia’s of successful resistance against the forces of domestication and five centuries of successful resistance against enslavement by the modern industrial world, “everything they [do suggests] a deliberate decision, an act of self-determination, to shut themselves off from the rest of us.”<sup>48</sup>

There are many other examples of such attempts at resistance and evasion by indigenous nomads, hunters, and foragers across the world, but it seems that none have held on to the degree The Arrow People have. One of the deepest and most enduring examples of tremendous persistence in fighting the dominant order is the fact that, for entire decades during the European conquest of the American West in the nineteenth century, groups such as the Apache, Cheyenne, and Lakota were defeating the US Army day-in-day-out in various battles and skirmishes while simultaneously continuing to feed themselves and their children via wild food hunting and gathering. This capability is an immense testament to the strength and resilience of such people, whose enemies were meanwhile being fed, sheltered, clothed, and armed primarily through organized supply chains. With some access to firearms, these near victors of the Indian Wars also continued to maintain heavy reliance on primitive technology, annihilating hundreds of cavalymen with hand-made bows and arrows, among other traditional weaponry. The only way these groups were defeated was through the implementation of a military strategy to de-

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was a succession of imperial Andean empires, including Wari, Tiwanaku, Chimor, and Moche, all leading up to the time of the Inca, followed by Spanish conquest. So there is little doubt that, wherever they originate from, The Arrow People have indeed been successfully evading civilization for a very long time.

<sup>46</sup> At least some of The Arrow People are not exclusively hunter-gatherers and are known to maintain orchards. Because of the difficulty of clearing forests with stone tools, there has likely been a long tradition of permaculture style forest gardening in the Amazon forests, cultivated by semi-nomads who combine this tactic with hunting, fishing, and gathering. Mann 2006 suggests many of these Amazonian forest gardens are hundreds of years old and that various groups of people moving through the region have probably used them for subsistence temporarily before moving on. This type of small-scale agroforestry cannot yield enough food on its own to support large populations or complex cultures. A semi-nomadic hunting, fishing, gathering, forest garden mixed subsistence strategy has worked well for these groups of Arrow People as a method of both survival and evasion from civilization and technology for at least centuries. This should not be overlooked by anarcho-primitivists.

<sup>47</sup> Wallace, 2011, Pg. 257

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, Pg. 299

stroy their food-base and by hemming them in on limited parcels of land. Perhaps, in the face of such a powerful leviathan, defeat was sadly inevitable. Nonetheless our current cultures of resistance should draw on this history for inspiration.

Through this we should also continue to make note of the destructive consequences for the indigenous groups who have initially welcomed domestication and then continued to blindly make concessions to it, effectively allowing themselves to become dependents of the industrial system as a result.<sup>49</sup> For example, in contemporary Alaska many native people continue to survive to a large degree by hunting, fishing, and gathering but only accomplish this with modern technology and fossil energy. So much direct knowledge of ancient skills has been lost that any long-term glitch in the long supply chain which impedes receipt of now necessary goods and services into remote Alaska would likely become a humanitarian crisis. This situation can be contrasted with the far greater level of self-reliance and traditional skills retained by some Siberian indigenous peoples whom have had much less opportunity to tinker with industrial consumption and technology over the course of both Soviet and Russian Federation history. Compared to the Alaskans, the Siberians are well-posed to endure upcoming supply chain collapses.

None of this is to be taken lightly however. Primitive survival in Arctic and Subarctic environs presents formidable challenges which few of the domesticated masses would ever be willing to confront. Although, examples throughout the ethnographic record do inform us what our species is capable of, especially in cases where we are born and raised outside of domestication. For instance, at the tip of the Southern Hemisphere in Tierra Del Fuego, in a much harsher climate than exists in today's last stronghold of wild indigenousness in the Amazon, the Yahghan people lived for thousands of years "practically naked" without shoes in the winter snows<sup>50</sup>. They were expert swimmers in the cold waters of the southern Pacific near Cape Horn. Further into the interior existed the Ona who, rather than having the woven grass skirts occasionally worn by the Yaghan, survived the mountain winters clothed by a one-piece un-tanned guanaco skin robe. "Ona men cared nothing for being clothed". Their single sheet guanaco skin was not sewn and was "never fastened in any way, but was held in a position with the left hand in which the hunter also carried his bow and quiver"<sup>51</sup>. Once in range of game, or in preparation to encounter an enemy, "the hunter discarded his robe before using

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<sup>49</sup> There are certainly many who have resisted conquest by domestication, until the bitter end, and there are also those who have been much more passive in surrendering to it, even desiring it and urging it on while failing to recognize the long-term costs.

