

Regenerative Culture and the Potential of Social Defence

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

October 31, 2021



Image: Drone Age view of our farm. January 2021.

Abstract

In 2014 Associate Professor Brian Martin asked, *Whatever happened to Social Defence?* This research is my response to that question. Social defence, as speculative concept, had been proposed as an alternative to the military in the peace movements of the 1980s and early 1990s.

The proposition of this research was that social defence is philosophically and practically well developed within agroecology and anarchic\grass roots politics. Following this, the research aimed to learn something about the concept of social defence from people within agroecology and anarchism/grass roots. Working with post ideological commitments and ecological theory that is cognisant of the Anthropocene, Regenerative Culture provided the broader rubric of this research because all of the movements I explored are committed to regenerating degraded ecology, politics, economies and societies. Relationally, they aim to do this by regenerating indigenous knowledge and ecological ways of being. Regenerative Culture also includes reclaiming matriarchal feminisms and updating them for the contexts of the 21st century.

This research engaged directly and indirectly with the Navdanya Movement, Rojava, Extinction Rebellion and Rainbow Family as a way to understand the speculative concept of social defence, as well as to think about if and, how the concept has fallen off the agendas of activists and others working for peace.

I used the experimental methodology of post qualitative inquiry following Elizabeth St Clair, Raewyn Connell and others working from post theory(s). I also used the theory and practice

of prefigurative politics and the method of autoethnography; following the premise that research of this nature is best conducted by people who are directly involved. In my case, I am in the 'field' of agroecology every day and have many years of experience within anarcho pacifist praxis. I joined Extinction Rebellion when it launched in Australia in July of 2018. The research did not aim to prove anything or generalise its findings.

This research put food first because food is our most vital human system and the root source of justifications for war.

The research is therefore limited by this focus and does not address alternative forms of transport and communication which would also be necessary if the concept of social defence were to attract more interest.

Based on extensive reading and interpretation of Martin's texts on the topic and relevant extant literature, this research concluded that social defence has been recuperated and sold back to people as a good idea *if* they use it somewhere else. But there is nowhere else, hence the proposition has been emptied of its revolutionary potential and the lacuna that only some people fight wars is exposed.

That is, if states are making the agenda, social defence has no revolutionary potential. If on the other hand, the agenda is being collectively formed and experimented with in grassroots anarchic initiatives, then social defence does have significant revolutionary potential. The nascent concept of legal anarchism has been proposed as a possible legal basis for social defence.

Using my own direct experience of regenerative farming as well as exploration and analysis of the existing Imperial food system and its collective alternatives, this research suggests that social defence should put food first. By doing this the concept would come into the realms of peasant movements defending life by challenging patriarchy and capitalism; movements that are at the same time creating alternative forms of production and consumption that is clean, healthy and inclusive.

The concept of social defence is under researched and it is an incredibly unpopular topic. In the context of life and death nonviolence is a privilege and this is under or simply not acknowledged in broader nonviolence literature. There is a massive movement for climate change but no corresponding movement for military change. Hence many movements have not joined the dots, in turn this helps explain why the concept fell off the agendas of some movements. My exploration of social defence, as speculative concept, suggests that Navdanya and the experiments of Rojava are more explicit in their rejection of the military system than broader global justice movements are.

Whatever social defence is becoming it is not there yet.

Certificate of dissertation

I certify that the ideas, analysis and conclusions in this thesis are my own ideas unless otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been published or submitted for publication elsewhere.

Signed: Karen Kennedy, October 31, 2021.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge the University of New England for supporting my proposal to undertake this research. Especially Bert Jenkins, who supervised this research for just over one year until he retired. I would also like to acknowledge the diplomacy extended to me by Professor Helen Ware, who agreed to read this work when supervision could not be found. Helen is the kind of diplomat social defence will need. Helen made it possible for me to continue the research even though she had little interest in the topic and does not share my politics.

I would also like to thank the people who left this earthly world during the research period. My non biological sister, Lisa Scott. She would have said something like, Kazz the farmers will change just give them time. Like many folks she often asked, are you rebels nonviolent, that is not what it looks like on the news. Thanks also go to David Graeber whose work I continue to learn from and who is sadly missed within anarchist politics and culture.

In my first year studying politics as a mature age student. The lecturer Anthony Ashbolt asked the audience if anyone knew the woman on the screen. I said very quietly, Vandana Shiva. He asked me to call her name out loud. I was nervous but followed the instruction and used my loudest voice to shout the name Vandana Shiva. 21 years later I am still invoking her name. I think Anthony would be happy with this research.

Back to the world of the living. I would like to thank Brian Martin for asking the provocative question and working for peace. I thank my partner and two sons for supporting my efforts, however strange they find them.

I could not have completed this research without my small circle of old and new friends, they know who they are.

Finally, thank you to the rebels everywhere who are speaking truth to power and then acting like that truth is real. Sat Nam.

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Chapter 1: Introduction: Regenerative Culture and the Potential of Social Defence

“In the age of mass protest there is a widespread feeling that existing institutions and leaders are unresponsive and incapable.”¹ In response people are getting on with working the alternatives.

This research explores the concept of Social Defence through the broad lenses of Regenerative Culture. Social defence has been defined by Associate Professor, Brian Martin and his collaborators as “nonviolent defence of the vital features of a society – including – human rights, local autonomy, and participation – against all oppressive forces, it is a nonviolent alternative to military defence.”² Conceptually, social defence is future oriented and speculative.

This chapter sets out and explains the research design. The research aims, proposition, key definitions, methodology and methods are introduced in the first section. Following this the structure of the thesis is presented through an introduction to each of the chapters. This research has taken place between February 2018 and August 2021. It has been conducted on my farm and in various spaces of collective rebellion in Australian, towns, cities and forests.

The research has taken place on West Bunjalung country in the Clarence valley of the eastern state of NSW. The contexts were a severe drought (2018-2019/20), multiple emergency level bush fires and the massive loss of biodiversity, land, resources and lives that these emergencies resulted in.³ Compounding these was the arrival of the SARS- CoV –2 Virus and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The World Health Organisation, WHO declared a global pandemic of the disease in March 2020.⁴ At the time of writing (September 2021), parts of the State of NSW are in ‘lockdown’ other state borders are closed and the city of Melbourne is enduring one of the worlds’ longest ‘lock-downs’.

¹ S J Brannen, C S Haig and K Schmidt, *The Age of Mass Protests: Understanding an escalating global trend*, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CISIS), 2020, www.jstor.org/stable/response22600.5.

² B Martin, *Social Defense: Arguments and Actions*, in, S Anderson and J Larmore, *Nonviolent Struggle and Social Defence*, War Resisters International, 1991, pp. 27-28, <https://wri-irg.org/en/nonviolence/nvsvd-part2.htm>, <http://www.bmartin.uow.edu.au/sd> (accessed 04/07/2018).

³ D Celermajor, R Lyster, G M Wardle, R Walmsley and E Couzens, The Australian bushfire disaster: How not to repeat this catastrophe for biodiversity, *Wires Climate Change*, Feb 3, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.704>

⁴ WHO, About the virus, overview, World Health Organisation, https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1

Medicine, like food has been turned into a weapon of war. Alex De Waal's, *New Pandemic Old Politics*, explains how "the triangle of state, war and medicine" is conducting a war on a disease.⁵ Moreover, this is a war, that seen from the ecological perspective and in view of the conditions of the Anthropocene, humans cannot win. This is not just a metaphor, De Waals work is also significant in relation to food and war.

Keeping up with mutations in the biosphere due to the rapidly changing climate, loss of biodiversity, zoonotic spill over and toxic agricultural systems, according to De Waal and others cited throughout this thesis poses significant challenges. Capitalists are making a fortune, global dependencies based on imperial trade systems once again show that the most vulnerable everywhere are left to die of or with Covid-19 and other diseases. There are alternatives to the war language and strategy used by the triad. Only time will tell if this pandemic brings people together to attend to the compounding crisis. This requires changing the way most humans live.

Food is vital to every society. It has been central to State making for thousands of years, is a human right (UN 1948) and is of primary concern to international relations and global capitalism. It is also central to my personal politicization and life choices. Following this I use food systems to explore the central concept of social defence and the broad rubric of regenerative culture that nurtures it. In turn this enables an exploration of social defence through ecological food production and distribution systems. Namely, Agroecology which includes one of its modern branches - Permaculture.

Because the political tradition of social anarchism (as distinct from the anarchy of international relations and liberal capitalism) is rooted in voluntary self-governing systems and ongoing experiments with these it offers an existing alternative to patriarchal nation states and neoliberal capitalism. Anarchism has expanded globally since the 1960s and more rapidly since the early 1990s. This political tradition has been subjugated and framed as dangerous and extreme by those in authority, be they liberals, traditional socialists or fascists within the 'international community' of nation states that exist, as other within or, in spite of the anarchy that does its best to challenge the legitimacy of any kind of absolute rule. Put simply states exist to prevent anarchy.

In an interpretive reading of the *Game of Thrones*, GOT, Larson and Lundstrom recognize,

⁵ A De Waal, *New Pandemics, Old Politics: Two Hundred Years of War on Disease and its Alternatives*, Polity Press, 2021.

*“The notion of anarchy exposes how political and economic international relations – in the absence of a global government – can be comprehended as a perpetual conflict to appropriate such a vacuum. In this sense anarchy is understood to be pathological but productive.”*⁶

They also recognize that “subaltern” and free peoples are also represented in GOT. In this way they carefully show how GOT, *“like the contemporary world(s) also contains other meaningful stories and other socialities and polities...that are incomprehensible to the claimants of power”*.⁷ In this subaltern or alternative version, “anarchy would mean no throne to claim and no game to play.”⁸ In that way, GOT leads us into the government of no one which is to say the self-government of everyone.

In this way there exists a kind of ban on its peaceful and autonomous traditions. At best anarchists are consistently branded marginal and therefore meaningless yet they have successfully formed political parties such as the Pirate Party and work in broader anticapitalist, socialist and green political movements.⁹ Despite the supposed marginality of anarchist political traditions which includes libertarian socialists, reality everywhere suggests their processes and practices are not as marginal as popular culture, in this case GOT, or popular authorities, nation states, supra state institutions, radical capitalists and other religious fundamentalisms make them out to be.

As Pritchard and Havercroft acknowledge, linking the re-emergence of anarchism in a range of disciplines with International Relations is difficult work that is very much in progress.¹⁰ At the grassroots level anarchism has traditionally been contested ideologically and traces of this remain. Joining Ruth Kinna, I find that:

*“While the emergence of anarchism in the nineteenth century resulted in the construction of an ideology, it also represented the crystallization of a fluid political tradition that extends beyond the historical and geographical boundaries that ideology assumes.”*¹¹

⁶ S Larsson & M Lundstrom, Anarchy in the Game of Thrones, *Springer Nature*, 6 March, 2020, p. 2.

⁷ Ibid, p. 11.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ S Bara Omarsdottir and V Orri Valrarosson, Anarchy in Iceland, The global left, pirates and socialists in post-crash Icelandic, politics, *Globalisations*, Vol. 17, No. 5, 2020, p 840-853, DOI:10.1080/14747731.20201722496

¹⁰ J Havercroft & A Pritchard, Anarchy and International Relations Theory: A Reconsideration, *Journal of International Political Theory*, Vol. 13.No. 3, 2017, p. 256. DOI:10.1177/1755088217719911.

¹¹ R Kinna, *The Government of No One, The theory and practice of Anarchism*, Penguin, UK, 2019, p. 8.

Anarchism does not endorse holding to party lines or imposing orthodoxies. Embodied in the individual, but not singular, anarchism's interests are collective and its imaginings expansive.¹² As such it has the capacity to assist any exploration of alternatives to modern global capitalism's militarized systems of defending our common vital social, political and ecological systems. As Bruno Latour put it in his *Down to Earth Politics in the New Climate Regime*, "when the rug is pulled from under your feet, you understand at once that you are going to have to be concerned with the floor."¹³

Latour does not write within anarchism, though in a similar way to Vandana Shiva he shares strong affinities with it.¹⁴ This is evident in his body of work and his recent contributions to finding a politics for Anthropocene. For Latour, answering the political questions, requires "multiplying viewpoints, so as to close all provincial or closed views with new variants."¹⁵ It is sensible then, to understand that they cannot be answered, and people (human and not) are unlikely to be reassured of their basic rights to safety and protection to food, water and shelter, by "decreasing the number of alternatives regarding the existence and course of the world."¹⁶

In this thesis, experiments that work through various forms of grassroots action that take place as-against the state are viewed as being consistent with the concept of social defence.¹⁷ These are resistance and regenerative movements refusing both the popular authoritarianism of the 1% and extinction as they emerge in the period between 2018-2021. I have purposefully selected four grassroots examples to explore the central research concept. They are: The Navdanya Movement, Extinction Rebellion, The Experiments of Rojava and Rainbow Family.

Each of these examples works from various views of cosmological unity. They are all earth bound and have either landed or when they land, are attuned to earth's core systems. Quantum physics, autopoiesis, sympoiesis, ecological, biological, geological, systems thinking inform their actions in more meaningful ways than modern political ideology(s) or international relations theory(s). Politics are obviously not removed rather attempts are being made to flatten power and to move beyond politics as we have known them in this civilization and with increasing speed and scale during the past 200 years.

¹² Ibid, p.6.

¹³ B Latour, *Down to Earth, Politics in the New Climate Regime*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2018, p 8.

¹⁴ M Ramnath M, *Decolonising Anarchism: An antiauthoritarian history of India's liberation struggle*, AK Press, California, 2011.

¹⁵ Op Cit, B Latour, 2018, p. 8.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 11-13.

¹⁷ U, Gordon, *Anarchy Alive*, Pluto Press, UK, 2007, p.7.

To assist this shift towards cosmology and ecology and out of ideology, I locate the movements of agroecology and the political tradition of social anarchism within contemporary regenerative cultures. I cannot simply abandon the term anarchism. Nor should I. My aim is to remain open and to seek common ground and mutual solidarity.

“...clearly, once the word “anarchist” is invoked, different standards are held to apply - especially so, if there is any evidence that a scholar, so labelled is not just putting it on for rhetorical effect but might be inclined to apply anarchist principles in practice, even if only in very limited contexts and very limited degrees.”¹⁸

In the spirit of openness, regenerative culture became my rubric. This research shares strong affinities with Donna Haraway, Bruce Pascoe, Timothy Morton, Bruno Latour, Julian Cribb and broader, decolonial, interspecies environmental humanities. It finds comfort in spaces where speculation is encouraged and where people still dare to dream. Latour’s actor network theory consciously pushed the social science cannons and stretched out into what we might become if we accept that ‘we have never been modern’. ¹⁹ If we accept that we are actors in a network of complex, interconnecting systems. Stating it clearly, “we westerners are immersed in a process of unlearning and relearning all those systems we tried to eradicate.”²⁰

Listening to and learning from the planet’s surviving indigenous cultures is a feature of the movements that this research explores and holds solidarity with. Decolonisation, in the form of solidarity that assists indigenous people in their struggles is a priority. In this thesis decolonialism accepts that: “Asserting sovereignty over territory is foundational for renewing indigenous cultures’ modes of self-governance.”²¹

¹⁸ D Graeber, A Response to Anastasia Piliavsky’s *The Wrong Kind of Freedom? A Review of David Graeber’s The Utopia of Rules: On Technology, Stupidity and the secret joys of bureaucracy*, Springer, Science and Business Media, 13 January 2017, DOI: 10.1007/s10767-016-9248-0, p. 4. I can add, I have not been asked a single question about my own work on the anarchist turn 2012-2015 by anyone that has supervised this research. Perhaps it is the topic? It has been peer reviewed, K Hebden, Book Review: Deeply Felt Reflections on Religion and Violence within the Anarchist Turn, *Journal of Anarchist Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 2017, <https://www.lwbooks.co.uk/anarchist-studies/25-2>

¹⁹ B Latour, *We have never been modern*, Harvard University Press, 1991, B Latour, On Actor Network Theory, A few clarifications plus more than a few complications, *Philosophia*, Vol. 25. No. 3, pp. 47-64 *Sozialise Welt*, Vol, 47, 1996 pp. 369 -381, B Latour, Anthropocene Lecture, *HKW Berlin*, May 4th, 2018, <http://www.bruno-latour.fr/lectures.html>

²⁰ B Latour, in D Milstein, I Marrero-Guillamon & I Rodriguez-Giralt, Down to earth Social Movements: an interview with Bruno Latour, *Social Movement Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 3, pp. 353-361, DOI: 10.1080/14714742837.2018.1459298. complete p. 5.

²¹ A Antliff, About this issue’s cover: The Meaning of Decolonisation, *Anarchist Studies*, Vol. 28. No. 1. 2020. P.7.

Here in Australia the process of unlearning required to relearn is taking place through public figures such as Bruce Pascoe. Clearly this is not an easy task. As Pascoe noted, his skin is so light he often hears what mainstream Australia really thinks. “There is incomprehension, bitterness, vindictiveness, but, most importantly of all, an impoverished understanding of the national history.”²² Pascoe assists my research in foundational ways. Most significantly here in the introduction he does so by acknowledging that the “world is in too precarious a state to allow us to hide our heads in the sand any longer”, we have to embrace the nature of this continent and the knowledge of our people, gathered over eons.²³

No claim is made that the time in which I write is the only time of crisis on the planet, in this way it presents nothing new. In the stakes of ongoingness it embraces the speculative while remaining grounded in processes that seek to multiplying viewpoints, protect, biodiversity and decolonizing solidarity. Placing an emphasis on ecological food systems means acknowledging indigenous food provision systems as the ongoing basis of agroecology and of what in the 1970’s became permaculture. This also means acknowledging the existence of non-warring cultures and the armed and unarmed resistance mounted by peoples whose existence has been denied, subject to femicide, ecocide, genocide and less lethal forms of systemic racism and patriotic nationalism over thousands of years.

Seeking common terms fit for the politics that speculates on a future has occupied philosophers of the Anthropocene. For example, environmental philosopher, Timothy Morton, has fabricated a raft of speculative terms that might assist us to become ecological. *The Mesh, Dark Ecology, Hyperobjects* and *Object-Oriented Ontology*, among them.²⁴ The concept that resonated with me is the notion of the *strange stranger*. This concept suggests that even those people with whom you think you know well, you very often don’t.²⁵ On the other hand, it is possible to form an immediate affinity with people you have never met in person or with others one might meet for the first time. For feminist Donna J Haraway, “Science fact and speculative fabulation need each other, and both need speculative feminism.”²⁶

Beyond and into multispecies, feminism and science, Haraway, proposes the Chthulucene to name “the ongoing symchothoconic forces and powers of which people are a part and

²² B Pascoe, *Salt, Selected Stories and Essays*, Black Inc, Australia, 2019, p36.

²³ Ibid, p. 37.

²⁴ T Morton, www.ecologywithoutnature/books (accessed 20 September 2020); Ibid, Kennedy, *Deeply Felt*.

²⁵ Ibid, p – p.

²⁶ D J Haraway, *Staying with the trouble: Making Kin in the Chtulucene*, Drake University Press, London, 2016, p. 3

within which ongoingness is at stake.”²⁷ The Chthulucene is based on what Haraway calls “Odkin.”²⁸ Haraway, Morton and Latour place attention on the need to build uncanny, unexpected collaborations so that we might become one with each other as multiple species sharing a damaged and interactive planet. These theories, philosophies and practices suit the prefigurative and ongoing nature of the historical social revolution of social anarchism because the outlooks however different are expansive. They also resonate with a decolonializing, regenerative culture that *Stays with the Troubles*, to use Haraway’s term.

The troubles are clear; governments have failed to defend or secure their populations. Revolutionaries and Rebels, some of whom we meet in this research have refused to participate in and cooperate with the projects that destroy our common home. Both civil and uncivil disobedience are common and contested tactics of resistance in the mass revolts of the 21st century. The legal system is playing catch up with mounting charges of ecocide, genocide and femicide, but omnicide, the killing of everything evades legal redress. The question, who is responsible for Omnicide? has rightly been asked by Professor Danielle Celermajer.²⁹

Omnicide is the killing of everything. It is certainly the hardest charge to contemplate among the criminal cides. Its gravity so intense that much like the concept of social defence it can easily be met with mild amusement or incredulity. Surely no one is intent on killing everything, as Celermajer suggests, then again, our vital social systems are defended by a military system that is by design, intended to kill and otherwise contain and constrain. Celermajer believes that “all of us have created and are creating the conditions in which omnicide is inevitable.”³⁰ Most people paying attention are grappling with the gravity this as they attempt to take individual and collective responsibility for the disastrous politics of annihilation that imperialism has justified.

Along with recognised scholars I take inspiration from Christopher Crewe’s concept of ‘earthbound’ movements to situate the specific examples this thesis will explore vis-à-vis social defence.³¹ It is acknowledged that names can only take us so far. Looking into the *how*

²⁷ D J Haraway, Commentary, *Environmental Humanities*, Vol. 6, 205, p 59 -65.

²⁸ Ibid, p. 61.

²⁹ D Celermajer, Omnicide: Who is responsible for the gravest of all crimes? ABC Religion and Ethics, 3, Jan, 2020, <https://www.abc.net.au/religion/danielle-celermajer-omnicide-gravest-of-all-crimes/11838534> .

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ C G Crews, Social Movements and Earthbound People: Towards a New Politics of the Earth in the Anthropocene, PhD thesis, *New School of Social Research*, New York, 2019, ProQuest: 13859020

of these movements, into their processes, strategies and ways of being in resistance and regeneration is not just more interesting, it is practical.

It is risky using regenerative culture in the way I am. The term could easily be recuperated in the way that sustainability has been. On the other hand, it is central to Extinction Rebellion and is a mantra in agroecology and permaculture. I could not use the label anarchist movements or anarchists because I have no right to place others in political theory and traditions that they themselves have not chosen. Nor could I say that today's rebellions are socialist movements or peasant movements or environment or antifascist movements. They are all of these at once.

The internal culture that XR has built and is building upon is an ethic of care termed, "regenerative culture."³² Broadly speaking 'regenerative culture' can be seen as "an evolving concept that challenges the fundamentally uncaring and destructive relations of modern western society."³³ It is broad enough to carry the diversity of grassroots movements challenging the systems of power and creating the alternatives intent on providing care and mutual solidarity. The term is less likely not provoke a reaction from the authorities that misrepresent peaceful anarchists as violent extremists and/or ridiculous fringe dwellers.

The research design:

This research is oriented to the root causes of our collective troubles and the revolutionary potential of prefiguring a future. Regenerative cultures move beyond the smoke screen of sustainability and into deep practices that renews, restores, and recreates. Regenerative agriculture, for example, represents growing local, national, and global alliances committed to a transition that restores severely degraded ecological, social, and economic systems.³⁴

Social defence has regenerative potential because it gets to the root of systems and technologies of war- the military system. It offers individual and collective empowerment through voluntary participation, the establishment of alternative institutions and collective nonviolent defence against all forms of aggression and repression. Anarchism is regenerative because it gets to the root of our political systems by presenting the historical argument against government, capitalism and the modern system of nation states. Its

³² Emily Westwell & Josh Bunting, The Regenerative Culture of Extinction Rebellion, Self-care, people-care, planet care, *Environmental Politics*, Vol. 29. No. 3, 2020 p, 546-551, <https://doi.org/10.108/09644016.2020.1747136>, p 456.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Regeneration International, About Us, *Regeneration International. Org* <https://regenerationinternational.org/about-us/>; D C Wahl, We are living in the Century of Regeneration, *Medium.Com* August 2018, (accessed 11/09/2020).

movements, now thought to be in their fourth wave, offer a borderless world, of self-organized and mutual societies.³⁵

Food brings individuals into contact with their own existence and the cultural values, stories and rituals that inform their view of reality or ontological orientation to the world in which they live. Importantly, food has a significant role to play in reducing systemic violence and wars. In this research food is problematized through the crisis of agriculture that Walden Bello, called, 'Food Wars.'³⁶ Rather than feed the world, agriculture has done the opposite. Yes, agriculture has produced more and more food, but more and more people are going hungry, biodiversity has been severely threatened and the 'earth systems'³⁷ inclusive of its people have been poisoned.³⁸ As Fair Food advocate Nick Rose so clearly put it, 'our food system is not merely broken, it is *killing us*'...³⁹

Practitioners and advocates of corporate agriculture's alternatives, agroecology and permaculture, on the other hand, have demonstrated that their earth care systems and solidarity-based values of caring and sharing can feed the world and mitigate some of the damage caused through agriculture.⁴⁰ They have also demonstrated that they can do this without using toxic chemicals, monocultures, extractive energy technologies and the rampant exploitation of human energy – aka-labor. Yet their methods have been deemed, among other things, as primitive, uncivil and unprofitable.⁴¹

³⁵ J Adams, Rethinking Global Anarchism: Non Western Anarchism, *RA Forum*, 2005, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/jason-adams-non-western-anarchisms> (accessed 11/03/12). See also, P Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A history of Anarchism*, Harper Perennial, London, 1992.

³⁶ W Bello, *Food Wars*, Verso UK, 2008; W Bello and M Baviera, *Food Wars*, in F Magdoff and F T Tokar, *Agriculture and Food in Crisis*, Monthly Review Press, New, York, 2010.

³⁷ C Hamilton, *Defiant Earth: The fate of humans in the Anthropocene*, Allen & Unwin, Australia and New Zealand, 2017.

³⁸ M A Altieri, *Agroecology: Key concepts, principles and practices*, Third World Network and SOCLA, Malaysia and USA, 2015, p. 1.

³⁹ N Rose, *Fair Food, Stories from a Movement Changing The World*, University of Queensland Press, 2015, p. 2.

⁴⁰ B Mollison, *Introduction to Permaculture*, Tagari Press, Tasmania, 1991, p. 1-4.

⁴¹ See for examples, T Morton, *Humankind, Solidarity with Nonhuman People*, Verso, New York, 2018; P McMichael, Commentary: food regime for thought, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol, 43, No. 3, 2016, 648-670, doi.org/1080.03066150.1143816; J C Scott, Afterword to "Moral Economies, State Spaces, and Categorical Violence, *American Anthropologist*, Vol.103, 2005, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3567025> (accessed, 27/03/18); Y N Harari, *Homo Deus: A brief history of tomorrow*, Vintage, London, 2016. All of these authors concur on the point.

In these times agroecological practices make the majority world of capital and states look increasingly redundant because they have not been able to defend peoples basic right to existence. As Martin put it in 2014 – 2018; “Military, though justified as needed to deter and defend against external enemies are more commonly used to oppress their own people.”⁴² Military industrial/technological/media/academic complexes defend states, economic inequality and systems of aggression and repression. These are killing systems, yet they remain unchanged by the uptake in the use of and interest in nonviolent action/civil resistance during the 1990s.

Focusing on food is not singularly a matter of metabolism, as our most vital life system, it is significant because, “a positive, inclusive relationship with food allows us to create communities and a vision of what is possible.”⁴³ To tell the truth and act like that truth is real.”⁴⁴ Extinction Rebellion’s first demand, could well be the mantra keeping this thesis together. Telling the truth about our food systems and acting like that truth is real, opens the way to telling the truth about our military systems and acting like that is real. At least that is how I have imagined my way into the concept of social defence. We all know it is not that simple. As “neither states nor markets can exist without the constant threat of force”⁴⁵ because both “are founded on a very similar logic of violence,”⁴⁶ they stand in the way of alternatives such as social defence. Just as they ignore the claim that agroecology rejects the military system.

The aim of the research:

The aim of the research was to learn from experienced people and movements within regenerative culture. The literature used in this thesis points to consistent historical links between anarchism and social defence. Contemporary examples within agroecology and anarchism/grass roots suggested that social defence is being prefigured. In the case of Rojava, social defence is here experimentally in the form of Democratic Confederalism, if revolutionary nonviolence is understood as journey towards anarcho pacifism. These are its historical roots, in Europe, the United States and most other parts of the world. Post WW1, anarchists re explored and articulated modern radical pacifism. Many upon being released from prison were those pacifists that had embraced anarchism during the war. They put their theory into practice and “launched new organisations that today we call intersectional.”⁴⁷

⁴² B Martin. Social Defence, A revolutionary Agenda, 2018, Conference Paper, Pacifist Conference, Otago University New Zealand, 2018, add weblink.

⁴³ Momo Haque, *This is Not a Drill*, Extinction Rebellion, Penguin, UK, 2019, p.112.

⁴⁴ XR, First Demand, www.earthrebellion.org/demands

⁴⁵ D Graeber, Debt, The first Five thousand years, *Eurozine*, 2010, p. 3.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ A Cornell, *Unruly Equality: US Anarchism in the Twentieth Century*, University of California Press, p. 148.

The methodology:

The methodology keeping the thesis coherent is Post-qualitative – Prefigurative Politics. The primary method is Autoethnography. Post qualitative inquiry follows broader historical currents within post structuralism stretching into the precarious present. A premise is that; “The experimentation required in post qualitative inquiry cannot be accomplished within the methodological enclosure.”⁴⁸ Things in the making, how and what is becoming drive this methodology. In contrast existing methodological structures contain and constrain research in formulaic processes that researchers must fit into.

As I had difficulty fitting in with these, post qualitative inquiry has facilitated my use of prefigurative politics precisely because it is, personal, political, generative and experimental. Ethnographically, my own experiments arise in solidarity with the alternatives I use to explore social defence just as they do with the concept itself. As such the methodology is endogenous. My own experiences of starting, along with my partner, an off-grid permaculture-oriented food farm in 2014 and my sustained involvement in revolutionary nonviolent activism and research form an essential and valid part of the experimental, embodied and reflective analysis that keep this inquiry in motion. Most obviously because I am in the research field(s) of agroecology/permaculture every day.

The Extinction Rebellion arose on the other side of the world shortly after I began this research, it took root in Australia and globally, in 2019, the second year of my research period. It presented to me, in the territory that I inhabit and the contexts that constitute my life as a necessary response to the common crisis in the biosphere and a hopeful expression of nonviolent revolution. Suddenly my marginal topic took on a life of its own when I joined the rebellion in July 2019 at the Lismore Town Hall.

I was in it before it arose as were many but not all my new-found rebellious friends. Simply because we had been active in the global justice movements that arose during the 1990’s and were accustomed to working in loose affinity groups, self -organizing and working with people whose viewpoints were different. I am a white person who is happy with the pronoun female whose blood family were dairy farmers, bush people, mechanics, and more generally, civilised working class folk. My life, then, is constituted by the processes of those on the winning side of empire and colonization. Wars of military, political and cultural domination.

⁴⁸ E A, St Pierre, Writing Post-qualitative inquiry, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 24, 2018, DOI: 10/1177/1077800417734567, p. 603.

Now at risk of run-a-way everything, these wars have evolved into a vast apparatus of organized violence and destruction that are fundamental to the political economy of the global patriarchy's capitalist system. In 2018, the UN warned its global audience of a new cold war between the United States and China which would be more dangerous and harder to manage.⁴⁹ Its secretary- general, also launched a disarmament agenda, in a "non -paper" and "based on concrete practical actions."⁵⁰ Thus, the managers of war and peace – violence, the international system of laws, humanitarian, economic and political, trade resource– wars have admitted that war has in fact, got away from them. Anyone expecting a global ceasefire, as was recommended by the UN Secretary General as the pandemic emerged in 2020 will be disappointed with the current escalations and major shifts taking place in global politics in 2021. These are heading further from collectively conceptualising of social defence as an alternative to the military, just as they are powerfully suggesting we take more notice of the concept.

This research was inspired by and builds upon the work of dissident academic, Brian Martin. It responds to his 2014 question; "Whatever happened to social defence"?⁵¹ and accepts "that it is not clear how to promote social defence nor should it be the preserve of any particular group or orientation."⁵² The approach taken here is one amongst many possibilities.

The proposition and argument of the thesis:

The proposition informing the thesis was that social defence is philosophically, theoretically and practically well developed within contemporary earthbound movements and regenerative cultures. Through their collective, 'knowing of knowledge' 'valuing of value' and their 'believing and beliefs';⁵³ the alternatives explored here demonstrate life affirming, participatory, voluntary and self-organised approaches to living in the world. Through anarchist viewpoints, they show individual empowerment, collective interests and an expansive imaginary.

Another way of saying this is:

Social defence does not exist as a nonviolent system in our present. Like democracy, it is an ideal. However, if it ever were to replace military systems, the proposition put forward here

⁴⁹ A Guterres, United Nations Secretary General, Security our Common Future, *Office for Disarmament Affairs*, New York, May,24, 2018, p. xi

⁵⁰ Ibid, p.74.

⁵¹ Ibid, B Martin, *Whatever happened*,2014

⁵² B Martin, *Social Defence, Social Change*, Freedom Press, 1993, p. 35.

⁵³ R Bawden, Epistemic aspects of social ecological conflict, in D Cartwright, C Camden – Pratt and S Hill, *Social Ecology: applying ecological understanding to our lives and our planet*, Hawthorn Press, UK, 2011, p. 54.

is that significant and vital aspects of such a system are, epistemologically, ontologically and axiologically well developed, within agroecology and anarchism as they unfold in myriad prefigurative formations of resistance and rebellion today. Here I call these regenerative cultures. Hence, it is to people practicing these and my own experiments with them that the thesis looks and hopes to learn from.

In food wars, it is becoming increasingly evident that agroecology and permaculture can feed the world,⁵⁴ regenerate biodiversity; reduce waste and harness alternative, sustainable energy and water. The histories and present movements of agroecology are organic and healthy. In addition, agroecology values ecological and cosmological knowledge, believes in interconnectivity, solidarity and cooperation and follows ethics based on sharing, caring and a spirit of experimentation and service within one's community.⁵⁵ The histories and present movements of anarchism are diverse and often divisive. Yet they offer a viable alternative to democratic liberalism, Marxism, Fascism and popular authoritarianisms.⁵⁶

In turn this suggests that vital aspects of any future system of social defence is being prefigured in the present. When refined, the argument was that a nascent and building synergy of earth-bound movements provides examples of 'temporary autonomous zones'⁵⁷ of regenerative culture, inside, against and beyond, nation states, neoliberal capitalism and popular authoritarianism. Neoliberalism, even if it is called social democracy, is increasingly authoritarian, racist, patriarchal, cruel and life destroying.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ M Altieri, *Agroecology, Small Farms and Food Sovereignty*, in Ibid, Magdoff & Tokar, 2010, p.253-267; Bija Vidyapeeth – Earth University, Doon Valley, India. Home of *Navdanya*, <http://www.navdanya.org/earth-university> (accessed 03/07/18).

⁵⁵ C Burk, *Permaculture Design, Pedagogical Resources, Resilience. Org*, November 2018, <http://www.resilience.org/resilience>, (accessed 04/02/2018). See, *The laboratory of Insurrectionary Information, 13 attitudes, 9th Experiment, Post-Crash*, 2009, www.labofii.net, (accessed 15/12/2015).

⁵⁶ B Morris, *Kropotkin: The Politics of Community*, PM Press, Oakland, 2018, p. 20.

⁵⁷ H Bey, *the Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy and other Essays*, Autonomdia, New York, 2003; R F Day, *Gramsci is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements*, Pluto Press, Toronto, 2005.

⁵⁸ J Cribb, *Surviving the 21st Century*, 2017; V Shiva, *Peddling Poison, and sowing the seeds of suicide: Two decades of Monsanto's illegal actions, frauds and crimes in India*, *Vandana Shiva. Com*, November 24th, 2017, [http:// www.vandanshiva.com](http://www.vandanshiva.com) (accessed 01/12/17); J Bellamy Foster, *Capitalism has failed, What Next?* *The Monthly Review*, February 01, 2019, pp. 2-32; T Trainer, *The Simpler Way; Collected Writings of Ted Trainer*, (ed's) J Rutherford and S Alexander, Simplicity Institute, Australia, 2020.

In December 2020 I abandoned my previous plans to interview people, even via email, due to the lengthy processes of obtaining ethics approval and supervisory approval to do so. Just three months out from the end of the scholarship and formal research time frame of three years I had not obtained approvals. It was possible to rush them through. However, in my view that would only lead to rushed work that would add little to what is offered here and what might be made of it. This research lived through my autoethnography of regenerative culture and the four examples I use to explore the concept of social defence and from which I hope to learn. Two of these examples are treated analytically as per scholarly convention. They are Navdanya and Rojava. Extinction Rebellion and Rainbow Family form part of the autoethnographical chapter which is presented as a photo essay. I have two published photo essays, one published during this thesis and one not long before I began. So, it seemed sensible to make use of that experience, however limited in this thesis.

Citation practices attend to the traditional use of primary and secondary source material. Academic data bases have been useful. However, movement websites and linked affinity websites on commons and social media are also used extensively. Academic blogs, Official Government Institutions, Think Tanks, International Organisations, such as the United Nations, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The World Economic Forum are all in the mix of source material. Where possible I will use the most recent update to publications from official sources and each of the movements. I also use recent doctoral and theses when I can to support others. In summary, citation practices balance traditional approaches with the spirit of creativity and experimentation expected in research that is attuned to big picture of symchothoconic forces and the potential of social defence.

The organisation of the thesis

Chapter 1: Introduction:

Introduces the research topic, contexts, aim and proposition of the research. The methodology of post qualitative inquiry and prefigurative politics as well as the primary method of autoethnography are introduced. The structure of the thesis is also introduced through each of its chapters and the concluding section of this chapter, updates reality by commenting on the politics and impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Chapter 2: Key definitions: The social semiotics of; Social Defence, Anarchism, Agroecology, Permaculture, People, Feminism, Patriarchy and Cosmology:

This chapter discusses working definitions of some of the key areas of the research. Other key terms, such as violence and nonviolence are presented in greater detail in later chapters. The purpose here is familiarise the reader with contexts in which definitions were formed as well as to assure the reader that definitions are appropriately sourced and that they have been thoughtfully selected. A sense of polyvalency is assumed.

Chapter 3. Methodology:

Post qualitative methodology is justified and the grounding aspects of prefigurative politics are explained through the resonant and analytical scholarly literature. Due to the speculative nature of the methodology, no methodological claims to generality are made or pursued. Our contexts show that our common problems unite us as a species of people who share a planet, and that love could well be epistemology, ontology and axiology of earth bound politics and regenerative cultures. Ethically thought, the principles are here on my understanding and do not need to be proved.

The methodology is itself speculative and emergent. Following key authors such as Elizabeth St Pierre had been aptly described by Le Grange as emergent, becoming and post-anthropocentric.⁵⁹ Post-qualitative theory does not separate the ontological from the epistemological. This non-separation of the possible basis and processes of knowledge from, the possible basis and processes of existence is what makes post-qualitative approaches distinct from realist, social constructivist and other colonial and positivist approaches to knowing, being and becoming.⁶⁰ Philosophy is treated as being important and worth spending a lot of time with because it supports all methodology, regardless of its purpose and particular methods. Philosophy is generative of the collective ideas of history. Of the stories of what is yet to exist, is currently subjugated, denied or otherwise rendered irrelevant, marginal to social research methodology.

Chapter 4: Autoethnography as Method:

Just ten years ago, autoethnography was struggling to exist as a social research method, today there are “multiple forms of ethnography that compete for attention”.⁶¹ Regardless of the form an autoethnography takes it is always a relational process. In her exploration of rigour in autoethnographic research, Cheryl S Le Roux suggests, “if the rigour of autoethnography is to be established, it would seem that evaluation criteria might need to be specifically conceived taking into account the particular genre and consequently unique goals of the research”.⁶² Along with scholarly literature on the method, this chapter explores two examples of autoethnography that assist the reader who may be unfamiliar with the method, or simply wants more clarity. Honesty is a foundational aspect of autoethnography because it charts a “critical and reflective movement through everydayness”.⁶³

⁵⁹ L L Grange, What is Post-Qualitative Research, *South African Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 32. No. 5, 2018. p.10,

⁶⁰ N S Mauthner, A Posthumanist Ethics of Mattering: New Materialisms and ethical practice of inquiry, R Iphefen & M Tolich, (ed) *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research Ethics*, 2019, p.64.

⁶¹ NK Denzin, A Manifesto for Performative Autoethnography, *International Review of Qualitative Research*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2017, p45.

⁶² C E Le Roux, Exploring Rigour in Autoethnographic Research, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, Vol.20 No. 2. 2017, p.20.

⁶³ T Spry, *Performing and Writing autoethnography*, Left Coast Press, California, 2011, p. 120.

Chapter 5: Exegesis. Brian Martin's unruly concept of Social Defence:

Presents an exegesis of Brian Martin's work on the concept of social defence. The chapter first introduces Brian Martin himself and his body of work, situating this within broader nonviolence/civil resistance literature. The body of the chapter makes use of Haraway's concept of *staying with the troubles*, to focus in on contentious and nebulous areas within nonviolence and the concept of social defence that remain, often profoundly, unsettled. These are, Pacifism, Just War, Self Defence, Revolution, Violent Nonviolence, Civil Disobedience, Policing and Resistance Movements. In this way the chapter considers Martin's work in relation to broader literature within revolutionary nonviolence, peacebuilding, philosophy, ethics and the laws, or lack of them in today's high tech, all of society forever wars. Anarcho pacifism is the mainspring of my reading of Martin. Anarchism's broader ambivalence toward violence also assists my reading of Martin vis-à-vis the four movements and my own experiments.

My interpretation of Social Defence finds the prospect of legal anarchism resonant with Martin's work. As such it provides a credible source of inspiration and information in relation to my interpretation of the concept. Anarcho pacifist peace, on my reading of Martin is consistent with his recommendations, observations and conversations. Allowing for diversity, such an understanding of peace, in my view is evident in earth bound movements such as agroecology. I have also found that Martin's work on the topic is rarely cited in the broader nonviolence, civil resistance literature. At the same time some of the enduring ideas of the concept are evident in the movements this research explores. Social defence is fit for the purpose of attending to the troubles of the Anthropocene and the ongoing project of emancipation from the military system of defence and security that in no small part led to the new climate regimes and is currently attempting to command and control the troubles through the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). ⁶⁴Hence, sleepwalking into more, not less violence and war.

This is not a traditional literature review. It is longer, and if done well, should have more substance and depth. Except for small mentions of the term that unsurprisingly reference Brian Martin there is little literature in English that specifically addresses the topic from a nonviolent standpoint since the demise of the peace movements. Martin and his collaborators, particularly Jorgen Johansen provide a body of work on the topic from the early 1980s to the present. Their most recent contribution, *Social Defence*, was published by Irene Press in 2019. ⁶⁵ Despite this body of work, I have been consistently asked "but who do you use, Foucault"? As if using the work of a dedicated and thoughtful academic, close to

⁶⁴ Broadcast on mainstream medias, The Australian National Broadcaster here in Australia, the BBC, Al Jazeera and so forth. In this thesis I will assume the reader is following political shifts and does not need me to provide links to everyday sources of public information media.

⁶⁵ B Martin and J Johansen, *Social Defence*, Irene Press, Sweden, 2019.

home, with whom I have formed relations is somehow not scholarly enough. Or worthy of the attention. Or?

Brian Martin's conceptualizing of social defence has consistently taken an anarchist political trajectory that, rather than anarchist, is called grass roots. To ignore this body of work or shirk from attempting to answer his provocative question, whatever happened to it would further subjugate, pacifism and anarchism, a move that would simply work for the status quo that social defence contests. Clearly this thesis does no such work. This is a key chapter of the thesis, as such it has been used to draw out the four key ideas I use loosely in some chapters and more formally in others to assist my understanding of what Martin calls the radical potential of social defence. These are. 1- that social defence is possible 2 - that it empowers people to resist aggression and repression 3 - those official channels are likely to respond with threats and/or the use of repression and aggression and 4 - that it requires the construction of alternative institutions and forms of organisation from the grass roots.

Chapter 6: Revolutionary Nonviolence:

In this chapter I explore approaches to revolutionary nonviolence and anarcho pacifism. The chapter covers contemporary approaches to Pacifism, Self-defence, Just War and Civil Disobedience. It brings Rojava into the conversations vis-à-vis the exegesis undertaken in chapter five. Ecological philosophy of nonseparation is applied to violence and argues that following this, we give everyone a gun or take all the guns away, otherwise nonviolence only exists in the nightmare of positive binaries that are not attuned to the Anthropocene, or helpful when considering the potential of revolutionary nonviolence, for social defence.

Chapter 7: Food Wars:

This chapter puts food at the center of the concept of social defence and by doing so, it assists my understanding, this in turn contributes to collective understanding of 'what happened to it' and what, where and how of its potential. It shows that alternatives to the military are being prefigured in agroecological food systems. If these alternatives are ever multiplied enough times in enough territories and if this in turn leads to deeper political systems change, the potential and relevance of the concept would be substantiated. Social defence as an alternative to the military might, in that case, simply be the agenda. The variant from the ideological arrow, still in the mix of multiple ongoing experiments.

Chapter 8: Food systems alternatives:

This chapter takes focuses on the alternatives of Agroecology and the food sovereignty movements that have formed through international peasant, feminist, political, social and ecological justice movements. It brings agroecology into the conversation with social

defence and puts food first. Regenerative culture is expanded and reckoned with in this chapter and new peasant feminisms are introduced. Along with Julian Cribb, asking the question will we choose food or war is central to the exploration under way in chapter six and seven.⁶⁶

Chapter 9: Autoethnography: A Photo Essay of Regenerative Culture:

In this chapter I invite you join me in this exploration of the potential of social defence by asking you to ponder some of the questions that I had planned to ask others, whose experience and knowledge within agroecology-permaculture and or grassroots, anarchism, revolutionary nonviolence, it was hoped, would help me learn more about the concept. To assist this shared imaginative process, I have selected 13 photographs. These images help me handle the gamut of options available in the autoethnographic method. Some of the photographs are evocative and moody, others are straightforward, still others attempt to convey the agroecological practices in the emergent food gardens on our farm. Some represent the official level of war and invoke analysis. Rainbow Family, Food Not Bombs and Extinction Rebellion join us, on board the Bus to Nowhere.

The two movements I use to explore the concept and my evolving understanding of it are included as Appendix. I hope the reader will find the material interesting, resonant and credible enough that they do read the Appendix.

These are:

Appendix 1. Love your mother like no other: The Navdanya Movement and Social Defence.

Appendix 2: In the context of life and death: Rojava and Social Defence.

Appendix 3: Rojava Timeline.

Appendix 4: Participant Information Sheet.

Chapter 10: Conclusion:

The proposition, that social defence is being philosophically and practically prefigured, has not been found to be unreasonable or perhaps as marginal as it is made to look in state centric literature. However, the idea of replacing military systems faces significant challenges. Adding the concept of social defence more explicitly to permaculture and extinction rebellion discussions would contribute to the efforts already underway in agroecological movements that do make it explicit that agroecology is a rejection of the war machine. Perhaps, the concept can help to orient movements where ideology seems to prohibit the potential of some concepts. This research affirms the under researched aspect of the concept since the mid-1990s to 2021. Martin's caution to activists, that by taking their focus off the military system, that system may hit them in the face, appears to be true.

⁶⁶ Ibid, J Cribb, *Food or War*, 2019.

However, It really does depend on who is setting the agenda for who and how that agenda will be implemented.

Updating reality: # Pandemic. Entering the collective realms.

I feel I can say with some confidence that those I am speaking about and in solidarity with would all agree; “The coronavirus has come as a gift to authoritarian states, (because) in country after country...governments are using the lock-downs to silence their critics.”⁶⁷ In India, the origin of the Navdanya movement, “things are happening with speed; if we were sleepwalking into the surveillance state pre corona we are now panic-running into the arms of a super surveillance state that asks us to give up everything.”⁶⁸

We, anarcho rebels, used to jokingly say: *stay at home, you will only get in the way*. That was years ago, at the beginning of the neoliberal assault upon sociality and what remained of common public spaces and earth systems. It was also an excellent way to encourage humanities students to think about what politics is by prompting them to think about how it works.⁶⁹ Students were not sure how to take the suggestion when I used it in my classes – as teacher provocateur. The pandemic has put people in their place just as it has destroyed the illusion that social change is impossibly slow.

At the time of writing, rebellion has been locked down in many parts of the world. In other places unlikely coalitions of people are protesting the economic and social restrictions of lockdowns the virus legalises and the way the virus has been mobilized as another war. In other, often forgotten places, people are innovating and making their own ventilators, face masks and experimenting with organic treatments for Malaria as well as the Corona virus.⁷⁰ At the time of writing, XR was at home together, reflecting, nurturing, holding its visions and reformulating its strategy. As I edit the work a few months later, they are re-emerging in ‘Covid safe ways. For Extinction Rebellion Australia, “Activism is an essential service” and we all “have a duty of care.” The Lismore movement shrank dramatically post the pandemic, a smaller group now organise various actions, weekly, on and offline and rebels are dispersed,

⁶⁷ Ibid, Shiva.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ I used the saying in my classes in subjects such as power and change, political theory, ideas in history and so forth between 2006-2014. I also used it in guest lectures and research presentations for the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies at USYD.

⁷⁰ Aljazeera, \$1 test kits: Senegal’s approach to coronavirus, 28 April, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/podcasts/thetake/2020/04/1-testing-kits-senegal-approach-coronavirus-200427143150262.html> (accessed 3 May 2020); B Cutzen, The Malaria Business: Big Pharma vs Natural Medicine, *France 24*, April, 2019 <https://www.france24.com/en/20190111-reporters-plus-malaria-business-big-pharma-vs-natural-medicine-artemisia-annua-who>; N Swan, Coronacast, ABC Radio National, <https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/coronacast/> (accessed 1 July 2020).

appearing at actions such as Fridays for Forests, Disrupt Land Forces and major city actions convergence. I have personally retreated temporarily to concentrate on writing this thesis, on upscaling seasonal vegetable production and delivering the surplus to more vulnerable folk in nearby villages, and to friends and neighbours close to home. Freedom rallies replaced the extinction rallies drawing previously antagonistic groups together to oppose the draconian laws the pandemic has been used to rationalise.

The COVID-19 pandemic is linked to the climate emergency and the mass extinction it is part of.⁷¹ It has shown that political will and speed are not obstacles, or the reasons why we can't bring about massive and radical social change. This debate is over! Change is and arguably always has been sharp, brutal and instant when the political is viewed as personal, social and ecological. While states and corporations continue to proliferate weapons of disruption and destruction, the pandemic has shown that they could just as easily stop these practices almost overnight.⁷²

To be honest, some days I just don't know what to think about the rapidly moving situation and maintaining concentration has not been easy. On clear days, I am outraged at the audacity of what looks like a planetary re-setting; "A coup against a terrified humanity", as nonviolent, strategist, Robert Burrowes has put.⁷³ On other days, I shut the laptop, turn off the internet and walk out into the garden. I am in the garden every day, particularly at the moment because the weather is warming and we are germinating seed for summer food crops and mulching soils in preparation for the heat of summer, feeding citrus trees and other fruiting trees. Here, the vegetable gardens, the soil, the trees, the Kookaburras and the weather of the day re-affirm my own fragile sense of refuge and my hope in a future resurgence of people's harmonious, earth bound multispecies relations.

⁷¹ Ibid, Shiva, *An ecological response, Oneness*; Ibid J Cribb, *Surviving the 21st Century*; A Ladha & F Viveros, Indigenous People guard the lungs of the planet for all of us, *Aljazeera Opinion*, 16 June, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/indigenous-peoples-guard-lungs-planet-200610111532981.html>.

⁷² I Debre, UAE Weapons show draws major deals, traders amid pandemic, Associated Press, 2 February, 2021, <https://apnews.com/article/middle-east-abu-dhabi-coronavirus-pandemic-united-arab-emirates-e6e9dfba107e2b3c2d579305823534a9>; R S Cohen, What the UAE Weapons Deal Says About the United States and its Allies, Lawfare. Com, February, 28, 2021, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/what-uae-weapons-deal-says-about-united-states-and-its-alliances>; UN Disarmament Commission, add the source,

⁷³ R W Burrowes, Elite Coup against a terrified humanity, *Nation of Change*, May 2020, <https://www.nationofchange.org/2020/05/05/the-elites-covid-19-coup-against-a-terrified-humanity-resisting-powerfully/> (accessed 20 June, 2020); R J Burrowes archive, Series extends Elite Coup, *Global Research*, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/author/robert-j-burrowes> (accessed 22 June, 2020).

Social defence as a straightforward idea does seem to be on all the big agendas today but not as an alternative to the military. There are far too many enemies and threats and way too much inequality and organised resistance for that. Weapons spending is on the rise.⁷⁴ Trade wars and vaccine wars are emerging as a battlefield of broader global significance.⁷⁵ Enter – the surveillance of what is inside of our bodies and how that is used to control our lives. Temperature = Check. Symptoms = Clear. Movements = Tracked = Job = lost or not, your livelihood cancelled. Just another ordinary day in the annals of national security and defence.⁷⁶ Of people's subject to aggression and repression organised by the ruling system and their willing accomplices within the excluded middle, of quiet global citizens – that according to my research, does not actually exist.

It remains to be seen if the new normal – The War on Domestic Terrorism – that gathered pace during Covid, in the US, Germany and France, for example, will impact Navdanya, Extinction Rebellion or Rainbow People.⁷⁷ Rojava's leader is a Terrorist in the eyes of NATO and friends and Rojava's Self Defence Forces have assisted the global coalition to defeat Isis and then been brutally betrayed. If the systems of global capital has no outside, "its only enemies are within the system, and thus, by definition, are insurgents, also known as terrorists and extremists."⁷⁸ The problem is that modern governments are confounded by the necessity of sharing the planet with people they have previously called, "traditionalists, reactionaries, or simply locals."⁷⁹

The modern exile from the local into global uniformity is over and people are now attempting to return to country, territory, land *"that is already occupied, that has been populated from time immemorial and that has more recently undergone a repopulation by the multitude of those who have felt, well ahead of the others, the extent to which it was necessary to flee post-haste from the injunction to modernize."*⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Global Military expenditure sees largest annual increase in a decade, April 2020, SIPRI, <https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2020/global-military-expenditure-sees-largest-annual-increase-decade-says-sipri-reaching-1917-billion> (accessed 1 July, 2020).

⁷⁵ Ibid, Burrowes, Elite Coup; C Report, Bill Gates plan to vaccinate the world, part 2, *off-guardian*, May 9, 2020, <https://off-guardian.org/2020/05/09/watch-bill-gates-plan-to-vaccinate-the-world/>.

⁷⁶ B Seargent, 2017-2020 Defence Corporate Plan, *Australian Government Department of Defence*, 7 June, 2017, www.gov.defence.au ; Defence Covid-19 Task Force page shows what tasks the Australian defence forces are undertaking in response to the pandemic, <https://www.defence.gov.au/covid-19/> (accessed 2 June, 2020); S Ruberzstein-Dunlop and K Taylor, Think of the Corona Virus as a test run: Australian Military leaders warn we must prepare for worse, ABC, April 29, 2020, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-04-29/military-leaders-warn-australia-prepare-for-worse-coronavirus/12193228>.

⁷⁷ C J Hopkins, The (New Normal) War on Domestic Terror, *off-guardian.com*, February 9th, 2021,

⁷⁸ Ibid,

⁷⁹ Ibid, Latour, *Down To Earth*, 2019, p. 42

⁸⁰ Latour Ibid.

Tending the grassroots: Introducing the movements

Moving into more concrete grounds I have drawn four key ideas from the concept of social defence, and these are applied, with varying degrees of emphasis to the four movements the thesis hopes to learn from. They are: *That social defence, as an alternative to the military, is possible. That it empowers people to take responsibility to work collectively against all forms of oppression and aggression. That it will likely be resisted by governments. That existing institutions will need to be replaced and alternatives created.*

Consensus says our species existence is at stake so sitting on the fence, sticking to the non-existent middle ground is not an option. It never really was. As Vandana Shiva explains, in quantum physics there is no excluded middle, and everything is potential.⁸¹ Alone and together, each of the movements have significant experience of voluntary, open participatory processes which include outreach and empowerment. Each is based in people's self-organisation and various forms of non-cooperation with the existing dominant systems. They effectively erase the modern ideology that seems stuck in a straight line, assuming a polarity of extremes from political left to right and a great vacuum of silence in between. This ideology of separation is the civilisations ruling tactic. The movements explored here expose the paucity and vacuous politics at work in such an approach.

Each movement has an analysis of power relations that informs their strategies and each to lesser or greater extent is involved in collaborative research and reflective analysis of their own processes. Countering mis- and dis-information. Official channels, as we should know by now, often don't achieve anything which is also often their intent.⁸²

Eveline Lubbers research into corporate and police spying shows that undercover policing, infiltration and the criminalisation of dissent is a fundamental aspect of state power in liberal democracies.⁸³ "Counter-insurgency is a type of war that emphasises intelligence networks, psychological operations, media manipulation, security provision and social development that seeks to maintain governmental legitimacy."⁸⁴ Extinction Rebellion may

⁸¹ V Shiva, Seeds of Truth, Vandana Shiva and the New Yorker, *Sciencenews.org* <https://www.independentsciencenews.org/un-sustainable-farming/seeds-of-truth-vandana-shiva-new-yorker/> (accessed 20 July 2019) Published in response to M Spectre, Seeds of Doubt, the *New Yorker*, August 2014 <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/08/25/seeds-of-doubt> (accessed 20 July 2019).

⁸² B Martin, *Official Channels*, Irene Publishing, Sweden, 2020, makes this argument through case studies within whistleblowing, scientific controversies, corruption in Banking and more.

⁸³ E Lubbers, Undercover Research, Academics, activists and others investigate political policing, in A Chowdry (ed), *Activists and the Surveillance State, learning from repression*, Pluto Press, 2019.

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 238.

not have achieved their aims but along with others they have shifted the conversation and brought climate change and species extinction to the attention of more people.⁸⁵

The capacity to “deal with disinformation” and the establishment of effective communications, internally within movements and externally with the broader public and dominant official institutions is a key component of social defence.⁸⁶ Think tanks and lobby groups have played a huge role in disputing the scientific consensus on climate change, hiding the evidence of alternatives and degrading their opponents.⁸⁷ The psychological operations of war have traditionally been about the battle for hearts and minds which is needed to sustain ‘threats’ and legitimate warfare. Units “producing paper bullets and black propaganda of the type that tries to conceal its own source,”⁸⁸ were developed with enthusiasm in the First and Second World Wars.

The ruling tactic of separating some people from others to create a ‘legitimate’ enemy and/or to garner support for campaigns of annihilation, ethnocide and ecocide, has not changed.⁸⁹ The expansion of strategic manipulation of information through data wars and psychographics, now happening through artificial intelligence (AI). Moving with unprecedented scope and velocity AI and quantum technology disrupts every industry and every aspect of life.⁹⁰ The rise of right-wing popular nationalism in the United States, Europe, Australia and other places is partly explained by the fact that the ruling elite influence and control the economic system and they have a coherent communications

⁸⁵ P Moraro, Threats to extinction rebellion show their demands are being heard but ignored, *The Conversation*, republished in the *ABC*, 12 October, 2019, www.abc/conversation (accessed 15 November 2019); R Marsh, A new kind of conversation, *Medium. Com*, https://medium.com/@robmarsh_92449/a-new-kind-of-conversation-5530f7b7ed16 April, 2019 (accessed 18 June, 2020); G Carlile, largely following Lakey, offers a critical perspective that supports XR’s new direction, Where XR and the climate need to go now, *Peacenews*, Issue. 2630-2631, June, July 2019, <https://peacenews.info/node/9356/where-xr-and-climate-movement-need-go-now> (accessed 12 April 2020); XR Story- Vision – 2020, *Rebellion.Earth*, www.rebellion.earth/strategy (accessed 28 January, 2020); S Karatatasli, The twenty first century and internationalism: a world historical perspective, *Globalisations*, Vol. 16, No. 7, 2018, p 985-997, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2019.1651525> (accessed 12 June, 2020).

⁸⁶ J Johansen and B Martin, *Social Defence*, Irene Publishing, Sweden, 2019, p, 61, 100- 174.

⁸⁷ R Aedy, Hot Mess, *Radio National*, May 2020 <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/hot-mess/> (accessed 18 May 2020), Ibid, B Latour, *Down to Earth*, 2019, also charts the political and monetary impacts upon scientific knowledge.

⁸⁸ J A C Brown, *Techniques of Persuasion, from propaganda to brainwashing*, Penguin, UK, 1963, p. 82, 98.

⁸⁹ B Martin, *Ruling Tactics*, Irene Publications, 2017, available at www.bmartin.edu.au/publications/.

⁹⁰ D Godrej, The Age of Disruption, *New Internationalist*, November, 2017, p. 12.

strategy.⁹¹ Cambridge Analytica's role in electoral manipulation provides just one example of the evidence of this within contemporary psychographic/information/truth wars.⁹²

Pressing on we need to acknowledge the rise of killer robots and other contemporary weapons technology. Alarming, these are accompanied by a rise in civilian casualties in countries such as Yemen and Somalia and the reduction in military lives lost in the US army that is somehow falling under the radar.⁹³ Nation states have always relied on control and manipulation of knowledge and processes of division and separation. As Shiva succinctly put it, "separation is violence."⁹⁴ Yet when applied to nonviolence this means that even Shiva has a gun.

Modern bureaucracy functions as a "utopia rules."⁹⁵ The rule keeping it churning over is that one size fits all which has worked for the 1% because they now own most of the world. This utopia has been called out and rejected on multiple grounds. The number of members of the elites is not the important point, it could be 1.01% 0.0001% or another combination, the point is that "1% is not just a number, it is a system, an economic system shaped by a tiny minority of rich and powerful."⁹⁶ Shiva is one of many to have repeatedly explained how these systems have resulted in "economic apartheid between the haves and the have-nots, which translates into an ecological apartheid between lives and live-nots."⁹⁷ Rising inequality, material and ecological disruption is built into the ruling systems of this civilization.

Historian Yuval Noah Harari put it this way; "Whether you live in Congo or Mongolia, in New Zealand or Bolivia, your daily routines and economic fortunes depend upon the same

⁹¹ S Lovera-Bilderbeek, The World Social Forum: Between Politics and NGOs, *Globalisations*, Issue. 2, 2020 p, 231, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2019.1670960>, Ibid, Aedy, *Hot Mess*, Radio National, 2020, episode 2.

⁹² A Ramsey, Cambridge Analytica is what happens when you privatise military propaganda, *Open Democracy* UK, 3 April, 2018 <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/dark-money-investigations/cambridge-analytica-is-what-happens-when-you-privatise-military-propaganda/> (accessed 20 may 2020).

⁹³ N Sharkey, Killer Robots, *New Internationalist*, November 2017, p. 14-16; D Sjursen, The End of War as We Know it? *Tom Dispatch* May 26th <https://www.tomdispatch.com/blog/176705/> (accessed 28 May 2020).

⁹⁴ V Shiva, *Oneness versus the 1%*, Spinifex Press, Australia, 2018, 2020, p.16.

⁹⁵ D Graeber, *The Utopia of Rules*, On Technology, stupidity and the secret joys of bureaucracy, Melville House, 2015; K Kennedy, Against a definition in favour of nonviolent social defence and the anarchist turn, *Peace and Conflict Review*, Vol. 9, No.1, 2016.

⁹⁶ Ibid, Shiva, *Oneness*, p. 29-53; P Koenig, The global reset-Unplugged. The Deep State, 17 June 2020, *Globalresearch*, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/global-reset-unplugged/5716178> (accessed 27 June, 2020).

⁹⁷ Ibid, Shiva, *Oneness* p.30.

economic theories...the same circuits of capital.”⁹⁸ Harari also reminds his readers that, globalisation is a homogenising project, that brings different groups and even enemies together through a single economic market. Relationally he suggests that what is often overlooked is the distinct role of military globalisation. “War spreads ideas, technology and people far more quickly than commerce.”⁹⁹ The result of homogenising systems is that one political paradigm – defended by one military system - has been imposed upon a great diversity of living communities of people, plants, animals and technologies.

We, anticapitalists, extinction rebels, seed savers, satyagrahis, rainbow family and others that have challenged war as global monoculture responsible for the 6th mass extinction of species have been labelled by those who seek to hold on to the fractured world of war, prophets of doom.¹⁰⁰

None of these unruly formations believes that American exceptionalism or capitalism’s fourth and fifth industrial revolutions can save the world from the impacts of climate change and the 6th mass extinction. Refusing the choice between an authoritarian global-techno government and extinction these examples, however differently they go about it, are actively working towards the re-turn of an ecological civilization for future generations. The call is to love our mother, earth and our earthly mothers like no other.

From the realms of Rojava, the women of Afrin have stated their collective case, “capitalist modernity constitutes the highest stage of the patriarchal system,”¹⁰¹ its current fragility and crisis offer us an opportunity to come together and “create a women’s free and equal global system”.¹⁰² Jineology, informs the foundation of Rojava’s feminist vision through a re-claiming of Kurdish indigenous knowledge.¹⁰³ In the movements of La Via Campesina, a peasant feminism is being formed and in broader literature attending to food and war, women’s and women centric relations and systems are found to be those that humanity needs most.¹⁰⁴ Ecofeminists and anarcho feminist critiques of patriarchy is an historical

⁹⁸ Y N Harari, *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*, Jonathan Cape, London, 2018, p. 107

⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 99.

¹⁰⁰ D Trump, Remarks by President Trump at the World Economic Forum, Davos, Switzerland, January 21, 2020, *Whitehouse*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-world-economic-forum-davos-switzerland/> (accessed 20 March 2020).

¹⁰¹ Women of Afrin, Statement, February, 2018, widely circulated online, np. <https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/defending-afrin-means-defending-womens-revolution>; <https://www.peaceinkurdistancampaign.com/call-for-a-womens-alliance-for-peace-in-afrin/> (accessed 1 July 2020).

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ A Shavisi, Beyond Orientalism: Exploring the distinctive feminism of Democratic Federalism in Rojava, *Geopolitics*, December 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2018.1554564> (accessed 12 July 2019).

¹⁰⁴ Copy over from chapter food systems. J Cribb, YouTube, Ibid, *Food or War*, p.

continuity reaching back to the origins of the State. They evolve today in a pluriverse of commoning based on unconditional care.

To situate these examples using only the ideological narratives of modernity – left, right – conservative, green, anarchist as previously mentioned would be a mistake. Such a move would be inconsistent with the unbound experimental methodology of the research. Anthropocentrism and colonial linear progress are precisely what the ‘anarchist turn’ and post ideological politics attempted to move away from.¹⁰⁵ In response to the Anthropocene Christopher Crew has tracked a variety of social movements including La Via Campesina and Navdanya. He suggests that these movements and the transnational networks they have formed are committed to and united by “an earth cantered politics” that “have a common desire to re-think our relationship with the Earth and to build a different set of political and economic institutions as a counter force to that of neoliberal globalization.”¹⁰⁶

Crew also suggests that there is “nothing inherently committing earthbound movements to a politics of pacifism”.¹⁰⁷ He leaves this an open question while confirming that “past trends have favoured direct action and protest over armed struggle.”¹⁰⁸ For Crew the “emerging movement for the rights of nature, engage the state on its own terms – that of constitutional law”, they also “push the realm of the political beyond the existing norms of liberal political institutions.”¹⁰⁹ Modern nonviolent action was formulated as action that occurs outside of regular political channels. Now it is mainstream. This complete about turn can be explained by following the processes of recuperation. The modern state has captured and recoded the basis of nonviolent action and then sold it back to politics, as something that governments dreamed up to facilitate democracy or social cohesion. The fatal blow – you can be nonviolent; indeed, we insist that you are – when it suits us and when it doesn’t – force will be unleashed and the work of making our world will be back in the firm hands of the authorities, who tell us, they have it all in hand. Agroecology and perhaps soon regenerative culture will suffer the same obliterating strategy that governments have conjured up. The movements in this thesis are working hard to prevent yet another fatal blow.

Some of these examples push the existing realm of politics further than others, namely Rojava. Rainbow Family, when they gather, act as if the existing norms do not exist. They are busy road testing the politics of pacifism in gatherings in forests and they decide when to go home. None of us can individually or nationally answer the questions of our time,

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, K Kennedy, *Deeply Felt*, S Tourmey, *Anti-capitalism for Beginners*, Pluto Press, 2008, Chapter 3.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, C G Crew, 2019, PhD Thesis, p.68.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p.197.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, Crew, p. 336.

“they are too big to answer” but they also “too big to fail” to answer.¹¹⁰ Working with the knowledge that patriarchy has subjugated is part of the task at hand. Here in Australia and elsewhere the immediate crisis of the day was revealed and then used to whip up divisions in our so-called national cultures; making the crisis itself mere fodder in the climate change denial machinery produced by the fossil fuel industry and disseminated through its media alliances.¹¹¹ The 2018, and in some places ongoing, drought in Australia and the 2019-2020 bushfire emergencies revealed how unprepared the Australian State and many of its citizens are for events they have long been warned about.

Unlike Sweden, which in 2018, unequivocally instructed its citizens to prepare for total war inclusive of climate change, cyber warfare, food and power shortages and health pandemics.¹¹² Down Under, we are still debating the impacts of climate change phenomena and we have only just begun to acknowledge the fire stick management practices of the Aboriginal people whose country is being destroyed.¹¹³ Each of these examples challenge the ways that capital subjects labour to its rules and is encoded into law while continuing the mighty march to profit.¹¹⁴ The point of their collective present is the desire to make other species and the ecological environment the starting point of the *we*, to offer solutions to the multiple problems that patriarchy and its militarized systems of state making have imposed upon people and the planet. To acknowledge that we are continuing a long pilgrimage to justice as Ann Grey, Australia’s first black theologian put it.¹¹⁵ Friend of peasants, the largest class of people on the planet, and friend of anarchists, James C Scott’s warning to revolutionaries violent or not is also the warning that Brian Martin points to in his conceptualisation of the concept of social defence. “When the revolution becomes the state, then it becomes my enemy again.”¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ S Beck, How Climate Change might save the World, *Development and Society*, Vol. 43, Issue. 2. 2014, <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.une.edu.au/10.21588/dns.2014.43.2.002> (accessed 7 February, 2018).

¹¹¹ Ibid, Aedy, *Hot Mess*, part 2, 2020; Voice of Action, Institutional Corruption fears as Corporates tighten Grip on PM’s office, *Voice of Action*, May 22, 2020, <https://voiceofaction.org/institutional-corruption-fears-as-corporates-tighten-grip-on-the-prime-ministers-office/?fbclid=IwAR0qRC9ughqaEwyPZECuGcMgyB25TXB7D-Tdjp9Tbnk7ORLTb1gxSvunJDg>; M West, Michael West Independent Media, complete citation, Corporate Watch add the report.

¹¹² K Gerner, Why Sweden’s prepare for war brochure is a waste of paper, *The Conversation*, <https://theconversation.com/why-swedens-prepare-for-war-leaflet-is-a-waste-of-paper-97194> 25 May, 2018, presents a critique of the brochure that hit news headlines in May 2018.

¹¹³ V Steffensen, *Fire Country*, Hardi Grant, 2020; Ibid, B Gammage, *The Biggest Estate on Earth*, 2012.

¹¹⁴ K Pistore, Capital’s global rule, *Constellations*, Vol.26, 2019 p 430-441, DOI: 10.1111/1467-8675.12434

¹¹⁵ A Pattel Grey, Reconciliation as a pilgrimage to justice, *Soul Search*, *Radio National*, May 31, 2020, <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/soul-search/> (accessed 3 June 2020).

¹¹⁶ J C Scott, When the Revolution becomes the State, it becomes my enemy again: an interview with James C Scott, *The Conversation*, with B Ferron and C Oger, September 2018,

XR, Australia and globally, have explicitly committed to working with indigenous peoples and respecting the deep history of their struggles against aggression and oppression. The experiments of Rojava offer a vision of Democratic Confederalism as a solution to the Kurdish question and the Arab question and this is also extended to global questions. Navdanya offers earth democracy as a local and global solution and Rainbow Family remind us that whatever we create and recreate by reclaiming autonomous spaces is our common Home.

Respecting the precious roots of any alternatives that have the capacity to reveal the radical potential of social defence is one way of forming a better understanding of the concept. Of tentatively being able to say, this is what it is because this is what it is becoming because this is how it is being experimented with right now.

Conclusion

Martin has rightly brought the fading out of social defence to the attention of those interested in nonviolent action and revolutionary social, political and ecological alternatives. As he put it, at the Bradford Conference in 1991 and more recently in 2014-2018, governments are unlikely to bring about nonviolent social defence. 'One of the main reasons that previous estimates of social defence failed is because they were set within the most conservative estimates of society'.¹¹⁷ Along with Martin and others, I find it implausible that social defence could be implemented without radically changing the existing systems.

Governments do not want to empower their own citizens in ways that might be used against governments themselves'.¹¹⁸ People must do this in their relations with each other. Vandana Shiva has explained and teaches others that, "organics rejection of Agriculture was also a rejection of the war machine."¹¹⁹ The former leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, recently stated what the concept of social defence finds obvious when he said, "*What we need now is an entire rethink of the concept of security. Even after the Cold War it has mostly been envisioned in military terms.*"¹²⁰ Fortunately, lots of rethinking has been done and Mr. Gorbachev's repetitive calls to "demilitarise world affairs, international politics and political thinking"¹²¹ can in many ways be answered through the ideas of social

<https://theconversation.com/when-the-revolution-becomes-the-state-it-becomes-my-enemy-again-an-interview-with-james-c-scott-98488> (access October 2021).

¹¹⁷ Ibid, Martin, Social Defence, Social Change, 1993, pp. 37-38.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, Martin, *Whatever happened*, p. 57-58.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, V Shiva, 2015, *The Worm is turning*, Offthebarcode, Pty Ltd, Country, 2015.

¹²⁰ M Gorbachev, The world must come together after the Corona Virus, *Time*, April 13, 2020, <https://time.com/5820669/mikhail-gorbachev-coronavirus-human-security/> (accessed 21 April 2020).

¹²¹ Ibid.

defence precisely because it dares to dream and then work for a world without militaries. In this way the concept joins other calls for all people to enact their common duty of care, to come into radical intimacy with strangers and share all surplus of their production. If this is the global revolution of pluriversality as distinct from universality, which is to say of multiple approaches rather than one, then, if the state tells us, it knows how to enact this common duty of care, recuperation is complete and the concepts we have struggle for become our enemies again.

Chapter 2: Key definitions: The social semiotics of, Social Defence, Anarchism, Agroecology, Permaculture, People, Feminism, Patriarchy and Cosmology

This chapter attends to the ways in which meaning is made. It is based in the philosophy of science known as scepticism that is found in some traditional liberal and Marxist social theory that used deconstruction, post modernism and post structural modes of interdisciplinary social theory to question the ways that meaning is assumed, made differently and/or contested. Following these interdisciplinary approaches, the social and political contexts of defining and hence making meaning is agreed to be polyvalent and ongoing. Social Semiotics is used here to convey the idea *“that semiotic resources are not restricted to speech and writing and picture making, almost everything we do or make can be done in different ways and this allows, at least in principle, the articulation of different social and cultural meanings.”*¹²² Post the post structural and into the unbound worlding, polarisation provides the ruling strategy of patriarchy, within its formerly excluded middle are the seeds of social defence and the real revolutions of the Anthropocene. What anything means in these contexts has been put to work for war when intellectuals turned what had formerly been called culture wars debates into truth wars.

