

There is nothing to be proud of in the Western tradition.

Not only is there nothing to be proud of, but the idea of “the West” itself, upon closer inspection, tends to come apart at the seams. It’s time to face the music: *the conception of history on which our struggle against fascism has rested is, in fact, untenable.* The linear, progressive conception of history and the idea that the passage of time will, via progress, deliver us from the barbarism of reaction is part of that fabricated western tradition, shot through with contradiction. This would explain much about where we find ourselves now, after a century of camps and the dawn of the sixth mass extinction event has already confirmed which way the wind blows. Endless waves of moral outrage, lesser evils, and incremental reform have delivered us to the doorstep on which we now languish. We must accept that we cannot fight this enemy or erode its appeal on the grounds of faulting it for its lack of progressive decorum or ameliorative action. The manifold springs of its rancid effluvia must be choked off at their ultimate source. The telltale symptoms of the power virus— the landfills and the mountains of bodies which underlie all the vaunted cultural “achievements” of the West— will be reckoned with, will be countered at the level of their very nature, or they will be repeated. To grasp the key to defeating fascism, we must grasp why the murder and regimentation of millions can never and will never bring renewal— but also why a White House bathed in rainbow hues or a more equal distribution of global internet access will ultimately not get us any closer to liberation either. To satisfy ourselves with being the Leftist or democratic version of the statist, world-building project ensures that those who do it with more honesty and less apology will always maintain or recover their appeal.

There is nothing in the Western tradition to be proud of except in its subterranean channels of resistance, recalcitrance, and dropping out. All the true renegade traditions of the Western world bode for this culture and its relationships of exchange to be abandoned, cast into the fire, root and branch. Just as the early christians endlessly deferred any genuine renewal of their spiritual grounding in favor of further evangelistic hegemony, the endlessly deferred consequences of the shared hallucination called “civilized society” are coming to claim us all.

Anarchy—our final hope for at least one last beautiful dance before we leave the stage of earth—is against the State in all its forms, against capitalism in any of its managerial modes, and against fascism—that false opposition to Modernity—in all of its guises.

**with a new introduction,
“Actually, Antifa is Good”**

PROUD FOR WHAT

volume 1
patriotism
nationalism
western chauvinism
fascism



a meditation inspired by clashes with Patriot Prayer and Proud Boys

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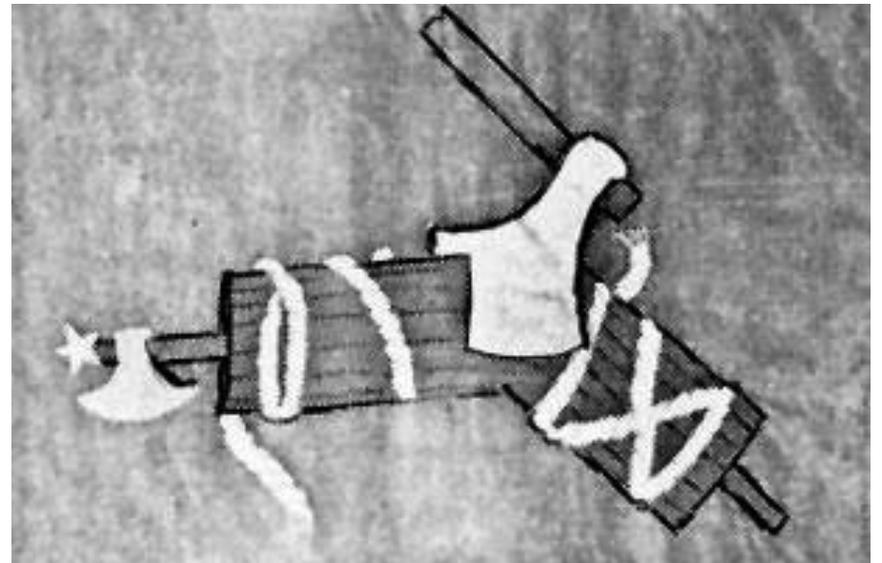
EDELWEISS PIRATES



ETERNAL

for Adan Parker
a stalwart comrade, through everything

“never surrender”



WAR

***Nature and Madness* by Paul Shepard**

Coming Home to the Pleistocene by Paul Shepard

Traces of an Omnivore by Paul Shepard

And check out the Three Way Fight blog for some intelligent discussion of fascism that avoids many of the pitfalls of both liberal anti-fascism and the orthodoxies of revolutionary leftist/marxist anti-fascism. The blog can be found at: <http://threewayfight.blogspot.com/>

itsgoingdown.org

crimethinc.com

sub.media

To print this and other essays, visit edelweisspirates.noblogs.org

ACTUALLY, ANTIFA IS GOOD AN INTRODUCTION

Antifa is winning to the extent that they are willing to go further than anyone else...

– Richard Spencer, white nationalist, March 2018

We do not assume that our world is inevitably heading towards a liberatory transformation of social relations. Misery, work, starvation, slavery, war, and ecological destruction are present on a scale never before seen. Why would we think that we could have any effect upon this state of affairs? Why do we believe that we could possibly challenge the ever-accelerating rush towards a bleak future of greater social control and ecological collapse? Because *we are unwilling to lie down and eat shit while we are around.*

– *A Murder of Crows* magazine, issue #2, March 2007

As I sit down to write this introduction, I think back on the past few months since this, the first volume of *Proud for What*, was completed some time around the new year. In late February, two members of the Proud Boys fraternal organization (Toese and Flippo) caught felony assault charges for an attack on a random liberal in northeast Portland on June 8th, 2018. This was only one in an ever-lengthening string of incidents from last year involving the group prowling the streets after high-profile demonstrations, waiting for the scrutiny to die down just enough to seek out liberals, leftists, people of color, or queers to attack— or just anyone who is not down with their project of “Western chauvinism.” If anti-fascists of whatever stripe were about to rest on their laurels, breathing a sigh of relief at the advent of these indictments coming down at long last, a news item broke like a reminder at the end of April. Recently released Portland Police Bureau (PPB) records show what everyone paying attention already knows: the cops ignored or were actively friendly with the armed alt-right demonstrators, in this instance on August 4th, the date of a Patriot Prayer rally which was a high watermark in the highly visible and well-attended clashes of last summer (see Part One).

It was a day that saw the right-wingers perched on rooftops with rifles and tactical gear at the ready, overlooking the immediate vicinity of the counter-demonstrators, while on the ground police politely declined to enforce the supposed ban on weapons in designated demonstration areas if the gunslinger in question happened to be a patriot. And between the two assembled masses, in the street separating one from the other, the full might of the Portland Police Bureau stood shoulder-to-shoulder, decked out in riot gear, facing the black bloc, an enemy whom they literally referred to in their radio communications for the day as “the bad guys.”

And finally, it came to light last week that it was a Portland-based ICE contractor, one Nicholas Carefelle, 37, according to court records, who posted the \$750 bail back in March in order to free Proud Boy Donovan Flippo from Multnomah County Jail. Carefelle works for a detention center (or is that a “residential center?”) run by the private prison corporation called GEO Group, where ICE detainees are ripped apart from their families and face abuse, assault, and rape as they await hearings in immigration court. According to an article by Katie Shepherd on the website of Willamette Week (a Portland newsweekly) the company “has access to government information about immigrants and access to immigrant detainees through detention centers, probation services, and transport operations.” The bail payment raises something a little more corporeal than just a spec-

“Greece: When the state turns antifa” [article on libcom.org]

“Leftism 101”

“Anarchists, Don’t Let the Left(overs) Ruin Your Appetite”

“Instead of a Meeting: By someone too irritated to sit through another one”

“Why I am not an Anti-Primitivist”

“Why Primitivism (without adjectives) Makes Me Nervous”.....all by Lawrence Jarach

Fire Alarm: Reading Walter Benjamin’s ‘On the Concept of History’ by Michael Lowy

Rites of Spring: the Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age by Modris Eksteins

***Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* by Saidiya V. Hartman**

Night-Vision: Illuminating War and Class on the Neo-Colonial Terrain by Butch Lee and Red Rover

“The Witch’s Child”

“Science” by Alex Gorrion

“A Balanced Account of the World: a critical look at the scientific world-view” by Wolfi Landstreicher

“Manifesto of the Committee to Abolish Outer Space”

“Neil DeGrasse Tyson: pedantry in space” by Sam Kriss

“A Wager on the Future: Anarchist organization, the Islamic State, the crisis, and outer space” by Josep Gardeneyes

“An Anarchist Solution to Global Warming” by Peter Gelderloos

“Beyond Amnesty” [brilliant anti-psychiatry, anti-civilization zine out of the UK]

***Revolutionary Letters* by Diane di Prima**

Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture by Arthur Evans

“Burning Women: The European Witch Hunts, Enclosure, and the Rise of Capitalism” by Lady Stardust

The Stifled Soul of Humankind by Paul Cudenec

***The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* by Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker**

Gone to Croatan: Origins of North American Dropout Culture edited by Ron Sakolsky & James Koehnline

Dixie Be Damned: 300 Years of Insurrection in the American South by Neal Shirley and Saralee Stafford

Movement for No Society published by Contagion Press

The Subversion of Politics: European Autonomous Social Movements and the Decolonization of Everyday Life by Georgy Katsiaficas

Baedan journal, published by Contagion Press

Anything Can Happen by Fredy Perlman

The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism by Fredy Perlman

Elements of Refusal by John Zerzan

***A Crime Called Freedom* by Os Cangaceiros**

“Armed Joy” by Alfredo Bonanno

“From Riot to Insurrection: analysis for an anarchist perspective against post-industrial capitalism” by Alfredo Bonanno

Tame Words From a Wild Heart by Jean Weir

“When Insurrections Die” by Gilles Dauve

ter of association between ICE and the paramilitary shock troops of the far-right, as well as the overlap of state priorities with those of the fraternity with the renegade pretensions.

Meanwhile, something of a meltdown has transpired between the main movers and shakers of Patriot Prayer and those of the Proud Boys. The alliance between the two groups has proved, as alliances often do, to be a shaky one. The fault lines have come to the surface in a serialized shitstorm of internet drama and posturing. While the ultimate origins of the split remain unclear, the fallout seems to involve money and sex as usual. Calling to mind the grand tradition of fascists occasionally doing us all a favor and killing each other over funds and women (behavior so befitting the principled, scrupulous, and not at all degenerate warriors who defend the honor of American patriarchy and capitalism), it seems like the No Masturbation policy of the Proud Boys has not placed their members on as even a spiritual keel as they would like us to believe. A jumble of romantic intrigue, mishandling of finances, and diverging priorities has been comically punctuated by threats of extreme violence and random bullshit. A disillusioned (and further radicalizing?) faction of Proud Boys has called out Joey Gibson’s opportunist politicking, media finagling, and lack of loyalty to the true cause. But if Gibson’s style and aspirations are too Hollywood for the goons whom he once counted among the faithful, it seems that he now has only diminishing returns to show for it, if any indication can be taken from the sad (sad!) turnout of his anti-choice rally held at a (closed) Planned Parenthood in Albany in mid-May. The day saw Gibson prematurely cross the street away from his own miniscule rally of less than a dozen (a group half-composed of a few Proud Boys dressed as clowns) in order to hang his head in despair, alone in the grass. And this on the heels of a million dollar lawsuit brought against him the week before by a Portland bar frequented by anti-fascists for repeatedly bringing violence to its premises. During the final proofreading of this introduction, a second suit was brought against Gibson for defamation.

Again, in light of the ebbing fortunes of Patriot Prayer, the recent charges against Proud Boys, and, indeed, the oft-touted collapse which followed on the heels of the meteoric rise of the alt-right, the temptation is to put all this behind us, to initiate the slow—but not inexorable—process of forgetting. Anti-fascists have always been faulted for paying any attention at all to the allegedly fringe groups of the far-right and fascism, especially when there are such bigger fish to fry. Besides, is it not tiresome to be the statistician and commentator upon fools? Does it not dignify with a re-

sponse that which you would seek to minimize?

Here, in the long nightmare of industrial society's afterlife, it's starting to feel a little bit like we've accidentally left the oven on... except the oven is the world and we're all inside. We haven't burnt to a crisp just yet. The same semblance of functionality (and coercion) that keeps us all going back to our jobs each day even as one million species are in imminent danger of extinction is the same fraudulent social "peace" which ensures that our age— the dubiously-named "anthropocene"— remains for the moment a fertile loam out of which manifestations of the new fascism will continually sprout. Namely, whatever else we find ourselves dealing with, groups like Patriot Prayer and/or the Proud Boys will either rebound or be replaced by other specimens of a spontaneously generated, populist, ultra-nationalist force with a potentially broad and deep resonance in our unraveling conditions. That the appearance of such a force is written into the genetics of this farce called "America," or that its prerogatives, as discussed in the essay to follow, reach back quite a bit further than this, is not an argument for its legitimacy or inevitability but an inducement to understand its trenchant, obnoxious appeal. As we shall see.