<sup>50</sup> E.L. Bridges, *Uttermost Part of the Earth: History of the Tierra Del Fuego Indians*. Overlook/Rookery, New York, 2007, Pg. 64.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 368

his bow and arrows”<sup>52</sup>. The legacy of these bands of Tierra Tel Fuego Indians is one of hardiness and resilience for multiple thousands of years. Today, as a result of the effects of European colonization, they are extinct. Not a single language speaker or full-blooded Yaghan or Ona remains. In the necessity to procure food, their attempts to resist the colonization of their lands proved futile. “These unfortunate natives, though, as a rule, vastly superior physically...to their enemies, were hopelessly handicapped by having to provide for their numerous families”<sup>53</sup>.

This is the unfortunate story for thousands of wild cultures who have become victimized by the onslaught of domestication and civilization across the globe over the course of the last two thousand years. Yet The Arrow People have maintained their wildness and capacity to endure and they provide all of us and the planet with a sliver of hope.

Nevertheless, in face of this grand reality, the domesticated cry out “it is hopeless!” And why? Because the picture is clear. In order for The Arrow People to accomplish wildness and true liberty continuously over the course of at least five centuries they have needed to maintain an extremely high threshold for psychical discomfort<sup>54</sup>. Yet they are humans just as we are and they had the resilience of our forebears deep inside their minds and bodies. Not only this, they also had to maintain a great capacity for mobility and it is surmised that the ancestors of some of these bands were also once sedentary farmers but that “to stay a step ahead of the invaders, they abandoned their crops and villages to forage in the forest”<sup>55</sup>.

*This is what victory looked like: The Arrow People, holding forth in the Parallel Realm. Uncontacted. Untamed. Unconquered.*<sup>56</sup>

For us, is it hopeless? In the face of overwhelming odds (*too many people, not enough land, mass extinction* – are all common reproaches) it very well may be. But we have no choice. The only way forward is to somehow develop a capacity not to be dependent on the Leviathan. Unhinge our domestication. The task before

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid, Pg. 379

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, Pg. 265. Some may think it is the destiny of all such wild and free peoples to ultimately become annihilated through such Social Darwinist forces. My view, however, is that all remaining wild and free peoples, and those of us striving to get there, should push forward and bide our time, being that, taken as a whole, socioecological evolutionary history is actually much more on the side of small-scale, self-sufficient communities than it is on the side civilized of adaptations.

<sup>54</sup> Meaning physical discomfort as it would be experienced and defined by domesticated people. ‘Discomfort’ is relative to cultural and material upbringing. Much of what we find uncomfortable would not be perceived as such by hunter gatherers.

<sup>55</sup> Wallace, 2011, Pg. 211. The ability to flee and reestablish nomadic hunting and gathering lifeways has likely been operationalized by thousands of indigenous peoples when the complex societies they were temporary members of faced collapse or when oppressive forces became overwhelming.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, Pg. 423

us is immense. It is undoubtedly multigenerational, yet not unreachable and not pushing forward with it means failure for all that is decent about humanity and means utter destruction for the ecology of this sacred wild planet.

## Forward into Rewilding Realities: Risk, Hardship, Humility, Community

*Out of these [21st century] struggles will emerge new attempts to remould society around the values of solidarity, mutual support, egalitarianism, collective cooperation and a democratically planned use of resources. The ruling classes of the world, like their predecessors for 5,000 years, will do their utmost to thwart these attempts and will, if necessary, unleash endless barbarities so as to hang on to what they regard as their sacred right to power and to property. They will defend the existing capitalist order to the end – even if it is the end of organized human life. A Peoples History of the World* <sup>57</sup>

*I just know I want out. And I don't know what my limitations are, but I'm ready to find out. The Black Wolf Woman –Anonymous Alaskan Rewilder*