Variants of meaning, systems thinking, decolonising knowledge and views of the world is the alternative proposed by ecofeminism, anarchists, peasant movements and others who are willing to speak truth to power and act as if they mean it. Into the multispecies and ethical systems of meaning making. The grand narratives of patriarchy and capitalism have not disappeared, the challenges were made but the patriarchs fought back and increased their lethality and technologies of social control. In his 2002 introduction to post modernism Christopher Butler’s suggested *“that it is obvious to any reader of the news that men and women are killing each other in the name of grand narratives every day.”*¹²³ Almost twenty years later quantum realities of indeterminant meaning are ubiquitous in the information and military revolutions of the Anthropocene. Following my post qualitative methodology, meaning is always being made through experiments, when these fail or consensus cannot be reached, confusion and nihilism flourish. It is hard to contribute to collective meaning if you don’t officially exist, or if your voice has been silenced. Following my prefigurative approach to it, social semiotics – the how, by who and for who – definitions are formed and used is what this chapter covers.

¹²² T Van Leeuwen, *Introducing Social Semiotics*, Routledge, Milton Park, UK, 2005, p. 4.

¹²³ C Butler, p. 14. *Postmodernism, A Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2002, p.13.

Social Defence

In this thesis the term social defence has been defined as an alternative to the military system of defence following the work of Martin and his collaborators. As Martin put it in relation to the ruling tactics of war, “converting to social defence would involve a range of transformations.”¹²⁴ Importantly, for Martin this all happens within the grassroots.

The concept is strategically intended to replace reliance on troops and weapons technology to deter and defend against attack. In that absence, people would need to take responsibility for defence themselves. To prepare for this they would need to enhance training in nonviolent actions and design vital systems that cannot easily be destroyed or recuperated and in that way expand autonomous collective resistance to the military system.

The terms, Civil Resistance and *Satyagraha* (truth force) are compatible with social defence and sometimes appropriately used synonymously with revolutionary nonviolence. The former term, civil resistance is derivative of nonviolent action movements predominantly within Europe and the United States as well as global justice movements and campaigns defending earth’s systems and peoples. The latter derives from the work of Mahatma Gandhi and is commonly used within India and within the broader strategic theory and practice of revolutionary nonviolence.¹²⁵ The concept of social defence is rooted in pacifist religiosities and the syncretic ongoingness of these evident in today’s mass global revolts.

Gandhi called those people who wage peace through nonviolent struggle Satyagrahis. These are people that have dedicated their lives to experimenting with the truth force – Satyagraha - as the way to achieve ahimsa – nonviolence; a state that civilization had unsettled, according to Gandhi.¹²⁶ Bringing the thinking and actions into contemporary resonance, Timothy Morton, though not a Gandhian scholar as such, has also spent a good deal of time and energy explaining how nonviolence is disturbed.¹²⁷ The satyagrahi Vandana

¹²⁴ B Martin, *Ruling Tactics*, War chapter 13, Irene Publishing, Sweden, 2017, <http://wwwb.martin.cc/pubs/17rt/>, p. 222.

¹²⁵ For Civil Resistance, See, Ibid, Vithagen, *A theory*, 2015 and V Duduoet, *Powering to Peace: Integrated Civil Resistance and Peacebuilding Strategies*, International Center for Nonviolent Conflict (ICNC), *Special Report Series*, <http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org> (accessed 10/09/ 2017). For *Satyagraha*, See, M K Gandhi, *An Autobiography, My experiments with Truth*, Amazon Kindle Version, 1925, part 5,

¹²⁶ M K Gandhi, *My Experiments*, 1925, parts, 2, 4 and 5, <https://www.mkgandhi.org/ebks/An-Autobiography.pdf>.

¹²⁷ T Morton., *Disturbing Gentleness: The ontological Depth of Nonviolence*, Conference: *Easter and Indigenous Perspectives on Sustainability and Conflict Resolution*, Florida, November 14th, 2011, recording available at, <http://ecologywithoutnature.blogspot.com.au/p/talks/archive> (accessed March 2012).

Shiva, founder of the Navdanya movement embodies revolutionary nonviolence that is based in the Gandhian concepts, of self-rule, non-cooperation and civil disobedience. The interesting thing is that while civil disobedience is a standard tactic within revolutionary nonviolence and more generally in resistance to states impositions over eons, it has been a source of contention in extinction rebellion and led to repeated debates about the strategy of mass civil disobedience.

The term social defence is preferred because it enables consistency, clarity and accountability. It is also the term that has been theorized and experimented with as, an alternative to, rather than, a part of military defence systems within the peace movements of the 1970's and into the 1990s. The Bradford Conference, titled, *Nonviolent Struggle and Social Defence*, affirms that this is the case.¹²⁸

The Bradford Conference is representative of perhaps the last collective, international attempt by people involved and interested in alternatives to the military to define and discuss social defence. It is a key historical document in relation to this research. Here I offer an introduction to the conference and the debates that are further explored in chapter five.

Over a hundred people from the international peace movements that formed during the 1970s and 1980s came together for five 'intense' days for the purpose of collectively coming up with a concrete definition of social defence.¹²⁹ The diversity of participants consisted of people from within governments as well as people working within grass roots organisations and 'even one member of the West German military'.¹³⁰ No consensus definition was achieved. Rather, two streams of thought emerged:

1. that social defence should be part of the existing system of military defence and that it should proceed as a slow process of reform within democratic states, be they socialist or liberal. This definition, was at the time and is still, predominantly referred to as Civilian Based Defence (CBD). Civilian Defence is an existing component of many nations military defence systems.¹³¹

¹²⁸ Ibid, S Anderson and J Larmore (editors), *Nonviolent Struggle and Social Defence*, 1991, p.1.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid, Anderson and Larmore, 1991, p. 2.

¹³¹ For example, Sweden sent it's population a 20 page document, *If Crisis or War Come*, to prepare its people for war, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44208921>; <https://www.dinsakerhet.se/siteassets/dinsakerhet.se/broschyren-om-krisen-eller-kriget-kommer/om-krisen-eller-kriget-kommer---engelska-2.pdf>, as part of its total defence system. Many nations also have conscription and others have special powers to call on civilians if the military is overwhelmed, such as Germany. Gene Sharps major early work on the development of CBD, *Self-Reliant Defense: Without Bankruptcy or War*, with B Jenkins, The Albert Einstein Institution, 1992 offers further context.

2. that social defence should stand alone as a complete alternative to military defence and the systems of government and political economy that militaries defend and secure, whether this might be called democratic or not.¹³²

These came to be known as the narrow and broad definitions. Brian Martin was amongst the participants at this conference and one of the people who advocated for the broader alternative definition. For him social defence is fundamentally about participation, empowerment and autonomy within community - grassroots systems of organisation and the ways that these facilitate the capacity of all people to take part in securing vital social systems such as food and defending them without the use of collectively organised violence.¹³³ Martin acknowledges that he formed his definition collectively as a member of the Australian Peace Movement and in previous research with a local nonviolent action group.¹³⁴ If there is a central theorist to this work and its central concept of social defence it is Brian Martin. He is not the only person to maintain an interest in the concept. However, he is without doubt, in the Anglosphere, one of the few.

As a modern concept based in peoples struggles against the ruling system of war and a form of revolutionary nonviolence, I interpret the concept as anarcho-pacifist. Whatever name we might want to replace that with it should not, in my understanding of the concept, thus far, separate or divide the anarchism from the pacifism. I take the contentious terms pacifism, self-defence, violence, nonviolence, just war and civil disobedience up in more detail in chapters five six. This explains their omission here.

Anarchy and Anarchism

Anarchy has been defined variously and simply as society without rule or without government. However, these skip over and therefore obscure the history of the idea and its earthly manifestations. In this thesis, I follow Brian Morris's definition of anarchy as, "an ordered society without government (or any enduring structures of domination and exploitation) and anarchism as an historical movement and political tradition".¹³⁵

Brian Morris is a senior anthropologist and anarchist whose work has largely been ignored despite his providing this clear and comprehensive definition based on years of rigorous research within the university system and outside of it. It is also in line with the definitions offered by David Graeber, Emma Goldman, Mahatma Gandhi, Colin Ward, Sandra

¹³² Ibid, Anderson and Larmore, 1991, p. 2 -29.

¹³³ Ibid, B Martin, *Social Defence: Arguments and Actions*, in Anderson and Larmore, 1991, pp. 27-28.

¹³⁴ Ibid, p. 28.

¹³⁵ B Morris, Anarchism, individualism and South Indian foragers: memories and reflections, *Radical Anthropology*, Issue, 7, 2013, p. 23.

Jeppensen and Ruth Kinna.¹³⁶ Variants and orientations of anarchism have resurged since the 1960s, some say earlier, today these have many names or none. I follow small a anarchism because it is focussed more on process and prefiguring solutions through direct actions.¹³⁷ It aims to anarchise by example and is like agroecology; an ethical system of practice and movements. In my previous research I defined anarchism as a practice of radical openness and ecological thinking. Authoritarian religion and politics do the same thing for me and each works hand in hand to proscribe and sanction human and other animals' behaviour. My small a anarchism is mystical to its core and ancient at its source.

Anarcho capitalism sits outside of this political tradition. It is therefore seen as an emergent post capitalist version of neoliberal capitalism. It is not a focus of this research; at this point in time does not meet my definition of anarchism because of the centrality it places on the authority of the capitalist market and the subsequent, coercion and inequality inherent in profit driven, growth centric political economies. Complications have compounded previously held ideological assumptions impacting global production and supply chains. For example, China is communist and capitalist. That is, if you understand communism as authoritarian and nationalistic. While the United States is democratic and capitalist.

If you understand communism at the level of common sense, as how most people live cooperatively then it is as David Graeber explained, "what a grass roots democracy looks like".¹³⁸ This view of communism applies here and helps to push us beyond the boundary's ideology assumes and into the possibilities of moving beyond them. In a similar way, anarchism is seeking the voluntary participation of all and is a form of direct, participatory democracy. Reflected in the anarchist turn from the early 1990s into the present, anarcho-communism has evolved as the force animating global justice movements and those working on transitions into temporary autonomous zones.

Agroecology and Permaculture

According to the Transnational Institute TNI, 'Agroecology is a way of life for millions of women and men who prioritizes the development of a decent life in the territories over the

¹³⁶ Ibid, D Graeber, The Rebirth of Anarchism in North America, 1967-2007, *Historian Actual Online*, Number. 21. 2010, pp.123-131; Ibid, *Direct Action: An ethnography of a movement*, AK Press, 2009, Ibid, R Kinna, *The Government of No One*, 2019; E Goldman, *Emma Goldman Papers*, Berkeley University, <https://www.lib.berkeley.edu/goldman/>; C Ward, *Anarchy in Action*, Freedom Press, London, 1996.

¹³⁷ Ibid. Have all emphasised this and use the small a to denote inclusiveness.

¹³⁸ D Graeber, in F Campagna & E Campiglio, *What We are Fighting For: A Radical collective Manifesto*, Pluto Press, 2012, p 165 -175.; Ibid, K Kennedy, *Deeply Felt*, 2015, chapter 1.

search for profit'.¹³⁹ The Transnational Institute (TNI) has been interlinked with global social movements for over 40 years and has dedicated itself to putting forward alternative proposals through its mutual relations with grass roots global social movements. Significant people whose work is widely published by TNI and within the milieu of food sovereignty and peasant movements that focus on the so called 'global south' include Susan George, Walden Bello and Marc Edelman.¹⁴⁰ In 2010, the UN's Special Rapporteur on the right to food, explained it this way. "Agroecology is both a science and a set of practices, it provides the most favourable soil for plant growth, and does not depend on the use of external farm inputs".¹⁴¹ The noted political scientist, James C Scott's ethnographic work with peasants in South East Asia helps to show that agroecology derives from the practices of people whose methods of food provision has persistently been defined as uncivil.¹⁴² In this way agroecology has always been subjugated, reframed or outlawed by those wielding financial, military and legal power.

Agroecology is connected in significant ways to the development and implementation of the human right to food.¹⁴³ Networked movements such as La Via Campesina have been presenting their demands for systems change for over a decade. In 2020 coalitions of key organisations argue that a partial transition to agroecology is being used to cover a broader "strategic capture of some of the goals, discourses and practices of agroecology... for the purposes of changing everything, so that nothing changes".¹⁴⁴

Significant work on defining and redefining agroecology arises within the movements associated with food sovereignty, through the *Journal of Peasant Studies* and within the Navdanya Movement. These are collective definitions rather than simply bureaucratic definitions that assist the flow of capital and state. As Graeber and Wengrow show in detail in their fascinating critique of history, agriculture does not mark the beginning of inequality and it did not happen as an 'event' of the industrial revolution.¹⁴⁵ Unlearning the false

¹³⁹ (TNI) *Call for applications: young researcher's program: linking the food sovereignty debates*, <https://www.tni.org/en/article/call-for-applications-young-researchers-program-linking-the-food-sovereignty-debates>, 2018 (accessed 02/07/2018).

¹⁴⁰ Transnational Institute (TNI), History, <https://www.tni.org/en/page/history> (accessed 02/07/2018).

¹⁴¹ O De Schutte, Report Submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, *United Nations, Human Rights Council*, 16th Session, December 2010, p. 3 – 6. A/HRC/16/49.

¹⁴² J C Scott, Afterword to "Moral Economies, State Spaces, and Categorical Violence", *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 107. No. 3, p. 395-402, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3567025> (accessed, 27 March, 2018).

¹⁴³ Ibid, Summary, p.1.

¹⁴⁴ A-A Fradejas, et al, *Junk Agroecology: The Corporate Capture of Agroecology for a Partial Ecological Transition Without Justice*, ATI, TNI, Crocevia, April 2020, p.7-9.

¹⁴⁵ D Graeber & D Wengrow, *How to change the course of history*, *Eurozine*, March 2018, p. 1-29, <http://eurozine/how/to/change/the/course/of/history/>, (accessed 04, March, 2018).

histories of progress and development -the civilising narrative – of scarcity is a task underway within agroecology.

As the civilization we are in is now failing, or at the very least is in emergency mode, it is a good time to focus on the processes of unlearning. To accept that indigenous peoples and various academic research disciplines, such as anthropology and archaeology, agree that foragers and people living with nature are those people that have survived. They are the planets oldest living cultures. Today, the minority of global populations, they are people whose water was clean and whose food was organic.¹⁴⁶ Australian research, while acknowledging the farmer to farmer, and social movements processes of agroecology, has applied transitions research to the prospects of an agroecological transition in Australia.¹⁴⁷ Viewing agroecology as niche and dependent on Australian Indigenous knowledge, LLes finds its chances in Australia are very slim. Also, that such a transition will not come about through massification – scaling alone. Noting, “it calls for remaking the cognitive and historical bases of agriculture to being with, indigenous peoples, the first peoples who understood how to farm in diverse often ‘inhospitable’ conditions, must be at the core of the transition.”¹⁴⁸

Agroecology is an historical continuum finding its way back from the brink of agricultures’ imperial and violent food and war nexus. It is central to the alternatives created by the Navdanya Movement and the circles of resistance and regeneration it is part of. For Navdanya, agroecology is the science and practice that brings ecofeminism and their concept of Earth Democracy into being.¹⁴⁹ Agroecology outsteps modern linear time through its endurance and in its resurgence.

Permaculture is a modern formulation of agroecology, which arose perhaps unsurprisingly, around the same time that peace movements became interested in the concept of social defence in the 1970s. Permaculture is ‘a design system for creating sustainable, human environments’.¹⁵⁰ There is wide agreement that the term was coined by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in the mid 1970’s to describe an “integrated, evolving system of perennial self-perpetuating plant and animal species useful to man”.¹⁵¹ In 1991, Bill Mollison, explained that the word is a melding of permanent agriculture and permanent culture,

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 21.

¹⁴⁷ A LLes, Can Australia transition to an agroecological future? *Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems*, 2020, DOI: 10.1080/21683565.2020.1780537.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 33.

¹⁴⁹ Navdanya, About us, Agroecology/ecofeminism, Navdanya.Org, www.navdanya.org/agrecology (accessed 29 September 2020).

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, B Mollison, Introduction, 1991, p.1.

¹⁵¹ D Holmgren, Permaculture, About, Holmgren.com.au <https://holmgren.com.au/about-permaculture/> (accessed September 29, 2020).

‘because cultures cannot survive for long without a sustainable agricultural base and land use ethic’.¹⁵² David Holmgren continues to publish works on permaculture and his website provides access to an archive of resources, essays, films, interviews and book extracts. Today Holmgren describes permaculture as “a design system for resilient living and land use based on universal ethics and ecological design principles”.¹⁵³

Holmgren aptly describes permaculture as a global movement that applies its common principles and ethics to the design of buildings, tools and technology along with the foundational applications that redesign gardening, forestry, animal husbandry and farming.¹⁵⁴ Permaculture has many design principles that have been applied to retrofit suburbia, green deserts, regenerate country and more.¹⁵⁵ The core and common ethical imperatives are, care for people, care for the planet and share the surplus. Bob Waldrop added care for the future’.¹⁵⁶ Hence, in permaculture we are to be and become good ancestors. To think like a planet.

In his forward to Bob Waldrop’s highly recommended, *Ipermie: How to permaculture your urban lifestyle* Vinay Gupta captures the essence of permaculture and its relationship to the concept of social defence. “Permaculture is about taking responsibility, knowing who grows your food and ending the exploitation of other people, other nations and other species”.¹⁵⁷ Following the contexts and theorising of agroecology and permaculture, it is very clear that capitalist agriculture is based on false beliefs and assumptions. Namely, the assumption that there will always be plenty of water, healthy soil, cheap energy including human labour and ingenuity, along with the belief that human beings are superior to all other living beings.¹⁵⁸ Modern’s of the western enlightenment believed that humans could master the world around them and use it to their advantage and for their progress and development. This is what constitutes Anthropocentrism.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ J Lawton, Greening the Desert, a long running project that began at Zytuna Farm, NSW, Australia. In this film Lawton conducts an educational tour of the site in Oman, *Discover Permaculture with Jeff Lawton*, YouTube, 9 Jan 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fj0oeyREeM>

¹⁵⁶ B Waldrop, *Ipermie: How to permaculture your urban lifestyle*, Kindle Edition, 2013, section 1.

¹⁵⁷ V Gupta, Foreword in, B Waldrop, *Ipermie*, 2013, p. 6; S Alexander & R Read, *This Civilisation is Finished: Conversations on the end of Empire- and what lays beyond*, Simplicity Institute Melbourne, 2019.

¹⁵⁸ M A Altieri, *Agroecology: Key concepts, principles and practices*, Third World Network and SOCLA, Malaysia and USA, 2015,

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, Hamilton, *Defiant Earth*, 2017, p. 60- 68; Ibid, Morton, T, *The Ecological Thought*, 2010, *Dark Ecology* 2016 and *Humankind* 2018.

Contemporary agroecologist Miguel Altieri succinctly defines the farming trajectory of anthropocentric modern agribusiness that our current food systems are founded and building upon, “agriculture is the artificialisation of nature”.¹⁶⁰ Clearly, permaculture is a modern iteration of agroecology and globally part of its resurgence. Bill Mollison and David Holmgren observed and took inspiration from indigenous peoples’ ecological systems. Reflecting on their observations, they had no doubt that cooperation with our natural surroundings is the key to creating abundance.¹⁶¹ Agroecology has consistently called out the scarcity narrative modern agriculture is founded in.

In these times the emphasis everywhere is on taking notice of our limits, sharing our surplus and redesigning our vital food systems which are our vital ecological, social and political systems. When refugia has collapsed, thinking abundance would be blatantly dishonest and offensive. Evidence has poured in to support the fact that agriculture has poisoned and wasted the common resources of land, water, soil, and air that life depends upon. This, at least, does not seem such a controversial thing to say any more.

The need for food systems change is now so obvious, the UN, upon request from the World Economic Forum (WEF) have convened an emergency Peoples’ Food Summit (UNFSS) for July 2021, which was postponed to September 23-27. The upcoming summit is after all, based on the realization that hunger and conflict cannot be solved separately; that achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No 2 of zero hunger, following the 2030 Agenda requires the transformation of global food systems.¹⁶² Twenty two organisations have formed a counter summit and claim to represent the “real people’s summit.” They are *Hungry for Change* and have developed collective People’s Action Plans and Declarations.¹⁶³ At this point in time Food Sovereignty, the movement for agroecology has stopped cooperating with the existing rights base of the food system.

As La Via Campesina put it, “*The formation of the movements that defend peasant ways of life and agroecological production are not just trenches of resistance, they are seeds for the flourishing of new social, political and ecological relations*”.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, Altieri, *Key concepts*, 2015, p. 9.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, Mollison, *Introduction to*, 1991, p. 3.

¹⁶² A Guterres, Foreword, Food Security Information Network, (FSIN), Global Report on Food Crisis, 2021, Joint Analysis, *fsin.org*, <https://fsin.org/2021/global/>.

¹⁶³ Hungry For Change, Press Release, Food Sovereignty.Org, <https://peoplessummit.foodsov.org/movements-civil-society-counter-anti-people-un-food-systems-summit/>, (accessed Sept, 23, 2021).

¹⁶⁴ La Via Campesina, International Peasant Movement, *LVC, A Movement Formation*, DVD, April 17 2021, <https://viacampesina.org/en/event/new-documentary-a-movement-in-information/>

The social cosmology that agriculture has relied on to shore up its beliefs, have been exposed as, patriarchal, toxic, racist, exploitative, and violent.¹⁶⁵ Agroecology exists in the world as nonviolent system of farming that regenerates ecologies, economies, cosmologies and politics through its metabolic inclusion of all life and its collective processes of – peer to peer decision making and information sharing. Shiva summed it up when she said that Agroecology's rejection of agriculture is also a rejection of the war machine.¹⁶⁶

People

I define people following the group, *Survival International* as meaning “a distinct and identifiable society” in the sense that, ‘it is a singular not a plural word.’¹⁶⁷ This terminology makes a distinction between the nationalistic practice whereby people are defined through the territorial borders of nation states. It shows that people exist prior to and/or outside of the modern legal and administrative understanding of people as individual citizens subject to the rule of the government of a particular nation state. Obviously, nation states have an astounding array of people “each with their own particular characteristics and markers of belonging such as a common language and identity.”¹⁶⁸ In the case of tribal and indigenous peoples, their status as precolonial humans and their former modes of self-organization, sustainability and lack of integration with the machinations and boundaries of the imposed nation state, mark them as distinct societies.¹⁶⁹

This approach is also compatible with social anarchism's understanding of individual people as autonomous or in classical anarchist terms, as having individual sovereignty.¹⁷⁰ Anthropological work has revealed that foragers, tribal and ecologically sustainable people are deeply egalitarian, stridently independent but always viewed as “intrinsically social beings.”¹⁷¹ This view point counters the liberal and neoliberal idea of a “rigidly bounded and non-social individual.”¹⁷² Because people live in ecologies with other species and objects people, as I use the word in this thesis, also refers to non-human people and the entire natural world. This is not a metaphor; it reflects the biological reality of our being part of the world we are in. Birds, kangaroos, trees and grasses, bovines' and worms, trees, rivers and mountains are people too.

¹⁶⁵ This point is made by most of the authors thus far cited. The most explicit links are made in: Ibid, V Shiva, *Peddling Poison*, 2017, Ibid, in *The Worm is Turning*, DVD, Offthebarcode, 2015; V Gupta, *Plausible Utopias*, 2011, Ibid, Foreword, in B Waldrop, *Ipermie*, 2013.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, Shiva, *The Worm is Turning*, 2015.

¹⁶⁷ Survival International, Terminology, <https://www.survivalinternational.org/info/terminology> np.(accessed 20/06/2018).

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. n.p.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. n.p.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, P Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible*, 2008, p. 4-12. Marshall's discussion of M K Gandhi's influence adds to the relevance of this approach, to this thesis; K Kennedy, *Deeply Felt: Reflections on Religion and Violence within the Anarchist Turn*, Irene Publishing, Sparnas, Sweden, 2015, chapter 3, Re-enactment: The Search for a Supreme Fiction, pp. 129-167.

¹⁷¹ Ibid, B Morris, *Memories and Reflections*: 2015, p. 26.

¹⁷² Ibid.

As Haraway, Morton and others have explained. The human genome has around 6% of its DNA that is specific to humans, the rest we share with fungi, bacteria, water and other ecological actors and networks.¹⁷³ This approach is sometimes represented through the nonhuman turn, attention to the rights of other than human life and through renewed interest in animism.¹⁷⁴ Moreover, it works with the anarchist impulse to create order without dominating others through concentrated sources of authority and power.¹⁷⁵

Patriarchy and Feminism

My own definition is that the substantive goal of feminism is to rid the planet of patriarchy and the processes it has institutionalised in cultures and societies. It is the modern formation of resistance based in women's thinking and practice that is known, depending on your point of view, as liberal feminism. Or as an enduring formation of grass roots, earth oriented queer, nonbinary, males and females working together within intersectional movements that explicitly challenge the shape shifting and overarching tentacles of contemporary patriarchal rule.

Patriarchy is historically defined simply as rule by the father, the figure of the strongest and most powerful male authority on earth. Sanctioned, though not without resistance in antinomian religiosities, by the God(s) above. As such and for the past five thousand years it has made women its subjects. Abdullah Ocalan put it this way, "The five thousand year old history of civilisation is essentially the history of the enslavement of woman."¹⁷⁶ Food sovereignty approaches also aim to "reverse the logic of patriarchy."¹⁷⁷ Despite hegemonic and orientalist representations of women within the experiments of Rojava in western tabloid media; women in the movements have challenged these, just as they have challenged those male comrades that attempted to exploit Abdullah Ocalan's imprisonment.¹⁷⁸ In this thesis, feminism that explicitly challenges and creates spaces

¹⁷³ T Morton, *Dark Ecology: For a Logic of Coexistence*, Columbia University Press, New York 2016, D J Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble, Making Kin in the Anthropocene*, Lecture, *San Francisco Art Institute*, Live Stream, April 11, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrYA7sMQaBQ>

¹⁷⁴ For the nonhuman turn, See J Bennett, *Vital Matter: A political Ecology of Things*, Duke University Press, 2010. Ibid, Morton, *The Ecological Thought*, 2010, *Dark Ecology* 2016 and *Humankind*, 2018. For Animism see, G Harvey, *Animism, Respecting the Natural World*, Wakefield Press, South Australia, 2005.

¹⁷⁵ E Cudworth & S Hobden, *Anarchism's Post Human Future*, *Anarchist Studies*, Vol. 26. No.1. 2018

¹⁷⁶ A Ocalan, *The Political Thought of Abdullah Ocalan: Kurdistan, Woman's Revolution and Democratic Confederation*, Pluto Press, London, 2017, p.57.

¹⁷⁷ La Via Campesina, *Struggles for Agrarian Reform*, 2017, https://viacampesina.org/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/10/compressed_Publication-of-Agrarian-Reform-EN.pdf p. 3 and p .31-35.

¹⁷⁸ B Simsek & J Jongerden, *Gender Revolution in Rojava: The Voices beyond Tabloid Geopolitics*, *Geopolitics*, 29 October 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2018.1531283> p. 15-16.

outside of and against patriarchy, seems most consist with social defence. Gender equality is not sufficient in and of itself.

Toxic Masculinity has emerged as one way to express the conditions of contemporary patriarchal rule. "As peace activists we know that misogyny and toxic masculinity are right at the core of military institutions. War, and the arms trade, are central to colonisation and patriarchy..."¹⁷⁹ For contemporary radical Mona Eltahawy, patriarchy is like an octopus, the head encompasses misogyny and sexism while its nefarious tentacles represent other forms of oppression such as racism, Islamophobia and homophobia.¹⁸⁰ However it is defined, patriarchy is synonymous with violence against people, especially people gendered female, binary, queer; mother, child; poor, disabled and dis-eased on a planetary scale.

In my previous Higher Degree Research, I concluded that the contemporary anarchist turn was under-represented by individuals, gendered female, and that in the Anglophone world which I mostly conducted research within and, it is mostly individuals, gendered men, that are published and noted for their contributions to anarchist theory and philosophy. While this is a problem entrenched in the historical over-reach of patriarchy, the much more positive implication I found in that research was that all of the texts I engaged with explicitly claimed that anarchism is a feminist process.

Anarcha-feminism

From my perspective you cannot be an anarchist and not be a feminist.¹⁸¹ Further to this, anarchists have contributed to ongoing, feminist, queer, intersectional, post and decolonial theories.¹⁸² As well as to the affective, ontological, and multispecies turns in social theory. Significant and explicitly feminist anarchist scholarship clearly exists in regenerative cultures whatever name we give it. Perhaps the most well-known modern feminist and anarchist in my part of the world is Emma Goldman. As Rutger Bregman noted in his *'Hopeful History of Humankind'*, "Emma Goldman [was] a feminist, whose struggle for freedom and equality earned her a lifetime of slander and contempt".¹⁸³ Within anarchism, her work is valued for

¹⁷⁹ Disrupt Land Forces, War = Toxic Masculinity, *Disrupt Land Forces.Org*, 2021, <https://disruptlandforces.org/disrupt-toxicmasculinity-in-war-making/>, (accessed, Sept, 23, 2021).

¹⁸⁰ M Eltahawy, *Seven Necessary Sins for women and girls* Publisher, 2018; Natasha Gillezeau, The F word: Mona Eltahawy takes an axe to patriarchy, *Australia Financial Review*, November 4, 2019, <https://www.afr.com/politics/the-f-word-mona-eltahawy-takes-an-axe-to-the-patriarchy-20191031-p53615> (accessed September 28, 2020).

¹⁸¹ Ibid, Kennedy, Deeply Felt, 2015.

¹⁸² A Kinna, (ed), *The Continuum Companion to Anarchism*, Continuum International Publishing, London, 2012. Offers a useful summary of contributions. S Jeppensen and H Nazar, in Ibid, *Gender and Sexualities in Anarchism*, pp. 162-192 is explicit.

¹⁸³ R Bregman, *Humankind, A Hopeful History*, Bloomsbury, London, 2020, p. 18.

the life she shared and for the inspiration this provides. In continuum through continued involvement with her texts and initiatives.

Among the many contributors over the years, notable individuals gendered female whose work is publicly anarchist include, Starhawk, Silvia Federici, Carol Elrhic, Ruth Kinna, Sandra Jeppenson, Mia Ramnath, Judy Barry, Sandra Jeppenson, Cindy Millstein and various collectives both temporary and more permanent in most parts of the planet. From the perspective of international but US landed anarchism, “anarcha-feminism was disseminated through the journal *Sirens* during the radical women’s movement of the early 1970’s and eventually merged into the anti-nuclear movement”.¹⁸⁴ Which in turn moved into the broader peace movement that dissipated in the clamping down on dissent by governments and corporations that picked up pace in the 1990’s.

Explicitly feminist literature is plainly evident through the recent communications of the Zapatista women and the women of Rojava and in the pamphlets and zines produced and shared in multiple small collectives in most parts of the world that the anarchist tradition has roots.¹⁸⁵ Thankfully, that seems to be everywhere.

Liberal Feminism

On the other hand, liberal feminism sought to cancel anarchist feminisms which in my view is where ecofeminism arose. Non the less, anarcha feminists seemed to have faded away with the broader peace movement and merged into shifting solidarities and affinities within broader networks of resistance. To be sure, liberal feminism “has cemented itself as the intellectual mode to such a degree that it is almost synonymous with feminism itself”.¹⁸⁶ Liberal thinkers, inclusive of liberal feminists, historically distinguish the private from the public sphere and do not aim to change the property relations upon which capitalism is founded. Modern promotion of liberal feminism was opposed by Marxist and socialist feminists who viewed the property, reproductive and wage relations as a source of oppression and exploitation. In 1997 academic philosopher, Martha Nussbaum, analysed the critiques made of liberal theory in relation to women.¹⁸⁷ Her seminal publication offers a sound modern introduction to the classic liberal position vis-à-vis other feminisms.

¹⁸⁴ Julia Tenenbaum, *BlackRose Anarchist Federation*, To destroy domination in all its forms, June 12, 2019, <https://blackrosefed.org/anarcha-feminism-to-destroy-domination-in-all-forms/> (accessed, September 28, 2020).

¹⁸⁵ A plethora of organized anarchist libraries exist online, see for examples, <http://theanarchistlibrary.org/special/index>; <https://libcom.org/library>, these are two reputable and long running sources of anarchist archives and contemporary theory, both are active and updated regularly. See also, AK Press, <https://www.akpress.org/catalog.html> (accessed 18/07/2018).

¹⁸⁶ E Robertson, Get Mad and Get Even, *Meanjin*, Autumn 2016, p. 1-4.

¹⁸⁷ M C Nussbaum, *The Feminist Critique of liberalism*, University of Chicago, Department of Philosophy, Publication, 1997.

Nussbaum defends liberalism but argues that it does not go far enough in its pursuit of liberty.¹⁸⁸ In addition to this, a special edition of the journal *Social Alternatives*, published in 2004 concluded that, “there had been many gains, but many are in danger of being reversed or eroded by social and political conservatism...”.¹⁸⁹ Sixteen years later, women are actively campaigning, through all means possible in ever renewing circles of people to challenge the assumptions and values of the dominant global culture.

Patriarchy propels and defends an entrenched liberal and conservative view of women that is being resisted in movements such as #me2, #me2mosque, Black Lives Matter, the experiments of Rojava, the ecofeminism at the root of the Navdanya Movement and more. When faced with liberal feminist interpretations of history, peace researcher and journalist Kieran Finnane expressed her dissatisfaction with what she and others perceive to be reductionist arguments.¹⁹⁰ Typically these point to “Spartan mothers, women in the 19th century such as Bismarck’s wife and national leaders in the twentieth century, Indira Gandhi, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Golda Meir and Margaret Thatcher”.¹⁹¹

Hence, it is clear to Finnane that these examples “are all of women formed in patriarchal societies – who among us are not”,¹⁹² she asks? Much like capitalism, liberal feminism was marketed and institutionalized as the only realistic option. That’s recuperation for you. Young Australian feminist, Elanore Robertson, aptly calls liberal feminism, ‘lean in feminism’.¹⁹³ Liberal feminism leans into and operates through the systems of reproductive, property and labor authority’s currently in place. For Robertson, ‘Lean in stinks more because of the already privileged positions of the women it appeals to’.¹⁹⁴ Faced with a political vacuum in terms of an alternative Australian feminist movement due to the forces of neoliberalism and the destruction of collectives, it seemed that Australian feminism was largely conservative. Perhaps holding the belief that the patriarchs would defend and secure them in return for their obedience or out of fear or due to lack of imagination when it comes to alternatives. Each is surely possible.

Challenging Patriarchy

The fires of a more radical feminism clearly did not go out. The recent campaigns that specifically focus on male domination and violence within the liberal private sphere, are as

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 36-37.

¹⁸⁹ J Bielecki, Australian Feminism 2004: Gains, Losses, Countervailing Forces, Some Failures and Sobering Thoughts, *Social Alternatives*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 2005, p 8.

¹⁹⁰ K Finnane, *Peace Crimes: Pine Gap, National Security and Dissent*, University of Queensland Press, Australia, 2020, p. 250.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid, Robertson, 2016, p. 2.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 4.

Robertson suggests, point to the formations of larger coalitions that are coming together around alternatives. Feminist scholar, Silvia Federici's interview with the authors of *Joyful Militancy, thriving in toxic times* provides further reasons to remain hopeful and optimistic.¹⁹⁵ Federici speaks about the role of passion and the collective creation of communities, often brutally forced into large cities by land grabbing or other agricultural strategies. She sees hope and a new politics emerging, even in places threatened by narco-criminals within and outside of national governments. For Federici, 'either your politics is liberating and that gives you joy, or there's something wrong with them'.¹⁹⁶

Rather than leaning in, anarchist- anti authoritarian grassroots feminism 'digs up'.¹⁹⁷ This later approach addresses the roots of domination and speaks to people, "even if they are poor, black or female".¹⁹⁸ A fascinating history continues to unfold of female and feminist/queer/nonbinary/eco/peasant anarchists and their international connections from the medieval period to the present. Significantly, these have been shaped, in large part by a radical pacifist tradition. Peace women of significance such as Starhawk have contributed to collectively developing contemporary theories and strategies of nonviolent action, spiritual anarchism and permaculture.¹⁹⁹ Starhawk has also played a key role in the Reclaim movement and she has been involved in direct actions globally since the 1990s. Reclaiming traditions offer principles of unity through values that stem from their understanding of the earth as being alive and that all life is sacred.²⁰⁰

In these diverse but common everyday ways, feminists making systemic challenges to patriarchy are doing it in their own ways. Some use their own military means (Rojava), others use strictly nonviolent means (Navdanya, Rainbow Family and Extinction Rebellion). In concert they offer us an Earth Democracy, A Democratic Confederation, A Regenerative Culture and in the case of Rainbow Family, they show us that we are already home if we gather autonomously and live as if Babylon did not exist. As Martin so aptly put it, "the liberal feminist solution of equal opportunity and equal representation within the existing social institutions is doomed to failure."²⁰¹ Social defence is entirely consistent with all

¹⁹⁵ S Federici, interviewed by N Montgomery & C Bergman, *Feeling Powers Growing: An Interview with Silvia Federici*, AK Press, 2013, <http://www.akpress.org/-joyful-militancy.html> (accessed 12/05/18).

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, p.1.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid, Robertson, p. 3.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 5.

¹⁹⁹ Starhawk, *Social Permaculture*, in *Communities Magazine*, Vol. 153, 2011, <http://kindredmedia.org/2011/12/social-permaculture-by-starhawk/> (accessed on 23/03/18); Starhawk, Personal Blog, <http://starhawkblog.org> (accessed 06/07/2018).

²⁰⁰ Collective Document, Principles of Unity, *Reclaiming Collective*, <https://reclaimingcollective.wordpress.com/principles-of-unity/> (accessed December 14 2019).

²⁰¹ Ibid, Martin, *Social Defence, Social Change*, p. 36.

feminisms that challenge the systems and processes of patriarchy; the institutional systems of oppression and violence against women, people and the planet.

On Cosmology

Cosmology is associated with philosophies of the nature of existence which is “traditionally a branch of metaphysics dealing with features of the world as a whole”, it is often synonymous with speculative philosophy in its widest sense”.²⁰² This understanding of and proclivity towards speculation is how cosmology is approached. Applied to the social, the idea of social cosmology as it has been explored by key peace thinkers, such as Johan Galtung and by Robert Burrowes, is important in this thesis. The Satyagrahi Robert J Burrowes worked with Galtung and stayed with Gandhi. In *Strategy for Nonviolent Defence: A Gandhian Approach*, Burrowes defines a social cosmology as,

*“Four mutually reinforcing components. The specific pattern of matter-energy use, its particular set of social relations, its prevailing philosophy about the nature of society (which includes the concept of human nature) and its strategies for dealing with conflict.”*²⁰³

For Burrowes a societies pattern of matter and energy use and its strategies for dealing with conflict are just as important as its social relations and prevailing philosophy when it comes to understanding a social cosmology. The current dominant social cosmology “was shaped by patriarchy, Christianity and more, recently, capitalism.”²⁰⁴ Hence, the approach to defence and security is destructive, wastes energy and resources, kills and exploits people. Following this a social cosmology suited to social defence might be found in alternatives to patriarchy, authoritarian religions and to capitalism. In turn philosophies that are designed to put ethics into everyday practice and that work to collectively end war provide the alternatives to neoliberal, fascist and anthropomorphism.

In a forthcoming publication, Randall Amster defined the cosmic perspective “in a nutshell” as the special empathy human beings should foster towards each other and implies a radical refusal of heteronomy as the basis and precondition for justice and fairness.²⁰⁵ For many a new global cosmology is being made. For Randall, this empathetic worlding could take humanity down into the dark ecology of the Anthropocene. Having faced that nightmare,

²⁰² A Finch, Cosmology in T Honderich (ed) *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, UK, 1995, pp 166-168.

²⁰³ R J Burrowes, *Strategy for Nonviolent Defence: A Gandhian Approach*, Sunny Press, Australia, 1995. p.1.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ R Amster, Beyond the Anthropocene, into the Anarchocene? Notes on the next epoch, in *Undoing Human Supremacy: Anarchist Political Ecology in the Face of the Anthropocene*, Forthcoming, Springer International, 2021, Google Scholar, <https://books.google.com.au/books>

the anarchocene seems set to have a lot to do with how humans understand themselves cosmologically. This, as Burrowes and others have shown, has everything to do with worlding alternatives to war and everyday forms of violence, oppression, and aggression.

Regenerative Culture

Is evolving as the grassroots term for the earthbound revolutions of the twenty first century. For XR, regenerative culture begins with acknowledging the knowledge held by first nations people and recognises our collective dependence on traditional knowledge in confronting the climate emergency.²⁰⁶ XR is committed to developing regenerative culture internally and locally. To do this, they are also committed to acting with integrity with each other and recognising this work is not separate from the ways we act with and respect natures boundaries. In this way, regenerative culture aims to reclaim “our sense of being in harmony with the earth and each other.”²⁰⁷

Danielle Christian Wahl’s, 2016, *Designing Regenerative Cultures*, is an invitation and a call to live the hard questions of our time more deeply, it asks us to stop rushing the emergencies.²⁰⁸ Regenerative culture is based in ecological thinking. Whatever it is becoming it asks humans to unlearn the “pathological habit of understanding and experiencing we as separate from nature, from each other and from the community of life.”²⁰⁹ Applied to agriculture as regenerative agriculture, recuperation is lurking at its door.

If states announce an international community plan to regenerate everything by such and such a date, we will know that this approach has been recuperated and that regeneration will become our enemy again. This has been the path of sustainability. Which has clearly failed because the biggest class of people on earth, the small scale peasant farmers have been openly betrayed. There is no way of knowing just how regenerative movements will evolve. While the idea of regenerative agriculture is certainly a great idea, hiding underneath the rush to capitalise on it, is a secret. “No one really agrees on what regenerative agriculture means, the fundamentals are still being negotiated and research has found that only 51% percent of research articles that use the term supplied any sort of definition.”²¹⁰

²⁰⁶ XR NSW, *Regen 101, Workbook*, 2020 compiled by C Wilson, christiew@prontonmail.com. Available at www.earthrebellion.australia 2020,

²⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 4.

²⁰⁸ D C Wahl, *Designing Regenerative Cultures*, Triarchy Press, Scotland, 2016, pp 15-24.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 24.

²¹⁰ J Fassler, Regenerative Agriculture needs a reckoning, The Counter, 5 March 2021, <https://thecounter.org/regenerative-agriculture-racial-equity-climate-change-carbon-farming-environmental-issues/>

Regenerative Culture is the rubric I'm using here. Applied to agriculture the dangers are evident and becoming increasingly clear. Everyone might agree that agriculture needs regenerating and that means farming in ways that make the whole world better. As Joe Fassler suggests, a lot depends on how you see the whole and who you include in a better world.²¹¹ Wahl's work is agroecological and moves from competitive to collaborative, from controlled to conducive from a system that protects to one that adapts from politics and economies that are forced to those that are designed to fit.²¹² Where ever regenerative cultures might take us, they are set on transforming the world and envisioning a future in which humans are not set on answering questions that might be best left to rest. We are but specks of dust in the cosmos and that is unlikely to change. To regenerate culture, the questions we ask also need to change. The question I ask for social defence is how regenerative culture works for military systems change. The reader may like to refer back to this chapter if they feel I have used a term without having paid due attention to social semiotics and the ways that meaning has and is being made by who and for who.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Ibid, D C Wahl, 2016, p. 236.

Chapter 3: Methodology: Post-Qualitative, Prefigurative Politics

Introduction

Post qualitative methodology is experimental; people are making it up as they go along. That is the shortest and clearest explanation of the how the methodology works. I will now move into the long version to explain the how, the ifs, the buts, and why. To begin I will introduce and discuss the methodology of post-qualitative inquiry, the theory of prefigurative politics I use to earth the methodology and the method of autoethnography that brings it to life.²¹³ I begin with my understanding of epistemology and ontology because these provide the philosophical basis of all social research methodology. This is followed by sections on theory as without it there is arguably no methodology. The ethical foundations, imperatives and enactments of sharing and the role of data are also discussed. The final section discusses the theory/practice of prefigurative politics. Subtitles guide the reader through the chapter.

Theory defined here as: frameworks produced and reproduced through “sets of ideas”,²¹⁴ that this research is built upon emerges from the philosophies of the alternatives that are explored through regenerative culture in its broadest sense as well as through the four specific examples, Navdanya, XR, the experiments of Rojava and the Rainbow Family. Processes of prefiguration and regeneration oriented to agroecology and permaculture also inform my day to day farming activities.

A common link in all these alternatives is that they are based in an ethic of care for oneself and other people, along with care for the planet we all share and the future that others will inherit. Regardless of institutional ethical processes, requirements and/or methodological debates, the ethical commitments and relational values that affirm life is already established. This research exists and becomes through my responsibility to the common ethic of care and my political commitments to prefigurative processes. When one’s research is committed to nonviolence in the way that this project is; experimenting with force of truth is the embodied ethical imperative and the practice one aims to live. In the Gandhian cannon this is known as Satyagraha. In pacifist ongoingness, regenerative pacifism collaborates with small a anarchism busy at work in the grassroots.

²¹³ Note the following chapter engages with the scholarly literature on Autoethnography in more detail.

²¹⁴ B Martin, Theory for activists, *Social Anarchism*, No. 44, 2010, p.32.

Ontology and Epistemology

The perspective taken here is that epistemology and ontology are discourses about the possibilities of knowing, being and becoming. In line with many others within resistance anthropology, ecological humanities and post-qualitative methodology the focus is put on how humans coexist with other beings because this is critical for our common survival on earth.²¹⁵ This approach is evident in research that accepts the presence of other than human beings. Of mountain spirits and other “earth beings.”²¹⁶ Ontologically the existing alternatives share common assumptions about the capacity of ordinary people to remake their world and to do it in a way that challenges the existing structures of authority. For Salleh, Goodman and Hosseini, researchers within the transversal global justice movements, a shift from ‘the possessive ontology of having more to a relational ontology of being more’ is required as the capitalist mode of production reaches its limits.²¹⁷

My understanding is that there is no *a priori* ontology and that it would be against any commitment to liberation for me to propose that there is a fixed understanding of ‘how things exist’.²¹⁸ Ontology is not a synonym for culture, or world-view, it is a philosophical discourse about the metaphysical nature of being,²¹⁹ a discourse about the basic building blocks of reality.²²⁰ Debates continue in relation to the ontological turn in anthropology and new work continues to add contributions.²²¹

Post-qualitative theory does not separate the ontological from the epistemological, the being from the knowing. This non-separation of the possible basis and processes of knowledge from the possible basis and processes of existence is what makes post-qualitative approaches distinct from realist, social constructivist and other colonial and positivist approaches to knowing, being and becoming.²²²

I exist because I am here on earth; wherever I go, that is where I am. My existence is not to be taken for granted as given. As contemporary mystic, Sadh Guru says, “give yourself a

²¹⁵ B G Karlsson, After Political Ecology, *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 34. No. 2, 2018, p. 24.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Ibid, Salleh, Goodman and Hosseini, From Sociological Imagination to ‘ecological imagination’, 2015 p. 97.

²¹⁸ T Morton, The Ontological is the political, Verso books talks, September 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QKrRNK6b4sg> (accessed 2 July 2018).

²¹⁹ O O’Neil, Ontology, in T Honderich (ed), *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995, p. 634.

²²⁰ D Greaber, Radical alterity is just another way of saying ‘reality’ a reply to Eduardo Viveros de Castro, *Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, Vol 5. No. 2, 2015, p. p.15.

²²¹ P Heywood, The Ontological Turn, University of Cambridge online, may, 2017, <http://doi.org/10.29164/17ontology>.

²²² N S Mauthner, A Posthumanist Ethics of Mattering: New Materialisms and ethical practice of inquiry, R Iphefen & M Tolich, (ed) *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research Ethics*, 2019, p.64.

little smile when you wake up each morning in recognition of the fact that you are alive. Many others will not wake and therefor no longer exist” in the material and mundane world.²²³ I share with other humans’ existential questions about the world I am in. This process, as anthropologists in the critical and radical traditions have shown, is a common human experience in diverse cultures that is tied up with lengthy and deadly debates around religiosity, science, nature, women and violence.²²⁴ The maxim here is that everything is interconnected.

In a similar way to Salleh et al, Natasha Mauthner's *Posthumanist Ethics of Mattering* argues for “a relational ontology or non-dualistic metaphysics that refuses to take itself as ontological given and insists on accounting for its own ontological existence and commitment to nonduality”.²²⁵ I could be reading ancient Vedic mystics, the Yoga Sutras or the philosophy of Vipassana meditation as these have argued similarly for hundreds of thousands of years, though in relation to the self, they have different viewpoints. Australian and Torres Straight Island Indigenous knowledge is also based on non-separation and, *is thought of* as living knowledge. Victor Steffensen’s important work, learning and teaching indigenous fire management makes this clear. Particularly in relation to climate change which has two meanings for him,²²⁶

*“The climate that has been changing and humans have been adapting to for thousands of years” and “the manmade situation, where the harmful traits of human action are rapidly contributing. There is no separation, it is all part of the one problem...”*²²⁷

I rarely see the Vedic or Buddhist connections acknowledged in post-qualitative methodology literature. Indigenous and decolonial knowledge is, on the other hand, more broadly used. As the method bringing life to this inquiry is autoethnographic it important that I explain my own philosophical points of view and commitments. Honesty, as the following chapter explains is a basis of autoethnography.

Sat Nam:²²⁸

²²³ Sadh Guru, Inner Engineering, *Isha Foundation*, www.isha.org, class 4 of 7, September 2020. My partner and I completed the online course.

²²⁴ Ibid, Kennedy, *Deeply Felt*, 2015, where ontology is a key discussion in relation to the texts studied, especially chapter’s 1 and 2.

²²⁵ Ibid, Mauthner, 2019, p. 12

²²⁶ V Steffensen, *Fire Country*, Hardie Grant Travel, Australia, 2020.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ 3 HO Foundation, The Mantra Toolkit, Sat Nam, 3 HO, *Healthy Holy Happy*, <https://www.3ho.org/kundalini-yoga/mantra/kundalini-yoga-mantras/mantra-toolkit-sat-nam> (accessed 1 November, 2020). Explains the use of the mantra in Kundalini Yoga, the practice I have

My personal philosophy is grounded in nonviolence and anarchism because these are life affirming and open approaches to knowledge and reality. My being and becoming is also informed by syncretic Vedic and Buddhist onto-ethical-epistemology(s) through my involvement in yoga and meditation with over 25 years of practice. My political commitment is to a kinder and common future free of all forms of oppression and repression. Despite incommensurable views and entrenched hegemonies, the task of radical politics is to work for the liberation of all beings. As such, calls for emancipatory philosophy and taking responsibility for its practice are high on the agenda of people writing post-qualitative methodology and methods, just as they are in food sovereignty movements, global justice movements, animal rights movements, no border movements and more.

In post-qualitative methodology, materiality has been re articulated in emergent and spirited philosophies of matter.²²⁹

These found their way into the methodology by following the now many posts and turns within social theory. From that point they travel experimental paths. Abstracting down to food and the phenomena of food wars to focus on one vital aspect of a future social defence, was an ontological decision. This is precisely because, regardless of how one understands food subjectively, inter-subjectively or following this or that ideology or cosmology, its materiality as necessity for life on earth is common to all beings. Getting to know food requires engagement with its discourses.

Epistemology is defined here as theories of knowledge; discourses about, “its possibility scope, and general basis”.²³⁰ To the best of my knowledge you cannot undertake a university degree in anarchism, agroecology/permaculture or nonviolence, you have to go about accessing these bodies of knowledge outside of the university or settle for a little bit of this and a little bit of that, within interdisciplinary social and environmental sciences, humanities and more recently in some agricultural degrees that are making moves into regenerative farming. Knowledge gatekeepers and profiteers have seen to this. Feminists continue to challenge the content and infra structures of patriarchal knowledge that posited women as irrational and rendered women’s affective and reproductive labour free and private.

maintained for over 15 years, and its meaning which affirms that Sat – truth is my Nam– identity. This is a seed or *biju* mantra. Cosmologically significant for Kundalini Yoga and for the Navdanya Movement, “Within the seed is all the knowledge of a fully grown tree”.

²²⁹ Ibid, Mauthner, 2019, p. 12.

²³⁰ Ibid, *Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, 1995, p. 242.

Essentialising women as nature and reifying nature are surely two of the most oppressive structures of patriarchal systems. This *episteme-ontology* forged the dominant masculine hegemony within the social institutions of states. In courts of law, media institutions, universities, museums, prisons, hospitals, think tanks and other social and cultural institutions. Feminist standpoint theory, ecofeminist theory, anarcho feminist theory and Marxist- socialist feminist theory have helped to tell the story of how the philosophy(s) work and how they might be resisted.²³¹ The Eurocentric Modern separation of philosophy from science through the western enlightenment is rejected by post-qualitative methodology; by Australian indigenous knowledge and by Vedic and Buddhist knowledge. No doubt there are others knowledge systems I have not included. I can only speak to those I have enough knowledge of and experience with.

Paradigm Disputes

Discussions within research methodology are ubiquitously militarised through the discursive language of ‘paradigm wars. Denzin has made some effort to shift the discourse by writing the third moment as “new paradigm disputes” and paying a lot of attention to the processes of dialogue.²³² I have been challenged when keeping my eye out for the word nonviolence or for methodological research that does not obey the discursive language of war. Metaphors are not merely devices of rhetoric they are expressions of what is viscerally lived; bodies produce words as well as minds. Despite the many posts and moments, we are now, apparently treading water or in another new moment. My personal commitment is to experiment with truth, to care for myself, other people and the planet we share. Just as it is to share the surplus of my food production and my knowledge and experiences within revolutionary nonviolence.

As Arun Kuntz surmised; “The various posts are perhaps bound by their common refusal to abide by the bifurcation of knowing from being,”²³³ as much as their motivation towards openness and experimentation. Researchers and social inquiry more broadly are urged to acknowledge their entanglements and complicity in making and remaking the material conditions of the world. The view taken here following David Graeber and so many others is that “the only things about which we can have absolute knowledge are things that we have made up.”²³⁴ Earth will exist without us but as a species we share it with other beings and

²³¹ V Shiva and D Graeber have made this point across their publications, see also, R Connell, Southern Theory, Blog, <http://www.raewynconnell.net/>, Ibid, Decolonising Sociology, Contemporary Sociology, Vol. 47. No 4. 2018, p 405.DOI. 10.1177//0094306118779811.

²³² N K Denzin, Moments, Mixed methods and Paradigm Dialogs, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 16, 2010, p. 422.

²³³ A M Kuntz, Standing at Ones Post: Post-qualitative Inquiry as ethical enactment, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 2020, add DOI, p. 1

²³⁴ Ibid, Graeber, *Radical Alterity; a reply*, 2015, p. 26.

must now find common ground to survive the conditions we are living in.²³⁵ To do this we need to be healthy, empowered and collectively organized to practice caring and sharing. Organised and committed to regenerate degraded land, politics, economies and societies. Taking a life affirming approach to what is real is consistent with post-qualitative methodology in general. It gains further traction when it is grounded in ecological philosophy and prefigurative political theory.

If the way to nonviolent cultures is through the practices and processes of nonviolence then promoting knowledge specific to nonviolence and pacifism is a social, ecological and political imperative. To be consistent with prefigurative politics, a transformation at the individual level assists in helping people feel less vulnerable. Such shifts enable a sense of ecological, political and social responsibility that can be put into action, empowering people to tackle problems, rather than being a part of them or leave them for others to deal with.²³⁶ “Standing at one’s post”,²³⁷ as Arun Kuntz suggests, is about becoming adept at working in the terrains of the contemporary even as we strive to move beyond the normalising limits of convention.²³⁸

Theory

Ecological philosophies that deal with the Anthropocene, philosophical theories that are open to the immanent through *ongoingness*, living knowledge and decolonial solidarities shape the post-qualitative methodology that this research explores. I say explores because post-qualitative methodology, as methodology guru Norman K. Denzin has noted, arises out of new feminist materialisms. These as Denzin does *not* note also arrive out of various forms of anarchist feminisms that have “...always and already been engaged with countering and unmasking power and have rejected juridicio-discursive limitations of power.”²³⁹

Post approaches may be aiming to research without fences, but we are not there yet. There are lots of posts being constructed, it seems to me, just in case we need the fences to defend ourselves from artificial intelligence. While varied in their origin, genesis, ‘post’ or ‘re-turn’, these approaches did not just pop up in well-known philosophers such as Michele Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Gutarri, Jean Baudrillard, Jean Francis Lyotard, Edward

²³⁵ J Cribb, *Surviving the 21st Century: Humanities ten great challenges and what we must do about them*, Springer International, Switzerland, 2017. Ibid, Morton, 2010-2018, Ibid, Hamilton, *Defiant Earth*, 2017.

²³⁶ V Gupta, 2014, Forward to B Walden, *IPermie*, 2014, p. 5.

²³⁷ Ibid, A M Kuntz, *Standing at Ones Post: Qualitative Inquiry*, 2020, p. 1-5.

²³⁸ Ibid. p1.

²³⁹ S Jeppenson, *Towards a New Analytic of Power, Anarchist Imagination, Anarchism encounters the humanities and social sciences*, Routledge, 2019, p.5 of chapter 7.

Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhaba or any other philosopher of a contemporary post. They all build on pasts, and they may not yet be as inclusive as they aim to be.

For Denzin, what is common is the refusal of the essentialist ontological divisions that unsettled the many positivist, empiricist and constructivist methodologies.²⁴⁰ Along with Denzin, Elizabeth A. St. Pierre and others my use of this methodology accepts that; “A new paradigm is on the horizon, one that doubles back on itself and wanders in spaces that have not yet been named”.²⁴¹ I understand new paradigm to mean a body of theory and practice that has emerged out of critical discussions with older paradigms; a renewal that remains open to discussion and experimentation. Not something totally new to the world of philosophy, theory and practice in social research. Post-qualitative research might simply be called experimental research, regenerative research or unbounded research. Theory is still emerging and thoughtful critical accounts of its genesis and ongoingness appear in the literature.²⁴² Southern Scholar and post qualitative researcher, Raewyn Connell reminds us that “There is a whole back story of social critiques of empire” acknowledged by social theorists.²⁴³

Influential among these are Franz Fanon’s, *Wretched of the earth*, Edward Said’s, *Orientalism*, Samir Amin’s, *Accumulation on a world scale* and others dating back to the 1600’s.²⁴⁴ There is also a deeper history to the state form that travels back not just “five hundred years”²⁴⁵ to the beginning of European armed conquest and colonization. Our inherited assumptions about who and what is civilized go back Millennia to the slave states of Mesopotamia.²⁴⁶ Coming closer to our present, in 2011, scientist and futurist, Jeremy Ravetz wrote, “the most redemptive feature of the history of the century gone by is the rise of non-violence as a political and cultural force”.²⁴⁷ The current pursuits of scientific and technological human progress much like “food regimes”²⁴⁸, speed on as if people and

²⁴⁰ N K Denzin, Performance, Hermeneutics, Interpretation, chapter in U Flick, ed, *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection*, 2020 p. 15.

²⁴¹ Ibid, p. 16.

²⁴² G Gerrard, S Rudolf, A Sriprakash, The politics of post-qualitative inquiry: History and Power, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. No. 23, Issue No. 5, 2017. P 384-394.

²⁴³ R Connell, Decolonising Sociology, *Contemporary Sociology*, vol. 47, No. 4, 2018, p. 399 – 408.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 399

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ J C Scott, *Against the Grain: A Deep History of the Earliest States*, Yale University Press, 2017, makes this case, as does, T Morton, *Humankind: Solidarity with Nonhuman People*, Verso, New York, 2017; Ibid, V Shiva, *Oneness*, 2019, Ibid, A Ocalan, *Democratic Nation*, 2016. These are just some of the pertinent examples across disciplines and nations.

²⁴⁷ J Ravetz, Post normal science and the maturing of the contradictions of modern European Science, *Futures*, Vol. 43, 2011, p.147.

²⁴⁸ P Mc Michael, Bernstein-McMichael-Friedman, Dialogue on Food Regimes, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol 43, No 3, 2016. p.649-669 charts the trajectory of Mc Michaels, food regime analysis.

country did not matter. A violent and lopsided ontology²⁴⁹ has sustained a cultural hegemony that could be on the edge of dissipating as more humans put the philosophies of pacifism, nonviolence, civil resistance and anarchism into their theories of change and becoming.

In his welcome research publication, *Humankind: A Hopeful History*, Rutger Bregman diligently explains how war began with the earliest states. Relationally, war cannot be understood as a fact of human existence and the only way to deal with conflict resolution.²⁵⁰ Social theory's attempt to decolonize the University and hence its methodology, fits well with post-qualitative theory because it moves away from the assumptions of "one episteme that the discipline and its allies reproduces".²⁵¹

Crucially, the methodology "looks for connections between knowledge projects as much as the differences between them."²⁵² This methodology assists my reading of the literature from the examples and to locate them, as I have, as earth-based movements. As Connell so refreshingly says, solidarity-based epistemologies are key to decolonizing sociology and social theory more broadly and this includes its methodology. "The colonized world was first and foremost a source of data,"²⁵³ collected, and used to enclose the common resources of the planet and impose military, political, economic and cultural domination over populations in the urbanising global centres and in the peripheries of the civilization. As I will explain later in this chapter, data has no particular significance in relation to my experiments with this methodology. I have taken up Connell's "plea that researchers should just do it by making it up" because there are so many questions yet to be asked and answered in relation to de-colonising.²⁵⁴

Using an emergent experimental methodology is risky because it is usually met with resistance from gate keepers. According to my research within methodological literature, and broader philosophy, it is necessary that social theory changes. Not all decolonial methodology is post-qualitative, not all post-qualitative is decolonial but both are part of a mosaic of contemporary philosophy, it is necessary that theory and practice change. Post qualitative methodology is undeniably here in the world despite the claims of the University

²⁴⁹ D Graeber, *Direct Action*, A K Press, 2009.

²⁵⁰ R Bregman, *Humankind, A Hopeful History*, Bloomsbury London, 2020, p. 91. In chapter 4 Bregman presents the key debates through various disciplines and like many, pins his hopes on digging, "because the fossil fuel record can't be contaminated".

²⁵¹ Ibid, R Connell, *Decolonising*, 2018 p. 404.

²⁵² Ibid, p. 407.

²⁵³ Ibid, p. 402

²⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 407.

of New England that “no one in the disciplines of the humanities and social science uses it.”²⁵⁵

Methodology that stays with the troubles

“I live in a country that does not yet exist.”²⁵⁶

Agroecology/permaculture and anarchism exist as phenomena in and of this world. While these do not always go hand in hand, they are both and, often together - as anarcho/feminism, anarcho/pacifism and anarcho/communism - historical continuities in diverse geographical locations.²⁵⁷ On the other hand the central topic of this research: social defence as an alternative to the military, does not exist. If it did, the military system(s) would also not exist. In contrast, “global military spending has increased by 3.6% since 2018.”²⁵⁸ This figure does not account for the global Sars-Cov-19 Pandemic of late 2019/2020 or the rush to escalate the production of better killing systems and close the ecological world.

Elizabeth A St. Pierre, a founder of the methodology, is an experienced and senior academic who acknowledges that she worked with and benefited from the conventional humanist methodologies that evolved through the various ‘paradigm wars.’²⁵⁹ She now laments the formulaic, essentialist processes of those and has published rigorous articles explaining why she is now working differently.²⁶⁰ A deeper appreciation of the assumptions underlying rationalist empiricisms and the big three methodologies, qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods explain her moves into the post-qualitative.²⁶¹ In her response to the American 2002 National Research Councils, *Scientific Research in Education Report*, she was concerned about the erasure of politics, values and diversity in research and education. Here she perceived a backlash; “as those who lost control of the production of a certain kind

²⁵⁵ At a zoom meeting with the head of the HASS school and the head of UNE research I was told that no one uses post qualitative methodology at UNE. Dialogue available at kkenne27@myune.edu.au

²⁵⁶ J M. Lawson, Jr, Speech, February 2017, in A Fiala, (ed), *The Routledge Handbook of Pacifism and Nonviolence*, Routledge, New York, 2018, p. 386.

²⁵⁷ P Martial, *Demanding the Impossible: A history of Anarchism*, Harper Perennial, United States, 2008, charts the movements of anarchism. Religious anarchism predates modern anarchist theories and has been interpreted and updated in works such as A J M E Christoyannopoulos, ed, *Religious Anarchism: New Perspectives*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2009. Ibid, R Kinna, *The Government of No One* 2019.

²⁵⁸ Stockholm International Peace Research SIPRI, Global military spending sees largest annual increase in a decade, *SIPRI*, Press Release, <https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2020/global-military-expenditure-sees-largest-annual-increase-decade-says-sipri-reaching-1917-billion> (accessed 7/10/20).

²⁵⁹ Ibid, E A, St. Pierre, 2019, *Post qualitative ontology in a time of immanence*, p. 3.

²⁶⁰ E A St. Pierre & W S Pillow, Introduction, *Inquiry among the ruins: feminist post structural, Theory and Method in Education*, Routledge, London, p 1-24.

²⁶¹ Ibid, E A St. Pierre, *New Empiricisms*, 2016, p.121.

of knowledge” attempted, mostly successfully to “collapse all methodologies and epistemologies into one meta narrative of science.”²⁶²

Clearly frustrated given the back story of feminism, post modernism, queer theory, post structuralism and their critiques of meta narratives, St Pierre concurs with Spivak, that we practice deconstructions “persistent critique of what we cannot want.”²⁶³ By 2004 St Pierre had a name for what she had been developing in her doctoral dissertation and her attempt to help students who studied post structuralism, only to find it did not work with qualitative methodology. By 2010 she had presented her first conference paper on post qualitative methodology.²⁶⁴ She has stayed with what troubled her and continues to produce theory and examples of post-qualitative research.

Hers is more a history of ideas approach that requires close and careful reading of bodies of thought. One commensurable with former disciplines such as the *History of Ideas* which have all but disappeared from Australian Universities. In one of her most recent publications, St Pierre makes an explicit argument against methodology and for philosophy. I see this as a call to pay attention to the damage caused to thinking through the application of modern science. A call to take a quantum leap out of the linear, into the liminal and immanent.²⁶⁵ What I find troubling is that St. Pierre does seem to have missed the irony of perpetuating the assumption of violence by repeating the embedded methodological metaphor that propels the discourse of war. I will take a short digression here.

Social science methodology literature has been militarized. As discourse it mostly serves or is forced to serve the nation state. In that way, the metaphors are more accurate standpoints. Surely, then, part of decolonising and attending to philosophy is the rejection of militarised language, metaphors, semantics and discourse, along with re generating the literature using more peaceful language. This is not the reason St. Pierre turned to post-qualitative or as she puts it, “to lingering on the edge of the not-yet.”²⁶⁶ However, it is important to me. For all its capacity to break free of patriarchal, colonialist, militarist thinking, it seems there is no real push to change the now embedded language of ‘paradigm wars’. In reality, these are simply theoretical debates and discussions.

St. Pierre does not include the anarchist turn, post anarchism or the post secular to the best of my knowledge. But as my previous research shows, these ‘turns’ were also taking place globally in the period the methodology has been developing into its DIY, post-structural

²⁶² E A St. Pierre, Response to closed science, Refusing alternatives A science of contestation, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2004, p. 135. Add DOI:

²⁶³ G Spivak, in *Ibid*, p. 137.

²⁶⁴ E A St. Pierre, Why Post qualitative, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol 1. No. 1, 2020.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid*.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid*. St Pierre, *Writing post qualitative*, 2018, p.

worlding. This is curious because the methodology of the post-qualitative is almost anti methodology, yet certain political theories and philosophies do not appear to be inclusive and emergent when it seems to me that they should. According to St. Pierre, “Post-qualitative inquiry has no pre-existing research designs, it is not another version of nor is it compatible with qualitative inquiry”.²⁶⁷

Perhaps anarchism is just too close to pacifism? Perhaps it is because sociology *of* the military rather than *for* it is lacking in social research, perhaps it is simply a symptom of over information that anarchist turns are omitted and its philosophies subjugated in most but not all methodology, modern or post. As Brad West and Steve Matthewman argue “sociology has failed to appreciate the symmetrical relationship between civil society and the military as a central feature of modernity”.²⁶⁸ Peace studies emerged to tackle what sociology had not. Peace and conflict studies was an early adopter of interdisciplinary and cross cultural knowledge. However, for West and Matthewman it “is often imbued with a cosmopolitan assumption that wars’ end is in sight.”²⁶⁹ Peacebuilding now takes place through the status quo of legal justifications for the use of armed and other forces and international supra state systems of global political rule.

Despite sincere efforts from many, particularly feminists working for transitional justice within conflict transformation frameworks it is “the embedded discriminatory structures of the state” that limit opportunities within the four pillars (prosecutions, truth telling, reparations and institutional reforms) of transitional justice.²⁷⁰ Committed peace studies scholars such as Wendy Lambourne, lament the lack of involvement of local actors in supra institutional processes.

After 40 years of work in the field, Lambourne and others are still explaining that “patriarchal systems continue to marginalize women’s rights and limit all of the four pillars of transitional justice.”²⁷¹ Despite this work Lambourne and others still maintain a liberal approach to transitional justice through their use of Martha Nussbaum’s feminism which is undeniably well-intentioned liberal feminism, that still has not gone far enough.²⁷² As Roger

²⁶⁷ Ibid, St Pierre, Why post-qualitative, 2020, p,2.

²⁶⁸ B West & S Matthewman, Towards a strong program in the sociology of war, the military and civil society, *Journal of Sociology*, Vol 52. Issue. 3, 2016 p482-499.

²⁶⁹ Ibid, West and Matthewman, 2016, p. 494.

²⁷⁰ W Lambourne, V A Rodriguez – Carreon, Engendering Transitional Justice: A transformative approach to building peace and attaining human rights for women, *Human Rights Review*, No. 17, 2016, p, 82.

²⁷¹ Ibid, p. 90.

²⁷² Ibid, p. 89, See also M A Nussbaum, *Women and Human Development, the Capabilities Approach*, Cambridge University Press, 2013; M C Nussbaum, *The feminist critique of liberalism*, University of Chicago Press, Department of Philosophy, 1997 also discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis.

MacGinty and Oliver Richmond put it in their work on the ‘local turn’ in peacebuilding, “peace has followed power in recent history” and war has literally become peace. The local turn holds the potential to diffuse power, decolonize epistemology and ontology in peacebuilding and move away from the entrenched norms of western liberalism.²⁷³

Deconstruction, scepticism and countering misinformation are necessary and ongoing because we are not post the military structures of the civilized State. The challenge for anarchists within the University is to “*move on with the messy business of “destroying the suffocating authority of the dominant methods and confront the institutional practices that promote and protect them.”*”²⁷⁴ Through post-structural renewal of Marxist philosophies, St. Pierre has contributed to the anarchist challenge - however accidentally. Or perhaps it is entirely intentional because she does not read anarchist philosophy so therefore could not pertain to understand or use it. Hence it is up to those who are familiar with it to seek connections and build solidarities as well as note variations.

St. Pierre is embedded in the post-structuralist thinking of Deleuze and Guattari. Others in the field follow on from feminist scientist, Karen Barad and some lean into Bruno Latour and Donna Haraway.²⁷⁵ I resonate with the latter group but do appreciate the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, particularly in relation to Immanence.²⁷⁶ As well as other influential post Marxist’s such as Jean Baudrillard and Michael Foucault. My own intellectual lineage makes careful use of the work of Donna Haraway, Timothy Morton, Bruce Pascoe and Vandana Shiva. Coming into the mix are, Sandra Jeppesen, Raewyn Connell, Samuel Alexander, Ted Trainer, David Graeber, Emma Goldman, Uri Gordon, Extinction Rebellion, Abdulla Ocalan, the women of Rojava, Food not Bombs and Rainbow Family. For me these sources offer a way into thinking for social defence. Multispecies philosophies, as Karen Barad has explained, are based on a “relational ontology” and quantum physics.²⁷⁷ Barad calls this “agential realism,” Haraway calls it sympoiesis, some call it post human – mystical anarchy works for me, though I don’t dare use that term here. Whatever it is becoming, all agree it is epistemology, ontology and ethics in one.

²⁷³ R Mac Ginty & O P Richmond, The local turn in peacebuilding, a critical agenda for peace, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 34. No. 5, 2013, p. 775, 777; K Kennedy, Against a definition: In favour of nonviolent social defence and the anarchist turn, *Peace and Conflict Review*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 2016, p 91-104 provides my own analysis of the local turn vis-à-vis social defence and peacebuilding.

²⁷⁴ Ibid, J Ferrell, *Against method, against authority, for anarchy*, p.74.

²⁷⁵ J Gerrard, S Rudolph & A Sriprakash, The politics of post-qualitative inquiry: history and power, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. No. 23, Issue No. 5, 2016, p 384-394.

²⁷⁶ Ibid, K Kennedy, *Deeply Felt*, Chapter two.

²⁷⁷ K Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, Duke University Press, 2007, p. 352.

I take it that I should remain humble “because we are already floating in space.”²⁷⁸ I will not go into detailed theoretical debates about materiality, science, religion and politics in this thesis. I spent four years researching these in my former academic HDR research and have published on this topic. In this research the primary method used is also a ‘post’ method; namely autoethnography.²⁷⁹ My own participation in agroecological, permaculture-oriented farming; semi-autonomous off-grid living, and revolutionary nonviolence is also experimental. Just as the central topic of the research is. The methodology works well for this research project because post qualitative inquiry encourages concrete, practical experimentation and the creation of the *not yet* instead of the endless repetition of what *is*.²⁸⁰ As wide reading and immersion with philosophies and theories that underpin research is a distinct feature of post-qualitative research²⁸¹ then, perhaps by the time this thesis is complete regenerative culture will emerge in all its mystery and end the paradigm ‘wars’? We can all then stand down from our posts.

For now, we are still lingering on the edge. Yet very much here.