Ignore them and they'll go away. Those who are comfortably positioned in the bleachers will always have some shit to talk. And *talk...* isn't that part of the reason for the expansion of the privileged and middle classes undertaken by this colonial, capitalist civilization? Its break-up and subsumption of the traditional working class and the volatile hotbeds of revolt to which it occasionally gave rise? The diversifying cast of administrators in the neo-colonies? Among other things, post-industrial economic restructuring has meant that if everything can be kept on the surface level of representations— of standing up and being counted, of strictly symbolic actions and no end of cheap talk (or "likes" and "comments")— then there will be that much less of a substantial challenge for the powerful to have to repress in any really physical way. Since the end of World War II— the close of fascism's "classical" era— the piecemeal transformation which victorious neo-liberal democracy has gradually affected in the processes of production and reproduction, in the ways that value is generated and assigned, have spelled nothing less than an upheaval in the whole ensemble of class society. This upheaval has been ably described by a generation of anarchists and radicals before us which includes the likes of Alfredo Bonanno and the insurrectionaries, some varieties of anti-state communist, and some voices among the civilization- and technology-critical green anarchists. The emergence of the Zapatista movement in Mexico on New Year's Day 1994

"Jack Donovan on men: a masculine tribalism for the far right" by Matthew N. Lyons

Confronting Fascism: Discussion Documents for a Militant Movement by Don Hamerquist, J. Sakai, Anti-Racist Action Chicago, Mark Salotte

***Beating the Fascists: the Untold Story of Anti-Fascist Action* by Sean Birchall**

Antifa: the Anti-Fascist Handbook by Mark Bray

Antifa: Chasseurs de skins [excellent 2008 documentary on anti-fascist skin-head crews in 1980's Paris]

For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child-Rearing and the Roots of Violence by Alice Miller

Against Democracy by Grupos Anarquistas Coordinados

"This is What Democracy Looks Like: An Anarchist Critique" edited by Wolfi Landstreicher

From Democracy to Freedom by CrimethInc.

No Wall They Can Build by CrimethInc.

"Barbarians: the disordered insurgence" by Crisso and Odoteo

***Beyond Geography: the Western Spirit Against the Wilderness* by Frederick Turner**

***Against the Grain: a Deep History of the Earliest States* by James C. Scott**

Worshipping Power: an Anarchist View of Early State Formation by Peter Gelderloos

Against His-Story, Against Leviathan! by Fredy Perlman

Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation by Silvia Federici

RECOMMENDED READING & WORKS CITED

Note: I have used “quotations marks” for articles, essays, pamphlets, and zines. *Italics* are used for books and, in one case, a documentary. And **bold-face** I have used to denote those titles of whatever category that I felt like strongly recommending when this list was made. Happy hunting!

“This is Not a Dialogue: Notes on Anti-Fascism and Free Speech” by CrimethInc.

“Not Your Grandfather’s Antifascism: Anti-Fascism Has Arrived, Here’s Where It Needs to Go” by CrimethInc.

“How Anti-Fascists Won the Battles of Berkeley: 2017 in the Bay and Beyond: A Play-by-Play Analysis” by CrimethInc

“The Landing: Fascists without Fascism” by Research and Destroy

Fascism: Comparison and Definition by Stanley G. Payne

The Nature of Fascism by Roger Griffin

***Modernism and Fascism: the Sense of a Beginning Under Mussolini and Hitler* by Roger Griffin**

***Modernity and the Holocaust* by Zygmunt Bauman**

***Blessed is the Flame: an introduction to concentration camp resistance and anarcho-nihilism* by Serafinski**

“ETERNAL WAR ON THE HITLER YOUTH” [a Venomous Butterfly pamphlet edited by Wolfi Landstreicher]

Blood and Politics: the History of the White Nationalist Movement from the Margins to the Mainstream by Leonard Zeskind

and the Battle of Seattle in 1999 are among the early flashpoints in our lifetimes of the mass refusal of this agenda.

Forget the rhetoric about greater connection and greater choice: the explosion in information technology and obligatory networked sociality which has accompanied the change has been a massive tipping of the scales toward the pole of recuperation and self-policing, at least among the included of the so-called First World, and all of this at the behest of billionaires and military engineers. The technological lords of this world are supposed to be pioneers in the greatest boon to direct democracy yet devised. The result has been that, whatever wellings-up of dissent may momentarily steal the spotlight and whatever fanfare may accompany the efforts of charities and NGOs to conscientiously manage the apocalypse, behind the curtain of Spectacle the gears in the wheelhouse of Power still turn. The spell is so strong that even if the discontent within the society so constructed proves in fact to be enormous, deep, and hideously gnarled (rooted as it is, I would contend, in the perpetually frustrated and diverted needs and proclivities of a species), then some significant portion of that discontent will be prove, despite the ever-widening collection of talking heads and social media influencers, to be ineffable. And the ineffable will continue to be disqualified by the present order. Until it explodes.

To the point: now, perhaps more than ever, what Power needs is for people to remain calm, stay in their seats, and refrain from taking matters into their own hands. Or, in the event that they do seize the initiative, it needs them to refrain from taking things too far, to sublimate their heartbreak and rage into the new frontiers of capital.

And therein lies one of the most deeply subversive aspects of what our British counterparts like to call “physical force anti-fascism,” distinguishing it from legal or liberal anti-fascism. Its expansive liberatory potential comes from the way that a small group of determined people who have decided upon the lightning of action together contravenes, in and of itself, power’s admonition that no one should *act directly upon reality*. This is the brush fire of spontaneous horizontal linkage and initiative that must be prevented at all costs. This is the subversive potential that goes beyond the capacity of “the Left” to explain, to define, or, when things get out of hand, to contain. To complicate the matter, it’s an insurrectionary potential that may also, in certain circumstances, be exploited by our ultra-nationalist enemies.

The *act* gives terms to the ineffable. The act gives to the spirit its portal into the material conditions. The act breaks the spell. In condemning the act, you can hear the frantic whistle of the supposedly neutral referee in the voice of every aghast liberal and more than a few edgy mouth-breathing internet trolls. The thunder which reverberates from the acts of *autonomous* anti-fascists— not affiliated with any party, union, top-down organization, or movement managers— bowls over the pacifistic imperative of the neo-liberal status quo and, by definition, rejects fascism as well. So even in the least charitable of interpretations, its appearance potentially opens a gate from the increasingly stifled and fragile confines of consensus society and onto an open field of anarchy.

In fact, despite the media hoopla centering on the specter of “antifa” in the past couple of years, anti-fascism has usually been nothing more than a relatively small but tenacious tendency. A tendency, yes, fueled by excitement at the thunder, by the satisfaction of fears overcome and enemies bested... but a tendency consisting as well— and every bit as significantly— of a set of so many strategic, usually defensive choices made by anti-capitalists and anarchists in the course of decades of more general struggles. The recent media specter of Antifa versus Patriots— this set piece opposition between two centralized, molar heaps— *exists precisely to misconstrue anti-fascism and domesticate the many struggles*. And the struggles of the many, when they coalesce and flare up into the prospect of insurrection, can be seen as the manifestations of one struggle, as the many heads of the hydra Anarchy menace the Hercules of civil society. In this manner of speaking, anti-fascism at its most anarchistic has been only one such hydra head, but in the scope of resistance it has been one with an idiosyncratic position. Put another way, anti-fascism is just one of the things that we do, but for long moments of danger it acts as a form insurance for all that we do.

Since long before the liberal establishment in the US was shocked (briefly) out of its self-satisfied stupor by a successful (and, for some of us, not at all surprising) Trump bid for the presidency— before, even, anyone had heard of Obama or witnessed his office allowing the resurgence of the white nationalist movement and peacefully passing the baton to the administration that now brazenly wields the weapons brandished so much more artfully by his own team— the decentralized and autonomous chapters of the Anti-Racist Action network (ARA) and associated groups constituted one bitterly necessary avenue for putting “boots on the ground.”

For those of us in our youth in the late 90’s and early aughts who couldn’t

*not western civilization, but civilization itself
is the disease which is eating us
not the last five thousand years, but the last twenty thousand
are the cancer
not modern cities, but the city, not
capitalism, but ism, art, religion, once they are
separate enough to be seen and named, named art named
religion, once they are not
simply the daily acts of life which bring the rain, bring bread, heal, bring
the herds close enough to hunt, birth the children
simply the acts of song, the acts of power, now lost
to us these many years, not killing a few white men will bring
back power, not killing all the white men, but killing
the white man in each of us, killing the desire
for brocade, for gold, for champagne brandy, which sends
people out of the sun and out of their lives to create
COMMODITY for our pleasure, what claim
do we have, can we make, on another’s time, another’s
life blood, show me a city which does not consume the air and water
for miles around it, mohenjo-daro was a blot
on the village culture of India, the cities of Egypt sucked
the life of millions, show me
an artifact of city which has the power
as flesh has power, as spirit of man
has power.*

– Diane di Prima, “REVOLUTIONARY LETTER #32”

*Read no more odes my son, read timetables:
they're to the point. And roll the sea charts out
before it's too late. Be watchful, do not sing,
for once again the day is clearly coming
when they will brand refusers on the chest
and nail up lists of names on people's doors.
Learn how to go unknown, learn more than me:
To change your face, your documents, your country.
Become adept at every petty treason,
The sly escape each day and any season.
For lighting fires encyclicals are good:
And the defenceless can always put to use,
As butter wrappers, party manifestos,
Anger and persistence will be required
To blow into the lungs of power the dust
Choking, insidious, ground out by those who,
Storing experience, stay scrupulous: by you.*

– Hans Magnus Enzenburger

otherwise find traction in a rapidly globalizing and utterly stultifying world, it was the main avenue. In a prior phase of fascist strategy— and hence of anti-fascist resistance— the acts of anti-fascists didn't only deliver up tangible defeats to the once-burgeoning movements of the National Front, the World Church of the Creator, and others. It didn't just put the screws to innumerable nazi skinheads across punk and hardcore scenes nationwide, preventing their gelling into something more formidable and striking back at their terror. It not only defended our lives and bodies and those of our loved ones while seeking clinic services. Anti-fascist struggle also provided both an entry point and a defense for the several nascent struggles then in course. Long before Ferguson would become a household name or the Oakland Commune would blast a hole in the choreographed resignation called Occupy, it was under the banner of ARA that I first encountered people in the streets who weren't just there to hold signs, collect petitions, or spectate. ARA wasn't going to "speak truth to power." It was going to find the fascists and render them inert. It was going to make them pay. And as it did so, it wasn't going to give a solitary shit about the tears of liberals. A bare-bones set of Points of Unity was all that held the ARA network together, one of these points making provision for a practical anti-statism ("we don't rely on cops or courts to do our work for us"). *We don't call 911.*

Of course, it's impossible to know with any certainty, but the chilling influence of the anti-fascists upon the white nationalist movement— the constant steady erosion of the latter— may very well be one of the principal reasons that more of us aren't already locked up in camps. But apart from such lofty speculations, I'm not sure what else we were supposed to do when as teens when nazis attacked. Or when, fresh out of high school, their demonstrations still hadn't gone away and in some cases had swollen. Or now, when they attempt to poach followers from the edges of various anarchist and left tendencies, while the stock in fascism rebounds.

As the years wore on and the perspectives found in insurrectionary, post-left, and anti-civilization texts exerted their pull on me, I had no shortage of disagreements with ARA heads, both young and old, about a great many things. But if it's true that they couldn't be counted upon for everything, then the years, in so many episodes, have never failed to confirm a more consequential truth: for a few of the very most important things in the strange life of an anarchist insurgent, it has virtually been *only* ARA types who could be counted upon. Again and again, when the chips are down and the bad old days return, it's a familiar team regrouping in the rogue's gallery. Behind the mask is a face you really can trust. And trust...

that's a commodity in short supply these days.

Whether a century, a decade, or a year ago, those with detailed knowledge of fascist groupings and individuals have had a vital role to play. And now—whether we update and deploy the weapons gained thusly in the defense of struggles against the border and its world, against some industrial infrastructural project or another, against the anti-choice foot soldiers of white nationalism, or in a new round of occupations and encampments—those with capacity for and experience in *beating the fascists* will need to carry on that fight. Yes, even here in the last handful of decades for humanity, even as the world literally comes to an end. The time *is* ripe, not for forgetting, but for striking more furiously and more joyously than ever before. For one last dance.

You're obliged to pretend respect for people and institutions you think absurd. You live attached in a cowardly fashion to moral and social conventions you despise, condemn, and know lack all foundation. It is that permanent contradiction between your ideas and desires and all the dead formalities and vain pretenses of your civilization which makes you sad, troubled and unbalanced. In that intolerable conflict you lose all joy of life and all feeling of personality, because at every moment they suppress and restrain and check the free play of your powers. That's the poisoned and mortal wound of the civilized world.

—Octave Mirbeau, *The Garden of Tortures*, 1899

If the practical side of this history— the battery of tactics in the anti-fascist arsenal— is present and accounted for in what we do now, then what about the vision? What about where we are going from here? If, in given times and places, anti-fascist activity has allowed us to cut our teeth on more substantial social antagonisms than were otherwise possible, to understand and partake of the necessity of street violence, and has undeniably succeeded in staving off a more brutal and bigoted face of authority from manifesting, then what about the lesser evils that may have been bolstered as a result? What is it, exactly, that we are doing or signing off on when we are “winning?”

On this score, it may not be enough to simply muse that the problems inherent to modernity and its mass politics don't have any tidy solutions

One way or another, the dawn will be reached. The question is whether or not we are potentially on the verge of an outpouring of genuine resistance against this culture and its prerogatives, an outpouring which will render the fascist variant of the new dawn not just offensive or unpalatable, but unworkable and obsolete. What cocktail of meditation and action, what ensemble of the elements of refusal can bring about this flowering, bring on the rains?

Can it be done? Is there an alchemy which can bring a liberatory struggle to a mass dimension, or is it futile? To find out, which charts, which chronicles, which signs to read? Which odes to sing? Which battles to test our mettle?

His-story has borne out the lesson that so many have learned only too late: anti-fascism needs a ruthless, indeed, an utterly brutal side. But it needs much more than this. It needs much more *because of this*. If our own making of war and our own renewal are to be qualitatively distinct from that of our fascist enemy, if we are to trod a path out of the grey landscape of never-ending loss of which liberals make virtue and out of which Proud Boys and fascism spring, then we must make *appointments*. We must make the time and space for *encounter* with each other and with ourselves. We must learn or re-make the rituals for the true vulnerability, moments for *the removal of the armor, of the mask*. Any liberation movement which does not find a way to do this will end up becoming what it fights, lending its arms and legs to the animation of the un-living beast, its springs and gears.