*Every day is a physical toil, but never before have I felt such undaunted enthusiasm for my scope and freedom. On the Run in Siberia* <sup>58</sup>

We have clearly established that a rewilding component is a necessary foundation for any effective and enduring resistance against, and liberation from, the shackles of civilizational tyranny. This is not meant to discredit the efforts of others or to disrespect or reduce the value of the countless acts of self-sacrifice in the long history of action and resistance against the totality, in one form or another, around the world. Rather, the point is to identify the critical missing element – a concurrent pathway to undomesticate and rewild. For any suite of actions to have long-term beneficial outcomes for humans and the planet, this is mandatory. It is the only way forward; action without wildness as a foundation can only result in domestication, no matter what victory comes of it. Any modicum of authentic resistance now depends on shedding domestication<sup>59</sup>.

Those of us involved in the many forms of resistance occurring today, especially those of us who were born and now reside in the westernized regions of the world, including many of us who have come to reject civilization, have been raised as humans in the most comfortable conditions ever known to our species. We are domesticated. This provides us perspective on both the advantages and limitations

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<sup>57</sup> Harman, 2008, Pg. 620

<sup>58</sup> R. Willerslev, *On the run in Siberia*. University of Minnesota Press, 2012, Pg. 115.

<sup>59</sup> This includes addiction to digital technology, among multiple other things.

of domesticated lifeways which those 'less fortunate' do not have. But since our domestication tends to be our primary foundational life experience, we are left at a great disadvantage in gaining the capability to disembark from the complex systems which now prop us up.

If there was to be a great victory over the totality what would we be left with, without the physical and psychological ability to exist outside of its grip? We would be left with little ground to stand on and the situation would turn back to tyranny, unless rewilding occurs within our every physical, mental, emotional, sensory, and social faculty. Without this there is nothing. Yet the challenges to shift are immense. We need an authentically feral resistance but to go feral we need to cross boundaries, both physical and spiritual, throw caution to the wind, and embark full-throttle into wildness.

When the topic of physical discomfort and toil comes up, and when some primitivists and rewilders such as I promote embracing these things as virtuous, we are often accused of being arrogant and macho. We make no romanticized attempts at machismo associated with the trials and errors involved with our attempts to endure inside of wildness. Arrogance is our enemy. It is civilization talking. Above all else, rewilding shall teach us a humility which the civilized lack and which we must embrace wholeheartedly. An atmosphere of tougher-man, smarter-man arrogance is countered when a person with real on-the-ground experience displays some personal humility in regards to the situation<sup>60</sup>. And when it comes to gender, I am continuously humbled by the women I have spent time with in pursuit of rewilding.

Let us also, once and for all, set straight the notion that anarcho-primitivists romanticize, and thus do not take seriously, the realities of dispensing with civilization. We fully recognize the complete package of consequence involved with doing away with civilization and make no attempt to avoid the harsh physical and psychological realities which accompanies a feral return; hard work, discomfort, pain, danger, risk, lack of outside support to fall back on<sup>61</sup>. I hold no illusions regarding what befalls us and I say this all with a deep humility based on my own feeble attempts at rewilding, experiences which have often left me retreating back into the comforts of civilization. Again, in the face of all this, constant humility is the overarching perspective and state of being. The reality is that going feral requires

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<sup>60</sup> Bridges (2007:359) recollected "I never heard an Ona brag of his strength or prowess". Also see E.M. Thomas. *The old way: a story of the first people*. Picador, New York, 2006. The ethnographic record shows that hunter gatherers generally always respond to bragging and displays of arrogance by putting the perpetrators in-check.

<sup>61</sup> By 'hard work' I do not imply work under the guise of production and regimentation, rather this is to acknowledge the reality that wild survival sometimes requires nose-to-the-grindstone physical effort for hours on end. Also See Pg. 215 of *The failure of revolution* in Tucker, 2010.

physical and mental toughness. This is not a macho thing. It is a human thing. Domestication has softened us immensely. And thus we also need to be realistic about the overall legitimacy of training and physical fitness – swimming, climbing, jumping, running, travelling long distances on foot, carrying heavy weight, self-defense – and cast off any labeling of physical fitness activities as macho or militarist by lethargic anarchists and passive leftist activists. There is no easy way out – domestication debilitates physically into decrepitude and it has evolved our necessity for civilized comforts which ultimately destroy wildness and annihilate the planet. The overall physical alienation and feebleness of the most powerful elitist programmers, technologists, domesticators, and capitalists is perhaps one of the primary weaknesses in the totality that we ourselves should be capitalizing on. Even the hardest of them ends up worthless without technology, motors, grocery stores, and guns.