Data

The whipping boy of authority is not just “under assault” in relation to experience it is dead,²⁸² according to Denzin. Experience, however this is conveyed to others, “cannot be turned into a thing... it is a process that is messy, open ended, inconclusive and tangled up in the writer and the reader’s imagined interpretations”.²⁸³ Multiple approaches to data that re imagine it as simply practical as well as approaches that interpret data through alternative ontologies; be they the feminist materialisms at work in Denzin and others. Or the *Object Oriented Ontology* of Graham Harvey and Timothy Morton; the philosophical animism of Val Plumwood and Deborah Bird Rose; the Jineology of the feminist revolution in Rojava or the *Vasaudhiva* of the Navdanya Movement. Post-qualitative approaches to data resist definition because the methodology itself resists boundaries.²⁸⁴ Some post-qualitative approaches to data view it as inconsequential to the research.²⁸⁵ In this case researchers place their energy on the politics of the possible.²⁸⁶ For Timothy Morton, “data is simply what is given.”²⁸⁷ For me big data is the omnipresent and revelatory raw material of

²⁷⁸ T Morton, *The Ecological Thought*, Harvard University Press, United States 2010 and p. 17-18.

²⁷⁹ C S. Le Roux, Exploring Rigour in Autoethnography, *International Journal of Research Methodology*, Vol. 20. No. 2, 2017, p196, DOI:10.1080/13645579.2016.1140965.

²⁸⁰ E A St. Pierre, Post Qualitative Inquiry, In an Ontology of Immanence, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 25. No. 1. 2019 p. 1.

²⁸¹ Ibid, St. Pierre, add three readings...writing. Immanence.

²⁸² Ibid, N K Denzin, in Sage Handbook, 2020, p. 2.

²⁸³ Ibid, p. 3.

²⁸⁴ Ibid, Kuntz, 2020, p. 3.

²⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 5.

²⁸⁶ Ibid, p?

²⁸⁷ T Morton, *Being Ecological*, Pelican, 2018, UK. p. 19.

conventional social research disciplines that is all too often put to work for patriarchal states and the capitalist money machine.

Once data is given, much can be and is made of it. In this research, it is data that has not been mystified in the commodity fetish sense that is most useful. Hence the reliance on primary sources; of shared and open data within the 'earthbound' movement examples. Data has been mobilized as an economic device that is reified even in the institutional processes of ethics.²⁸⁸ As the raw material of information and knowledge, the big data of today can track our every move (at work now in contact tracing people for Corona Virus). Algorithms and complex mathematical codes and equations run our financial, agricultural and communications systems. The extent to which governments and citizens use it to manipulate and lie is evident in debates around democracy, sovereignty, privacy, trust, truth and rights of all sorts, including the right to food. Data tells us who is hungry when we know it is the poor, children and women fleeing wars.

The social and political consequences of data are unfolding at rapid pace. Securing data has become a top priority of states and their institutions. Ask Julian Assange, read Yuval Noah Harari's, *Homodeaus: A History of the Future*; follow the *Panama Papers* and anti-corruption movements, read *Off-Guardian* and then read the *Australian Broadcasting Commission* (ABC) news; *The Guardian* or the *Special Broadcasting Service* (SBS) and one is immediately aware of their being subject to the power of data and what is made of it.

Commons sources shared freely form the base of the research material – the data - used in this thesis. Brian Martin's work on the topic and in general is freely available online and circulated among friends for comment prior to publication. XR collectively write and rewrite their strategy in open source documents that anyone can participate in. Primary sources from each of the movements explored in this thesis are available through wiki medias, social media, activist media, and creative commons sources. Some make it to the university; others remain so oblique in that context they might as well not exist. For Denzin, who has long explored the politics of evidence, representation, and contemporary methodological discussions. "Data refers to the facts of experience, which cannot be replaced, and which are always fluid and transformative."²⁸⁹

In this research data is open to various interpretations, following Morton it is simply what is given once the thesis is submitted. There is no aim here to capture data or generalize it into a methodological category in support of this or that course of action. The research is an experiment with truth not a claim to truth. If I am producing it, then surely it is as free as I am, as active as I am and will change as I do. My responsibility in relation to data is to be

²⁸⁸ N S Mauthner, A posthumanist mattering of ethics: New Materialisms and the ethical practice of inquiry, in (ed) R Iphofen and M Tolich, *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Methods*, 2019, p. 62

²⁸⁹ Ibid, Denzin, *Sage Handbook*, 2020, p. 18.

thoughtful and honest about my selection of sources and my uses of them.²⁹⁰ Moreover, it is to remember that data big and small is what European science used as evidence to support its knowledge claims and world views and then sought to universalize them.²⁹¹ Through its conquests and modes of capitalist production and accumulation empire has “shared its ideologies including racism and sexism”,²⁹² in the form of statistical and scientific data. Jeremy Ravetz has been commenting on the contradictions or problems of science for over thirty-five years. His view is that “education in science is now far more dogmatic than in theology.”²⁹³ Which reflects the realities of contemporary physics as they are being conceived. On the other hand, the European science, which is quite other to the billiard-ball universe of its predecessors is out of sync with the “rapidly changing common sense of its publics.”²⁹⁴

Ravetz previously called the euro sciences pathologies of industrial science, he now grapples with in terms of contradictions or problems that cannot be solved within the currently accepted frameworks. In each of these contradictions: *knowledge and power, knowledge and Ignorance, the true and the good, consequences, quality, innovation and property, elitism and democracy, corruption in research, image and audience, societal context, reality, safety, reactions, official responses, societal responses, awareness, non-violence and valedictory*, it is typically problems linked to the power of the state and the economy that inhibit creative solutions. These problems for Ravetz are arguably also problems for post-qualitative methodologists.²⁹⁵

We have more data than ever, but a less compassionate world and the dominant ‘western’ civilization faces multiple existential threats. Resolving the problems of science, the problems of making use of thinking and experimenting with ideas is far more urgent than acquiring more data. Significantly, it is critical that social researchers understand that “all is not well in the world of science and technology of modern European civilization.”²⁹⁶ The one we are in. Data may be a whipping boy for those in authority, but it has no real relevance in this research. I will most likely not refer to the raw material of this thesis as data outside of this discussion. Leaders of the world are busy promoting the benefits of General Artificial Intelligence. A form of technology that will increase disruptions to peoples’ lives, this evolving new technology might also be capable of “out manipulating human leaders and

²⁹⁰ E Nurmien, What Post Qualitative Research Could Become, *Affective Inequalities* post conference report, 16 September 2016, <http://affective-inequalities.fi/en/author/en/> (accessed 24 July 2018).

²⁹¹ J R Ravetz/ Postnormal Science and the maturing of the structural contradictions of modern European science, *Futures*, Vol. 43 2011, p 142-148.

²⁹² Ibid, p.145.

²⁹³ Ibid,143.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Ibid, p, 142 – 148.

²⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 142.

developing weapons we cannot even understand”.²⁹⁷ Into the old politics of the new pandemic, data is flashed across the screens and data analysts are called to present the news in much the same way that the weather is presented. Data is the whipping boy of authority because those in power can make it do whatever they want. Climate change denial provides ample evidence of that.

Sharing

Taking the full range of options open to me through post qualitative methodology means thinking of my research as shared. In and of itself it is working for me and those I am building solidarity with. A process of resistance that shares common ground, common aims and as Roger Hallam put it ‘common sense’ for the twenty first century.²⁹⁸ If, “separation is violence” then, as Vandana Shiva rightly affirms a resurgence of the real is a resurgence of our oneness and non-separability.²⁹⁹ Shared recognition that “the edge of extinction is not just a metaphor: system collapse is not a thriller”³⁰⁰ and, that new feminist inspired solutions are necessary is a key premise of solidarity based ecological futures and ought to be reflected in a methodology that is future oriented in the sense that this research is.³⁰¹ Following this I have taken the liberty of using the anarchist/regenerative theory of prefigurative politics as the grounding theory because it is what connects my philosophy to my day to day life; Connects what is being prefigured in Regenerative Cultures and in particular through the examples of them, I explore in this research.

No matter what I read from the literature of, for and by the movements this thesis explores, it is love that is being regenerated and spread. Relationally, it is possible “that we might collectively re imagine the foundations of social research, so that love might become, ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology and pedagogy, too”.³⁰²

Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim speaks truth to power in a chapter of Extinction Rebellion’s, *This is Not a Drill*.³⁰³ “Everywhere on the planet, more than 370 million indigenous people who live according to the rhythm of nature, in symbiosis with their environment, tell the same

²⁹⁷ D Godredge, The Age of Disruption, *New Internationalist*, No. 507, 2017, p. 13.

²⁹⁸ R Hallam, *Common Sense for the Twenty First Century*, Only nonviolent rebellion can now stop climate breakdown and social collapse, Wern Dolau, UK, 2019.

²⁹⁹ V Shiva, Oneness versus the 1%, p. xii.

³⁰⁰ D Haraway, Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin, Commentary, *Environmental Humanities*, vol. 6, 2015, p. 161.

³⁰¹ Ibid, J Cribb, *Surviving*, 2016, Ibid, T Morton, *Humankind*, 2018 Ibid, Scoone, et. al. *Emancipatory Politics*, 2018. Each add to the substantive support for this claim.

³⁰² J B Ulmer, Critical Qualitative Inquiry In/as Love, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 23, Issue, 7, 2017, p 543 – 544, <http://doi.org/10.1077/1077800417718298>

³⁰³ H O Ibrahim, Indigenous Peoples fight for Survival, Ibid, XR, *Not a Drill*, p. 54-57.

stories”.³⁰⁴ Now threatened by effects of above 1.5% warming in Chad, the writers home and everywhere on the planet these stories have been buried in the data dumps of old. It is true that “Indigenous peoples are the guardians of ancestral knowledge that draws from the environment the solutions of everyday life.”³⁰⁵ It is also true that “this knowledge is part of the memory of humanity that is threatened with extinction. With all knowledge that is lost, every ancestor that goes out, is a book that burns, or a library that disappears.”³⁰⁶

To move beyond politics as we have known them, we need about an analysis of power. For Carne Ross, “we will only get a more equal society if power is equitably shared. You cannot produce equality of power when the few are making decisions for the many. The answer as Ross suggests, is a system where the many govern the many. In other words, a system in which we govern ourselves. You could call this self-government or bottom-up democracy. For Ross, who echoes Shiva, it is reasonably be called “democracy – *real* democracy”.³⁰⁷ For me it just as easily be called the *Chtulucene* and describe the process of making Odkin. As Haraway put it; “Living-with and dying-with each other in the Chtulucene can be a fierce reply to the dictates of both Anthropos and Capital.”³⁰⁸ In post qualitative methodology the point is made that we are always *making with* each other, in scientific language this is called Symptoiesis.³⁰⁹ Whatever names we give it, the foundational philosophy returns to experiments with truth.

Researcher Anitra Nelson has made significant contributions to research within, about and for collectively organised alternatives, intentional communities and transitional movements, of all sorts. Her research has followed alternative forms of housing on its own and vis-à-vis, ecological, social and political limits and constraints.³¹⁰ Nelsons crucial point is to show that we are not dallying on the edge as much as some think. That existing alternatives are not as marginal as those in authority would have you believe.

*“Indeed, the most remarkable cases of eco-communal living are so politically aware and connected, so far removed from self-absorbed cults, that they could be seen to cast mainstream urban life into a quirky, out-of-date and marginal light”.*³¹¹

³⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 54.

³⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 56.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ C Ross, Act Now, Ibid, *Not a Drill*, p. 180.

³⁰⁸ Ibid, Haraway, *Staying with the troubles*, p. 2.

³⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 58.

³¹⁰ A Nelson, *Small is Necessary on a shared planet*, Pluto Press, 2019, p. 237.

³¹¹ Ibid.

Prefigurative Politics

In anarchist research discussions the term prefigurative politics is used extensively but not without scrutiny. In his recent analysis of the term, Uri Gordon suggests it might be better moving to use the term, 'concrete utopia' largely because of the religious associations with the prefiguration prior to its re-emergence in the new left politics of the 20th century.³¹² Into the 21st century, prefigurative politics offers an example of "commoning" because it gives power from below and "the means embody the objectives of a certain political practice..."³¹³ Mathijs van de Sande argues that prefiguration needs further politicisation outside of anarchist theory. The suggestion is made to take up "constituent" power rather than "constituted" power. In this way, prefiguration takes a non-linear view of history and is set against the antagonistic and linear view of power constituted through the earliest states and into the modernising international system of nation states.³¹⁴ This argument was made in collective theorising of militant ethnography in 2007. Described as an open process, militant investigation turns bottlenecks and seemingly dead end views into new opportunities of joyful insurgency.³¹⁵

Both Van de Sande and Gordon ultimately assist attempts to move beyond politics, as we have known them. Prefigurative politics works for my inquiry by providing the philosophy, theory and experiments of anarchism -grassroots forms of anti-authoritarian resistance and regeneration. Keeping the larger picture or systems in mind it is important to recall the concept of "social defence is largely defence against one's own state".³¹⁶ When I used that approach in previous MA research, I was called before the head of school and told I should be using participatory action research. Clearly nothing much has changed. Obviously in other places theory is allowed to run free. Having said that, to be true to prefigurative politics, I simply must press on and generate the processes that are set on changing the world without taking power. The point, after all is to remake the world together and multiply the point of view.

For Uri Gordon, who has consistently reminded anarchists to be diligent in the face of ever-present recuperation, "concepts travel accidental paths."³¹⁷ Gordon is concerned about the "broken lines of transmission" that anarchists and others using the term may not be aware of. These are its centuries old religious meanings in the Old Testament and exegesis of them. For Gordon, these histories give the term prefiguration a sense of reassurance and a

³¹² Ibid, Gordon, *Prefigurative Politics*: 2018, p. the italics are mine, as this to me, is the significant point.

³¹³ Mathijs van de Sande, The Prefigurative Power of the Commons, in *Perspectives on Commoning*, ed G Ruivenkamp and A Hilton, Zed Books, London, 2017 p. 29

³¹⁴ Ibid, p. 37.

³¹⁵ S Shukakis, D Graeber and E Bidle, (eds.) *Constituent Imagination: Militant investigations, Collective Theorization*, A K Press, 2007, p. 11.

³¹⁶ Ibid, Martin, *Whatever happened, p. Revolutionary Agenda*, 2018, p.

³¹⁷ Ibid, Gordon, 2018, p. 1.

temporal mode of recursivity that is out of sync with the future oriented and generative approach popular in anarchism.³¹⁸ Gordon charts the secular usage of the term as it was “integrated into authoritarian Marxist frameworks” and carefully shows, through the literature on prefiguration, that it was anarchism and radical pacifism, not the Marxist oriented new left that re generated the term by producing a critique of revolutionary practices whose means were instrumental and did not embody their ends.³¹⁹

As he says, “The past century has continued to see democratic and socialist political revolutions, as well as military coups and civil wars, but none have achieved a classless society.”³²⁰ Indeed, farmers amassed in the biggest human strike in history are facing off with the leaders of the world’s largest democracy in the Indian city of New Delhi and they don’t intend to go home. Despite a century of being developed and structured into a green revolution, the plight of peasants has only become worse. Gordon notes “the obligatory dismissal of anarchism” in the work of Utopia theorist Bloch whose Marxist determined version of concrete utopia, he suggests, might even work to broaden the use of the anarchist ethical attention to prefigurative politics. Eco socialists also prefigure the future and share the history of prefiguration. A recent eco socialist publication put it this way, “prefiguration is a fancy word that means to try and live the like the future, right now”.³²¹ In practice we (the broad anarchist, anti-authoritarian left/green/rainbow/grass roots) are all working together, given the free fall space we are in and the tipping points we are hurtling towards.

What is important to this research and its methodology, is Gordon’s assertion that “the most realistic and generative understanding of prefigurative politics, as we confront toxic times, are found in ethnography that is aligned with permaculture and ecological sustainability designs.”³²² These ‘anxious hopes’ are in his view and also in mine, most aligned to the reality of systems collapse. “This is not a drill” as XR put it. We are where we are. According to van de Sande the concept, “...encompasses a practical approach to struggle and resistance...and an understanding of the common as that which both creates and simultaneously exists as the alternative to capitalist structures from within.”³²³

Militaries are not immune from systems collapse. The troops needed for them to function have suffered from diseases such as Cholera, starvation, and psychological trauma. The goal of forming alternatives to the military system, as Brian Martin suggests, seems to be off the

³¹⁸ Ibid, p. 5-6.

³¹⁹ Ibid, p 4-7.

³²⁰ Ibid, p. 10.

³²¹ No author, Eco socialist Prefiguration, *Ecosocialist Horizons*, 2011, <http://ecosocialisthorizons.com/prefiguration/> (accessed Sept 17, 2018).

³²² Ibid.

³²³ Ibid, M van de Sande, 2017, p. 60.

agenda of activists. More significantly, the system has been untouched by the recent rise in attention to and the practice of nonviolent direct action.³²⁴ Paying attention to prefigurative theory and its genealogy has helped me to understand the subjugation of pacifist knowledge as well as its contemporary manifestations and variations on a basic truth.³²⁵ This subjugation of pacifism works to sever anarchist politics from their pacifist roots. I don't share the concerns of Gordon if religion is the only issue. Rather I embrace the antinomian, interfaith approaches to religion because it is so clearly of this world.

When systems do collapse, further, it is people experienced in teaching others how to design ethical, sustainable food, energy and waste systems by empowering others to organise themselves organization that will be needed.³²⁶ This research can be seen as one response, "to take the ethnography of revolutionary futures to diverse movements, *practicing their ends*, such movements might bring concrete experiences and ethical commitments to bare on transformative political theory."³²⁷ If methodology is "the theoretical lens through which research is conducted."³²⁸ It is not just food that matters it is the conditions that bring it into being and the way that it is shared that should occupy my time.

Research examples of prefigurative politics:

European *Noborders* activist, Leslie Gauditz, put the theory to work in her own research. Here the idea is put clearly in relation to how the concept works, "an inner personal transformation is necessary to achieve change in the political system."³²⁹ This is not easy because it means "that activist practices should match the broader goals of the movement."³³⁰ In 'radically egalitarian' movements it is typical that state policies are challenged while at the same time new spaces are created that are in line with the bigger picture goals.

In *Noborders* case, the goal is the removal of territorial borders, a task that is surely urgent given the mass migration of the 21st century refugee crisis and more general lack of spaces

³²⁴ B Martin, *Whatever happened to social defence*, 2014 and *Social Defence*, a revolutionary agenda, forthcoming 2018.

³²⁵ Chapter 6 takes this up through Ibid, J Cribb, *Food or War*, 2019, Ibid, A De Waal, *New Pandemic Old Politics*, 2020, and chapter five dives in via, R Jackson, *Pacifism and Revolution, Anatomy of a Subjugated Knowledge, Critical Studies on Security*, Vol. 2. No. 2, 2018. DOI: 10.1080/21624887.2017.1342750.

³²⁶ Ibid, Gordon. 2018 p. 6-8.

³²⁷ Ibid, Gordon, *Prefigurative politics*, 2018, p. 12.

³²⁸ M Walter (ed), *Social Research Methods: An Australian Perspective*, Oxford University Press, 2008, p.10.

³²⁹ Ibid, Gauditz, *Noborders*, 2017, p. 53.

³³⁰ Ibid, p. 49.

of 'refugia' left on earth, for any species.³³¹ This prefigurative approach is compatible with the historical aim of anarchism because borders are key infrastructures of oppression and private property is viewed as the first form of theft.³³² Prefiguration is also a key component of the methodology known as "prefigurative anti-authoritarian feminist participatory action research" (PAFPR) that Sandra Jeppenson and others have developed, along with "militant ethnography."³³³ Prefigurative approaches have clear synergies with complexity thinking which can be applied to animate and inanimate systems because "both explore the possibilities for development of order without a single source of authority".³³⁴ The ongoingness that Shiva calls autopoiesis and Haraway calls sympoiesis.³³⁵

In her movement towards a new analytic of power, Jeppensen concludes that "the challenge of unlearning oppressive behaviours remains a daunting task for the anarchist movement".³³⁶ Anarchist-feminist theories and practices can as Jeppensen suggests, help us better understand the struggles we are engaged in together as anarchists in a global movement.³³⁷ Activist theory following social movement literature, another option I considered, tends to carve up spaces and categories for the purpose of methodology. This kind of methodology is what St. Pierre takes issue with because it rushes to apply institutionally approved methods.³³⁸ Regardless of the philosophy at work. Once you damage thinking or downplay its role, the case can surely be made that the university has failed. Perhaps offending methodologies will usher in the new university and re open the gates. Only time will tell.

One of the problems in applying social movement methodology in this research is that social movement theory rises out of sociology. As sociologist Dana Williams has pointed out, there is no anarchist sociology, yet.³³⁹ It is the yet, that is important here because of the immanent quality of the posts. For St. Pierre, "In an ontology of immanence, one becomes

³³¹ Ibid Haraway, *Making Odd Kin*, 2015.

³³² From Bakunin (date) to Vinnay Gupta (2012), privatizing earth and its inhabitants as property constitutes theft. Whose soil, whose water, these questions are at the heart of all modern wars and part of the history of state making.

³³³ Ibid, S Jeppenson, et al, 2018,

³³⁴ Erica Cudworth and Stephen Hobden, *Anarchisms Post Human Future*, *Anarchist Studies*, Vol.26. No. 1, 2018. P 79.

³³⁵ Ibid, Shiva, Ibid Haraway, Ibid Morton, widely accepted across ecological humanities, in my opinion.

³³⁶ Ibid, S Jeppensen, *New analytics of power*, 2019, p. 23.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Ibid, A E St, Pierre, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol 25. No. 1, 2019, add url. p. 4.

³³⁹ Williams D, Review: A New, Complicated, and Discomforting Mission for the Discipline: The Radical Challenge to Study, Envision, and Practice Social Alternatives. Reviewed Work(s): *Direct Action: An Ethnography* by David Graeber; *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* by James C. Scott; *Anarchy in Action* by Colin Ward, *Contemporary Sociology*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (July 2014), pp. 479-482

less interested in what is and more interested in what might be and what is coming into being".³⁴⁰ As my concern in this inquiry is with what *might become* a system of social defence as an alternative to the military. The call to make post-qualitative theory an "ethical enactment,"³⁴¹ has helped me to keep my approach to social defence open and to resist the rush to apply this or that method because that is what everyone else does. That is against the grain of thinking and in this case would be totally absurd. Summing up the issue for social defence, Kurt Schock explains that

*"Social movements literature tends to see nonviolent action as part of a continuum between conventional politics and armed struggle in contrast, people who focus on revolutionary nonviolence see it as being distinct from both conventional politics and armed struggle', as antithetical, rather than complementary to violent means."*³⁴²

Two other examples of prefigurative research that have helped me find my way are Nick Apoifis', *Fieldwork in a furnace: anarchist, anti-authoritarians and militant ethnography*, and Peter Jensen's, *People Can't Believe We Exist! Social Sustainability and Nonprofit Organising*.³⁴³ Jensen's ethnography explores "how one anarchist-run homeless shelter resists and challenges current trends in non-profit sustainability."³⁴⁴ Jensen found that the desire to be viewed as a market entity has resulted in sustainability organisations abandoning missions and core organisational values.³⁴⁵

Significantly, "volunteers and workers, resisted a quantitative measure of the work they performed and sort to offer the best quality of care possible..."³⁴⁶ Jensen and the catholic worker backgrounding Assisi House, that Jensen explores and has been active for thirty-three years, offer an alternative to marketisation through anarchist prefigurative organisation. The author hopes that more people will believe they exist.

Nick's research took place in Exarcheia, Athens in "the heart of the anarchist and anti-authoritarian milieu."³⁴⁷ He found tensions as well as common commitments to anti-authoritarianism in his research. Moreover, because he was both a researcher and insider

³⁴⁰ Ibid, St. Pierre, 2019, p. 4.

³⁴¹ Ibid, A Kutz, p.

³⁴² Schock K, in S Zunes, H Merriman and M J Stephan M J, *Nonviolent Struggle*, 2017..

³⁴³ N Apoifis', *Fieldwork in a furnace: anarchist, anti-authoritarians and militant ethnography*, *Qualitative Research*, Vol. 17. No. 1, 2017, pp 3-19, P Jensen's, *People Can't Believe We Exist! Social Sustainability and Nonprofit Organising*, *Critical Sociology*, Vol. 44. No. 2, 2018, pp. 375-388.

³⁴⁴ Ibid, P Jensen, p. 376.

³⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 386.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Ibid, N Apoifis, 2017. P. 14.

(born in Athens and migrated in his youth to Australia) he used militant ethnography in his approach. His understanding of that approach is that “researchers mirror the knowledge production mechanisms within the spaces and authors acknowledge their chosen sympathies.”³⁴⁸ I call these affinities. Clearly everything is always, spilling over, under and above what is thought and what is shared and made of the thinking.

Conclusion

The methodology used in this research does not allow for broad social generalisations nor does it intend to that. It does provide a space, a crack in the infrastructures, that can provide a carefully researched and embodied response to the question this research has responded to. What can be learned from people in regenerative culture in relation to the concept and potential of social defence? It allows me to ask, how might social defence become and to use concrete examples in the here and now to speculate in relation to its future possibility thought from the place of not yet.

Prefigurative politics affirm that making change is up to us. Governments are not likely to disarm the killing system. Ontologically-ethically-epistemologically, *the how is the what* of this research; of what it might become and what, if anything, might be made of it. Farming ‘at my post’ this chapter has discussed and is honest about the philosophies I base my assumptions on. It has presented discussions from the methodological literature and clarified the common ethics the research is committed to. We may still be standing at our posts, just in case we need the fencing, but we are doing this in an emergent regenerative culture. For extinction rebels, “we accept that changing any system will also mean changing ourselves”.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ XR, Regenerative Culture, Regen, 101 Workshop Booklet, 2020, *Sydney XR*, contact christiew@protonmail.com; www.earthrebellion/regenerativeculture/

Chapter 4: The Method of Autoethnography.

Introduction

In this chapter I explain why autoethnography is the most practical, ethical, and honest method for this research. I situate autoethnography within the literature of methods and the broader post-qualitative methodology discussed in the previous chapter. The chapter then moves to cover some of the critical discussions within the methods literature. I then discuss formal ethics processes, particularly as they have played out for me in relation to this research. I provide as an Appendix 1 to this chapter, the work I had undertaken on interviews, proposed, approved then de approved. Ultimately chapter seven, uses some of these questions as part of its conversational and intimate structure as I undertake my own autoethnography.

I also include three contemporary examples of autoethnography that resonate with me. These are briefly discussed to assist the reader who may be unfamiliar with or even hesitant to the method of Autoethnography. Following this I engage with the notion of rigour in this method and the key concepts of truth, self-reflexivity, resonance, credibility and contribution recommended by scholars for those who are producing rigorous academic autoethnography and for those who are marking or reading.

In chapter nine I present my own Autoethnography as a photo essay. I have taken this approach because I have some experience in the form and have published two photo essays, one prior to this research and one within it.³⁵⁰ Subtitles guide the reader through the chapter.

Autoethnography of and for emancipatory politics

Staying with Denzin, who has arguably always attempted to orient methodology to the contemporary, the political and emancipatory, it is clear that “multiple forms of ethnography compete for attention: narrative, critical, collaborative, queer, global, grounded, situational, performative, decolonising, meta, co constructed, duo”.³⁵¹ Just ten years ago autoethnography was struggling to exist as a social research method. In 2014, Sally Denshire described autoethnography as “an alternative method and form of writing

³⁵⁰ K Kennedy, Arresting Times: Photo Essay, In R Skilbeck (ed), Fire Storms and Protests, *Arts Features International*, October-December, 2019, Borderstream Books, pp. 8-15, K Kennedy, Travelling on a long rope #1: The Festival of the Pot, Allahabad, India, 2013, Photo essay, in R Skilbeck, Escape Artists Anthology, *Arts Features International*, Issue 1, Winter, 2018, pp. 202-217, www.borderstreambooks.com.au

³⁵¹ N K Denzin, A Manifesto for Performative Autoethnography, *International Review of Qualitative Research*, Vol. 10 Issue. 1. 2017, p. 45.

that often blurs boundaries between fact and fiction.”³⁵² Citing St. Pierre and others, as well as using interesting examples of PhD dissertations that are written in various forms of autoethnography, Denshire has found that “autoethnographers are obliged to share their accounts with others who are involved in their texts.”³⁵³ For me, this means publishing my photo essay and sharing it with rebels in my affinity group(s) locally, that is in Lismore and making it available to the individuals and groups I had contacted and hoped to interview.

The entanglements of multispecies commoning and post qualitative methodology make some aspects of traditional assumptions such as sharing with stakeholders impossible. We are all stakeholders in the concept of social defence. I cannot share my work here with my partner and family, if they are not interested, or with the soil I am co creating, or with birds whose activity announces the rising sun and setting of the sun. The trees we are growing and those we are learning from in the forested areas of this farm and the remnant, travelling stock routes. They are stakeholders here too.

Relational ethics are always under way in autoethnographies because they are embodied.³⁵⁴ In that way the method deals with all that life is, has and can be. It is often uncomfortable because it shares experiences of grief, loss, humiliation and pain as well experiences of transformation, ecstasy and more. Denshire tells us that she had to “read against the discourse” to find a resonance with the method, “gradually though, viscosity and the pain expressed by these authors persuaded me to somehow start writing my body-self.”³⁵⁵ Tamy Spri works with and teaches performative ethnography and believes “the purpose of the method is to better understand who we are in relation to culture”.³⁵⁶ Cheryl Le Roux’s, 2017 exploration of the scholarly concept of rigour points out that “although auto ethnographers define autoethnography differently, the concepts of personal experience and of culture appear to be central.”³⁵⁷

Regenerating culture nurtures and supports every aspect of this research. For Daniel Christian Wahl whose work is recognised within regenerative culture, it is clear we need

³⁵² S Denshire, On Auto-ethnography, *Current Sociology Review*, Vol. 62, No. 6, 2014, p. 831.

³⁵³ Ibid, Denshire, p. 841.

³⁵⁴ Ibid, Denzin, 2017, add the other work 2016; M Brigg and R Bleiker and Brogner, Autoethnographic International Relations: exploring the self as a source of knowledge, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 2010, pp 779-798,, <http://www.jstore.org/stable/40783296>, (accessed Jan, 20, 2020), C S Le Roux, Exploring Rigour in Autoethnography, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, Vol. 2 No. 2, 2017, p. 195-207; D Bell, I Canham, U Dutta & J S Fernandez, Retrospective Autoethnography: A call for decolonial imaginings in the new university, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 1 No. 11, 2019, p. 2-11.

³⁵⁵ Ibid, Denshire, p. 841.

³⁵⁶ T Spri, *Body Paper, Stage; Performing and Writing Autoethnography*, Left Coast Press, California, 2011. P. 50.

³⁵⁷ Ibid, Le Roux, rigour, 2017, p.198.

more than sustainability. Wahl, joins and has solidarity in the formations of each of the movements explored in this thesis, particularly agroecology, and grass roots ecological ethics. The strategy and aim are to overcome- once and for all- the false separation between nature and culture requires us to acknowledge learning from nature.³⁵⁸ As part of nature. Wahl, put it this way, “we have to learn to listen from our heart and our mind and trust our own inner wisdom, the wisdom of our community, the wisdom of indigenous cultures and the wisdom of the rest of nature.”³⁵⁹ Regenerating culture is about living our way rather than knowing our way,” about befriending uncertainty and ambiguity as we collaborate in creating conditions conducive to life.³⁶⁰

In this way regenerating culture is more than just my rubric; it is what I do and what I might become by living the experiments of regenerative culture.

What-ever autoethnography is becoming, *“It renders experience a source of knowledge, liberation and power because it is anchored in undoing the hegemonic logics of knowing and being, along with the discourses and mechanisms of a disembodied research practice”*.³⁶¹

Autoethnography’s many forms have followed the social turns “that place traditional concepts of performance, ethnography, narrative, meaning, voice, presence under erasure.”³⁶² For Denzin and for me, “together they politicise the interpretive and affective turn.”³⁶³ Crucially, “the affective turn resists the war machine”³⁶⁴ according to Denzin. In this way the method is consistent with the methodological – philosophical – theoretical – ethical and political commitments of this research. Anything is possible, “all cards are on the table” because we are living in a “free fall postcyber universe.”³⁶⁵ This is the Drone Age and the Quantum Revolution. The harsh truth, according to Brendan Nicholson, “is that Australia will find it hard to win any war, so we better not lose.”³⁶⁶ Swarming drone technologies are one of the many emerging quantum technologies of disruption that have the potential to “drive significant change in the character of warfare” particularly of cyber and information warfare.³⁶⁷

³⁵⁸ D C Wahl, Valuing traditional ecological knowledge and indigenous wisdom, *Medium.com*, April 24, 2017, <https://designforsustainability.medium.com/>.

³⁵⁹ Ibid, n, p.

³⁶⁰ International Futures Forum (IFL), Introduction, *IFL.Org*, Designing Regenerative Cultures, <https://www.internationalfuturesforum.com/p/designing-regenerative-cultures> (accessed Sept 24, 2021), D C Wahl, *Designing Regenerative Cultures*, Triarchy Press, England, 2016, p. 29.

³⁶¹ Ibid, D Bell, et al, *Retrospective Autoethnography*, 2019, p. 2.

³⁶² Ibid, Denzin, *Manifesto*, 2017, p. 45.

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 45.

³⁶⁶ B Nicholson, Change Now Critical, *Land Forces 2021* Special Report, p. 1

³⁶⁷ N Pittaway, New ground in robotics and quantum tech, *Land Forces 2021*, Special Report, p. 6.

Maintaining caring relations for oneself and others in Denzin's free fall is becoming harder as the war machine seeks to command and control everything in the biosphere. The nexus with food and health are well known. Military command and control of the climate is less well known. "Despite the fact their primary mission is to fight wars, militaries are concerned about the increase in disasters and the burden of response this poses."³⁶⁸ There are many important questions, left unanswered and under explored in relation to the military undertaking traditional civilian roles and claiming space within existing international climate governance systems.

Anarchist ingredients

I was originally going to call this research an anarchist ethnography of agroecology: There are many reasons for the change of title and my acceptance of the ban on anarchism in theory.³⁶⁹ Grief may well be involved as a reason I am just beginning to acknowledge. David Graeber did not want to be called "the anarchist anthropologist" but often was.³⁷⁰ His sudden death on 2 September 2020 has since been marked by an intergalactic gathering and memorial around the globe. My personal Facebook page was hacked about a month later, just as I began discussions with friends to get together over zoom and/or take to the streets with some culture jamming using some of David's quotes and to link up to the international intergalactic gathering his partner and close friends had arranged. I don't think the hacking is related. But it did stop me in my tracks. I felt David's passing personally and decided to erase my 12 years of Facebook. I reopened an account six months later and keep it to family group messaging, local friends and community groups.

I hope I did not contribute to David being called an anarchist anthropologist. Not that my interpretation of his work in *Deeply Felt* has received any attention, that is not the point, it is how I felt. As he wrote on Twitter: "I see anarchism as something that you do, not an identity, so don't call me an anarchist anthropologist".³⁷¹ I understand, as he did, that there is no anarchist anthropology. Just as there is no anarchist sociology. Yet in a way there is. There are few reasons not to include them and more reasons for their inclusion in interdisciplinary scholarly pursuits. We are here and have been part of the making of this world. "Clearly it would be un-anarchist to set anyone else's programme, but surely it is disingenuous to suggest that anarchisation does not ask people to give things up."³⁷² Anarchists still argue about sacrifice, war and violence, power and terror as well as the

³⁶⁸ D Jayaram & M C Brisbois, Aiding or Undermining? The Military as an emergent actor in global climate governance, *Elsevier, B V*. Open Access, [Http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0).

³⁶⁹ Chapter 1 pages 2-7 explains the notion of the ban on anarchism.

³⁷⁰ D Greaber, the # tag on his twitter, which I dare not look up now because he has passed.

³⁷¹ S Jeffries, David Graeber, Obituary, *The Guardian*, 6 September 2020, www.guardian/davidgreaber/obituary/SJeffries

³⁷² R Kinna, *The government of no one*, 2019, p. 270.

chances of anarchizing our social relationships. ‘Small a anarchism’ that pays attention to movements and works towards flattening power through horizontal relationships was a feature of the anarchist turn.³⁷³ Thought of broadly as post anarchism it updates early modern anarchists, such as Goldman, Day, Proudhon, Kropotkin, Bakunin, Gandhi and others.

As Kinna affirms, small a anarchism “is understood in a variety of ways and that anarchism should be understood as protean and plural.”³⁷⁴ In the spirit of Emma Goldman’s “*rhythmic and fluid activism that not only animated post-war feminism, civil rights and anti-colonial movements but also later ecological and social justice campaigns.*”³⁷⁵ Small a anarchists such as myself work to counter big A anarchism and “dovetails with social anarchism.”³⁷⁶ Clearly, an immense backstory, understory and present of diverse anarchist experience, art, culture, philosophy and revolutionary practices exist. Why would they not be included in sociology or any other discipline? The response of refusal to cooperate with the system is surely valid. For those of us working to expand zones of autonomy; it seems totally unlikely the state can be displaced by civil resistance, it is more likely the earth itself will be agent that threatens it most.

I recognise Graeber’s *Fragments of an anarchist anthropology* (2004) as his own anarchist manifesto of sorts. His commitment to asking difficult questions and following them up as he did in his remarkable work *Debt: The First Five Thousand Years* (2011) has had an impact on many people. His openness in conversations and emails with me between 2008 and 2012 represent a part of my being in the world. I read *Direct Action* before it was published, putting some facts to the process of academic collaboration and sharing. I was invited to join whatever was happening where David was. At the time this was London. He was surprised I was writing a whole chapter of a book about his thinking and his work. He answered all my questions honestly and succinctly and I will always think of him as my friend.

I continue to read and re read his work, to learn from it and experiment with what I make of it. I think he would welcome my current research and understand my acceptance of the ban, in theory. After all, what is banned is the anarchism he and others have tried to show is simply what most of us practice on a day to day basis. His view along with others is that research within the anarchist milieu, the one he was a part of is most accessible when conducted by people who are involved in the movement(s). Otherwise, lengthy processes of familiarization and learning are required before a researcher could form a relationship of

³⁷³ K Kennedy, *Deeply Felt* 2016, Graeber chapter, add p.

³⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 145.

³⁷⁵ Ibid, p.146

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

trust and/or be familiar enough with the thinking and the internal debates within anarchist political traditions to undertake ethnographic research.³⁷⁷

Using autoethnography as method follows the idea that research conducted amongst people practicing radical alternatives “would only work if it was ultimately, a form of autoethnography.”³⁷⁸ Because I do not speak the language of all of my examples or even languages that may have much more to tell us about social defence; I am writing about others and including them without their knowledge and could be accused of objectifying them and worse. From the perspective of the dominant marketized, objectivist and individualist approach to culture I am writing as their other. However, as ‘othering’ or separation is viewed as a violent process in and of itself, an updated understanding of others is at work here.

This is one that has no binary edging or fixed origin and end. My self is either not here at all as is the case in some non-western theories of enlightenment and western forms of Buddhism, for example. Or it is in flux and dynamic continuity of shifting inter relations, object oriented ontologies and multispecies commoning. An actor/agent in a network of systems, much of which are out of the ken of human understanding.³⁷⁹ Whatever it is, the approach to phenomena of all sorts that I take, is one in which I am an actor involved in a complex network of inter relations and processes that are dynamic. Where the whole is more than the sum of its parts. An inhabitant of *Country*, *The Pluriverse*, *The Mesh*, *The Cosmos*.³⁸⁰

There are countless examples of the method in contemporary interdisciplinary research. Here I will present three examples before I move on to some of the criticisms of the method and discussions of these in relation to scholarly rigour. My aim here is to offer my reader enough from each text to showcase different approaches as well as the common ground. Each example resonates with my own affinities, and each has helped me to understand the practice as it emerges.

³⁷⁷ U Gordon, In *Constituent Imagination, Militant Investigation Collective Theorisation*, S Shukakis, D Graeber and E Biddle (ed's), AK Press, 2007, p. 279.

³⁷⁸ D Graeber, Anarchism and the Avant Garde in, R Amster, A DeLeon, L A Fernandez, A J Nocella and D Shannon (ed's), *Contemporary Anarchist Studies; an introductory anthology of anarchists in the academy*, Routledge, London, 2009 p.112.

³⁷⁹ Ibid, Kennedy, *Deeply Felt*, 2016.

³⁸⁰ T Morton, *The Ecological Thought*, Harvard University Press, 2010, p. 61. Country is the expression aboriginal Australians use to describe their place in the world and their relationships with culture.

A Paradoxical Peace: A Scholar Activists Autoethnography on Religious Pacifism, by Ruth Halaj Reitan.³⁸¹

In this political and poetic autoethnography Ruth struggles with being and becoming both a pacifist and Marxist and follows post Marxist Felix Deleuze as well as Jungian psychology. She uses the form of “expressive autoethnography” to “convey what living through and with paradox feels like.”³⁸² Ruth does not present “a detailed study of principled or pragmatic nonviolence or of complex, anticapitalist movements and pacifism.”³⁸³ She affirms that there “is no coherent, let alone static, actor called the peace movement”,³⁸⁴ and “...no teleological progression but a spiralling dance among innumerable paradoxes.”³⁸⁵

Ruth constructs her autoethnography by reflecting on what the news does and does not report. Media representations of the world are used as temporal markers. In turn these are used reflectively as she shares her experiences and retrospective analysis. The story begins around the age of ten. “She does not read the news yet.” At that time, “Soviet troops invade Afghanistan causing the non-aligned movement to fracture and the US Senate to halt the ratification of the second Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (ASALT 11); Anarcho pacifist Dorothy Day dies, aged 83...” The story continues in this form through short paragraphs of her experiences of schooling. These move through to her post graduate experiences and then tenure at a US University. She leaves us feeling optimistic about her “utopian socialist movement course which is generating interest.”³⁸⁶

As I read the work, I feel with her because I have travelled a similar path. I may not share the sense of paradox she does because I see anarchism and pacifism as reciprocal, each supports the other and are varieties of the ongoing collective process of a satyagraha.³⁸⁷ In practice this is more complex As Joseph Llewellyn’s 2018 PhD research suggests “anarcho pacifism, is an amalgamation of both anarchism and pacifism, a world-view that is committed to revolutionary nonviolence.”³⁸⁸ Gandhi called this the experiments with truth on the journey to ahimsa – nonviolence. Anarchism stands alone in prefiguring grass roots social relations and challenging patriarchy and capitalism in this way, the State and the

³⁸¹ R H Reitan, Paradoxical peace: A scholar activists auto-ethnography on Religious Pacifism, *Globalisations*, Vol. 12. No. 1, 2015, pp. 25-42, DOI:// 10.1080/14747731.20.971541.

³⁸² Ibid, p.26.

³⁸³ Ibid, p. 36.

³⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 26.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ This autoethnography has been republished as chapter 3, in, C Rosedale (ed) *Occupying Subjectivity: Being and Becoming Radical in the 21st Century*, 2018, Routledge,

³⁸⁷ J Llewellyn, Envisioning an Anarcho-Pacifist Peace and an exploration of Gandhian Movements for a Stateless Society, PhD thesis, *University of Otago*, p.1-361.

³⁸⁸ Ibid, p.6.

international system of nations states have formed to protect the world from anarchy. According to Llewellyn's research, "The argument that the rejection of the capitalist state is the basis for a nonviolent politics, if accepted, would require a major rethinking of much peace and conflict theory."³⁸⁹

As Ruth takes us through her involvement with the World Social Forums (WSF) and anticapitalist movements that responded to neoliberalism and became global justice movements "the second bomb hits" and the tower falls. She had already become "convinced the only thing worth salvaging from the bible is the socialist and pacifist doctrine of Christ, who-ever he is"; she has become atheist, feminist and socialist." She becomes involved in the Zapatista uprising and associated solidarity movements in Mexico. Here she tells a # me too story, in the subtlest of ways. A story that haunts the work though is never revealed. It is a tentative thread that questions fear, marriage, children and the way that "it sometimes seems that our efforts as public intellectuals, citizens and activists sometimes mirrors the tragic imbalance between constructive and destructive labour."³⁹⁰

Ruth expresses her frustration after working with political campaigns for well known (renowned?) indigenous ecofeminist Wynona La Duke. She put it this way, "La Duke's from my reservation which is how I would normally say it; more accurately my family occupies hers." She wonders about the "layers of gut level insecurity" she may feel because she knows the land is not hers. Her frustration and uncertainty resonate with colonial peoples, such as me, and so many others, as they attempt to unlearn the western hegemonies and decolonise movements. Today our common duty of care seems clear. The unlearning of imperial thinking underway in attempts to decolonise, particularly within revolutionary movements. In Australia we have been asked several times to walk with them and to share their responsibilities for country.

Like Ruth, I took part in the anticapitalist global justice movements of the late 1980s and early 1990s. I have also been involved with small and sometimes larger nonviolence collectives and particular campaigns or actions including the massive movements against the war in Iraq and Refugee action collectives. Like every anarchist I personally know as well as friends who identify as communists or socialists of various posts and varieties or simply as activists, I understand that we have all worked together within the movements for ecological and social justice. As well as in the current circles of self-organised systems of rebellion that reject capitalism's planetary expansion, ecocide and omnicide.³⁹¹

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ Ibid, Reitan, p. 38.

³⁹¹ See Chapter 1 and the introduction to Chapter 6.

The role of the state is viewed as crucial in any major systems transition, just how long states will survive is still a source of debate and the search to live without government is an ongoing variety of experiments. As Samuel Alexander suggests; “Under Marxism the communist utopia, is assumed, eventually to be without need of a state, and will wither away.”³⁹² Alexander tentatively argues for an eco-anarchism following Ted Trainer and Murray Bookchin. Pragmatically he sees anarchism flourish as we all work together.³⁹³ Alexander also works with paradox and expresses sentiments similar to Ruth Reitan’s. He is also an academic employed at the University of Melbourne.

The affective roller coaster activists often experience is conveyed through the spectrum from “we are winning” post the battle of Seattle to “that old feeling that suddenly we have lost or that the other side is ratcheting up the ante but has to reveal the price.” Reitan acknowledges “the cross fertilisation of and détente of sorts among pacifism, communism and anarchism” in response to the supposed defeat of a peace movement, obvious in the War on Terror and the subsequent ratcheting up of multiple troubles. She cautions, “perhaps we have not been tested yet.”

Taking her reader through narrative prose along with sections of poetry, her auto self is related to culture. The foundation of autoethnography is evident, through significant events in the larger world of war and peace as well as religious narratives and political texts. For example, she includes among other poems, *Knight of Regret* and *Politics versus Poetry*. Ruth exudes the hopes of the Arab Spring and laments its suppression in Iraq, Egypt and many other places. Her story concludes, “rage is not working for us or the planet, our true work is otherwise.” Ruth shares her contemplation and introspection of this *otherwise* and alludes to the movements of agroecology, permaculture and anarchism at the heart of my own inquiry into the concept of social defence.

“With the click of a mouse” Ruth “joins the movement to make Dorothy Day a Saint.” She wonders what Goddess might be celebrated beyond “the Virgin and sacrificial Mother Mary,”³⁹⁴ embodying her right to dream a future.

Ruth’s description of her “mentorship”, its diversity and support within her post graduate research is striking. This type of collaboration is not something I have personally realised or manifested in this PhD research. These are different times this is a different continent. Globally the university is now more deeply involved in technological approaches to education such as machine learning and formulaic research design. I wonder if Ruth is in

³⁹² S Alexander, Wild Democracy, *Simplicity Institute Report*, 16A, 2016, p.9.

³⁹³ Ibid, p. 10.

³⁹⁴ Ibid, Reitan, p. 38.

Extinction Rebellion. What is she feeling as Afghanistan is once again on all the news media? The coalition forces withdrew, and the Taliban are attempting to govern the nation with international recognition and support. I can definitely imagine that Ruth and I have shared some similar responses, frustrations and perhaps more. Ruth's autoethnography assists me with my own use of this method and it fulfils the four criteria that Le Roux has proposed for people using the method of autoethnography and for those adjudicating it. Namely, "Subjectivity, Self-Reflexivity, Resonance, Credibility and Contribution".³⁹⁵

Being a Bad Vegan. By Leila Green³⁹⁶

Using autoethnography, Leila shares her story of being vegan. She tells us, my experience of being vegan is a contested activity with a significant range of variation..."³⁹⁷ Interweaving, introspection, self-reflexive critique and analysis; this "bad vegan" discussion is lived during: "twelve years of experience of identifying as a vegan to draw upon." Different motivations for vegan and vegetarian diets are explored through scholarly literature. Ethical, environmental, and animal rights vegans are seen, through Belinda's literature as distinct from the individual – health motivations to being vegan.

Another group, "seeking dietary inclusivity" through vegan diets associated with religious practice and norms. Leila calls herself a bad vegan because her experiences are at the intersections of vegan motivations. She mostly began for health reasons rather than ethical reasons, but these have come together along the way. She is not chasing purity and "does not ask too many questions about whether the wine I drink is refined using, milk, or eggshells." Following Singer and Mason, purity is not the point "not supporting animal abuse and persuading others not to support it is the issue."

Leila recounts, "I began to construct animals differently once I stopped seeing other sentient creatures as a handy food source." She is no "poster girl for vegans and her body weight index is significantly outside of the healthy range." She feels,

"The need to justify this due to the amassing and ongoing discussions within health and vegan literature. She is vegan because it "disrupts the status quo: it questions both the appropriateness of humanity's systematic torturing of other species for food and the risks that those animal based foods pose for the long term health of human populations."

³⁹⁵ Ibid, C S Le Roux, rigour, 2017, p.204.

³⁹⁶ L Green, Being a Bad Vegan, *MC Journal of Media and Culture*, Vol.22. No. 2, 2019, <https://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/issue/view/vegan> (accessed September 29, 2021).

³⁹⁷ Ibid, online, n.p.

Interestingly Leila tracks the feminist critique of the livestock industry with patriarchy and masculinity. Long recognised in radical feminism, *she* is as Meat, the metaphor at work in dominant and toxic masculinity, hides the way that “the ability to eat without criticism and scrutiny, is something studies have shown relate to male privilege.” Leila notes, one of her main concerns is with the ways in which industrial farming is linked to cancer, particularly breast cancer. She cites medical sources and concludes that this is among the reasons for being a bad vegan. Collaborative ecofeminist and agroecology scientists have published evidence linking breast cancer to chemicals used in the Vietnam war and then, when the war ended, were used in agriculture. As Shiva put it, “We are eating world war two’s leftovers”.³⁹⁸ Into the Anthropocene, toxicity is now measured and understood as an existential threat.

This autoethnography resonates with me because I have been a political vegetarian for over 30 years. To the shock of my family, I converted myself in my late teens and then began to preach, *PropaGandhi* style, the benefits of my choice. My own son’s rebelled (in their mid and late teens and took themselves on a food journey that I did not support). I bought them a bar be q and gave them money to purchase their meat. Into their twenties they began a shift into vegetarian and vegan diets and maintain these today. Over these years I have been asked many times, why I am vegetarian. I relate to Leila’s having to justify and her self-critical introspection. For me, diet, nutrition, and community has always been a “food or war” question? The answers led me into anarcho-pacifism and once I had the political education to articulate where, why, how, I might explain and justify my own decisions.

Anarcho pacifism, as it emerges today in multispecies, quantum systems thinking and living within agroecology provide more than enough evidence for me to sustain my own being a lazy vegan and a long time vegetarian. Now a days, I am rarely asked why and when I am, I usually respond. I don’t eat anything with a face. And do my best to move the subject on.

Otherwise, if given the opportunity I will explain Animal Liberation and Earth Liberation movements. I will repeat Steven Best and many others point of view:

*“Throughout history our victimisation of animals has served as our victimisation of each other. History reveals a pattern whereby first humans exploit and slaughter animals, then they treat people like animals and do the same to them.”*³⁹⁹

The challenge back then (2009) for anarchism, social ecology, inclusive democracy and other left movements, for Best and as I understand it from the affinity position of direct action

³⁹⁸ V Shiva, Ibid, The Worm is Turning, DVD Off Barcode, Films For Action, *YouTube*, 2015, <https://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/the-worm-is-turning-2015/>

³⁹⁹ S Best, Rethinking Revolution, in Amster, et al, (eds) in *Contemporary Anarchist Studies: An introduction to anarchists in the academy*, Routledge, London, 2009, p. 197

within Animal and Earth liberation movements was to “recognise the deep interrelations between human and animal liberation.”⁴⁰⁰ Extinction rebellion have certainly done this, indigenous people have been doing it for Millennia and ecological philosophy of the Anthropocene and posts takes these entanglements and interconnections as natural.

I had a quick look for vegetarian statistics. Roy Morgan reports that there are more people who are obese in Australia than are vegetarians.⁴⁰¹ Vegetarian diets have increased as have vegan, to 12. 1 % of the population now have diets that are mostly or fully vegetarian, up from 9.7 % in 2012.⁴⁰² Animal groups are celebrating this and Leila also talks of a “massive uptake in vegan diets.”⁴⁰³ But these figures are still low, to heal the earth they need to keep going up and balance a just transition, that considers the worlds farmers, particularly those in the ‘developing world’ who have been structured into feeding the ‘developed world’ – the poor; feeding the rich. The same rich, who just happen to be involved in weapons and arms industries, including the big data, quantum systems of artificial defence technology and the proliferation of nuclear armed war-ships. As Food Not Bombs rightly ask, *How can we spend another dollar on war when more than a million people go hungry each day?*

Leila’s vegan autoethnography is a compassionate response to the marketplace dominance and imperial processes of unjust, dangerous and unhealthy, artificialized global food systems. It is also, in my view, a sensible approach to her health and self-care. Sharing the varieties of motivations and some of the literature on being vegan is one way for Leila to help others see the benefits of a vegan diet. As she says, “I had to be coaxed.” Her reflections show that she now constructs animals as companion species, as part of the family. No longer as a handy source of food. In that way she is co constructing multispecies justice.

Multispecies justice has adopted relational ontology, so that other than human beings are included in the just outcomes human beings seek.⁴⁰⁴ Decolonising is built into multispecies justice. Celermajer, et al, researchers at the University of Sydney put it this way, “*While remaining alert to the dangers of appropriation, Indigenous approaches afford critical*

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ R Morgan, Rise in vegetarianism not halting the march of obesity, *Roy Morgan Research*, April, 2018, <http://www.roymorgan.com/findings/7944-vegetarianism-in-2018-april-2018-201904120608>, (accessed, Sept, 28, 2020). Animals Australia have published the same research, Surge in Aussies eating vegetarian diets, Animals Australia, June, 2020, <https://www.animalsaustralia.org/features/study-shows-surge-in-Aussies-eating-veg.php> (accessed, Sept, 29, 2021).

⁴⁰² Ibid, R Morgan, n.p.

⁴⁰³ Ibid, L Green, p. 1.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid, Celermajer, et al, Multispecies justice: theories challenges, and a research agenda for environmental politics, *Environmental Politics*, Vol. 30. No. 1, 2021, p.120.

intellectual resources for challenging dominant understandings of human-non human relations and offer alternative schema."⁴⁰⁵ Leila's sharing adds to my understanding of the method I am using and demonstrates the importance of resonance in building affinities and working, tentatively, towards a future of inclusive, biodiverse liberation.

To get there, we will have to think more like a planet, live with what we have created and move beyond the politics that brought us to the current crisis.⁴⁰⁶ Collective thinking attentive to the "Anthropocene Transitions" has found the "key to this fresh approach may well be the word regenerative."⁴⁰⁷ Co creating a fresh regenerative story, "to be worthy ancestors", climbing out of disciplinary and professional silos... and start genuinely transformative change" is part of what is needed if we are to "earn the title of worthy ancestors."⁴⁰⁸

Retrospective Autoethnography: A call for decolonial imaginings in the new university by Deanne Bell, Hugo Canham, Urmitapa Dutta and Jessica Siham Fernande⁴⁰⁹

These dissident co-authors use autoethnography as methodology and method. Together, they "strive to imagine a New University characterised by radical hope, doing so alongside student movements pushing for decolonising the university."⁴¹⁰ They use the method to counter their marginality and to centre themselves as "whole and important,"⁴¹¹ within the oppressive system. Following Denzin, they engage in "a mindful and intentional exercise of militant utopianism."⁴¹² Like the previous examples these authors "*strive to make sense of past and present conditions, experiences, and way of being in relation to cultural phenomena that operate under systems of power and oppression.*" In that way each shows that autoethnography renders experience as source of knowledge. It is an alternative to disembodied research practice.

Bell et. al. embrace deconstruction, Black, Chicanz and 'third world' feminist approaches to the autoethnography. Hence, their commitments to disrupting the neoliberal university are performative, moral, and political. They believe "autoethnography must of necessity be a

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.p.p.132.

⁴⁰⁶ K McLeod, Anthropocene Transitions Program (APT) Discussion Paper, 10-2018, October 2018, pp 1-18.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 11.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 14.

⁴⁰⁹ D Bell, H Canham, U Dutta and J S Fernandez, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 1 No. 1 2019, pp. 1- 11. of 11.11, DOI: 10.1177/1077800419857743.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid, p.1

⁴¹¹ Ibid, p. 2.

⁴¹² Ibid.

generative and enabling frame for mining the possibilities borne of our defiant dreams.”⁴¹³ Clearly, their dreams and the value they place on them, resonate with possibilities being explored through social defence, and the now well-established call for and experiments forming to decolonialise the university. As we left Ruth Reitan, she was dreaming a future goddess beyond the hegemonic religious frames. Here we meet four other scholars, intent on dreaming the new university. These autoethnographies re-claim the right to dream.

Dreaming can be dangerous. Post Occupy the dreamers reflected on the criminalisation of dissent and the violent repression of occupations, the rest is unfolding in # of intersecting rebellions. The battle for the imagination is being won through the psychological operations of war. Ruth’s paradoxical peace reverberates again. She tells us that she enjoys her utopian worlds and shares her knowledge of them in her teaching, she also wonders if her work is elsewhere.⁴¹⁴ For Bell, et al, their dreaming is dangerous to the old University. Following scholars, they identify as “decolonial dreamers.” But they want a clean slate.

“We do not seek to build on the old through sabotage and subversive tactics. In the new University we must be dissenters...that allows for liberation and radical love to surface.” Hence, their utopian militancy which “aspires to a good place.” The restoration of home is important for these scholar activists because they have experienced being the ‘ethnic other’. The viscerality of their narrative is heart wrenching and real.

Deanne is a Jamaican woman with African, Indian, Scottish, Irish and English blood. “Daily, I see and feel how the university grinds some Others’ lives into oblivion and how colonialists turn a blind eye to this reality.” Deanne is speaking truth to power in solidarity with decolonising authors. Fed up with relying on critiques “of the plantation university” on their own, evaluations of what is wrong will not achieve transformation.⁴¹⁵ The view is refreshing and strident in its refusal of the neoliberal university. Through dialogue with each other, they ask questions and consider solutions. Urmita, was “recently successful in the tenure process” even though her work refuses the university that is. She believes “that to the extent voice is privilege afforded to those with tenure” she must speak up.

I hear her, loud and clear when she says, “*we do not talk about what it means for community and peace studies programs to lead to uncertain existence while security and terrorism studies receive accolades for bringing in big dollars from private defence contractors and the Department of Homeland Security.*”

⁴¹³ Ibid, p.3.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid, R Reitan, *Paradoxical Peace*.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid, p.5.

These authors dream of the new university as a place of emotional and intellectual emancipation. Inclusive of all they share the dream of creating a collective vision towards healing and affirmation of “ourselves and the self in and through our work.” This article would be on my reading list if I were teaching methodology. It is rigorous, brave and covers far more than I can convey here. Bell, et al, “refuse to engage in a reflexivity that demands that we lay bare our vulnerabilities, only for it to be used against us.”

Seeking solidarity of the kind that actually is kind. For them, “collaboration and solidarity mean that failure is cushioned, and learning is shared.” They meet transgender colleagues and share strategies for uprooting patriarchy. Hugo is “numb now” and no longer has the “energy for fighting institutional racism.” They invite their readers to join them in this decolonial project and to come together; “fortified with compassion, care, love and the desire to heal from the wounds of the academy.” As one of their readers, I accept their invitation and thank them for their honesty.

Comment on the examples

Each of these examples has shared lived experiences, personal through the method of autoethnography, or the methodology for Bell et al who view it as a new creative methodology. Each is presented through narrative structures and published in academic journals giving them credibility. Collectively and alone, they reflect and struggle with how it is they meet their dreams and visions of the future. A self-critical process foundational in the method. One that is also necessary in prefigurative politics.

Interpersonal struggle with political ideals as Leslie Gauditz, an activist in the Noborder Movement put it, requires asking; “in what ways do Noborder activists try to meet their political ideals, in their everyday practices.”⁴¹⁶ In Noborders, “conflicts are approached the anarchist way, prefigurative politics.”⁴¹⁷ For Gauditz, this process makes Noborders distinct from humanitarian aid and from state processes. When hundreds of people come together in temporary camps, “refugees, non-migrants, other migrants and activists, inequalities between people persisted despite activists being engaged in a struggle against inequality.”⁴¹⁸ Harsh reality often forces us, as we have seen through these examples to realise that we are continuing experiments of and for the liberation of all. Autoethnographically, they are experiments in truth.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid, L Gauditz, The Noborder Movement, *Social Inclusion*, 2017.p. 49.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid, p. 51.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid, p.53.

I worked as an academic mercenary, as one of my colleagues put it and as a member of the academic precariat, as the National Tertiary Education Union understood it, for ten years, (2006-2016) nine of them, semester to semester, year after year. In the sandstone of Sydney University and the high tech architecture of the University of Technology, Sydney. I have a file of contracts, that I hope to use creatively, one day. They are evidence of what for a tenured academic would be an illegal amount of marking and teaching. I know Bell et al, are telling the truth. The university has become a mirror of the command and control system of the national security state. The environment is competitive, exploitative and demoralising for many. Full of hope that money will pour in, profits will be made, machine learning will replace, dissident disruptive academics, for others.

Vulnerability, not self-disclosure, is inherent in the method or methodology of autoethnography. According to Tamy Spri, “self-discourse is not in and of itself scholarship.”⁴¹⁹ Spri teaches “the practice of vulnerability as agency in her classes by encouraging people to “move out of their comfort zones, take risks and enter the “betwixed and the in between, the liminal.”⁴²⁰ In this way, this practice and its process as method of inquiry, assists self-reflexivity and is part of *becoming* which for Spri, is “a continually critical and reflective movement through every-dayness.”⁴²¹ Whatever it may be *becoming*, all agree that autoethnography is personal, social and political. As Spri put it, “we cannot create meaning alone” writing autoethnography is an experience of language as much as it is an experience of performativity, interconnectivity, and ethical enactment. The real decision for me was the form my autoethnographic chapter would take. Would it be prose or would it combine multiple narrative forms?

I cannot imagine using *Charnel Ground* as title and concept for my autoethnography of regenerative culture today. In six months, this could change, looking back to the fires of 2019-2020 and into the hyper Covid-19 pandemic, I could return to a much more sombre, earthy, dying in the Anthropocene.

Rigour, ethics and interviews

Cheryl Le Roux’s exploration of rigour in autoethnography charts the debates critically and she remains open-minded. She explores “the question of research integrity or trustworthiness by considering her own experiences of engaging in research of this kind.”⁴²² Le Roux is an experienced qualitative researcher who writes and marks scholarly works of

⁴¹⁹ Ibid, T Spri, *Performing and Writing*, p. 124.

⁴²⁰ Ibid, p 164 – 177.

⁴²¹ Ibid, p. 120.

⁴²² Ibid, C S Le Roux, p. 196

autoethnography. She has conducted field work with colleagues and sees herself as “contributing to discussions of trustworthiness” by suggesting her four criteria.⁴²³

I suggest here that my use of autoethnography does meet the criteria of subjectivity, *Self-reflexivity, Resonance, Credibility and Contribution* that Le Roux proposes should be used by those doing autoethnography and those marking it. As she says, “checklists such as the one provided and others I mention in this article, cannot substitute for informed judgement”.⁴²⁴

There is a backstory to my research in general. Which I suspect is complex and political, that is it has to do with power relations. Here I make mention of it because it really did change most of what I had hoped to do. Problems I had in attaining ethics approval to attend agroecology and permaculture courses in India and to conduct in-depth interviews at these courses as well as outside of them are surprisingly where things came apart. The university suggested that this was not field work but rather it was professional development and would not be approved.

So, I changed tack. “I will stay here in Australia, attend only one course and continue with the interviews” was my response. I stayed on this track for a while. Meanwhile the Extinction Rebellion formed in Australia, with around 600 people gathering at Lismore Town Hall. I joined them despite the tyranny of distance. Then, the drought that had been impacting local areas expanded to most parts of the continent of Australia. Zero water days were announced as towns began to run out of water in the summer of 2018 and 2019. The ground water in the area I live had dwindled to a trickle and the mighty Clarence River stopped flowing. Then, fires re-emerged at long gully near Drake around 40 minutes by car south of our farm and spread rapidly. On October 12, 2019, the day I was arrested for crossing a road with fellow red rebels in Brisbane – Meanjin, during the Extinction Rebellion’s October rebellion, nearby villages and even friends’ farms were destroyed by fire. By the end of January 2020, the whole country seemed exhausted and traumatised. My Mother’s ancestral land was totally burned in the Currowan Fire, on South Coast, bush country on the edge of the Morton National Park. Did anyone really want to be interviewed? While they agreed, I personally thought it would be too draining on myself and on others to follow through.

I realise this is not ideal in research that is based in sharing and caring. I have attempted to remain flexible in relation to threats to my life and others (fire, drought, toxic food systems,

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

warfare lawfare and Pandemy).⁴²⁵ As well as to the practicalities of maintaining this research and attending to administrative processes. I hope that my inclusion of Navdanya, Rojava, Extinction Rebellion and Rainbow Family stand together with my autoethnography to make a small contribution to the concept of social defence and regenerative culture. Perhaps I can use the work I had produced for interviews and interview people at courses and online - post this thesis. My approved public documents are attached as Appendix 1 to this chapter. They include the participant information sheet, the consent form and the proposed questions.

In all other ways I must comply with the ethical policies and commitments of the University of New England and the Australian government. These are set out in the institutions' key documents. A footnote link is provided here.⁴²⁶

Informed consent in fieldwork of any form is full of complexities and uncertainties. What happens when people simply are not interested in signing bits of paper? As was the case for Nick Apoifis when he conducted his *ethnography in an inferno* in Athens and for Peter Jensen's ethnographic research with anarchists running a homeless shelter.⁴²⁷ Jensen plays on Graeber's 2002, *Hello We Exist*, in his post hello research article, *People Can't Believe We Exist*. Apoifis and Jensen show just how difficult it can be to obtain consent from anarchists, who "are not interested in paper".⁴²⁸

In relation to experience, phenomenology, as Paul put it "the essence of humans is pressing into possibilities and the creating of the phenomenological world."⁴²⁹ From my perspective, experience and questions that are existential should not be left out, nor be foreground in the research that I am undertaking here. Beings co-create the phenomenological world and often in reaction to phenomena they do not, yet, or may never, understand. They do it through episteme-ethical-ontologies. Prefigurative methodology seeks to question and dismantle borders metaphorical and territorial, not reinforce them by fixing onto disciplinary and institutionally approved ethics and methodology. The point of 'the posts' is

⁴²⁵⁴²⁵ Op Cit, A De Waal, *New Pandemics*, 2021, chapter 1, p 15, the point is made that the old English concept of Pandemy be used to describe epidemics. Pandemy implies that epidemics of a viral causes are also epidemics of an ecological, social and political causes. In this way, alternatives to the war language and strategies of dealing with health issues might be sublimated.

⁴²⁷ Ibid, Apoifis, fieldwork in a furnace, 2017; P R Jensen, People Can't believe we exist! Social sustainability and alternative non-profit organising, *Critical Sociology*, Vol. 44, No. 2, 2018, p. 375-388.

⁴²⁸ Ibid, p.380

⁴²⁹ Ibid, Paul, *Engaged philosophy in the Anthropocene*, 2017, p.6.

to open to the changes as they emerge. To experiment with their theories and methods while remaining attentive to the troubles as they arise within them and from those who oppose the very notion of a post, colonial, modern, world.

I had previously addressed David Silverman's critique of experience and use of interviews vis-à-vis, data, or what is made of them. While I concur with many of the arguments made, on others I dissent. In summary, perhaps what Silverman is worried about, is people doing things outside of disciplinary and even interdisciplinary boundaries, without recourse to methodological gate-keepers. Silverman is possibly one of those people who cannot believe anarchists exist, in the academy or perhaps anywhere else. "Very few academic research engages with anarchist ethnographies."⁴³⁰ As I hope to have adequately shown, thus far in this thesis, anarchists organise within current systems and contribute to meaningful change. The emphasis is on mutual relationalities and shared responsibilities of care.

Conclusion

In my 'small a' post anarcho, feminist and pacifist mind, we are all strange strangers, often unable to comprehend those we are intimate with, let alone people we do not know personally. Accepting that we are here together and just getting on with what I am supposedly trained to do, means getting on with the unlearning, taking direct action, caring for myself and others. To illustrate the point, David Graeber explained why there are not more people commenting on and interested in the radical experiments of Rojava and beyond. The reason he suggests is that "Everyone is afraid of people doing things for themselves".⁴³¹ This, I believe, applies to experiments in permaculture/ agroecology, prefigurative politics and to criticisms of autoethnography.

The section of road our farm is on, is known as Apple Tree Flat. It is part of the old stock route that ran from Tenterfield to Lawrence. Perhaps in the future an indigenous elder will give our farm a name and link it to the knowledge contained in the local song lines. Through the practices of agroecology, it is already linked to the seeds that contain the whole knowledge of the plants and trees that are part of this multispecies farming community that I call home. In this way my approach to the method is to share the living knowledge of regenerative culture that I have been a part of.

⁴³⁰ Ibid, Apoifis, 2017, p. 6.

⁴³¹ D Graeber, Syria and Anarchism, Syria, Anarchism and Visiting Rojava, *Real Media*, Interview, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqfoJvD0Ifg>

Chapter 5: Social Defence: an Unruly alternative to the military

*"The agenda of promoting social defence as grassroots empowerment, including the transformation of social institutions, should be seen as an important facet of revolutionary nonviolence."*⁴³²

Introduction

This chapter is structured in the following way: it begins with an introduction to the interpretive method of exegesis and then moves into introducing Brian Martin and his work. This is followed by my interpretation of the concept of social defence. The next section introduces Martin's key single authored texts and the latest co-authored book on the topic published in 2019. I then come back to some general comments on Martin's approach to power and history before concluding this chapter. Subtitles guide the reader through the chapter.

Social Defence disturbs the military system by imagining it does not exist. Rattling away within the concept of social defence discussions and contentions cohere around the meaning of pacifism, just war, self-defence, civil disobedience, violence, and nonviolence. Troubles as I use the term in this thesis are areas of debate and division that remain, often profoundly, unsettled. For example, Irish people call the Irish war for independence the troubles, Aboriginal Australians talk about the troubles threatening country. Brian Martin talks about the troubles of the military system. As Haraway put it, "We- all of us on Terra – live in disturbing times, mixed up times, troubling and turbid times."⁴³³

Haraway goes on to suggest that our collective response is to invent, create and collaboratively make lives that connect to ways of living and dying well. "Our task is to make trouble, to stir up potent responses to devastating events."⁴³⁴ Reading Martin, social defence is a potent response to the civilisations most devastating system. Arguably, this as Martin suggests, "is compatible with the search to supersede the problems altogether."⁴³⁵

⁴³² B Martin, *Social Defence: A Revolutionary*, my copy 2018, p.11

⁴³³ D Haraway, *Staying with the trouble, Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, Duke University Press, London, 2016, p. 1.

⁴³⁴ Ibid, Haraway, p. 1,6.

⁴³⁵ B Martin, *Social Defence, Social Change*, Freedom Press, 1993, p. 5.

This type of literature review, formerly known as an Exegesis, is associated with deep reading and familiarity with the texts that subject to interpretation. The aim is to understand and then communicate Brian Martin's thoughts on the topic of Social Defence and to bring these into conversation with others. In turn this enables further exploration of the concept. In my case, this is a solidarity exploration. I have this interpretive authorship because I have been reading Brian's work since 1998. The same year I became a mature age student and embarked upon a law degree which I opted out of after successfully completing the first year. I re oriented to complete a BA (hons) in Political Science and International Relations in 2004 at the University of Wollongong, which is where I first met Brian.

I have been voluntarily researching with as well as commenting on texts that he has single authored and/or co-authored for publication irregularly since then.⁴³⁶ This does not mean that I have read and re-read *all* of his published work. I have, for example, not kept up with his many and varied publications on vaccinations, euthanasia, and other areas of his work. I often read his blog and consider myself a friend, as well as a student.

<https://comments.bmartin.cc>

Conceptualising social defence is hard work, as Brian Martin knows. This is not a popular topic and is easily met with incredulity. Anyone interested in promoting the improbable but not impossible concept of social defence is in for an empowering journey into the grass roots of revolutionary nonviolence. My own experience leaves no doubt that this is a topic people are willing to talk about. You do need a tough skin and a good sense of humour. Brian Martin has both.

This is a big- picture - systems concept that works against the grain of this civilisation's teaching that the use or threat of aggression, repression and violent force are necessary, justifiable and unalterable methods of defending communities and nations. *Real* politics has argued that humans are naturally violent and self-interested. Moreover, the argument of states is that outside of their militarised borders is the anarchic world of raiders, dissenters, and disobedient idealists whose world they are challenged to understand and perpetually seek to deny. Nation states are not the only organised violent actors; not the only people making decisions to use military systems. Yet they still have a monopoly on the legal and therefore social organisation of violence. Articulated in its simplest form this functions as a license to kill.

Concerned Philosopher for Peace, Richard Holms put it this way, "*the right to kill millions of people with weapons of mass destruction if necessary, is claimed by many states (and the*

⁴³⁶ For methodological explanations, of exegesis, K Kennedy, Three new anarchists on questions of religion and violence, *USYD, MA (RES)*, 2012.

capacity to do so is coveted by states that do not have that capacity) but not by individuals.”⁴³⁷ Historically addicted to the profits generated within killing systems,⁴³⁸ the expansive Military Industrial complex is yet to answer the basic questions concerning whether it is necessary and whether it is unalterable.⁴³⁹

Social defence, as Brian Martin has helped to conceive it, answers No; it is not necessary and No; it is not unalterable. It does this in the company of a variety of pacifist –nonviolence traditions as they have endured through the 20th century and into the 21st. My interpretation finds the concept is a re emergent theory and practice of anarcho-pacifism, Martin calls this, revolutionary nonviolence. I think we are talking about the same thing. For me anarcho-pacifism is useful because it is representative of continuous collective living experiments in nonkilling systems over eons. Relationally, an understanding of pacifism is needed to unpack the term revolutionary nonviolence and begin the journey into thinking social defence.