They have brandished their *fasces*— their symbol of false unity, their undifferentiated mass, their bundled rods of the *polis* and its executioners. Now they don their red caps and their ill-fitting polo shirts.

We must answer with the chaotic and manifold volleys of our unbound arrows.

Edelweiss Pirates///
yuletide 2018/new year 2019

end

of their spiritual grounding in favor of further evangelistic hegemony, the endlessly deferred consequences of the shared hallucination called “civilized society” are coming to claim us all.

AGAINST HIS-STORY, AGAINST LEVIATHAN... AGAINST DEMOCRACY!

Lure with bait; strike with chaos

– Sun-Tzu, *the Art of War*

Anarchy— our final hope for at least one last beautiful dance before we leave the stage of earth— is against the State in all its forms, against capitalism in any of its managerial modes, and against fascism— that false opposition to Modernity— in all of its guises. Despite persistent charges made against anarchists by the guards of the stillborn and largely performative Left-liberal “opposition” to fascism— charges of purism, privilege, naivete, adventurism, self-aggrandizement, myopia, and trivializing or equivocating about the fascist threat— the anarchists and their fellow travelers are practically alone among “the politicals” in apprehending the situation. The indications given by the beautiful losers of history have never been followed *en mass*, and perhaps never could be. Our strategies have never quite been tried on for size.

And so it is that we may share in the dark laughter of that young Filippi, after a short life of opposing the fascists *and* the state, before perishing in the events of the *biennio rosso* when he fought alongside the exploited and excluded, blown to bits in an attempt to bomb a meeting of the richest people in Milan. With him in his quest for another, non-fascist kind of renewal— *the renewal that no conquest can purchase*— we hear endless admonitions and doubts pass the lips of so many, those who say to the swallow that takes flight in search of the spring that she will never reach it. In haughty or plaintive tones come to us the vaunted pragmatism, the venerable pacifism, the credentials of democratic discourse, or the bogus militancy of the latest vanguard— all of whom will see the anarchist fold her wings lost and discouraged. And with our forebears we may offer the rejoinder: I do not stop, I do not fold my wings. Who knows that the distant dawn cannot be reached; who knows?”

which don't themselves court disaster, although an avalanche of historical testimony, a chorus of anguished cries from nearly every quarter, has indeed borne this out. The bird's eye view of the aspiring civil engineer, social worker, or politician of whatever stripe entails a power fantasy of top-down control as surely as any dream of fascism, however much more humane in the short term or for the fortunate. Even the dusty, old “big names” and neckbeards among the anarchists partially grasped this truth, at least intuiting the “poisoned and mortal wound” inside of which their lives were unfolding, their cities blossoming like bruises in the fucked up petri dish of civilization. They provided some of the earliest, if rudimentary, indications of this understanding in the industrialized world when, as long ago as the mid- and late 1800's, they split with the authoritarian Communists over the matter of the conquest of State power. Most long-term anti-fascists today take this knowledge well in hand, and some of us never tire of retelling the triumphs and tragedies of our chosen grandparents, giving them their due for being comparably less hoodwinked than the others. But those who are born in the belly of this horrible machine (“..and the machine is bleeding to death”), however impeccable their bravery, tenacity, and intentions, might at best end up serving as only its guilty conscience. When fighting breaks out, sides are chosen, and only those not slated for termination might have the luxury to sit it out and make critiques instead. At any rate, anarchists have never claimed for the anti-fascist prong of their project the status of a solution to all social, ecological, or existential problems, nor have they claimed to be all things to all visions of liberation. Such a claim is more accurately seen as one imputed to the specter “Anti-fa” by the aforementioned media spectacle of late and other enemies.

In the contemporary, rising temperatures and sea levels may yet drive home an understanding which the propagation of insurrectionary, anti-civ, afro-pessimist, and the more anarchistic interpretations of anti-colonial and indigenous solidarity campaigns (to name a few) have so far failed to make coterminous with the resistance-flavored sentiment suffusing the anti-Trump horde: that to mouth platitudes like “water is life” and “defend the sacred” in the course of a failed struggle like Standing Rock while maintaining that there are any redeemable industrial projects whatsoever is the height of nonsense. If the long fine flash of resistance of the past decade culminates in little more than a resounding “not in my backyard!”... if the upshot of it all is that some people farther afield must do your dirty work, tremble under the lash, or suffer the toxins of your lifeway while their cousins secure better representation in the heart of Empire, then what is there to distinguish us from the well-meaning colonials of yesteryear?

Yet anti-fascists and others, especially since the election of Trump, still find ourselves congealing around the sanitized charnel houses known as “The Left” and “Progress,” with all their totalizing ambition (to say nothing of the Soviet fetish). The blueprints of these two temporarily and unfortunately revived mummies have never offered up a recipe for a comprehensive and effective antidote to nationalism. Only occasionally have they pretended to. In fact, the steady but fraught advance of these antiseptic monoliths is a matter inseparable from the allegedly atavistic draw of fascism, and for a variety of reasons. The early socialists held an overwhelming positive attitude toward the national-bourgeois revolutions of their day, a type of revolution much more common in their world than any purely proletarian/socialist one. If we don’t realize that the fraudulent *dream of Reason* has produced more— and more voracious— monsters than the *sleep* of Reason could ever lay claim to, then we will find ourselves all too easily falling back on mistaken or outmoded formulas for understanding fascism and its descendents, or inadvertently making the kinds of bedfellows about whom we should really know better by now. We don’t need a blueprint— especially not of the kinds that have demonstrably and horrifically failed— but here we are, back at the drawing board, in need of visions, goals, and strategies against fascism that are worthy of going viral.

It is toward this end that these first two installments of *Proud for What* have been written, and are being issued together here as a “first volume” of sorts. To momentarily (and self-consciously) stay in the industrial and pathological idiom of the modern betokened by the above talk of blueprints and blackboards, of antidotes and viruses, *Proud for What* isn’t a read-out of diagnostics nor a blow-by-blow health plan so much as a detailed background file about the life of a patient. This is the opening ream of pages in a necessarily dense case-study, notes of a preliminary and tentative nature that should be borne in mind while reading. As such, it’s a strong possibility that more installments—perhaps a regular column?— will eventually see the light of day (for example, with more in-depth looks at populism, the militia movements, neo-fascism, anti-fascist history and prospects, etc.) Plain and simple, if you’ve passed through the threshold of radical politics in the past few years but want to delve deeper into questions about the nature of fascism, modernity, the state, and resistance, then you should fuck with this essay. You may not like everything that it has to say, and some of the ideas we are putting forth may prove wrong or incomplete, but here a fruitful dialogue may arise. Perhaps new writings such as this can help set the stage for a new generation to get down to brass tacks, armed with more plausible

with money and soft living” is pretense, laughable. The barest hint of a challenge to even a fraction of their privileges has been enough to inspire the raging bile of the Alt-Right and prompt their activation across social milieus and economic classes in order to put down the rebellions. The situation is unique, but the motivating myth is equivalent: old and new, they are marked by the same propensity for national rebirth and macho ritual, scandalized by the same androgyny. An Alt-Right rich kid may be sheltered, foolish, and soft... and he may still gun down nine people in a black church or drive a car through a crowd.

Not only is there nothing to be proud of in the Western tradition, but the idea of “the West” itself, upon closer inspection, tends to come apart at the seams. It’s time to face the music: *the conception of history on which our struggle against fascism has rested is, in fact, untenable*. The linear, progressive conception of history and the idea that the passage of time will, via progress, deliver us from the barbarism of reaction is part of that fabricated western tradition, shot through with contradiction. This would explain much about where we find ourselves now, after a century of camps and the dawn of the sixth mass extinction event has already confirmed which way the wind blows. Endless waves of moral outrage, lesser evils, and incremental reform have delivered us to the doorstep on which we now languish. We must accept that we cannot fight this enemy or erode its appeal on the grounds of faulting it for its lack of progressive decorum or ameliorative action. The manifold springs of its rancid effluvia must be choked off at their ultimate source. The telltale symptoms of the power virus— the landfills and the mountains of bodies which underlie all the vaunted cultural “achievements” of the West— will be reckoned with, will be countered at the level of their very nature, or they will be repeated. To grasp the key to defeating fascism, we must grasp why the murder and regimentation of millions can never and will never bring renewal— but also why a White House bathed in rainbow hues or a more equal distribution of global internet access will ultimately not get us any closer to liberation either. To satisfy ourselves with being the Leftist or democratic version of the statist, world-building project ensures that those who do it with more honesty and less apology will always maintain or recover their appeal.

There is nothing in the Western tradition to be proud of except in its subterranean channels of resistance, recalcitrance, and dropping out. All the true renegade traditions of the Western world bode for this culture and its relationships of exchange to be abandoned, cast into the fire, root and branch. Just as the early christians endlessly deferred any genuine renewal

most unruly, uncouth, and murderous, and hence the most embarrassing for their own (unraveling?) consensus.

It is also important to see breeding grounds for fascism outside of the typical right-wing cesspools that are imagined. Democrats often enable fascists in the street and in the social. And they also perpetuate the state-brutality that is often called fascism in the government. The hand-wringing liberal rhetoric about so-called extremists, terrorists, and radicals who would go to the root of problems—which for the liberals is always too far—provides a gateway into reactionary and fascist politics as demonstrated by myriads of ex-liberal alt-righters on Youtube. “Moderates” jumping at the chance to condemn anti-capitalists, anti-racists, and feminists for ‘going too far’ are lead into the reaction via *ressentiment* and performances of rationality in pathways that are in part intentionally built by fascists. There are also those liberals who uphold free speech rights for fascists using “slippery slope” arguments and at the same time embrace the statist rhetoric regarding terrorism and extremism. These free speech arguments give fascists and their ilk cover to have public entry points and shows of force for their inherently violent projects while the narratives around terrorism not only feed into the racist narratives of nationalism, but also enable the state to turn whole ethnicities into targeted populations and make it socially viable for the state to use its most brutal and authoritarian tactics. Civil society and its liberal defenders are often the very things that render the ground fertile for the growth of the fascism. Not only in its rhetoric, but also in its eternal failure to meaningfully address the crisis of our times.

There is nothing to be proud of in the Western tradition. This was true one hundred years ago. It’s true now. But the Proud Boys and the broader movement of the Alt-Right of our day are, by and large, not the war-shattered veterans of unimaginable hardship that many of their fascist forebears were. They are not ensconced in the same kind of privation suffered in the subdued nation-states of the Great Depression era. What we find ourselves contending with in contemporary US and European culture, even as material conditions indeed deteriorate more and more for an ever-broader swath of society, is a different, updated privation and its reaction. The composition of this monster, which presents itself as the foil of perceived “postmodern neo-marxist” ineptitude and the entitlements of the nanny state, is marked significantly by the pampered little basement-dwelling trolls and bored, push-button soldiers who populate the neo-colonial phase of this: the most dominant superpower to arise since the world began. At best, any gesture of wanting to leave behind “the central fixation

and actionable takes on what we’re up against than some of our forebears.

Part One, originally intended as a flyer, grew from inauspicious beginnings: a relatively brief statement on the falsity of patriotism and nationalism prompted by the clashes with Patriot Prayer and the Proud Boys in the pacific northwest in the summer of 2018. Eventually, a different flyer was indeed produced as an auxiliary to Part One which thoroughly debunks the idea of “leftist violence” as conceived by Patriot Prayer, who attempted to stoke opposition to this figment of the right wing imagination as the animus for a slew of their demonstrations. Its relevance, sadly, will probably not diminish in the days to come.

From this baseline anti-nationalist point of departure, the essay soon explodes into a confrontation with the dark heart of “civilization” and “the West” themselves. Part Two is the real meat of the feast, tracing the elements of alienation, patriarchy, authority, and reaction that imbue the nationalist and fascist projects. It goes on to flesh out a respectably lengthy and historically informed definitional foray into the term *fascism* itself, all followed by a somewhat grand (but hopefully not too grandiose) meditation on the strategic and spiritual import of fighting in the present terrain. Here, I should note the existence of a section in Part Two which takes the reader on a whirlwind tour through the history of the so-called western world, in which it is laid bare that to be a “western chauvinist” is really no better than to be a fascist. Whatever its strengths, this section is almost absurd in its abridgment of an utterly sprawling subject, and leaves much to be desired in its description of the involved phenomena. I wholeheartedly recommend a reading not only of the Frederick Turner book referenced in the section itself, but also of James C. Scott’s *Against the Grain: A Deep History of the Earliest States* for a sufficient corrective to the discussion found therein about domestication, sedentism, slavery, hierarchy, the advent of state societies, and more. In Scott’s deeply anarchist works, the reader may dive into yet another rich tapestry of evidence for the reason that life in a country like America (or Italy, or Germany, or...) will always feel as if it stands woefully in need of being made *great again*: for the vast majority, life in the city-states and nation-states of civilization *has never been great*. For the downtrodden as well as for the relatively privileged, it lacks so many of the fundamentals of a fulfilling existence and in such sore measure that we chase evermore after a slew of cheap surrogate thrills and the social nostrums of authoritarians and salesmen, whether of the left or the right, all to no avail.

In analyzing specifically fascist ideas of *national rebirth* in some depth and accuracy and treating their deployment seriously, we are not attempting to legitimize them or to yoke the attention of the reader to the definitions of a bygone era, but rather to rehabilitate the discourse around an admittedly slippery term that is too often misused or emptied of any meaning, even (or especially) at this late hour. It is abundantly clear from reading the actual words of the vast majority of original fascist luminaries and even their much more sophisticated neo-fascist counterparts (let alone the buffoons of Patriot Prayer and the Proud Boys) that while they offer something distinct from simple conservatism— and that grasping the nature of this something could be one of the keys to its defeat— they nonetheless constitute a pack of the most laughably credulous, meaning-devoid, authority-worshiping, blatantly opportunistic and sycophantic man-children ever to waste a shit-load of breath, paper, or effort. But the spewing of such streams of adjective-heavy aspersions— much like efforts at “fact-checking” a governmental regime or claiming the moral high ground against it— amounts to little in the material reality of things. Thus, it is always our hope when speaking of fascism that we are doing so in order to give sharper weapons to its enemies, as a prelude to leaving it all behind. These may be imbeciles that we are dealing with, but they are committed imbeciles.