I witness each day the end result of this alienation, insistence upon the virtues of domestication by the vast majority of humans around me. A fear of the natural world, a fear of the dark, the cold, of being dirty, of being outdoors, of being human, of being an animal, and the natural world continues to suffer concomitantly. Feral pathways inevitably come with personal risks and require a mental, and often physical, crossing of the threshold of domestication. As a Tanana Athabascan activist once told me, “well-being was widespread before contact, but we cannot romanticize it, being hungry, which the elders have caught a glimpse of”. Danger certainly lurks here. I am aware of the risk. And in situations without civilized control I am not without fear.

We have always heard from the domesticated the inaccurate assessment that life for primitive people was “nasty, brutish, and short”. Life expectancy at birth for hunting and gathering peoples was lower than in modernity not because no one survived into old age but because less children survived in proportion to the population as a whole. Healthy seventy-plus year old elders from hunting and gathering cultures have been well documented in the anthropological record<sup>62</sup>. If a person survived to adulthood, mortality was related mostly to accidents and violence. In the case of an accident there was no modern medicine, surgery, or life-support. This is perhaps one of the most difficult realities for us to face. It certainly was for

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<sup>62</sup> For example see M. Gurven and H. Kaplan. *Longevity among hunter-gatherers: a cross cultural examination*. *Population and Development Review*, 33(2) pages 321-365, June 2007. Average worldwide lifespan in the 21st century is 66 years and for hunter gatherers “the data show that modal adult life span is 68-78 years and that it was not uncommon for individuals to reach these ages.” Meanwhile, in the most ‘advanced’ country in the modern civilized world, the supposed model of ‘progress’ for all, exists the highest infant mortality rate of all industrialized nations. See <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2014/09/29/our-infant-mortality-rate-is-a-national-embarrassment/>, accessed January 26th 2016.

me when I cut myself deep while butchering a deer while in a very remote camp on an island for several weeks and became paranoid that I was getting an infection. This humble reality became even more critical for me when I stared directly at my friend's finger hanging lopsided and barely attached to the bone while she begged me to sew it for her so that she could *avoid* going to a hospital. And these little incidents are relatively minor in comparison to the medical situations we will inevitably face one day no longer linked to the matrix, in full reliance only on one and other, in wildness, where anything can happen<sup>63</sup>.

As domesticates we often find ourselves distressed by elements of unpredictability, accident, and chance, yet an embrace of these is one important element which builds the adaptability and resilience of the feral, wild and free human. Our domestication of animals and plants was essentially an unprecedented psychological transition "from unpredictability to reliability".<sup>64</sup> Yet, dependence upon "reliability" ultimately initiates a psychological dependence on control, and thus a control logic which originates from a fear of uncertainty.<sup>65</sup> I get frustrated with uncertainty personally, and I can see how a culture would make efforts to reduce it via domestication. As such it may be that this psychology has played a massive role in our own domestication and its comprehensive impacts to wildness and the planet. The unpredictability of wildness offers both risk and award. Some who have found boundless healing, meaning, purpose, hope and spiritual solace in rewilding have disappeared on vision quests into wildness, as a result of chance or simple mistakes, or both, never to be seen again. I do not valorize this.

Prior to domestication, if a lone hunter crashed through the ice and could not start a fire then there was no cell-phone to call in a heli-vac, there was no airplane to search for them when family became concerned. Thus, there must have been a much greater acceptance of death in those wild cultures than we have in ours. Such are the risks that we take, especially when we travel solo in remote locations. We are realistic about the risks and we strive to develop the courage and honor to accept our predicaments and their consequences. In those cases, we should prefer

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<sup>63</sup> Most importantly, hunter gatherers certainly do provide us with concrete examples of both medical self-sufficiency and entirely accurate knowledge of the biological functions of the human body. For example Thomas (2006:250) recounted witnessing a Gwi/ bushman "dissect a springbok...naming the various parts, including its internal organs and accurately describing their functions, pointing out that the blood was moved around the body by the heart and that the lungs were for taking in breath...but he didn't confuse the antelope body with the human body, as he understood the different functions of the stomach and the rumen."