Pacifism is a contentious term, “ironically, some peace activists and scholars of peace and nonviolence have rejected the term despite their own interest in and commitment to peace and nonviolence.”⁴⁴⁰ Later sections of this chapter explain why I see pacifism and nonviolence as one and the same thing. Nonviolent action or what some scholars refer to as pragmatic nonviolence, following the godfather of separation, Gene Sharp, is “is a peaceful form of resistance, but is not by itself, capable of creating societies free of violence, because it does not address all forms of violence.”⁴⁴¹

Pacifist philosopher, Andrew Fiala, confirms there are distinctions in the way peace studies scholars focussed on empirical examples differ to philosophical approaches that focus conceptual analysis and abstract argument.⁴⁴² In my multispecies mind even these distinctions are removed. Empirical examples and philosophical contexts are not distinctly separate processes

⁴³⁷ R L Holmes, Pacifism and the Moral of Morality, in Ibid, A Fiala, (ed) *The Routledge Handbook of Pacifism and Nonviolence*, Routledge, 2018, p. 109.

⁴³⁸ Add sources here from chapter 7, Addiction to Arms Sales, Licence to kill, Drone profits, Military spending SPRI.

⁴³⁹ W Gay, The Military Industrial Complex, in Ibid, A Fiala, *Handbook, Pacifism and Nonviolence*, p 265.

⁴⁴⁰ A Fiala, (ed) *The Routledge Handbook of Pacifism and Nonviolence*, Routledge, UK, 2020, p.

⁴⁴¹ J Llewellyn, Building Emancipatory Peace through anarcho- pacifism, *Critical Studies on Security*, Vol. 6 No. 2, p.260. add DOI

⁴⁴² Ibid, A Fiala, p.2.

Pacifism and nonviolence are used differently by different people, there simply is no consensus in the literature.⁴⁴³ It is entirely possible to discuss concepts and issues around meaning within the literature and not use the term pacifism at all. In a 2016 publication I suggested that social defence could be seen as an infrastructure *of* peace.⁴⁴⁴ In the context of that article, social defence is presented as part of the emergent body of resistance studies and the local turn, vis-à-vis the broader field of peace and conflict studies and the state-centric-bureaucratic arms of liberal peacebuilding. I had no *particular* interest in the concept until I read Brian Martin's 2014 provocation, *Whatever Happened to social defence?* Researching and writing the article against a definition is where this research journey really began for me.

Other chapters of this thesis come into conversation with social defence updating some of Martins work to assist the exploration of his question and the implications of his work. In this chapter I introduce some of the ways these examples interact with social defence and then expand on them in later chapters. Here, the main focus is on Martin's conceptualisation of social defence, which is like all concepts, collective and political. The concept even as it was developed by controversial figures, such as Gene Sharp and emerged as Civilian Based Defence, (CBD) shifts the responsibility of defence from professional soldiers, those paid by state and non-state actors, mercenaries and criminal organisations, to the entire population. To organise this type of civil resistance requires people becoming ungovernable and return to self-government, this in turn opens the way for the possibility of building what Joseph Llewellyn has for now called an "emancipatory anarcho-pacifist peace."⁴⁴⁵ Gene Sharp, a peer of Martins and fellow traveller on a journey into the concept of social defence either took his eye off the ball, or never really had a clear strategic vision in relation to what happens once the dictators have been brought down? Martin on the other hand has never wavered from the grassroots perspective which for him is where social defence initiatives are likely to be found.

As I interpret it:

The concept can be described per Martin as an unruly peace. People are making it up and organising it themselves in gras roots movements and in the massive upheavals and migrations of the living struggling to find a place to land, live and die all over the world. There is no nonviolent jurisdiction within the international system of nation states. Instead, there are laws and norms of war, crime, and punishment. Omnicide, the killing of everything, is not a crime, nor is it featured in international humanitarian law, for example. To address this vacuum, based on my reading of Martin, I am tentatively putting forward

⁴⁴³ Ibid, p.3

⁴⁴⁴ K Kennedy, Against a definition in favour of nonviolent social defence and the anarchist turn, *Peace and Conflict Review*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 2016.

⁴⁴⁵ J Llewellyn, Building Peace through anarcho-pacifism, *Critical Security Studies*, Vol. 6, No.2, 2018, DOI:10.1080/21624887/2017/1345034/

legal anarchism because it might assist the formation of common solidarity underway in earthbound responses to the Anthropocene. Sirus Kashefi's Doctoral research explored the concept of *Legal Anarchism*. For Kashefi, legal anarchism offers an alternative approach to crime and punishment, war and peace that based on my reading of it is compatible with the grassroots of Social Defence.

*"Legal anarchism rejects state law because of its unjustified and unnecessary nature founded on unlimited violence and white collar crime. It suggests alternatives to the Governmental legal system that are founded on agreement and peace, and it takes into account the elements of time and space, which means the ecological, local, national, regional and international aspects of the legal system."*⁴⁴⁶

Following Elizabeth Frazer and Kimberley Hutchings, I agree that classical anarchists are ambivalent when it comes to violence. They have justified it and they are also associated with pacifist commitments to revolutionary nonviolence and civil resistance. Just as they continue to be today. While historically imposed false distinctions and separations crumble in the contexts of grey, quantum war, as I read Martin I ask: who is civil, violent, or not, to what degree, on what grounds, in whose name and for what aims? Where is the right of peoples to exist, free of the impositions of systemic violence? How can politics work for "liberation from lethality?"⁴⁴⁷

I cannot answer the question that Brian has asked, Whatever happened to social defence outside of the obvious facts of Imperialism, Colonialism, Fascism and contemporary forms of popular authoritarian politics, democratic, liberal, socialist, communist or not. These political theories - now ideologies - continue to expand and proliferate the logistics and data of military systems, lethal and non-lethal alike. When alternatives to the military win the hearts and minds of populations, they are swiftly obliterated and forced underground. Their ideas incarcerated with the bodies held in prison systems. As is the case with Abdullah Ocalan, the theoretical instigator of the Rojava revolution. Or, in nations not so openly fascist as the current Turkish state. The theory and practice of the alternatives – in this case - agroecology, nonviolent action, sustainability, and possibly regenerative culture- are recuperated by capital and state institutions. Part of the ruling strategy what is recuperated is usually presented as something new. The root of the problem, following Martin, is found in the reality that nonviolence is popular but social defence is not.

⁴⁴⁶ S Kashefi, *Legal Anarchism: Does Existence Need to be Regulated by the State*. Osgoode Hall Law School of York University, *PhD Dissertations*, 32, 2016, <http://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/phd/32>.

⁴⁴⁷ G Paige, *Nonkilling Political Science*, Center for Global Nonkilling, creative commons, 2009, p. 127.

Social defence, as concept, does not present anything new. It is a modern re articulation of ancient forms of nonviolent struggle against aggression, repression, and exploitation. Whatever social defence is becoming Martin has given it a lot of thought and collaborated with a lot of good people to provide a range of easily readable, peer reviewed and freely shared texts on the concept. He has presented scenarios to consider and by doing so, has empowered others to affirm its potential and possibilities.

Within the experiments of Rojava diplomacy is proposed as the way to settle problems, Democratic Confederalism is how Rojavans imagine their future. Having taken the opportunity to claim autonomy, Rojavans and their international defenders are doing their best to create the social relations and consensus codes of conduct and law in a radically egalitarian and participatory way. I see no contradiction in including them in this thesis. At risk of femicide, genocide, famine, sexual slavery and more. The people of Rojava have been used and abused by the ruling superpowers and criminals alike. It is clear in the example of Rojava that nonviolence is a privilege in the context of life and death. Rojava shares more common ground with the grassroots concept of social defence than it does contradictions or contentions. Beyond the ideological assumptions and binary thinking - violence nonviolence - are common sense understandings of what and who is violent. Common sense that is evident in Martin's work. If we take the multispecies earth bound movements seriously then no one should be excluded from the practices of care. Brian might disagree with my including Rojava in my attention to his work, that would be great. It is clear the concept is elusive and that he is seeking collaboration.

I do not personally find it difficult to oppose all war and organised systems of collective violence – killing systems and at the same time support Rojava. War made the experiments of Rojava possible. I have no right to sit here in relative safety and tell people in other situations how to defend what they have created. There is consensus that the contexts are deadly.

Self-defence is justifiable, in this case but that is not a justification for the war. We do not need international humanitarian law to make this case. The people in Rojava are making their own case and it is defended internationally. Nonviolent movements have formed solidarity with the Rojavans experiments and the models they are collectively building through explicitly illiberal feminist, ecological and radically inclusive democracy. We in the west have not been able to achieve these kinds of social organisation or consensus, despite and because of, our far safer contexts. I pay taxes and therefore help my government fund the proxy wars that Rojava is caught in and made possible by. As Patrick Huff suggests, in formulating Democratic Confederalism, Ocalan's intent is that modernity is sublimated and superseded. Its instrumentalist rationality is replaced with what Huff calls a politics of reasonableness, that rests on three "ideological pillars: women's liberation, direct

communalist democracy and ecologically sound society.”⁴⁴⁸ In post ideological contexts Rojavans are part of the massive global revolts in which unity versus the 1%. As Frazer and Hutchings say, violence poses a problem.

*“The question for anarchists of whether it could be, as a practice, be compatible with anarchist values comes into relation with the simultaneous question of whether, given the violence of capitalist states, and the war relations between capitalist classes and the people they oppress and exploit, it could possibly be avoided?”*⁴⁴⁹

“Thinking about the world that violence instantiates, as opposed to the world it is supposed to produce” as Frazer and Hutchings suggest, is practical and it is ethical. The claim that political violence cannot be justified does not mean that violence is politics is always (if ever) evaded, or that it is always, retrospectively condemned.”

Given the lack of consensus on pacifism and nonviolence and the continuity of the military industrial, media, surveillance, academic and technical complex, depends upon laws that justify it, Frazer and Hutchings are cautioning us to pay attention to violence that acknowledges it cannot be made right and, violence which pays the least attention to justifications and is decided and practiced inclusively. In chapter six and eleven, I suggest that Rojava deserves our attention because it does not try to make its use of defensive violence right. Nor does it pay undue attention to justifications. More significantly the use of defensive violence is decided by everyone. Here in Australia, the government does not have to ask its polity for permission to go to war. Even when millions turn out to demand they don’t, the people are simply sent home.

The grassroots of social defence:

Attentive to the seed sources of violence and war and the need to dissent from them, Brian Martin’s thinking is attuned to uprooting the sources of war and to maintaining a strategic vision of social defence as an alternative to the military system. Getting into the seeds of war Martin alerts us to the fact that:

“Government departments of war changed their names to departments of defence in order to avoid the association with killing and destruction.”

⁴⁴⁸ P Huff, Re-Enchantment of the Political: Abdullah Ocalan, Democratic Confederalism and the Politics of Reasonableness, EPI 2018 International Conference -Authoritarian Populism and the Rural World, *International Institute of Social Studies*, The Hague, 2018, p. 2-11.

⁴⁴⁹ K Hutchings and E Frazer, *Can Political Violence Ever be Justified*, Polity Press, 2019, p107.

Martin's work is an act of solidarity with activists within global nonviolence and anarchism. The two are rarely thought together, or so the backstory goes. Satyagrahi, Medha Patkar a renowned activist within global justice movements was interviewed for TNI's State of Power in 2017. She had started an indefinite hunger strike in July of that year and has been active in resistance against the construction of the Narmada Dam and other campaigns in India for over thirty years. In the TNI interview she said *"the goal is to move towards what I call mass-roots organisation (not a grass roots organisation as grass can be plucked out at any time)."*⁴⁵⁰ The semantics at work here might suggest the metaphor grassroots is out of date, but this is not the case.

The common inclusive ground advocated by Patkar in which people hold different opinions "but key activists must share a common approach" is also evident in Martin's grassroots. It is not necessary that everyone who participates in a movement shares the full vision or uses the same terms, as Patkar suggests, "we will approach issues from different angles and points."⁴⁵¹ In India the Satyagraha – the politics of nonviolence - is popular "because it is an effective tactic but also because it demonstrates our values and vision. Reading Martin, the grassroots are critical because the seed of the grass holds within it the knowledge of its past, present and future and its quality and endurance is dependent upon its networks within the mass roots structures of mountains, rivers, soils, forests, deserts oceans, and peoples within its complex ecological environment."⁴⁵² In one of his most recent publications on the topic of social defence Brian Martin confirms his principal position. *"Governments are likely to be the prime opponents of social defence. Primarily this is because, if implemented in a far-reaching fashion, (social defence) naturally leads to grassroots empowerment."*⁴⁵³

To the best of my knowledge Martin's work conceptualising social defence has been paid fleeting reference by other nonviolent researchers.⁴⁵⁴ Much Civil Resistance literature leaves the goal of replacing the military system out of their calls for systems change and focus, understandably on campaigns which in many cases have been ongoing since the 1940s in

⁴⁵⁰ M Patkar in, TNI, State of Power, Marching Forward, resistance and counter power: an interview with Bertan Zuniga Caceres, Medha Patkar and Nonhle Mbuthuma, TNI, long read, 2018, <http://longreads.tni.org/>, p.14.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid, p.12-14.

⁴⁵² B Martin, *Social Defence, Social Change*, Freedom Press, 1993, p.4, e

⁴⁵³ Ibid. B Martin, *Whatever Happened*, 2014, Ibid, *Social Defence, Arguments and Actions*, in Ibid, Anderson and Larmore, p.

⁴⁵⁴ M Branagan, *Social Alternatives*, Vol.33. Issue. 4. 2013, p. 35, Branagan brackets his discussion of nonviolence and resistance to Nazism this way, "...dedicated to pacifism and nonviolence (two very different things) a position I find problematic. Furthermore, Branagan, spends 2 pages on the concept of social defence in his impressive book, *Global Warming, Militarism and nonviolence: The art of active resistance*, Springer, 2013. Noting this lack of interest in social defence in no way takes away from Branagan's equally important work. What it does is confirm Martin's view that few decide to take it up, the speculative concept of Social Defence. Hence his provocation.

the modern context that Martin became aware of the concept. This is the curiosity Martin is concerned with. Civil resistance could be the same thing as social defence, yet many civil defence actions are not connected to disarming the military system, this is implied sometimes. Surprisingly, the idea of replacing militaries with nonviolent systems of resistance and defence has faded out of the literature as Martin's concerns show. This suggests that it has been consciously and unconsciously found to be less compelling than non-revolutionary forms of nonviolent action/civil resistance that supports, however critical, the international system of peace keeping/peace building. It could even be that few people take it up because they have found it to be irrelevant in relation to the present existential crisis.

Perhaps it is thought to be too late to demand global disarmament, the elimination of the market that produces and profits from the weapons of destruction and the kinds of work, that David Graeber called Bullshit Jobs.⁴⁵⁵ Martin's research and my own suggest that 'public' institutions such as universities, are not, at this time, focussed on replacing the military system. On the other hand, Satyagrahi's and civil resisters engaged in revolutionary nonviolence and decolonial processes of unlearning are systems thinking their way into planetary awareness, pushing all the boundaries that modern ideology assumes are permanent fixtures of the ruling civilisation.

Martin's work to date includes twenty books, ten edited books and booklets; over sixty major peer reviewed academic journal articles; many other edited journal articles and at least twenty book reviews. In 2014 Martin began circulating discussions via a "comments to colleagues" email thread, in 2015 this became Brian's Blog: <https://comments.bmartin.cc>. These publications are broadly focussed on nonviolent actions and dissent, both of which are part of the concept of social defence. Brian Martin also publishes on nuclear science and other scientific controversies. He has supervised many post-graduate students and introduced courses on happiness, media, war and peace during his work at the University of Wollongong. Brian is a quiet person who is actively involved in giving back to the community on and off the campus. I get the feeling that wherever he goes, that is where he is; busy seeding a future of social defence as an alternative to the organised killing systems that in reality make a mockery of the term defence.

He is currently Emeritus Professor of Social Sciences at the University of Wollongong, President of Whistle-blowers Australia, https://www.bmartin.cc/dissent/contacts/au_wba/ and he hosts a large network on the suppression of dissent, <https://www.bmartin.cc/dissent/>. In line with copy left, open source, shared knowledge; all

⁴⁵⁵ D Graeber, *Bullshit Jobs: A Theory*, Penguin Books, London, 2019.

of Brian's work is available to read online or download for free. No paid subscriptions or paid forms of membership are required to access these works.

Selected Texts of Social Defence

On the specific topic of social defence, Martin has authored two books, one booklet, twenty-six peer reviewed articles and book chapters, seven 'other articles', five book reviews and one newspaper article. His latest work co-authored with Jorgen Johansen was circulated to friends for comment in late 2018 and published as *Social Defence* in July 2019. The texts I have selected are introduced here in their chronological order of publication. My recommendation would be that interested folk read *Whatever Happened*, 2014 first. Readers deciding to move on to his 2020, *Revolutionary Agenda* and could then go to his collaborative work with Jorgen Johansen, *Social Defence*, 2019. This book, like all of Martins books is easy to read, has images that assist the flow of the text and social semiotics and follows a format that introduces, historicises, asks questions, presents responses from different viewpoints, makes suggestions, summarises the thinking and points the reader to other sources of information.

Brian Martin's work on social defence can be thought of as an example of anarchist ambivalence, in relation to political theory, ideology and violence. This might sound strange to people, and he may well disagree. There is no doubt about his commitment to nonviolence. His work speaks for nonviolence and shows it is far more sensible, reasonable and effective, and that it can also be ineffective, recuperated, ridiculed, ignored and brutally repressed. The violence structured into the degraded industrial system is not left out by Martin. As he says, "Everywhere, the military is the ultimate defender of the state and economic inequality."⁴⁵⁶ His point is to focus on the possibility of alternatives so that they might replace the current system. Social defence is envisioned by Martin through revolutionary nonviolence. Which acts outside of regular political channels and seeks systems transformation. Martin insists there is no template or way of knowing how to present a scenario of social defence that would bring revolutionaries and their opponents together to form consensus. In the meantime, social defence is fertile in the grass roots. Martin has never suggested it would happen overnight as if by magic. I will introduce the texts I have selected from the latest moving back to the Bradford conference introduced in chapter one of this thesis. I will conclude with the co-authored work, *Social Defence*, 2019.

⁴⁵⁶ B Martin, *Social Defence: A Revolutionary Agenda* in R Jackson, J Llewellyn, GM Leonard, A G Tonga Karene, (eds.) *Revolutionary Nonviolence: Concepts, Cases and Controversies*, Zed Books, London, 2020, online version, <https://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/20Jackson.html>, n.p.

‘Social Defence: A Revolutionary Agenda’, Book Chapter, 2020.

*“What can be called revolutionary nonviolence includes challenging and building alternatives to patriarchy, capitalism, the state and other systems of inequality and hierarchy.”*⁴⁵⁷

This book chapter was circulated as an article using the same title in 2018. I have not read the book it is published in so cannot introduce the chapter in its full context. Two of the editors are scholars in the pacifist tradition that are working to DE subjugate the historical basis of nonviolence. So, Martin is in good company here. In this text, he confirms the lack of progress made on transforming military systems, the lack of interest in social defence despite its agenda for citizen empowerment. Martin reaffirms that, “social defence is more than a refusal to use violence, it involves plans, preparation and training to resist aggression.”⁴⁵⁸ As is usual in his work, he notes that policy approaches that see social defence as being introduced by governments have never gained much success. Therefore, he returns to the grassroots. As he says, “if, on the other hand social defence is seen as a grassroots initiative, there is no need to convince governments to support it. Social defence becomes society defending itself against the state.”⁴⁵⁹

As a single author Martin is easily read as being peacefully seditious, patiently uprooting war, as the title of one of his early publications shows. Three aspects of social defence, that illustrate the point for Martin are 1) technology design, 2) communication and 3) capacity to protect vital functions. Each of which is threatening to governments or corporate elites, or both.⁴⁶⁰ Beyond this, whatever it might become or not, as seems likely in 2021, for Martin the concept can be used as a guide for social change in the direction of citizen empowerment.⁴⁶¹ This is equally dangerous because empowered people challenge all systems of unequal power. So, get your anarchy on. Martin joins a long line of anarchists, in his case, grassroots activists who *“have repeatedly tried to describe how power can be distributed to ensure the greatest number of sovereigns. Yet in doing so, they appear to lay down rules for others.”*⁴⁶²

Anarchist political scholar and editor of the journal *Anarchist Studies*, Ruth Kinna has given a lot of attention to ongoing theory and practice of anarchism. Kinna cautions us to be aware that anarchists have hotly debated the ideal of democracy and no consensus has formed or is likely. Assumptions, therefore, should not be made. In relation to government and democracy many anarchists are ambivalent, tensions remain, and discussions continue. For example, “Murray Bookchin’s apparent, hiding behind the concept of the responsibility of humankind,” as a way to evade difficult questions sparked discussions. Kinna research

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

⁴⁶² Ibid, R Kinna, *The government of no one*, 2020, p. 238.

points to the fact that “the anarchist concern with ifs and buts, is still a concern.”⁴⁶³ The social relations in which privileged intellectual workers do the planning or anti planning for less valued workers, is a persistent theme. The ideas of a vanguard dissipated in response to neoliberalism and as solidarity with Zapatista and global justice movements turned towards the practices of horizontal, consensus based decision making. Affinities, not ideology became the norm in networked movements.⁴⁶⁴ Decentralisation the process and solidarity through mutual aid, not charity. Brian Martin is aware of these tensions and those who do decide to attune their interest in nonviolence to social defence will pick up on what he has consistently presented as a radical proposition with revolutionary potential. Like many people familiar with anarchist theory and practice, Martin is good at asking questions that are difficult to answer.

Whatever Happened to Social Defence, 2014.

Works as a provocation by asking, “why has nonviolent defence disappeared from the agenda while other uses of nonviolent action have thrived?” Here, Martin is doing the important work of asking questions that in one way cannot be answered because, the concept under consideration does not exist yet. On the other hand, the provocation does incite one to confront the unanswerable by attempting to respond to the question. The provocation is clearly talking to the movements demanding post ideological whole of systems change.

This article introduces the rise in nonviolence and the new context where “understandings of oppression have broadened and now encompass, patriarchy, racism, domination of nature and other systems of exploitation and unequal power.”⁴⁶⁵ Gently taking the reader through the agenda of the global justice movements challenge to neoliberalism and its occupation of spaces critical to the intersectional systems now understood as oppressive, Martin then moves into global Occupy. Here he briefly explains the common strategy of building participation and empowering people to join direct actions and to work collaboratively, across differences is what occupy movements showed was possible in spaces all over the globe. Food Not Bombs are mentioned as a group that directly challenge multiple forms of oppression while also creating an alternative. For Martin, it is clear that social defence needs prefigurative politics, making the challenge is only one part of the concept, creating the alternatives from the bottom up is arguably more important in his understanding.

⁴⁶³ Ibid, Kinna. P. 239.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid, Kennedy, Deeply Felt, 2015.

⁴⁶⁵ Online version of *Whatever Happened*, at B Martin, Publications, n.p.
<https://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/14sa.html> (accessed 02/10/2021).

Martin leaves us to ponder the “seemingly strange combination of welcoming (at least in retrospect) popular challenges to autocratic governments but cracking down on grass roots action within western societies.”⁴⁶⁶ The resultant neglect of social defence and the implications, as Martin says, “can best be understood in this context.” As per his style of communicating, *Whatever Happened* covers a lot of ground in a short article. Readers are shown, through peoples’ examples, suggestions are made in relation to what reader can do and informed of the contexts in which direct action will take place. Martin is aware,

“toppling rulers is easier then dissolving and replacing systems of organised violence – namely military and police forces. Social defence, is unlikely to be introduced or promoted by governments because governments use police and military forces to maintain their existence.” Social defence implies removing the state, “rational argument is likely to go nowhere.”

His recommendation is that social defence be restated on activist agenda’s, and that Gandhi’s constructive programme of building just, political economic and social systems be given more attention. In this article Martin alludes to the answer to the question he has posed. Having read that particular article at least twenty times and possibly more what I think happened to social defence is that it was and is repressed, criminalised, and other wise, recuperated and managed by the state. This could possibly explain what happened to it. Following J C Scott and moving back through Martin’s texts. If the state became social defence, then its revolutionary potential became our enemy again. This does not bode well for champions of nonviolence if systems change is the goal. As a single author, Martin actually is crystal clear; “Getting rid of the military means getting rid of the state.”⁴⁶⁷

Social Defence: Social Change, Freedom Press, 1993.

This is Martins first book on the topic and repeats sections, acknowledged as such, that were previously published by War Resisters International after the Bradford Conference, introduced in Chapter two of this thesis. *Social Defence, Social Change* (SD-SC) begins by reminding readers that as a proposition for and of social change, “it is extremely radical. Yet a large amount of the writing on this subject is set within the most conservative of assumptions about society,” to Martin, this is implausible.⁴⁶⁸ For him, peoples experiences of nonviolence are necessary to test, reject and refine its ideas. SD-SC presents an introduction, reviews case study examples of revolutionary outbreaks across the continents and argues “for a grassroots perspective, an offensive orientation and a revolutionary agenda.”⁴⁶⁹ He maintains this argument today. The question of casualties if social defence were attempted and when it has been, as Martin notes, “has hardly been discussed.”⁴⁷⁰ So

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid, online version, *Whatever*, n.p.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid, Martin, *Social Defence, Social Change*, 1993, p.1.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.p.13.

much for the whipping boy of data all we have so far is 3.5% of people are needed to bring a dictator down, there is no count to say how many die or were injured, imprisoned or simply disappeared.

Sacrifice is assumed of anyone willing to die for an idea, a relationship, country, love, a way of living, in both violent and nonviolent revolution. If the issue of casualties is more acute for social defence, perhaps this is one reason why it is not a popular subject. Or, as Martin suggests, “people misunderstand nonviolence to mean no violence at all”⁴⁷¹ On the other hand, it could not be any clearer that violence is the norm of this civilisation and war is the basis of its economy and the means of keeping people dependent on charity, aid and military intervention for their survival.

Martin does away with Sharps approach of trying to win over elites and convince the liberal democratic state to lead the way into civilian based defence. He explains the top down approach would most likely lead to social defence becoming a supplement rather than an alternative to military systems. Many countries have a combined system or total defence system, such as Sweden. Even countries without militaries, such as Costa Rica or those with limited militaries, such as Iceland are fundamentally linked to the world systems and have agreements with larger powers such as the US and the EU, Russia or China, the UK and multinational military alliances such as NATO. They are not presenting as alternatives to the system, they are manoeuvring and forming national policies, with militarised land and water borders, militarised and super surveillance systems. For example, the Five Eyes coalition that Australia takes part in at the absolutely secretive and infamous, Pine Gap. On the other hand, Martin shows that these approaches cannot simply be ruled out. Martin’s vision of social defence is purposefully unruly, anything remotely approaching a rule immediately closes the door. Perhaps Costa Rica will lead the world into total disarmament and Iceland will follow suit. If such plans are underway, they are heavily guarded secrets, or I have simply failed to take full account of them.

Pointing to one of the central problems, he says, “*elite sponsorship, by giving the appearance that social defence is being officially promoted, would reduce initiative from below.*”⁴⁷² As we will see in the following chapter, manufacturing the appearance of change is how governments and corporations deal with food sovereignty movements and large networked movements like *La Via Campesina*, collectively responsible for struggling for, The Declaration of Peasant Rights and for agroecology, as global method of diverse, locally based food production. Martin knows that many people have reservations about

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

⁴⁷² Ibid, p. 15.

researching social defence. The upshot is that “all the evidence shows the futility of relying on governments to abolish the war system.”⁴⁷³

It is in SD-SC that social defence affirms its revolutionary aims and methods. Here Martin asks key revolutionary questions, such as, what is going to happen after the regime is brought down, who will clean the streets, feed the people, and attend to the waste? What is the strategic vision, what solutions and alternatives have been created, are we prepared? He responds to many with scenarios and this way joins others envisioning a future within the grassroots. In the period of this research and the escalating states of emergency, what are called scenarios are clearly valuable “thought experiments.”⁴⁷⁴ Co-founder of permaculture, David Holmgren produced four scenarios back in 2009. These envisioned possibilities from, Brown and Green tech to the Lifeboat and Earth Steward scenarios.⁴⁷⁵ Julian Cribb, offered, *How to Survive the 21st Century: Humanities Ten Great Challenges and How We Can Overcome Them*.⁴⁷⁶ Coming into military contributions, David Spratt and Ian Dunlop’s, *Existential climate -related security risk: A scenario approach*, begins with a 2020-2030 scenario, “in which policy makers fail to act on evidence...warming reaches, 1.6.”⁴⁷⁷ In Spratt and Dunlop’s scenario, the national security state is expected to face a scenario “of outright chaos” and the probability of a catastrophic future, that they are currently unprepared for.⁴⁷⁸

Social Defence is clearly a thought experiment that in on the lookout for a more convincing scenario. Martin’s assessment in 1993 was “that no scenario has been presented which is persuasive enough both to advocates of elite reform and to advocates of grassroots initiative. In SD-SC, Martin’s conclusion is that “one possible scenario for revolutionary social defence involves the introduction of social defence in a revolutionary situation brought about for other reasons.”⁴⁷⁹ In other words, one thing could lead to another, previously unanticipated thing. As we are in multiple complex revolutionary situations at the level of daily life all over the world.

This book, like all of Martins work on the topic points to the fact that individuals within the military have also taken an interest in social defence. Some militaries are also strictly defensive, as is the case with Rojava’s armed self-defence forces. Others in the mainstream

⁴⁷³ Ibid, p. 17.

⁴⁷⁴ D Graeber, *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*, Prickly Paradigm Press, 2004, p 81.

⁴⁷⁵ D Holmgren, *Future Scenarios: How Communities Can Adapt to Peak Oil and Climate Change*, Chelsea Green Publishing, 2009.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid, J Cribb, *Surviving*, Springer International, 2017.

⁴⁷⁷ D Spratt, Existential climate -related security risk: A scenario approach, *Breakthrough Online.Org. Au*, Policy Paper, May, 2019, p. 6.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid. p. 10.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

superpower and aspirational power coalitions, operate offensively in interventions and through brinkmanship according to threats, real and imagined. Their next step is to shore up the industrial base of the global economy. If you are not a superpower, you need to choose one to ally with to even be a national economy. Australia, for example, is expanding its defence industrial base. Controversially and without any consultation with Australian people, the Morrison government's ruling national liberal coalition has ordered nuclear armed submarines and increased numbers of US troops into Australia.⁴⁸⁰

Through its Lead the Way Defence Transformation and Updated Strategic Vision, defence is creating greater capacity and "continuing to enhance lethality and readiness" to adapt to the now "less remote chance, of high intensity conflict."⁴⁸¹ The new strategy updates the 2016 Defence White paper. Its implications for Australia's "force structure" is "the new policy will require force structure and capability adjustments focussing on grey-zone challenges, the possibility of high intensity conflict and domestic crisis."⁴⁸²

Reading Brian Martin, we can be sure that social defence is Not in the grey-zone between, war and peace, because this is the military systems way of talking about and justifying the current international system based on the technologies of killing and the expansion of weapons industry into all areas of most people's lives. Here in Australia, the government are increasing their lethality, to prevent an outbreak of civil resistance that might at the same time demonstrate a convincing scenario *of and for* social defence through the prefigurative actions of existing movements such as XR and School Strikes for Climate. Martin is envisioning social defence from the perspective of the total population. The most appealing reason to promote nonviolence is because everyone can participate in it. There is no way of knowing how militaries will respond into the future.

His point, as I read it, is that the mass migrations and rebellions underway the 21st century may provide revolutionary opportunities that have been, thus far unimagined. Individuals in the military do defect and they do work to bring about political coups. It is after all possible that if their source of income and social access were to come from nonviolent jurisdiction that many would support such a move because they can no longer fight, kill, torture, monitor and control the living world or serve a system that exists purely to do those things.

⁴⁸¹ Australian Government, 1Defence Publications, *2020 Strategic Update*, <https://www1.defence.gov.au/about/publications/2020-defence-strategic-update.p> 30.

The Expert Group formed as the International Military Council on Climate <https://imccs.org> warns that militaries are overstretched, that laws are outdated and, that most governments are unprepared for the future of climate change and the compounding crisis of mass migration within and between state borders. Or for even more social inequality food insecurity and disruptions to communications and power grids.⁴⁸³ Anything could happen in these revolutionary times. Martin is optimistic but not at the expense of reasonableness. He believes this is also the most unlikely scenario. However, if anything like this did happen, anarcho pacifism not anarcho capitalism has constructed the programs and experimented with the solutions that are suggested in Martin's approach to the concept. If money and power did not flow to individuals as they currently do in militaries, and if everyone earned the same basic income and food was not a weapon of war. The position seems far less radical. If only we lived in a world that did exist NOW.

The Implications as Martin seen them in his 1993 text are the concepts links "with anarchist groups, the sarvadaya movement and portions of feminist, peace and environmental movements, and the green movement generally".⁴⁸⁴ The trouble for him, is that social defence is commonly thought about in relation to invasions and is divorced from day to day social struggle. Martin points out that offensive military postures and campaigns are "castigated but military defence is seen as acceptable. The system seems untouchable, unalterable. "Almost no effort has been put into disarmament, numerous scientists and engineers have devoted their energies to the construction of weapons, but few have developed simple ways to dispose of them."⁴⁸⁵ As little effort has been put into training people in how to disarm weapons, Martin rightly suggests that this is likely to be specialists within the military who perform this utterly essential task for social defence. If we take it a little further and imagine that a voluntary conversion from military to earth repair has global democratically deliberated consent, then this would not pose a problem because the specialist in the military could freely share the secrets of their trade. For now, they are under oath to keep the secrets safe. Only whistleblowing our outright mutiny within the ranks lets those secrets out of the bag.

Respect for all life and for the dignity of all people is the basis of the pacifist/nonviolence claim to being participatory. From that perspective my enemy is still my enemy, but they are not removed from the realms of care or denied the fruits of collectively produced surplus food and shelter. Nonviolence has also shown that everyone loves a joke. Coming into more serious engagements, liaising with police in large public demonstrations and in places where civil disobedience actions such as blockades and lock-on's take place is the most common example of what is known as fraternization in movements such as XR. Communicating with

⁴⁸³ As discussed at length in chapters, 1, 7 and 8.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid, B Martin, *Social Defence, Social Change*, p. 35.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

people in the military, fraternizing and forming relations based on mutual responsibilities is something advocates of social defence should make every effort to do, according to Martin. He knows that militaries are bastions of male domination⁴⁸⁶

He was of the view in SD-SC that woman who became guerrilla fighters were no better because “never have they approached an equal role at the top levels of command.”⁴⁸⁷ Martin assumes here that women will always be relegated to their subordinated role when the pressure to survive is removed.⁴⁸⁸ Clearly, Rojava are road testing the kind of radical feminism that may prove Martin and others wrong. Then again, they may not. The other possibility is that they actually are annihilated and the international community watch as the Turkish State carries out its promise. Thus far, the women of Rojava are not relying on anyone and they don’t expect to go home and back to into patriarchal submission once the situation improves, if it ever does.

Arguments and Actions, In *Nonviolent Struggle and Social Defence*, War Resisters International, 1991.

Edited by Shelly Anderson and Janet Larmore both of whom worked for disarmament campaigns this collection of papers is apparently the last collective effort to make meaning of the term social defence. “participants came with first-hand experience of both violence and active nonviolence.”⁴⁸⁹ The editors found the conference, exhausting, stimulating, and challenging by turns. The collected papers present a range of possible definitions. For everyone involved,

*“the concept implies a degree of unity, or consensus, on the part of the civilian population. What is such consensus does not exist – and for good reasons, because society’s own institutions are the oppressors?”*⁴⁹⁰

The ultimate aim of the publication and the papers presented in it, is to encourage more people to investigate the potential of social defence. Petra Kelly’s paper, *Social Defence and the State*, asked, even demanded to know, why the peace movements haven’t taken social defence seriously?⁴⁹¹ As Kelly pointed out back then and is still the case today, “of all the movements which have the resources to do so, it is the West European disarmament

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid. 36.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid, Anderson and Larmore, *Nonviolent Struggle and Social Defence*, January 1991, WRI, p. 1.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 2.

⁴⁹¹ P Kelly, in Ibid, p. 3.

movements which must address as soon as possible the issue of social defence as a main priority.”⁴⁹² Petra Kelly was right about this and many other issues. Martin surely concurs.

Social Defence: Arguments and Actions is Martin’s assessment of social defence based on his experience within the Australian and international peace movement and obviously his conversations and shared experiences with other conference participants. The real value in this publication is that readers can see how Martin fits into the group of people who, as Anderson and Larmore explain, came together in the common hope that the concept of social defence was an idea whose time had come.⁴⁹³ The conference tried to work out how to present social defence to the larger public. Participants who presented arguments for pragmatic nonviolence “pointed out that social defence could be integrated into the military system...as a first step towards the longer term goal of ending war and argued that while this did not live up to the pacifist position, the body count is lowered, and fewer people are killed.”⁴⁹⁴ Others stressed that “while nonviolent action may involve some of the same components as military action (keeping up morale, good communications, clear goals and coordinated action), the two systems are incompatible.”⁴⁹⁵

Despite the diversity of opinion, Anderson and Larmore found that “many participants preferred the broader definition.” Petra Kelly and Brian Martin presented strong papers in support of that view. Martin’s paper is distinct in the way it presents a conversation based on typical questions which he then responds to. That takes place in the first part of the paper, the arguments section. The second part of Martin’s paper looks at actions. These include lobbying, leaflets, language skills, short wave radio and scientific research. As a scientist himself, Martin believes that scientific research is a virtually untapped resource for social defence but that few scientists know anything about it or how their skills could contribute.⁴⁹⁶ Perhaps his view has changed today, however this seems unlikely.

The Arguments section of the paper covers what are now standard methods of civil resistance. To make his arguments Martin poses intentionally predictable questions such as, Why not just keep using military defence? He responds by running through some of the serious problems. For example, “Since the development of planes and missiles, everyone - civilians and soldiers – is on the front line in a war, social defence provides a way for everyone to take responsibility for war, unlike military defence.”⁴⁹⁷ Martin asks, who will guard the guardians, if military forces stage a coup? He explains social defence avoids this problem because it is based on popular participation and voluntary consent. This means

⁴⁹² Ibid.

⁴⁹³ Ibid

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 1.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁶ B Martin, In Ibid, p 27 – 53.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 29.

that everyone is a guardian, the question then becomes why keep using militarised killing systems when we could all defend ourselves together through non killing methods.

The next provocation, “social defence is not really peaceful....it has more in common with military defence than with peace and harmony throughout the world, which should be our real aim? He responds. “Correct. Social defence does not promise a golden age of total harmony. It seeks an end to war, namely mass organised violence.”⁴⁹⁸

Martins’ article continues in this format working his way through questions about the war in Iraq, the Iranian Revolution and other historical struggles. In many ways this paper lays out his original thinking on the concept. He first heard the term in 1980 and it held little meaning for him. As he put it, “no one had heard of it or knew a thing about it.”⁴⁹⁹ Since then, he has continued to avoid presenting a single prescription. *Arguments and Actions* is largely based on material published by Canberra Peacemakers and Schweik Action Wollongong. It is a collaborative response to the troubling social system of organised violence. Brian Martin, like James M Lawson Jr, another pacifist of note, “lives in a country that does not yet exist.”⁵⁰⁰ But that has not stopped him from believing it is possible. No religion or creed is required, nor are they explicitly ruled out.

Brian Martin’s social defence speculates on an inclusive unruly peace. Despite the differences and friendly disagreements between the work of Sharp and Martin, it is clear to me through Sharps, *Self-Reliant Defense: Without Bankruptcy or War*, published by Albert Einstein Institution in 1992, not long after the Bradford Conference that Sharp’s theory does not challenge capitalism. Martin on the other hand does support unarmed challenges to capitalism. Gene Sharp’s paper at this conference fell into the narrow definitions approach. He argued for an incremental approach. For me Sharp is after a withering away of the military. His civilian based defence mimics the socialist state that withers away to communism – minus the anticapitalism. For sharp, gradual civilian military blend “is significantly different from the more traditional campaigns or movements that are, for or against policies.”⁵⁰¹ Relationally, Sharp is not concerned with what happens after the revolution and leaves this to others to make state policy.

For Sharp, “the objectives of civilian based defence are to deter and defeat internal usurpations and international aggression.”⁵⁰² But guess what, Martin and others taking the broader view are the internal usurpers. Reading Martin, ending all forms of aggression is the

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 27.

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⁵⁰⁰ Ibid, James M Lawson Jr, in A Fiala, *Routledge Handbook of Pacifism*, p. 386.

⁵⁰¹ G Sharp, Transitions to Civilian Based Defence, in Ibid, Anderson and Larmore, p. 7.

⁵⁰² G Sharp, *Self-Reliant Defense: Without Bankruptcy or War*, published by Albert Einstein Institution, Boston, 1992 p. 21.

goal, so nonviolence revolutionaries *are* the internal threat. However Sharp was also clear, that “civilian defenders would aim to make the attacked society unrulable without bankruptcy or war.”⁵⁰³ Sounds easy in theory but as we shall see in the following chapter, obedience is a problem. As Robert Burrowes put it in his thoroughgoing article, *Why Violence*, “if all individuals are terrorised into obedience of conventions, commands, rules and laws, then even when a command or rule is dysfunctional, few individuals will have the capacity to identify, let alone to resist, the dysfunctionality, precisely because the fear of being subjected to violence (punishment) obliterates both these capacities.”⁵⁰⁴ What both Martin and Burrowes are explaining is that in practice we police ourselves because if we don’t, we will feel the forces of those authority. In the case of the people and their rulers, it will be the forces of the state that will punish disobedience. Foucault called this governmentality.

Broader arguments against pacifism-nonviolence take two broad swipes. The first is the charge of inconsistency because pacifists may oppose war and violence but may also be willing to use violence in self-defence or to protect a loved one. The second has been that pacifism as a form of social change is simply not effective and has no chance in the face of serious military repression.⁵⁰⁵ Martin is one of the few scholars of nonviolence that publishes in anarchist journals, he is also one of the few within the field to respond to critiques of those who support the pacifism is pathology view. Most recently this has been grassroots activist Peter Gelderloos. Looking through his broader publications, not just those on the topic of social defence, it is clear Martin is actively engaged in contributing to anarchist theory through his critique of it, as well as his grassroots being within it. Though he never explicitly identifies with it.

Some of the charges against pacifism are addressed later in this chapter and subsequent chapters of the thesis. The key point to make here before moving into the most recent publication on the topic is that there are a variety of pacifisms, some allow for violence in some contexts and as such are conceived as pragmatic pacifism, some are being redefined in the 2020s and regenerating anarcho pacifisms, others continue to regenerate ecofeminist pacifism, as is the case of Navdanya. These are all experiments. To my knowledge none claim there will be no defensive violence undertaken by militaries and police on behalf of states. Nor has Martin claimed that nonviolence is less lethal. His point is that it is likely to be if it is strategically oriented to constructive alternatives that are organised and experimented with in the grassroots of movements that do challenge patriarchy and that do

⁵⁰³ Ibid, p. 21.

⁵⁰⁴ R Burrowes, *Why Violence*, was emailed to the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Sydney in 2006, it is available at [ibid, https://robertjburrowes.wordpress.com/publications/](https://robertjburrowes.wordpress.com/publications/).

⁵⁰⁵ J-A Orosco, *Pacifism as Pathology*, in *Ibid, A Fiala, Routledge Handbook*, 2019, p 199.

remain open enough to admit that it is not possible to know how social defence might come about.

Social Defence by Jorgen Johansen and Brian Martin.

Founded by Jorgen Johansen and Majken Jul Sorensen, Irene Publishing “works for peace by peaceful means” and covers the areas of nonviolent action, peace, resistance, social change and related issues.⁵⁰⁶ *Social Defence* (2019) updates much of Martin and Johansen’s early work on the topic and is clearly a product of their many collaborations. The view, consistent from the 1980s, is that social defence is under researched and therefore open to contributions precisely because it is possible. The concept challenges power structures because it depends upon empowering people to defend their societies against all forms of aggression and repression.⁵⁰⁷

In western liberal societies – aka - this civilisation, people have been schooled into believing that it is the responsibility of governments to defend and secure the vital aspects of society on their behalf, the military system is central to this.⁵⁰⁸ As Martin and Johansen write,

*“History shows us that military means are frequently used to attack rather than defend. With lies and distorted descriptions of reality, armies attacked other states on the pretext of defending”.*⁵⁰⁹ Because a change from military defence to social defence could happen suddenly, so planning for the life without a military to defend vital systems is necessary.

Their Prologue is a hypothetical scenario; Here the future awakes to a drone attack and the local social defence groups meet to discuss activating their plans. Pigeons replace mechanical message carriers. Infrastructure disruption groups meet to begin making it hard for the invading forces, “without doing serious harm to the population.”⁵¹⁰ Importantly, “since no consensus was reached in relation to planning, both strategies, keeping plans open and public and keeping some secret are used in the resistance.”⁵¹¹ The authors imagine that *“most of the population had their own storage of enough water, food, fuel and medicine for at least two months...All were drilled in how to use as few resources as possible and to be prepared to suffer as well as share when situation becomes tough.”*⁵¹²

⁵⁰⁶ About Irene Publishing, <https://irenepublishing.com/>

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid, Martin, 1991,1993, 2014 and Martin and Johansen, 2019.

⁵⁰⁸ E Goldman, The social importance of the modern school, *Mother Earth Publishing*, 1917, Archive, The Anarchist library Anticopy right <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/emma-goldman-the-social> (accessed August 10, 2018); J D Mathews, Towards the destruction of Schooling, *Revolutionary Zine*, The Anarchist library <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/anonymous'towards-the-destruction-of-schooling> (accessed August 11, 2018); W Brown, The end of Educated Democracy, *Representations*, Vol. 16, No.1 The Public University, Fall, 2011, p 19-41

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid, Johansen and Martin, 2019. p. 41.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid, p. 9-10.

⁵¹¹ Ibid, p. 10.

⁵¹² Ibid, p. 11.

Martin and Johansen's story responds to the drone age with "massive general strikes, public protests that disrupt all but essential services are escalated, making it hard for invaders to receive the support needed from populations" to successfully occupy, a place, a people, a time into the future.⁵¹³ International solidary actions are imaged but the questions, "will the attackers (who arrived by drone and then by water and land) give up and go home, will they become ruthless against the resisters, will other potential attackers re think their plans."⁵¹⁴

Martin and Johansen view the concept of defence as "a euphemism, because if militaries were used for defence and never attack, there would be no war or military-backed government."⁵¹⁵ This is the same claim that Abdulla Ocalan made as he moved into his mature thinking.⁵¹⁶ Rojava are not mentioned in *Social Defence*, nor to my knowledge in any of Martin's work. While this is disappointing, this book does cover movements up to Occupy, which is not quite far enough. Having said that they do present a case study of an enduring campaign that did achieved its aims. *Kynnefjall: Local people versus the nuclear industry*.

The authors use this example in Sweden, Jorgen Johansen's country of birth, to show how the campaign relates to promoting social defence. "All agreed from day one that the campaign would be nonviolent, those in favour of sabotage were resolutely opposed."⁵¹⁷ They key activists were fighting for their own society and its future. Cutting the longer story short, we learn that activists who rostered a permanent 24 hour vigil were successful. It took 19 years and is one of the worlds' longest running environmental vigils.⁵¹⁸ The authors assess the campaign for social defence and find, it was not connected to awareness of nonviolent action as a systematic alternative to military defence."⁵¹⁹ Though it did build awareness of how ordinary people can use direct nonviolent action to resist oppression. When they consider it in relation to "valuing, understanding and endorsement" vis-à-vis social defence, they make the same assessment. However, when "action" is assessed, they found "it laid the basis for applying the same skills and insights learned during the campaign to defend nonviolently in other circumstances."⁵²⁰

⁵¹³ Ibid.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid, p.13.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid, A Ocalan, *The Political Thought*, p.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid, Martin and Johansen, *Social Defence*, p. 144.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid, p.

⁵²⁰ Ibid, p. 146-147.

Their more general assessment of the of this and other movements and campaigns is that they do help lay the foundations of a future social defence system but lack a direct connection to it, as an alternative to the military system. This assessment seems to be right in many ways. However, looking at different sources and taking a different approach, I find that the movements I explore and follow through cyber space, in my garden and in my local rebellion – the auto ethnographical part of me – are making connections and have proposed alternatives that do aim to replace the entire system. Agroecology is a clear rejection of the war system, Rainbow Family are autonomously gathering to road test nonviolent forms of policing in forests and then they go home, intent on leaving no trace.

Extinction Rebellion is hoping they continue ever widening circles of regeneration into a critical mass (no magic number) of people needed to disrupt the status quo, enact civil disobedience and demand citizens assemblies be set up to decide what to do about the extinction crisis and compounding threats.⁵²¹ Rojava has international solidarity in most parts of the world, and they are fighting for a new system as they build it. Their armed defence forces are explicitly for self and social defence. The defence of life is biological reality this is evident in Robert Burrowes work, just as it is in the prison writings of Abdullah Ocalan that have been published as his political thought. The Rojava revolution is undeniably an experiment formed and reforming through initiatives developed within the grassroots. If it is not clear how social defence might come about, Rojava has as much to offer as XR or Navdanya.

Social Defence, 2019, does not engage with the philosophies of the Anthropocene or the proposed transitions with multispecies justice. This is not a criticism - they cannot cover everything. Their work is a call for collaboration that they feel few take up. When I was asked to review this book, I was surprised, as I had not been expecting a new publication on the topic. I thanked the authors for the publication and offered my thoughts. I asked about Rojava because it seemed to me that it was important in relation to the key ideas and goals of social defence and, the obstacles facing genuine revolutions.

I also recommended that Robert Burrowes, *Flame Tree Project* and *Peoples Charter to create a Nonviolent World*, as well as his more recent works, such as *Why Activists Fail*, be brought into the discussion.⁵²² I found that the word community was often interchanged for State, which contradicts the commitment to grassroots found in Martin's single authored and earlier publications. States are legal, juridical entities, imagined communities, not real, ecological communities. For me, the slippage in their use of the legal state is problematic.

⁵²¹ Ibid, R Hallam, *Common Sense*, Extinction Rebellion, Regenerative Culture Book, 2019, www.earth.rebellion.regenerativeculture

⁵²² Ibid, R Burrowes, *Why Activists Fail*, *Transcend.Org*, 2019, <https://robertjburrowes.wordpress.com/publications/>.

Social defence, the concept is unlikely to take the form of a centralised state that has monopoly capacities. This is precisely what social defence aims to be an alternative too.

Among their 19 key ideas the authors suggest that “social defence can be organised by government or through social movements, hierarchically or via networks.”⁵²³ They don’t prescribe but clearly networks are preferred. Moving into more tangle prospects their section on feminism shows the contributions made by feminists “continual emphasis on values including caring, empathy and human connection.”⁵²⁴ They warn us of the risk of placing too much attention on instrumental techniques, “this is especially a concern when social defence is seen as a direct replacement for military defence, given the military systems are based on a systemic rejection of caring and compassion for the enemy.” They wonder, “exactly what it means to have a caring and compassionate defence system, because “it remains to be learned.”⁵²⁵ They are clear that the “first point to note is that men are far more likely to use violence than women” and acknowledge that women are better at the generating intersectional solidarity.

Social Defence, 2019 could not be more open in relation to a future. The main aim of this book, as I read it, is to offer interested folk, enough information, history, connections, and variations on a possibility, that they might begin to think about it and say, “we think we can do that for ourselves.”⁵²⁶ The authors do update some of the fast moving disruptive changes, particularly the various issues with new technology’s, drones, robotic warfare and non-lethal weapons. Each is treated by offering a point of view from social defence and then from the perspective of military defence.

Coming back to some of the original discussions at the Bradford Conference the point is reaffirmed that just like military defence, social defence is not seen as purely defensive. Thoughtful offensive strategies and disruptive tactics are evident in the power of nonviolence as a form of active struggle regardless of our attempts to think it through binaries or legal distinctions. In theory social defence makes the distinctions obsolete and the pretence of using violence as a promise of better things to come an open lie. Their introductory scenario gives us a sense of the offensive nonviolent capacities and strategies at work in their visions. The authors also note the power of humour, to win the hearts of broader populations who are somehow yet to be convinced that the military system serves no useful human function once you get rid of the weapons and what Burrowes describes as

⁵²³ Ibid, p. 62.

⁵²⁴ Ibid, p.

⁵²⁵ Ibid, p. 108.

⁵²⁶ Ibid. p. 86.

“the spectrum of utterly invisible violence,” that function as systems of social control.⁵²⁷ Vandana Shiva’s classic example is way that food has been turned into a weapon of war.

Social Defence concludes, “that social movements are the most promising basis for promoting social defence and, that social defence provides a framework for building a resilient, self-governing community.”⁵²⁸ The concept they suggest, has “natural” affinity with the global justice movements and Occupy movements because, these movements have been inspired the by the Zapatista. The authors do not mention that the Zapatista have used both nonviolent and military defence of their autonomous zones. It is clear they are included because their collaboration was vital to the movement of movements and collective revolutionary theorising into the anarchist turn. But that movement of movements is now an emergent epoch of ever swirling circles of rebellion and regeneration. Not that this really matters, it is really more of a frustration for me, because I am the person interpreting the texts so that I can apply that interpretation to other experiments with the forces of truth.

In 2016, David Graeber asked why the world was ignoring the revolutionary Kurds. In *Social Defence*, Johansen and Martin seem to be asking why the world is ignoring social defence? Graeber understood, as I think Martin and Johansen do when revolutions that show how to build new social relations from grassroots initiatives and defend them with international solidarity, these relations are ignored purposefully because, “everyone is afraid of people doing things for themselves.”⁵²⁹

In my comments to the authors, I also suggested this publication might pay more attention to food because of the nexus with, oppression, aggression and war. Agroecology and permaculture were also mentioned in my comments because their transition plan is to do what it is they already do and get on with regenerating degraded systems and building healthy, ethical systems. They can teach the concept of social defence what a caring society would look like and how to make governments obsolete. The authors agree “there is no single picture of a world without war. One picture is of world government, which maintains peace through a monopoly over arms.”⁵³⁰ In *Social Defence*, the authors present a different picture. They understand the context in which militaries seem an entrenched part of the material and mental landscape, rendering the concept of social defence utopian. “But it was not so long ago that women’s emancipation seemed utopian”, they remind us.

⁵²⁷ Ibid, R Burrowes, Why Violence.

⁵²⁸ Ibid, Johansen and Martin, 2019, p126.

⁵²⁹ D Graeber, Syria Anarchism and Visiting Rojava, Real Media, YouTube, 31 May, 2017, [David Graeber - Syria, Anarchism and Visiting Rojava - YouTube](#) .

⁵³⁰ Ibid, p.

At times I read the concept with Roger Hallam's common sense in mind. Put this way in his book to a nascent Extinction Rebellion, Hallam described the politic as "a rugged anti utopian liberalism", seen as an act of universal service and duty in the tradition of "our civic and republican tradition."⁵³¹ Hallam's call to nonviolent rebellion argued that solutions "satisfactory to both liberal and revolutionary constituencies is necessary."⁵³² This seems to be what Johansen and Martin are looking for too. Hallam's book for XR and those interested in it was published in the same year as *Social Defence*. Deeply democratic and popular, Hallam's theory of rebellion seeks to channel an explosion of radical political energy into legitimate means. Citizens Assemblies, following World Social Forum models are proposed and have taken place. In Hallam's scenario, if Rebellion does not succeed, it still has the popular empowering impact of "shifting the Overton window, the range of ideas that are openly discussed in public debate."⁵³³

Following Martin and Johansen, social defence, the concept will also benefit from XR's rebellion and who knows, it is not over yet. Veering off from Hallam, *Social Defence*, 2019 leans into Graeber's, "you are either utopian or you are a schmuck."⁵³⁴ Careful to ground their utopia and not to be thought of in that way, Martin and Johansen have taken care that the concept remains open, and in that way, it fits well with the demand from XR to move beyond politics and create more participatory democratic systems. The concept is future oriented and it stands up for a better world for all. We can call this utopian but what does that really mean? Reading social defence utopia is another word for the prefigurative politics of nonviolence.

Martin and Johansen say, "we don't intend to produce a blueprint for moving from today's military systems to those of a future system of social defence."⁵³⁵ Significantly this is "because there is no experience in making this transition so, it is not sensible to predict, or prescribe how this might occur."⁵³⁶ Their collaborative work is valuable and necessary. The authors cannot say how to do this or that, they know that decisions about vital aspects of living and dying should be made collectively by consensus in voluntary inclusive ways within the grassroots at the local level. The utopia of social defence is from my interpretation of it, the government of no one because everything is for everyone, as the Zapatista put it, not that long ago.

⁵³¹ Ibid, p. 76.

⁵³² Ibid, R Hallam, Common Sense 2019, p. 63.

⁵³³ Ibid, p. 65.

⁵³⁴ D Graeber, Direct Action, p.

⁵³⁵ Ibid, p. 20

⁵³⁶ Ibid.

As a single author, Martin nudges Hallam's rugged liberalism into Graeber's small a anarchism. As he put it in *Social Defence, Social Change*, 1993; despite interest in the 1980s, particularly within the German Greens "social defence is still seen as an unorthodox and radical option, even by many in the peace movement and it is little known among the general public."⁵³⁷ It seems that little has changed and that the concept is even more remote as the civilisation faces collapse. It could also be that the mass grassroots revolutions underway everywhere today are the opportunity social defence has been waiting for. Back in 1991, at the Bradford Conference, Brian Martin and over 100 others gathered to share their visions of a concept whose time they thought had come.

Historicity

Johansen and Martin suggest possible research projects, one of which is a full history, "which is yet to be undertaken."⁵³⁸ Whose view of history or process of historicity is not suggested? I assume the authors mean modern history. If not the idea of a history depends upon when you think something began and if you think history is linear; moves forward or is circular or is directionless. In his thoughtful and informative article on XR, Scott Ludlam's discussion of direct action recounts the success of the Bentley Blockade when locals in the Northern Rivers, and surrounding areas organised themselves to defend country from coal seam gas mines.

*"In the final days in 2014, I joined colleagues to stand with local Aboriginal families, farmers and the wider community on a weekend when the state was planning to send in hundreds of police."*⁵³⁹

This story is now history for the books and for whatever is becoming of social defence. Ludlam knows direct action "can provide extraordinary opportunities for people to transform their social relations."⁵⁴⁰ When people resisted coal seam gas, at Bentley and elsewhere, they realised they have a lot in common with others whom they have historically and into the present, had wide ranging conflict with.⁵⁴¹ Ludlam's insights are valued, so I will quote them at length,

"collective organising - even if it means breaking the laws written to protect the powerful – has always been part of the repertoire of dissent. Aboriginal people have resisted violent dispossession, extinction and destruction of landscape for 23 decades by way of strikes, raids, sit ins and marches. There still isn't wide appreciation of just how deep the lineage

⁵³⁷ Ibid, Martin, *Social Defence, Social Change*, 1993, p.6.

⁵³⁸ Ibid, Johansen and Martin, *Social Defence*, p. ?

⁵³⁹ S Ludlam, *The Extinction Rebellion, The Monthly*, July, 2019, p. 26.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid.

*goes, even though this unbroken continuity of defiance predates the “modern’ environment movement by 200 years.”*⁵⁴²

Notably, XR had to address the need for decolonial solidarity in their 2020 vision statement and as they reformed their strategies through open documents and in the grassroots organising and meetings taking place in late 2019 and early 2020.⁵⁴³ In my view social defence could place more emphasis on this unbroken continuity. Indigenous recovery, Anthropology and Archaeology show that histories are being uncovered all the time. As Duane Cady put it in relation to the pacifist commitment to positive peace, “Such work involves recovery of lost or neglected history and consideration of a full range of options beyond traditional social constraints holding the forms of domination in place...”⁵⁴⁴ Current scholarship shows decolonising global ethics through collective concepts such as the Pluriverse opens possibilities for peace through justice that do not exist yet.

*“that push us away from the possibility of specifying what the attainment of global justice might mean, and towards the importance of the cultivation of particular kinds of virtue in the context of ethical practices of coexistence and collaboration”.*⁵⁴⁵

Whatever social defence is becoming it has a variety of rich cultural knowledge and ethical experience to draw upon. Political philosophers are also working to help clarify what feminists and multispecies justice mean by a relational ontology. For example, Kimberley Hutchings has suggested “moving discussions of democratising the debates or governing it into possibilities that would open it up to different voices and force an abandonment of dominant European paradigms.”⁵⁴⁶ For Hutchings this provides an alternative to polarised ethical debates on matters of political violence and humanitarian intervention. Significantly relational ways of being in the world, “focuses our attention on what it means to live with others without subsuming them into one world or another.”⁵⁴⁷ In this way decolonising global ethics as Hutchings says, “is not about finding out the right answers but about experiments in ‘being with’, not something that can be known in a satisfactory way; it is only something that can be done.”⁵⁴⁸ Agroecology and permaculture can help here, As Geoff

⁵⁴² Ibid, Ludlam, p. 25.

⁵⁴³ XR,2020, Vision, add details.

⁵⁴⁴ D L Cady, *From Warism to Pacifism: A Moral Continuum*, Temple University Press, 2010, p. 116.

⁵⁴⁵ K Hutchings, Decolonising Global Ethics, *Ethics and International Affairs*, Vol.33, No. 2, 2019, p. 115-125.Doi:10.1017/So892679410000169.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid, Hutchings, p. 104.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid, Hutchings, Global Ethics, p. 124.

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid.

Lawton put it, “*Permaculture is an ethical design system and with ethics, we don’t have toxic results and don’t accumulate surplus; this disempowers the authorities and governments.*”⁵⁴⁹

Permaculture in theory and practice points out that many of the function’s governments claim to undertake on our behalf are unnecessary and harmful. Martin and his collaborators are sensitive to this, and the point is made that the dots be joined, so to speak. In that way permaculture could learn from the concept of social defence and social defence would depend upon the experience and skills developed through agroecology and permaculture because they attend to vital social, political and ecological systems and are therefore best placed to defend them, disable or disguise them. They are sustaining bodies, minds and hearts with health food.

In the spirit of increasing diversity, cultivating relational ethics and including subjugated histories, my approach to the concept of social defence takes a deep view of history that works ‘to outstep time.’⁵⁵⁰ In *Staying with the Trouble*, Donna Haraway explores and explains the meaning of sympoiesis through her Camille stories.⁵⁵¹ Haraway expands the concept of autopoiesis “because no-thing makes itself.”⁵⁵² She calls for multiple joining(s) that speak for the dead and dying. That replenish heart and mind and stay with the “ragged joy of ordinary living and dying” and in this way bring in new things of earth through “generative sympoiesis.”⁵⁵³ For Haraway, we really are all in this together making each other up as we go along. Staying with Haraway, social defence can be read as sym defence.

Sympoiesis makes the lacuna that only some people and things fight wars transparent. Crucially, this is because other species are also annihilated, tortured and more on behalf of humans attempts to justify military activities and research.⁵⁵⁴ This is not an approach that Martin takes, though I believe it is one he is very open to. As a prefigurative mode of revolutionary nonviolence, social defence asks individuals to change, so that society will change. If solidarity within the grassroots is the essential nesting ground of the concept, then some people will need to change more than others. Thankfully, anarchists and their

⁵⁴⁹ G Lawton, interview, J Spirko, Geoff Lawton on Permaculture in Strange Times, The Survival Podcast, March 15, 2021, <https://www.permaculturenews.org/2021/03/15/geoff-lawton-on-permaculture-in-strange-times/>.

⁵⁵⁰ Haraway uses the term frequently to explain her emergent ideas, which are part science fiction. Timothy Morton’s concept of the Hyperobject, also outsteps time, as do multiple cosmologies outside of this civilisation. Buddhists have influenced people like Morton, Johanna Macey and Helena Norberg-Hodge who work with this concept within western Buddhism.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid, Haraway, *The Trouble*, 2016.

⁵⁵² Ibid.

⁵⁵³ Ibid, p 166-168.

⁵⁵⁴ C Salter, ed, *Animals and the Military*, add publisher, 2014, B Martin, *Social Defence Social Change*, 1993, p. If the reader is interested in novels, J M Ledgard, *Giraffe*, Vintage Books, London, 2017, is a powerful story of authoritarianism, Giraffes, communism and human interrelations.

allies have established and experimented with creative and supportive circles of care and inclusion, and they have extended mutual aid without restriction. Rainbow Family, Food Not Bombs, Common Ground Collective are among the many grassroots anarchist groups organising the systems that based on what we know about the concept of social defence, will be needed. The problem of obedience still stands in the way.

Power and Delusion

Martin has produced a significant body of work that relates to the personal aspects of violence and the mediated social relations of warfare. Self-deception, also known as delusion, beautiful soul syndrome and existential balm, is one of the key reasons people fail to engage in revolutionary nonviolence.⁵⁵⁵ When faced with multiple ethical demands, an apparent lack of alternatives and the very real threat and use of violence against unarmed dissenters, it is all too easy to trick oneself into thinking they have no political, social or ecological agency. When in reality we are all of us actors, syms in a network of objects, shifting inter agencies and experiences of ethical responsibility.⁵⁵⁶

For Martin, “Some types of self-deception are functional, such as having hope, when the prospects of success are poor...but other types of self-deception are damaging, such as trusting in leaders who continually betray their followers.”⁵⁵⁷ Acknowledging the complicated worlds of our inner personal lives and the troubles they represent and working to shift personal delusion is part of the unlearning that is needed to create alternatives to oppressive systems and to defend ourselves, individually from aggression and violence.

Individuals’ personal responses to the world they are in is central to prefigurative politics. In this tradition individuals intend, as much as is possible, to be nonviolence, to act as if they are already free of the impositions of governments and their infrastructures of social control. Nothing occurs in a vacuum or comes from nowhere; individuals make personal decisions as part of a collective that is constituted within shifting constellations of power. The idea of the hive mind and the shifts enabled by convergence media, user generated content platforms and contemporary philosophy and science make it impossible to claim that the production of knowledge and texts is not a collective process.

Whatever the issue, climate change, Corona Virus, Nuclear Proliferation, people decide their own truth, often by following the consensus of experts or “knowledgeable people within a particular field”, this truth as Martin shows then becomes what is right. The problem is that

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid, Kennedy, *Deeply Felt*, 2015 p. 107-115 p. 124-142.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid, D Harraway, *Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene*, 2014, Ibid, T Morton, *Dark Ecology*, date *Hyperobjects*, date, Ibid, B Latour, *Actor Network theory*,

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid, Martin and Johasen, 2019, p.133.

“what is right or true changes.”⁵⁵⁸ Social defence has never been conceptualised with a particular focus on personal violence which is overwhelmingly biased through violence towards women.⁵⁵⁹ In his 1990s work in particular, Martin has intrinsically linked social defence to feminism. Importantly he has made it very clear that “social defence is concerned with collective nonviolent struggle...social defence does not say what to do about sexual assault, beatings and harassment.”⁵⁶⁰ Martin links social defence to radical and anarchist feminisms which he says are models that “challenge the patriarchal structures of the state, capitalism and bureaucracy.”⁵⁶¹ Aware that theory and practice rarely fit like a glove, Martin acknowledges that “in theory, a strong system of social defence would mean that women were trained in the skills of nonviolent action, and therefore that these skills would also be used in struggles against male aggression.”⁵⁶²

In *Arguments and Actions*, he responds to the imagined comment, “Surely you wouldn’t just sit and do nothing while soldiers raped your mother or your wife,” with six points: “first I would do my best to use nonviolent methods to prevent and stop rape. Using violence might make matters worse, secondly, this is not the real issue, social defence is about collective defence of a society and whether nonviolence is a better way to do this.” His third response, “military systems are a major contributor to rape, not a solution, fourth, “...armies are male dominated and can only contribute to the problem, fifth,” women are often expected to be passive and not develop their resistance skills or encouraged to do,” sixth, a comment? “The question about rape is not strictly a question about social defence, but it must be answered, there is no single best answer and much depends on the audience and tone of the discussion. He suggested using different responses depending on the context.

He also points out that in theory, capitalism, representative democracy and state socialism are gender neutral but in practice they are patriarchal.⁵⁶³ By doing this he forms solidarity with feminism, particularly with anarcho, socialist, -eco-pacifist feminism. Debates around what Hutchings and Frazer call “the feminist politics of naming violence, which are “contested by opponents – those who justify, downplay and or naturalised gender based violence and violence against women - and by feminists”,⁵⁶⁴ are inherently linked to the concept of social defence.

⁵⁵⁸ E Said, *Orientalism*, date, publisher, p. B Martin, *Truth Tactics*, Irene Publications, Sweden, 2021, p.9.

⁵⁵⁹ M Eltahawy, *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls*, Hardy Grant, 2019.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid, Martin, *Social Defence*, 1993, p. 37.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid. p. 36.

⁵⁶² Ibid, 1993, *Social Defence*, p. 30.

⁵⁶³ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁴ Kimberly Hutchings and Elizabeth Frazer, The feminist politics of naming violence, *Feminist Theory*, Vol.21, No. 2, 2020, p. 199-216.

That the personal is political is not just a feminist slogan, it is the truth. Whose life is devoid of an array of power relations? No one I know. The one thing I really did learn in my politics degree is that politics is the study of power relations in society. It is more than the study of government and institutional power relations. Within indigenous cosmologies and into contemporary ecological philosophy and theory, agroecology and permaculture systems it is accepted that everything is relationally connected to everything else.⁵⁶⁵ The distribution of power and its concentrated use as method of social control, defence and security is the source of eons of discussions within philosophy, cosmology and mythology and centuries of modern ideologies. Today, Sandra Jeppensen and other contemporary anarchists use Foucault's rethinking of power as diffuse to explore ideas such as 'power with' rather than versions of 'power over'.⁵⁶⁶ Jeppensen argues that "anarchist-feminists have always-already been engaged with countering power, in part because they have rejected juridico-discursive limitations of power."⁵⁶⁷ Indeed, the conception of power beyond the state underpins anarchist-feminist rethinking of gender oppression.⁵⁶⁸

Underpinning work on nonviolent action is the consent theory of power.⁵⁶⁹ This theory of power as the name implies is based on acquiescence. Martin put it this way in *Arguments and Actions*, "*social defence is based on the principle that no regime – whether democracy or military dictatorship can survive without the passive acquiescence of a large fraction of the population. In other word, all societies are built on consent, cooperation and obedience. Social defence aims to disrupt this and replace it with noncooperation and disobedience.*"⁵⁷⁰

This could also be thought of via hegemony and counter hegemony. Martin acknowledges critiques of the theory and updates to it. In *Social Defence, Social Change*, Martin was aware:

*"there are a lot of problems with the idea that regimes depend on consent that can be withdrawn, it doesn't take into account the complex ways that power is exercised through state bureaucracies, markets in goods and labour, patriarchy and media".*⁵⁷¹ He knows that it is "no simple matter to withdraw consent because of the variety of systems of social

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid, Kennedy, Deeply Felt; D B Rose, Val Plumwood's philosophical Animism: Attentive Interactions in the sentient world, *Environmental Humanities*, Vol 3. 2013, p 93-109, makes the point using the idea of being inside webs of connection; Vandana Shiva and other ecofeminists such as Starhawk, use similar ideas to describe interconnectivity.

⁵⁶⁶ S Jeppensen, Towards a New Analytics of Power, Forthcoming in, *Anarchist Imagination: Anarchism Encounters the Humanities and Social Sciences*, editors, S Newman and C Levy, Routledge, 2019, p. 4.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 5.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁹ Gene Sharps work is based on this theory of power, it is also evident in the history of the theory of hegemony...

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid, B Martin, *Arguments and Actions*, p. 30.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid.

control.” However, he thought that “...despite its flaws the theory worked as a tool for community activists.”⁵⁷²

Social Movements

The concept, in Martin’s lineage, gained traction within peace and antiwar movements within and outside of official politics which was how nonviolent action was originally defined.⁵⁷³

Remaining consistent to that founding assumption, in *Social Defence, Social Change*, Martin thought, “*The key to social defence may be its link with those social movements with the potential for promoting revolutionary change in social structure. This category includes anarchist groups, the Sarvodaya movement and portions of feminist, peace and environmental movements, and the green movement generally*”.⁵⁷⁴

While he noted that none of those movements seemed to have the potential to bring about quick change, he cautioned that “appearances can be deceptive.”⁵⁷⁵ Contemporary movements such as #metoo and women’s general strikes, now in full swing in multiple countries, are based on the belief that that if women stop, the world stops.⁵⁷⁶ More than a cliché, women’s’ organisation of general strikes have played key roles in establishing rights to abortion and safety and rights defending vital social systems such as food and community care.⁵⁷⁷ Women’s free reproductive and caring labour has sustained and defined capitalist growth.⁵⁷⁸ Common sense, not cliché, shows that if women stop reproducing, caring and managing households; accepting gender based violence and unequal economic positions then, much of what keeps this the world in motion will also stop. It’s not hard to imagine what a day or a week without women might look like.

As Mona Eltahawy explains, “There is no war on women bulletin. Imagine, she asks, “hearing nothing but those stories on the news...it would be overwhelming and suffocating.”⁵⁷⁹ Yet, we have plenty of bulletins on the war on terror, on trade and on wars within nations. We are, all of us, complicit in the complex phenomena of this world which includes the military system. It is delusional to suggest that we are outside of the world looking in. Interconnectivity assures that we are not simply *in* or an addition to the world,

⁵⁷² Ibid.

⁵⁷³, K Kennedy, BA Hons, *Culture Jamming: A Revolutionary Nonviolent Technique*, Wollongong University, 2005, K Kennedy, Three new anarchists on questions of religion and violence, MA Res, University of Sydney, 2012.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid, B Martin, *Social Defence, Social Change*, 1993, p. 35.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁶ See, Women’s Global Strike, <https://womensglobalstrike.com> (accessed 8 December 8, 2019).