The true believers, the hardcore of fascism, aren't merely bullies attempting to hold onto their privileges or exercise their contempt for the weak and the different, though this they may undoubtedly be. They are no mere “reactionaries” attempting a literal restoration of past glories, though concern with the past constitutes a major aspect of their mission. No simple appeal to fairness, equality, goodness, progress, or truth can derail their prospects. Despite the garish or villainous bearing of its more plebeian shock troops, the commitment of the fascist is in reality charged with the seduction of an idealistic, ultimately utopian vision— a hope for a radical, futural thrust into a post-liberal New Order. Their efforts brim with a fervor that at least challenges and often surpasses anything among its nearest analogues to be found on the Left, and which inspires its possessors to kill and die in anticipation. To the continued consternation and embarrassment of leftists, these unscrupulous, cowardly dullards recruit from a broad and varied base whose members are nonetheless characterized by some level of real susceptibility to the particular vision that they put forward. It has been the intent behind *Proud for What*— while standing on the shoulders of the giants among the “new consensus” in fascist studies like Roger Griffin— to explicate the substance and appeal of the fascist vision... so that it can routed.

place in a realm almost utterly divorced from the strictures of democratic polity, even if its battles are registered there, even if victorious fascists will always make full use of the might of the State. The lines are increasingly drawn between those fighters who seek total freedom for all and those who fully intend, in their futile and counterfeit version of the quest for renewal, to put into camps and ovens the masses of us who ostensibly belong to identity categories that cannot be assimilated into their totalitarian project— be it Jew, Black, Queer, or Anarchist. Meanwhile, the Uppity Woman will be disciplined and consigned to the unsightly housework and reproductive labor of the regime. The hearth and home fashioned after the cell of a prison, and prisons built to reproduce it all.

However, and for the vital importance of all this, fascism is *only the jagged tip of the iceberg* of the Western civilized tradition. The struggle must be against fascism in its various cloaks, but the struggle cannot be *only* against fascism. Other, more novel modes of subjugation are poised to consolidate their power over us, such as the mesh-work of extra-state technology and the inscription of the logic of the market into people in highly networked cultural terrains. Apparatuses of control that operate on the plane of desire and biopolitics, that neither carry a badge of the state nor bare the *hakenkreuz*, are as much the heirs of the Western civilized tradition as racist brutality or patriarchal double-standards. The enemy of our enemy is not necessarily our friend.

The failure to grasp this— a failure of vision— is a significant part of the reason for the deeper loss of ground that anti-fascists suffer, punctuated by the precious, too-few victories that we may speak of. History shows where it will land us if we fail to act swiftly and decisively, or remain forever willing to choose the lesser of the evils presented rationally to us by puppet-masters. But more than this: those potential allies of ours who are searching for a deeper, more coherent critique of the way things are and how they got to be this way will be increasingly unsatisfied with the prospect of playing nothing more than the guilty conscience of Western civilization, or cheerleading for those who merely want to divvy up the spoils of neo-colonization more evenly. Along with the aforementioned opportunism of the fascists and their alliances with entrenched powers, the deficit of creative thought and initiative on the part of their opponents, engendered significantly by Leftist precepts, forms a nexus of factors that may well prove insurmountable, and will see us acquiescing to structures we would rather destroy. We must not be content to applaud as the State mumbles in security documents or locks up those fascist enemies of ours who are the

beginning of knowledge—unless it is the knowledge that the view of history which gives rise to it is untenable.

– Walter Benjamin, *On the Concept of History, Thesis VIII*

The cold has entered my mind that dreams of a future of warmth and sees it in the far distance, or, as someone told me, almost out of reach. How sad these words are. You say to the swallow that takes flight in search of the spring that she will never reach it; you will see her fold her wings lost, discouraged. I do not stop, I do not fold my wings. Who knows that the distant dawn cannot be reached; who knows?

– Bruno Filippi, *The Free Art of a Free Spirit*, from the collection *The Rebel's Dark Laughter*

There is an overarching battle for the souls of disaffected and alienated moderns that the anti-fascist side currently seems to be losing. We must go to the heart of the matter.

Fascism remains, along with entrenched State structures, a most *urgent* enemy. It is the most repressive, entitled, and brutal opponent that we are likely—indeed, certain—to encounter in direct physical combat as well as on the terrain of cultural interventions as we attempt to free ourselves. It is almost a caricature, a composite, of all the most patriarchal, authoritarian, and reactionary outgrowths which spring from the broader, older seedbed of this culture of command, suffused by the desperate thirst for a spiritual renewal that no further conquest of ever farther-flung frontiers will ever sate. But fascism is not the only danger in these woods. Far from it.

The fascists of our day, as of old, are absolutely opportunistic and will combine forces with any player in the field in order to nip any truly liberatory prospects in the bud. Clearly, our response cannot be equally opportunistic, cannot proceed without regard for principles, or our fight is lost in advance. We must bring other weapons to bear, ones that resonate on a different level. Concepts like “free speech” and “civil dialogue” mean less than nothing in a war. This is particularly true in this war between fascists and anarchists, a war whose *spiritual aspect*—and hence *main aspect*—takes

Despite fascism meeting with hapless defeat and utter discredit over and over, on a scale ranging from the conclusion of world wars to thrashings and ridicule meted out in neighborhood streets the world over, ours is the clear misfortune of continuing to tarry with these imbeciles in the imbraglio of the modern. The civilized world that gives rise to fascism, in iterations ranging from its rightful managers to its regressive castoffs, has not passed. Progress has not and will not deliver us, unless it's to greater heights of alienation. Unlike the left-liberal spectrum of thought which smugly looks down on the “irrational” aspects appropriated by fascism while losing ground to it over and over again, we recognize that the compunction toward a motivating mythology, the need for irrational communal bonds and ecstatic states triggered by a sense of imminent rebirth, may well be unavoidable for the human animal. Even the avowedly Rational priorities of classical and Enlightenment thinking are themselves forms of myth, often spiked with their own version of rebirth ideology, satisfying similar urges toward meaning with a leap of faith congruent to the most “barbaric” or mystical among us. What's more, liberal democratic modernity has bequeathed a nightmare world of dungeons, clearcuts, and cancer. Its robust trade in carbon emissions and gut-wrenching psychological malaise aren't the less twisted for having confetti sprinkled on top. Its denial of the ineffable has left the door open to the fascist upstart claiming to speak in its name. Leftists can continue trying to soften the blows of democracy and do damage control for its reputation all they want. But it is the juggernaut of modernization that has resulted in this clusterfuck of multivalent possibilities and pitfalls which some like to abbreviate: *the three-way fight*. And it won't be resolved so easily. In this essay, we hope to have laid the groundwork for understanding the barest contours of a mythology (or set of mythologies) that can leave the competing alternatives put forth by these two management teams—by the current neoliberal regime and its fascist outsiders—in the dust.

This obsession with needing a social majority has nothing to do with being “practical”. What it has to do with is bourgeois and defeatist thinking. This is like the left thinking that it could not build a *practical* anti-fascist movement in Weimar Republic Germany during the 1920s and 1930s, although millions hated Nazism and wanted to do something, because that German left was too preoccupied with fantasies of either seizing or getting elected into state power for itself.

That left was too lost in delusions of success almost within their hands, delusions of maneuvering together a majority, to bother even really understanding fascism coming up fast in their rear view mirror. The urgent need was to organize a working minority to counter fascism in a much more radical way. Not by trying to defend liberal bourgeois rule. All the real things that had to be done by scattered German anti-fascists later after the Nazis were put into power – such as to survive politically, to significantly sabotage the war effort, to rescue Jews and Romanians and gays, to build an underground against the madness of the Third Reich – all these things were attempted bravely but largely unsuccessfully, because they had to be done too late from scratch. This is a much larger subject, too large to dive into now, but it is on the horizon, like the smoke of a distant forest fire.

– J. Sakai, *When Race Burns Class*, 2000

We're already dead.

– Rage Against the Machine

Yesterday, the anarchist news website *It's Going Down* posted what seems to be the only news story available about an incident on April 25th 2019 in Denver, Colorado involving an anti-fascist being repeatedly stabbed while removing fascist stickers placed on the side of a Goodwill store by the recently active neo-nazi group Patriot Front (Patriot Front is the new moniker of Vanguard America, which was rebranded after the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia when anti-racist activist Heather Heyer was murdered by a white nationalist and the group was discredited). So far, it seems that no charges will be brought against the known attacker, one Santi Martinez, who whispered “maybe some people deserve to be in concentration camps,” before disemboweling the anti-fascist, who happened to survive.

Meanwhile, two former Seattle leftists have recently turned fash, casting over their old allegiances as activists in the Seattle Solidarity Network (or SeaSol, a tenant and worker advocacy group). Now, as members of American Identity Movement (or AmIM, the rebranded Identity Europa) they are attempting to dox and expose their former comrades. Furthermore, both Patriot Front and American Identity Movement have made recent propaganda pushes in downtown Olympia, Washington and elsewhere.

seem earnestly to desire the throwing over of significant aspects of Modernity and its State. But this is only in their quest for a more perfect White Man's world, one in which the existence of non-white peoples and non-men is sheerly incidental to the perpetuation of an all-male fire circle. Their audiences, starved for rustic authenticity, may not be troubled that the particulars of this vision are really the fruit of the same Modernity, merely hearkening back to a prior incarnation of its values and logic.

No one is more enamored of identity politics or their own status as victims than the fascists. The shared pride in that heritage of the nagging loser is what unites the modernizers and state-makers among them with the supposed outsiders, the bikers and white “tribalists” gathered round the outskirts of empire and yet named in reference to its metropolis, just as the Germanic tribes of antiquity were in a significant sense the appendage of the (multicultural) Roman Empire. This is why, despite seemingly irreconcilable planks in these platforms, between the fash who “refuse to apologize for creating the Modern world” and those who wish to “revolt against the modern world,” the latter will always make common cause with the former to squash genuine insurgency. Stopping a black insurrection will always be more important for them than taking on the culture that is destroying the whole of the world—primitive, ancient, and modern.

...AND WE STILL THINK THAT NATION-STATES ARE A BAD IDEA.

The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the “state of emergency” in which we live is not the exception but the rule. We must attain to a conception of history that is in keeping with this insight. Then we shall clearly realize that it is our task to bring about **a real state of emergency**, and this will improve our position in the struggle against Fascism. One reason why Fascism has a chance is that in the name of progress its opponents treat it as a historical norm. The current amazement that the things we are experiencing are “still” possible in the twentieth century is not philosophical. This amazement is not the

and proud white nationalists blame the failures of white people themselves to recognize their own racial interests and agenda, pointing to their weakness, sinfulness, distraction, their allowing themselves to be manipulated by others, etc., as reasons for the declining fortunes of the world's most prominent and successful historical colonizers. That is, the liberal assumption that it is prejudice, scapegoating, or some abstract "hate" for the Other which forms the sole or even the primary motivations for white nationalists— rather than a racial cosmology and ultra-nationalist worldview spiked with the expectation of rebirth— is quite possibly mistaken or woefully incomplete. The old refrain, "we don't hate any other race, we just believe in protecting and celebrating our own heritage!" may bring to mind recent conflicts and controversies surrounding neo-folk and volkisch nationalist currents of crypto-fascism and its sympathizers. Meanwhile, the idea of Whiteness they affirm was invented just a few hundred years ago— the blink of an eye ago— and *for no other purpose than oppression*.

On the topic of the civil credentials of fascism, it should be noted that the current era of the "alt-right" and "Trumpism" is far from the first in which white nationalists have mobilized progressive or supposedly radical narratives about *free speech* and other figments of democratic discourse in order to advance their agenda. This is a strategy going back at least to the late 60's, and even a central feature in the rhetoric of some white nationalist ideologues (see David Duke giving white supremacist speeches at Louisiana State University's "Free Speech Alley" in 1969, or the 1988 demonstrations and defenses which advocated for free speech and the First Amendment in support of the defendants in a high-profile seditious conspiracy trial against the white supremacists Louis Beam, Robert Miles, Richard Butler, et al., etc.).

It should be clear by now that despite the seeming contradictions involved in capitalizing upon the republican governmental heritage that it shares with its alleged enemy Liberal Democracy, this is totally in keeping with fascism's celebration of the Progress it hopes to re-tool and steer into different straits. Its progressivism is at variance with its prejudices and its air of barbarity not at all. The Western chauvinists à la Gavin McInnes embrace that governmental heritage. They are the consummate statist among the fascists, like Mussolini and his *squadristi*. They will alternate insurgent rhetoric with tail-between-legs, please-don't-hate-us "resignations" and phone calls to the police, pledging their allegiance all the while. On the other hand, the more cutting edge of neo-fascism, with its emphasis on iconoclasm, atavism, and egalitarianism (for example, Jack Donovan),

Simultaneously, a new formation called Cold Front is picking up where the Proud Boys have stalled out, harassing people and filming it and, separately, pretending to be Antifa to trick people into incriminating themselves or blundering in speech, all while fraternizing with outright fascists. And soon enough, the re-election campaign of Donald Trump will be like a wind pouring down over the coal bed of white nationalist initiatives, attacks, and provocations.