<sup>64</sup> R. Willerslev et al, *Sacrifice as the ideal hunt: a cosmological explanation for the origin of reindeer domestication*. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute. 2014, Pg. 19.

<sup>65</sup> Fear of uncertainty should be recognized as a "a prime mover in the development of new subsistence forms" and thus may very well have been an important factor in the development of plant and animal domestication (Willerslev et al. 2014:19)

to become a bear or part of a river, rather to go on with civilization. This would be more along the lines of the spirituality of the old hunters where humans and wildness are one and where the spirits of people do not die but instead only change forms. Better to die in the wild than in car wreck, better to eat the dirt than to eat the pavement, better to be eaten by a beautiful wild creature than to be shot apart by bullets and thus eaten away for nothing by a domesticated and lost predator in our nation's ongoing epidemic of mass-murder public shootings (a perfect example of the ever escalating civilized psychosis occurring in our obviously crumbling society).

There exists a fine line between just wanting out of the system, or the ability to survive the collapse, and an actualized feral anarchy movement. Anarcho-primitivists do not attempt to go feral and rewild just because we want out – we do so because we see it as a vital component in the package of resistance actually necessary to bring the totality crashing down.

Rewilding is not a survival course and any machismo survivalist cultural baggage that people incite regarding it should be done away with. Survivalists see wildness as an enemy which they must overcome to survive. Rewilding requires an in-depth focus on rethinking our ways of being and our ways of perceiving ourselves as human beings on planet earth. It is the learning of LIVING skills, both the material and the psychological. Authentic rewilding requires just as much focus on healthy social skills, community building, and mental awareness as it does on the practical elements needed for the establishment of small-scale, localized, self-reliant, primitive-technology based societies. Rewilding goes beyond survival, and into deep relationship with the ecology of the planet and thereby fosters long-term resilience, deep personal character, and community self-reliance: developing a new sense of what it means to be a successful human being on planet earth based upon the actual 2 million year evolutionary legacy of ecologically adapted human lifeways and psychologies.

Practical skills are critical not because they are needed to “survive” in the here-and-now but because practicing them develops mental awareness and strength of character; these skills build a foundation for dismantling our domestication by teaching the essence of self-reliance within an ecosystem through intimately knowing that ecosystem with no technological mediation. All of this is easily romanticized on paper and we should not underestimate its complexity and challenges while nonetheless not losing sight of the fact that it is all necessary to an actualized resistance against civilization, and a future without it.

The challenges and complexity mean that what needs to be accomplished cannot be accomplished entirely by any group of us any time soon and not likely within our own lifetimes. By necessity the pathway needs to be multigenerational and

anyone who embarks upon it should have as a priority passing on the spirit of rewilding to children.

Prior to global industrialism people were generally only a step or two away from a return to wildness – yet today domestication runs so deep that several steps are likely required for our return . We need to come to terms with the fact that no one can do it all and release ourselves from the politically correct guilty burdens which cause so many of us hopeless despair. Reality means certain levels of compromise with domestication, but settling at these stages certainly means failure. In this sense, rewilding can realistically be viewed as occurring across tiers. Any small step away from domestication has merit and value in the spectrum of resistance but each step should take us further and deeper into wildness and not domestication. Leftist strides for better or equal treatment from within the totality do not fall into this category. This has become highly apparent to me in my work with disenfranchised indigenous peoples whom have lost their wildness and self-sufficiency as a result of being coopted into dependence on the totality. For instance, a Suqpiaq elder recently said to me:

*As long as the government is giving away free money, Medicaid, and food stamps, and other welfare checks its gonna keep going like we see it here in the villages, no matter what the prices are like. Gas has been going up. Its way over \$6 a gallon but these kids and people, they can afford it and we wonder where they are getting all that money? It's easy to figure that out. It's good old government money. Too much handouts. So if that stops, that might take care of everything, we might go back to our own tradition.*