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁸ Covered in some detail in chapter two, expanded further in chapters ten and eleven.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid, Eltahawy, 2019, p. 137.

we are inherently of the world we inhabit.⁵⁸⁰ Feminisms, particularly eco and anarcho-feminisms are foundational bodies of knowledge in relation to social defence. Women have also played a key role of the development of pacifism throughout history⁵⁸¹ and they remain central to its theory and practice today. Eco-pacifism, according to the Oxford Reference Library of Pacifism, begins with religious inspiration but it also benefitted from its synthesis with eco feminisms.⁵⁸²

The ecofeminism at the heart of the Navdanya movement's proposed *Earth Democracy* is part of the history of eco-pacifism just as it is of eco-feminism. What became known as ecofeminism, "shaped and revitalised the women's peace movement" and led to innovative methods of nonviolent resistance and organising as well as new understandings of power.⁵⁸³ Today, all of this is intermingled and entangled. Politics and food wars in the new climate regimes, really are as Shiva put it, a battle for unity versus the 1%. And, their supporters who are still under the spell of binary left/right opposition, detached from the critical zones of living earth sciences and relations.⁵⁸⁴

Considered from an evolving interest in the roots of nonviolence. The potential of social defence as Brian Martin has explained it, "has two facets".⁵⁸⁵ It refers to the use of social defence in potentially revolutionary situations, that defend significant changes in social relations, and it refers to the "intrinsically revolutionary nature of the concept".⁵⁸⁶ He also argues that nonviolent struggles should be understood in a new context. In this new context, "*nonviolent action is sold as a means of challenging governments somewhere else...it is like saying nonviolent action is OK when used against those nasty rulers but not against us.*"⁵⁸⁷

Martin is describing the process of recuperation. Capitalist society recuperates cultural and material challenges to it by absorbing, confusing and then re-coding the substance of the

⁵⁸⁰ S L Brown, A Patterning Approach to Complexity and Understanding for students: A case study, *Northeast Journal of Complex Systems* (NEJCS), Vol1. No1, Special Inaugural Issue, September 2019, p. 6.

⁵⁸¹ C Ryan, Pacifism, Just War and Self Defence, *Philosophia*, Vol. 41, 2013, pp. 977-1005.

⁵⁸² A, M Pois, Critical Pacifism, *Oxford Reference*, 2010, add weblink doi and p.

⁵⁸³ Ibid, p.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid, B Martin, 1993, p. 33.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid, Martin, Whatever Happened to Social Defence, *Social Alternatives*, Vol. 33 No. 4, 2014 p. 58.

challenge to suit its own logic.⁵⁸⁸ Capital then profits by selling what has been recuperated back to publics. Following, Martin, Robert Burrowes, David Graeber and others, nonviolent action has been recuperated by governments, particularly those whose constitutions are based on social and liberal representative democracies, the upshot is that social defence has lost its radical edge and with it, the capacity to imagine and speculate on future visions that are potent enough to share the love – and anarchise ideas. This would constitute an act of reclaiming that would restore historical memory by placing anarchism and pacifism back where they belong. I take this as a process of unlearning the disinformation and subjugation both ideas have suffered for no good reason at all.

The effect of recuperation is a compounding lack of will to imagine a better world is possible. Even fiercely articulate and compassionate political author Arundhati Roy declared the end of imagination as it became more and more obvious that peacekeeping and democracy building were really covers for fascism and other forms of authoritarian and sectarian violence. The extent of the lopsided view of the world that organising collective killing systems and then calling them defence or security can be grasped by thinking hard about Martin's insistent claim that, "Little attention has been given to preparing for social defence."⁵⁸⁹ His inkling is that governments will do whatever they can to prevent this type of collective empowerment because it could be used against them too. Rather than being supported conditionally when it is used to intervene in someone else's backyard.

Anarchists and pacifists were accused then - as they are now of "being inconsequential", as Jean Marie-Muller put it at the Bradford Conference.⁵⁹⁰ Marie-Muller argued for a narrow reform based definition of social defence, in contrast to the broad, revolutionary one that Martin, Petra Kelly and others defended. These debates are over, at least for the movements explored in this thesis. Permaculture teacher and author of *Ipermie*, Bob Waldrop expressed this way, "the government will not save us until we become the government. If you doubt this, watch the news and read the daily paper for a week."⁵⁹¹

⁵⁸⁸ U, Gordon, *Anarchy Alive*, publisher, 2009, p.51. Recuperation has been theorised through left critiques, following and diverting from Marx into the new left and the present. The Situationist International, Guy Debord, Rael Veneigem and post modernists influenced by them, such as Jean Baudrillard have all shown how recuperation is used by capitalist societies, the terms co-option and re-integration see, J McQuinn, *Post-left Anarchy*, 2009, *Anarchist Library*, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/jason-mcquinn-post-left-anarchy-leaving-the-left-behind>. Anarcha feminists and ecofeminists have also explained the process, see chapters, 1, 6 and 8.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid, Johansen and Martin, SD, 2019, p. 83.

⁵⁹⁰ J Marie-Muller in Ibid, Anderson and Larmore, *Nonviolent Struggle and Social Defence*, 1991, p. 6.

⁵⁹¹ B Waldrop, *Ipermie, How to permaculture your urban lifestyle, a good-life design guide for Millennials, Boomers and Generation X*, Bob Waldrop, 2013, pdf creative commons, p 1- 466, this quote, p.196

The work of researchers, Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works*, as Martin notes had a huge impact,⁵⁹² and it also faces several criticisms, particularly those raised by Peter Gelderloos, *Failure of Nonviolence from the Arab Spring to Occupy*.⁵⁹³ Gelderloos responds to Chenoweth, but Chenoweth did not respond to Gelderloos, others such as Gabriel Khun and Elizabeth Frazer have taken that on. Gelderloos main argument is that nonviolence is forced on “more militant and combative groups and others who are not strictly nonviolent”.⁵⁹⁴ This debate is or was, a debate about diversity of tactics. Equally it is about who and what is civil and how violence and nonviolence are defined or claimed to work for some thing or other in society. Gabriel Khun responded to Gelderloos based on his experience in the German autonomous movement from the 1980’s and in continuum. His view is that both sides know where each other draw the lines. Furthermore “anarcho pacifists are considered amongst his most consistent and trustworthy comrades”.⁵⁹⁵

Kuhn sensibly suggests that there is no point in kicking a horse while it is down, which is what he believes Gelderloos is doing to nonviolence. As he says, nonviolent activists want diversity of tactics too, they just want nonviolent ones.⁵⁹⁶ Martin’s review of Chenoweth and Stephan’s book acknowledges some of the critiques in relation to statistics and notes that it is an academic work not an activist manual. However, he believes it should be used by anyone intending to write an activist manual. My own concern is not that nonviolence is being shown to be effective when a certain percentage of the population is involved. Using numbers is in my view unwise. Violence, like debt functions through mathematical patterns of numbers, as if people were not real at all. In the grassroots, we have been cautioned continuously to be aware and remain vigilant about what numbers can be made to do and provide alibis for.

Martin’s view, while unequivocally supportive of the fact that nonviolent action is more successful than violent action. His concern is that much like Sharp’s attempt to convince the military to take up civilian based defence, rational argument is likely to go nowhere.⁵⁹⁷ It is the construction of alternatives and the methods of resistance that are most important for Martin. The how - of social defence suggests - the what it is *becoming*.

⁵⁹² Ibid, Martin, *Whatever happened*, p.57, E Chenoweth & M J Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works, The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2011.

⁵⁹³ P Gelderloos, *The Failure of Nonviolence From the Arab Spring to Occupy*, Leftbank Books, 2015.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 11.

⁵⁹⁵ G Kuhn, *Violence Sells---Whose Buying?* Review published on Khun’s web site but widely found in reddit forums and other anarchist media,

<file:///Users/libraryuser/Desktop/Alpine%20Anarchist%20Productions.webarchive>

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid, np

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid, B Martin, *Revolutionary Agenda*, 2017, p. *Whatever happened*, 2014, p.

The satyagrahi Robert Burrowes cautions nonviolent activists and others working for systems change that resonate with Martin's. For Burrowes, *"Whatever victories have apparently been achieved in the long struggle to achieve political representation, human rights, dignity, economic justice, cultural and gender identity, ecological sustainability and other causes dear to the hearts of those have struggled, the elite, (local, national or global) has always retained control and merely surrendered the minimum necessary to keep the bulk of the human population submissive"*.⁵⁹⁸

Burrowes sense of frustration with projects based on state reform is understandable. He has dedicated his work to nonviolent revolution and is reasonably well cited in the nonviolence cannon. He has produced practical and theoretical tools for nonviolent revolutionary activists and the public at large. Much like Martin, who is also reasonably well cited within nonviolence but not in relation to social defence, Burrowes work, it seems, has been largely ignored beyond his 1996 publication, *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense, A Gandhian Approach*.⁵⁹⁹ Burrowes is a satyagrahi whose work to date is consistent with the key ideas of social defence because it counters disinformation, empowers others, prefigures alternative systems (*The Flame Tree project, The Peoples Charter to create a nonviolent world, Nonviolent Defence/Liberation Strategy*) yet his work is ignored by official institutions.⁶⁰⁰

He is a dissenting voice within the pandemic but only those who still read his work would know that. Still others have dropped off the email list this year. Burrowes asked people on the list if they wanted to continue receiving his emails and the links to his publications. I stayed on, happy to be kept up to date. The Flame Tree project would be on my list of books for social defence. The peoples charter for a nonviolent world would be part of my exploration of legal anarchism. For sure I am not the only one thinking like this. My feeling is that Burrowes work is rarely cited because it presents a detailed analysis of why there is so much violence and how to oppose it. It effectively presents a version of the concept of social defence, so in that way there is nothing surprising about its suppression.

Burrowes does not identify or even talk about anarchism or anarchists, but he is assisting them through his work. His Flame Tree Project to Save life on Earth, is not about lobbying government to fix things. "Nor is it ten easy ways to fix your light globes. It is designed to

⁵⁹⁸ R Burrowes, Killing democracy once and for all, *transcend.org*, 1 May 2021, <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2021/05/killing-democracy-once-and-for-all-the-global-elites-coup-detat-that-is-destroying-life-as-we-know-it/>

⁵⁹⁹ R Burrowes, *The Strategy of Nonviolent Social Defense*, Albany State University, 1996.

⁶⁰⁰ Burrowes most recent email informs his readers that "13 progressive journals that have published his work for the past 17 years will no longer publish him", available at, kkenne27@myune.edu.au, may 2, 2021. Burrowes word press provides links to all his publications, affiliations and more, <https://robertjburrowes.wordpress.com/publications/>.

help you think, plan and act for yourself.” It is a document of empowerment and self-defence in the face of impending ecological catastrophe “. ⁶⁰¹

Radical pacifist alternatives have always been on the periphery in academic contexts but often central within social movements and resistance movements. New social movement and other academic theory caught up with anarchist trends as represented by works such as Richard Day’s, *Gramsci is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the New Social Movements*, and David Graeber’s *Direct Action*. ⁶⁰² Predictably, there is not yet an anarchist sociology as Danna Williams research shows. ⁶⁰³ Williams reviews the works of James C Scott, David Graeber and Colin Ward. She defends their place in sociology and academic inquiry more broadly and notes that the history and values of anarchism are what is important. Many people hold these, without “self-avowing” as anarchist, according to Williams. ⁶⁰⁴

My previous research in anarchist philosophy and politics confirmed her point. Furthermore, I argue that Martin’s work on social defence makes Williams point hard to deny. He does not identify as an anarchist or as any other political tradition, yet his visions, recommended processes, values and the methods underlying his thinking about social defence are clearly part of the history of anarchism in Anglophone countries and in global resistance culture. As Kashefi put it, “anarchism is multicultural because it is older than anarchism. For example, China produced libertarian ideas 2500 years ago while Southeast Asia and Africa have their own traditional anarchism”. ⁶⁰⁵

His 2014 essay *Whatever Happened to Social Defence* works in the same way that David Graeber’s *Hello We Exit* did; it is a provocation and an invitation. Martin formed his vision of social defence within the peace and anti-war movements of the 1980s and 90s. His research is participatory and demonstrably caring and sharing. He is not just writing the theory, he is active within local movements and his committed work to the right of people to dissent, to question and to resist all forms of aggression and repression are the hallmark of his broader body of work. Social defence is one small but often missed part of what Brian has produced.

⁶⁰¹ R Burrowes, *Flame Tree Project*, revised, 2008, 2009 and 2011, I received it by email in 2012, p. 1. <https://robertjburrowes.wordpress.com/publications/>.

⁶⁰² R J F Day, *Gramsci is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the New Social Movements*, Pluto Press, London, 2005, S Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of Commitment Politics of Resistance*, Verso, London, 2017, D Graeber, *Direct Action, An Ethnography*, A K Press, California, 2019, D Graeber, *The Democracy Project, A history, a Crisis, A Movement*, Penguin Digital, 2013.

⁶⁰³ D Williams, D M Williams, Review: A New, Complicated, and Disconforming Mission for the Discipline: The Radical Challenge to Study, Envision, and Practice Social Alternatives, *Contemporary Sociology*, Vol. 4. No. 3. 2014. p. 479-482.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid, D Williams, p. 48.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid, S Kashefi, *Legal Anarchism*, p. 20.

Having collaborated and studied with him, I know he enjoys his work and makes every effort to help people think for themselves, explore alternatives however unpopular - and to work joyously with others.

In many ways Brian and I are worlds apart. Yet in other more significant ways we share the shady grassroots of revolutionary nonviolence by living in a world that does not exist yet. Letting the sunlight in – acting like the truth is real – is a regenerative act in and of itself. If seeking common ground across divides is how we might live and die well together in the Anthropocene, the fortresses and military geographies keeping anarchism and pacifism apart need to be acknowledged and given due consideration in the mix of transitions into diversity as the norm. For Llewellyn, the commitment to a cooperative social order based on voluntary agreement is common to both anarchism and pacifism, yet barely explored in nonviolent literature.⁶⁰⁶

Conclusion

Brian has attempted to track his citations and interest in his work. On his website, he lists hits by web searches and numbers of academic citation as per social science indexes, for 2006 and 2007. His 1993 work *Social Defence, Social Change* is on the list of both, coming in at number 10 out of the top 14 publications. *Social Defence, Arguments and Actions*, written for and amended based on the Bradford Conference, 1991 receives academic citations but not web hits. Two things become apparent: The first is that Martin's publications in other areas are cited more often. In 2006-7, 34 citations were recorded for the top paper and 5 were recorded for *Social Defence, Social Change*. His science rather than social science publications attracts hundreds of citations.⁶⁰⁷ The second is that I am not the only one reading and citing his work. Granted, there is no tracking beyond 2007 yet it is reasonable to suggest that Martin would not have written *Whatever Happened* if his social defence work had been more widely read, critiqued and discussed. I have been unable to find critiques of his work on the topic and few people in my activist affinity groups have heard of it. Perhaps this is because:

*“a large proportion of the population believes in the need for systems of organised violence: they believe they need to be defended by professionals in the use of violence against external dangers- namely against other such professionals”.*⁶⁰⁸

In an interesting revisit of the reform/revolution debate in left political movements, Juan Ferre points out, “Marx and Engels as well as Lenin and Trotsky understood that the power

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid, J Llewellyn, *PhD*, 2016, p. 7.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid, B Martin, publications, www.bmartin.uow.edu.au/pubs

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid, B Martin, *Whatever happened*, p.59.

of the state comes down to ‘special bodies of armed men’.⁶⁰⁹ Hence, the traditional left has justified armed defence and guerrilla warfare as part of its strategy to usurp the capitalist state and replace it with socialism and – eventually, with communism. Anarchists such as Kropotkin, who are enjoying a resurgence in permaculture, following his agroecological ways, eventually fought in the wars of the 1900s in Europe. In his book, *Kropotkin: The Politics of Community*, Brian Morris shows how Kropotkin fell out with his comrades over his eventual support for war. “Although Kropotkin was never a pacifist, he was vehemently opposed to war both ideologically and emotionally.”⁶¹⁰ Morris charts Kropotkin’s life. Unfortunately, as Morris says, he forgot that he was an anarchist when he supported the French against the Germans and eventually fought in wars. He forgot he was an internationalist, that he had just before 1913 about the coming capitalist war.⁶¹¹ Patriotic nationalism seems to be the reason that Kropotkin forgot he was an anarchist and as such was opposed to war. There are lessons here for social defence around what the priorities might be. Anarchism is incompatible with national borders, it is seeking expansion and radical inclusion and has historically acted as the cartographies of violence, the lines upon a map were not even there. Furthermore, anarchist researchers paying attention to prefigurative politics such as Uri Gordon suggest that,

*“For anarchists and their allies, it will become increasingly important to be involved in building independent, sustainable alternatives and community self-sufficiency...constructive direct action along these lines is especially relevant in the advanced capitalist countries where most anarchists are located and where community ties and basic skills have been thoroughly eroded”.*⁶¹²

Reading Brian Martin, you can be sure he agrees with that. His vision of social defence is unruly, and this is what gives it the anarchist touch. Anarchism, in the US and elsewhere in the world, where it is even more well established, offers an unruly equality,⁶¹³ fit for the purpose of regenerating interest in the concept that was abruptly put to sleep. Brian Martin was born and raised in the US. He is clearly part of an ongoing tradition of revolutionary nonviolence – aka- anarcho-pacifism. Andrew Connell’s research explores the developments and discovers that much of the practice was theorised in US jails in the 1940s, then ramped up in the 1960s and is resurgent now.⁶¹⁴ If my interpretation is even close to correct it is easy to see why social defence has failed to attract the attention that Martin believe it deserves. The concept is based in historically subjugated, obscured and recuperated ideas that Martin and others have tried explaining and in this way hope to encourage others to explore. By doing so Brian Martin joins anarchists and their allies, whose focus is not so

⁶⁰⁹ J C Ferre, *Reform of Revolution*, 2019 Edition, *Left Voice*, July, 28, 2019, <https://leftvoice/author/cj->.

⁶¹⁰ B Morris, *Kropotkin: The Politics of Community*, PM Press, 2004, this edition, 2018, p. 263.

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⁶¹² Ibid, U Gordon, *Dark Tidings*, p. 257.

⁶¹³ Ibid, A Connell, *Unruly Equality*, 2019.

⁶¹⁴ Ibid, p.

much on success and failure. But, as Kinna notes, the focus is on “capacity and endurance.”⁶¹⁵ Patience in the face of revolutionary defeat was recommended by Emma Goldman, today Abdulla Ocalan “has raised anarchism to new heights.”⁶¹⁶ Martin joins others who are trying to find opportunities to introduce non anarchists to anarchist practices and alternatives. In this way Martin’s social defence seeks to anarchize nonviolence and return it to its grassroots and restore its revolutionary potential to render the military system obsolete.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid, R Kinna, Govt of No One, p.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid.

Chapter 6: Revolutionary Nonviolence

Introduction

In this chapter I explore approaches to revolutionary nonviolence and anarcho-pacifism. For me, these are the same thing, clearly not everyone shares that view, so it is given that multiple questions remain and will continue to arise. The first section looks at other scholarly research approaches to revolutionary nonviolence and it brings the Rojava revolution into the discussion. The next section considers the anarchist perspective. Following this I apply the violence of separation argument of ecofeminism and politics of the Anthropocene to Rojava as a way of introducing the context for chapter 11. The next section considers contemporary discussions of just-war and pacifism, the key issues are, self-defence and social defence. The final section moves into literature on civil disobedience and what has been called uncivil disobedience, or the anti-legal turn. Subtitles guide the reader through the chapter.

*“Earth First! Means a world without Borders. The border is not just a line between two places. It’s a scar on the earth, and in our lives, where empire and ecocide meet.”*⁶¹⁷

In the contexts of the Anthropocene, it is no longer possible for anyone to say, not in my backyard, but I don’t mind if you do it over there in some else’s. Relationally, the focus is on the phenomenon of climate change, food security, food sovereignty and dealing with mass loss of life and biodiversity. If social defence is a revolutionary form of nonviolence and if we are also in contexts where binary oppositions, violence and nonviolence, peace and war, have lost all meaning and each does the others bidding, then, social defence is self-defence and community defence against the aggressions and repressions of the ruling system. One does not have to justify or not Rojava’s use of political violence to defend its autonomous non state, democratic alternative. As I struggle to understand what revolutionary nonviolence and social defence mean when considered as a response to the Anthropocene, and in light of ecological thinking the anarcho pacifist approach makes most sense to me.

Leave the violence nonviolence separation out and give everyone in the world a gun, or take all the guns away, then we might begin to speak of political, social and ecological justice, of crime and punishment, peace and war. Given that calls for military change and interest in social defence are not on the agenda in any kind of organised or systemic way, it is clear humans have not made this a priority yet. But let’s imagine the guns are gone, or that everyone has a gun. Ecological thinking insists we consider issues from the perspective of interconnectivity and interdependence, this immediately levels the playing field, leaves the

⁶¹⁷ Earth First Newswire, Friday April 29, 2011.

unfathomable violence in place and opens the door to the alternatives being created that put the earth first and make everyone responsible for the defence of their society.

From the perspective of social defence revolutionary nonviolence requires the same kind of focus humans have reluctantly put on climate change also be focussed on military change. The first demand could follow the continuity of revolutionary nonviolence in the same way that XR have. Tell the truth. Gandhi called the revolutionary force of truth Satyagraha. Telling the truth about the military system means calling it a killing system, acknowledging it is built on a system of command and control and facing the existential threats the system is responsible for. Then we need to act like that truth is real. Yet, even radical activists find it hard to image global disarmament.⁶¹⁸ War is what makes modern capitalism work, food wars provide the evidence for that, as discussed in chapters 6 and 7. War is socially institutionalised and profoundly misunderstood. As Simon Hill put it just two weeks ago, “armed forces are not there to protect us, but to protect the powerful. Let’s have the courage to say so.”⁶¹⁹

Across revolutionary nonviolence it is widely acknowledged and true that pacifism is a subjugated knowledge. Violence is understood socially and, it is agreed that violence begets violence and hence creates a cycle of violence when states wage war, are centralised, secretive, expansionist and interventionist. Understandably, the basic position is that violence cannot and will not bring peace or a politics based on cultural and ecological diversity. From an anarcho pacifist perspective, it is also important to admit and respect “that not all nonviolent movements have entirely desired outcomes, that pragmatic nonviolence is not by itself capable of creating societies free of violence because it does not address all forms of violence.”⁶²⁰

This perspective is important because this tradition of theory and practice rejects the state, capitalism and patriarchy.⁶²¹ As Joseph Llewellyn suggests “it is only this form of pacifism that fully rejects all forms of violence and therefore offers the potential to create emancipatory peace.”⁶²² Anarchism and pacifism come together on the common ground of rejecting domination and authority. Both want to flatten power and create inclusive regenerative system. They do not come together on ideological grounds that claim absolute distinctions between violence and nonviolence.

⁶¹⁸ S Hill, What if Armed Forces were abolished, *New Internationalist*, 7, October ,2021, <https://newint.org/features/2021/08/09/what-if-armed-forces-abolished>.

⁶¹⁹ Ibid.

⁶²⁰ J Llewellyn, Building Emancipatory Peace, *Critical Studies on Security*, Vol, 6. No. 2, 2018, p. 260.

⁶²¹ Ibid, Llewellyn, p. 264.

⁶²² Ibid.

This approach also helps us to unlearn the strictures of state conditioning. These are, sexism, nationalism, racism, colonialism, fear and obedience, ableism and ageism. Perhaps there are more. Crucially this perspective has an analysis of power that has been applied to the social relations of exploitation of other people, animals, and the planet's vital resources. Consumer culture, the logic of infinite growth and human supremacy have empowered an accumulative, extractive and wasteful political economy. Capital is not a thing it is an imposed system of social organisation and control. As Julian Cribb accurately put it, "we are, all of us, now engaged in this self-harming act of pulling down our own house."⁶²³ Only states and authoritarian leaders claim exemption for the collective violence of war, over consumption, toxicity and organising violence toward other living species. The problem is, in the world's most powerful democracies they do it on our behalf.

Arundhati Roy gave revolutionary nonviolence a jolt when she called nonviolent opposition to the Maoist insurgency of the Naxalite tribal people of North East India, 'Andy Pandya Gandhi' after her *Journey with the Comrades* into the insurgency.⁶²⁴ Roy's main complaint is the hypocrisy that is evident when the fundamentalist Hindu government openly burns villages and people, appropriates and extracts resources from Naxalite tribal land and then says, the insurgents are only interested in violence and bloodshed.

When Roy asked an independent researcher what the most serious of breeches were over his thirty years of observing the struggle, he replied there were dozens but offered the example of Kotrapal. "It's a famous village, it has been burnt 22 times for refusing to surrender," he told her. Roy wanted to find out for herself how people were organising their revolution and what the alternatives were, so she walked with the insurgents who are on the move constantly and listened deeply to their stories. This had a profound impact. In her reflection on that journey, she speculates, "should I write a play, I wonder – Gandhi Get Your Gun? Or Will I be Lynched."⁶²⁵

I totally get it, because I am about to give Vandana Shiva a Gun and I feel like I might be lynched. I am sure many other people got it when they read Roy's article. This purpose of this conversation with Arundhati Roy is to flush out the troubles of revolutionary nonviolence and hence better understand social defence.

India like many nations has waged protracted internal colonial wars since it gained independence. The Israeli model is openly used in some of the world's last remaining tribal

⁶²³ Ibid.

⁶²⁴ A Roy, *Walking with the Comrades: Gandhi with a Gun?* Outlook India, March 29, 2010, p 1-22.

⁶²⁵ Ibid.

areas on the sub-continent.⁶²⁶ The Kashmir valley is the sight of a massive military mission to make India Hindu, following the vision of the ruling BJP, hence the people there are on the genocide watch list. In these contexts, judging resistors more harshly than the State that invaded them is ludicrous in my view. Yet that is what the liberal peace and the nation state system works so hard to make sure most people do. Roy defends the insurgency, not the violence they use, because of what the violence is instantiating. Because of the ways the Naxalite are more Gandhian than Gandhi, ecologically and organisationally.

Nonviolence researcher Chris Brown also explored the Naxalite movement in India and revolutionary movements in the Americas; the Zapatista and the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado. He found, “there is a lack in the conceptual and strategic development” of revolutionary nonviolence and a lack of attention paid to the “pragmatically oriented civil resistance studies.”⁶²⁷ He also advanced “the idea of nonviolent revolution as a synthesis of anarchist prefiguration and obstructive nonviolent action.”⁶²⁸ With respect to Rojava, Brown found that the anarchist approach and the nonviolent approach “do not recognise each other or engage in critical constructive conversation.”⁶²⁹

This is certainly true in many respects. However, he does not focus on when they do come together and the ways they have in practice formed critical and constructive dialogue with each other through their history of ideas and how this might help us understand anarcho pacifism or revolutionary nonviolence today. Brown is aware of solidarity with Rojava because it is not seeking a state and has self-organised and declared its autonomy and enacted participatory democracy. However, he finds,

“it remains a revolutionary process guarded and sustained through militaristic means, with no suggestion of how such militaristic activity, regardless of its perceived necessity, is perhaps deleterious to the very notion of a social revolution.”

His purpose is not to downplay the “significance of the ideas or suggest they have nothing to offer”, rather he asserts that “both these elements need to be put together,” and in that way “a certain re-structuring or modification of each approach might be necessary and productive in the pursuit of a nonviolent future.”⁶³⁰ In this way, Brown is contributing to anarcho pacifism by locating nonviolent revolution as the convergence or hybridisation of nonviolent action and anarchist prefiguration. I believe he has slightly misread Rojava in

⁶²⁶ Survival International, Tribal People, Asia <https://www.survivalinternational.org/>

⁶²⁷ C Brown, Towards the Impossible Dream, PhD thesis, USYD, available, add in, 2016, makes this argument.

⁶²⁸ Ibid, p.

⁶²⁹ Ibid, add p.

⁶³⁰ Ibid, C Brown, p.15, 17.

suggesting that the Rojava revolution and more broadly their project of Democratic Confederalism does not address and/or critique its use own use of violence.

However, this critique is evident in Ocalan's prison writings and in the many primary source accounts of the whole of society process that if successful clearly offers a solely diplomatic solution to the Kurdish question and to global questions over people's right to exist. The heart of the controversy, vis-a-vis absolutist nonviolence is the nation states' monopoly of the legal system because this is where the rules that regulate human existence are made. Regardless of constitutional separations in theory, in practice the political and so called social contracts of polities with governments has through the laws of the land, perversely usurped our right to decide and defend our own existence. To decide for ourselves who, when, where and what poses existential threats to our own and others' lives. In simple terms this is our individual right to self-defence and democratic social defence. Rojava have declared their sovereignty in relation to these rights and they are defending this.

Various philosophical approaches to self-defence explore it through concepts such as Utilitarianism or through Kantian or Virtue ethics, as well as through the world's major political theories, liberalism, communism, everything in between, spilling out of, and over what has been made of these theories. Given the complications and complexity of ethical demands and long running contests over what words mean and how that meaning is made. No absolute rule of morality is possible, nor can our ethical actions be separated from human beings lived social relations and daily routines, in or out of revolution. As David Chan so aptly put it, "what one is permitted to do to defend one's life is a matter of controversy both in law and in moral philosophy".⁶³¹

Pacifist philosopher Ryan Cheney suggests that self-defence, "became a modern obsession in the late 19th century with Social Darwinism in which war came to be understood as a matter of survival."⁶³² Hence the ruling belief that the most powerful are the most likely to survive. The myth of scarcity, discussed in detail in chapters 7 and 8 is the fiction of the ruling civilisation. Anthropocentrism has been rejected by Indigenous peoples and in ecological philosophy. Modern states command of, and loss of control of, organised collective violence is called law enforcement. Though a nation states laws are enforced to prevent other laws being broken and, in war they are used to prevent humanitarian catastrophe, or come to the defence of innocents, "the state's presumed right of collective self-defence is the major justification for the use of violence in both cases."⁶³³

⁶³¹ D K Chan, Virtue Ethics and Nonviolence, in Ibid, A Fiala, *Routledge Handbook of Pacifism and Nonviolence*, p. 173

⁶³² R Cheney, Pacifism and Just-War in Ibid, A Fiala, *Routledge Guide*, 2018, p. 985.

⁶³³ R L Holmes, Pacifism and contemporary Morality, in Ibid, A Fiala, p. 108.

Anarcho pacifism brings the individual back into collective rights as a full participant which makes it much more suited to revolutionary nonviolence than liberal capitalism. Concerned philosopher, Robert Holmes can help us out here. For him, philosophical pacifists ask for a reconceptualization not just of war but of the broader social order. When collective actions are undertaken by pacifists, “it is not national interest that is foremost, but the wellbeing of human beings”.⁶³⁴ Thus, it is necessary to take the emphasis off the rights of the state, as guardian of the collective, and return rights to individual human beings, animals, plants and the living earth system.

An important, however nascent, perspective, for me, is underway in legal anarchism. Not only does anarchism have a tradition of ambiguity that is needed as we transition out of absolutes. “According to anarchism without adjectives, anarchism is plural in its means (anarcho-individualism, anarcho collectivism, anarcho communism etc) but singular in its end, that is the establishment of a voluntary society.”⁶³⁵

Learning from the experiments of Rojava brings us into conversation with the work of Elizabeth Frazer and Kimberley Hutchings. I agree with them that political violence is never justifiable but that it is also necessary because diversity of tactics is needed to defend oneself and one’s children and society from threats to their right to exist. Frazer and Hutchings, provide timely and thoughtful analysis of the views of classical anarchists to locate a general ambivalence to debates around collective violence, even in the work of Tolstoy, the well-known anarcho pacifist, Jesus Radical or Christian anarchist.⁶³⁶ “Rejecting war and orienting to nonviolence”, as Hutchings and Frazer note is what some contemporary feminists have done when faced with disagreements around the right to self-defence, or defence of their children, because “ nonviolence cannot guarantee the outcomes of action any more than can violence.”⁶³⁷

The truth is that feminism is fighting back, and it is building peace through everyday practices of care.⁶³⁸ These processes and visions are at risk of rapid recuperation in the way that agroecology is. Evident because only selective aspects of Rojava’s revolution are amplified in official channels and through corporate media, others are downplayed, ignored, criminalised and worse. Elizabeth Frazer’s response to supporter of the pacifism as

⁶³⁴⁶³⁴ Ibid, p. 114.

⁶³⁵ S Kashefi, *Legal Anarchism: Does Existence Need to be Regulated by the State*, PhD, *Osgoode Digital Commons*, Thesis and Dissertations 2016, p. 12.

⁶³⁶ E Frazer & K Hutchings, *Anarchist Ambivalence: Politics and violence in the thought of Bakunin, Tolstoy and Kropotkin*, *European Journal of Political Theory*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 2019, p 553.

⁶³⁷ Ibid, Frazer and Hutchings, *Can Political Violence Ever be Justified?* 2019 p.118

⁶³⁸ Ibid, *Care as Everyday Peacebuilding*,

pathology view, Peter Gelderloos diversity of tactics debate helps me out here too. Frazer agrees with Gelderloos analysis of violence but disagrees with his analysis of political power. For her, “Politics requires tolerance of ambiguity.”⁶³⁹ What counts as violence for Frazer is “action that violates and injures,” in that way she clears Gelderloos general objection to the way violence has and is being defined, or not, as is more often the case and the source of Gelderloos frustration. In situations where what counts as violence is contested, it is clear there are multiple difficulties and a lack of social consensus.

For Frazer and I agree, as does Gelderloos, “there is pervasive disagreement, and vagueness, about such difficult cases.”⁶⁴⁰ Randall Amster’s work is also notable in admitting that concepts such as peace, justice, violence and nonviolence are highly complex and only partly understood.⁶⁴¹ Relationally, my understanding of social defence requires ambivalence. Without ambivalence, you have ideology and no room for multiplicity, radical openness and unconditional care for all beings. When debates are polarised, the wheel keeps spinning, the marketers keep working overtime and the bankers and corporate lawyers ensure the military system goes on killing and calling it defence.

It’s clear, violence and nonviolence do each other’s bidding. The violence of states is resisted using nonviolent methods, when these are successful, states enact new laws to clamp down on the dissent, sanction are formulated and applied, these are challenged and on it goes. Earth bound politics are adapting to the possible closure of a future and have responded with myriad transitions on agroecological lines, and within anarchist-grassroots and pacifist politics. The point is that no one can continue a politics based on exclusion when we cannot agree on why or how distinctions and exclusions ought to work in practice, especially in relation to the UNSC mandate of preventing war and dealing with what war has instantiated. Borders are useless because everything overflows them.

Trying to attribute justice and peace by enforcing a particular view of the right kind of sacrifice is what liberal peacekeeping does. Any other kind of sacrifice is problematic, easy to right off as crazy individual action, nothing to do with the collective. The complexities overwhelm us, at the same time the trauma of witness to and knowledge of human sacrifice continues. This is evident when veterans come home from wars, in anti-conscription movements, in acts of self-immolators and hunger strikers. Evident when young British revolutionary Anna Campbell became the first British woman to die fighting with and for

⁶³⁹ E J Frazer, The Diversity of Tactics: Anarchism and Political Power, *European Journal of Political Theory*, Vol. 18, No. 4, 2019, p. 553.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 556.

⁶⁴¹ R Amster, in *Undoing Human Supremacy: Anarchist political ecology in the face of the Anthropocene*, Springer International, forthcoming 2021, available to read on *Google Scholar*, <https://books.google.com.au/books?hl=en&lr=&id=OupDEAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA165&dq=Randall+Amstere>, p 166-180

Rojava.⁶⁴² The point is that violence and its social organisation as war, is always projected as being somewhere else and some else's problem.

If nonviolent revolution is a relevant response in the context of the Anthropocene, it needs to look at the constructive programs as much and arguable much more, than it continues to amplify contentions over what the violence and nonviolence are and what it is they do. That was Gandhi's message, applied today this suggests that all revolutionary movements, of the Anthropocene can be though through revolutionary nonviolence, if their revolutionary violence is limited self-defence and community defence, and if it is accompanied by participatory constructive programs that benefit everyone and can be sustained, ecologically, socially, and politically.

Rojava asks us to befriend the uncertainty and ambiguity of their situation and to include them in our common duty to care for people care for the planet and share the surplus products of our alienated labour. For Frazer, Gelderloos separation of friend from foe, within common revolts amounts to a serious kind of violence itself, because it "ejects individuals who are not full comrades from the realm of care and concern."⁶⁴³ As Frazer also notes, Gelderloos does believe peaceful and more competitive tactics can work together and his work offers some interesting reflections on his own involvement in grassroots rebellion.

Nonviolence is clearly a more ethical form of politics, and it should be experimented with, even when it fails. From the anarcho-pacifist perspective it should be made lore and law and, in many ways Rojava offers important lessons in how Legal Anarchism, following Sirius Kashefi's exploration of it might assist humans to move into alternative practices of conflict resolution and deal with issues of crime and safety.⁶⁴⁴ Nonviolent politics could be the basis of UNSC, its systems could devolve into flat hierarchies, its peacekeepers would then be the ordinary people everywhere. This as I understand it the central premise of the concept of social defence, revolutionary nonviolence following Martin sets the course for social defence.

The current trends, as analysis shows, has been towards greater use of armed peacekeeping rather than less, and a deeper story of scandal, corruption and unilateral state expansion of

⁶⁴² C Ramaswamy, Anna, the when to fight Isis: Review, A daughters bravery, a families guild, *The Guardian*, 4 July, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2019/jul/03/anna-the-woman-who-went-to-fight-isis-review-a-daughters-bravery-a-familys-guilt>

⁶⁴³ Ibid, E Frazer, p. 564.

⁶⁴⁴ S Kashefi, copy over ref from master bib.

military and economic power.⁶⁴⁵ Despite a rise in the use of nonviolent action methods, the international system, deciding and keeping the war – as – peace, has moved to more, not less use of violence. Following this, the politics of nonviolence cannot simply be understood through the reasoning of means and ends and then adding a full stop. Life goes on with all its interconnectivities and inter relations at quantum scale disrupting any bifurcations or absolute distinctions. Befriending ambiguity is not an argument for violence, it is at the level of revolutionary politics, common sense.

Pacifist researcher Richard Jackson has also been rethinking pacifism and has worked hard to stand up for revolutionary nonviolence. As is common in the literature, Jackson notes that there is no reason to limit responses to violent repression to defensive violence. A history of creative nonviolent revolt, deploying all of Gene Sharps methods and more, make this clear. But the clarity can quickly become murky. For example, Jackson also follows empirical work from Maria Stephan who, famously proved nonviolence was more effective with Erica Chenoweth and led to the confusing and confronting 3.5% thesis. Jackson, says “There is even evidence for successful community-based nonviolent resistance to ISIS in Syria and Iraq.”⁶⁴⁶ No doubt this is true but how long did it last and where are these people now?

The Syrian resistance movements did not bring the dictator down, the organisations with money, such as the Muslim brotherhood, had their own agendas.⁶⁴⁷ No doubt the gruesome murder of key nonviolent organisers is one reason why people do not join political parties or identify with this or that tactic, strategy, or coalition. Significantly, many activists left Syria because they knew that if they did not that they would die in jail there. Activists accounts of the violent repression of all dissent, including nonviolent dissent in Syria does not make easy reading but it does have to be read, if people are going to make claims to the effectiveness of nonviolence based on such cases. “The regimes response to non-violent struggle was unfailingly brutal.”⁶⁴⁸

This is not a call to leave unsuccessful civil resistance out of pacifist rethinking nor is there an argument with the position that nonviolence is far more inclusive than military violence. All peaceful resisters are, as Kassab and Al-Shami, say in relation to Syrian’s grassroots civil resisters, “the people who’ve truly made history, enough to compete with and for a moment drown the savage history made by states.”⁶⁴⁹ This brutal history as Brian Martin

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid, sources and add,

⁶⁴⁶ R Jackson, Pacifism and Revolution, *Rethinking Pacifism for Revolution, Security and Politics, Conference*, University of Otago, New Zealand, 22-24th November 2017.

⁶⁴⁷ R Yassin-Kassab and Leila Al-Shami, *Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War*, Pluto Press, 2016, p.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 76.

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid.

knows only too well is also the least likely to bend to the will of nonviolence because “governments use police and military forces to maintain their existence”.⁶⁵⁰ And we the people, with the power, are indebted to them for ours.

Jackson has made substantial contributions to the task of de-subjugating nonviolence/pacifism which for him are the same, just as they are for me at their root sources. Using the method of discourse analysis, Jackson shows how International Relations, political theory and the broader warist world ignore pacifism.⁶⁵¹ He found that less than 1% of conference papers within I R and political theory over a five year period, mentioned, pacifism, nonviolence, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Satyagraha, Gene Sharp or Tolstoy.⁶⁵² As Jackson says, identifying the subjugation of nonviolence also shows “that we do not fully know its full potential, its conditions of possibility or its limitations”.⁶⁵³ In this way, the possibilities offered to politics by pacifists have been rejected, dismissed as ineffective, idealistic and so forth. On the other hand, powerful democratic states encourage civil resistance in nations they deem to be undemocratic. As I see it, this is how states have effectively reframed the nonviolence they have otherwise and everywhere else, intentionally subjugated. It all depends on who is putting the nonviolence into practice where and when. No one expected the Rojavans to help defeat Isis without any force or use of military means. Then again, no one expected them to exist at all.

When pacifism and revolution come together, Jackson suggests that emancipatory projects that use violent means, including to counter terrorists, are essentially no better than those they defend themselves from because “the ethical character of violent political action is incompatible with and indeed counter to, the notion of emancipation.”⁶⁵⁴ This position is common and understandable, but it is not compassionate or open enough to bring about the synthesis Llewellyn has found in anarcho pacifism or the one Chris Brown is seeking for revolutionary nonviolence. Nor does it assist solidarity with alternatives, at least at this point in time. Room ought to be kept open to allow people to decide for themselves in their own day to day realities when and where violence is a part of, not the basis of their self and social defence systems.

⁶⁵⁰Ibid, B Martin, *Whatever Happened*, 2014, p. 59.

⁶⁵¹ R Jackson, *Pacifism: The anatomy of a subjugated Knowledge*, Critical Studies on Security, Vol

⁶⁵² Ibid, p. 165.

⁶⁵³ Ibid, p. 172.

⁶⁵⁴ R Jackson, CST Counter Terrorism and nonviolence, *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, Vol. 10. No. 2, p6. <http://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2017.1334851>

From the Anarchist Perspective

States always fail and for that reason we should not 'Think like a State'. Given that we are all in states, maintaining an interstitial distance to them, retreating, and acting as if they do not exist is what the bulk of contemporary resistance movements and rebellions are doing. James C Scott calls this *infra politics*. Anarchic politics are based on taking direct action – that is they do not seek permission - to organise food, housing, educational opportunities, emotional and legal support, protection and other essential social systems as well as to defend their collectives, properties, spaces and ecologies from attack. Peasants have been historically adept at this, their formations through the politics of food sovereignty and the *Via Campesina*, the peasant way is a massive global movement of the largest class of people on the planet. As almost everyone else depends on their labour for their own food, these movements have international solidarity and wide consensus on what they want and how to go about getting it. All of this is explained in chapter seven. In this chapter the points are simply made.

Acknowledging the “uncountable and uncounted lives lost or irrevocably damaged to invasion drone strikes, institutional torture, shoot-to-kill policies and the global violence of the war on terror”, Jackson, following Dustin Howes offers a warning to nonviolent revolution. The warning is that, practicing violence makes it difficult to reverse course or admit one’s mistakes and even when temporarily effective, ensures that domination becomes the marker of legitimate authority, which inclines to the escalation of competitive violence.⁶⁵⁵

In the case of Rojava this warning withers away, ecologically thinking and responding to the present means admitting we all have guns, that we all take part in the making of the violent world because we are dependent on the chains of global trade and finance. Extinction Rebellion’s action consensus understands and makes it clear, that nonviolence is undertaken as a privilege and should be maintained through self-sacrifice by putting one’s body, unadorned with weapons of destruction, on the line.⁶⁵⁶ More significantly in relation to the warning of competitive violence, Ocalan has changed his mind, and admitted his past mistakes. He has reached out to the settler colonies theorists and to revolutionary movements to advocate disarming.⁶⁵⁷ Ironically his imprisonment has provided him with all the silence of the world and the time to complete his own legal defence. Ocalan’s prison writings have formed the basis of the experiments of Rojava. I expand on this mature thinking of Ocalan and what revolutionaries have made of it in chapter 11. Despite the years of deconstruction and posts in social theory, it does seem that we are still stuck in “the

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 7.

⁶⁵⁶ R Hallam, *Common Sense for the 21st Century*, affirms the liberal view of civil disobedience, p.

⁶⁵⁷ A Ocalan, *The Political Thought of Abdullah Ocalan*, Pluto Press, 2017, pp. 135-139.

positivist nightmare” as Frazer so aptly put it, if we tried to dispense with vague, contested or ambiguous concepts.⁶⁵⁸

Rojava pushes the boundaries of nonviolence because it uses some violent means which are limited to self-defence and social defence and is therefore contested from an absolutist perspective, because it continues “to construct a world of hierarchical, zero sum distinctions between warriors and non-warriors,”⁶⁵⁹ these grassroots systems of limited defensive violence are the systems in which their nonviolent politics are possible. Millions of people are at home waiting and waiting for governments and radical capitalism to make anything remotely like Rojava happen.

The women of Rojava are not here to be sent home. That is their message to the international community, that has betrayed them by allying with them militarily to keep the broader liberal peace but not politically aligning with them. There are also socialists who accuse Rojavans of serving the Imperialist forces of US capitalism.⁶⁶⁰ Which is even harder to understand. “Is it because the dominant political inspiration comes more from anarchism rather than orthodox Marxism, indifference to a socialist experiment that puts the liberation of women at the center,” as has been suggested.⁶⁶¹ Or, is it ideological obedience that refutes any cooperation with the ruling system? In that case it is not just outdated, it ignores the real world political and existential decisions that Rojavans have had to make and like Gelderloos, it excludes Rojavans from the realms of care and mutual aid. Rojava has had to rely in part and at different times on limited US and even Syrian support to prevent genocide.⁶⁶² My question from revolutionary nonviolence to social defence is why everyone is not talking about this? Isn’t it possible that in this revolutionary situation that is for other reasons, be the tipping point into social defence? Martin has suggested as much, as chapter 5 interpreted his approach to the concept.

Rojava is in part accidental and spontaneous. That it has survived and thrived despite all the hostilities and embargos constraining and surrounding it shows what happens when, as Graeber put it, “suddenly, that 95%, or so of most human populations that is normally told their perspectives count for nothing are suddenly free to find out what they are actually good at and say whatever they want”.⁶⁶³ If the promise of revolutionary nonviolence is an

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid, E Frazer 2019, p.559.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 120.

⁶⁶⁰ P Dolack, Why are Leftists cheering the potential demise of Rojava’s Socialist experiment? *Counter Punch*, January, 14, 2019, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/01/04/why-are-leftists-cheering-the-potential-demise-of-rojavas-socialist-experiment/> (accessed July 2020).

⁶⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶⁶² Ibid. n.p.

⁶⁶³ D Graeber, Foreword, in M Knapp, A Flach and E Ayboga *Revolution in Rojava: Democratic Autonomy and Women’s Liberation in Syrian Kurdistan*, Pluto Press, 2016, p. xvi.

inclusive society and any revolution using violence could never be inclusive or fully participatory or lead to possible nonviolent solutions then Rojava is practicing revolutionary nonviolence precisely because the distinctions made on ideological grounds about violence and nonviolence simply do not hold.

Rojava does not fit into the thesis in the same way that Extinction Rebellion, Rainbow Family or Navdanya does. In comparison these examples seem relatively straightforward because they are using only nonviolent methods. On the surface this makes it look like they fit seamlessly into social defence and revolutionary nonviolence. In obvious ways, these examples do make the best case studies. On the other hand, this is only possible because each has the privilege of already being defended by great powers and are, at this point in time, conducting their nonviolent revolutions on the winning side of today's imperial wars. The same wars that made Kurds stateless, decided the War on Terror and profit from their control of the means of destruction. Once you move beyond the absolutes, the experiments of Rojava are a revolution at the level of common sense. David Graeber's contribution to *What We are Fighting For: A Radical Collective Manifesto*, published in 2012 looks at democracy through the examples of work, communism and capitalism to explain the idea.⁶⁶⁴ He argues here and in many of his other texts that:

*"the war for the imagination is the only one the capitalists seem to have definitely won. Even when the system completely discredited itself in 2008, no one seemed to have the slightest idea what an alternative would look like."*⁶⁶⁵

As he suggests the battle over common sense assumptions took on an "usually strategic significance."⁶⁶⁶ Like all terms anything semantically defined in relation to common, the concept "contains the sediments of long political struggles."⁶⁶⁷ For Graeber common sense is the kind of practical wisdom he thinks most academics do not have but is evident everywhere at the everyday level of communism. To unlearn the past and often unrealistic definitions of that term I believe he is correct in suggesting that:

"All it requires is to stop imagining 'communism' as the absence of private property arrangements and go back Louis Blanc's original definition: 'from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs.'" ⁶⁶⁸

⁶⁶⁴ D Graeber, in F Campagna & E Campiglio, *What We are Fighting For: A Radical collective Manifesto*, Pluto Press, 2012, p 165 -175.; Ibid, K Kennedy, *Deeply Felt*, 2015, chapter 1.

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 168.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid, p.

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 174

Following the 3.5% thesis and the claim that violence is out of fashion, people seeking the absolutes and positivist distinctions, take violence out of its social basis. They do not say how the 3.5% will bring down patriarchy or capitalism, nor how this theory works as a response to the Anthropocene. In short it is state centric and therefore, we have been warned repeatedly in anarchist thought and in ecological thought that there is no clear line between rulers and the ruled. If revolutionary nonviolence is anarchising, as Amster suggests, then it becomes crystal clear that “we are all communists with those we love and trust the most; yet no one behaves communistically in all circumstances with everyone, or presumably ever has or ever will.”⁶⁶⁹

All societies are communist at base, and as Graeber suggests, “capitalism is best viewed as a bad way of organising communism.” If you push away “the ideological accretions” on all sides of the communism divide, then you find that it is the basis of democratic cooperation and egalitarian participation. Precisely what social defence needs in order to become a viable alternative.

We are lost in Space, and if everyone had a hand in destroying their own home, then everyone does, metaphorically have a gun. Beyond the metaphor – the reality of guns and other killing technologies is something humans have written schooled people into believing is a system of defence and security. There is something obviously very wrong with this. It also helps explain why so many people simply do not want to talk about these issues or join the dots of historical pacifist and anarchist struggle.

Chris Brown’s search for the anarcho pacifism he seems not know exists or believes is tautological is still evident in his publications in 2019. Though far more general, there is still no mention of the root sources of anarchist prefiguration and nonviolence or the ways that anarcho pacifism is being rethought today. Following Richard Jackson and others, the common point of disagreement among supporters of the traditional view of nonviolence is that any group using violent means as a political solution is inconsistent and analytically inept because violence is unlikely to result in liberation or emancipation.⁶⁷⁰ From this perspective Rojava is little different to those nation states, whose license to kill is democratic and civilised. On the other hand, it is simply common sense that, “In the context of life and death, nonviolence is a privilege.”⁶⁷¹

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁰ R Jackson, Counter Terrorism, Critical Security Studies, – finish the citation.

⁶⁷¹ A A Atar, in L Dauden, In the Context of life and death, nonviolence is a privilege, SUR, International Journal of Human Rights, December, 2016, <https://sur.conectas.org/en/in-the-context-of-life-or-death-non-violence-is-privilege/> n.p; XR Action Consensus, www.earthrebellion

The violence of separation

Martin and Johansen tend to cling the lacuna of distinction and separation in their collective work on social defence. For example, they write: *“Contemporary militaries are mostly separate from other parts of life: personnel are soldiers, not civilians: weapons systems are largely separate from civilian systems: and daily routines for civilians do not involve much thought about being involved in defence.”* The separation appears to be so naturalised that it is taken for granted that only those who volunteer to serve and work for military systems will protect those who do not.

Separation is also the basis of the international criminal and humanitarian legal system, the laws of war and concepts such as duty to protect. If, *“in contrast with social defence civilians are on the front line, with everyone potentially involved, this means that civilian technological systems are also defence systems.”*⁶⁷² Social defence in my interpretation of it, is a concept that requires nonseparation. It needs to move into the multispecies, decolonial spaces of sympoiesis and out of modernity’s nightmares. In 2021 the concepts of Grey, Hybrid, Asymmetric, Counter-Insurgency war are used to describe the officially evaporating distinctions. Quantum weapons and disruptive technologies shatter the illusion of and capacity for the justification of war and other forms of legalised violence. In three words, it is possible to understand how peace has become the same thing as war. As Shiva put it, *“Separation is violence.”*⁶⁷³

Martin is keenly aware that “in practice, nonviolent action can be used for various goals”, including defending the status quo, pushing for reforms, challenging oppressive regimes and in fundamentally changing social relationships and institutions.⁶⁷⁴ He has also emphasised in all his work on the topic that it is not people within the military but the system itself that ought to be challenged.⁶⁷⁵ As he says, we can replace the people, the generals, soldiers, lawyers, the presidents and so forth but new people will replace them.⁶⁷⁶ It is the social structures of centralised control which maintain economic and political power, these are, *“the state system, the bureaucracy, the military and patriarchy”*.⁶⁷⁷

Militaries like most institutions are based on hierarchies of professionalisation, skills, knowledge and power. As Martin frequently admits; what is most challenging about the idea of social defence is that it clashes with the “usual dependence on professionals, instead of

⁶⁷² Ibid.

⁶⁷³ Ibid, V Shiva, Oneness versus, 2019, p.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid, B Martin, Revolutionary Agenda, 2017, p.3.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid, Martin, Social Defence, Social Change, 1993, p. 4, add the others. Ibid B Martin, Revolutionary Agenda, 2017, p, Ibid, Martin and Johansen, 2019, p. 153,154.

⁶⁷⁶ B Martin, *Uprooting War*, Freedom House, 1990, revised edition, p. 2.

⁶⁷⁷ Ibid.

relying on someone else for defence, it becomes a community responsibility”.⁶⁷⁸ Rojava’s armed self-defence forces challenge social defence and in a similar way. By removing the illusion that nonviolence/ civil resistance is only effective and can claim moral superiority if activists are ready to die, submit to rape, torture, imprisonment, and other forms of military violence. In the grassroots of the Syrian war, civil resisters following the model used in the west were tortured, jailed, killed, and forced into exile on masse. Like the abstraction of labour from humans, the reification and mystification of commodities from the sources of their production and severing of the economy from society, the abstraction of violence from social systems and social relations has similar results. Violence is seen as out there, over there, anywhere else but here, of this world we make together.

Violent Nonviolence

The idea of *violent nonviolence* is not new, it has a history within left revolutionary theory and philosophy of the 20th century and into the 21st. Judith Butler and Simon Critchley have explored the idea as have doctoral research students.⁶⁷⁹ Gregory McCreery’s 2016 doctoral thesis, titled *Violence and Disagreement*, argues that “beyond the commonsense point of view political ideology is inextricably bound up within distinctions about kinds of violence”.⁶⁸⁰ Violence and nonviolence are fundamentally contested on ideological grounds for McCreery. If nonviolence is defined as distinct from violence, then it too is fundamentally and ideologically contested, according to McCreery. Having explored various philosophical and political definitions of violence within liberal and Marxist rubrics, McCreery concludes his research by questioning “the degree to which there could ever be agreement concerning what counts as violence”.⁶⁸¹

This thesis charts disagreement within liberal philosophy through Kant, Hobbs and Heinrichs Vontrishke; it tracks and discusses disagreements between them but confirms the liberal consensus in that violence is thought to be essential to the existence of a state, “without violence a state cannot achieve its destined power”.⁶⁸²

The question of legitimacy haunts States self-proclaimed monopoly on the use of violence, evident in disagreements such as those that McCreery explores. Martin would surely agree that justifications and other grounds for the legitimacy of state violence and war are merely written to serve the interests of the state. Not as McCreery points out, in the interest of the people whose sacrifice and obedience the state demands in return for its ability to secure

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid B Martin, *Revolutionary Agenda*, 2017, p. 7.

⁶⁷⁹ S Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding*, 2014, J Butler, add sources and pages, M Mc Cree

⁶⁸⁰ G R McCreery, *Violence and Disagreement: From the commonsense view to political kinds of violence and violent nonviolence*, Doctoral Dissertation, November 10th, 2016, *University of South Florida*, p. 10.

⁶⁸¹ Ibid.

⁶⁸² Ibid, p . 101.

and defend polities.⁶⁸³ McCreery takes on classical anarchists such as Bakunin and also explores the work of Arendt, Machiavelli, Zizek and Walter Benjamin, all of whom have made substantial contributions to understandings of violence and to the concept of violent nonviolence. This is impressive research that resonates with my own research here and with my previous HDR research which also examined revolutionary violence and nonviolence through the texts of David Graeber, Timothy Morton and Simon Critchley and their interlocutors following the anarchist turn. Like McCreery, I understand that “nonviolence does not merely refer to nonviolent acts but to a strategy that is a means to defeating violence”.⁶⁸⁴

In some ways, McCreery answers Martins’ question whatever happened with his own question. He asks, “Can nonviolence be achieved in practice”?⁶⁸⁵ McCreery links up with Todd May’s concept of nonviolence as undermining rather than overthrowing neoliberalism, a concept which has inspired others because of its lucidity. May like Martin favours working from the grassroots on the basis of equality and dignity of everyone. Yet McCreery disagrees with May by taking a different philosophical course. He points out that May’s views of nonviolence, even when considered as nonviolent action with the emphasis *on action*, can be perceived by others as violent. If, following Martin and May, nonviolent action undermines the military system, this could be seen as a kind of violence by those who seek to keep the system in place. What McCreery’s research does is highlight the complexity of the conceptual debates are also political debates.

It is true that, “*ones’ own idea of nonviolence, no matter how strongly one intends to actualise it in concrete, paradigmatic actions, does not guarantee the action will be defined as nonviolent by most people*”.⁶⁸⁶ I agree with McCreery that “no political ideology is needed to convince people that it is wrong for one person to intentionally behead another person for the sake of causing harm and destruction.

The proposition from revolutionary nonviolence – for social defence – is that it is possible for humans to stop killing each other. For anarcho pacifists it that both theories and practices are needed if all domination and authority are to be challenged and individual sovereignty return to people and taken away from nation states. There is no way I have the right to ask the women in Rojava to surrender their guns and go home and wait for the global community to save them. This to me is an absurd proposition that backs away from the common duty to care. Acknowledging the violence of nonviolence is not intended to

⁶⁸³ Ibid, p. 107.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid, p, 135.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 150.

downplay nonviolence. My intention is to explore revolutionary nonviolence in the context of the Anthropocene and with the question, whatever happened to social defence in mind.

McCreery does not expect philosophy can solve the disagreements in a move worthy of social defence. He never refers to it as a concept but in his conclusion, he suggests,

*“Perhaps, an ahistorical, non-traditional, global and nonviolent kind of cooperation could serve as the foundation for a future philosophy, but it may be difficult for this kind of cooperation to avoid counting as a kind of violence, or for a politically neutral argument to be made for it”.*⁶⁸⁷

Social defence as it has been conceptualised by Martin, Robert Burrowes and other nonviolent revolutionaries may have more to offer McCreery’s nonviolent future than he thinks. Certainly, if the rule of law is to maintain any validity in relation to nonviolence, then explicit nonviolent jurisdiction would need to be enacted and people experienced in training for nonviolent social defence would need to be consulted. Agroecologists and permaculture people will be needed to continue training people for food sovereignty, decolonising global ethics and political theory is already evolving into multispecies justice. Now that things can happen overnight officially, it is possible but unlikely that a global nonkilling jurisdiction could be the new basis of international diplomacy and conflict resolutions. There is no lack of organisations with the knowledge. However, as Thomas Weber put it, in India, there are more Gandhi institutes than Gandhi actions.⁶⁸⁸ Gandhi has been turned into superman, made out to be more than human. Yet he struggled using all his capacities against the violence of the ruling system, he had no superhuman powers at all. He had a message and a political theory of nonviolence.

Pacifism as revolutionary nonviolence

Pacifist traditions provide the historical continuity of ideas that directly oppose the utility and apparatus of violence and therefore of militaries and war as a way to solve the problems of the world. Though this tradition is obscured by the claims of political realism, justifications of colonialism, liberalism and neoconservatism, pacifism remains important because it has consistently disputed these claims.⁶⁸⁹ Today pacifism continues as a contested term that has deep roots in various religions.⁶⁹⁰ As such it is syncretic and

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid, p 185.

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid, K Kennedy, *Peace Review*, 2016.

⁶⁸⁹ D E Howes, *The Just War Masquerade*, *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, Vol. 27, 2015, p 379-387.

⁶⁹⁰ A J M E Christoyannopoulos, *Religious Anarchism: New Perspectives*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011; Ibid, D E Howes, *The Just War Masquerade*, 2015, D L Cady, *From Warism to Pacifism: A Moral Continuum*, Temple University Press, 2010, 2010, Ibid Johansen and Martin, *Social Defence*, 2019, p 122-161 discuss religious groups and approaches in relation to social defence.

dynamic in practice and should not be considered as being a fixed or settled phenomenon.⁶⁹¹ Scholars within the extant literature commonly categorise the term through adjectives such as, *political pacifism*, *principled pacifism*, *philosophical pacifism* and increasingly as *credible*, *pragmatic pacifism* and/ or as prefiguring a utopian pacifism. Or as Matais Thaler put it, as “a minor grounded utopia”.⁶⁹²

I will not present a history here. Devi Prasad’s, *War is a Crime Against Humanity: The story of War Resisters International*, offers a thoughtful history of pacifism, particularly in relation to WRI from its inception in 1921 to 2005 but also to its precursors in Buddhism and Christianity.⁶⁹³ Of note is that contemporary scholars and activists who write in English and focus on pacifism are found to be attentive to “a more realistic anthropology”.⁶⁹⁴ This may seem a moot point, given the work of indigenous people, anthropologists and others, who concur that hunter gathering peoples, *barbarians*, were healthier, more creative, egalitarian collectives. From what we know in these cultures everyone was mutually responsible for their environment and had much more free time, to gather and assemble for celebrations, deliberations and various rituals.⁶⁹⁵

Devi Prasad was a student of Gandhi’s who remained committed to pacifism and peace until his death in 2011. He comments, “The more aware humankind has become of the need to be nonviolent and peaceful, the more the opposite forces seem to have grown assertive and overwhelming. Why has that happened? Fear and Ego and creative contradictions”,⁶⁹⁶ are the short version of a very long answer. Prasad reminds us that pacifists were persecuted by the State in cooperation with the official church throughout the middle- ages up to the enlightenment.⁶⁹⁷ Unofficial, heterodox religious antipathies are another story, hidden in the grassroots, busy vying for sunlight and nutrients. Staying with Prasad, “it is important to keep in mind that, if looked at in a cursory manner, for various reasons the story of pacifism may not show much continuity” but when looked at in depth, “the withdrawal of pacifists

⁶⁹¹ C Ryan, Pacifism, Just War and Self Defence, *Philosophia*, Vol. 41, 2013, p. 977-1005; *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 17, No. 4, December 2019, p. 1003-1018.

⁶⁹² M Thales, Peace as Minor Grounded Utopia: On Prefigurative and testimonial Politics, *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 17, No. 4, December 2019, p. 1003-1018.

⁶⁹³ D Prasad, *War is a Crime Against Humanity, The Story of War Resisters International*, WRI Press, London, 2005, p. 1-523.

⁶⁹⁴ D E Howes, Just War Masquerade, 2015, p. 379.

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid, D J C Scott, Weapons of the Weak, date, p, *The Art of Governing*, date, *Against the Grain*, 2018, D Graeber and D Wengrow, name and date, B Pascoe, Dark Emu, date, Salt, date, B Gammage, name and date, B Morris, add matriarchy ref’s, J Cribb, Surviving, 2015, Survivors International .Org, Radical Anthropology, add web link.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid, D Prasad, 2005, p. 25.

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 42.

from the mainstream should not be interpreted as a defeat of pacifism or the death for any hope of its future.”⁶⁹⁸

On the contrary, pacifists are according to most of the literature in support of them, optimists who believe it is true that life, persons, and the planet are intrinsically and equally valued. “Of course, there remains vigorous debate among Christians and in Catholicism about Christian pacifism, but it is hard to deny, that the recent popes have shifted to a commitment toward some version of pacifism, according to philosopher Andrew Fiala.⁶⁹⁹ It is also clear that they too could be assassinated, co-opted or even change their minds. Pacifism is a problem for politics that defend and justify the use of violence and aggressive force as the means of sharing the common resources of the planet. It’s also a problem for religion for the very same reasons. Like its sister anarchism it is mostly thought of by states, bureaucracies and popular culture in pejorative terms. People seeking to disempower the term have presented it as a novelty or something to be wary of because of its subjugation as a doctrine of weakness and its association with utopianism.”⁷⁰⁰

Andrew Fiala’s edited collection of contemporary pacifism offers a diverse range of perspectives both for and against that are part of the rich tradition post Gandhi and Martin Luther King. As Fiala says, one important reason for the collection “is to make it clear that pacifism is a legitimate moral position, that it has a deep history and that it ought to remain a central concern for scholars and activists who are concerned with violence, war and social justice.”⁷⁰¹ Political elites are continuing to prepare for even worse wars, and they are busy experimenting with even more lethal technologies. So, it is common sense that pacifism taken seriously rather than being subjugated and recuperated back into the realms of lawfare – that is legalised war. Reading Gail M Presbey, we learn how after Kant and Hegel, histories of philosophy became narrower and that Africa and Asia were written out.⁷⁰² Presbeys’ contribution to contemporary pacifism informs us that nonviolence in the African context “has been expressed or intertwined with mutual respect and care. It shows itself in hospitality to strangers.”⁷⁰³

In this way African nonviolence is a version of agroecology/permaculture and other systems that design care and radical intimacy into their social systems. This is what we are all fighting for here in Australia, well, at least those of us in the rebellions underway. Yet when people think of Africa, the common response is to think of war and under development. This

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid, Fiala, 2018, p. 11.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid, Fiala, 2018, p.30, Ibid, R, Jackson, Pacifism and Revolution, 2018, Anatomy of a Subjugated Knowledge, *Critical Studies on Security*, Vol. 2. No. 2, 2018. DOI: 10.1080/21624887.2017.1342750.

⁷⁰¹ A Fiala, Introduction, Ibid, p. 3.

⁷⁰² G m Presbey, Philosophy of Nonviolence in Africa, in Ibid, A Fiala, 2018, p. 64.

⁷⁰³ Ibid, p. 65.

is clearly a misinformed view and a carefully guarded secret. Recall, Martin's response to proposition that nonviolence people would stand by while their mother was raped, implores, who is guarding the guardian's. That is the historical anarchist question, and it is the question for pacifism and social defence.

In the experiments of Rojava, women working to challenge patriarchy, colonialism and slavery have formed global solidarity and are sharing stories of femicide and horrendous crimes against women.⁷⁰⁴ Notably studies of women's' participation in Rojava's self-defence forces, even prior to Rojava have found that women had to organise all forms of resistance because men were arrested immediately if and when they organised civil resistance.⁷⁰⁵

Coming back to Fiala's edited collection, Jose Antonio Orosco is one of the authors who critiques pacifism. Following the pacifism is pathology critique advanced by George Orwell, Ward Churchill, Peter Gelderloos and others. The basis of the critique is that pacifists simply fail to understand the power of the world.⁷⁰⁶ Nonviolence continues to exert coercive force and at least buy time, as is the case in XR's rebellion. Nonviolence has a history of making social change happen. That is why it is popular and why it is subjugated and ridiculed. Having explored this terrain, Antonio Orosco believes it is crucial to investigate whether or not nonviolence is a means of political transformation. *"Given changes in the global economy that intensify precarity and debt, the increase in the militarisation of police forces worldwide and the role of the media in creating disinformation and mistrust"*.⁷⁰⁷

Fiala points to the importance of Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein; both of whom produced pacifist texts and took part in various pacifist actions. In the aftermath of World War Two, "after the devastation had been measured" pacifism re-emerged "in earnest" according to Fiala.⁷⁰⁸ While both Russell and Einstein ended up justifying violence when faced with criticisms that pacifists were useless when faced with regimes such as Nazi Germany under Hitler, they recommitted to pacifism post World War Two.⁷⁰⁹ The reality of the nuclear arms race and perceived threat of human annihilation during the cold war ensured that so called political realists would press on with criticisms of Einstein, Russell, and other important pacifists such as M J Muste.⁷¹⁰

⁷⁰⁴ Freedom For Ocalan, Women Defend Rojava, UK, 100 reasons event, *Freedom for Ocalan, YouTube*, [Women Defend Rojava UK, 100 Reasons event - YouTube](#) (accessed 2 October, 2021).

⁷⁰⁵ P Tank, copy ref, p. 419.

⁷⁰⁶ J A Orosco, Pacifism as Pathology, in Ibid, A Fiala, p. 205.

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid, .p 209.

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid, A Fiala, p. 35

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 30-34.

⁷¹⁰ Ibid, Martin, 1993, Fiala, 2020, Ryan, 2013, Thaler, 2019

Gandhi is for good reason one of the main *influencers* within modern pacifism. Whether Gandhi can be called an anarchist or not is beside the point, he has influenced anarchists in multiple ways and is part of contemporary anarchist and pacifist theory and practice for some and may not be for others. Influential self-identifying anarchists such as Emma Goldman argued forcefully against the use of violence and can also properly be considered anarcho-pacifists. Goldman said:

*"I believe that militarism – a standing army and navy- in any country is indicative of the decay of liberty and the destruction of all that is best and finest in our nation. The steadily growing clamour for more battleships and an increased army on the grounds that these guarantee us peace is absurd as the argument that the peaceful man is he who goes well armed."*⁷¹¹

Martin's work on social defence does not assume there will be no violence. Nonviolence researchers including Martin are acutely aware that military planners and national security organisations know there will be 'collateral damage'. In 1993 Martin thought "the issue of heavy casualties seems more acute for social defence; one reason is that people misunderstand nonviolence to mean no violence at all".⁷¹²

Consensus is evident within the literature produced by Martin and others frequently cited here, that by the 1960s "Gandhi's ideas had spread and were woven together with Christian pacifism".⁷¹³ Both Graeber and Thales note, it is clear that nonviolent action was extensively used in the convergence of the civil rights and anti-war movements in the US and into the occupy movements forty years later. "Clearly an anti-war movement in the 1960s that is still tying the hands of the U. S military planners in 2012 cannot be considered a failure"⁷¹⁴ Graeber implored. Continued opposition to corporate death fairs and increased militarisation's continues in 2021, in global rebellions. The premises of deterrence and the ruling ideas that legitimate military power balances as the only way states can defend their authority over and unfettered access to the resources of the planet.

Antiwar activists in Australia converged to disrupt the 2021, Land Forces, killing fair.⁷¹⁵ In her reflections on the campaign, Miriam Tozillo wrote that most people in Brisbane would have gone about their daily lives, unaware of what was taking place there.⁷¹⁶ This event like

⁷¹¹ Ibid, p.33. The failure of pacifism and the success of nonviolence, *Perspective on Politics*, Vol.11, No.2, 2013, p. 427-446 www.jstor.org/stable/432080797 (accessed June 13, 2018).

⁷¹² Ibid, Martin, *Social Defence, Social Change*, 1993, p. 41.

⁷¹³ Ibid, p. 37.

⁷¹⁴ D Graeber in Ibid, Thales, *Minor Grounded Utopia*, p. 1012.

⁷¹⁵ Add link to disrupt Landforces,

⁷¹⁶ M Tozillo, Activists disrupt Land Forces Expo in Brisbane, *The Echo*, June 7, 2021, <https://www.echo.net.au/2021/06/activists-disrupt-land-forces-expo-in-brisbane/>

all big industry events was all about jobs and the QLD governments pride in hosting the event and being known as the Khaki state. I spontaneously attended the event in the spirit of fraternisation. In chapter 8, I offer a brief reflection, here I would just like to say that I was overwhelmed by the experience. Traumatized. As Miriam says and is obvious, “the weapons on display will kill, children, women and men just like you and me.”⁷¹⁷ In her words a committed band of people made sure the truth was told.⁷¹⁸ Towards the end of her article in a local paper, Miriam says that, of the people in the committed band who did go inside, none was prepared for the reality.⁷¹⁹

I can only agree. I did walk the floor and I did hold my posture and I did speak to people respectfully for around 3 hours. That was it, I walked to my accommodation at great pace, grabbed a blanket and walked to the botanical gardens in the city. It is one thing reading military literature and analysis, which I have done more than usual in this research. It is another to walk the industrial floor and realise that few people think killing others in the name of jobs for the boys and girls and security for the nation is NOT a problem that is worthy of their dissent. The love of money was on display at Land Forces exhibition. The conferences that were open to me and others attending the expo offer more of hope in relation to a military transition. Legal challenges cannot keep up with technological developments, this was also obvious to me after I had attended a conference and having read the literature prepared for the expo. More on this later. Clearly this civilisation has inculcated what Duane Caddy, calls Warism.⁷²⁰

Pacifism and Just War

Social defence would render just war theory more or less irrelevant for Martin and Johansen.⁷²¹ Their view is that just war theory suffers from a “false dichotomy between acquiescence and violence by not considering not violent actions a way to both deter and prevent attacks”.⁷²² According to Martin, just war thinking is unable to address its internal contradictions or adequately defend its validity. Even though it has been conceived of as a last resort and has on that basis produced laws of war, it has done this by making military systems, specifically states and their opponents central to and overly valued agents. Social defence is for defence of society, not states. It puts people and their vital systems up front and centre, to show that they come from somewhere, have a history and have intrinsic value. As Cheney Ryan put it, just war theory is the non-pacifist alternative to war.⁷²³

⁷¹⁷ Ibid.

⁷¹⁸ Ibid.

⁷¹⁹ Ibid.

⁷²⁰ D Caddy, Warism and the Dominant World View, in Ibid A, Fiala, p. 249-245.

⁷²¹ Ibid, Martin and Johansen, Social Defence, 2019, p. 41.

⁷²² Ibid.

⁷²³ C Ryan, C Ryan, Pacifism, Just War and Self-Defence, *Philosophia*, Vol.41, 2013, p.977-100

Dustin Howes and Duane Cady put pacifism in a type of linear continuum with Just War theory and each defends a credible pragmatic pacifism. Howes suggests that Just War and Pacifism are “equidistant” within theories that run counter to those that argue violence is amoral or cannot be logically contained.⁷²⁴ For Howes, the split between just war and pacifism is the defining feature of thought on the subject in the western tradition.⁷²⁵ One problem with this is that it encloses pacifism, in thought and practice within western traditions, or within this civilisation. A further problem is that Howes’ analysis is based on the belief that morality is somehow separate from other areas of our inner and outer, social lives; out there like a liberal version of the economy, when it is clear we are enmeshed in an ecology of shifting intersubjectivities and ontological orientations.⁷²⁶

As we transition into earth based politics pacifism offers a rich tradition of vegetarianism and care for all species through metaphysical philosophy that views animals as part of the continuum of human life, as companions to be protect not just for their own sake but for the wellbeing of humans and to foster the development of empathy and intimacy.⁷²⁷ Ecological pacifism has when combined with anarchism used direct action to highlight the injustices of animal and earth cruelty and to link these with the cruelty people inflict upon each other. Convergence is part of ecological thinking and regenerative activities of people worlding multispecies futures based on unity and the ethics of caring and sharing. Just War is struggling to keep up with these iterations as they combine with climate science and existential risk studies.