The word "radical" literally refers to the quality of "forming the root," indicating something inherent. A return to this original usage might be the only way to give subversive content back to a word that anybody may wear. Truly, anti-fascists must be willing to go the furthest, but not merely, in the flattering phrase of alt-right poster boy Richard Spencer, in terms of "just violence, intimidating, and general nastiness." These, to some extent, have been the stock-in-trade of all moderns, whether directly or by proxy, and we see where that's gotten us. We can't stop there. A new wave of anti-fascists must go further than each and all in journeying toward the roots of the quagmire we've inherited. Writers like Saidiya Hartman have shown amply that the ideas of "freedom" which we find at hand in this modern world are inevitably tethered to the hard fact of the slavery that made it all possible. Democracy, abolition, decolonization— each starting from the best of intentions— have all administered their own medicines only to find the un-living beast and its sickly notion still intact, if anything placing it farther beyond reproach than ever before. Still, while striving to transcend such ubiquitous and compromised notions, we may ask: in the event that such relative freedom becomes *that much more curtailed*, what will you wish you had done with it while you had the chance?

While gathering the courage to match our convictions, we answer with a proposal for a campaign of sustained attack and subversion against all institutions that generate or guarantee the repressive phantasm of Whiteness (or any of its prospective successors), whether these institutions prove to be the police department, the Democratic party, the grade schools and universities, the labor unions, the NGOs, the hospitals, the nuclear family, or the fucking grocery store. Taking the threat of fascism seriously and defending against it need not translate to enabling a lesser evil or hiring out as its mercenaries.

The scripts and dictates of patriarchy, statecraft, settler colonialism, democracy, and capitalism— all tributaries that feed the rise of fascism— need to be thwarted and drained of prestige wherever their ugly heads

are reared, and this needs to happen whether it's neoliberals who keep the throne or fascists who end up re-conquering state power. Furthermore, the integrity of the struggle to do so, the sprawl of tendrils connecting the work of one hydra head to that of another, needs to be assured by righteous anti-fascist violence, by vandalism against property, by expropriation of the rich, by endless ridicule or detournement of middle class values, and by what can only be considered a *wild practice* of total sharing in the last fruits of the earth. Only a commitment to these customs can keep away both fascist participation *and* liberal recuperation, and act as a lightning rod for other uncontrollables.

If the old Left "delusions of maneuvering together a majority" had zero chance of halting or even slowing the rise of fascism, then the slew of current obsessions, falling far short of even these, must be seen to have a less-than-zero chance of showing up or deflating the appeal of the new faces of ultra-nationalism, to say nothing of the unfolding eco-catastrophe: policing language and space, landscaping the hedges of one's echo chamber, "cancellation culture," unlimited invocations of an obviously counterfeit positivity, and that chimerical abomination known as "the community." Each of these will speed people into the arms of fascists as surely as collegiate counter-insurgency narratives, shame-mongering identity reductionism, and declarations of "it's not my job to educate you" are seen by most regular people to be the province of cowards, hypocrites, elitists, and petty tyrants.

As the world starts to boil alive, half-measures and pandering will get us nowhere fast. Any house of cards we might assemble by jockeying insincerely for liberal converts or playing down the horrors of pro-industrial and technological Leftism for credibility will only be swallowed whole by the mounting crisis anyway. If said crisis has narrators who are perceived to be more honest and less beholden to the bullshit of left-liberal decorum, then the day shall belong to them. At the very least, they shall set the terms. Let him who still doubts it live in the hell fashioned by his passivity and capitulation.

Unlike our erstwhile comrades in that particular portion of the post-left anarchist scene whom we find shading into apathetic, lazy, defeatist, or confused positions, or overlapping more substantially with avant-garde and crypto-fascist agendas, the essay in front of you doesn't make an either/or proposition between fighting fascism and the alt-right on one hand, and a more genuine anarchist iconoclasm on the other. If we deign

party bureaucrats... these were the deranged caricatures of a more authentic fight to dissolve hierarchical class society, lock, stock, and barrel.

Fascism and National Socialism are every bit the workerist ideologies that syndicalism, communism, and some forms of anarchism are. But if the belief that "Work Makes You Free" is not quite enough on its own to render these ideologies equivalent, then they may appear closer to one another when viewed in the perspective of other shared elements added to the mixture: allegiance to the State and Capital, pride in a national motherland, and the need to colonize ever new terrains and aspects of life to feed the machine. If it's true that fascism imbues or charges the concept of "The People" or "The Nation" with a sort of energy that can be described as primal, in most manifestations its nimbus of primordialism has been wispy and fragile. Its pretensions of this kind tend to evaporate in the daylight of its modernizing ambition, which intends no such literal-minded reproduction of past circumstances, especially as power is achieved.

If it's uncomfortable for the reader to admit that the revolutionary Left played an important role in the rise of fascism, let it at least provide a definitive rejoinder to those who doubt the nefariousness of Proud Boys, those who might be taken in or placated by the flimsy defenses of Gavin McInnis: if syndicalists and socialists can help bring fascism to power, it is obvious that the fraternity of Western chauvinism of our own time can do the same.

Turning toward contemporary US white nationalists, a look at their history from the era of World War II onwards shows that most have understood their mission as a civilizing one (or one to *save* patriarchal, white civilization), with adherents eager to trace their lineage back to various plantations and settlements on this continent and, further back, to identify themselves with the first civilizations and with an original civilizing impulse itself, against wildness and savagery. Topically, such grandiose notions may get us closer to the atavistic fringes but the priorities and values expressed fall within the mainstream of official Euro-American history and culture. Furthermore, in addition to the self-avowed and virulent racists, the history of white nationalism on this continent is chock full of examples of adherents who claim publicly, vehemently, repeatedly, and consistently to NOT be racists or white supremacists (the whining pleas of Gavin McInnis may be ringing in your ears). Paradoxically, many of the most committed

of the socialist project that was at the time largely internationalist, but also a co-optation of modern socialist methods and, in certain fringes, even its ideals. The jump from syndicalism to a national syndicalism was apparently not a long one, and the Marxist party model was a key part of fascist form in most of its practice despite its vitriolic hatred for its red enemy.

In the first part of this essay, it is posited that all forms of nationalism affect a replacement of some forms of conflict by others. Namely, engagement with the genuine conflicts occurring *within* a complex society between individuals or classes is replaced by engagement with the spurious or abstract conflicts *between* societies or cultures themselves, rendered or projected as monolithic identities, for which the energies and sacrifices of individuals are marshaled by centralized forces. Fascism was no different, starting with Mussolini and the early Fascists proffering the concept of the “proletarian nation” as the categorical agent of history rather than the proletarian individual or class. In its increasing haste to distinguish itself from materialist, Marxist communism and its struggle waged *within* class society, the chameleon-like philosophical bearing of Mussolini increasingly wove the threads of national news and happenings into a tapestry depicting a stalwart and industrious Italy, ever virtuous but ever taken advantage of, swindled by the bullies of the international community. The proletarian nation would ultimately need a cross-class idea of unity, for modern warfare would be its means of redress, the path back to its sacred vitality in a massified world.

Ironically, the most authoritarian and organized variants of communism served as another kind of competitor for the budding fascism, effectively competing for recruits but along different lines than the new right or the old school conservatives competed for the same. In striving for and attaining state power and hence becoming the guarantors of capital, even the most flagrantly Marxist regimes would end up jettisoning class struggle in a way not dissimilar to fascism. This starts to look more like a sporting rivalry, with all its attendant heated bombast, than a contention between irreconcilable visions of life. For all the contemporary social media posturing and idle fantasies of hammers-and-sickles pitted against the swastika, Hitler’s Germany was the non-Marxist regime which bore the closest resemblance to the regimentation of the USSR. Marxist-Leninists and Maoists would themselves come to privilege the monolithic identitarianism of national liberation struggles over the struggles unfolding everywhere (at least potentially) against class society itself. The fight for the future of a particular class, for the shoring up of its position, the creation of a class of

to throw our hats in the ring of the social at all, if we think that it may still be worth it to attempt the effecting of outcomes in social struggles, then we at least acknowledge it. We might change our minds tomorrow or next year, but we don’t have anything to lose by such an admission. To make any headway toward what our anarchist forebears called “the Beautiful Idea” may well depend upon, firstly, a sincerity and humility which are not the same as virtue signalling, self-effacement, or false modesty, and, secondly, the same capacity for mobilization that would allow us to go from strength to strength in the fight against fascism. To anyone with a better method we say carry on. Besides, we don’t have anything better to do anyway. Do you?

Anarchists, then, may as well say and do what only anarchists can. If the esteem placed in our ideas is poised to rise, if our affinities with comrades old and new can grow at all, it will only be by means of sticking to our guns.

In this light, we say without reservation that wild places, wild beings, and wild customs of our own— that wildness most often ignored, ridiculed, parodied, hated, or tokenized by the resigned, or else conceived outside of and separate from anti-fascist struggles— should in fact be protected, cherished, and nurtured. The myriad embodiments and iterations of wildness— but distinctly *not* the spectacular, civilized construction of “wilderness” and its denizens— should be centered, seen as the very grounding of any social struggle. This is not out of any adherence to “conservation” or the other accoutrement of greenwashed genocide, nor is it any longer in hopes of saving the world in some pragmatic long game of stewardship. Even if these approaches hadn’t been wrongheaded all along, it’s far too late for any of that. And it’s not just because such a footing for resistance, by force of counter-example, will tarnish the “green” luster which emanates from insurgent manifestations of fascism and will usurp their ability to appeal to such concerns. More than this, we should live and fight for the congregation of wild beings because they alone are the elements that can furnish for human cultures— here and now— a relationship of respect and reciprocity with any Other that is encountered. They alone give to humankind its only authentic basis for meaning, sociality, dignity, balance, and joy. No matter how late the hour.

It is not some shallow sense of duty or self-sacrifice but rather this outwardly enlarged circle of solidarity combined with an inwardly plumbed depth of self-sympathy that will enable a new anti-fascism to collapse those malnourished concepts of “freedom” passed down to us inside the belly

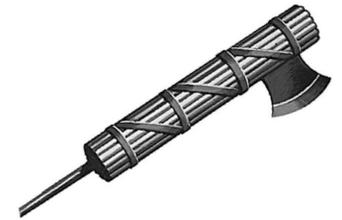
of the machine and connect whatever was vital in them to the undulating expanse beyond, to a home of endless series of accords with the living to replace the thousand and one humiliations and stale routines of the living dead. Let us embrace what I am euphemistically referring to, in the parlance of the civilized, as “the wild,” because we are a part of that congregation and this is the only world we’ve got. Despite the theology of the postmodern, the system really does have an outside. It is reflected in each and every one of us and, as some have written before, *we are unwilling to lie down and eat shit while we are around.*

The indictments of Proud Boys will likely amount to nothing, or else a slap on the wrist. The daily police slaughter and incarceration of indigenous and black populations will go on. The drone strikes and invasions to secure the oil for our cars and factories or the cobalt for our phones will continue. The ephemeral borders of civilization and its little geo-political fictions called “nation-states” will continue to be enforced for some time more, whether by means of the border wall proffered by “reactionaries,” or else the smart technology and electronic leashes of the “progressives.” If the host of politicians and Good Citizens cried at the de-platforming of a few racist cranks and united against the sins of these illiberal antifa barbarians inside the gates, what will they do when we take the fight to the sprawling prison archipelago? When they find out we really mean to get rid of money? When the momentum needed to burn down the factories is reached? The time is now to come together and decide how we are going to conduct these struggles for maximum effectiveness, resonance, and fun.

Here in the Pacific Northwest— the land where the “Northwest Territorial Imperative” of the white nationalist movement has been taken quite seriously— the anti-fascist tendency is a few catastrophes or circuitous turns away from being forced underground. The equivocating of liberal mayors who scoff with good humane sensibility at “mutual combat laws” while upholding the present order of things means nothing. Youtube’s recent purge and demonetization of white nationalist channels means nothing. The digital reach of the fascists will contract somewhat for now, while their claims to be scorned but noble freedom fighters swimming against the current will be legitimized, inflating their appeal enough to make up for it until they recover the turf. For reasons explored in the essay to follow, we can’t content ourselves with crying foul to the referee: under his striped shirt the referee is a blood-soaked tyrant, and the game is rigged. By contrast, what we may need is some Tonya Harding-style sportsmanship. Add a little *Catch Me If You Can*-style social engineering and subterfuge to keep our foes confused

Community as was fascism. (No other movement, for the record, made such fetishes of “virility” and a masculine principle either, and according to scholar of fascism Stanley G. Payne, “No other movement professed such complete horror at the slightest suggestion of androgyny.”).

The origins of Mussolini’s political career among the socialists and syndicalists is sometimes remarked upon, but a meditation upon the emblem of Fascist Italy— the *fasces* itself— is instructive. The word shares a root with the *fascio*, the term for guild- or union-like council structures discussed above, from a root meaning *bundle* or *band*. The image of the *fasces* pre-existed the fascist movement: it was a symbol of Roman republican governmental power, a bundle of 12 rods with protruding ax blade, a weapon used in ancient Rome by the bodyguards, or *lictors*, charged with protecting the chief magistrates. With *fasces* in hand, the lictors intimidated the unlawful and passed sentence on criminals. It was therefore a symbol of coercion and state power *as such*, and of the supposed mandate for order emanating from a united people. It is found all over state buildings and materials in the United States, especially those whose construction dates from the 20’s and 30’s. Mussolini rebranded it, using it as his logo of rebirth: Making Italy Great Again was to be carried out under this sign of representative government, wedded to a kind of illiberal collectivism, a symbol conjuring the figure of the unscrupulous henchman carrying out the dirty work of judges— as endemic a picture of “Western chauvinism” as any.