This is just one of dozens of comments I have from interviews with indigenous elders on how dependency destroys self-sufficient land-based cultures. What these elders have witnessed constantly makes clear to me that as long as we remain dependent upon the totality for survival we will increasingly revert to collaboration with it. Moreover, because evolved dependence on technology and the need to pay for it represents for these elders a primary driver of the problem, the situation also makes clear to me that viewing technology as liberatory or neutral is a critical mistake, and not in any way a solution. This reality should cause those who claim to be anti-civilization or pro-indigenous but who are simultaneously uncritical of the contemporary obsession/addiction to digital technology to think more critically about their stances on the matter.

Today we have the historical and anthropological knowledge to lead us out of the despair created by 10,000 years of domestication. It is not the time for a 'sit-in', it is the time to stand up and walk into the forest, leaving behind all of our domesticated baggage. We must now ultimately become The Arrow People. A feral future represents our only pathway forward. I posit that the resilient feralist rewilders will be the last one's standing after the massive upheavals to come, able to

do so purely because of the strides made on a multigenerational level to undomesticate. I envision the formation of tight-knit feral bands (bandits!) not chained by circumstance but instead fleet-footed occupiers of forests, mountains, and brush impenetrable by the domestic – inhabitants of our own ‘grizzly maze’ in which the domesticated dare not enter<sup>66</sup>. Not only this, but bandits also effective at striking the infrastructure of civilization, doing irreparable damage, and readily disappearing into the shadows only to emerge to strike again and again.

## **...and through her the bear’s spirit of wild resistance lives on.**

Sometimes, when she drives a car through town, random paranoid ego and violence obsessed people catch a glimpse of her middle finger stretched straight over the top of the steering wheel –pointed directly at them and their way of life. They have trouble understanding what they have done to deserve such a greeting from such a seemingly innocent young woman. But somehow, in their hearts, they know it. Her presence there on the road is a reminder to their souls that this way of life is failing, a reminder of its destruction and hopelessness. “I sorta see it as a mirror pointed directly back at them” she says.

In their frustration they react. Some just return the gesture and peel out. Others have tried to chase her down, screaming and yelling obscenities, flashing their guns. She just keeps driving slow and waves that finger with a smile. Stumped and confused the perpetrators thus far have all eventually just put the pedal to the metal and sped onward down their roadways to nowhere. Her middle finger will not bend. Neither will her spirit. Her wildness just grows.

She tells me she that she often gets messages from birds, from eagles, from mountain sheep, and continuing messages from bears, messages of encouragement to never give in and to continue spreading to any human who will listen the spirit of feral wildness and unrelenting resistance to civilization. Perhaps some of those people who catch a glimpse of that middle finger stuck straight will get the message and rather than attack and threaten her will become infected with her mother bear spirit, as have I.

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<sup>66</sup> This is how the rebel squatters of the Kalalau Valley and other Hawaiian jungles have evaded compliance with the system to a large degree for decades now. However, at Kalalau, which previously never had motorized access, outside black market entities found a new market among some of the squatter population for alcohol, drugs, and other goods and began smuggling these items in at night by motorboat. The squatters with a taste for these goods fell sway to the allure of what the traders were offering and once these new market relations were established the community fell apart and the primal spirit of that forested valley was severely diminished.

In order to grow into wildness we must release ourselves into constant opportunity to experience all that is wild within us and around us and forgo dogmatic, elitist etiquette and politeness to the domesticators, and their reified notions of what it means to be human. I must admit that sometimes going feral seems like a hopeless cause, but no matter how hard I get my ass kicked every single hopeless, painful, and depressing moment has ended up paying off for me psychically, mentally, socially, and in strengthening my understanding of what it will actually take for humans to stop civilization. As long as we stay domesticated in mind, body, and culture we will never be free, the earth will suffer, and the takers will win. Like her, it is time to use every fragment of spirit we have to overturn this predicament.

This essay has made an attempt to say much within little space. Readers will undoubtedly be left with questions and critique. How is it even possible? What should I do? What are the steps? In BAGR #4 I will attempt to answer some of those questions by providing some detailed and specific Feral Prescriptions and Pathways for moving forward. Stay tuned.

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