As Cheney Ryan noted, a major problem in speaking for pacifism today is that pacifist and just war traditions have converged over time, rendering their differences increasingly murky. For Dustin Howes and Duane Cady both traditions share “a common aim of reducing the incidence and severity of warfare and have origins in common philosophical and religious traditions”.⁷²⁸ Howes and Cady suggest that just war and pacifism weave in and out of each other in some kind of line running from pacifism as a world view and way of life to realism and the machinations of those who manipulate the international laws of war, the legal apparatus of (*jus ad bellum*), and (*jus in bello*).⁷²⁹ For Cady, “Everyone on the continuum believes that innocents-children, the elderly and infirm, ordinary civilians uninvolved in the war effort – must be immune from attack. Perhaps Cady is right, and the point could even be extended to claim that most people have a common sense understanding of what is violent, tolerable, justifiable and so on. From the perspective of the post qualitative, the ecological and within surviving indigenous cultures, there is no straight line, it does not exist. In my view the straight line analysis is unable to respond to

⁷²⁴ Ibid, Howes, 2015, p. 379.

⁷²⁵ Ibid.

⁷²⁶ Ibid, K Kennedy, *Deeply Felt*, 2015, chapter three, p..

⁷²⁷ C K Chappel, *Animals, Vegetarians and Nonviolence* in Ibid, A Fiala, 2018, p.353.

⁷²⁸ Ibid, Howes, *Masquerade*, 2015, p. 379.

⁷²⁹ Ibid.

the Anthropocene. However, that does not mean throwing the baby out with the bath water.

Evidence from diverse sources, explored throughout this research suggests that International Humanitarian Law has failed and is increasingly corrupt in its implementation. Many states and rebel groups breach international criminal laws with impunity.⁷³⁰ Significantly, the contemporary contexts of runaway technology and quantum warfare make it clear that maintaining distinctions between who has legitimate authority to wage war and who is and is not a civilian almost impossible to sustain.⁷³¹

Australia's role in "extra judicial killing" via its' role in the Five Eyes surveillance system which Pine Gap provides one among many examples.⁷³² Kieran Finnane's investigative journalism provides evidence of Australia's role in war crimes. She follows the legal cases of pacifists charged under Australian national security laws and argues that Pine Gap is a top secret military installation that most people know little about. As Finnane explains, Australia is part of a network, or war machine that is doing things many people would consider to be unjustifiable.⁷³³ But if they don't know about them there is little chance, they will dissent or challenge the laws, they really had no part in making.

Finnane confirms the reality of the total global social war that Australia is a part of. In the second chapter of her book, we find out that US Military chiefs argued in 2018 that *"the peace/war binary is obsolete, instead they want to see military and civil activities aligned along a 'continuum of cooperation, competition below armed conflict and armed conflict'."* Furthermore, "the campaign is worldwide, continuous into the foreseeable future and is framed entirely to project US power".⁷³⁴ In Martin's view military systems and institutions offer an "illusion of security".⁷³⁵

In reality, he says, whistle-blowers are made to look as if they have done something wrong and laws continue to prohibit, sanction, and imprison them on the grounds of national security. Martin reminds us that: "the draconian laws applied to Chelsea Manning and intended for Edward Snowden are exemplary."⁷³⁶ Notably, in Australia it has become a

⁷³⁰ Ibid, B Martin, 2017, and Johansen, 2019, D Graeber, 2009, 2012, Ibid, Finnane, 2020.

⁷³¹ Refer to chapter 1 where the contemporary context is introduced through the source material from official channels and voices of dissent.

⁷³² Ibid, K Finnane, Peace Crimes, 2020, p. 3.

⁷³³ Ibid, p.28.

⁷³⁴ Ibid, Finnane, p. 27,

⁷³⁵ Ibid.

⁷³⁶ Ibid, n. p.

criminal offence to be a whistle-blower on national security issues and for journalists to report on them.⁷³⁷

There is no justice in war

The right of self-defence and the commonsense right to defend one's children and other vulnerable people. In short, the justice that counts for war has been turned into the states' right to wage a just war on behalf of its unfettered access to the resources of its sovereign geographical territory, its polity and things else legislated under national security laws and defence policy. Ryan put it this way, "the ideology of self-defence has been vital to the national security state in turning every incident into a matter of national survival, and every dissent into an act of treason."⁷³⁸ Originally a very small part of the theory, Ryan believes it is now the main justifying argument for legal military action.⁷³⁹ Strangely, sovereign self-defence, aka national self-defence is theorised today as analogous to individual self-defence, rather than to defence of a home or homeland.⁷⁴⁰ Individuals do not have the same legal protections or obligations as states and not all states have the same political basis of political authority. "There is no machine to measure the huge suffering of humans and non-humans stemming from the aggressive state apparatus."⁷⁴¹

The state sees nothing positive in statelessness that is the work of anarcho-capitalists. As Kashefi points out, no one has punished the technologists and scientists who develop weapons of mass and minor destruction. If human law cannot keep up with its technologies or the intensity of its war machine, why do we have more not less laws? This is a question for social defence just as it is for just war. Kashefi also reminds us that "every authority has power."⁷⁴² The state uses its authoritarian power to convince folk that they need it to survive, when the evidence is that they should do their best to create nonviolent alternatives. States are based on their claim to cooperation, and use of friendly competition (arms races), (trade wars, food wars) to prevent the violence anarchy, and therefore anarchists. Clearly, they fail to hold the mirror up and look at themselves. States are run by people; they don't exist without them. Relationally, "their political authority depends not only on the brute and sophisticated force of the army, the police and the legal system, but also on the stupidity of the masses to be manipulated by propaganda."⁷⁴³ Ok, there is no need to call people stupid, but I do understand what Kashefi means. People's capacity to think has been damaged and that has to be repaired.

⁷³⁷ Ibid.

⁷³⁸ Ibid.

⁷³⁹ Ibid, p, 991-992.

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid, Ryan, 2013, p. 992.

⁷⁴¹ Ibid, S Kashefi, Legal Anarchism, 2016, p. 71

⁷⁴² Ibid, p. 28.

⁷⁴³ Ibid, p.30.

The Anthropocene is marked by omnipresent insecurity and vulnerability. Running up to COP Glasgow, 2021, the scramble to convince people that the international system of politics will work is heating up. The backstory of such agreements turns out to be repetitions of empty promises. As Martin argues *“security agencies cause insecurity by repressing the population, by stoking fears of internal or external enemies, and by enabling attacks on enemies, thereby stimulating the very threat they are supposed to be addressing.”*⁷⁴⁴ The existence of security agencies may give people the impression that they are being protected, leading them to believe they don’t need to become involved, and anyway are powerless to help. For Martin security agencies, even the most honest and competent ones, proliferate a dangerous illusion

Martin mentions nonviolent policing in all of his texts on the topic. He knows that police brutality is rampant and has produced the backfire theory to help activists and others struggling with police brutality and militarisation. Black lives matter campaign, Black deaths in Custody campaigns tell us that people are waking up, rising up and mobilising. This is organised in the grassroots, the place where all adaptation to the forces of the violent state, takes place. Recent shocking cases of police abuse of power and lethal violence, in India, Thailand and London have sent shock wave across the world. As Food Not Bombs put it, we need housing, not jails. Policing is just a lesser version of the army. It is justified using the same laws and functions through the same legal, political, and economic channels. In the US movements such as Common Ground have defended people from the police and private militias in contexts of crisis such as Hurricane Katrina. Food not Bombs, feed people at demonstrations and occupations, and, as I explore further in chapter 8, State emergency services now rely on the experienced people extending mutual aid in the anarchist way, through solidarity not charity.

Ideology assuming the binaries and reifications of modern left and right is still ubiquitous in the scholarly literature because it continues to provide the grounds for disagreement and hence reveals the extent to which much political discussion is stuck in the mud of modernity, and not yet ready to confront the Anthropocene. Once you start drilling down this makes little sense because ideology is not just something inside our heads, or on the page. As the bureau of public secrets effectively put it, you have an idea, an ideology is something that has you.⁷⁴⁵ If pacifism is an ideology, then surely nonviolence is too? Systems thinking brings us back into the world and out of the categorical reifications. Howes is not alone in his quest for analytic boundaries. Boundary problems are evident in most

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid, B Martin, Whistleblowing and Security, 2021, n.p.

⁷⁴⁵ This quote forms part of my memory. When I looked it up online it is attributed to Morris Berman and supposedly recent, <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/406157-an-idea-is-something-you-have-an-ideology-is-something> (accessed December 9, 2019). However, from my memory this quote comes from The Bureau of Public secrets, run by Ken Knabb and is a summary type of translation from Guy Debords, The Society of the Spectacle, <http://www.bopsecrets.org/PS/joyrev2.htm> (accessed December 9, 2019).

important ideas. For Howes nonviolence is strictly practical, “self-limiting, pragmatic and realistic” when compared to the “pacifist rejection of violence on moral grounds.”⁷⁴⁶ A way out of the dilemma is to unlearn the strictures of modern philosophy and stick to the realm of common sense ideas and the concepts they are rooted in. In that way pacifism, as Richard Jackson suggests, following Cady, is something we are still trying to understand and something “we have hardly begun to try.”⁷⁴⁷

Pacifism is the source of nonviolence in collective theory and practice. It is evident as the source of various practices such as meditation, dancing, yoga and chanting, that are designed to bring individuals to the source of their own inner peace. To give them space to think freely. Going to the root source of problems is not just relevant to responses to the Anthropocene it is also important within regenerative culture and in the movements of earth based peoples resisting the authority of the 1%.

The military system is a state based system and the source of collectively organised social violence. Yet as Brian Martin shows, it is the one system that seems to be untouchable by two decades of sustained interest and application of nonviolent actions. Howes extensive research found that pacifism’s failure is not set in stone, he considers a pragmatic pacifism may yet arise to offer a far better explanation of how politics could work.⁷⁴⁸ His distinction between pacifism and nonviolence is made in the interests of developing a pragmatic pacifism that complements its moral, or in his terms, ideological and principled position. Hence, his pragmatic or “credible” pacifism is open to “violence being just in certain situations”.⁷⁴⁹ Credible pacifism, then, is a form of realism (in relation to this murderous civilisation) that is politically relevant, reasonable and most of all, it is inclusive. “It took a long time to develop the techniques of violent power, indeed this has been the primary enterprise of states”.⁷⁵⁰ We have been warned by credible people, repeatedly, that when the state becomes the revolution, it becomes our enemy again.

Over the centuries pacifism has been subjugated, reframed, ridiculed, and silenced.⁷⁵¹ Anarchism is equally subjugated, most often in serious and spontaneous discussions, by accusations that it is only interested in violence, “yet little work has been done to think about how the relation between pacifism and anarchism might be of value in thinking about international relations and international law, where anarchical conditions are broadly recognised as prevailing.”⁷⁵² Contemporary thinking in relation to how anarcho pacifism

⁷⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 428.

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid Jackson, *Subjugated Knowledge*, 2018, p.167.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid, Howes p.

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid, p.

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid, R Cheney, *Pacifism, Just War and Self Defence*, 2013, p.1003.

⁷⁵¹ Ibid, Jackson, p.

⁷⁵² Ibid, J Moses,

could transform international law often takes place through discussions and disagreements around the major nonviolence tactic of civil disobedience. These discussions complicate matters further.

Civil Disobedience

In liberal democratic theory disobedience is civilised when nonviolence is used politely in the public sphere and uncivil when resisters use anything remotely defined as violence. It is increasingly seen as uncivil when digital disobedience and hacktivism are used, as well as when intentional damage is inflicted upon commercial or public property. While a liberal consensus seems evident in that the term civil is the marker of the disobedience. The term uncivil is also the historical marker of progress and development that is the hallmark of western civilisations promised to civilise the Barbarians, the Nomads, the Aboriginals and so forth.

According to William Scheuerman, consensus formed around the idea that those practicing civil disobedience held a respect for the rule of law and were for the most part, justifiably bringing critical public issues to light in public places.⁷⁵³ This consensus according to those seeking to maintain it, such as Scheuerman, is currently in a process of decline.⁷⁵⁴

Scheuerman is concerned that criticisms made by philosophers, feminists, anarchists and others will stretch the concept so far “that it will no longer be able to offer normative or analytic guidance.”⁷⁵⁵ Scheuerman acknowledges the validity of some challenges (anti-globalisation activists, hacktivists and others attacking corporate property, animal rights activists, eco sabotage and whistle blowing) because they fall outside of orthodox understandings and legal rulings. Yet, he is set on defending the liberal democratic view which, “presupposes the existence of a state resting on a monopoly of legitimate violence, alone capable of guaranteeing internal peace and legal security for all its citizens”.⁷⁵⁶ Scheuerman says he is not interested in salvaging an orthodox view nor does he recommend “throwing the baby out with the bath water” and the baby is the highest respect for law.⁷⁵⁷

What has been called an anti-legal turn can also be called an anti-state turn or simply the anarchist turn. Feminists, anarchists and pacifists have traditionally critiqued the patriarchal and liberal democratic basis of the international legal system because of its role in defending private property, exploiting human and non-human life forces as well as

⁷⁵³ Ibid, W Scheuerman, *Civil Disobedience*, 2018.

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 1-11, 122-154.

⁷⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 143.

⁷⁵⁶ Ibid, p.80.

⁷⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 147.

damaging and degrading earth's key systems using philosophies of violence. Scheuerman correctly points out there is now much broader scepticism about the law "even among those who do not openly subscribe to 'political' or 'philosophical anarchism.'" ⁷⁵⁸

He recognises that the principle of general participation, equality and acceptance of the rule of law is possibly naïve but defends this anyway. Anarchists are the people he is intent on opposing and that would include people like Brian Martin and Robert Burrowes, who don't openly identify with the tradition but do reflect the sort of opposition to self-delusional obedience and both are anti-authoritarian and working for social defence. Legal anarchism, as I am beginning to understand it, offers real hope for social defence.

Alternatives to the military are at the same time alternatives to the state following Martin and following Burrowes both suggest that people need to become ungovernable if a new system of nonviolent defence is the goal. Civil disobedience will necessarily be unruly precisely because revolutionary nonviolence – as social defence – would effectively be the government of no one, which is also the government of everyone. Perhaps as Martin suggests, social defence is not on the agenda because, "in Europe where there was little prospect of military attack, those interested in alternatives have looked instead at nonviolent interventions and uprisings." ⁷⁵⁹ Burrowes argues the rule of law is unjust and violent. Moreover, he points out that "without the unjust and violent rule of law it would be much harder to maintain elite control." ⁷⁶⁰ For Burrowes, Gandhi's message, is that self-reliance is true nonviolent governance. ⁷⁶¹

Self-authority or in political terms individual sovereignty means referring to your feelings and your inner voice, as Gandhi and so many others call it. As Burrowes, says, this is directly at odds with the social institutions of authority. The more authority and rules humans make, immediately gives them less chance of self-reliance and self-authority. In the language of the powerful and the policy makers, this is a perfect storm, going nowhere. But, working for something and that something is social control. Burrowes is aware that war crimes committed by many states have never been charged and that whistle blowers like Chelsea Manning, "who told the truth in a courageous act of nonviolent civil disobedience" was legally tortured and imprisoned before being tried. ⁷⁶² He also recognises that his readers may have seen through the illusion of justice the legal system perpetuates. After all, as he

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid, Scheuerman, p. 147.

⁷⁵⁹ Ibid, B Martin, *Whatever Happened*, 2014, p.56.

⁷⁶⁰ R J Burrowes, *Rule of Law: Unjust and Violent*, August 2013, <https://robertjburrowes.wordpress.com/publications/>

⁷⁶¹ R J Burrowes, *The Flame tree Project to Save Life on Earth*, Ibid, WordPress, <https://dkeenon.com/Flametree.pdf>

⁷⁶² Ibid.

says, “if the legal system were just, poverty and homelessness would be illegal.”⁷⁶³ If it were just global disarmament would be well underway, as it stands, this would come down to the powerful veto vote in the UNSC. No sign of that from my research.

Other authors prominent in the so called ‘anti-legal’ turn such as Candice Delmas, describe the field as divided by two camps, namely, those who view disobedient action as just when that action is in pursuit of a democratic goal. And those who view it as a mode of liberal justice following John Rawls.⁷⁶⁴ Put simply, democratic and liberal approaches. Delmas charts the liberal differences in relation to Hobbs understanding of consent as majority rule and Lock’s account of mutuality and voluntary consent among citizens.⁷⁶⁵ Like Scheuerman Delmas notes that cases such as Edward Snowden do not meet conventional understandings of civil disobedience and are, for now, best understood as uncivil or otherwise. Delmas argues that “uncivil forms of conscientious breaches of law should not be relegated to the periphery of acceptable modes of non-compliance” and defends, government whistle blowing, which as Martin and others have shown is now a criminal offense in Australia and many other western nations.⁷⁶⁶

While Scheuerman would like to leave anarchists out of civil disobedience, N P Adams would like to keep them in.⁷⁶⁷ Adams is equally committed to the political purpose of civil disobedience as Scheuerman but less committed to a complete ethical critique in the way that Burrowes and others involved in nonviolent revolutionary strategy are. Co-founder of Extinction Rebellion, Roger Hallam is a mobilisation ‘expert’ argues that radical change is a numbers game. Applied to civil disobedience, the more people you have, the more chance of radical change.⁷⁶⁸ For Hallam and Martin would not disagree, the key challenge is getting people to participate. There is no doubt that civil disobedience works but ought it be the only way people can challenge unjust killing systems. All sorts of people participate in civil disobedience.

Ploughshares is a tradition of civil disobedience that came out of the same peace movement that animated the concept of social defence at Bradford. It is a form of Christian direct action that is aimed at turning swords into ploughshares. Similar disobedience took place at Pine Gap Joint Facility when Peace Pilgrims entered the prohibited area to witness the illegality of the operations underway at the facility. Kieran Finnane’s, *Peace Crimes* is more

⁷⁶³ Ibid, Burrowes, *Rule of Law*, 2013.

⁷⁶⁴ C Delmas, Disobedience, Civil and Otherwise, *Crime Law and Philos*, No.11, 2017, p 195-211.

⁷⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 201-202.

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid, Delmas, 2017, p 211, Ibid, B Martin, *Security*,

⁷⁶⁷ A P Adams, *Uncivil Disobedience: Political Commitment and Violence*, *Res Publica*, Vol.24,2018,

⁷⁶⁸ R Hallam, *Common Sense*, 2019, p.31.

than an eye opening read, it is a case study on civil disobedience.⁷⁶⁹ Furthermore, it's a case study that shows just how committed those people challenging the state to expose its darkest secrets need to be.

In practice academic discussion around civil and uncivil disobedience are also discussion about diversity of tactics. Peter Gelderloos, Elizabeth Frazer, Starhawk, Chris Hedges, George Lakey and many others have taken up that debate. No consensus has been reached at the philosophical level and people do change their mind about such things.

Adams keeps anarchists in civil disobedience and argues that orthodox understandings of civil disobedience do not rule out certain types of violence. Namely that against property, individual self-harm, as in hunger strikes and even self-immolation and/or violence that is conducted in reprisal. The latter is a long running debate over the role of nonviolent civil disobedience in unleashing state violence in reprisal.⁷⁷⁰

Civil disobedience is the primary method of nonviolent intervention used in XR, it is deployed frequently by Navdanya International and by peasants involved in food sovereignty and peasant rights movements. Any challenge to political authority is disobedient when laws are intentionally broken to win the hearts and minds of larger populations. Like diversity of tactics framing, the debate is over for some but far from over for others. As we have seen, following Martin, empowering people to replace the military by popular nonviolent action implies that the state can no longer rely on a monopoly over the use of 'legitimate' force.⁷⁷¹

Social defence asks people to challenge the legitimacy of the military system with a view to replacing it. Revolutionary nonviolence, the satyagraha and common sense are all subject to discussion when committed bands of people do come together to take direct action and disobey the law. When it comes to putting food on our table, farmers and peasants all over the world are bringing civil disobedience to life, so that others can have a life. As Shiva says, when you control the weapons industry, you control armies, when you control food, you control society⁷⁷². Healthy, well-fed people have plenty of energy to sustain campaigns of civil disobedience. Hungry people do not. This is a problem for social defence. It is also why I am putting food first.

⁷⁶⁹ K Finnane, *Peace Crimes, Pine Gap, National Security and Dissent*, University of Queensland Press, 2020

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid, N P Adams, *Uncivil*, 2018, p. 482-488.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷⁷² V Shiva, The seeds of Vandana Shiva, Trailer, *Seeds of Vandana Shiva*, YouTube May 20, 2021, [The Seeds of Vandana Shiva Trailer | 2021 - YouTube](#)

Chapter 7: Food Systems

Introduction

These next two chapters put food at the centre of the concept of social defence. This will bring food into the conversation with movements empowering peace through food sovereignty and agroecology. If these alternatives were ever fully assimilated into popular culture and systems did change, social defence - as an alternative to the military, might in that case, be on the agenda. In answer to the question will we chose food or war? Social defence can only answer; food.

Agroecology and the food sovereignty movements defending it show us that there are existing alternatives to globalised, state centric, capitalist agriculture; the system that secures food for some and hunger for others through its historical nexus with war, imperialism and colonialism. Agroecological methods and knowledge are currently at risk of rapid recuperation or co-optation into agribusiness even as the fourth industrial revolution accelerates the pace of transforming food systems into globally homogenous tech systems. Capitalism - and the global rules based order that has dominated global food systems during the 19th and 20th centuries -is attempting to regain the trust of global populations and reset the global political economy.

In the evolving system, conformity of farming methods; concentrated ownership of resources – land/water/soil and the financial instruments (credit, debt, insurance, taxes, wages and money) as well as the artificial technology required to be in the food system - are being challenged by the agroecological system. Agroecology is based on local biodiversity and the sharing of resources, knowledge, technology and skills that are needed to feed the world without destroying it. It is in harmony with nature and seeks broader emancipation and justice for all. If agroecology is successfully recuperated by capital, it will lose its alternative potential. That is why Shiva wrote *Oneness versus the 1%*, why farmers in India have blockaded New Delhi and sparked global solidarity. It is why after many years of working within international peasant and food sovereignty movements the Transnational Institute (TNI) in 2018 launched an Emancipatory Rural Politics Initiative (ERPI) which is focussed on generating alternatives to regressive, authoritarian politics.⁷⁷³

The struggle over how food is produced, distributed and how it sustains people is, in its broadest sense - the struggle to live within the systems of the earth we share. It is not new. Food is the most vital resource in all human societies and profoundly shapes the interrelations between the multispecies that share the planet. A female US veteran of the war in Iraq concluded that; *"The military culture that fed our bodies and kept us alive had*

⁷⁷³ <https://www.tni.org/en/page/emancipatory-rural-politics-initiative>

*done nothing to feed our souls, instead it tried to manage our humanity. The culture that had met our needs, our truer, deeper needs, was the one that we had been sent to destroy.”*⁷⁷⁴ Many people are surprised to learn “Access to food, not just the amount and type of food produced is understood to be a direct result of political decisions which prioritise the needs of some groups over others.”⁷⁷⁵

Food wars, as Walden Bello and others have explained them are part of the crisis in agriculture in which more than thirty countries experienced violent popular actions due to sharp rises in the price of food staples in 2007 and 2008.⁷⁷⁶ Across the continents, countries involved included Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Somalia, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Mexico and Haiti.⁷⁷⁷ International pressure has been building since and those in political, financial and technical authority have had to respond. The situation was blamed on a “perfect storm” and global food institutions produced multiple reports to explain why prices rose so rapidly and who those price rises benefited. Financial speculation, the diversion of staple food from less wealthy nations to the wealthiest for conversion to agrofuel, real estate speculation, extractive energy dependence as well as structural production and supply chain issues are all features of the various explanations.⁷⁷⁸

As I write this chapter in June of 2021, food wars continue and the problems that lead to them have yet to be solved. They are intensifying as crisis is normalised into the global systems of capital. Covid-19 has brought everything from the climate crisis, the agricultural crisis, the financial and the social crisis into full view. The rhetoric and some of the main initiatives now underway in the dominant system have taken up agroecological approaches - which is a good thing. By doing this they have confirmed and validated many of the positions held by its global movements for decades. However, it is argued here, following others, that only selective parts of agroecology and food sovereignty are *actually* being implemented to hide the pervasive practice of ‘greenwashing’.

⁷⁷⁴ K F Campbell, *Enemy Cuisine*, Chapter 11, Ibid, P Collinson & H Macbeth (ed’s) 2017 p.151

⁷⁷⁵ P Collinson & H Macbeth, *Food in Zones of Conflict, Cross disciplinary Perspectives*, Bergen Books, 2017, p.22.

⁷⁷⁶ W Bello & M Baviera, In F Magdoff and B Tokar, *Agriculture in Crisis: Conflict, Resistance and Renewal*, Monthly Review Press, 2010, p. 34.

⁷⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁸ Ibid., P McMichael, The Agrarian Question Revisited, *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 4, 1997, p. 630-662, justor.org/stable/1477264; P McMichael, Commentary: food regime for thought, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vo. 43, No. 3, 2016, p. 648-670, DOI:1080.03066150.1143816

Greta Thunberg put it this way: at a recent summit of global political and business leaders, “people in politics are role playing and the gap between rhetoric and reality grows ever wider”.⁷⁷⁹

The *Transnational Institute*, *Friends of the Earth* and *Crocevia*’s report into the corporate capture of agroecology summed it up this way. The World Economic Forum members know that the costs of unsustainable development could lead to their being no world to do business in; the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security (HLPE) the main advisory to the UN’s Central Food Committee (CFS) have endorsed and encouraged new initiatives such as Sustainable Intensification (SI), but these do not incorporate all the key principles of agroecology. Instead, a partial transition is being used to cover a broader “strategic capture of some of the goals, discourses and practices of agroecology... for the purposes of changing everything, so that nothing changes”.⁷⁸⁰

How the global food system is being shaped and how that agenda is being resisted within agroecology, permaculture, and food sovereignty movements frames the overall reach of this chapter. Food is everywhere and where it is not, there is no life. This fact means that exploring food systems is open to multiple research limitations and can be contained through specific disciplines such as history or culture or geopolitics and political economy, for example. In this chapter I aim to stay attuned to the bigger picture because social defence is a big picture concept. I will introduce the significant role of the Navdanya Movement as well as Dr Vandana Shiva, its founder. Her inspirational work within global seed saving movements, ecofeminism and campaigns to defend and implement, seed, water, soil, food and knowledge sovereignty is the reason why she is loved like a mother.

To assist the reader and bring coherence to the chapter I do not spend much time on the history of genocide and colonialism, the latter is still a feature of the global ‘food regime’, the former is still evident in places and its impacts are felt globally. Often colonialism is summarised as structural violence, a phenomenon which is now normalised within political and social sciences analysis and everyday life. Adding to this people are now working to avoid ecocide and focus on healing from the traumas of colonialism as they attempt to survive in the Anthropocene and put de-colonial solidarities into action.

⁷⁷⁹ G Thunberg, Speech at Austrian World Summit, 3 July, 2021, *Facebook*, <https://www.facebook.com/gretathunbergsweden/videos/491368782161207>

⁷⁸⁰ A A Fradejas, et al, *Junk Agroecology: The Corporate Capture of Agroecology for a Partial Ecological Transition Without Justice*, ATI, TNI, Crocevia, April 2020, p.7-9.

As much as possible I restrict discussions to the period of the research 2018-2021. However, in this introduction to the chapter and in the introduction to each section, it is necessary to use historical and other interdisciplinary scholarship to provide a discussion that is broad enough to carry the claims, process and movements of each section.

The subtitles: *Food and War, Food Imperialism - the main players, The Rights base of the food system, Back to the political economy, Defining the terms, Food Sovereignty – the movement from below, Agroecology and multispecies commoning, Recuperation and Reckoning*, guide the reader through the chapter and into the conclusion. It is a long journey.

Despite the evidence that agroecology, the practice of surviving indigenous peoples, now in contemporary regeneration through food sovereignty movements and permaculture has been able to produce adequate, even abundant healthy food for populations, at various scales, via biodiverse and ecological methods. Along with the evidence that small-scale farmers still feed much of the civilized world, they are still struggling and face some of the worst inequalities of the capitalist system and the brunt of climate change impacts.⁷⁸¹ On the surface agroecological and food sovereignty methods are being recommended and implemented but the surface does not represent the full picture. To understand that, as Brian Martin and his peacefully seditious allies show, we need to go to the grassroots.

Co-created within the grassroots of agroecology defends system wide solutions - but only those parts that can be aligned to the Agenda of the Great Reset and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Thus, through the capitalist world economy [is] what is being implemented from top down. “Having built an architecture of industrial growth so vast it now threatens the foundations of human society, the ruthless few in power are not going to give this up”.⁷⁸² Recuperation is a feature of capitalist culture that is used to limit social backlash and ultimately subsume challenges to it.⁷⁸³ The international community has endorsed and adopted the ambitious SDG agenda formed in 2015 and is now accelerating toward 2030 via the fourth industrial revolution and Stakeholder Capitalism. However, as Marc Cohen put it, despite all the rhetoric and calls for action and the wide governmental recognition of the problems within the food system, “fixing it is not a top priority for policy makers because other concerns and constituents take priority”.⁷⁸⁴

⁷⁸¹ J Clapp, et al, LVC, Peasant Labour Report,

⁷⁸² S Ludlam, The extinction rebels, a new movement rises, *The Monthly*, July, 2019, p. 26.

⁷⁸³ See chapter one where the process is explained and cited. See also, Ibid Shiva, Biopiracy, date explains the process, Ibid, K Kennedy, Deeply Felt, 2015, looks at the concept in David Graeber’s work.

⁷⁸⁴ M J Cohen, Let them Eat Promises, Global Policy Incoherence, Unmet Pledges and Misplaced Priorities Undercut Progress on SDG2, *Food Ethics*, Vol.4, 2019, p 175-187, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41055-019-0048-2>

Moreover, words cannot be eaten and policies that sound good, but fail due to their incoherence are in effect policies designed to “let them eat promises”.⁷⁸⁵

The promise of zero hunger (SDG2) much like the promise of leaving no one behind is not something capitalism can achieve. This is the argument of the traditional left and the post ideological justice movements of the 21st century. Working against the state while within it is simply a feature of the planetary reach of global capital and the state system.

According to my research into social defence, food sovereignty movements, agroecology and permaculture, States hinder rather than assist the uptake of agroecological methods of food production and distribution. Along with others I find the state is almost always at the center of environmental injustice and this means that those working for emancipatory social change would benefit from taking a more sceptical view of the politics of the state.⁷⁸⁶

Getting on with what must be done, as if states do not exist, the process of prefiguring alternatives to it is both needed and well underway. Prefiguring alternatives that can exist free of oppression and aggression within the State - the general anarchist trajectory - is fine until the state burns your crops, steals your land, poisons your water or tortures, imprisons and/or otherwise controls, constricts or kills you.

War, conflict, poverty and ecocide, not shortages of food are the root causes of food insecurity. On this almost everyone agrees. On the role of States, capitalism and the conditions of the existential crisis as they relate to food systems there is no agreement. Rather, there are attempts to make it look like everything is being done when the evidence says not much is being done and conditions almost everywhere are degrading further for those most at risk. Starvation is one of the worst ways in which a human being can die. That it exists puts serious pressure on everyone to un-learn the social structures and the political and ecological assumptions that agribusiness is based upon. Our times demand we move beyond human supremacy and face the Anthropocene.

Scholar of globalization from below, Walden Bello explains that beyond the “technocratic Keynesian proposals of the traditional left” are the “truly radical alternatives of degrowth, ecofeminism, food sovereignty and *Buen Vivir* or Living Well”.⁷⁸⁷ These also include the

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁶ A R, Alcala, Agrarian Anarchism and Authoritarian Populism, towards a more (state) critical-agrarian studies, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 48. No. 2, 2021, p.317, Ibid, J C Scott, The Art of Not Being Governed, 2009, J C Scott, *Weapons of the Weak, Everyday Forms of Resistance*, Yale University Press, 1985

⁷⁸⁷ W Bellow, The Far Right, Formidable but Not Undefeatable, *Agrarian Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 9. No. 3, 2020, p, 390. DOI:

notion of dying well that Donna Haraway and others have worked so hard to communicate.⁷⁸⁸ Just as significantly, Bello affirms, the center left's

*"Thorough-going compromises with and facilitation of neoliberalism has tarnished the progressive spectrum as a whole. It was from the non-traditional, non-state left that the critique of neoliberalism and globalization was issued in the 1990s and 2000s".*⁷⁸⁹

Global farmers' – peasant movements formed the International Peasant Movement, *La Via Campesina* (LVC) between 1994-1996 within the movement of movements and the World Social Forums (WFS) that issued the alarm and announced their resistance and international solidarity. As the Zapatista put it, *Ya Basta*. Enough!

'Agrilogistics' is the longer project that classified, named and administered those whose knowledge systems stood (and still stand) in its way; to be barbaric, uncivil, incapable, inefficient, unable to scale up and therefore outdated, as well as too emotional or spiritual to be of use.⁷⁹⁰ Chapter one of this thesis established the regenerative capacities of Navdanya and global agroecology and permaculture movements who continue to present the evidence that food systems have been hijacked by the elite. The financial traders and entrepreneurs of big business in partnership with or simply through disregard of nation states. The result is that people have been subject to the rules of global capitalist food system and the founding myth of scarcity.⁷⁹¹ You get the sense of it by reading the Food and Agriculture Organisations (FAOs) origin statement. Here the problems of feeding people are cast as,

"A continuing struggle" solved as "man took his first giant step forward and learned to cultivate plants and finally took his second giant step forward when he learned to domesticate animals. But these developments bought an extension of the problem for they opened the way to the population explosion of the last century. In many parts of the world, population exceeded production and in places where food could be bought many people

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid, D Haraway, *Athropocene, Capitaliocene*, 2017 *Staying with the trouble* 2018; T Morton, *Humankind*, 2018, Ibid, B Pascoe, *Dark Emu*, 2017, *Salt*, 2019,

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁰ On agrilogistics, T Morton, *Humankind: Solidarity with Nonhuman People*, Verso, 2017, p. 12-22, p. 44-47, Ibid, B Pascoe, *Dark Emu*, *Salt*, add the Monthly article post the fires,

⁷⁹¹ Nyeleni Declaration., Grass Roots Voices, Special edition, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol.36, No.3, 2009, p. 673-676, DOI: 10.1080/0336615093143079, E H Gimez, Capitalism, Food and Social Movements, The Political Economy of the Food System, *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems and Community Development*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2019.091.043>, P McMichael, The Agrarian Question Revisited, *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 4, 1997, p. 630-662, justor.org/stable/1477264. Ibid, Commentary: food regime for thought, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vo. 43, No. 3, 2016, p. 648-670, DOI:1080.03066150.1143816.

could not afford it. The second world war brought the problems of disruptions to trade and distribution of agricultural products to the fore and the FAO was brought into being during post war reconstruction”.⁷⁹²

The contemporary food system is clearly based on founding assumptions that cohere around scarcity. This myth is also violently intertwined with Debt. “The system upon which all modern nation states are built and the central issue of international politics.”⁷⁹³ Whose rigorous and respected study of the five thousand year history of Debt ultimately presented the grounds for a global Debt Jubilee.⁷⁹⁴ No such jubilee is in sight or on the agenda of global business leaders and billions of people and nations who owe money to the international bankers and traders, as such, they are in debt for their biological rights to live on and eat from the earth. In debt for their right to exist.

Debt, for David Graeber, is the perversion of a promise. Relationally, “The way violence, or the threat of violence, turns human relations into mathematics” runs through Graeber’s five thousand year history of the concept of debt.⁷⁹⁵ Violence then is the “ultimate source of the moral confusion that seems to float around everything to do with debt.”⁷⁹⁶ The impact is evident in the process of political economy that converts, love, honour, trust and mutual connectedness into numbers and is held in place by weapons and other forms of violence.⁷⁹⁷ This deeper history of debt and civilization goes back to “*ancient Mesopotamia, it finds its first expression, reappears in endless forms throughout recorded history, and still lies underneath the essential fabric of our institutions today...*”⁷⁹⁸ This view follows contemporary understanding of Deep History as history that includes indigenous cultures, not just as survivors of imperialism and genocide but as respected peoples whose knowledge and food systems we now must take notice of.⁷⁹⁹

Imperial debts have not been repaid, countries that have been colonised and classified as; undeveloped, third world, periphery, global south – they all mean the same thing, still owe the World Bank and the IMF for the structural adjustments of the 1990s. Aboriginals in Australia have been offered crumbs and still face large gaps in food security, housing, health and social access. Yet their original forms of work, could not be considered Bullshit, or

⁷⁹² FOA, origins, <http://www.fao.org/3/p4228e/P4228E01.htm>

⁷⁹³ D Graeber, *Debt*, 2012, p. 4, Ibid, K Kennedy, *Deeply Felt*, chapter 1.

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 14.

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁷ Ibid, K Kennedy, p 27.

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 14

⁷⁹⁹ Add link to ANU Center for the study of deep history, established in 2018.

useless jobs. According to the records, stories and evidence of survival, aborigines produced food and managed, *The Greatest Estate on Earth*.

Post the 1980s and the rise of the FIRE sector research shows that many people know their jobs are meaningless, they continue because they do not have the freedom to say no, they will lose their jobs to the massive reserve of unemployed, under-employed and the working poor.⁸⁰⁰ From Mesopotamia to the present State based, which is to say, trade-based agriculture, the space we are in, is a utilitarian recipe that mixes patriarchy with speciesism and anthropocentrism.⁸⁰¹ Our common home, planet earth and her nonhuman species are calculated and coded as infinitely malleable when we know the resources sustaining the planet are approaching climate change tipping points because of our treatment of the living world Indigenous people have explained this again and again as have environmentalists, ecologists and others working in solidarity with them.

Environmental philosopher and author of multiple texts in solidarity with indigenous peoples' cosmological and ecological systems, Timothy Morton reminds us of an ever present past. "In the Book of Genesis, the agricultural world is imagined as dust in which the worker labours in great pain while the preagricultural Eden with its rich affordance is sealed off forever".⁸⁰² Empty promises and the perversion of promises are put to work to assure forever never comes. Just like trauma, our visions of tomorrow are carefully managed through what Graeber called the *Iron Laws of Liberalism* and the *Idiocy of the Bureaucracy*.⁸⁰³

Equality of access and representation before the law is one of the foundations of liberalism. That foundation, much like the level playing field it implies and deploys through liberal rhetoric has cracked so wide that even those with faith in it have rebelled.⁸⁰⁴ Maintaining legal political authority and sovereign power over territory, be it through liberal forms of democracy or fascist forms of authoritarian rule, require forms of knowledge and power -

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid, D Graeber, *Bullshit Jobs: The Rise of Pointless work and what we can do about it*, 2018, p 151-283, covers the arguments and feudal trajectory of the capitalist market.

⁸⁰¹ Ibid, T Morton, 2017, T Morton, 2019, Ibid, V Shiva, 1984-2020, J C, Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An anarchist history of upland Southeast Asia*, O P Richards, Peace formation and local infrastructures for peace, *Alternatives, Local, Global and Political*, 2013, 38:4, 271-287.

⁸⁰² Ibid, T Morton, *Humankind*, p. 18.

⁸⁰³ D Graeber, *The Utopia of Rules: on technology, stupidity and the secret joys of bureaucracy*, Melville House, 2015, London, O P Richards, Peace formation and local infrastructures for peace, *Alternatives, Local, Global and Political*, 2013, 38:4, 271-287

⁸⁰⁴ R Hallam, a founding member of XR is a prime example, see also Lowry Institute add link, See chapter 3 Scheumaker's exploration of civil disobedience and questions around the new notion of State disobedience.

discourses that ensure tomorrow will never come for the those left to die of hunger, while others watch in horror and live in fear, they will be next.

The UN's 2020 State of the World's Food and Nutrition Security report tells us, following "new household survey data in relation to China, who has one-fifth of the global population, that 8.9 % of the global population are under nourished; that since 2014 the number of hungry has been rising and that if this trend continues the number of undernourished people will exceed 840 million by 2030".⁸⁰⁵ The "situation for children" is not as hard to believe as the multilateral agencies claim it is. The solutions have been put forward again and again. Yet here we are facing data and what is being made of it as the latest numerical statistics flash across computer screens. In 2019, 2% of children under five were stunted, 47.0 million were wasted and 37.6 million were overweight".⁸⁰⁶ Adult obesity is on the rise across the globe and the quality of food is degrading for billions.

In his essay "Dear John" in the context of Australia's attempt to reconcile with its truth in the culture wars of the John Howard era, Bruce Pascoe put it his way, "*there is not time for either despair or blame*" "*the problems are known, children were stolen against the wishes of their parents and did not have better lives or educations and the damages continue.*"⁸⁰⁷ Uncle Bruce Pascoe and others working to tell the truth about how Aboriginal people produced and managed sophisticated food systems including healthy stores of grain and tubers, adequate fish through aquaculture, food preservation, storage methods and medical use of plants are also helping to educate people. In this way, they facilitate de-colonial thinking and practice. In turn this empowers de-colonial solidarities and the processes of forming mutual voluntary relations. Pascoe understands that there is still much to learn about soils and how they were managed by Aboriginal people, he also understands "that colonial settlers ignored the Aboriginal method, and that contemporary Australians still suffer from the result".⁸⁰⁸

As capital intensifies under the pretext of changing everything, so does the suffering of those who continue to ignore the work and advice of Pascoe and others such as Bill Gamage: exploring and communicating the truth of how Aboriginal peoples cared for country, farmed without fences and not withstanding climate extremes over the eons, lived healthy lives in cautious abundance, until 1788.⁸⁰⁹ Bill Gamage describes "Heaven On

⁸⁰⁵ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2020. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020. Transforming food systems for affordable healthy diets*. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9692en>, p. 10.

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁷ B Pascoe, *Salt*, Black Inc, Australia, 2019, p. 174-175.

⁸⁰⁸ B Pascoe, *Dark Emu*, Magabala Books, Australia, 2014, p.63.

⁸⁰⁹ B Gamage, *The Biggest Estate on Earth: How Aborigines Made Australia*, Allen and Unwin Sydney, 2012.

Earth” in preinvasion Australia and notes that “Few Europeans understood why they (aboriginals) fought so hard, but the yams say, they say because they were food and they were totem and bound up in the co creation of shared vital food systems.”⁸¹⁰ In 2021, we are all asked to place our trust in an emergent, or not? Stakeholder capitalism. It is true that we are all stakeholders in the food wars of agrilogistics but what does that really mean?

The perspective from below suggests it means that sovereignty – power of authority - is still assigned and coded into states, corporations, consumers, soon to be stakeholders, rather than to the planet we all share and the geographical and biological systems our nourishment and sustenance comes from.

Empowering peace through food sovereignty and agroecology means each of us is a valued participant in their food system not a legalised stakeholder, left wondering precisely what stakes it is they hold, while others know that the stakes are life or death. Defending indigenous methods, women, agroecology and food sovereignty are good things for responsible humans to do. However, as Rutger Bregman put, *“to stand up for human goodness is to stand up against a hydra, to stand up against the powers that be. For the powerful, a hopeful view of human nature is threatening. Subversive. Seditious”*. Bill Mollison knew this, Shiva knows it, almost wherever you go in agroecology or permaculture this hopeful view is evident.

“The formation of the movements that defend peasant ways of life and agroecological production are not just trenches of resistance, they are seeds for the flourishing of new social, political and ecological relations”.⁸¹¹

According to the international peasant movement *Via Campesina*, capitalism has exhausted its limits and can only now offer us devastation, war and barbarism.⁸¹² According to capitalists particularly those nations and private business investors who work within the World Economic Forum (WEF) Stakeholder: capitalism will fix the world. Socialists in all of their versions, including anarchists or libertarian, communitarian socialists have been carrying flags and wearing badges demanding that capitalists Un Fuck the World. In 2021 the WEF say they are going to Un Fuck Word, quickly. As Klaus Schwab, the founder and executive Chair of the WEF put it back in 2016,

⁸¹⁰⁸¹⁰ Ibid, p. 128-129.

⁸¹¹ La Via Campesina, International Peasant Movement, *LVC, A Movement Formation*, DVD, April 17 2021, <https://viacampesina.org/en/event/new-documentary-a-movement-in-formation/> (accessed, August 2011).

⁸¹² Via Campesina, *A Movement in Formation*, DVD, 2020, <https://viacampesina.org/en/event/new-documentary-a-movement-in-formation/>

*“The speed of current breakthroughs has no historical precedent. The fourth industrial revolution is evolving at an exponential not a linear pace, it is disrupting business in every industry in every country and the breadth and depth of these changes herald the entire transformation of systems of production, management and governance”.*⁸¹³

Covid – 19 has opened the doors that are facilitating the resetting of capital and the global trading system which clearly includes the system of nation states and the multilateral, ‘private public’ institutions set up by them.⁸¹⁴ While the WEF and the SDG’s more generally, pledge to leave no one behind, you have to wonder who really believes that. Then you realise the international community believe it and the elite business and philanthropic individuals believe it. Compounding this, you also realise that many people you know have never heard of the reset or the SDGs and/or they think it is a hoax and wild conspiracy. The pace for researchers is at times incomprehensible.

The scale of complexity tends to work as a trap that seals in the status quo because the buck stops nowhere, so to speak. Being aware that agroecology and permaculture are simpler, slower ways of being in the world is important for several reasons. For one, it unsettles the pace of change described by Schwab and opens to the simplicity revolution. Well underway through agroecology; oriented to de growth, earthbound and holding strong despite Millennia of state making, grain and people. James C Scott’s epic work on State formation, presented in *The Art of Not Being Governed*, said, “If we examine the centripetal narrative of civilisation closely, it is striking how much of the actual meaning of “being civilised” boils down to becoming a subject of the state.”⁸¹⁵

Within the longer history of agroecology, today permaculture is practiced as a form of “multispecies commoning” in which *“commons must be oriented by the additional goals of emancipation, social justice and ecological sustainability in order to challenge the dominant socio-economic order”*.⁸¹⁶ Agroecology as chapter two has defined and defended it; derives from the practices of people whom agriculture, through internal and external forms of colonialist infrastructures, has persistently defined as uncivil. As James C Scott put it

⁸¹³ K Schwab, The fourth Industrial Revolution: What it means and how to respond, World Economic Forum, The Agenda, 14 Jan, 2016, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-what-it-means-and-how-to-respond>, (accessed, Sept 2021).

⁸¹⁴ R J Burrowes, Defeating the Global Elites Coup Deatete: The Great Reset, *Transcend Media Services*, March 2019, <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2021/03/defeating-the-global-elites-coup-detat-the-great-reset/>, C Todd Hunter, Author at *Off-guardian.Org*, [https://off-guardian.org/tag/colin-todhunter/\(accessed](https://off-guardian.org/tag/colin-todhunter/(accessed), October, 2021).

⁸¹⁵ Ibid, J C Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, 2009, p. 119.

⁸¹⁶ L Centemeri, Commons and the new environmentalism of everyday life. Alternative value practices and multispecies commoning in the permaculture movement, *Rassegna italiana di Sociologia*, In press. Hal-01773575, p. 7.

“agriculture, which has for so long been associated with the making of the civilized state” was not “the great step forward in human health and well-being, nutrition and leisure that had been previously assumed” and taken to be natural.⁸¹⁷ More significantly, and in line with the evidence from surviving non-warring indigenous cultures, “something like the opposite was initially the case”.⁸¹⁸

The “civilisational discourse” has such staying power that it now threatens life on earth. As Scott put in 2009, “its permanence is even more remarkable in light of evidence that ought to have shaken it to its core...despite our awareness that people have been moving back and forth between civilised, the un-civilised and the not-yet civilised.”⁸¹⁹ The poles of civilisation, are the same ideological poles, whatever name we give them that *Down to Earth Politics* and the *Chtulucene* to come have unsettled and seek to move beyond. Landing and worlding in the Anthropocene is what multispecies, regenerative cultures are attempting to do in collaboration with first nations peoples.

Indigenous perspectives are surely heterogenous, but they are also increasingly recognised in discussions and movements that share a common belief in the truth that violent dispossession from land and culture and ecological extraction of common resources continue today despite the fact that the civilisation western agriculture built is facing total collapse. Summing up a collective paper on collapse and indigenous perspectives, the authors point out that we are asked to replace the current system with “relational maturity, sobriety and accountability”, then we need to re-orient our relations towards “the visceral and embodied responsibilities of entanglement (with everyone/everything)”.⁸²⁰

This also means moving away from the privileges that the current systems have generated for some- at the expense of the immiseration of others. Food systems problems are features of human existence and can be solved through collective empowerment and egalitarian systems which is why such systems have always attracted the attention of scholars within anarchist political traditions.⁸²¹

While this chapter is not the place to take up a detailed discussion of culture wars, debates in this or any other nation, it is important to note that such debates are taking place in the research period and that heated public discussions continue to erupt in Australia. Laying siege to Bruce Pascoe’s *Dark Emu* and his being awarded a humanist accolade in 2021 is one

⁸¹⁷ Ibid, J C Scott, *Against the Grain*, 2017, p. xii

⁸¹⁸ Ibid.

⁸¹⁹⁸¹⁹ Ibid, Scott, p. 99.

⁸²⁰ Decolonial Futures Collective, *Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures*, <https://decolonialfutures.net/portfolio/preparing-for-the-end-of-the-world-as-we-know-it/>

⁸²¹ See chapter 1 definitions, See B Morris, Kropotkin, ...Ibid, A Roman-Alcala, Ibid, J C Scott,

way of taking down a person that is standing up for eons of Aboriginal survival whose food provision method is based on care for country and fair shares. Remarkably, *Dark Emu* is a book which has sold over 300,000 copies. Moreover, the debate is taking place over the use of terms the terms 'agriculture' and 'hunter gatherer' and it is also harking back to humanist problems with spirituality.

I bring this up here because I resonate with Pascoe's work as well as others who do not have a problem with aboriginal spirituality and its role in their culture and hence their food systems. As chapter one made clear I am not just writing about this, sitting at a desk in a city environment, or visiting a farm for fieldwork and then going home to connect to the power grid or flushing toilets. I am a *permie* (the affective term used within the movement) oriented agroecological farmer and an XR rebel who lives and works on Bunjalung and Walhabul land in the biodiverse region of the Northern Rivers of NSW.⁸²² I have made my own decisions and begun my own processes of unlearning and my own attempts to build decolonial solidarities and regenerative cultures.

As things have been increasingly unsettled with the arrival of the COVID-19 Pandemic, it is not sensible to predict what will happen as food systems are being reset. It is surely wise, though, to heed the warning of Scott, who argued in *Against the Grain*, that the primitive, barbarians, (whose life was better, healthier and freer than the subjects of civilization; domesticated through the deep history of state formation),

*"Willingly dug their own graves by systematically replenishing the state's manpower base, by slaving and by protecting and expanding the state with its military services".*⁸²³ This is also the warning that Brian Martin sounds in relation to the disappearance of the concept of social defence. For Martin, if you take your eye off the bigger picture, the military system, it will hit you in the face. Given its rise along with the financialization of life and big data, it seems Martin was right.

Debt has something to do with the problems inherent in the capitalist food system because it is other people that humans are indebted to. The financial system that legalises the social relations of capital, the market system, is based on calculations that even bankers do not understand. As the court cases after the GFC of 2008-2009 proved, only a very small percentage of tech people understand how the share market and trading algorithms work.⁸²⁴ To entrust our food systems to things most people will never understand is

⁸²² <https://planetcorroboree.com.au/blogs/culture-country/bundjalung-nation>

⁸²³ Ibid, p. 227-256, bring the argument home.

⁸²⁴ M L, *Flashboys: A Wall St Revolt*, Norton and Company, New York, 2014 TNI State of Power, Y N Harari, *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow*, Vintage, London, 2017, p430-432.

ludicrous, to say the least. To hold others in debt for their existence is authoritarian and it is oppressive.

War and conflict are the nexus of the global food system that is being rejected by agroecology, de-colonisation efforts and multiple peoples' food based rebellions. These groups have tracked the relationships between the chemicals designed to kill people in war and the chemicals used in 'man's giant steps forward' through agriculture. Companies including defence companies have and are still being taken to courts of all sorts for damages caused by environmental pollution and agricultural toxicity.⁸²⁵ Military operations use of extractive and toxic technologies are well known to cause environmental damage.⁸²⁶ Moreover, there are currently seven countries on the list of nation states who are accused of committing starvation crimes. That is, they are using food as a strategy of warfare.

Before them is a longer and deeper history of food and war, the subject that we now turn our attention to.

Food and War

It is widely recognised that food, war and conflict are interrelated. The food rights architecture of the 21st century is based on the outcome of the wars of the 20th century and these flow from the outcome of previous wars, conflicts and ecological conditions throughout history. Lack of food and fear of its lack are associated with war throughout our species history according to Julian Cribb, James C Scott, Alex de Waal and all of the international agencies that constitute the main players in the global food rights system.⁸²⁷

⁸²⁵ Navdanya, Seed Freedom Report, Navdanya.org, <https://www.navdanya.org/site/living-seed/seed-manifesto>, the cases in which India versus Monsanto is exemplary. Human rights lawyers and policy makers recognise the risks of wilful biological destruction of crops and lack of regard for international laws, see M J Strauss, Prospects for conflicts to spread through bilateral land agreements for food security, Ibid, Collinson & Macbeth, *Food in Zones of Conflict*, p. 197-209. See also, Foodwatch.org who track cases, <https://www.foodwatch.org/en/foodwatch-international/> (accessed, August, 2021).

⁸²⁶ Ibid, J Johansen and B Martin, Social Defence, 2019, p 209-255, W Gay, The Military Industrial Complex, in A Fiala (ed), *Routledge Guide to Pacifism and Nonviolence*, Routledge, New York, 2018, p. 255-268, N Buxton, The Elephant in the Room, *TNI.Org*, <https://www.tni.org/en/article/the-elephant-in-paris-the-military-and-greenhouse-gas-emissions> (accessed, August, 2020).

⁸²⁷ Ibid, Cribb, Ibid, FAO, Ibid, CFS, Ibid, Shiva.

It is against international laws and conventions of war to use food as a weapon in war.⁸²⁸ It is also important to note that food systems are about hearth, as well as health.⁸²⁹ Sharing food brings people together, it keeps families, communities and societies happy as well as healthy and active, or it makes them sick, weak and anxious. In this way, food is naturally the basis of the social relations of reproduction. Governments around the world have succeeded in using humanitarian aid to keep people from starving by funding the “logistics of humanitarian aid” but that are yet to account for the structural failures of the global political economy, and the cases in which they have looked the other way.⁸³⁰ Food has been socially constructed to legitimise the regulation and legalisation of existence. These facts on their own ought to make everyone want to join the direct action group, *Food not Bombs*, http://foodnotbombs.net/new_site/ who ask, “when a billion people go hungry each day, how we can spend another dollar on war”?

World War two was mainly fought, at least in Europe, over food and food wars are features of the 21st Century. In researching this chapter, the work of Julian Cribb has been particularly interesting. Julian Cribb is a member of the Australian National University Emeritus Faculty and Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Science and Engineering (ATSE). An internationally recognized author and science communicator who has produced research that explores food systems, famine and war and is therefore an appropriate source to work with. Moreover, he clearly asks what I agree is the right question.⁸³¹ Will we chose food or War? This is the appropriate question on an existential level just as it is the right question in relation to the concept of social defence.

Cribb reminds us, “the horrors of world war one’s starvation were fresh in everyone’s minds and still scarred their bodies” as politics by other means, that is world war two took place.⁸³² In his 2019 book, *Food or War*, he includes the partition of India in his case studies because “it is an early example of large scale conflict and starvation arising out of the mass movement of people”.⁸³³ As he and many others rightly warn, large scale movements of people due to war and climate breakdown are a feature of the 21st century.⁸³⁴

⁸²⁸ A De Waal, Food as a Weapon of War and the Nobel Peace Prize goes to the World Food Program: Calling out the Culprits, *World Peace Foundation*, December ,2020, <https://sites.tufts.edu/reinventingpeace/2020/12/09/food-as-a-weapon-of-war-and-the-nobel-peace-prize-for-the-world-food-program-calling-out-the-culprits/>, Ibid, J Cribb, *Food or War*, p.60.

⁸²⁹ H Slim, Foreword, Chapter 8, in P Collinson & H Macbeth, *Food in Zones of Conflict, Cross disciplinary Perspectives*, Bergen Books, 2017, p.11.

⁸³⁰ Ibid.

⁸³¹ J Cribb, Blog, Existential Risk, Is the authors blog, <https://juliancribb.blog/about/> , D Spratt, Existential climate -related security risk: A scenario approach, *Breakthrough Online.Org. Au*, Policy Paper, May, 2019.

⁸³² Ibid, Cribb, *Food or War*, p.51.

⁸³³ Ibid. p.59.

⁸³⁴ Ibid, IMCC, Ibid, D Srpap & I Dunlap, *Breakthrough* 2019

Cribb opens *Food or War* by pointing out that one of the first paintings, a *Gwion Gwion* Rock art from Australia that is 17 000 years old, depicts a battle scene that is thought by “prehistorians” to have been produced in a period of intense warming; Scott calls this period a thin Anthropocene.⁸³⁵ Multispecies are now navigating what in Scots terms is “an explosive thick Anthropocene”,⁸³⁶

Julian Cribb’s academic blog introduces his work in “the respected discipline of Existential Risk”, noting that “it is a topic you rarely see headlined in the media, on the lips of politicians or civic leaders. Yet it concerns all our fates”.⁸³⁷

If existential risk, climate emergencies and tragedies are too much for humanity to deal with, surely the food that sustains and nurtures them is the very system they should participate in with great care and respect and with knowledge of the food system that sustains them. The same governments that fund the organisations that have been set up to order the global food system are also the governments that are accused of directly or by proxy, using food as a weapon of war. I am sure most people find this abhorrent, barbaric and totally unnecessary but that has not stopped the practice.

In 2020 the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the World Food Program (WFP).⁸³⁸ The organisation that “plays a key role in multilateral cooperation on making food security an instrument of peace”.⁸³⁹ It is true that wider jurisdiction that seeks to cover changing war contexts is being “closely looked into by lawyers”.⁸⁴⁰ More laws will not solve the problems, nor can they keep up with pace of change. What they do is amass wealth for individual lawyers and judges and divert aid money back into the pockets of those giving or promising the aid.⁸⁴¹ As international humanitarian law stands, starvation as a weapon to be deployed against civilian populations is prohibited.⁸⁴² That it still goes on is one of the reasons the world has the WFP, the problem is the WFP depends upon assistance and funding from governments. Hence, its most controversial aim “is to act as driving force to prevent the use

⁸³⁵ Ibid, Cribb, p. Ibid, J C Scott, *Against the Grain*, p. 15

⁸³⁶ Ibid, Scott, p.

⁸³⁷ Ibid.

⁸³⁸ WFP, The Nobel Peace Prize, Press Release, 2020, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2020/press-release/>

⁸³⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid, de Wall, Nobel Peace Prize, 2020.

⁸⁴¹ H Healey, Who cares, *New Internationalist*, Vol 1, April 2018, Ibid, Collinson and Macbeth, eds, *Food in Zones of Conflict*, 2017, introduction and chapters 8-11 provide detailed cases from multiple perspectives.

⁸⁴² Ibid, Cribb, p. 60.

of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict”.⁸⁴³ The WFP believe “we will never achieve zero hunger without ending war and armed conflict”.⁸⁴⁴

Here Scott’s warning rings loud because what is being given on one hand is being taken away on the other and this assures war continues, business as usual. Many of the people using agroecology to end food wars are also in countries in which the disruption of food supplies is a strategy of war. Even countries not on the official watch list for starvation crimes have been accused of them. In 2013 the Indian state constituted a national right to food. India is also the home of millions of farmers, food sovereignty movements and agroecologists as well as nation in which there are of multiple internal wars. I will only mention Kashmir here but there are others.

Maintaining a military force in Kashmir, one of the largest in the world, is expensive and it requires human soldiers who need food. Even though we now have precision weapons and autonomous weapons systems that are both lethal and non-lethal, in much of the world, human soldiers defend territory through allegiance to states or non-state actors and all use armed force. Armies as the history of food and war show, have to be fed. “Wars between countries are increasingly fought by proxy, using insurgents and nonstate actors” in what is known as asymmetric or grey warfare, which “has heightened the exposure of populations and increased their vulnerability to food stress”.⁸⁴⁵ In 2008, Arundhati Roy explained that half a million heavily armed soldiers occupied Indian administered Kashmir.⁸⁴⁶ As public anger erupted due to price rises in food and the BJP’s plan to change the existing land laws of the Kashmir Valley that had been agreed in 1947, the only highway connecting Srinagar, the main city of Kashmir to India was blocked by the army and the people of Kashmir were threatened with mass starvation.⁸⁴⁷

In 2019 I spoke to a family friend. A Kashmiri who had left the country to pursue the dreams of the west and then returned as they faded and failed to materialise for him in Australia. He is the father of my sons, who were in a six month curfew in Kashmir in 2008 when the highway was blocked, and mass starvation threatened. Having returned for just under ten years between 2009 and 2019, our friend, fled Kashmir a couple of weeks before Narendra Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government finally overturned the 1947 land agreements and “the special constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir.”⁸⁴⁸ As is well

⁸⁴³ Ibid, WFP, Nobel Peace Prize, 2020.

⁸⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁵ Ibid, Collinson and Macbeth, 2017, p.19

⁸⁴⁶ A Roy, Kashmir in Crisis, The Guardian, 2008,

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/aug/22/kashmir.india>

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁸ Human Rights Watch.Org, India Events of 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020/country-chapters/india#>

known, before the announcement the government deployed additional troops to the area, shut down the internet and phones and placed thousands of people in preventative detention”.⁸⁴⁹ When he arrived back to Australia and I asked our friend how are your family in Kashmir? He replied, they are hungry, there is no food.

Disrupting food access to food and stealing food that locals (civilians) trapped in the war have grown to subsist on is happening in Kashmir and other places on a regular basis.⁸⁵⁰ It is often the hidden side of the nexus between food and war. More recently, the Lebanese military is reportedly on the verge of collapse because its soldiers cannot afford food.⁸⁵¹ These are global issues that reveal the nexus of food and war. And, like all global issues they play out differently in different geographical territories and within these impact people in different ways. That is how food imperialism works as a mode of external and internal colonialism.⁸⁵² Sub Saharan Africa has clearly been left behind, indeed it accounts for 17 of the 22 countries that were in “a state of protracted crisis” in 2010.⁸⁵³ Failed states are often attributed as the reason for wide scale food crisis, but why do states fail and who gets to say they failed? These questions form part of the larger explanation of structural violence and the current incoherence in policy that relates to human rights and the SDGs.

De Wall’s Peace Foundation realise the WFP “have to be discreet when it comes to identifying the men who make man-made famine” but De Waal can be transparent and name them as well as attempt to expose them. He has been writing books about food and war for decades. To him and I don’t see who would disagree, the seven cases that the UN secretary general should swiftly report to the Security Council are,

South Sudan, where military forces are also blocking humanitarian aid as well as raiding communities and reducing them to starvation, Yemen, where the entire country is in food crisis, with a warning that famine is possible, Syria, where Bashar el Asaad’s regime used starvation as one of its main strategies within the civil war, north-eastern Nigeria, where Boko Haram and the Nigerian army are jointly causing mass starvation, Venezuela, Myanmar and Ethiopia complete the list.

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁰ Personal conversation with Ibrahim Baktoo, December 2019, A Roy, The Ministry of Upmost Happiness, Add article Hamilton, UK, 2017, A Roy, Intimations of an Ending: The Rise of the Modi and the Far Right, November 22, 2019, *The Nation*, La Via Campesina, Palestinian Rights are Human Rights, LVC.Org, May, 14, 2021 <https://viacampesina.org/en/la-via-campesina-palestinian-rights-are-human-rights/> (accessed August, 2021)

⁸⁵¹ A Vohora, What would the Collapse of the Lebanese Military Look Like, *Al Jazeera*, July 3, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/7/2/what-would-the-collapse-of-lebanons-army-mean> (accessed August, 2021).

⁸⁵² J Latham, Agriculture’s Greatest Myth, *Jonathan Latham. Net*, April 13, 2021, <https://jonathanlatham.net/agricultures-greatest-myth/>, Ibid, V Shiva, *Biopiracy*, add the Shiva Reader, P Mc Michael, Food Regime Analysis, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 2012 – 2021.

⁸⁵³ Ibid, Collinson and Macbeth, (ed’s.) 2017, p.5.

I will not go into the details of these cases, De Waal and Cribb, Collinson and Macbeth all provide graphic details. The point is It is that in each of these cases international humanitarian laws are breached and the agreed human right to exist and be nourished (Universal Declaration of human rights, 1948) comes second to other concerns. Which are, the maintenance of a hegemonic global political architecture and the geopolitical quest for land and resources that are historically struggles that involve national sovereignty, religious and political ideology as well as economic and military power. All of which are interconnected phenomenon. While I cannot provide details, as I have done with Kashmir, I will speak briefly to cases to assist the reader through the chapter. It is also important to do this because the methodology underpinning the thesis is prefigurative, based in the ethics of care for the planet, care for people and fair share – return of surplus.

In the case of Ethiopia and the rapidly declining conditions in Tigray, the strategy is to win the war quickly. The government has established humanitarian corridors but that does not guarantee aid gets to area's outside of the Ethiopian governments armed control, nor does it deal with militias who act outside of the official military.⁸⁵⁴ More significantly the Ethiopian military has lost its hold on Tigray and communications with aid organisations have become erratic.⁸⁵⁵ Meanwhile, everyone faces more urgent food needs. Ethiopia is of course a country well known for famine and food based politics are part of its modern history. In the horn of Africa in 2020 “the Ethiopian, president, the Eritrean President and the Leader of the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPL) are directly involved, or at risk of becoming involved (according to international humanitarian law) of committing starvation crimes.”⁸⁵⁶

The case of Myanmar is deeply troubling. Aung San Suu Kyi’s commitments to nonviolence have inspired people everywhere.⁸⁵⁷ She made huge personal sacrifices to become the democratic leader of Myanmar and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. Come 2019 she was facing genocide crimes in the international humanitarian court in the Hague. Described “as a text- book case of ethnic cleansing” of the minority, Muslim Rohingya.⁸⁵⁸ In 2021 the situation is even worse as the military junta have jailed Suu Kyi and many others and reinstated total military rule over one of the geographically largest nation states on the

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid, De Waal, WFP, Peace Prize, p. 2.

⁸⁵⁵ A De Waal, Ethiopia, Tigray Crisis, Warnings of Genocide and Famine, *BBC*, May 29, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-57226551>,

⁸⁵⁶ Genocide watch.org, De Waal, International Criminal Court of Justice, Cases and Situations, ICC, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/Pages/cases.aspx>, A Guterres, Recognise and Act on Warnings of Genocide, *UN News*, 9 December, 2020 <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/12/1079592> (accessed, July, 2021).

⁸⁵⁷ A San Suu Kyi, *Freedom From Fear*, add in from my book case, was particularly powerful for me and sold (copies).

⁸⁵⁸ UN, News, Aung San Suu Kyi to appear at ICJ as UN Rights expert urge greater protection for Rohingya, 10 December, 2019, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/12/1053121>

Asian continent. In each of these cases food is strategically used as a weapon of war and the longer the war goes the worse the situation becomes.⁸⁵⁹ Just think about it. The War on Terror is endless, the genocides have and still are taking place, and many committed people are now attempting to avert ecocide. The forever war can simply be understood as omnicide.

More is made of Syria in Appenidix 1 because the Experiments of Rojava take place within the Syrian War. The men who make famine are the same men who are responsible for wars and when they are not directly responsible, they are running the companies that are funding both the wars and the organisations that attempt to hold them to account through international humanitarian laws. This internal contradiction is senseless, and it is cruel. "In 2020, the price of food in Syria is 236 % higher than it was a year earlier, bread shortages are common across the country including in the autonomous "Kurdish administered northeast, known as Rojava".⁸⁶⁰ Needless to say, the "five million people inside the autonomous region, under siege by Turkey and sanctions imposed on Syria by the US"⁸⁶¹ are facing a humanitarian nightmare. In chapter 8 we look into the ways in which the Emergency Committee for Rojava⁸⁶² is working in solidarity with the people of Rojava and the international movements that support them.

I was in Yemen in 2010. In the capital Saana, one of the few cities and areas that westerners could visit, young people told me that they knew they would be the next Iraq. That powerful nations would conduct a war by proxy in their homeland. This war by Proxy that Australia is also taking part in, is illegal.⁸⁶³ It is a war against children, the future and an international disgrace for which there is no justification.

As we know, legality is not morality, and everyone is not equal before the law in any nation. More significantly, laws can be replaced seemingly overnight, as the case is through the pandemic. So why not institute nonviolent jurisprudence and join the processes of transition that Navdanya, LVC, Food Sovereignty and permaculture argue need little regulation?

Using food as the basis of demilitarising and dismantling the enclosers of the military system could be achieved through agroecology, permaculture and local governance systems of

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid, de Waal, Peace Prize, 2020, Cribb, 2019.

⁸⁶⁰ Rudaw. Org , Skyrocketing food prices, flooding, pandemic: Syria makes grim start to 2021, January, 21, 2021, <https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/syria/21012021>

⁸⁶¹ Ibid, Rudaw. Org, Rojava Calls for Opening of al-Yarubiyah Border, June 3rd, 2021, <https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/syria/04072021>

⁸⁶² <https://www.defendrojava.org/our-mission>, see also, A Huff &P Huff, Now is the time to stand up for Rojava, April, 2019, <https://www.redpepper.org.uk/rise-up-for-rojava-turkey-us/>

⁸⁶³ Ibid, K Finnane, *Peace Crimes*, 2019, p1-14.

participatory democracy. Even amid the Syrian war, the Rojavans have demonstrated this. There are few signs this is going happen in the current contexts but that does not mean it is not possible. Julian Cribb's work points out that, "contrary to the popular imagery of war, hunger is a far greater killer than military action or disease, though it interacts with both".⁸⁶⁴ It is also important to recall that even if there were no military industrial, tech, media complex, transitioning to biodiverse food systems and local contexts of production and distribution, is challenging because of the damage that has been done to the planet, particularly over the past two hundred years. The world is running out of land suitable for agriculture and the concept of landless food is developing so that food choices would expand to include algae, fungi and insects.⁸⁶⁵

Closed systems such as aquaponics and various proposals such as David Holmgren's, *Retro suburbia* which lays out a transmission to resilience through permaculture, Bob Waldrop's *Ipermie: How to permaculture your urban environment*, various Green City campaigns on smaller levels such as Roof Top and Planter Box gardens fed via recycled water systems are being experimented with as solutions of food, agricultural and land crisis.⁸⁶⁶

Cribb's fundamental argument is not new and follows the idea of converting Swords into Ploughshares. The idea is to reduce the money spent on killing technologies in the name of defence, that is on weapons and other systems of violence pursued through technology and redirect that money into ecological and participatory food systems. A kind of withering away of the military. The ultimate problem of implementing this type of gradual transition for Cribb, is politics. His view is that "no political belief, no matter how ardent its followers, has ever produced a truly just compassionate society, and none ever will."⁸⁶⁷ For Cribb and many others, "the nation state reached is used-by date, as a structure for human self-organisation and we may need to explore different structures of self-governance if we wish to survive."⁸⁶⁸ Such alternative structures, I contend here, are evident in the concept of Social Defence and in the peer to peer networks of agroecology, the multispecies commoning of permaculture and the alternatives being prefigured by Navdanya, XR, Rojava and Rainbow Family. Cribb does not go into these, indeed he described agroecology, in his 'future of food' chapter, as

⁸⁶⁴ Ibid, J Cribb, *Food or War*, p. 1.

⁸⁶⁵ W David, Food choice: a response to landless food concept, *AGR.Org*. Vol. 11, 2021, p277-284, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13165-021-00355-1>

⁸⁶⁶ Ibid, Cribb, *Food or War*, p. 253-279 canvass the major initiatives, D Holmgren, *Retrosurbia*, website, <https://retrosurbia.com/>, <https://permies.com/t/20627/iPermie-permaculture-urban-lifestyle-Bob>, Sadly Bob passed away in 2019.

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid, Cribb, *Food or War*, p. 199.

⁸⁶⁸ Ibid, p.199.

*“an approach that combines innovation and tradition has emerged, one that could transform the way we grow food, it’s called agroecology and it places ecological science at the center of agriculture. It’s a scrappy movement that’s taking off globally”.*⁸⁶⁹

Julian Cribb is a respected science communicator and liberal thinker, he has explored food, famine and science for decades and published, clear evidenced based accounts of the global and some national contexts of food wars. Cribb has presented technological, social, scientific and ecological solutions currently underway, but he is clearly just catching up with agroecology. He ultimately makes each of us responsible for the future which means each of us must make careful and wise choices if we want to survive the existential threats of the 21st century. Cribb is far from alone in his call that we must cease, as a species, to bury our heads in the sand. This means focussing on the solutions. To achieve this, it is recognised through Cribb’s work and that of others cited in this section and within agroecology and LVC that each person is responsible for caring for country and each other. Significantly, “the most obvious and dangerous delusion is that, because supermarkets are usually full of food, the global food system is secure and there is nothing to worry about.”⁸⁷⁰

As he rightly suggests, “the weight of evidence advanced in his book Food or War and those that proceed it suggest that aim of reducing global military spending by 20% is achievable – by recognising investment in sustainable global food supply as, in effect, defence spending.”⁸⁷¹ Cribb is not anti-capitalist in the way that LVC is. He is not seeking transformation of the political economy but nor is he saying this won’t happen if we take responsibility for and care of food. Eric Holt- Gimez has been writing on the political economy of food systems. In his assessment of the contradictions of capital – labour and surplus production – capital accumulation on a finite planet and the counter movements.

As is now obvious to everyone, “capital continues to accumulate wealth.”⁸⁷² Holt- Gimez summed the situation up nicely, we have a corporate food regime, a food counter movement and radicals. He believes most people including himself are in the counter movements and progressive and that the radicals are in LVC. His vision is that the radicals will merge with the progressives to create the social pressure needed to enact structural change at the level of the political economy.⁸⁷³ As capitalism is seeking to stabilise and manage its internal contradictions, we are all waiting to see how this will play out. Coming back to Cribb and building upon the vision of forming common post ideological and

⁸⁶⁹ Ibid. p. 258.