The *fasces*

The original Italian Fascism was formed by nationalized sectors of the revolutionary Left— syndicalists and other participants in the socialist movement who ended up embracing extreme nationalism— when they combined with the novel forms of authoritarian right-wing nationalism outlined above. When D’annunzio declared his short-lived “Regency of Carnaro” at Fiume, its charter was written by a recent former anarcho-syndicalist and had several aspects considered to be “progressive,” even radical. Relatedly, the wonderment that can still arise upon consideration of the juxtaposition found in the term *national socialism* bespeaks the obscurantism which renders it incomprehensible that the name for which *Nazi* is an abbreviation is no accident: what the radical wings of the movement in Germany wanted was indeed a kind of socialism for those who belonged to its Nation. The varieties of fascism were, in part, inversions

with the Nazis) or culturally (as with the Italian Fascists until under Nazi pressure later on), were one body, even if that body did have a “natural” head to speak of, or the trunk of a faithful, structure-giving torso, limbs for building and fighting, or a proper place and conduct for extremities like hands and feet. Anyone falling outside the body of racial or mythic-national thought was as good as detritus— degenerates, invaders, parasites, immigrants, outsiders— responsible for sapping the strength of the living Nation and delaying its rebirth or renewal.

Fascism’s increasingly frenzied and provocative scream into the void was bound to be heard by many who found themselves disappointed in the political movements otherwise on offer, including the Marxist revolutionary Left and social democracy. Embarrassingly for liberal consensus, many and various persons were ready to lend an ear to this upstart ideology, the littlest sibling in the litter of Modernity. However strange to say, fascism exuded the appeal of the underdog or runt. It jealously asserted itself as newcomer to an ensemble of modern political forces which was relatively long-established. It also possessed a kind of dual aspect— that is: a profound misgiving about where the degenerate liberal version of Progress was taking them *and* a hostility toward major aspects of conservatism or the *ancien régime*. From this dual aspect came the legitimately insurgent or rebellious character to be found among the seeming hodge-podge of fascist thought, a rationale for a war of *creative destruction* against a particular status quo which saw it occasionally overlapping with certain iterations of other forms of radicalism, among them anarchism. Even when it was looking backwards for inspiration to supposedly great episodes in the Nation’s past, fascism always returned to its forward-looking gaze, toward the new height to be conquered. All who made common cause with the fascists were those who were susceptible to this vision of *a Nation reborn*, risen from the ashes like a phoenix.

It was a vision with profound appeal and affective power in the conditions of interwar Europe. It captured the attentions and fired the imaginations of people in society like none other. There is a lesson for the radicals of today contained in the fact that fascism has a significant cluster of its roots in socialism. It does not lay cleanly on one end of the Left-Right spectrum as once hoped, but cuts across it, reflecting its various priorities at oblique angles. In addition to the martial and reactionary pedigree outlined above, many other players threw chips into the pot to come up with fascism, which syncretically makes use of several traditions. Consider that none of its ideological rivals or siblings was so obsessed by the notion of

and fighting among themselves. Mix in a lucid analysis of our enemies and of existing conditions. Top it all off with some good old-fashioned luck and magic, and let’s see what we can make of it.

The night is growing darker than Germany in the 30’s. The pristine and the pedantic, and plenty of others besides, will laugh at the gravity of the comparison. But the smart money says it’s the delusional who will be caught with their pants down as the dawn breaks upon the worst moment in the history of the world. This is our moment. This is the Age of Mass Extinction— the fruit of the western, civilized world. And here is my love song to the only tendencies that could have saved my life long enough for me to see the beginning of its end. May its melody help to put a few more partisans on the crooked path before the party’s over.

Even in the best of worlds, Death comes for us all. In the terminal phase of terrestrial life, defeat is a surefire bet. We can let this knowledge cow us into a few more years of meek servitude or we can make a few of the motherfuckers pay for their victory. We can let the knowledge that doom is certain freeze us in our tracks like a deer in headlights, or we can spring like a tiger, swatting at the helicopter which scours the jungle. We can take it lying down or we can sing, dance, and fight for the whole of our visions.

When the government turns over its Blacklists to the jackbooted thugs and they come to murder us in our beds, we’ll see if the Bernie Sanders and “I’m With Her” sets are happy with the new social reality they helped to usher in every step of the way. All good Edelweiss Pirates and their fellow travelers will likely be dead or locked up when the punchline of this bad joke finally lands on them. And if it never comes to this grim variant of the endgame scenario, then it may very well *be* the democratic socialists who plow us under, throw away the keys to our cells, or pioneer the technologies that can manufacture mass consensus more smoothly and completely than anything dreamed by an official of the Third Reich just three or four generations ago. If you’ve ever wondered what type and magnitude of stupidity, apathy, cowardice, cretinism, acquiescence, social conditioning, bigotry, brutality and mind-bending evil was required to make good little Germans passively accept or actively carry out the Holocaust... you can stop wondering and look around. Those of us who make it through the coming upheavals and look back with our broken bodies and grey hair will see that America has put it all to shame in our lifetimes.

We're all bastards now. When it comes to facing the architects of the nightmare with some consequences, we might consider starting to act like it.

This is really happening.

This has been Saint Aries of the Edelweiss Pirates,
Sarah Connor Brigade
May-June 2019

If you can hear this message, you are the resistance.

Broadly speaking, given the historical circumstances of its rise, fascism was a confused but utterly sanguine reaction to the onrush of state-originated change, stagnancy, and tension. The Great War proved an anti-climax: the endless paroxysm of carnage had taken on epic mythic, religious, and mass psychological proportions but had failed to set anything right. The defeats were disastrous. All victories to speak of would end up pyrrhic. Astonishingly, after the tragedy of the ages, the maelstrom had only begun to churn.

Yet the traumatized would call for more of the same, for a return to form. The failure of the war to renew the world did not mean that the resultant peace was any less fraudulent. The reinstatement of the fighting spirit, the return to a struggle guided by noble values and motivating myths, was key. This meant that the endeavors of the first fascists tended to be framed or infused by the martial style, the full suite of traits for which the culture of commander-and-followers—civilization's great gift to the human experience—boded. But fascism was not limited to this only. It had various and sometimes conflicting expressions. Socially, it had supporters in many classes and walks of life. Nonetheless, politically and mythically speaking, *fascism* emerged as a fairly specific and super-potent variant of *ultra-nationalism*.

At root, the original fascisms were the war-torn castings of that restless, age-old search for renewal into the consummately modern terms of Race, Nation, and People. This phenomenon was fundamentally conditioned and inspired by the histories of colonization and capital, but this was no mere expansionist greed decked out as a principle, capitalist "reaction" orchestrated in the wings, or new shock troop of hardcore conservatism as is often imagined. At least on its surface or in its early phases as a movement (i.e. before achieving power), fascism differentiated itself from its nearest ideological competitors—such as the followers of various military dictators, royal crowns, clergy, or entrenched classes (although it would make alliances with any of them)—and even from other new radical right ideologies of the time, by ostensibly seeking to involve the whole of its Nation in a vision of top-to-bottom, revolutionary change. Specifics were spelled out as often as they weren't, and, when made explicit, were not consistent throughout the corpus of fascist thought. For effectiveness, they didn't need to be.

Its vision was a populist one: the People, whether conceived racially (as

manner of direct action. Before Mussolini's Blackshirts existed properly, there was the tradition of militia culture, there were the *fascio*, and, as the established institutions of middle class Italian society failed to quell the revolts of the Biennio Rosso, there was *squadristo*. This new, mass movement of fascist squads, or *squadristi*, was not directly founded or controlled by Mussolini but sprung up around him and his burgeoning movement, mostly in rural areas under the leadership of local bosses, with the purpose of smothering the flames of the red two years. *Squadristo* organized the breaking of strikes, tax abstention in socialist-controlled areas, and the murder and torture of socialist leaders and the burning of their shops. In 1920 and 1921, the fascist squads led a terror campaign in northern Italy in which several thousand people were killed, tens of thousands were injured, and tens of thousands were forced to leave.

In this period, the nascent fascism also drew upon the disgruntled of the *Arditi*, a special forces elite of the Royal Italian Army, a number of whom would join the incipient movement. Among others, they aided the attempted annexation of the Free State of Fiume for the Kingdom of Italy in 1919-1920, an attempt led by Gabriele D'annunzio—italian writer, war hero, and eventual “father of Fascism.”

Similarly, in Germany, the *Freikorps* (“free corps” or “free regiments”) were volunteer militia units with a long tradition as mercenaries. In the years after World War I, they and other veterans turned increasingly toward putting down communist uprisings like the Spartacist revolt of 1919. But the *Freikorps*, the main paramilitary formations of the Weimar Republic, were home to many who hated that liberal Republic as much as they would later hate the invading Soviets.

While the postwar wave of social upheaval may have momentarily increased the positioning and leverage of “the Reds,” some kind of awful pendulum swing (or was it a change of ideological register more subtle than this metaphor allows?) ensured that Mussolini's March on Rome was not far behind. Soon, the liberal king of Italy and his coalition of parliamentarians would bow to middle class fears of a socialist revolution and peacefully hand over the reins of power to the Blackshirts rather than crush or call the bluff on their planned insurrection. A decade later, the Great Depression contributed to an explosion in the share of votes won by Hitler's party, who similarly swept to power in relative peace amidst pronouncements about a Germany awakened, reborn to its role as guarantor of eternal values in a modern world.

I.

WHAT IS PATRIOT PRAYER? WHO ARE THE PROUD BOYS?

Patriot Prayer is a far-right political organization: in this case an association of newly active Christian bigots, low-key white nationalists, professional agitators, and opportunistic brawlers based in the area of Portland, Oregon, founded in late 2016 to defend the honor of the ascendant Trump presidency from the massive waves of social upheaval accompanying his election. Repeatedly since then, Patriot Prayer and their affiliates have rallied in support of an array of vacuous and American-sounding principles like “freedom,” “love,” and “truth,” while making common cause with an array of open white supremacists as well some non-white US ultra-nationalists and fascists along the way. They have brutally attacked vulnerable individuals and populations, and have clashed with anti-fascists of various stripes— always under the auspices of supporting the billionaire president, closing the national borders, and championing figments of the democratic imagination like “free speech.” Their leader Joey Gibson attempts to navigate a vague middle ground of reaction that maneuvers temporarily away from anything extreme enough to prevent his goal of forging a broad-based far-right populist movement. Gibson has aspirations toward seizing State power, having announced his run for U.S. Senate from Washington early in 2018. Two years after its formation, it is becoming clear that not only is Patriot Prayer not going away, but it is using its apparently protean political commitments to give impetus to what is becoming potentially the most significant upwelling of fascistic street mobilization in years.

Patriot Prayer uses dog-whistle politics— thinly-veiled or coded language meant to motivate the base of true believers who understand its references— to mobilize white rage against minorities. They have organized or have been present at a great many of the rallies and demonstrations of the past couple years associated with the term “Alt-right” (itself an obscurantist euphemism which refers to the adherents of a collection of ultra-nationalist and neo-nazi ideologies), including the high-profile battles of Berkeley which transpired throughout 2017. In April of that year, an anti-muslim bigot and frequenter of these events named Jeremy Christian murdered Ricky John Best and Taliesin Myrddin Namkai-Meche and seriously

wounded Micah David-Cole Fletcher on a Portland MAX train after they had attempted to de-escalate Christian's harassment of 2 young muslim girls. Similarly, August 2017's "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, VA saw an anti-racist activist named Heather Heyer murdered (and several more seriously injured) when a fascist drove a car into the assembled counter-demonstrators. In the wake of these and other attacks, Gibson has weakly attempted to distance himself from outright racists and fascists (Patriot Prayer loves parading its token couple of non-white members), and denied that his movement is part of the Alt-Right.

But nothing could be further from the truth. Gibson's obligatory gestures of disavowal of these murders— motivated in large part by his own light-vs-dark rhetoric and budding militancy— ring hollow. Before and after each new attack, nothing changes with this group. Several supporters of Patriot Prayer can be seen and heard to gloat over these and similar outrages, and go on making brazen threats or actually attacking their opponents in the streets.

The **Proud Boys** are an aspiring street gang who basically serve as the shock troops of Patriot Prayer, with whom their membership overlaps. According to founder Gavin McInnes (also co-founder of Vice Media), the Proud Boys are a "pro-Western fraternal organization" of men who "refuse to apologize for creating the modern world." That is, they refuse to condemn patriarchy, genocide, colonization, and slavery. These apologists for the world of prisons, parking lots, and date-rape drugs have chapters across the United States and Canada, with several members in the Pacific Northwest. Their members explicitly gain status and advance through the organization by physically attacking anti-fascists and minorities at rallies and other events (such as the recent sexist and anti-choice attacks organized by PP/PB on people seeking clinic services in Olympia, capitol of Washington state) and by refraining from masturbation, an attempt to supercharge with virile energy their attempts to "meet women". The Proud Boys have recently been alleged to have taken part in a vicious and calculated gang-rape in Portland.

The Proud Boys' barely-hidden propensities for virulent racism, extreme patriarchal violence, and close association with blatant neo-nazis are all underscored by the existence of their paramilitary wing, "The Fraternal Order of Alt-Knights," (FOAK), for whom the white nationalist Augustus Sol Invictus once served as second-in-command. Furthermore, Jason Kessler, the white nationalist who organized the first "Unite the Right" rally



Paul Nash, "We are making a New World" (1918)

In the country of Italy, there was also the decades-long and politically-ambiguous tradition of the *fascio*, a word literally meaning *bundle* or *sheaf*, but figuratively referring to a "league" or "band"— these were guild- or union-like groups, convening in support of different political objectives, usually spontaneously and without party affiliation. First given this sense by revolutionary democrats in Sicily in the 1870's, the word would later retain its revolutionary connotations even as nationalist *fascio* began to convene under its auspices in the interest of pressuring for intervention in World War I. The former socialist Mussolini headed up one such revolutionary *fasci* near the beginning of the war but by 1919, as dissatisfaction with the conclusion of the war skyrocketed, he would rename it *Fasci Italiani di Combattimento* ("Italian combat group"). The networked cult of energetic young nationalists would congeal into a movement and eventually into the National Fascist Party in 1921.

Furthermore, this coalescence of the early fascist movement was catalyzed in large part by concurrent efforts at repressing the *Biennio Rosso*, the "Red Two Years" from 1919-1920. The Biennio Rosso was a period of intense social upheaval in Italy after the conclusion of the war and following on the heels of the Russian Revolution. It saw industrial and rural strikes in exploding numbers, factory occupations, armed conflicts between militias, and the involvement of communist, socialist, and anarchist groups in all

fully understand without also understanding the Great War: its reasons and results, the cascading crises that set it off, and the habits of the “western” mind which set the stage for the war to resonate within and between people in the ways that it did.

As the 19th century— itself the theater of a thousand mass atrocities of colonization— drew to a close, there existed an undeniable upwelling throughout much of the strata of the “Europeanized” world. The intermittent waves of restive revolt by the dominated, exploited, and excluded formed one cacophonous chorus of the refusal. The dead of endless war-mongering— the rivers of their blood, the scarred, denuded, and fouled lands— offered up more and more reverberations of the discontent. In some countries it manifested itself in the “Modernist revolt” in art and culture (some of which was affirming of modernization, some of it condemning), or in the widespread intellectual apostasy which turned a critical gaze or else turned away from the wretched results of Enlightenment rationalism, scientific positivism, crass materialism, bureaucracy, and the parliamentary system. A ubiquitous sense— expressed in many and often contradictory ways— was crescendoing; a sense that something had to give, something had to come and sweep all this horror away.

In the Great War, in the ordeal of the front line experience, the unimaginably traumatized men who would go on to help form the nuclei of the early fascist movement in the following years had found what they considered to be their true Community, an utterly transcendent experience with their comrades in a hellish reality. But when the state-orchestrated sacrifice of mountains of human flesh and the devastated, nightmarish landscape of trenches which was its setting failed to deliver the renewal and regeneration so desperately believed in and sought, the veterans did not stop, but plodded on. After the war, as they failed to reintegrate into civilian or national life, as its institutions held out so little for them in the way of the life they now imagined, the healing they now desperately needed, or the revenge they now sought, what they would attempt was a resurrection of the culture of the front lines, casting the principle of *trenchocracy* (*trincerocrazia* in Italian) for the job. In the countries where insurgent fascist movements had most success, like Italy and Germany, this idea of an *aristocracy of the trenches* or *aristocracy in action* found a correspondent in the disaffected ranks of the established militia or para-military traditions. These were the national movements where many veterans could be found before and after the war.

in 2017 at which Heather Heyer was murdered, is a former Proud Boy. He was expelled after Heather’s murder in order for Proud Boys to save face.

Most recently, on August 4th, Patriot Prayer and the Proud Boys held a rally in Portland, OR and hid for several hours behind a massive formation of riot police. They waited it out until the latter dispelled the massive anti-fascist counter-demonstration with extreme force to then prowl the streets and attack random people of color and bystanders. In the clash with the cops, one anti-fascist sustained a severe wound when Portland PD intentionally blasted them in the back of the head with a concussion grenade at close-range. Likely, only the helmet worn by the demonstrator saved their life.

Patriot Prayer and Proud Boys may attempt to distance themselves from overt white nationalists and the Alt-Right, but the writing is on the wall. So far, it remains to be seen if the deaths and the injuries of the victims of these groups and their close allies have been in vain...

WHAT’S THE PROBLEM WITH PATRIOTISM?

*God and Country sold you out,
And fed you scapegoats for your doubts*

– Cursed, “God and Country”

The appearance of Patriot Prayer and Proud Boys is not an anomaly. These groups are not aberrations, nor are they mere flare-ups of the worst excesses of a system that we might bring back into balance or repair. They are not manifestations of an otherwise good or healthy allegiance to the State gone wrong: Their project, worldview, and practices are totally consonant with the entire arc of the history of this continent’s colonization, the history of the patriarchal, genocidal, and slavery-based entity known as “America.” The successions of administrations allegedly steering this ship may swing from conservative to liberal, from more dictatorial to more democratic, from right to left and back again... but this dance of politics is done in order to conceal the fact that *the whole enterprise is rotten to its core.*

It was the westward expansion of the English-speaking peoples across the continent of “North America” that provided one of the most salient inspirations to the young Adolf Hitler and the burgeoning nazi movement. It was in the US Midwest and in California that white-coated functionaries pioneered the science of eugenics, providing the template for the racial doctrines and programs of Germany’s National Socialists. Brutal repression and toxic social control has been woven into the tapestry of the United States from the start. Its whole spectrum of politically acceptable positions and ideas has been painted with the broad brushstrokes of Whiteness– the American monument to the art of governance– and established on firm foundations of irreconcilable anti-indigeneity and anti-Blackness, among others. As pointed out by the authors of *Dixie Be Damned*, it’s even true that the best friend of racism in this country has most often been democracy, not fascism.

Allegedly “radical” and hate-based groups like Patriot Prayer and the Proud Boys are quite at home in this continuum. Rather than a fringe, they really represent both the germ and the conclusion of American culture, with its perpetually juvenile and awe-struck worship of ill-gotten gains and fixation on unearned wealth and power, with its settler arrogance and oblivion, with its apparent disdain for vulnerability and openness, and its veneration of caprice and contempt, a hardness that is counterfeit, lived vicariously in nearly every instance through a supposedly great leader.

The obvious telltales of insecurity, entitlement, and resentment worn on the face of every Patriot and every Proud Boy are the seeds that– with the right effort at cultivation– grow, generation after generation, into an immense fiction, a kind of mass hallucination of a very specific content. The illusion is intentionally maintained by statesmen and capitalists for its usefulness: your love for the land you stand upon is disfigured by borders, imaginary lines drawn around “countries” on a map by avaricious conquerors and their agents, while at the same time your regard for your neighbor or your fellow human is refracted through the lenses of “race” and “culture,” obscuring all chance for understanding and goodwill across place, time, and circumstance.

At the tender age of 15 or 16 years old, some of us witnessed the collapse of the twin towers of the World Trade Center on our ubiquitous classroom televisions and knew, even then, that a fate just as grisly was being continually doled out, year after year, to untold tens of thousands of people all over the world at the hands of the United States and its proxies,

ject deprivation, capricious entitlements, massified cruelty, toxic poisoning, and ennui. In other words, while fascism as a system has needed to marshal all of these aspects of the Western tradition– its alienation, domination, exploitation, xenophobia, slavery, brutality, borders, police, prisons... its *state power*– none of these things has needed fascism to arise and persist.

So we see that anyone who has no beef with patriarchy, the state, or capitalism– anyone who has no beef with the supposedly harmless mantle of “Western Chauvinism”– has no business running their mouth about fascism.

SO... WHAT IS FASCISM?

[...] “classical” fascism openly despised & promised to supplant the bourgeois culture of accumulating capital to live off of, the central fixation with money and soft living. **The Nazi cultural model was not a businessman or politician, remember, but the Aryan warrior willing to fight & kill.** Fascism was a movement for failed men: of the marginally employed professional, the idle school graduate, the deeply indebted farmer, the unrecognized war veteran, the perpetually unemployed worker with no chance of work. But failed not because of themselves, but because bourgeois society had failed them in a dishonorable way.

–J. Sakai, *The Shock of Recognition*
from the collection *Confronting Fascism: Discussion Documents for a Militant Movement*

Fascism is one of the infernal children born of late modernity. It was forged in the crucible of a mass, mechanized slaughter which was inconceivable at any other time or place in history until then and there.

That crucible, that slaughter of millions was the apocalyptic cataclysm known to us now as the First World War. We are still living in its tumultuous wake. Historically speaking, the advent of fascism is impossible to

pursuit of *a sense of spiritual renewal* which in practice was sealed off from the seekers at the moment of their setting out. All human cultures prior to and outside of civilization have ensured for their members access to this sense of renewal or regeneration by means of a panoply of cultural innovations and spiritual techniques, rituals acknowledging the cyclical nature of being which adapted each of the multifarious and wondrous iterations of humanity to their landbase. But, for the armored servants of Leviathan the inexorable march of *Progress* had already begun. Progress— that most maladaptive and racist of motivating ideas— ensured that the renewal so longed-for by these world-weary colonists, soldiers, cultivators, and believers was *endlessly deferred*, experienced only fleetingly and then swallowed up in the gaping maw of a humanized god who would have no others before Him. Going from high to momentary high, what was missing for them— and for us— is *a renewal that no conquest can purchase*.

In his book, at the outset of a chapter about the Lost Colony at Roanoke, Turner shows in detail how the Scientific Revolution of the West is, in point of fact, the direct offspring of this alienated worldview of Christianity. Despite the torrid claims of mechanistic atheists, the monolith of “Science”— its restless search for an “objective” Truth and its consignment of all phenomena outside itself to an empty realm awaiting its own specially-imposed illumination— gestated in the necrotic womb of Christian solipsism and hubris, descended from the same spiritual malaise and distance from the living. It portended, among other things, the replacement of the array of organic metaphors for the body with the metaphor of the body-as-machine. In an essay on Science by Alex Gorrion we find that “while the ascendance of Enlightenment rationalism constituted a rupture with Church power and doctrine, we would qualify this as an evolutionary rupture, incurring no more breakage or damage to Church structures and thinking than was strictly necessary for Science to gain its independence and make a qualitative leap as the hegemonic worldshaper, as the butterfly must break the chrysalis.”

So also— and importantly for our discussion— did the outgrowths of the capitalist work ethic, industrial discipline, and the varieties of nationalism of the past few hundred years spring from this world-shaping project, this stagnant pit of modern filth and hypocrisy, each indelibly shaped by a trajectory set in motion long-prior to the birth of any of them.

None of them has needed the innovations which fascism provides in order to make of this world a dilapidated wasteland of disenchantment, ab-

its architects of the world trade holocaust, its little Eichmanns. Some of us, on the other hand, flew little American flags and vowed that if what we were called to do was throw grenades disguised as water bottles to attract little brown children in the wake of our tank patrols and blow them to bits in Afghanistan or Iraq... well, then that’s what we would do. It’s what the wise leaders demanded, after all.

This particular “we” and this particular “us” of patriotic self-identification with fatherland in fact *hides so many yawning chasms*. Standing on the far shore of one of these gaps— opposite of the those among our peers who cowered at each new bogeyman and vowed to be tough on “terrorism,” on “crime,” on “drugs,” and increasingly (once again) on “communism”— stood a motley rabble of the wayward, unwanted children of the 9/11 generation. We were marked out for ridicule and queer bashings, or trips to the principal’s office. In what seems like another lifetime, we once imagined that George W. Bush represented the absolute nadir of American imperial arrogance, stupidity, and bellicosity. We were wrong. The liberals were wrong (again) too. Now grown, we know that the surges of racist terror under George W. Bush and those of our present figurehead are not the unfortunate, nearly-inconceivable but momentary setbacks on the forward march of Progress, but are among the eternally recurrent outgrowths of a nightmare vessel which will never stop until it is actively decommissioned, or finally breaks down of its own accord and slowly rusts away.

Patriotism shifts our gaze away from the quality of our own experiences, from our own directly-lived social and ecological relations, from the hierarchy or exploitation which pass untroubled in our own lives only by being continually mystified, naturalized, re-consecrated or valorized. The occasional and contingent conflict we can imagine arising between real individuals of flesh and blood, pitted now and then against one another in an otherwise substantially free and unfettered existence, has been replaced by the constant, alienated, and massified slaughter between *nation-states*, and, within those nation-states, by the domination of a particular few classes over all the others.

Patriotism is a circus tent erected over a mass grave. But it’s not only the most chauvinistic or jingoistic expression of these ideas which plays havoc with our perceptions, our interests, and our lives.

WHAT ABOUT NATIONALISM?

Indeed, that was an apt and true reply which was given to Alexander the Great by a pirate who had been seized. For when that king had asked the man what he meant by keeping hostile possession of the sea, he answered with bold pride, “What do you mean by seizing the whole earth; because I do it with a petty ship, I am called a robber, while you who does it with a great fleet are styled emperor.”

– St. Augustine, *City of God*

Patriotism (from the same etymological root as *patriarchy*) is only the name given to each particular, popular iteration of *nationalism*, that ideological doctrine which from the 18th century until today has played an indispensable role in wrecking utter devastation over the face of the earth several times over. The nominally liberatory idea that *a nation should govern itself free from outside interference* is a sleight of hand undertaken to mask the great farce of governance *in and of itself*. In other words, self-determination for the nation-state, however democratic, *is* subjection for the individual. It necessarily spells servitude and subordination for any living, breathing community that one might hope to liberate. It is a guarantee that the other-than-human inhabitants of the world (known in civilized parlance as “natural resources”) will be consigned to rapacious consumption and totalitarian management, and that the land itself will know the lashes of the omniscient whimsy of a mega-machine that has slipped the moorings of any human scale, agency, or control. This is the case no matter what color flag is flown by the administrators and leaders of the Nation.

Put another way, nationalism is the ideological gloss that allows a Patriot or a Proud Boy to believe they are truly fighting for their own interests when they are fighting primarily for a well-oiled apparatus of systematized death and control, for a boss or a bureaucrat, for a general or a police force, for a class of developers, gentry, or managers, for the maintenance of an abstract idea or role with which they are taught to identify, or, as we now see, for an utterly effete and comically inept rich-man-rapist-turned-president who can somehow still be painted as the picture of domineering masculinity as well as as an “outsider” to the world of power and politics, an image erected by well-paid technicians for the passive consumption of hordes of timid spectators.

and can easily be extended to the POC membership of the Proud Boys.