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 199.

⁸⁷¹ Ibid, p. 218.

⁸⁷² E Holt-Gimez, Capitalism, food and social movements: the political economy of food system transformation, Journal of agriculture, food systems and community development, 9 August, 2018.

⁸⁷³ Ibid, p. 32-35.

decolonial relations we can see that he is standing up for a hopeful vision of humankind, a responsible thing to do, he is also avoiding self-delusion, a mature thing to do.

As he says, *“we are in the process of creating an Earth-sized mind through thousands of organisations on the internet and social media, it is planetary democracy in practice, it will replace the failing nation states, the tyranny of transnationals and the fantasy of world government”*.⁸⁷⁴ Food is the sixth existential risk of the 21st Century, as Cribb understands it and diligently presents the evidence to support his view. He has summarised these risks into three easily understandable issues,

“famine/food insecurity from any combination of man-made or natural causes (including deliberate and unintentional acts) leading to conflict; food deprivation as an overt weapon of politics or conflict and food insecurity resulting from conflict but potentially spawning further confrontations”.⁸⁷⁵

Cribb, the WFP, the World Peace Foundation and many others cited throughout this thesis have no doubt that if we fail to sustain the food needed to nourish populations “there will without a doubt, be war”.⁸⁷⁶ Clearly, they are right, we are failing and there is war on-over-in -everything.

People can save the world through food. This is the message of agroecology and permaculture; it is the message of Via Campesina and the movements for food sovereignty. It is the message of scholars, Julian Cribb, Alex De Waal, it is the message of Bruce Pascoe and others paying attention to indigenous people seeking decolonial solidarity. The solutions are here, the concept of social defence is here. Everyone is mobilised, according to the hyperbole. But they are not all revved towards the same processes, despite the claims of this or that government or corporation. The Australian government has not committed to food sovereignty. Quite the opposite, it has committed to the WEF’s agenda as well as the SDGs.⁸⁷⁷ We will return to some of the solutions Cribb explores in *Food or War* and in *Surviving the 21st Century*, as well as the arguments from food sovereignty and agroecology in later sections of this chapter. First it is judicious to understand who the main players of the food system are before moving into the social semiotic definitions and discursive structures of the ruling system.

⁸⁷⁴ Ibid, p.201.

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid. Cribb, p.1.

⁸⁷⁶ Ibid, Cribb, p 60.

⁸⁷⁷ Australian Government, UN Food Summit 2021, <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/market-access-trade/un-food-systems-summit-2021>, explains the governments support of the Agenda for food organized by the WEF.

Food Imperialism - The main players

*“The combined appropriation and redirection of food production and circulation underpins the socially constructed food scarcity and permanent hunger experienced by, at conservative estimates, over 1 billion humans”.*⁸⁷⁸

Food imperialism is the process that has turned “the Global South into a world farm for a minority of global consumers, concentrated in the global north and in strategic states and urban enclaves of the Global South”.⁸⁷⁹ The key institutions of food imperialism are, the United States and the Britain and other European and Asian nations that formed the multilateral global institutions post the second world war. These are known today as the multilateral system of international politics, called the rules based order. Often referred to as the international community are the various partnerships between civil society, the private companies and multiple governments that constitute the global community. In this way, the global political economy and trading system as well as the human rights systems shape the food systems most people depend on today.

The United Nations established in Paris in 1948, and now based in New York is the origin of the rights-based system. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, (FAO) established in Canada in 1945, and now based in Rome conducted the First World Food Survey in 1946 and FOA formed the Committee on World Food Security, (CFS) in Rome in 1983. CFS, is self-described as the “foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform of all stakeholders to work together to ensure food security and nutrition for all”.⁸⁸⁰ CFS works through “scientific and evidence based reports that are produced by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food and Nutrition Security, (HLPE) and through the work supported by the FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) the World Food Program (WFP) and members of the CFS advisory group”.⁸⁸¹

The World Bank (WB) The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) are among the main players of the political economy. The supposed power vacuum in international politics that was filled through US hegemony is being challenged by Russia and China. But the institutions forged during US hegemony are still those that decide the rules of the food system. The WTO has significant influence and power within the international system. Post the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade, (GATT) “which became effective in 1948” and proceeded through ‘rounds’ of negotiations up until

⁸⁷⁸ P McMichael, The World Food Crisis in Historical Perspective, Ibid, Magdoff and Tokar, *Agriculture and Food in Crisis*, 2010, p.51

⁸⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁰ CFS, Homepage, About CFS, <http://www.fao.org/cfs/en/>.

⁸⁸¹ Ibid.

the Uruguay Round in 1994⁸⁸², the US and associated nations have dominated agricultural production, supply, access and value, inclusive of the pricing of food and the value of labour, that is wages within global agricultural supply chains.

I do not need the research to tell me how wages are set in monocultural global food farms and therefore in the capitalist political economy. Philip Mc Michael, Vandana Shiva, Walden Bello, Gimez- Holt, Frances Moore- Lappier, Julian Cribb, GRAIN.org and so many others I cite in this chapter and the thesis have explained the processes. In line with the lived nature of this research my own experience of trying to make a living in the food system is not just relevant in relation to the provocation. It shocked me. Even though I am a trained political scientist and have taught subjects and lectured on the political economy, society and the environment.⁸⁸³

I worked as a fruit picker, the job that Australians apparently do not have the skills to undertake or the type of work most Australians are unwilling to undertake, between November 2014 and November 2016. Farmers do of course set wages in the private market, but they do so within the variants and fluctuations of global commodity prices and the financial markets as well as national regulatory systems. Many if not most farmers are in debt and those who are not are the wealthiest farmers in every nation. The landed gentry is the colloquial term. Even if they pay the minimum wage in countries like Australia, they are part of the larger system of financial debt and taxation that has been exposed through various official commissions and is now high on the agenda of those preparing the WEF.⁸⁸⁴ A leading global trade visitor to the farm I worked on was praised for his role in reducing wages on US farms down to \$3 an hour. I have video evidence of food dumping and environmental degradation. I am sitting on that, so to speak but happy to make it available to an examiner.

Working in humanity's most vital system is classified as unskilled work and when skills are recognised, they are ranked among the lowest in terms of remuneration and conditions. Picking was only called off when the berries were over 42 degrees, it did not matter how hot it was for the workers. There was no shade at all for the first year I worked on this farm. I personally approached the owner, who turned up from time to time. Most of the other workers were surprised that I would just walk up and ask reasonable questions about the

⁸⁸² B Wilders, *The Vanishing Free Market: The Formation and Spread of the British and US Food Regimes*, *Journal of Agrarian Change*, Vol. 9, July 2009, p.334, Ibid, P Mc Michaels, 1996, 2016, 2021.

⁸⁸³ K Kennedy, lectures for CPACS, Political Economy of Peace and War, 2011-2012, available at CPACS, USYD.

⁸⁸⁴ Ibid, add link to WEF, Swab fair tax, Brexit and post, tax, Panama Papers, add link, K Schwab, WEF, What is stakeholder capitalism, 1 December, 2019, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/12/why-we-need-the-davos-manifesto-for-better-kind-of-capitalism/>

working conditions. The owner was aware that I was speaking for others with or without their consent. I was told I was a silly girl, for suggesting that health and safety breeches were taking place. I knew the temperature forecast was to exceed 40 degrees. Things did change, slowly and the following year, market style shade tents were set up for pickers to take breaks in.

Worker's cars were regularly damaged on the country roads and often workers were called in only to be told to sit and wait until the berries were ready and if they were not ready due to weather conditions, workers were told to go home. These are among the best conditions in Australia and at one of the largest monoculture fruit farms in the southern hemisphere. Few locals work there now and temporary immigrant workers and # Pandemic, Covid-19, students and travellers on working visas were employed. There are well known reasons for this, though these are not what are usually published. The truth is, local workers are more likely to speak up, as I did, they are also unlikely to earn a living wage, picking fruit.

Agricultural and Horticultural workers are guaranteed between, \$21 and \$ 23.00 an hour in the current industrial system of award agreements.⁸⁸⁵ Piece work is not minimum waged guaranteed in practice even if it is in theory. I am fit and healthy and I found blueberry picking required a lot of skills, particularly concentration. These were attainable through observation and practice and the work can be very enjoyable and interesting. However, I can prove through my pay slips and the rates of pay per kilo that it was impossible to make a basic income. The big promises of making enough money in the season to carry you over until the next were empty. Investigative journalists and food writers have exposed the reality of working on farms that monocrop and export their produce and I could write this chapter on what I learned as a blueberry picker but that is not the point of the chapter or the thesis.

The two questions to be answered are, why the wages for such vital work are so low and why do most Australian's think the work is of little value? The answers are interconnected and well known. Value is attributed to money and organized through what Graeber called Bullshit Jobs, and this is one way of explaining how it is lawyers and the CEOs of University are paid wages that are far higher than those of horticultural and agricultural workers.⁸⁸⁶ LVC have produced multiple reports on global peasant labour and some of these will feature in section four of this chapter. The International Labour Organisation has also tracked

⁸⁸⁵ Fair Work, Ombudsmen, Horticulture: Piecework Rates, *Fair Work Ombudsmen*, <https://horticulture.fairwork.gov.au/pay-piecework-rates>; Australian Government, Fair Work, minimum wages, horticulture, *FairWork.Gov.Au*, updated, July 2021, <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/minimum-wages/pay-guides>, (accessed, Sept, 23, 2021).

⁸⁸⁶ Ibid, D Graeber, Bullshit Jobs.

conditions, as have the Industrial Workers of the World.⁸⁸⁷ If the capitalist system was working, Klaus Schwab would not be lobbying to change it, there would be no Davos Manifesto and the attempt to use Covid-19 to reset capitalism would not be underway. In Schwab's words, there are three options,

*"Shareholder capitalism, embraced by most Western corporations, which holds that a corporation's primary goal should be to maximize its profits. The second model is state capitalism which entrusts government with setting the direction of the economy and has risen to prominence in many emerging markets, not least China. The third is Stakeholder capitalism, a model which positions private corporations as trustees of society and, is clearly the best response to today's social and environmental challenges."*⁸⁸⁸

Everyone knows the system is unfair, inequitable, exploitative and needs changing. But can the WEF or the WTO, do it? Can the UN, do it? Or should it be left to the peasants *"fighting for agroecology, food sovereignty, dignity for migrants and waged workers, land and territory, climate and ecological justice and peasant rights"*.⁸⁸⁹ Agroecology proceeds today based on *"the International Forum of Agroecology celebrated in 2015 in Nyeleni, Mali"*.⁸⁹⁰ It is understood as a key tool for building food sovereignty and cooling the planet and was also viewed as emancipatory.⁸⁹¹

LVC, have recently responded to the pandemic by producing an *International Manifesto for Life*, that denounces food imperialism and calls for the immediate suspension of public debt and military activities, the end to unilateral US coercive measures and the re-organisation of states towards de-commercialisation of life and the rebuilding of public services and social protection for workers.⁸⁹² They also call for the WTO and United Nations *"to assume their financial responsibilities to access financial resources hidden in tax havens and place limits on governments who are undemocratic"*.⁸⁹³

⁸⁸⁸ Ibid, K Schwab, We need the Davos Manifesto for a better kind of capitalism, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/12/why-we-need-the-davos-manifesto-for-better-kind-of-capitalism/>

⁸⁸⁹ LVC, What are we fighting for, <https://viacampesina.org/en/what-are-we-fighting-for/>

⁸⁹⁰ Ibid, *Junk Agroecology*, TNI, Friends of the Earth Crocveia, 2020, p.6.

⁸⁹¹ Ibid, Ibid, LVC, Nyeleni Declaration, 2015, 2017, add the link.

⁸⁹² LVC, International Manifesto for Life, April, 2021, <https://viacampesina.org/en/in-defense-of-life-over-profit-vaccine-and-public-free-healthcare-for-all-now/>.

⁸⁹³ Ibid.

Agriculture is the system that allows states and corporations to regulate existence. This is biopolitical control and it is now at the molecular level through 4th industrial revolution technologies. In the original GATT of 1948, Agriculture was largely removed.⁸⁹⁴ Which indicates there was no general agreement on the tariffs and trading of food, or the land, water, seed and soil needed to produce it. Nor a guarantee for workers within the food system. That removes everything needed to feed people. Yet it happened, with the effect that it enabled nations to set agricultural policy through price protections and the expansion of export markets needed to deal with surplus production.⁸⁹⁵ The WTO still proudly claims it “is the only international institution dealing with trade rules”.⁸⁹⁶ It has faced ongoing opposition from advocates within peasant, farmers, food sovereignty and agroecological movements from its inception.

“Our rich world per capita footprint is about eight times as big as it would ever be possible for all the world’s people to sustain”.⁸⁹⁷ Yet it is the system that has been imposed through food imperialism. Conventional development, the Aid Engine of colonialism as Ted Trainer, author of the *Simpler Way*, so clearly put it “is a form of plunder”.⁸⁹⁸ Aid is used to pay for wars as well as to contribute towards their end. An end which will never come because peace has been sealed off forever through grey war and the endless machinations of the elite that keeps the system going. Attempting to balance humans and others with the interests and systems of financial trading and anthropocentric growth is, in my view, unsustainable. No one needs a right to exist or derive nourishment from the earth, this like all concepts is socially constructed and taught through culture.

The rights base of the global food system

Human rights have developed through western legal systems and have a range of problems. But they are here and either they are abandoned, or they are agreed as the basis for swift action following the proposals of La Via Campesina and others involved in agroecology, permaculture and regenerative culture more broadly. The argument from below is that implementing the solutions requires more than stakeholder capitalism, it requires, the cancellation of debt both personal and public, the resetting of value towards food and a rapid decentralizing of political power. The opposite is happening. Hence human rights remain the hope for many. And, without hope, insanity prevails. Too much hope, on the other hand, means recalling the arguments of JC Scott and Brian Martin, as well as the wide spectrum of critical discussion of Covid- 19 underway in(Off-guardian.org, www.off-guardian.org, www.off-guardian.org

⁸⁹⁴ B Winders, The Vanishing Free Market: The Formation and Spread of the British and US Food Regimes, Journal of Agrarian Change, /vol. 9. No. 3 July, 2009; Ibid, P McMichael, WTO.org history, add weblink,

⁸⁹⁵ Ibid, Wilders,

⁸⁹⁶ WTO, Explainer, https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/whatis_e.htm ,

⁸⁹⁷ T Trainer, *The Simpler Way, Collected Writings of Ted Trainer* (eds) S Alexander and J Rutherford, Simplicity Institute, Melbourne, 2020. P. 4.

⁸⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 8

garudian.org, Global Research, www.globalresearch.ca.org, and other critical media and peace journalism, such as www.transcend.org) that by cooperating with our oppressors, we are digging our own graves. Respect for all is one thing, cooperation or not, is a different prospect.

Abandoning the notion of rights will not? help anyone, so what is left to reckon is just how rights can be agreed and who is responsible for dealing with breaches of them in what way? If the legal institutions set up to defend them disappeared, would anything change? Imagine that rights became the responsibility of every human, and that they were agreed in local contexts, decided at peoples' assemblies within economies based on shared resources. This is part of imagining nonviolent and agroecological jurisprudence, part of the work of conceptualizing social defence which is explored in chapter eight. XR. For now, let us go back to the present and the food rights system we have.

All people have a right to food. Article three of the original declaration of human rights does not specify food but it does state "everyone has a right to life, liberty and security of person". The specific human right to food was declared by heads of state in Rome in 1996. Prior to this universal right, many states and regions have specific food rights of which the FAO provide a comprehensive list, <http://www.fao.org/right-to-food-timeline/filter-the-timeline/en/>. In theory all humans on the planet have these rights and various declarations have been made in the search to achieve them.

The UN signed up to the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 of which zero hunger is goal number 2. Just prior to this in 2014 the CFC and civil society organisations agreed on Principles of Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems, (RAI).

"Cross cutting the RAI principles is a dangerous commitment to balance human rights alongside international investment rules; small holders are conflated with large holders; farmers' interests are associated with breeders' interests and agroecology is recoded as sustainable intensification".⁸⁹⁹

Covid 19 has ruptured this dangerous balancing act and is exposing the deep failures of the food system. Compounding the situation are the power rivalries between China, Russia and the United States and the revolutions underway across the globe. NATO defends the current

⁸⁹⁹ S Kay, TNI Political Briefing on the Principles on Responsible Investment in Food and Agriculture, *TNI.org* 11 March, 2015, p.9 , <https://www.tni.org/en/briefing/political-brief-principles-responsible-investment-agriculture-and-foodsystems>

systems within a Eurocentric Trans-Atlantic,⁹⁰⁰ core while news headlines continue to push the idea of a new cold war as China and Russia compete with the United States for dominance or equivalence in the world system. Attentive, thinking people know there is a deep social war, a war against the poor, the earth, women, children and multiple species. The need for systems change is now so obvious, the UN, upon request from the WEF have convened an emergency Peoples' Food Summit (UNFSS) for July 2021. The UN publicity for the Summit contains the remarkable claim that "Scientists agree that transforming our food systems is among the most powerful ways to change course and make progress on all seventeen sustainable development goals" <https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/about>

Research from key figures within food sovereignty and peasant movements, the summit is set to empower global value chains at the expense of human rights.⁹⁰¹ It is almost as if the right to food did not exist or that it is walled off in a mysterious place that no one could possibly understand. Concerns are on the rise as the WEF agenda seeks to displace the foundational and central role of CFS and the Civil Society Mechanisms of the FAO as well as movements such as Via Campesina and allied ecological justice movements that have worked within the rights-based institutions of the UN in a spirit of collaboration and good faith.

At the time of writing, the hastily convened United Nations Food System Summit (UNFSS) 2021 is cause for greater concern rather than celebration of shared goals and a process of sensibly getting on with implementing the known solutions. The upcoming summit is after all, based on the realization that hunger and conflict cannot be solved separately; that achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No 2 of zero hunger, following the 2030 Agenda requires the transformation of global food systems.⁹⁰²

Movements opposing the infrastructures set up to facilitate the current reassertion of the US based global food system have long argued that the WTO is undemocratic, unfair, unjust, ineffective and violent.⁹⁰³ Tensions are high and hyped as global agencies continue to report

⁹⁰⁰ NATO, Welcome, briefing pages, *NATO International*, <https://www.nato.int/nato-welcome/index.html> ,

⁹⁰¹ M Canfield, M D Anderson and P Mc Michael, UN Food System, 2021, Dismantling Democracy and Resetting Corporate Control of Food Systems, *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, Policy and Practice Review, April 2021, doi:10.3389/fsurfs.2021.661552. p. 3.

⁹⁰² A Guterres, Foreword, Food Security Information Network, (FSIN), Global Report on Food Crisis, 2021, Joint Analysis, *fsin.org*, <https://fsin.org/2021/global/> .

⁹⁰³ V Baird, Just, open and Green: 14 ways towards a better global trade, *New Internationalist*, Trade in Turmoil, Jan, Feb 2019, p 34-36, P Mc Michaels, The Agrarian Question Revisited, *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1997, Ibid, Commentary, 2016, V Shiva, The Hijacking

rising food and nutrition insecurity and warn of the increased risk of social breakdown and therefore of conflict and war.⁹⁰⁴ Food has everyone mobilised. *The International Military Climate Council* on Climate and Security, (IMCCS 2021) Report put it this way:

*“As the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated, many countries are unprepared to manage multiple crisis simultaneously... the confluence of economic shocks and climate change related drought and flooding increased food insecurity globally, risking greater instability and conflict in many parts of the world”.*⁹⁰⁵

According to this report militaries are increasingly relied upon as first responders, and they are overstretched. The international report was confirmed for me when I attended the recent *Land Forces Civil Defence Conference*. One of the most interesting speeches reminded the audience that among the 200 trade exhibitors at the Land Forces Arms Exhibition, only one mentioned the SDG's and the laws that require companies to limit environmental damage.⁹⁰⁶ I will bring elements of this conference up in further detail in chapter 3.

The international military council are seemingly amplifying the warnings underpinning the evolution of XR, as their expert researchers believe: “the global governance system is ill-equipped to deal with the security risks posed by climate change” and that international law is modelled on outdated understandings of the current risks and/or has not been written with these risks in mind.⁹⁰⁷ International humanitarian rights laws and laws of war form the basis of protections and mechanisms that ought to hold those who commit food crimes to account and hence take responsibility for reparations and compensation. The opposite is happening because food is still used as a strategy in war and war itself is now ubiquitously everywhere. Ironically it is the pandemic that is holding the system together, or not, depending upon where you are and who you are and what you do to make a living.

of the Global Food Supply and other essays in *The Vandana Shiva Reader*, University of Kentucky Press, 2014, p 1-329

⁹⁰⁴ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2020. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020. Transforming food systems for affordable healthy diets*. Rome, FAO.

<https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9692en>,

⁹⁰⁵ S Brock (CCS), O-Leighton Barrett (CCS), L Birkman (HCSS), E Dick (HCSS), L Emanuel (CCS), S Goodman (CCS), K Guy (CCS), S Kabbej (IRIS), T Middendorp (Clingendael), M Rademaker (HCSS), F Remmits (HCSS), J Tasse (IRIS), Eds, E Sikorsky & F Femia, "Key Risks and Opportunities," an excerpt from “The World Climate and Security Report 2021.” Product of the Expert Group of the International Military Council on Climate and Security, *Center for Climate and Security*, June 2021, https://imccs.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/World-Climate-Security-Report-2021_Key-Risks-and-Opportunities.pdf

⁹⁰⁶ Add in the details from the program and my notes.

⁹⁰⁷ Ibid.

Back to the Main Players of the political economy

Democracy has become synonymous with capitalism, but capitalism is also compatible with fascism and totalitarian forms of communism. In theory the global system is open to everyone because everyone is interconnected and no one will be left behind, according to the liberal ideas of trickle down wealth that promises to level the playing field of opportunities for all individuals, via equality in relation to the laws of the nation and international laws a nation has agreed to abide by. What a lie. This is simply not how the ultimate claim of sovereign authority over territory and peoples has played out. On the face of it, all the global institutions want the same thing, systemic change towards safe, healthy, sustainable, equitable and culturally relevant food for everyone. But this has all been said before and still disinformation, secrecy, surveillance and the rise of popular authoritarianism “eviscerates democratic institutions, even as it uses them to legitimate its dominance”.⁹⁰⁸

Until very recently agroecology and food sovereignty representatives attended and participated in UN food summits, particularly its rights-based agencies. As Marc Edelman and Priscilla Claeys both of whom have participated in the rights system and are authors within peasant studies explain, “*Seventeen Years of Struggle. That is what it took for United Nations to adopt – on 17 December 2018, the Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP)*”.⁹⁰⁹ Groups such as LVC have always kept a distance from the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO whom they historically viewed as adversaries, but they have reluctantly and slowly pursued engagement with the UN with an emphasis on the FAO and the CFS.⁹¹⁰

Just three years on from UNDROP, Mathew Canfield, Molly Anderson and Philip Mc Michael’s review of the July 2021 food summit, explains why the 2021 summit is being boycotted by many significant food sovereignty groups and concerned scientists. To begin with, the summit has been called by the WEF, rather than the CFS and the FAO.⁹¹¹ The chair of the UN Sustainable Development Group signed a “strategic partnership with the WEF who are promoting the interests of the worlds’ largest corporations through the same ideas that agroecology has advanced through food sovereignty. This move is intended to allay opposition to neoliberal globalization through a new vision of “stakeholder capitalism and multi stakeholder global governance”.⁹¹² Once again, civil societies’ agroecologists are having the conversation at another table. LVC and the movement of movements opposing

⁹⁰⁸ Ibid, Scoones, et al, *Emancipatory Rural Politics*, 2018, p. 4.

⁹⁰⁹ P Claeys & M Edelman, *The United Nations Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas*, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol No. 47. No. 1, 2020, p. 1-68, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2019.1672665>.

⁹¹⁰ Ibid. p, 1.

⁹¹¹ Ibid, Canfield, et, al UNFSS, *corporate reset*, 2021, p 1.

⁹¹² Ibid, p. 2.

neoliberalism convened a parallel food summit in 1996 and they fought for inclusions and rights that, after further dialogue and struggle, led to the reform of the CFS in 2009.⁹¹³

The strategic partners of the WEF, “the premier private public partnership organisation in the world,” include, Adani Group, African Rainbow Minerals, Allianz, Alibaba Group, Astra Zeneca, Bank of America, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Blackrock, BP, Chevron and Credit Suisse, Deutsche bank, Dow, Facebook, Goldman Sacks, Google, Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing, Morgan Stanley, Mastercard, Pfizer as well as other major banks and financial asset management corporations. WEF is packed to the hilt with media and information corporations, banks and other institutional and individual capital, investors, insurers, mining conglomerates, info tech and urban developers. WEF is clearly partnered with and advanced through the world’s most powerful private-public companies and institutions.⁹¹⁴ The changing role of the WEF reflects what the Lowy Institute, one of Australia’s most influential liberal think tanks, has called the new world disorder.⁹¹⁵ As “liberalism faces its greatest challenge in decades” and “great power rivalry – geopolitics” between China and Russia and the Western US lead powers” form the narratives that pervade global politics, western policy making is shifting even further towards undiluted national self-interest.⁹¹⁶ On the other hand the Australian government and members of the opposition government is backing the SDGs and the WEF Agenda.

The problem is that the WEF is now the key stakeholder in the UN food rights architecture. According to multiple views, the July 2021 summit is set to usurp the CFS and FAO, while it removes the threat to its agenda that alternatives pose. As Canfield, et al, remind us in a demonstration of their lack of good faith and honesty, “powerful states have continually undermined the vision of good global governance to maintain control”.⁹¹⁷ At this point in time, as things are unfolding, it is difficult to keep up with developments and not sensible to predict what will happen. Nor is it possible. As such, the conclusion to this chapter will be post-scripted prior to final submission, as the Summit will have taken place by then.

Defining the terms of the global food system

To understand the power of the language and terms used to describe the global food system, their relation to violence and their authority in society we need to remember that discourse, following Foucault and his many interlocutors, functions as a social relation and has a genealogy. Through its political and economic assumptions, calculations and

⁹¹³ Ibid, p 5-7, Ibid, CFS, HLPE, Coming to terms with the terminology, thirty-ninth session, 2012, p 6-29 covers the evolution and participants.

⁹¹⁴ WEF, Our Partners, WEF.org, <https://www.weforum.org/partners#S> .

⁹¹⁵ B Lo, Corona Virus, China, Russia and the West, Lowry Institute, Analysis, 29 July, 2020, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/global-order-shadow-coronavirus-china-russia-and-west>

⁹¹⁶ Ibid.

⁹¹⁷ Ibid, Canfield, et al, UNFSS, corporate reset, 2021, p. 6.

institutions, food security is now part of the “disciplinary grid of society”.⁹¹⁸ Discourses “don’t form by chance, they are organized alongside dimensions constituting a discursive order”.⁹¹⁹ Today’s key terms in the disciplinary grid of complex society as they relate to food are *food security, sustainability, nutrition, equity and health*.⁹²⁰ Within this order there are multiple discourses that evolve and change over time. For example, the discourses of production, consumption, access, and policy making, and scales such as household, local, national and global are utilized frequently.⁹²¹ Food security, like many things that are state centric, is not defined by the hungry or the insecure, it is defined by their representatives within the ‘international community’ and the administrative arms and policy think tanks of nation states and the familiar global institutions.

Defining what a food system is has proved to be a challenge for the food agencies of the UN. Agroecologists and permaculture theorists have no such trouble because systems thinking has always been a pivotal part of their processes. As far as the term food system goes, there is no heated debate for them. Heading into the latest summit, the scientific group of the FAO, did not want to simplify complex inter relations or lean toward those that are focused too narrowly on particular economic arrangements and interests and hence sought a balanced approach. Thus, the FAO definition of food systems means that “following systems theory and in view of the SDG’s, food systems definitions are both normative and positive...least we fall into the dead end of wishful thinking”.⁹²² I am left wondering what the dead end is and why I cannot wish upon a star.

Pressing on, Five Action Tracks, underscore how food systems ought to be and what they ought to do.

1. *Ensuring Access to Safe and Nutritious Food for All (enabling all people to be well-nourished and healthy)*
2. *Shifting to Sustainable Consumption Patterns (promoting and creating demand for healthy and sustainable diets, reducing waste)*
3. *Boosting Nature-Positive Production at Sufficient Scale (acting on climate change, reducing emissions and increasing carbon capture, regenerating and protecting critical ecosystems and reducing food loss and energy usage, without undermining health or nutritious diets)*

⁹¹⁸ M Foucault, Truth and Power, Ibid, P Rainbow (ed), *The Foucault Reader*, 1991, p.53.

⁹¹⁹ A Borch & U Kjaenes, Food Security and food Insecurity in Europe and analysis of the academic discourse (1975-2013), *Appetite*, Vol. 103, 2016, p 141.

⁹²⁰ J von Braun, K Afsana, L Fresco, M Hassan and M Torero, Food Systems, Concept, Definition and Application for the UN Food Summit, *UN, Food Systems Summit, Scientific Group*, discussion paper, 2020, <https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/leadership#scientific-group> FAO, Food Systems, add the link and documents,

⁹²¹ Ibid, p.142.

⁹²² Ibid, J von Braun, et al, scientific group, concept and definition, 2020, p. 8.

4. *Advancing Equitable Livelihoods and Value Distribution (raising incomes, distributing risk, expanding inclusion, creating jobs) and*
5. *Building Resilience to Vulnerabilities, Shocks and Stresses (ensuring the continued functionality of healthy and sustainable food systems).*⁹²³

Moving into the details, these tracks support “engines of growth” that add value through salaries to workers, profits to entrepreneurs and asset owners, taxes to governments, benefits to consumers and impacts on the socio-cultural and natural environment”.⁹²⁴ In seeming ignorance of the evidence that the planet has reached its limits; agroecology and the rights peasants have struggled for are simply being ignored as the values at the heart of their systems are being recoded and then sold on the financial market to keep the disciplining powers of debt, crisis and food insecurity in place. De-growth, following slow methods of simplicity and ecological thinking, learns from and with the earths’ natural systems by caring for them. This is a foundational aspect of the alternatives. With movement into that literature, schisms open to expose the lies built into the discourse of food security.

As the CFS put it “reaching agreement on a technically and politically acceptable definition of food security and its relationship to nutrition security has not been straightforward.”⁹²⁵ The concepts underlying the term food security took shape “in 1943 as forty-four governments met in the United States to consider the goal of freedom from want in relation to food and agriculture”.⁹²⁶ Freedom from want, while still associated with poverty came to be “a secure adequate and suitable supply of food for every man, woman and child, where secure referred to the accessibility of food, adequate referred to the quantitative sufficiency of the food supply and suitable to the nutrient content”.⁹²⁷

Throughout the 1950s and 60s policies focused on increasing productivity and marketing the grains of the civilized, primarily wheat and rice and “the longer term goal of reducing poverty dropped out of sight”.⁹²⁸ By the 1970s more and more institutions had been created and new rights declared. In response to harvest failures, rising prices and market shortages the FAO, the CFS and the Administrative Committee on Coordination Sub Committee on Nutrition (ACC SCN) were created. By the 1980s consumption and access moved focus from the global supply chain to individuals and households, in turn this led to the pursuit of three

⁹²³ Ibid.

⁹²⁴ Ibid, p. 15.

⁹²⁵ Committee on World Food Security, Coming to terms with terminology, Thirty-ninth Session, Item V.a. CFS, Rome, Italy, October 2012 add link, p.3.

⁹²⁶ Ibid, p. 4.

⁹²⁷ Ibid.

⁹²⁸ Ibid.

specific goals, “adequacy of food supplies, stability of food supplies and markets and security of access to supplies”. In 1996 the World Food Summit, defined food security as:

“When all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their food preferences for an active and healthy life”.

Following this definition across the FAO and related agencies, the four pillars of food security are: availability, access, utilization and stability. The change evident from the 2000’s “acknowledges the importance of key nutrition concerns” and recognises that “food security is also nutrition security and that this requires education and healthy environments”.⁹²⁹ The CFS believe that use of the overlapping terms, food and nutrition, when applied to security, causes confusion. That is certainly true.

The Australian government’s report on the impacts of the pandemic on food security espouses something completely different to WEF, CFS, IMCC and others previously cited here. In January 2021 the message is that global food chains are in good order and that prices are low.⁹³⁰ There is no food crisis here. The Australian government is “committed to strengthening the sector and ensuring it remains as competitive as possible, because stronger farms mean a stronger Australian Economy”.⁹³¹

Australia’s White Paper on Agriculture, just one of its key policy documents, has identified five priority areas of action backed up by a “4 billion dollar investment in farmers”. The government does not consider food security a risk in Australia because; “Economic prosperity and trade guarantee Australia’s food security” (Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, 2018). ABARES has noted climate change and the availability of resources as possible challenges.

Their stance overall is that Australia can assist the “approximately one billion people” in a state of food insecurity in other parts of the world, by “providing technical assistance to improve agricultural productivity in developing countries and continuing to seek improvements in international trading rules that allow the flow of food to where it is needed” (ABARES, 2018). Australia helps to facilitate the positive view of aid making it clear that is understood in many movements - as white saviour thinking, paternalistic and

⁹²⁹ Ibid, CFS, coming to terms, p. 6.

⁹³⁰ ABARES, Analysis of Australia’s food security and the Covid-19 pandemic, *ABARES ISIGHTS*, 13 January, 2021, <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/products/insights/australian-food-security-and-COVID-19>, (accessed, May 27, 2021).

⁹³¹ Australian Government, Agricultural White Paper, <http://agwhitepaper.agriculture.gov.au/>”.

patriarchal. Australia is a coordinating nation state, part of the five eyes strategic military alliance, and other strategic coalitions that oversee and reproduce the current system. Australia appears not just out of step with the human rights institutions it supports. It is also out of step with the advice of key public intellectuals and Australia's own Food Sovereignty Alliance (ASFA).

The ASFA is a member of the *International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC)*, *L Via Campesina*, *Urgenci – the International Network for Community Supported Agriculture* and works with *Slow Food International* and many of its Australian chapters.⁹³² ASFA contributed to a recent government inquiry into the bargaining power of farmers producing perishable goods and how this impacts global supply chains. The ASFA believe

*“the inequities that exist between the players in dominant, industrialised supply chain is not assisting ailing rural communities, is creating unacceptable animal welfare outcomes and is a direct driver of multiple ecological impacts contributing to drought, fires and climate change.”*⁹³³

ASFA supports and advocates for agroecology. For them, “agroecology aims to minimise toxins and conserve soils” and other biodiverse farming systems, that “re-establish ecological relationships that can occur naturally on the farm, instead of monocultures input-output paradigm and its associated external costs.”⁹³⁴ ASFA have noted the ways that DIY methods of exchanging food, such as local markets, could respond to the pandemic by “pivoting to household delivery” albeit with long hours. Other farmers “were driven back into the competitive supermarket system, in which shelves were emptying.”⁹³⁵ The Australian government is not heading this way at the moment, but it is well aware of the movements of peasants and others taking multiple forms of direct action as they prefigure the alternatives they advocate.

Prices to farmers of produce: fruits and vegetables, grains and pulses, tubers and herbs are going down in most places. In others the local currency is worthless on the global market but still hinged to it. Big Ag farmers, particularly beef farmers in countries like Australia are making a killing as the price of cows continues to spike upwards.⁹³⁶

⁹³² A Morris, T Jonas, ASFA, Response to ACCC's Perishable Agricultural Goods Inquiry, June 20, 2020, p.3, emailed to aginquiry@accc.gov.au

⁹³³ Ibid, p. 5.

⁹³⁴ Ibid, p. 6.

⁹³⁵ Ibid. p. 10.

⁹³⁶ Ibid, ASFA, p. 11, Ibid, J Latham, *Agricultures Greatest Myth*, Ibid, C Todd Hunter, *Indian Farmers Protests*, 2019, 2020, 2021, Shiva, *Farmers Protests*, Jivak, *Navdanya*, 2020.

The WTO also claim that “global commodity markets are in a strong position to respond to the crisis”.⁹³⁷ WTO members account for 67% of global exports of agriculture and agri-food products and 60% of imports. According to the WTO, supply chain “disruptions and distortions” are the key concern along with concerns over export restrictions which would adversely impact the world’s poor, including agricultural workers.⁹³⁸ Aside from these, WTO believe “global food markets remain well balanced and cereal stocks are more than adequate to meet demand” and they urge G20 leaders not to impose penalties on food used in humanitarian aid.⁹³⁹

The FAO and the CFS, the two major global bodies that track food production, distribution and access, believe that Covid 19 is threatening food security globally and that price rises are increasing volatility and risk.⁹⁴⁰ For Australians the advice of the current government is “that Australia consumers can be confident in our food security”, we are one of the most food secure nations, we export (70%) of our production and our agricultural exports act as a shock absorber that keeps domestic food supply stable.⁹⁴¹ Who is right, the FAO, the WTO, WEF, the Australian government, LVC, the international peasant movement and those tracking the green washing, that is the recuperation of agroecology as well as getting on with sustaining and broadening its methods? Coming back to the nexus between food and war and the question of who will lead the transitions recommended through agroecology and urban permaculture, the transition into food for peace. Julian Cribb is not alone in his findings, they bring him into consonance with LVC, ecofeminism and intersectional feminist movements more broadly. For Cribb it became abundantly clear that most of today’s destructive behaviours are predominantly by males.

“It is males not females, who start wars. Who release the most carbon and toxic chemicals, create deserts, clear fell forests, plunder and pollute the oceans and slaughter wildlife, Men usually like to solve their problems quickly, using machines, weapons and chemicals. Women on the other hand, tend to be more cautious, they usually consider the needs of future generations, they do not as rule start wars or pillage the biosphere. To survive the 21st century, we will all need to think more like women and less like traditional males.”

As climate impacts push us towards the planet’s limits and warnings continue to be ignored, it is as true now as it has been at any time in the history of state formation, that “the task of

⁹³⁷ WTO. General Council Committee on Agriculture, 29 May, 2020.

⁹³⁸ Ibid,

⁹³⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁰ Ibid, FOA, CFS, see also C O’Brien & T Lei Win, World Economic Forum, WEF, Covid-19 caused food insecurity to soar, climate change will be worse, WEF,

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/01/climate-change-covid-coronavirus-environment-food-insecurity-security-global> (accessed May 27 2021).

⁹⁴¹ Ibid, ABARES, Analysis, Jan 2021.

understanding power can only begin in the daily struggles, at the grass roots level, among those whose fight is located in the fine meshes of the web of power".⁹⁴² That is where the next chapter takes us.

⁹⁴² Ibid, M Foucault, P Rainbow, (ed), Reader, 2005, p.58.

Chapter 8: Food Sovereignty – the movement from below.

If there is one reality that resonates strongly within food sovereignty research, it's that "it is happening at a rate that is outstripping academic debates."⁹⁴³ Scholars and movements have engaged in reflexive research over the use of the term FS because existing sovereignty is held with nation states and defended by militaries. Yet to exist it requires legitimation and donations – taxes and fines, in the case of states. As critical agrarian scholar Roman – Alcala suggests, because of sovereignty's lineage, it has been considered in relation to a territorial state. "However, the link between power, control, authority and territory is more tenuous than ever."⁹⁴⁴

The question of the state looms large in FS research and discussions continue as the movement upscales and continues to be represented by LVC, Navdanya and regenerative cultures more broadly. Roman Alcala's understanding of state sovereignty "as a form of authority grounded in violence" resonates with his understanding of food sovereignty as aspirational.⁹⁴⁵ Put clearly in the Oxford Political Dictionary, sovereignty is the claim to hold ultimate power and authority.⁹⁴⁶ "If states claim sovereignty, then the structure of the international system is by definition anarchic" and it is only the acceptance and mutual recognition of state sovereignty including its territorial borders, that is the basis of the international community of states. Like all concepts it is both *de rigueur* to say as well as true that the term sovereignty is contested and used in different contexts.

Shifting the concept to empower food, water, seeds and other natural resources including the earth is what peasant movements have achieved through their struggles 'for another world'. LVC is the voice and movement formed "by millions of small and medium sized farmers, landless people, rural women and youth, indigenous people, migrants and agricultural workers from around the world".⁹⁴⁷ LVC has held international conferences and its website provides enough information for food sovereignty and agroecology to be swiftly brought into educational curricula around the world. Researchers have engaged in critical dialogue with food sovereignty as a concept and many participate directly in its political movements. Peasants have come together in horizontal spaces to deliberate the key concepts and their website makes all of these available. Together people have taken up direct action and civil disobedience as part of the struggles for food sovereignty.

⁹⁴³ A Shattuck, C M Schiavoni and Z VanGelder, *Globalizations*, vol. 12, issue. 4, 2014, p.428

⁹⁴⁴ R Alcala, Conceptualising components, conditions and trajectories of food sovereignty's 'sovereignty', *Third World Quarterly*, Vol, 37. No. 8, 2016, p.391.

⁹⁴⁵ Ibid. p.392.

⁹⁴⁶ Add name, Oxford Reference Online,

<https://www.oxfordreference.com/search/search?source=%2F10.1093%2Facref%2F9780199207800.001.0001%2Facref-9780199207800&q=sovereignty>

⁹⁴⁷ Viacampesina.org, Who we are, <https://viacampesina.org/en/international-peasants-voice/>

“The movement was born in 1993 in recognition that small farmers needed to develop a common vision and struggle to defend it.”⁹⁴⁸ To date six four yearly conferences have taken place internationally and the movement is committed to political decentralization of power between all its regions. Key positions are rotated, and the movement participates in global struggles for rights. As we have seen, the movement secured the declaration of the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, in 2018.

In the *Nyeleni Declaration* on Food Sovereignty in 2007 those present made it clear that they were fighting against *“Imperialism, neo liberalism, neo colonialism, patriarchy and all systems that impoverish life, resources and ecosystems and the agents that promote the above such as the World Trade Organisation, free trade agreements, transnational corporations and governments that are antagonistic towards their peoples.”*⁹⁴⁹

Via Campesina operate through peer to peer – farmer to farmer networks and have attempted to maintain relate distance from states and particular party allegiance. Moreover, they have made feminism a basis of the movement. In 2013 they produced a manifesto,

“We reiterate our commitment of resistance in the field, of full participation in the organisations, to fight violence against women until it has been completely eradicated, to condemn war and contribute to peace building with social justice, to defend Mother Earth and to fight to recover good living for all humankind.”

This manifesto was reindorsed in 2015 and in 2020 Via Campesina produced its first book in which it advances a peasant feminism. Still standing in the way, *“The capitalist and patriarchal system continues to grow throughout the entire world, violating our territories, our bodies and our minds. It continues to accumulate ever more capital to the detriment of the planet and humankind’s future.”*⁹⁵⁰ Today the way the food sovereignty movement currently understands agroecology is reflected in the Declaration of the International Forum for Agroecology celebrated in 2015 in Nyeleni, Mali. It is reflected in the ASFA statement previously mentioned and it is evident in permaculture and natural farming systems.

⁹⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁹ Viacampesina.org, Nyeleni Declaration 2017,

⁹⁵⁰ <https://viacampesina.org/en/vii-international-conference-womens-assembly-declaration/>

The conference recognised that “our ancestral production systems have been developed over Millennia, and during the last 30 to 40 years this has come to be called Agroecology”.⁹⁵¹ The purpose of the 2015 gathering was to find common understanding of agroecology as a key element in the construction of food sovereignty and to develop joint strategies to promote agroecology and defend it from co-optation.⁹⁵² The popular pressure applied through the multiple struggles across the world has “caused multilateral institutions, governments, universities and research centres, some NGO’s, corporations and others to finally recognise agroecology”.⁹⁵³

“However, they have tried to redefine it as a narrow set of technologies, to offer some tools that appear to ease the sustainability crisis of industrial food production, while the existing structures of power remain the same”.⁹⁵⁴

For now, the definition of food sovereignty following the movements which formed it and have reworked it is:

“Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations.”⁹⁵⁵

To further the discussion of food sovereignty I will now introduce some of the scholarly discussions within FS, agrarian and peasant studies literature before moving on to the scaling up of agroecology and therefore food sovereignty. Representing a global voice is clearly challenging, but best done by spreading power so that it becomes flat and by including as many voices as possible. As Edleman, et al put in a special issue of the *Journal of Peasant Studies*, in 2014, “big questions have been asked of Food Sovereignty, yet it remains to be seen if they can achieve transformations or whether they will enact changes in the system as it is”.⁹⁵⁶ Just as its chances of succeeding seem to be growing, so to do the powers lined up and ready to stop it. Nahendra Modi told the WEF that the biggest threat to

⁹⁵¹ Foodsovereignty.org, Declaration of the International Forum for Agroecology, Nyeleni, 2015, <https://www.foodsovereignty.org/forum-agroecology-nyeleni-2015-2/>

⁹⁵² Ibid, Ibid, Junk Agroecology, 2020, p.6

⁹⁵³ Ibid.

⁹⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵⁵ Via Campesina.org. Food Sovereignty Now, 2020, <https://viacampesina.org/en>

⁹⁵⁶ M Edelma, T Weis, A Baviskar, A Borras Jr, S. M. Holt-Gimez, E. Kandiyoti, D & Wolford, Introduction: critical perspectives on food sovereignty, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 2014, p. 927DOI: 10.1080/03066150.2014.963568.

progress is the anti-globalisation movements.⁹⁵⁷ By this he means the food sovereignty and agroecology movements.

In 2017, the journal *Globalisations* published a series of articles on the politics of food sovereignty. Edited by Annie Shattuck, Christina Schiavoni and Zoe Van Gelder the book republishes selected articles, mostly published around 2015. The editors ask questions about how food sovereignty can assist women defeat and defend against violence. In 2021 LVC address this in their new peasant feminism, which I will return to shortly. Many of the concerns raised and movements intersections with rights have been updated by UNDROP in 2018. As the editors put it back then, “the movement has simply become much more extended in reach and much more multifaceted that it was two decades ago.”⁹⁵⁸ Phillip McMichael joins this collection and takes up the “land question in food sovereignty.”⁹⁵⁹ Summarising the political economy response, “*the challenge for the food sovereignty movement is, ultimately to disabuse state and development authorities and private sector interests of the assumption that all ‘small holder’ farmers represent business in waiting.*”⁹⁶⁰

The principle of food sovereignty depends largely on rights claims which are collective and have been expressed in grassroots resistance to food security and land grabbing.⁹⁶¹ Hence the campaign that led to UNDROP to shift the norms of rights, not just to collectives, but to the right to reclaim land for agroecological regeneration, to re-establish cultural identity and territory and rebuild food self-reliance.⁹⁶²

In their analysis of UNDROP Priscilla Claeys and Marc Edelman introduce some of the key players whose work “describes a new kind of peoples diplomacy and an innovative bottom up process of building alliances, lobbying and authoring international law.”⁹⁶³ Of course the burning question now is implementation of the rights. Ndiakhate Fall is one of the informative interviews in Claeys and Edelman’s long read in Grassroots voices article who has been active in the peasant movement since 1985. He has been part of the process leading up the declaration and now helping to keep LVC - “We need to harmonise our positions and strategies for the dissemination of the declaration.”⁹⁶⁴

⁹⁵⁷ N Modi, These are the three greatest threats to civilization, WEF, Annual Meeting, 2018, R Chainey (ed) Uplink, [worldeconomicforum.org, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/01/narendra-modi-davos-these-are-the-3-greatest-threats-to-civilization/](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/01/narendra-modi-davos-these-are-the-3-greatest-threats-to-civilization/)

⁹⁵⁸ Ibid, A Shattuck, et, al, *The Politics of Food Sovereignty: Concept, Practice and Social Movement*, 2027. P.9

⁹⁵⁹ P McMichael, The Land Question in Food Sovereignty, in Ibid, A Shattuck, et, al, p. 14-31.

⁹⁶⁰ Ibid, p.20.

⁹⁶¹ Ibid.

⁹⁶² Ibid, p.21.

⁹⁶³ Ibid, P Claeys and M Edleman, *The UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people*, p.1.

⁹⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 38.

At the time of writing, Ndiakhate's words, "we have not yet won the battle but now recognition of peasant rights by the UN is already a victory and we must now continue to fight for its implementation," read more like a loud alarm than a cautions. Peasants and others in social movements have boycotted the UN Food Systems Summit and once again have held their own alternative, peoples' inclusive convention; coproduced their own documents and begun to shift in response to the latest challenge from those in authority in the ruling food systems. All of this is happening as I write, so the most I can do here is add the links to their reformed consensus and strategies.⁹⁶⁵ Concern with the way rights do not challenge capitalism, neoliberalism or patriarchy but instead sweep them into its orbit run through Claes and Edelman's interviews. I have no doubt the process and the successful adoption of the declaration gave voice to people historically excluded. On the other hand, "International law is inherently connected to capital and presupposes the legal concept of private property." Engaging with the international legal system also legitimates it and helps to sustain the very system that peasants are seeking displace.⁹⁶⁶

The politics and formations of food sovereignty offer sustenance to the concept of social defence and enhance the prospects of transitions with multispecies justice. Empowering food as the movements show is one way to empower people to challenge oppression and aggression. To do this organisation and communications are needed to sustain the direct actions being undertaken to defend food producers and the planet. Sitting at their own table, LVC and others are clear that food sovereignty means, "land, water, seeds, bread and solidarity."⁹⁶⁷ The summit is seen as a distraction from the real problems the planet faces, has been formed by the world's top 1000 corporations and is "*disproportionately influenced by corporate actors, lacks transparency and accountability and diverts critical mass and resources away from the solutions needed...*"⁹⁶⁸ UNFSS is accused of offering false solutions, renaming failed schemes and ramping up corporate abuse of power. Peasants finally made it onto the rights menu of the UN only to see the system hijacked by the very people it is designed to stop.

⁹⁶⁵ Extinction Rebellion, Global Support Report, 2022, <https://cloud2.organise.earth/s/sJoQg2Bti5HXmdK#pdfviewer>; M Lokatin, S Rathor, R Read, Rushing the Emergency? XR, Story and Vision, <https://xrstroud.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/XR-Story-Vision2020-Leaflet.V11.pdf>. NB: I responded in writing to this document to Lismore XR, I received no response, I also used this text as a basis for conversations with other rebels in the ACT in 2020.

⁹⁶⁶ Ibid, p.8.

⁹⁶⁷ LVC, Several Movements boycotting the UN Food Systems Summit, will hold counter mobilisations, *ViaCampesina.Org*, July 20, 2021, <https://viacampesina.org/en/several-social-movements-are-boycotting-the-un-food-systems-summit-will-hold-counter-mobilizations-in-july/> (accessed October, 2021).

⁹⁶⁸ Ibid.

Agroecology and Multispecies Commoning

On a shared planet communing is what happens even as the world is privatized. Its resurgence in responses to the Anthropocene are numerous. They reflect a similar pattern in that the commons are claimed as something new and research centers claim money to enact commons policies that in effect, help to destroy what is common. The unfettered access to resources that nation states claim through their sovereign national security systems is not the commons that multispecies justice movements and agroecology have in mind. Laura Centemeri put it this way in her exploration of permaculture as multispecies communing, “The commons is not necessarily antagonistic to other (dominant) social systems: it is simply structured on different values.”⁹⁶⁹

In their 13 Attitudes, The Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination, introduce permaculture this way, “*the more we study the living world the more we come to realise that the tendency is actually to associate, build relationships and cooperate.*”⁹⁷⁰ They continue in a post capitalist spirit, “it’s a revolution disguised as gardening.”⁹⁷¹ In permaculture the idea is to find the solutions in the problem and to reduce energy, to do more with less, regardless of who or what is doing the work. As a regenerative process permaculture is a response to the compounding crisis. “It is not a set of agricultural techniques and has shifted to a form of prefiguration and is both a method of design and a form of design activism.”⁹⁷² Permaculture reflects contemporary networks and affinities of individuals, collectives and communities who practice permaculture in diverse ways all over the world.

Engaged in sympoiesis, making with multispecies entanglements, permaculture values and embodies the principles of sharing with the others they make the world with and caring for that world. The problems of domination in anthropomorphic agricultural systems are rejected by permaculture and agroecology. More diversity - not less - is the founding and guiding approach. Sharing knowledge through commons media brings permaculture into peer to peer processes and into solidarity with food sovereignty, seed sovereignty movements.

The Permaculture Institute run by Jeff also hosts <https://www.permaculturenews.org/>, a news and information platform, forum’s, courses, shared stories and more. Having instigated a global project known as Greening the Desert, Australian and international permaculture teachers are showing others how to regenerate and transform landscapes, presumed inhospitable to food production. One striking example is the Dabaab Refugee

⁹⁶⁹ L Centemeri, Commons and the new environmentalism of everyday life: Alternative value practices and multispecies communing in the permaculture movement, *HAL Ouvertes*, Hal-01773575, 2018, In press, <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01773575>, p.6.

⁹⁷⁰ Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination,

⁹⁷¹ Ibid.

⁹⁷² Ibid, Centemeri, p. 7.

Camp. Here, Natalie who,” is a Resilience and Livelihoods coordinator for DRC Africa and has just spent three weeks in Dabaab helping our technical staff to learn about permaculture.”⁹⁷³ Funded by the European Union, the camp will transition to design based on permaculture. Swaling is used to buffer from flooding, chicken tractors, in-situ composting biochar and other methods of agroecology/permaculture have been demonstrated and facilitated by Natalie. There will be six large food forests across three camps; a pilot of the chicken compost system and buffer swaling, waste is being reduced and 150 small scale food systems at household level are being piloted.⁹⁷⁴ Initiatives like this show the promise of permaculture in transitions with justice.

Dabaab refugee camp would most likely be home to people who already know agroecological methods, peasants and farmers fleeing wars that Europeans have had a large part in creating. The literature is so abundant and the evidence of agroecology’s capacity to help heal and rebuild common food cultures based on sharing that makes it such an appealing alternative to capitalist agriculture and food imperialism. As Food Not Bombs say, solidarity not charity. This is not to say this, and other such initiatives have no value, that would be absurd, the point is not to lose sight of the unlearning required to decolonize. Something permaculture seems to struggle with.

Rafter Saas Ferguson et al, interviewed 25 prominent permaculture teachers and practitioners across the United States as a way of hoping to understand more about “the solutions based design framework of permaculture and transitions to a just society.”⁹⁷⁵ Ferguson has been contributing to research and part of this collective project was also to see what permaculture means now. Practitioners wrestled with definitions. Some did not like to use the word, others defined its “transformative pedagogy for education, fostering learning communities for grass roots practitioners” and offering holistic relationships with the natural world.⁹⁷⁶

The grassroots of social defence meets permaculture at the systems level. Despite different experiences with the word permaculture: “All respondents defined permaculture at the systems level, a systems way of thinking, an integration of processes.” The emphasis the researchers found was that permaculture is not stagnant or a set of rules. In relation to the “extent of change which permaculture is aimed,” the responsibility that “comes with human existence, namely that our place on earth cannot just extract,” was put first in responses to

⁹⁷³ Natalie, Permaculture systems at Dadaab Refugee Camp, *permaculture news.org*, June 6, 2021, <https://www.permaculturenews.org/2021/06/06/permaculture-systems-at-dadaab-refugee-camp/>, (accessed September 2021).

⁹⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁵ Ibid, R S Ferguson, et al, Re Defining Permaculture: Perspectives of Permaculture Teachers, *Sustainability*, Vol. 13, 2021, p.1.

⁹⁷⁶ Ibid.

this line of questioning. When asked who permaculture was for and where it was from? “It is a new buzz word for an old way of doing things.” There was concern for the commodification of the term, for potential and real exclusivity and appropriation of indigenous cultural knowledge.⁹⁷⁷

Ferguson et al, found the concern over the lack of acknowledgement and citation of Indigenous biocultural methods “may systematically undervalue existing indigenous alternatives that lay outside of its purview and reinforce the coloniality of ecological knowledge.”⁹⁷⁸ The authors conclude that permaculture has transformative potential but is fraught with the difficulties of commodification which in turn inhibits its need to decolonize. Ferguson et al, believe defining more carefully would help because conceptual semantics matter. Alive with multispecies imagination, permaculture communing really might be gardening disguised as revolution. The caution is not to forget to apply the principle ethics in all areas of daily life. Whatever permaculture is becoming, it is part of the wider global forces of agroecology. One profound way to flatten semantic violence is Ted Trainers, The Simpler Way.⁹⁷⁹

Conclusion

For agroecology - permaculture food security cannot be found in supermarkets. They have made it clear the current food systems are a form of biopiracy -a global food dictatorship. Farming does not have to be regulated. Even those on the liberal side of regenerative agricultures know that biodiverse natural systems farming requires few inputs and does not need rules. The system of global rule is not just out of step with scientific research, it continues to offer empty promises rather than implement the full set of solutions offered by movements defending the rights of the earth and its lifeforms through diverse forms of agroecology.⁹⁸⁰

When Cribb, and others speak of the metabolic break, in which food is separated from its place of production; in much the same way that neoliberalism separates the economy from society and in the same way that debt turns trust and love into a promise that remains empty. Food systems expose the ways in which we are all involved in war. Research implores us to ask will it be food or war? Social defence can only answer: food.

⁹⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 6.

⁹⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 8.

⁹⁷⁹ T Trainer, The Simpler Way, <https://thesimplerway.info/>

⁹⁸⁰ J Bendell, Deep Adaptation, A Map For Navigating Climate Tragedy, *IFLAS Occasional Paper 2*, July 27, 2020, p. 7. <https://iflas.blogspot.com/2018/07/new-paper-on-deep-adaptation-to-climate.html>

Chapter 9: Regenerative Culture: An Autoethnographic Photo Essay

Welcome

In this chapter I invite you join me in this exploration of the potential of Social Defence by asking you to ponder some of the questions that I had planned to ask others, whose experience and knowledge within agroecology-permaculture and or grass roots, anarchism, revolutionary nonviolence, it was hoped, would help me learn more about the concept. As we have not met and do not know each other I make no assumption that you, my reader, are experienced in these alternative movements. I do, on the other hand, believe that you are interested and familiar enough with the bodies of knowledge explored here to respond to these questions, as we move through this chapter, or at any other time.

Sure, I will not know how you have responded. It is the act of asking these questions and my trust that you will answer, or at the very least, ponder them that is important. This brings us into a radical intimacy through the act of sharing the troubles and the proposed solutions and transitions together. Perhaps you might even share a question or two with someone else.

Sharing stories of self is risky and exposes ones' vulnerabilities, fears and passions. This is an embodied act that is ultimately based in mutual respect and trust if it is to be judged as rigorous in the scholarly sense that autoethnography demands. Simply using the method of auto-ethnography is fraught, particularly within the gatekeeping methodologies of Universities that serve the status quo.

Perhaps this is more a sym-ethnography. That would bring it into line with Haraway's 'tentacular thinking', the kind of thinking that allows us to admit we are collaborating even though we are strangers. We are both living on a degraded planet, disappointed with the way things are going. I think it is our 'response-a-bility' to work together to regenerate culture, to think like a planet and be – come good ancestors. Telling stories is part of that, and "it matters what stories tell stories".⁹⁸¹ In their introduction to *Regenerative Culture* Extinction Rebellion, NSW, Australia, the authors make the point early in the text that, "there is joy and freedom in honesty."⁹⁸² I hope that you are comfortable. I imagine you

⁹⁸¹ D, Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chuhulucene*, p. 35.

⁹⁸² C Wilson, *Extinction Rebellion, Regenerative Culture*, Regen 101, *Workshop Booklet*, 2020, christiew@protonmail.com, p.5.

here, in this bus, experiencing the hospitality on offer. Please make yourself at home, help yourself to water and chai. I have included some ginger and turmeric from the garden.

Photograph 1; Selfie, in my garden



Mobile Phone, August 2021.

I have a passion for flowers. We made a big trellis last year so that they have a special place in the garden. I collect seed and enjoy making posies for neighbours and friends. Feel free to wonder about and get up close to experience of the planthropocene, enjoy the gentle fragrance of the sweet pea, this season will come to an end soon.

The questions I will ask you are those I drafted and had approved (HE-19-164)) to ask people experienced in agroecology, permaculture and grass roots revolts. They are, the inspirational - Robin Frances of Djanbung Gardens Nimbin, <https://permaculture.com.au/djanbung-gardens/>; Australian scholar, author and farmer, Bruce Pascoe; Samuel Alexander, of the Simplicity Institute, Melbourne; <https://simplicityinstitute.org/> and Jeff Lawton of Zaytuna Farm. I had one collective interview lined up with the Gong Commune in Wollongong, <https://gongcommune.wordpress.com>.

Do you know of them?

I will tell you a little about them. Jeff Lawton and Robyn Frances are pioneers of Australian Permaculture. Their farms are in a similar region, in the Northern Rivers – The Rainbow Region - of NSW. They have distinct approaches to permaculture, as we all do. Each has trained multitudes of people in the Permaculture Design Certificate, (PDC) and their respective websites host videos showing how they transformed degraded cow paddocks into thriving abundant multispecies farms. That was the real inspiration for me because I knew I would living further inland, out in the boon docks, so to speak. Robin Frances and Jeff Lawton are internationally renowned permaculture teachers, along with many others, they have connected us *Permies* – the affective term within the grassroots to global permaculture. I as *Permie* in training, have a sense of farming with them. I have not met either of them.

Uncle Bruce Pascoe, as chapter 1 discussed; is a controversial figure in Australia. I'm not worried about that. Anytime someone does something good, they are stamped down. I have learned a lot from his work and followed some of the debates. It is clear to me, taking my cue from Heidi Norman that, "Through his writing and speaking, Pascoe has made the deep ancient past and the present intelligible and imaginative to a wider audience."⁹⁸³ Samuel Alexander's Simplicity Institute is packed with low cost options for all sorts of urban transformation and effectively works as a manual for the simplicity revolution. The one that asks us to slow down because the simple life has benefits for everyone.

Each has enriched my life and each, in their own ways but more than that, they gave me the courage to undertake my own journey into transforming a degraded cow paddock into a *Permie* oriented, agroecological and sustainable farm. Seven years later, observation and

⁹⁸³ H, Norman, How the Dark Emu Debate Limits Representation of Aboriginal People, *The Conversation*, July 8, 2021, <https://theconversation.com/how-the-dark-emu-debate-limits-representation-of-aboriginal-people-in-australia-163006>, (accessed, September, 2021).

interaction in the living systems of this farm is my main teacher now. Still, I would love to know what they think about social defence.

The Gong Commune is for worlds in common, they see themselves as part of a broader ecology of movement of and revolutionary struggle.⁹⁸⁴ I know some of the folk who started the commune and have been active in revolutionary movements with some of them going back to the early 1990s. I have not seen anyone from my networks in Sydney and the Illawarra since I moved. I have had social media contact until early 2020, as well as newsletters from various groups, networks and campaigns. We were all looking forward to the interview, of those friends I know personally in the gong, we all understand that even though they don't 'identify' as anarchist that we share common viewpoints. Where we disagree, then, we disagree and continue to work together to build solidarity in our collective actions; to care for each other and share of our hearts, by doing what we can, at the time. I will make my research available to them when it is complete.

I also had approval to interview, potentially four others, who were to be selected though convenience and or snow-ball sampling.⁹⁸⁵ It was most likely that these people would have been in XR or other movements in my local area such as the Northeast Forest Alliance (NEFA). Or people who attended the Peoples' Assembly in the ACT -February 3-7, 2020.

So, I thought prior to the assembly. My apologies, we will get to the questions – just a quick reflection on what did and might have happened.

Having attended the Assembly, had the necessary permissions and supervision been available from the University. I would have interviewed sovereign nation custodians at the Tent Embassy as well as other XR rebels. Potentially anyone gathered there over the days of the Assembly. Honestly, I really did not have much time. But I did try to prep up, just in case the permissions came in. I forgot about the university once I joined the other Reds' and we set off for the capital city. We got started early each morning and the days were busy. There were red rebel journeys into the city, at the healing circles, in the parks by the lake, there were strategy meetings, and more.

Pandemic, the commitments rebels made to the indigenous custodians at the aboriginal tent embassy and to others at the gatherings that were emerging post the main assembly

⁹⁸⁴ Gong Commune, A Common Viewpoint, Gong Commune *WordPress*, <https://gongcommune.wordpress.com/gong-commune-a-common-viewpoint/>, (accessed, October, 2021).

⁹⁸⁵ See Appendix 1. Information Sheet for Participants.

were thrown into thin air. I felt slightly renewed when we arrived home. The rain had started, we could all tell the drought was going to break, the fires would finally go out and we could all rest. My heart began to fill with the New Dreaming Gathering being organised at the Tent Embassy, beginning in April 2021. <https://new-dreaming.raisely.com/>.

The next disruption had arrived. It was nothing to do with XR but had a lot to do with why XR exist. Zoonotic pandemics have been predicted to increase as biodiversity is lost and other species are thrown out of their homes or incinerated in climate change induced wildfires or wait their turn on the extinction listings. People working in agroecology-permaculture-simplicity-revolts at the level of common sense have also been preparing by reorienting life to a common terrestrial, earth bound politics. By telling the truth about the existential threats of climate change, toxicity, food and war.

Moving into the Questions

I have selected a mix of questions that are suited to semi-structured in-depth interviews. Asking the right questions is not always easy and often discouraged. However, when the right questions are asked, then, we can try to live them as we pursue the answers. Let's start with the burning question. Whatever happened to social defence?

Relax, this is not really an interview, it is a conversation in which questions are posed. An act of creative communication in which both of us must use our imaginations and place our trust in each other. In chapter three, I explained how I began to construct drafts of this chapter. Bringing those various drafts, including written responses to fellow rebels and personal reflections on devastating events together in a single chapter that speaks from the heart is challenging, to say the least.

What I have learned is that when you are restricted and your creativity is forced into a formulaic process guided by the logistics of the neoliberal university, speaking from the heart, expressing ones' truth, is to work against the doxas. The pressure to qualify and justify, which is a pressure to conform; this constrains heartfelt, honest and creative social research. Timothy Morton recently wrote that we have a choice between extinction and creativity. Personally, I am going with creativity because it is quintessentially experimental and anything but smooth and formulaic. You probably already know I am familiar with Morton's work.

I will start with two broad questions and then present the first of the 13 photographs I have selected to assist me handle the gamut of options available in this method. Because this chapter is about me and my worlding, I have access, through my being in relation to the photographs and the research more generally. Some images are evocative and moody,

others are straightforward still others attempt to reflect the deeply embodied and collective processes while others show the official level of war and invoke analysis.

Following the first two questions, I will tell you a little more about myself and my affinities by discussing the charge against anarchism and responses that resonate with me. Next, I will introduce Rainbow Family and Food Not Bombs. They are the two movements that have, for as long as I have known of them, made a lot of common sense to me. By the time I graduated with an honours degree in politics, I knew that democracy could not work when peoples' vital food systems were legally toxic and intertwined with war. I also understood that war is created by patriarchal States and legalised through the International system of states and the, for now, international rules based order of neoliberal and authoritarian capitalism. These two movements, Rainbow Family and Food Not Bombs, speak to my heart and I share their visions and ways of prefiguring common futures.

- Question 1: Are you/your close networks aware of previous interest in and attempts to implement social defence during the 1980s and early 1990s? If so, would you like to share your recollections.
- Question 2: Anarchy is defined in this research following the anthropologist Brian Morris as “an ordered society without government (or any enduring structures of domination and exploitation), and anarchism as an “historical movement and political tradition”.⁹⁸⁶ Do you see any problems with this definition? Is it reasonable to suggest that the term grass roots are synonymous with anarchism? Why, why not?

⁹⁸⁶ Ibid, B Morris, *Radical Anthropology*, 2015.

Photograph: 2. The Bus to Nowhere



Photo by Peter Brookes. Fuji X100. July 2014.

Landed

It was surreal watching this bus arrive on a hot summer night in January 2014.

She has been stationary for a while and though the bus was drivable it was ten hours away, so we had her loaded onto a flatback truck and delivered to the gate. We drove her in to the prepared area and since then, we have called this bus home.

In active service in Sydney until she came onto the open market in the 1990s. Her rolling sign once announced the destination route. Bondi to Central. The roll is no longer there. This really is, The Bus to Nowhere which, is also the Bus to Everywhere. While you're pondering the questions or just enjoying the space I will expand on my affinities and political commitments, the stories doing the story.

I have placed myself at the center of this research on the basis that -How I Go - is indicative of what my auto- self is becoming. "Terms of self vary widely and who one is fluctuates."⁹⁸⁷ Post the strictures of the modern and seen in light of sympoiesis and multispecies

⁹⁸⁷ Ibid.

commoning, the bounded modern self no longer exists and cannot therefore be seen as limiting social research. Regenerative Culture, however tentative in terms of movements working against capitalism, states and military systems is based in the idea, at least in agroecology and permaculture, that nothing has to be invented to survive life on earth, the systems are here, the deserts have been greened, seeds have been saved and the practical knowledge is widely shared and put into practice all over the world. What's missing are the politics needed to transition into future systems in which common political commitments are formed.

Permaculture is politically ambivalent according to research that exists in relation to its teachers and practitioners, in Australia and in the European contexts in which it first spread.⁹⁸⁸ In the contexts of it becoming into the world in liberally democratic Australia and spread in mostly European countries, it has not as a movement challenged capitalism. Nor according to research, are most teachers and practitioners concerned about decolonising.⁹⁸⁹ In this way it has failed its core ethic of people care.

Russ Greyson has found, mostly in Australia, through attendance at Permaculture Convergences, literature and social media, that permaculture has failed, "as a community of practice" to address the "pervasive recognition of the problems and challenges we face."⁹⁹⁰ He thinks "the future for permaculture and politics seems to be one of a deliberately-cultivated distance." In short, it lacks a succinct and compelling narrative for the future society. Moreover, permaculture has aligned with small business and organic gardening to profit. It is based in privileged private access to land, as well as shared communal property. It has been suggested that people within it though generally favouring freedom and local practitioners have supported all the major political parties, although they favour the Greens. Grayson theorises across the common political theory vis-à-vis permaculture and its key thinkers. In a subtle gesture, his view is that permaculture could be used in some imaginary anarchist society because of its ethic of sharing resources and its focus on community.⁹⁹¹

⁹⁸⁸ K Spanger, R McCann & R S Ferguson, (Re) Defining Permaculture: Perspectives of Permaculture Teachers and Practitioners Across the United States. *Sustainability*, Vol. 13, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13105413>, R Grasyon, A State of Confusion, Permacultures Politics, *Medium*, July 15, 2018, <https://medium.com/permaculture-3-0/a-state-of-confusion-permacultures-politics-18b51983ed87>, R S Ferguson & S T Lovell, Grassroots engagement with transition to sustainability: diversity, modes of participation in the international permaculture movement. *Ecology and Society*, Vol. 20, 2015, pp. 4-39, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ES-08048-200439>.

⁹⁹⁰ R Greyson, *State of Confusion*, 2018,

⁹⁹¹ Ibid, Grayson, *State of Confusion*, 2018, n.p.

My own view is that focussing on the concept of social defence would assist permaculture form a common vision of the future that does not avoid its ethic of people care and the existing need to decolonise the practice. Permaculture would also benefit by including agroecology and peasant studies into its thinking as it continually goes about (Re) defining. I try to put agroecology first because it is globally speaking far more representative of indigenous peoples' defence of the natural world which permaculture depends upon. Both of Permaculture's co theorists have helped to bring alternatives into practice. Jeff Lawton, now a global permaculture phenomenon uses Mollison's original understanding and call of permaculture as seditious. This, for me too, is a great way to begin the unlearning.

"I teach self-reliance, the world's most subversive practice. I teach people how to grow their own food, which is shockingly subversive. So, yes, its seditious. But it's peaceful sedition."⁹⁹²

Not everyone in permaculture accepts this. The result is that permaculture is mostly reformist. It shows no signs of being a threat to the imperial food system the Australia government is committed to. It is at best, partially subversive without greater political commitments and mutual solidarity that exists in anarchisation and within the movements of La Via Campesina and Food Sovereignty.

To say that I have had more selves in this period than perhaps any other is an understatement. It was not a soft landing. Moving from meeting hundreds of people every semester, working in large teams of university tutors and co-ordinating subjects within the universities that operated the international student gateway that streams into those universities; to spending a lot of time with my partner, who works off -farm, as well as on it, and a lot of time without the company of other humans but solely in the company of other species. Being here, on this farm, most of my time is now an accumulation of experiences, stories, memories and dreams. I share them here through these images and the complementary text so that others may understand, who is writing this thesis, for who and in what contexts.⁹⁹³

A charge against anarchy is that it cannot provide the protections offered by states. Ongoing discussion within anarchism reflects the historical and shifting sentiment. Political scientist James C Scott gave us two cheers.⁹⁹⁴ As someone walking with anarchism, he has

⁹⁹² B Mollison, in S London, *Permaculture: A Quiet Revolution*, An interview with Bill Mollison, 2005, scott.london.com, <https://scott.london.com/interviews/mollison.html> , Ibid, Lawson interview, *Survival* podcast, 2021, <https://www.thesurvivalpodcast.com/lawton-permaculture-strange-times>

⁹⁹³ E Said, in Ibid, Mundt, p.114.

⁹⁹⁴ J C Scott, *Two Cheers for Anarchism*, Princeton University Press, 2014.

contributed to the growing interest in anarchism.⁹⁹⁵ Ruth Kinna suggests, “for those prepared to give anarchism three cheers”⁹⁹⁶ the idea is that states only offer protections when they are demanded by and fought for from the grass roots. That the State, is plastic in much the same way the human brain is capable of neuro plasticity. For others, while ever states endure, anarchism’s visions and processes will be recuperated and repressed by them.

Two contemporary responses to the problem of the State, as Kinna notes, “is one that treats anarchism as a form of common sense while the other sees it as a special insight and presumes a gap between anarchists and non-anarchists.”⁹⁹⁷ The orientation of my small a anarchism is a common sense one. I believe philosophy should be practical and that theory is best produced by researchers who are directly involved in what it is they are researching. In its simplest form this chapter is a brief account of my experiment with truth. An extension of my dreams of another world and my own attempts to prefigure the solutions that are here.

It is necessary to disarm the military, remove the borders, walls, fences and prison complexes. To choose food not war, housing not jails. To rest the earth and heal its many tribes so that they may gather voluntarily to decide what is vital and how it should be defended. That is how I dream the bigger picture. Locally and terrestrially, my vision includes maintaining what we have so far created. It imagines expanding vegetable production, moving into floriculture, supporting my son’s efforts to, in the future, open a Yoga Ashram here. I hope I can contribute to sharing what we have learned about agroecology and permaculture through our experiences and that I can share my knowledge of the alternatives underway by including social defence as one of them.