The visions of the warlords, their project of social dominance and the metaphysical vistas of never-ending loss and desolation which it yielded, had blossomed into the first patriarchal, monotheistic religions. The newly-literate classes of priests and administrators would eventually bequeath to their heirs the knowledge of how to lock up all the marvelousness of life in a book, and all the rewards of virtue and forbearance in an afterlife, a paradise reserved for another world. They picked up where the semi-nomads of the ancient Near East left off, breaking more totally with the seasonal and spiritual rounds of nature-bound mythic consciousness in favor of something brand new in human experience: a linear, progressive model of Time. It was the historical sense of time which would come to consume and replace myth as a way of understanding the world. It was the sense of time inherent to a spirituality not lived in the present with its attendant visions, with oral traditions of illuminated prophecy and inspired revelation... but rather with decrees and records given once in the past, and compelling it's congregation ever after to expand, to seek out and make new converts— or else.

The rest is Christian history: flocks of followers striving to deny themselves earthly pleasures, never-ending cascades of blood spilled in Crusade after Crusade; masses of disloyal bodies tortured or burnt up during century upon century of Inquisitions and Witch hunts; entire worlds subjugated, plundered, and enslaved in colonial ventures, one after the other. The former mystery cult— the one-time outsiders of the decadent straits into which Greco-Roman civilization had gotten itself— made a bid for the status of state-sanctioned Church. It succeeded, and in the process it gained the footing necessary to give impetus to an entire imperial machinery. At this point in Western history, for all intents and purposes, Christianity, the State, and the civilizing impulse became coterminous. And it was this Christendom and its Crusades which would later lay the physical, intellectual, and spiritual groundwork for the pageant of slaughter that historians euphemistically refer to as the “Age of Exploration.” It was the Christ-bearers who established the contours of the geo-political fiction called “Europe,” and gave content to its emergent category of Whiteness, the one which would earmark the dark hordes for extermination, slavery, and oblivion.

According to Turner and a great many others, every new enterprise in this chronicle of colonization and war was, at its roots, launched in

and toward a punishing sky-father instead. The original protection racketeers— the horsemen of apocalypse— these pugnacious shepherds would eventually merge their subsistence base and cosmological view with that of the earliest agricultural settlements (the same ones whom they sometimes menaced), to create the mixed barnyard economy of plant production and animal captivity which would underscore all further campaigns in the war waged against the earth, a war known in civilized parlance as “development.”

It was they who offered up, in embryonic form, the first truly *patriotic prayers* to the angry and capricious gods of war and wrath: To defeat the enemy. To best the competitor. To control their flocks. To squeeze a few more drops of blood from the stone.

The emergent social contract of patriarchy, its little polity of important men, parlayed its initial spoils into the assemblage of the first true “megamachine” civilizations: not merely permanent agricultural settlements or enormous livestock herds, but massive apparatuses of *divided labor* to go with them, replete with dependent, subjugated work crews, maximal leaders and god-kings, soaring infrastructural projects and concomitant disasters for the land, monumentally displayed codes of law, standing armies, and specialized, privileged castes of clerics, record-keepers, and tax collectors. All of this was circumscribed by an apparently hostile cosmos and a battery of demonized foreigners offered up for the xenophobic gaze of the dominated, all of it underwritten by an increasingly separated, exploited, and gendered sphere of unremunerated domestic labor.

Here we can see a definite resonance with, and one of the origins of, contemporary incarnations of patriarchal and nationalist violence. Here may be glimpsed the beginnings of the macho rituals which are ubiquitous to civilized life. This is the tradition in which the Proud Boys are found. Rampant abuses such as rape or queer bashing are often events of narrative violence. They attempt to inscribe in the practitioners a reassuring sense of dominance and distinction from the targeted persons: an inclusion into a particular privileged identity. Men, bonding together in their bids for conquest, deployed a twisted, toxic mimic of the initiatic rites otherwise found throughout the human experience. The new, exclusively patricentric nature of the rituals was so important that in our own neo-colonial era the rituals may even embrace the existence of gay nazis and reactionaries (like those found in the original Nazi party) such as Douglas Pearce of the band Death in June, Milo Yiannopoulos, and the “androphile” Jack Donovan,

As alluded to above, nationalism re-casts the conflict between classes— between those placed higher on the ladder of hierarchy and those consigned to positions below— as a struggle instead between different nations or peoples, these latter being conceived as monolithic identity blocks (and this is ultimately as true for the left-wing, “revolutionary” iterations of nationalism as for its right-wing, “imperialist” forms). It is this critical change in perspective or theoretical register that gives rise (to risk a played-out Orwellian reference) to a mindset which quite literally posits that War is Peace, Ignorance is Strength, and Slavery is Freedom.

Indeed, for the Patriot as for the Proud Boy, up is down, servitude is agency, and substantial reciprocity between equals is impossible, or else symptomatic of a sickness. How else could they delude themselves that licking the boots of an ICE officer or of border patrol is the act of a free person? How else could the lords of this world mobilize entire armies of average people to kill “foreigners” who occupy an essentially similar position in the social relations of their own lands? How else to sell the idea that migrants— and not capitalists— are responsible for the economy which crushes or deprives you?

Nationalism is a prime example of pure ideology: abstract notions and stereotyped entities replace the potential for an ensemble of dynamic and materially-established affinities with one’s true comrades and co-conspirators. This substitution is matched by a host of concomitant moralistic truisms about “the People” and “this country” which replace all critical thought.

The nation-state is an un-living monster, a Leviathan. Its wheels and tentacles, its voracious maw, are animated only with the energy extracted from truly living beings, compelled to yield their creativity and their dreams once drawn into its circuitry.

Nationalism is a coat of armor, a mask that, worn for too long, bonds with the flesh of the wearer; any attempt at removal takes off strips of skin with it. The wearer recoils and, hiding his burning-hot humiliation, gives up his effort at removal, denying the pain felt at submission, or else projecting it onto some dehumanized enemy or another, of which there is a never-ending supply on offer to meet the demand.

In *denial*— in concealed shock, fear, shame, horror, or revulsion— the Patriot signs up for tours of duty, or he pretends that he would if it came down to it. He derides the safe spaces of his adversaries while hiding behind armies and droves of his usual natural ally: the police.

He cruises the night or stalks into the next room of his house for a victim, to blow off his steam in all the ways prescribed by his Party, his People, his Nation.

He goes to work. He buys what's on offer. He snitches and collaborates.

He changes channels. He goes back to sleep.

In brief: what tree is it that has borne the fruit of this “modern world” for which proud boys refuse to apologize? What, in a word, *is* there to be proud of?

A CULTURE OF ALIENATION, A RELATIONSHIP OF COMMAND THE WEST AT A GLANCE

What's that sound coming?

– At the Drive-In, “Catacombs”

Persons whom we would consider to be patriarchs, authoritarians, or reactionaries have existed as long as there have been rigidly hierarchical and state-based societies, perhaps longer, and exist wherever this form of society arises. In a book of unsurpassed lucidity and vision called *Beyond Geography: the Western Spirit Against the Wilderness*, author Frederick Turner furnishes ample evidence to the anti-fascist reader that the struggle against the kind of wanton, bigoted brutality that contemporary minds associate foremost with fascism may very well be only a recent manifestation of a more general struggle: the struggle against the colonizing entity known as Western civilization.

Paring away at the minutiae of intrigue and scandal, peering behind the endless back-and-forth of the pendulum swing of politics, we find that there is nothing short of a *spiritual sickness* impelling the juggernaut of “the West” and its armored servants forward on its path. The power, domination, and social control that mark all of Western culture, yielding increasingly widespread and irreparable experiences of misery, can be seen as symptoms of this sickness.

This social-biological virus of the West's alienation may have been unleashed, if not as far back as the appearance of the first erectors of permanent fences and walls to keep out the wild, then at least as far back as those fearsome forerunners of western civilization and its relentless malaise: the first mounted pastoral raiders, those bellicose bands of men at the dawn of domestication who turned away from the earth and its gods

sentimentally recalling the history and rituals of the organization, repeatedly referring to the Proud Boys in the present tense with the pronoun “we.” At length and in plaintive tones he insists that the Proud Boys are nothing but a harmless fraternity with no affinities for white nationalism. In fact, McInnes insists loudly that white nationalists “don’t exist” and that “it’s unlikely than any of us will ever meet a white supremacist.” These latter utterances are the standard refrains from white nationalists who are attempting to garner public respectability. They are particularly humorous coming from McInnes, who wrote rants about non-whites for the suit-and-tie nazi publication called American Renaissance (or “AmRen” for short, which describes itself as a “race-realist, white advocacy organization”), who got a job at Taki’s magazine thanks to white nationalist Richard Spencer, and who rubs elbows with Alt-Right leaders. McInnes’ statement was followed a day later (on Nov. 22) by a similar heap of accolades disguised as a token gesture of “disavowal” made by the disgraced Alt-Right darling Milo Yiannopoulos.

On Nov. 24th, the website of the official Proud Boys Magazine released a statement by its “Elders” chapter called “We’re Not Going Anywhere,” detailing some mundane structural changes in the leadership of the fraternity after McInnes’ departure and nervously attempting to quash any bids for independent leadership by the upstarts among the disaffected and agitated membership of the group. The comment section gives vent to a whole slew of hardcore racists, raging at McInnes’ for the treachery of his virtue-signalling, his “cucking” via the thin veil of his multiculturalism.

Faced with a fraction of the scrutiny reserved for earnestly liberatory movements and ungovernable individuals, McInnes appears to be hedging his bets with this consummately political and hollow PR maneuver, *attempting as he has in the past to draw a hard distinction between fascism or white nationalism on the one hand, and his allegedly innocuous pet project of “Western chauvinism” on the other.*

But what is this distinction really worth?

What is the Western tradition to which Gavin and his Boys (of whom he is obviously still quite fond) continually allude in order to contrast themselves with the *real* bad guys? The same bad guys they claim don’t actually exist? The droves of disillusioned ones bemoaning the cowardice of their former leading light even as the more tame or fawning of the fraternity praise his political acumen?

“ And these crimes are committed in broad daylight, after being plotted in the corridors of the government, under the influence of a clique, [...] while shouting over the rooftops: The people are sovereign, The Nation is sovereign, and under the buzzwords of patronage - Glory, Honor, Homeland, as if there were several homelands between all beings living on the same planet.

No! The anarchists have but one party, and that is humanity.

It is also in the name of civilization that exist these distant expeditions where thousands of men are killed with a savage ferocity. It is in the name of civilization that we plunder, that we burn, that we massacre an entire people who demand nothing [more] than to live peacefully in their homes. And these crimes are committed with impunity because the law doesn't cover this type of theft and armed robbery, *au contraire*: We award medals to those who have led all this carnage, medals to the mercenaries who have taken part, in memory of their good deeds, and these unconscious ones are proud to wear this insignia which is nothing but a diploma of assassination.

But on the other hand, the law severely punishes the worker to whom society refuses the right to exist and who has the courage to take what is necessary which he lacks, where there is superfluous amounts. Oh! And then this one is treated like a thief, brought before the court and finally returns to end his days in prison.

Voilà! The logic of our current society.”

– from the defense speech of Clément Duval,
french anarchist and criminal.

[On 25 October 1886, Duval broke into the mansion of a Parisian socialite and stole 15,000 francs before accidentally setting the house on fire. He was caught only two weeks later after trying to fence the stolen goods, stabbing a policeman named Rossignol several times during his arrest. The

policeman unfortunately survived his wounds. Duval's trial drew crowds of supporters and ended in chaos when Duval was dragged from the court, crying, "Long live anarchy!" He was condemned to death, but his sentence was later commuted to hard labor on Devil's Island, French Guiana. He was later to escape...]

II.

The first part of *Proud for What* explored some definitions and results of nationalism from an anarchist perspective. The context was the appearance of Patriot Prayer and the Proud Boys on the national scene which includes other Alt-Right and white nationalist activists since the election of Trump. The writing of Part 1 was catalyzed by a series of mobilizations by these groups and their openly fascist cohorts during the summer of 2018, including a demonstration on Aug. 4th in Portland at which, among other things, police attempted to murder an anti-fascist counter-demonstrator, seriously injuring them in the process.

Fast forward to November 17th, 2018: Patriot Prayer and the Proud Boys (PP/PB) held demonstrations in multiple cities: a pro-Trump, pro-America demo in Philadelphia, PA under the slogan "We the People," and a hyper-misogynist #HimToo demo in Portland OR, organized by Patriot Prayer member Haley Adams in reaction to the #MeToo phenomenon on social media, a demo designed ostensibly to paint men as the victims of false accusations of sexual assault, but actually to promote the reigning patriarchal culture where men can abuse and assault people with relative impunity. As we see, the cover provided by the involvement of women like Adams or, similarly, the existence of queer fascists or reactionaries does nothing to detract from the male chauvinism of their venture.

Then, on Nov. 21, Proud Boys founder Gavin McInnes posted a video on the internet suddenly tendering his supposed resignation from the Proud Boys, this fraternity of unapologetic "Western chauvinists" that he helped usher into being. This was done in the wake of the UK newspaper the Guardian revealing a few days earlier that the FBI considers the group to be composed of "extremists" with "ties to white nationalism." The remarks of the FBI and the Guardian story breaking them, in turn, followed the Oct. 12th attack by several Proud Boys on a trio of anti-fascist protestors who were opposing a speech McInnes was giving at the Metropolitan Republican Club in Manhattan, for which at least six Proud Boys are facing a variety of rioting and gang assault charges. The resignation of McInnes is a political move apparently meant to deflate the allegation that Proud Boys are a gang following directives from a discrete leadership.

In his video, McInnes declares that he is quitting the Proud Boys "forever," and then goes on to sing the praises of the group for several minutes,