Working within agroecology, my process of design is wholly focussed on this property as a basis for peaceful actions of everyday sedition. For now, there is enough water, even more than enough. There is a gully dam running through the property, it is a spring dam surrounded by trees and set in a forest amphitheatre. As the previous owner had intentionally broken the dam wall to allow water to flow into a dam across the road, we had to fix it to restore, what we viewed as our most vital resource.

⁹⁹⁵ J C Scott’s work is referenced in other section of this thesis. Thus far, this body of work has deployed interdisciplinary theory and practice to expose the genocidal and violent nature of the state and has contributed to new understandings of the earliest states and the agroecological peoples’ states, othered in their imperial quests.

⁹⁹⁶ R Kinna, *The Government of No One*, p. 250.

⁹⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 254.

We did this manually, over a couple of years. Over 300 barrows of mud, according to my sons who did most of the digging. We carried water, played music and stomped for a few hours every day, we planted vetiver grasses and tried an expensive bio agent that would through the mysteries of water find any small leak in the wall. It worked, post the 2020 floods, the wall is still intact, and this property has a secure source of water, for the time being. This is subject to the intensity of climate change droughts and the water systems of the Clarence water catchment that our farm is part of. As well as laws that may impose state emergency access to private water sources and our capacity to continue regenerating the surrounding forests and biodiversity.

I am not bracing for impact but working to defend the system that is here and to improve it, without the use of chemicals, expensive machinery or through financial mechanisms such as insurance and building ever greater debts to pay. From the first harvest to my pivot to home delivery of seasonal vegetables to elders in the village closest to me and much sharing up and down the Old Lawrence Road, seasonal food production has been the most exciting aspect of what is possible in the future I dare to dream.

Empowering myself and others

I have no specific training in agroecology. My experiments are auto didactic and made possible by the abundance of shared and freely available material on and offline. I had a good understanding of where the books I needed were because I had literally begged the head of the library to give me some work, shelving books. I worked shifts from 2007 to 2010. I expect most of the books no longer exist in their original form.

As one would expect, I found an original hard copy of Bill Mollison's title and date. I read and re read it. Then I graduated myself to Jeff Lawton's videos and other online resources and the rest is history. I had no real plans to move to the bush prior to 2012. I lived with my partner in an inexpensive rental property south of Sydney, I had casual work by train commute, an hour away in Sydney. I had friends and family close by. My arrival here remains a mystery and I tell that story in Travelling on a Long Rope #1. That I have stayed here through drought, fire, trauma, anxiety and a PhD thesis that pretty much no one was interested in - and a rebellion that most people don't like - often remains a mystery to me as well.

I have been compelled to ask, which part of me should I speak of and reflect upon?

The physicality of working with dirt, often in hot and dusty conditions, of identifying grasses and observing forests. Is it the political scientist part of me; my capacity to interpret social defence; is it my role in the Extinction Rebellion; my capacity and willingness to take direct

action? Clearly from the autoethnographic and post qualitative perspectives, it is all of these and more. The truth of this chapter is that most of what has taken place is left out.

The photographs I use are intended to give a sense of how the research is grounded in my being. I hope they add to the conversation and build trust between us. They may not speak a thousand words or paint a whole picture. But they do offer a sense of the movements the research walks with and evidence that I am here, doing the things I do.

Let us imagine then that we are home within this chapter by bringing Rainbow Family into the conversation. Om Shanti, peace be upon you, Sat Nam. Truth is your name.

Photograph: 3. Rainbow at the Maha Kumbh Mela, 2012



Video by Karen Kennedy. Cannon Quick Shot, S 11, December 2012.⁹⁹⁸

Rainbow Family

To the Rainbows, anyone who shows up at a family gathering is a member. With its genesis in the US counterculture and antiwar movements, Rainbow gatherings now take place in forests all over the world. Once they are packed up, there should be no evidence that a gathering of Rainbow Family had taken place. “Rainbow Family is a “subculture born in Babylon, engulfed in Babylon, with open fluid borders between its gatherings and Babylon.

⁹⁹⁸ Note: the video may have some lines on replay, please be patient, I downloaded it from an sd card that has been stored on this farm in far from ideal conditions between 2014 and 2017.

Rainbows are quick to remind people that what is 'out there' in Babylon is also 'in here' at the gatherings.⁹⁹⁹ Their place within nonviolence research, peace research and research geared toward alternative forms of policing, could be legendary. On the contrary they are rarely featured.

Rainbow Family has been aptly described by Michael Niman as "field testing non-violence in an all-inclusive society by following the anarcho pacifist ideals outlined by Peter Kropotkin."¹⁰⁰⁰ In this way, Rainbow Family resonates across this thesis. But it is not really here. There is no chapter, no grand theorist and no place to settle. Nothing official, no leader, no guru.

Rainbow uses a process known as the Shanti Sena, to regulate behaviour that is aggressive or violent. Essentially experienced people form a circle and chant OM (Aum). All rainbow gatherings practice this form of conflict resolution, and all rainbows practice this form of collective de-escalating. Niman's review of the movement found that not all conflicts could be solved by Shanti Sena actions. Gatherings have a history of various run ins with police and at times have called for their help. From what I understand, Niman's assessment, *"that where revolutionaries aim to control territory, the temporary autonomous zone – TAZ – avoids prolonged conflict with the state and instead liberates an area (land, of imagination) and then dissolves itself to reform elsewhere"* is correct.

The capacity of Rainbow to spread and persist for 38 years has been enabled through the construction and reconstruction of TAZ. "To the police authorities, Niman thinks, "the apparent retreat of the Rainbows might appear as surrender, which would satisfy their quest to control or dominate the Family, or they might view their problem, as over, since the Rainbows are gone, for now." This is certainly plausible. Kushefi includes them in his judicious exploration of the possibility of legal anarchism. He follows Niman and adds his own understanding. For Kushefi, "because the Shanti Sena exists in every Rainbow, every member of the Rainbow Family is responsible for keeping the gatherings peaceful and safe, even in the face of violent attitudes or provocations."¹⁰⁰¹ Invoking legal anarchism, Kushefi seeks cases of violence or interactions with police in which the Shanti Sena's collective Aum chanting has failed. To think about applying the policy of Rainbow Family to a larger community, Kushefi is wary of the temporary nature of the gatherings. As well as the fact that Rainbow's general rules of non-commercialisation and consensual decision face

⁹⁹⁹ M Niman, The Shanti Sena 'peace centre' and the non-policing of an anarchist temporary autonomous zone: Rainbow Family peacekeeping strategies, *Contemporary Justice Review*, Vol. 14, 2011, p. 66, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.une.edu.au/10.1080/10282580.2011.541077>

¹⁰⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰¹ Ibid, S Kushefi, *Legal Anarchism*, p. 314.

challenges when in relation to preventing crime or punishing criminals in dangerous cases.¹⁰⁰²

Along with Niman, Kashefi's assessment is that Shanti Sena actions cannot solve all conflicts. Kushefi situates Rainbow as a practical model of anarcho-communism. Moreover, he suggests after a lengthy review of classical anarchists that "All in all, it seems that the anarchist communists have not detailed their program for a legal system."¹⁰⁰³ Rainbow Family might be temporary and they might only be available to people who can afford to take time off work, to live as if Babylon did not exist affording them privileges. They have undoubtedly thought about alternatives to violence and experimented with a process that is taught and shared as a model for peacekeeping all over the world.

Rainbow's experiments are part of the radical potential - the concept of social defence. Their possibilities are liberatory, their processes are empowering, authorities overreact to their gatherings and their alternative forms of dispute resolution can be used by anyone. Living as if Babylon did not exist, is surely a prerequisite for changing the systems of money, violence and exclusion that the civilisation has globalised. If even half of the crimes committed by individuals and corporate States could be solved by Shanti Sena type actions the need for weapons, systems of torture and incarceration would rapidly decline. Time to leave the family and head back to war in Babylon and the vital system of food.

- Question 3: Do you think that agroecology-permaculture can provide a basis for social defence? Would you like to elaborate? I will move on with my introduction to Food Not Bombs. It may help you answer the question. If you would prefer to go outside for a while and wonder around the garden, please do. You are welcome to continue or to wind it up at any time. I will never know. And, if you were here. We would take lots of breaks and you could decline to answer and/or ask questions I have not considered. Or questions I could speak to.

Food Not Bombs: Solidarity Not Charity

Perhaps the only movement not to be recuperated and sold back to the grass roots as something new, Food Not Bombs recognises that the most important actions usually happen after the revolutions as governments and corporations seek to bring in a new regime and regain control. Food Not Bombs "volunteers are practicing working together using census and implementing their visions independent of government or corporate control."¹⁰⁰⁴ Food Not Bombs is viewed as a threat because even though they are small, as

¹⁰⁰² Ibid, p. 315.

¹⁰⁰³ Ibid, p. 314.

¹⁰⁰⁴ K Mc Henry, *Hungry for Peace, Food Not Bombs: How you can help end poverty and war with food not bombs*, See Sharp Press, USA, 2014, p. 14.

their founder put it, “they are the foundation of any sustained transition to a self-governed community.”¹⁰⁰⁵ Food not Bombs is ripe for social defence because the movement is based in solidarity not charity; it has always made common sense to me. My formal education in political science, international relations and peace and conflict studies has done nothing to change my mind. Food Not Bombs Banner, “proudly announces that our world needs food, not bombs.”¹⁰⁰⁶ This is a right, not a privilege and it is really, really free.

In response to the food and economic crisis of 2007-2008, Food not Bombs mobilised even in countries where most of the human population had stable incomes and inequality was not as severe, such as Iceland. Keith McHenry, one of the founders and author of *Food not Bombs, Hungry For Peace: How you can help end poverty and war with food not bombs*, explains that the group had been sharing food to a mystified public in Reykjavik, Iceland. “They told our volunteers that they could not understand why we would give away free meals when everyone was economically secure. That was until the Icelandic economy collapsed.”¹⁰⁰⁷

McHenry notes that this book is not meant to be a manual, the movement is a living global project. He introduces it as a reflection on some of what he has experienced during his thirty years of volunteering with the movement. Like many, he has been arrested numerous times and injured by police. No time to go into that here. In many ways McHenry’s book is manual.

It would certainly be on my list of recommended books for those interested in the possibilities of social defence. This is not an ethical or fair trade business; it is a network of self-organised collectives that do not operate for profit. The main website is easy to navigate, clear and contains all the resources needed and otherwise useful to anyone interested in starting a collective or joining an existing one. For researchers and others interested in the proposition explored here, this is a good place to start.

https://foodnotbombs.net/new_site/, Mc Henry’s Book is also easy to read with information about the background, growth, principles, systems of organisation and the alternatives its solutions offer. It contains ‘how to’ sections, vegan recipes, legal issues and small case notes for mobilisations, large and small.

Food Not Bombs empowers everyone towards their right to healthy food and their capacity to change the current system. Using only nonviolence, in its responses to repression of its activities by police and other official agents of the state it has created an enduring

¹⁰⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 115.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 113.

alternative model. Groups have been feeding the hungry, striking workers, anti-war protesters, environmental defenders and other social movements throughout their 40 year history. They take part in wider protests and they can start them.

Food Not Bombs was able to mobilise rapid communications and responses to Hurricane Katrina when it devastated parts of the US and began organising volunteers to help with the relief effort. "Rainbow Family buses and Veterans for Peace joined the relief effort. New Orleans City Councillors emailed Food Not Bombs for help, the State Emergency Services called Food Not Bombs frantic for updates."¹⁰⁰⁸ Inspired by War Resisters and the classic sources of civil disobedience, they are seeking to replace the current system based on violence. They typically operate with very little money. Their vegan food is healthy and is trusted in places where a group has endured.

Food is served free to everyone without restriction, rich, poor, stoned, sober. Each local group is independent and autonomous, has no leaders and uses consensus to make decisions. Every group is dedicated to taking nonviolent direct action and working for social change. Food Not Bombs is generally not interested in the bureaucracy and they urge groups not to seek permission from any government agency. Arrangements with other groups that do have a tax and or charity status have been used in the rare cases that groups are offered monetary support from an individual. XR Rebels in Lismore interestingly had to do a similar thing because we operate in the same way and have no official documents or bank accounts but did originally find people offered to contribute funds to our actions. Leapfrogging along, independent affinity groups are agile and able to land where they need to and find what they need by asking the right questions about the problem.

Mutual aid is the way that solidarity not charity is embodied and put into action in Food Not Bombs. This is an enduring method of anarchist prefiguration that is designed to show people what will happen, after the revolts and demonstrations and if the dictators fall. Taking notice of case studies of anarchist responses to the pandemic, it becomes clear that Food Not Bombs and others worked their way through the most enduring anarchist processes of mutual aid and affinity based, horizontal forms of local self-organisation. These are the processes that can reconfigure our relations to each other and the world we make together. Observers, Jun and Lance noted the spontaneous nature of anarchist responses and the positive impacts these have had for everyone.¹⁰⁰⁹ They point to the simple fact that governments have far greater capacities to respond and in that way anarchist responses

¹⁰⁰⁸ Ibid, p.111

¹⁰⁰⁹ M Jun & M Lance, Anarchist responses to the Pandemic: The Covid-19 crisis as a case study in mutual aid, *Kennedy Institute of Ethics*, September, 2020, <https://kiej.georgetown.edu/anarchist-responses-covid-19-special-issue/>

seem like the second best option. They do not advocate leaving responses to devastating and dangerous situations to anarchists and those who work with them because governments have the resources and systems. As we settle more intimately into this conversation, I will quote from their conclusion, at length.

“But in terms of their ability to build capacity and to show us new non-individualistic, non-competitive ways that we can be together, they are far superior to a competent government. These actions teach us new ways of being—ways that capitalism and a capitalist health system systematically hide. Each time we get together and build a food distro, a community porch singalong, or an online gaming night, we learn both that we can organize ourselves non-hierarchically and that we care enough to do so.”¹⁰¹⁰

Food Not Bombs, as McHenry notes have always thought of their street activity – the free food and literature tables – as a form of living theatre. Taking inspiration from radical theatre collectives and individual, approaching their work as theatre has made it easy to adapt. For Mc Henry, “the only limits on what kind of theatre your chapter can present are the limits of your groups imagination, time and pocketbook.”¹⁰¹¹

Extinction Rebellion’s Red Rebels is also a form of living theatre inspired by Artist Doug Francisco it stands in this tradition of bringing sentiments, principles and more to life through public performance. Doug said, the red rebels formed for Extinction Rebellion in 2019, were based on characters we created for the Anti-Iraq War demonstrations.¹⁰¹² Doug is proud of what we Red Rebels have created as a means of communicating this most important message. I am also proud of my own participation in the affinity group. It all began from an idea in Doug’s mind that he flagged with his network and then and through Doug’s stewardship red rebels expanded all over the UK, in Australia and in many other countries. McHenry and all those who have volunteered to participate in Food Not Bombs get three cheers from social defence. Sympoiesis in action, don’t you think?

Coming back to this farm, I often think of it as living theatre. Friends from the city often say how noisy it is here, but it’s not the noise they are used to. It’s the noise of the natural world, the wind in the trees, the birds living in on the bus roof. Life is noisy when you stay calm and extend your powers of hearing out into the world. This farm is now a place to defend. Slowly building sustainability on this farm links us to agroecologists, locally and globally and to all human beings that have oriented to the politics of the Anthropocene and the emergent re worlding taking place. It links my farm to Rojava and every other ZAD.

¹⁰¹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹¹ Ibid, McHenry, 2014, p. 54.

¹⁰¹² D Francisco, Extinction Rebellion 2019 – The Red Rebel Brigade, *Dougfrancisco.com*, <http://dougfrancisco.com/extinction-rebellion-2019-the-red-brigade/> (accessed, August 2019).

“We are linked because, despite our very different contexts, we are fighting for the same liberating project that seeks to recreate convivial societies where human beings and ecology prevail over the commercial logic of the current socio-economic system which, by its internal way of functioning, pushes for the destruction of life, advocates competition rather than mutual aid between peoples and causes the oppression of the great majority by a privileged minority.”¹⁰¹³

¹⁰¹³ ZAD de la coline, Switzerland in Make Rojava Green Again, <https://makerojavagreenagain.org/2020/11/07/from-the-zad-de-la-colline-in-switzerland-to-rojava-fight-turkish-fascism/> (accessed, July, 2021).

Photograph 4: The Compost is heating up.



Huegel Mounds – Mound Culture. December 2014. Photo by Peter Brookes. Fuji X 100.

Look for the solution within the problem. That was evident in Food Not Bombs and in anarchist processes of mutual solidarity, not charity. It is also a foundational method of permaculture and regenerative culture. This bloc had been used for livestock grazing for 70 plus years, the wood lot had operated for longer. The problem we inherited was the amount of so called dead waste wood. We also lacked large machinery to move wood or earth, we had no topsoil and there was little microbial activity. Essentially, we live on compacted clay. Following, the maxim in agroecology and regenerative culture, we looked for the solutions in the problems, real and perceived.

The solution was to return carbon to activate the compacted soils. In that way, what was seen to be a problem, wasted wood, was the first step towards solving the problem of having no soil. The agroecological answer is to return the carbon. Mound culture is an established way of doing this. First, we piled the wood, and then began to slowly bury it with compostable material, continually adding biomass. If there had been no rain, we watered the beds to assist the activation of the microbial activity. Two years later we began growing food in these beds. By 2020, the larger matter had completely broken down and two of the beds were capable of planting root vegetable such as beetroot in. Tumeric flourished once the beds were covered with shade cloth. We rotate crops and mulch beds heavily, mostly with hay we collect from the large open areas of grass at the front of the

property and in the gully. Approximately six years later, we have the four original mounds and eleven new large beds, and an open emergent food forest area. We had to earn the money to keep us going off this farm. Which is not easy, or highly paid and the priorities seem endless.

Photograph No. 5: Winter 2021.



Photo by Peter Brookes. LG Mobile Phone.

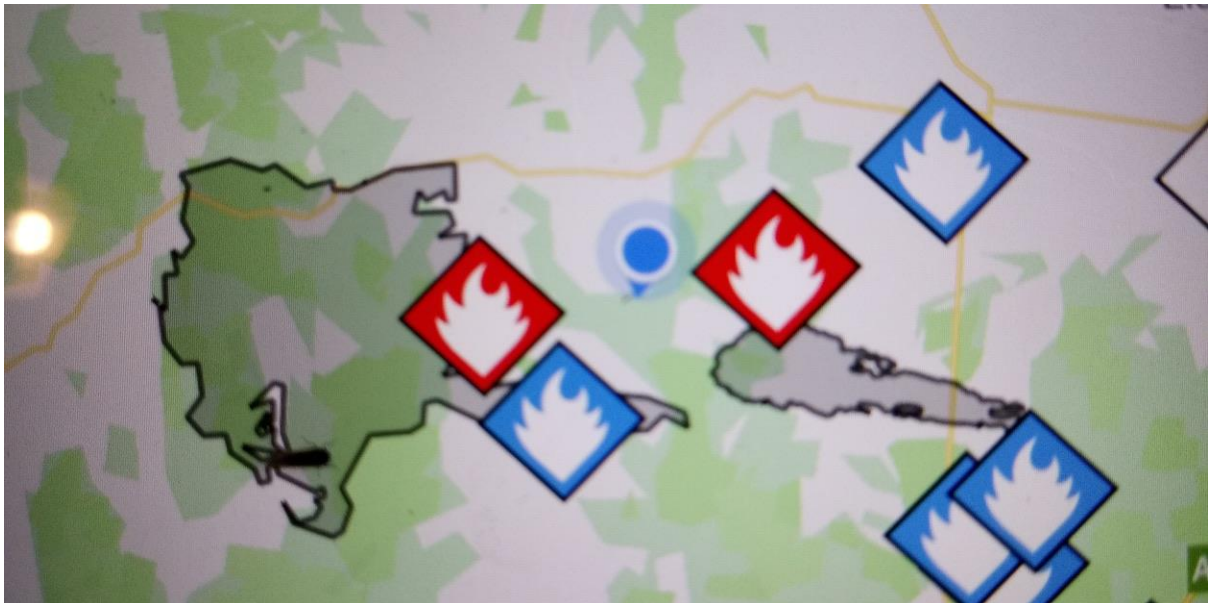
The original mounds are just out of view. We are now looking back towards the bus as the fog lifts and the sun begins to piece the cold moist air. The gardens in view have wild carrots on one side a garlic bed in the center and a mixed bed in on the eastern side.

Photograph No. 6: Pyro cumulonimbus, October 13, 2019.



Photo by Peter Brookes. Fuji X100, October 13, 2018.

Photo No. 7. Screen Shot, Fires Near Me.



We are the blue dot.

Fright and Flight, Anger, Exhaustion, Collective Trauma. It was only the second year of the research and I had joined the extinction rebellion and now faced immediate existential threat from fires. Oh yes, I was wishing I had not taken this on.

If this map were to expand, the line of red emergency level fires would show that fires continued from Drake to the Coast as it took out forests, wildlife, homes, houses, farms,

gardens and infrastructure such as water tanks, bridges and power lines. First to go was the town of Rappville, then Ewingar. Months of days with zero visibility, smoke and death and ash filled the air, anxious calls to and from neighbours. Towns facing zero water. Only the wind changes saved this farm. Somehow, at the University, folk thought one should push on with their work despite fire storms country wide, I was urged to travel around and meet proposed new supervisors – the city and country do not inhabit the same space. Concentrate! Conform. Even as the world burns.

Everywhere the emergencies we are not prepared for - were here. In late January 2019, I was getting ready to attend the Peoples' Assembly. I had already taken part in the August and October Rebellions in Brisbane, the Lismore School Strikes for Climate, multiple meetings, over an hour's drive away and two local XR emergency declarations. One with Kyogle XR to Kyogle Council, the LGA, I live in. The other a more clandestine and subtle, posting of an XR notice of emergency and commitment to rebellion, on a notice board in the village of Tabulam with the only other red rebel living, by country terms, close to me.

- Question number 4: What can we learn from XR about the potential of social defence?

I realise this question is not one you might want to answer today. That the rebellion is emergent and ongoing. Its strategy is in revision on a yearly basis and its resources are freely available and inclusive. Any rebel can contribute to collective theorising and organising. The rebellion is based on self-organised systems and circles of regeneration, healing and communicating with respect to foster inclusion. I have rebelled with seasoned northern rivers activists and people who have not been involved in direct actions before. For a while there the movement was quite strong here in the Northern Rivers, it eventually became a core group of people, most of whom are experienced activists. The following photo shows my core red rebel group moments before we crossed the road, after 5 hours of performative action in Brisbane, Meanjin.

Photograph Number. 8. Lismore Red Rebels support XR actions against Santos.

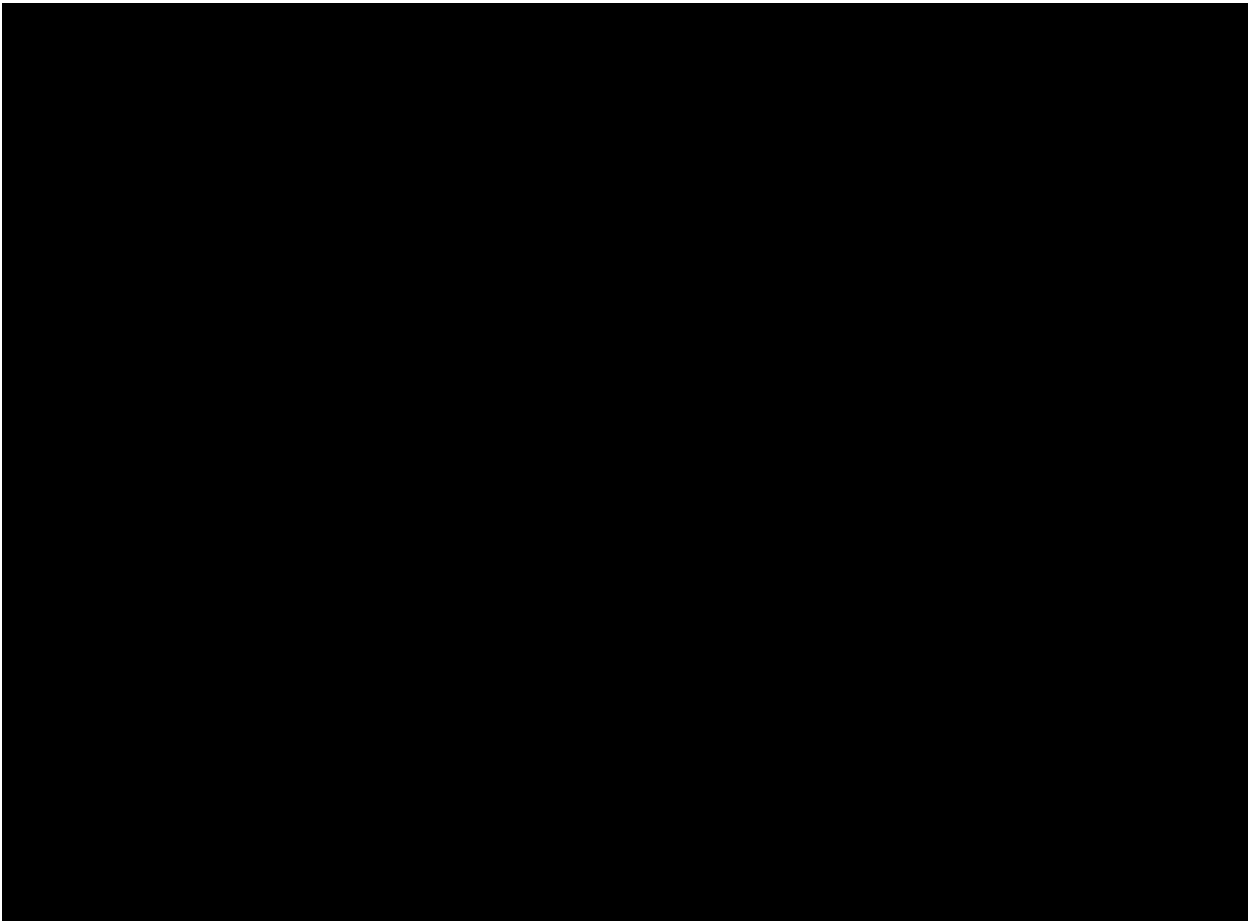


Photo by Anonymous, October 13. 2019.

We all look tired here and have been captured out of any specific formation. This was the last action of the day. I know everyone was looking forward to heading back to the park and then home to the shared accommodation we had booked. Little did I know, It would be quite a while before I made it back to the unit and to debrief with my fellow, sub liminal rebels. I am third from the right in this picture and that is my local friend, sitting next to me, if you look closely, you can see that we have the same flowers on our headdress.

Photograph No. 9. Arresting Times. Brisbane, October 13, 2019.

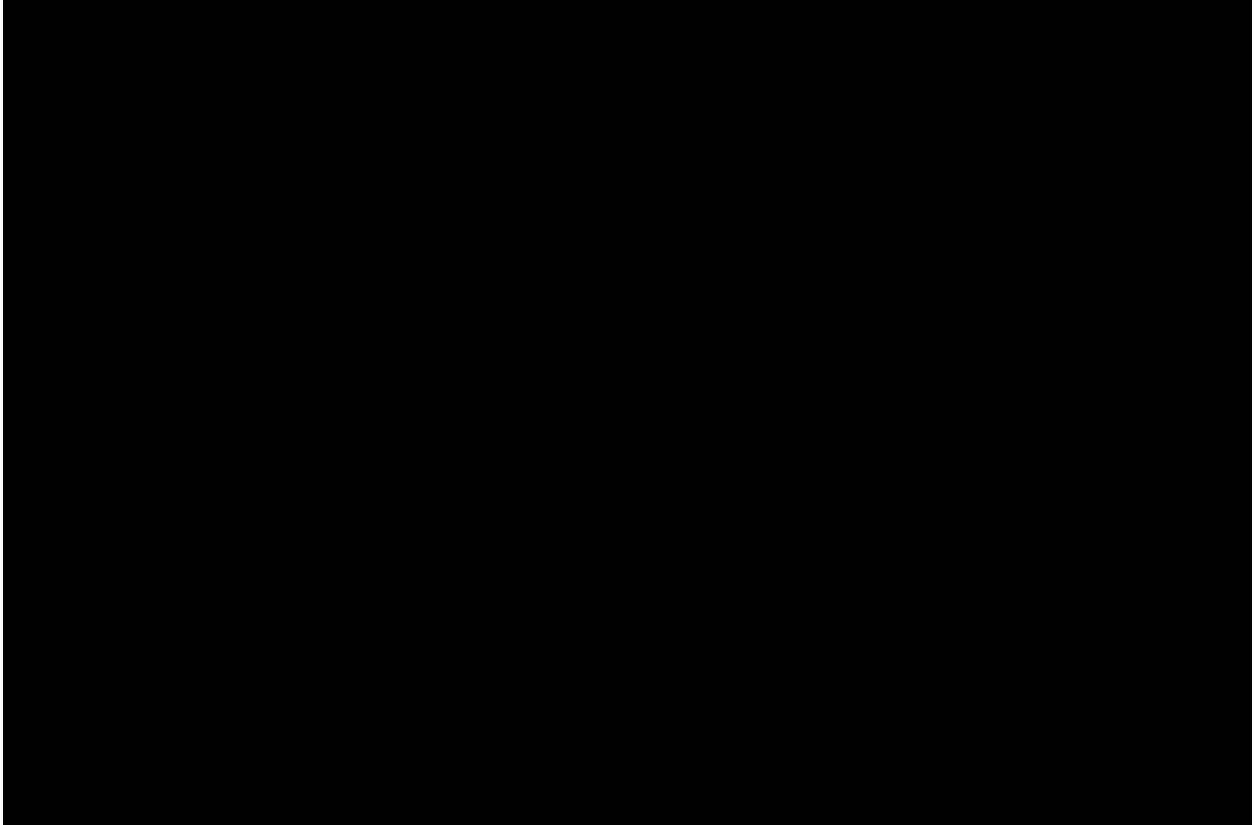


Photo. XR Red Rebel Security. Anonymous.

Yes, that is my hand. One officer, as you can see, has reached in and pulled out two people from the group of 12. Me, and a Brisbane Rebel, who had joined us for the first time that morning. We got to know each other, a little bit, in the watchhouse and met again in December 2019 at an elementals magic workshop. Lisa (name changed) and I were the only two red rebels arrested at the October Rebellion or indeed in Australia, to date. I have written a reflective account, published in *Arts Features International*, January February, Firestorms and Protests edition.¹⁰¹⁴ So, I won't go into these details here. In that account I describe the day of action, the arrest and the court case. Generally, reds believe they cannot be arrested because their role is to de-escalate and to evoke thoughtful responses to the climate emergency. We move between worlds; we do not speak, our pace is very slow and evokes contemplation, metaphysical and transcendental spaces.

When I got back to the farm, other matters were far more dangerous.

Extinction Rebellion: When my partner heard the description of XR announced on mainstream media he looked at me and said, "that sounds like you". It was nothing to do with him. I am sure he has found it difficult, at times, to live with a rebel. Fringe dwellers and anarchists were the terms the government wanted out there. They are hoping against

¹⁰¹⁴Ibid K Kennedy, In *Firestorms and Protests*, Borderstream Books, Australia, 2021.

hope that people still believe their fictions about anarchists and anyone who chooses to live or is forced to live in rural areas or in on the edges of large cities.

“True, in recent years, environmentalists have coined the term *ecocide*, the killing of ecosystems — but this is something more. This is the killing of everything. *Omnicide*.”¹⁰¹⁵ Such was my understanding of the bigger strategic picture prior to the rise of XR.

XR has been accused of not orienting to de-colonial solidarity, and kind of pretending it is something new. When it is not really new at all but has emerged out of the movement of movements against neoliberalism that became known as the global justice movements. And these emerged out of the peace and antiwar movements of the New left. Their strategy of using mass civil disobedience to achieve political change is not new either. I was surprised how contentious this strategy became and still is. Mass civil disobedience is one of the foundational methods of nonviolent action, famously categorised by Gene Sharp, non-cooperation and intervention. For Gandhi, it is what you do when you do not use weapons, it is the practice of ahimsa that can be practiced by anyone.¹⁰¹⁶

The traditional left suggested, to various degrees, that workers had been left out and ill considered. The traditional right and the governments of the UK and Australia have flirted with the idea of including XR on the terrorist watch lists. Australian think tanks, well researched analysis of the movement labelled the movement the *Extremist Rebellion*. XR have adjusted to the pandemic and while numbers of participants are few, in this region at present, they are dispersed across forest actions, city actions and or in retreat and/or recovery. Our duty to rebel is now cast as an essential service and duty to care. I don't have much time to go into analysis of XR. Or even into my own responses and contributions. I read the UK newsletters and followed media responses up until March 2020. I still read the NSW XR newsletter each month and hope to join friends again soon.

¹⁰¹⁵ Ibid, D Celermager, *Omnicide*, *Radio National*, 2019.

¹⁰¹⁶ M K Gandhi, Ahimsa, the way of nonviolence, Satyagraha Foundation, <http://www.satyagrahafoundation.org/ahimsa-the-way-of-nonviolence/> (accessed, October 2021).

Photograph No 10.: Contemplating the Peoples' Assembly at home.



Photo by Karen Kennedy. iPad. January 2019.

I needed to make a new costume because I had lent my previous robes out. They were in use elsewhere as I sat contemplating the upcoming assembly. The area between two shipping containers is covered by a large open shed. The atmosphere in here is pretty close to the atmosphere out there. The rains had not yet come. The fires were contained but continued to burn until the 5th of February, the day after we arrived home from Canberra.

I travelled by car with two other red rebels. I had over a couple of years formed a close friendship with one. Both of us were tired of the photographs. Concerned that we reds had become just another spectacle. She was worried about how organised our local mob was. I continued to cite Dough Francisco, "don't panic, its organic." There were about 15 of us that travelled from Lismore. We had a disco affinity, us red's, a police liaison team, lots of banners and pooled resources and a program full of workshops, small actions and the larger, attempt to circle Parliament House. Some of our crew stayed with people who offered to put non- locals up, some stayed at the Tent Embassy, which is the legitimate peoples house,

as far as I understand it. And where we ended up spending most of our time, when we were not involved in direct actions.

I cried for many reasons and none at all as I drove into Lismore to meet friends for the early morning start the following day. The week had been hot and steamy, the fires had exhausted and traumatised everyone, the planning around transport a daily social media thread. The temperature hit 47 as we travelled on the M7 freeway and then headed towards Goulburn. I began to feel excited about passing Lake George, a most enchanting section of low flood land about 30 minutes north of the ACT. The temperature was way above 30 degrees late into the evening on the 1st of February. None of us had much sleep.

The following day – I hope you don't mind my lack of precision around dates, remind me to tell you about a future where people turn up to administrative authorities asking, when is it? They had been ordered to stay at home for so long – anyway, back to this story; we arrived at the tent embassy around 10am and began to meet up with others. The red rebels had been offered the use of a tent to gather and costume up in. Robin from XR ACT Red Rebels was co-ordinating around 20 of us from the ACT, Sydney, Victoria, the Northern Rivers and other parts of NSW. After the welcome to country, we would walk from the old to the new parliament house in two lines, holding our eyes to the horizon and using our peripheral vision to follow the gestures.

We followed the sacred fire that Richard (name changed for privacy), Aunty Beryl (name changed) and another person carried. We were their guardians for this short but slow and purposeful walk. If they had set out to do this alone, they would have been turned back by security. Obviously, everyone was being watched. The think tanks had recommended upping the ante on XR and considering listing the movement as a terrorist threat. Honestly, one man's terrorist, you know the stories. This was a special walk for me. I had been at numerous conventions at Parliament House over the years. From memory, the last time was during John Howard's 'children overboard' refugee crisis and into the anti – Iraq war conventions. Entering silence, robed and moving slowly into lines, invisible to this world, was an act of solidarity with the original people of this country. At least it felt like that for me as we began the walk up to the big house.

Robin our ACT organiser had explained, at least twice that since the assembly had been put together by a diverse group of groups over a short time, we were to expect a level of chaos and were aware we needed to remain flexible and ready to change plans. Robin was caught on the hop straight up. Instead of an empty stage we found a young performer into her second song. We gestured and did some tableau for around 10 minutes, it felt like much longer and my heart began to race. We had not stayed with the sacred fire. As walked back,

Valerie called a group huddle. I was relieved. Something had gone wrong and some but not all of us knew this.

Bonny (change named) wanted to know why we did not follow the sacred fire and give our full attention to that process. I was glad she did, I knew something was not right. We asked Maree (change name) our liaison and coordinating rebel, to speak to Aunty Beryl, so that we could all feel like we were acknowledging and working with the right people from the beginning of our time here. I understand we have been welcomed to country so many times that it is our common duty to accept the invitation; to listen and learn so that we can begin to share the stewardship and care for country that is vital to regenerative culture. Beryl (name changed) invited us back to the tent embassy and the main fire.

“Would you like to come down to the sacred fire and do some business”, she asked. Back at the tent embassy she stoked the fire, spoke to us of the importance of fire and smoke and offered us each a leaf to add to the fire and to speak our names and place and purpose to the fire.

After this we all gathered in the tent embassy Aunty Beryl told us she was proud of us and that she liked the silence we maintained. She spoke to us about some of the history of the tent embassy and her role as one of the present care takers. She spoke to us about the importance of culture and of working with the sovereign people who know how to cool the land. She spoke to us about taking back our home. Aunty said we need 95% of people to come here and join us to take our place, people together, not government corporations. She said she likes the red rebels. She was impressed with the way we listened quietly to each other and the way we gave her our full attention – the deep listening.

We spent around an hour and a half doing the business of preparing for the main assembly and other actions. We then broke into smaller groups. Some red rebels stayed on to perform as backdrop to the choir who had travelled by bus from the Blue Mountains. We had not eaten and decided to find a place to eat and then rest in some deep shade by the banks of the river.

By 7pm the temperatures were dropping. We all hoped to sleep well. Up bright and early the next morning, we joined a few XR groups in early morning actions. These were peaceful demonstrations, we held signs and waved to the politicians arriving for work. This was the first time I had seen military personnel with automatic machine guns positioned around parliament house. I asked the officer who was keeping an eye on me (there were more security than rebels and the atmosphere was respectful on both sides) how long these weapons had been used in public security. His answer since the New Zealand Terror attack

of 2019. Right, I said quietly. Wondering what else had changed that we did not know about or might not have considered.

The day we arrived back to Lismore the rains began to fall and within a few hours the rain was torrential. I got up early and made my way home to this farm. By the next morning, we knew the long drought had broken and that the smouldering fires would go out. Everyone needed a break. Time to heal and regenerate and enjoy the rains and the relief this brings to people facing zero water to the wildlife and fungi dependent on the water system. Just three weeks later. # Pandemic, things became a lot more complex for XR and everyone else.

I didn't know anyone when we moved into this area. I was not a trusted activist. I did know that folk here were on a high. What is now known as the Bentley Effect is the nonviolent direct actions that were mobilised and succeeded in stopping powerful Coal Seam Gas company Santos from mining at Bentley and in the Northern Rivers more broadly. I have been lucky enough to meet long standing and still active members of the Northeast Forest Alliance, NEFA and had been invited to attend a ground-breaking mutual agreement between NEFA and the Githabul People whose country had been returned by the forestry corporation that admitted it could not manage it.

This was where I first heard Aunty Gloria speak. The simple, passionate yet calm delivery of her message has stayed with me. "We have to rest country before we think about bringing tourists in." I knew this was true. A few months later I heard her speak in Lismore as people rallied for Koala's. "We have to choose love." I know this is true. I answered a call for trusted activists to meet in Lismore to Stop Adani. I told the one person I had formed a friendship with (one born on the dance floor of a TAZ) who cried at the rally, that I was interested in XR. Their rebellion had kicked off in London and, in terms of my research topic and background, they were the movement I had been waiting for. Sure, I was already in continuous revolt and within the global justice movements and Occupy but these were still stuck in the politics of the left and right and we need to move beyond these. XR are contributing to that.

When we moved to Lismore, there was an independent book shop on one of the corners. We browsed around. I found a copy of David Graeber's Utopia of Rules. I had the book already but spoke to the owner about it. He said, "you are the only person I know, who might be interested." Really, I replied. This is Lismore. He said that there was not a lot of interest in anarchist theory and philosophy from his experience over 20 years in that shop. From my own experience in the area and in the rebellion, locally, he was absolutely right. Few people had heard of Graeber, Rojava, even Emma Goldman. I hope I am helping to change that. I know for sure that one of our media team read Bullshit Jobs. He continues to thank me and now recommends that book to others. For me, Graeber has asked the

proposed solutions. *Debt*, the first five thousand years is confronting, and *Bullshit Jobs* goes a long way toward explaining what happened to social defence. It is after all around the same time that peace movements failed that the FIRE economy began its ascendance. Finance, Insurance and Real Estate services.

I invited 8 XR rebels to respond to one of the four key ideas I have used, loosely through this chapter and in chapter 6 (Navdanya). Two replied. One to decline, because they don't think they could express themselves in words. I received one response quoted in its entirety here. Miriam Tozillo is happy to be named and invited me to use part, all, or none of her response to option 3. Which was, Official Responses - Talk about how the state responded to XR or how other official institutions responded, this could be police, local government, federal government or educational institutions.

"It seems to me that responses to XR varied depending on the distance/literally and metaphorically the institution/organisation/group was from the action taking place. In cites e.g. The crackdowns by the Qld government in 2019, followed the large scale rally that disrupted the CBD, were swift and extreme, coming in the form of legislative changes to restrict activism that recalled the days of Bjelke Petersen. The Qld government were also very close to key campaigns, they had given Adani critical infrastructure status and eased the company's access to significant and long term ground water use. Other factors could have come into play. I've no way to prove if the vindictiveness of the Qld Premier at the time had anything to do with the world views she may have formed as the daughter of a former Minister for Mines in the Qld government, but they were certainly out of all proportion to the actual disruption that had been caused.

Since then, big media and governments have toyed with patronising language, perhaps because for a time, radical action was off the streets and confined to ongoing blockades such as at Camp Binbee against the Adani Mine. Critiques of XR in Australia were similar to critiques in the UK that followed the disruption of the London Underground, suggesting that XR was elitist and privileged and out of touch with diverse and marginalised communities. However, the recent growth in XR action around Australia has been more de-centralised and localised, with actions in cites and regional areas connecting issues important to the local context to the bigger picture of climate collapse, including in particular the work of groups like Market Forces that work through shareholder and supplier groups, to weaken the position of corporates like Adani and Big Gas. First Nations people have more often been the initiators of ongoing action in the form of blockades, camps and disruptions. I believe this is the genesis of the current government's attempts to bring in restrictions not only of direct action, but to restrict organisations and individuals within them from speaking up, withdrawing their support, divesting and the like, with the threat of withdrawing their charitable status or of civil action."

Thank you, Miriam. We meet again at the Disrupt Land Forces campaign in July, 2021. I agree with you, governments and corporations know that extinction rebellion and the broader ecology of movements it works within is working in de colonial solidarity with indigenous people here in Australia. Our common stand with them is a huge threat to their system of power. Caring and sharing are not discriminatory ways of living, they are inclusive. Rebellion is an act of love in so many ways.

Let's return now to the garden and the alternatives I am trying to live and collectively defend.

Photograph No. 11. Packing for a delivery of surplus organic veg, herbs and flowers



Photo: Karen Kennedy. iPad.

I began my pivot to delivery by phoning a neighbour and asking them to help me harvest and deliver large bunches of pink and white cosmos flowers. From Mallanganee to Tabulam, we disrupted the fear and vulnerability that arrived with Corona Virus and the national stay at home orders of March 2020. Part theatre, part the simple sharing of surplus. Smiles, waves and instances of pure surprise replaced the anxieties evident locally, however briefly.

Since then, I have been planting for surplus, harvesting, cleaning and packing vege boxes and delivering them to four to five households of mostly senior people in the village of Mallanganee. Our farm attends the Tabulam Community Market when we have the surplus. One of the young locals instantly recognised that she would always get free food from me and that even better it would be organic beetroot or carrot cake made with love from our garden to the plate. I don't set prices for the surplus boxes. I make it up as I go along. I leave it up to the folk. People can work it out, those with more money pay a little more, those with less pay less. I trade produce for honey, eggs and other goodies. Sometimes I get a home cooked meal, all packed are ready to freeze or eat that night, instead of money.

In early 2021 I responded to a request for help to set up a surplus produce market in Everson Park, Mallanganee. I agreed on the condition that it would be a self-organised system. Once the location was approved, we put up notices and ran the market for few a months. We stopped when the winter set in. We do intend to return when we have the surplus produce, the time and the energy. The park has a covered rotunda with seating around the circle, it is ideal for gatherings and underutilised. If community resilience is what the climate change demands we build, then we had better get on with localising food sovereignty.

For now, I do the vege run when I can. I have come to know what each household prefers. They have come to know that if I text them an arrival time of midday, I am more likely to arrive at 1pm or even 2pm. I consistently underestimate how long it will take me to pick and pack the boxes. Just like our garden beds, the surplus market, the delivery service, the possibility of earning a small income; all of this may take years to become something more productive and inclusive.

Photograph 12: Sharing the Surplus. Trying to subvert the economy.



Karen Kennedy. Mobile Phone upload. Everson Park. Mallanganee.

We have vague permission to operate from the local council. They can deal with buying and selling and even with solely money less exchange but blend these and suggest all are possible in the one location and they are still attempting to work out how the grey can be made black and white. So, to speak. Applying state and federal policies to small villages is something local authorities struggle with. In my way of thinking, small villages and towns

should lead the transitions. They should be taken off the grid and regenerated agroecologically and managed by the residents, whoever they are. Thus far, there are no plans for this in my area.

I was going to include a photo of the high tech Body Armour for sale at Land Forces, Brisbane, Meanjin in June 2021. I decided to take it out. It is clear to me that weapons technology is in runaway mode. It has nothing to do with defending life. As I stood back observing a sales pitch. The words that grabbed me are, in this suit, one person can deal with or kill a room of 500 people. I was horrified, under prepared for the reality, all smiles from the salesman as well as the person listening to the marketing rhetoric.

A young person in defence uniform was standing beside me. I said, “this is what you will be wearing in the future”. He replied, “If I am - something has really gone wrong.”

Photograph No 13. Fraternisation – kind of or, not quite.



Photo: Karen Kennedy, Mobile Phone, July date, 2021.

But I gave it a go. I was prepared for the conference. I had done my reading of both the industry and the disruption information. After paying my respects to the elders and activists gathered to disrupt the death fair, I decided to ring Brian Martin. Was there a question he wanted me to ask? He was surprised but happy to hear from me. I explained where and what. He gave me some tips, some hypotheticals. What if there was a political coup in Australia? I have often and more frequently lately, thought that this is *the* revolutionary question. A nonviolent political coup is not impossible. I had my own broad questions in mind, hypotheticals around food security and run away tech. I also wanted to ask about the civilian military society relations. The broader question on my mind was, don't we already have a total defence system? Hasn't the boundary disappeared? Doesn't everyone have a metaphorical gun and a stake in the industry that makes and proliferates weapons designed to kill?

I had the chance to ask this question, in a short version. I stopped to look at a Jeep and soon began a conversation with the person doing the sales pitch. I asked him the question, do you think the distinction military civilian holds? His answer, what do you think? I replied yes, I thought the distinction was redundant and that, perhaps that was what we are trying to work out. He smiled but that gave me no indication of his own opinion. It told me that he was a reasonable and polite person who was lucky to be marketing a really functional Jeep with all the accessories a farmer like me would love. That people in remote villages and farming communities will need.

This was not nothing like the Toyota's made infamous by the United States and the Taliban in Afghanistan. I moved to take a closer look and said to the salesperson; I could do with one of those. He began to explain the features. It could move through floods, had all sorts of equipment. The conversation moved back to the features of the Jeep. I moved on to with no particular plan in mind. That was my fourth conversation.

The next day was the conference. I had been reading up on the speakers and the topics and had read the paper circulated at the conference, I was keen because this was really why I was here. I arrived early, eager to move away from the sales yard into the realm of civil defence and Australia's preparedness for future compounding emergencies. I have two paragraphs more to do here.

I took at seat not too far from the front. The first speaker was a marketer for the weapons industry, I did not take many notes. The next speakers had a common theme, we are underprepared for climate emergencies. There is a difference between lessons observed and lessons we can learn. The ADF bring a degree of neutrality and the new agency for national recovery and resilience is permanent. We have learned one size not fit all. It is up to communities to demand that they lead recovery efforts through local participation and

nonpartisan politics. Too many agencies not enough civilian training. The lenses need to be broadened in cross jurisdictional conversations. The Red Cross are responding to psychosocial needs, there is disillusionment 1 to 3 years into the expected 10 recovery period post a major flood, fires or other disaster. Lack of preparedness at local levels are evidently a concern of emergency and resilience organisations, government departments and the military.

The next speaker changed to conversation completely. Officer Ian Cummings began this way. "we are all custodians of the environment with co responsibilities. You know who told me to tell you this. The aboriginal elders who have been caring for this country." I was pleasantly surprised. He continued to note that of the exhibitions in the hall next door, only one stand mentioned the sustainable development goals, the rest were technically in breach of their international legal obligations. The officer claimed, "we know what to do but we are not." The G20 group have told corporations to take climate risk seriously. Public governance and accountabilities must enact due diligence. The officer said that defence needed to understand all 17 SDG goals. That climate change was impacting the ADF and climate change will inhibit peace. WOW. I was so please. There was another interesting presentation. Which I will have to save for another time.

Outside my friends were conducting a disruption: I was heckled by some of them as I walked into the conference. I sat down, alone, nervous. Once the presentations began, I knew this was a good thing to be engaged in. I concentrated, absolutely. I left on conclusion and did not return for the post presentation conversation. I had an informal discussion, randomly, with two civilian defence staff outside the venue. They asked about the protestors, I asked about the military system.

I suddenly realised that I was exhausted and decided to return to my farm. I packed up my hotel room and caught the train heading towards home. The experience was overwhelming. At the same time it provided me with a set of notes, names and was the basis of further research into the existing military system.

Photograph No. 14: Food Not War:



Photo: Peter Brookes Mobile Phone, September 2nd, 2021.

Three cheers to anarchism: may its endurance, optimism, senses of awareness, prospects of convergence – anarchisation – prefigure a future of social defence, new types of kin and earth bound politics that defend zones of inclusion, biodiversity and cooperation. It is the common sense found running through the mystical anarchism's I love and try to live. The solutions are within the problems, that is how I started to produce soil. If the problem is war, the solutions are within the systems that create and maintain it. In my view, to do this means experimenting with legal anarchism and adopting nonviolent law as politics for people who care and have formed consensus to share. In relation to our current food system. The response of Food Not Bombs is simply common sense.

I proudly held the sign in this image, that now travels with me on my deliveries and to local markets, at the entry to Parliament House. It was early in the morning. I was not in my reds, or was I. It seems so long ago # the pandemic and all that has not been said.

As Bob Waldrop put it. You won't find food security at the supermarket. Everyone ought to know that you won't find it in the system that has turned food into a weapon of war and convinced people to kill each other so that *some* people can exist. You won't find it in the legal system that is out of date and based on patriarchal systems of command and control.

Social defence as Martin has conceived of it is open to any possibility in theory. However, my research suggests that social defence could learn to put food first. It understands that capitalism cannot and will not save the world. On my interpretation, social defence seeks the government of no one, which is also the government for everyone. Following this, social defence would only work if everyone was included in the realms of caring and sharing.

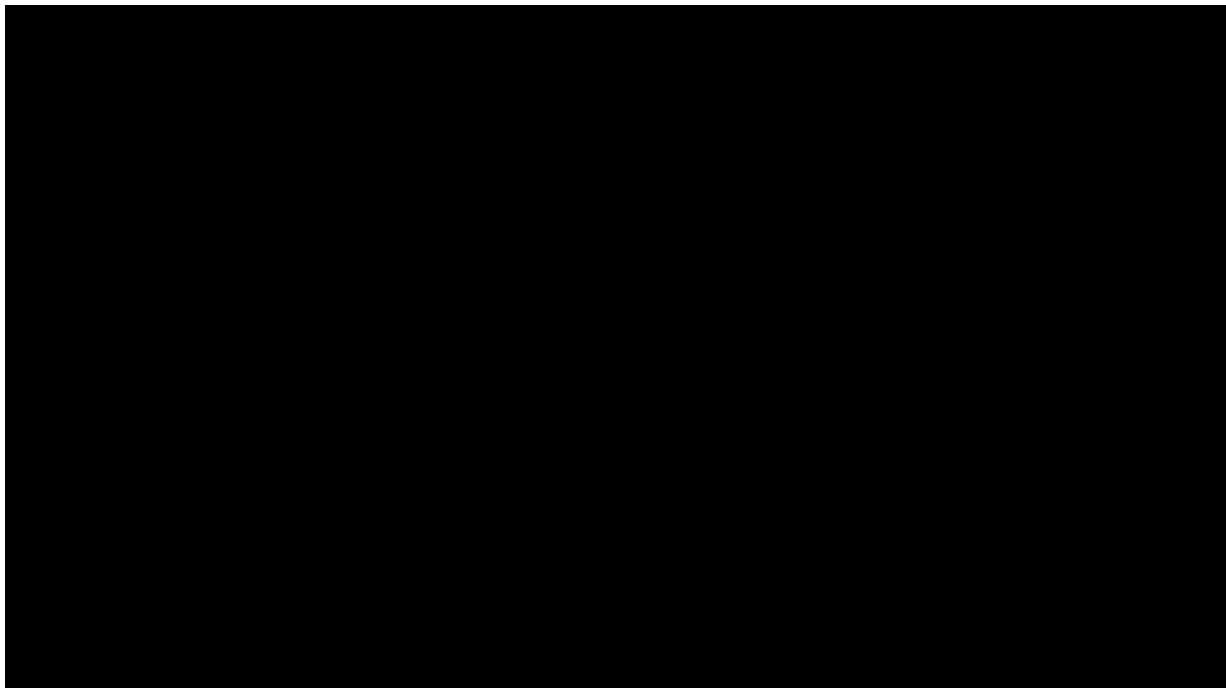
Thank you for spending this time with me. I hope it has not been too hard. There is a lot at stake. A future to prefigure. I have packed you a box of fresh veg as is customary on this farm. Please visit anytime. If you would like to continue the discussion, please email me at freespiritresearch@gmail.com.

Take away questions:

- Could this be the revolutionary opportunity that social defence is looking for? Will people dismantle the hierarchies of power and move into supporting mutual aid, decolonial solidarity, not charity, food not bombs?
- Will agroecology and grassroots -anarcho pacifists provide the vision needed to move beyond politics and into regeneration? Do we have the collective vision to come Home and road test nonviolent policing with the Shanti Sena, or with methods, on similar lines, decided by the people in their communities, suburbs, and villages?

Photograph No. 14. XR Global Newsletter 56. Preparing for the Worst.

“Rebels assemble outside the headquarters of Radiotelevision Italiana (Rai), one of Italy’s biggest broadcasters, to echo the IPCC’s warning of a code red for humanity.



Code red is official. People are building momentum towards COP. Extinction Rebellion, Global Newsletter, 56, October 2021, www.earth.rebellion/newsletter

In one of those moments where you pick up one of your books and hold it in your hands with intent and then open a page at random, I was reminded of again of the multiple visions and planning for alternative post capitalist economies. But these would have to be post in practice not just in theory. Kate Raworth described the essential move needed to begin transforming the degraded system before it destroys the planet. “The shift from degenerative to regenerative design goes hand in hand with an equally ambitious shift from divisive to distributive economies”.¹⁰¹⁷ I am not sure if I will be joining others in rebellion anytime soon. I will keep working on our capacities for food sovereignty here on this farm. Summer is coming, there is food to produce and share, projects to put back into action. I have my red rebel costume; I get the feeling I will be wearing it again soon. Or it may find a home with another rebel. I would like to talk to friends about some rainbow rebel actions and some public Aum circles and sharing circles. I have organised to purchase the film, Seeds of Vandana Shiva to screen at local halls over summer. A Rojava documentary night is on my mind too. I will talk to friends, or simply just get on and organise it myself, without worrying too much what others think.

¹⁰¹⁷ K Raworth, A New Economics, in, *This is Not a Drill*, Penguin, 2019, p. 147.

Chapter 11: Thesis Conclusion

The proposition of this thesis was that social defence is philosophically and practically being prefigured in agroecology and anarchic-grass roots politics, can in some ways be tentatively confirmed. In other ways, recuperation of pacifism – nonviolence suggests the potential of social defence is not on the agenda of governments and their attendant institutions, nor is it likely to be. Thus, this research suggests that it depends on who is setting the agenda and how that agenda will be implemented, or not.

The methodology used in this research did not intend to prove or generalise its findings. This is because the concept of social defence is speculative and future oriented. We have no such system place in the 21st century, as such conventional understandings of research and data as equations and formulars that are applied to publics through policy, law and sanctions in anthropocentric ways, have not been useful here.

However, through my exploration and analysis of food systems and regenerative cultures, this research does demonstrate that the proposition is not just something in the authors head, or on her own farm. In line with the post qualitative methodology explored, explained and justified in chapters three and four; an updated understanding of the self is at work here and the commitments, ethical, political and ecological are the basis of my solidarity with the collective movements I explore, as well as my own farming and activism. Reflexivity, like my existence is not a moment of reflection, it is incomplete and ongoing.

There are many movements of agroecology, anarchism and anti-authoritarian grassroots initiatives that social defence as an alternative to the military would need. Some of them are overtly aware that agroecology is also a rejection of the war machine (Navdanya, Rainbow Family and Rojava) others, particularly permaculture, regenerative agriculture and the broader rubric of regenerative culture have not yet fully committed to decolonial solidarity or to directly challenging patriarchy and capitalism and as such, do not always make the necessary connections to the military system that effectively and with lethality, holds the current systems in place. There is no large global antiwar movement in the ways there is a large ecological, climate change movement. Rather, there are small bands of committed people disrupting arms exhibitions and self-organising in groups like, Rainbow Family, Food not Bombs, Extinction Rebellion and various initiatives within the rights based institutions of the ruling system.

The unruly concept of social defence may not have fallen off the agenda as much as Brian Martin has feared. Anarchists have been prefiguring the government of no one, which is also the government of everyone, for as long as we have known about them. Feminists around the world are building movements to challenge patriarchy and reinstate an age of woman. Sensible commentators, following the question food or war, agree that women's relational processes and multispecies thinking will be needed if humans are to survive the 21st century in the context of the Anthropocene. Following the ecological theory of non-separation and applying the ethics of caring and sharing at the root of agroecology, this

research suggests that Rojava cannot be excluded because they have a democratic, armed self-defence force.

In the context of life and death, nonviolence is a privilege. This interpretation of the literature on social defence, civil resistance and some of its contentious areas explored in chapters 5 and 6, suggests that the experiments of Rojava can be thought of as building an anarcho pacifist peace, they are just not there yet. These chapters and the examples used to illustrate and discuss the literature on social defence used here, suggests that pacifism-nonviolence has been recuperated. As JC Scott and Brian Martin have warned, when the state becomes the revolution, then the revolution becomes our enemy again. In their 2019 publication, Johansen and Martin conclude, that social movements are the most promising basis for promoting social defence and, that social defence provides a framework for building a resilient, self-governing community.”¹⁰¹⁸

In the empirical examples I have explored, the speculative concept of social defence is being prefigured in grassroots resistance to authoritarian power. This resistance is diverse and based in local contexts. Practical information is shared through commons sources and share aims towards decolonisation and nonseparation. The concept seems to be nascent within the peasant movements striving for an emancipatory politics, the largest global movements in the world who have committed to food sovereignty and decolonisation and challenging patriarchy. The concept is attuned to our common duty to love our mother like no other and to include everyone in the realms of caring and sharing. Staying with anarchists-feminists and pacifists has personally helped me. It’s the blend I attempt to live and be guided by. One day I will be an ancestor too.

The methodology deployed means that I should experiment with truth and work for change in the current systems. As an ethical enactment based on nonseparation, I have never viewed this research as being isolated or narcissistic. Post qualitative methodology is viewed as a process that is ongoing. Research even that conducted by one person is viewed as a social process. As such this research is a body of work in a large global network of neoliberal universities that depend on a hierarchy of work and remuneration. Significantly post qualitative research is based on what is becoming not what is. The methodology pays attention to the ecological philosophy of the non-human and on philosophy more broadly. It is up to readers to decide if I have conducted this research in an honest, reflective and ethically committed way.

I have learned through this period 2018-2021, that social defence is not a popular topic. I really do feel that few people understand that undertaking a full time PhD and maintaining a productive food farm means that I have worked 2 full time jobs. Furthermore, this type of

¹⁰¹⁸ Ibid, Johansen and Martin, 2019, p126.

overwork seems to be the norm in both academic and regenerative contexts. For example, I came into this research as a qualified and published academic yet have been constantly asked to learn how to become an academic and to justify my political philosophy. Nothing in this research has changed my commitments to regenerating degraded political, ecological and social conditions. Climate change 'event's, fires, floods, the 2020 global pandemic have in my view, made an exploration of alternatives to the military and other killing systems, prescient and worthy of greater attention.

Sure, I did not go to India in person, but I did engage through knowledge commons and shared information, with the Navdanya Movement; I did not conduct field work in Rojava but I did engage with the literature, films and other information that people in Rojava and in solidarity with Rojava have produced. I also engaged in a critical way with official sources and scholarly critique in relation to Navdanya, Rojava and Extinction Rebellion and I paid particular attention to the ways the global food system works for war, rather than for peace.

Hence, this thesis agrees with Julian Cribb, we can choose food and not war but not enough of us have made this link or its choice – yet. This research will not end when the official research ends. I intend to continue working towards making my own small changes by trying to live ecologically and responsibly; to empower others by example. I remain active in social change movements and I hope to publish chapters of this research in journals and forums that focus on agroecology, anarchist politics and grass roots social change. This research is not just a figment of my own imagination, though I could not have conceived of it without a deal of imagination. It is clearly based on the collective work of others, particularly Brian Martin and his collaborators. This research suggests that the political and ecological philosophy of social anarchism is not as marginal as mainstream institutions make it out to be. If this were the case it would not have been possible to source, reflect upon and include up to date information on the alternatives explored here. In turn this suggests that social defence, as concept, and alternative to the military system is also not as marginal as governments, universities and others would like it to be.

Nonseparation is not an idea; it is what broader ecological and post qualitative methodology are attempting to become. Indigenous knowledge is central to this. This has huge implications for the military system because it depends on separating, civilians from combatants, good states from failed states, rich from poor, governed from self-governed. Arguably no move beyond the status quo could take place without demilitarising politics and removing patriarchal hold on the systems of life all humans depend upon. Social defence if ever implemented means that all people are responsible for defending what is vital to them.

This makes social defence relevant to multiple stakeholders. Moreover, the concept empowers people to think about alternatives just as it offers practical ways these can be undertaken. Empowered people prepared to take responsibility for defending their vital systems are not what governments want because this type of empowerment can also be used to challenge governments authority to decide who, what and how of defence and security. Each chapter of this thesis has explored the ways in which governments control just how much and who makes social change. In reality, as the 2019 - global pandemic has shown, social change of a dramatic type can happen overnight.

The suggested criteria used to judge autoethnographic research, as explained in chapter 4, are self-reflexivity, resonance, credibility and contribution. Chapter nine of this thesis is a self-reflexive photo essay. Perhaps the hardest chapter to produce here, it aims to show how my own work resonates with others, offers evidence of my credibility to interpret the sources I use, as well as my ethical commitments to systems change. Clearly, I have had to change and continue to become a responsible agroecologist and political philosopher, a student and a teacher, a mother. The thesis as a whole is the basis of my contribution to the under researched concept of social defence. In line with calls for and movements for emancipation, the thesis brings actual examples of everyday resistance and regeneration into synthesis with the concept of Social Defence.

The research has various limits. I read only English language sources, I have not conducted interviews and clearly there are many groups that could be included here but are not. I have taken risks by using emergent methodology and regenerative culture to conduct the research which from some perspectives limits its usefulness. There are no limits to further research based on this thesis or the concept it explores. Much of the work has been done here that could be used in the future to conduct large scale surveys online and/or to run focus groups or discussion circles to discuss the implications of this research. It is also possible that others might be able to use it as inspiration for ethnographic research in the future.

Three cheers for social defence, may its potential be realised within the mass revolutions of the Anthropocene and the age of women return to put food first.

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Appendix 1. Love Your Mother Like No Other: The Navdanya Movement and Social Defence.

Navdanya. Love your mother like no other.

Introduction:

The Navdanya Movement was formed by Vandana Shiva, a peace woman of significance. The movement she formed in 1994 continues to grow and is now part of the massive mobilisations of women challenging patriarchy and re asserting matriarchal thinking and values all over this damaged earth. "According to the patriarchal view, the origin of everything, including the origins of humans, is not Mother Nature or the human mother but Father in Heaven."¹⁰¹⁹ In a recent interview about the documentary, the *Seeds of Vandana Shiva*, the topic of femicide comes up early, and Shiva takes us back to the nine million female witches killed in Europe.¹⁰²⁰ She is taking her time to articulate her thoughts.

Shiva has been thinking about the witch hunts, the severing of mostly women witches and indigenous people, who seen themselves as part of nature, but were told they could not possibly be, for over thirty years. Shiva and many other women are here to say that witches are back. That patriarchies intent to kill the feminine idea of mother nature, cannot be killed. Future generations will thank Vandana Shiva and her many children, I consider myself one, for exposing the lies of this murderous civilisation. As she says, imperialism of the mind and colonial practice are not separate things. Shiva's philosophy is non-separation, applying that here, when I say the word Navdanya, I am talking about Vandana Shiva and the 9 seeds movement as if they are one.

This appendix brings Navdanya into conversation with social defence. It begins with a summary of the movement, considers official responses and the war Vandana Shiva called against Bill Gates. Navdanya's processes of empowerment are then explored with question whatever happened to social defence, in mind. The final section looks at earth democracy, the alternative Navdanya are busy creating through agroecology. If I were to ask Shiva herself the question, my hunch is that she would say nothing happened to it. She is after all the author of *Oneness Versus the 1%*, *Hunger by Design*, *Soil not Oil*, *Earth Democracy* and other inspirational texts. Her central message is that we should love our Mother Earth like no other. Navdanya are here to help anyone interested in social defence as an alternative to

¹⁰¹⁹ M Mies, *War is the Father of All Things, Heraclitus But Nature is the Mother of Life*, Capitalism, Nature, Socialism, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2006. P.18.

¹⁰²⁰ V Shiva, *Earth Democracy Connecting the Rights of Mother Earth*, Interview, *Mind Life Institute*, June, 23rd, 2021, [Vandana Shiva // Earth Democracy : Connecting the Rights of Mother Earth and the Well Being of All - YouTube](#)

the military. They have literally sown the seeds and seeded the future radical potential of social defence.

Navdanya “is based on the philosophy of *Vasudhiva Kutumbakam* (the earth as one family).”¹⁰²¹ Its active processes of empowerment are inspired by the Gandhian concept of self-rule and political decentralisation, *Swaraj*. Navdanya are part of a resurgence of the real, intent on prefiguring Earth Democracy, through the politics of eco-feminism. This movement is the most obvious to learn from because of its current capacity to undertake nonviolent actions. The movement protects India’s biodiversity through Seed, Food, Soil and Knowledge. The movement has its own ashram and teaching campus in the state of Uttarakhand in North-eastern India and has to date worked “farmer to farmer, movement to movement to establish over 122 seed banks across India and Bhutan.”¹⁰²² By 2011, in concert with others, Navdanya turned their attention to the,

*“Unconstitutional land acquisition and incidents of state violence against peaceful protesters. They worked with Farmer leaders Kesari Singh Gujjar and Satpal Chaudary from Uttar Pradesh along with Kishan Bir Chaudary and fellow farmer leaders to provide a direct account of the atrocities taking place in UP,”*¹⁰²³ and elsewhere in India.

As Wendell Berry put it in the foreword to the text containing her key writings, *The Vandana Shiva Reader*, “she has been an indispensable ally, devoted, smart, informed, tireless and fearless. Shiva realised that the biotech industry had plans to patent life, genetically engineer seeds and render food and its ecological sources inert. In her words, she recognised; “That if seeds were to become intellectual property, then saving and sharing seeds became intellectual property theft”.¹⁰²⁴ It is no accident that she was chosen to write the forward to XR’s first published handbook, *This is not a drill*.¹⁰²⁵ Navdanya’s *swaraj* campaigns are carefully aimed to prefigure *Earth Democracy* whilst also challenging the aggression and repression unleashed through capitalism’s capture and privatisation of common home.

¹⁰²¹ Navdanya, About Us, Homepage, *Navdanya.org*, <http://www.navdanya.org/site/component/content/article?id=616> (accessed 24 May, 2020).

¹⁰²² Ibid, www.navdanya.org/seed-satyagraha.

¹⁰²³ Navdanya, Press Statement, Stop Land Wars and Land Grabs, *Navdanya.org* <http://www.navdanya.org/news/168-press-statement-on-stop-the-land-wars-and-land-grab> (accessed 3 June 2020).

¹⁰²⁴ Ibid, Shiva, *Reader*, p. 3.

¹⁰²⁵ Extinction Rebellion, *This is not a drill*, Penguin, 2019.

Empowering people, one by one, seed by seed, community by community. The movement has its own ashram and teaching campus in the state of Uttarakhand in North-eastern India and has to date worked “farmer to farmer, movement to movement to establish over 122 seed banks across India and Bhutan”.¹⁰²⁶ By 2011, like many others, Navdanya turned their attention to “unconstitutional land acquisition and incidents of state violence against peaceful protesters. They worked with Farmer leaders Kesari Singh Gujjar and Satpal Chaudary from Uttar Pradesh along with Kishan Bir Chaudary and fellow farmer leaders to provide a direct account of the atrocities taking place in UP;”¹⁰²⁷ and elsewhere in India. Forming alliances of resistance, building momentum with movements of regeneration, and reaching out to others through shared communications is what Navdanya does.

The local Indian website is regularly updated, and it provides access to the movement’s multiple research and outreach publications, Vandana Shiva’s *Jivak* blog and information relating to training and a significant history of the campaigns that Navdanya have taken part in locally, nationally and internationally since it began: <http://www.navdanya.org/site/>. Navdanya is registered as a Trust and its financial statements are publicly available.¹⁰²⁸ The international arm was formally founded in Italy in 2011 and in 2012 Navdanya International launched its global seed campaign/ *bija swaraj*.

The international website is also comprehensive and up to date, <https://navdanyainternational.org/about-us-navdanya-international/>. Both sites provide links to other global seed saver movements, co-operative alliances, resilience alliances and other ‘earthbound movements. What unites these international, global movements is their “common desire to rethink our relationship with the earth and to build a different set of political and economic institutions as a counter force to neoliberal globalisation”.¹⁰²⁹

Seemingly unstoppable, Navdanya have been a part successful and un-successful negotiations with the World Trade Organisation (WTO), they have instigated and collaborated in legal and civil society actions through local, national and international courts against the worlds’ largest chemical and pharmaceutical corporations, Bayer and Monsanto, Syngenta, Dow and Dupont. The movement has worked at multiple levels within the World Social Forums (WSF) transnational Food Sovereignty Movements (FSM) and within global rights institutions of United Nations (UN) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). Navdanya is both an NGO and a gras roots movement.

¹⁰²⁶ Ibid, www.navdanya.org/seed-satyagraha.

¹⁰²⁷ Navdanya, Press Statement, Stop Land Wars and Land Grabs, *Navdanya.org* <http://www.navdanya.org/news/168-press-statement-on-stop-the-land-wars-and-land-grab> (accessed 3 June 2020).

¹⁰²⁸ <http://www.navdanya.org/site/attachments/article/616/NavdanyaTrustBS%20FY2016-2017.pdf>, (accessed 28 May 2020).

¹⁰²⁹ Ibid, C G Crew, *Earthbound People*, 2018 p. 68.

In India and in Europe where central banks were facilitating the mergers, people's resistance was met with lawsuits. Monsanto lodged these against India and other nation states who tried to use the rule of law to stop the 'toxic cartel's' monopoly rights over "hazardous drugs" and deadly fertilisers.¹⁰³⁰ In 2018 they joined *La Via Campesina* (LVC) in the "new movement to stop geo- engineering and stand in solidarity with communities and organisations resisting."¹⁰³¹ At the time of writing Navdanya are in solidarity with the farmers opposing the "so called farm bill."¹⁰³² Vandana Shiva is not surprised by the Indian government's current legal moves, they are for her a continuation of the struggles with corporatization, financialization and artificialisation that have been ongoing for the 40 years.¹⁰³³

When I imagine the world through Navdanya's eyes, we would all now be working with the knowledge and skills of people who have significant experience of working collaboratively on "spheres vital to survival...on seed, food and water."¹⁰³⁴ Vandana Shiva is one among many women to have demonstrated through her being and her values that "she works for her extended earth family,"¹⁰³⁵ her messages have always been consistent and clear. For these and other reasons, she is trusted. On World Health Day, April 2020, Shiva delivered this message from the Navdanya movement to the world.¹⁰³⁶

*"Here on this farm, we know it is possible, to reverse the extinction. It is possible to regenerate bio-diversity, it is possible to regenerate the earth, possible to create climate resilience. It is possible to replace communities including the earth communities. We have to learn that in these times of fear, in these times of hopelessness and to learn it we turn to nature, to our amazing ecological civilisation and re-seed the future with every seed we save and every seed we plant."*¹⁰³⁷ Shiva believes that, "Together we have the creative power to stop extinction through non co-operation at every level, beginning with each of us,

¹⁰³⁰ Ibid, Shiva, *Oneness*, p. 62; GRAIN.org, All crisis, the food crisis is central to all of them, *GRAIN Report*, 2019, charts many of the cases, <https://grain.org/en/article/6195-all-crises-the-crisis-the-industrial-agri-food-system-is-central-to-all-of-them>; (accessed 1 July 2020).

¹⁰³¹ La Via Campesina (LVC) Hands Off Mother Earth, Press Release, 4 October, 2018 LVC, <https://viacampesina.org/en/hands-off-mother-earth/> (accessed may 27, 2020).

¹⁰³² V Shiva, Indian farmers 30 year struggle against corporate globalism and 40 year struggle against the green revolution, *Navdanya International* 2021, <https://navdanyainternational.org/30-40-years-indian-farmers-protest/>

¹⁰³³ Ibid,

¹⁰³⁴ V Shiva, *Earth Democracy*, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, California, 2005, this edition, 2015, p. 129.

¹⁰³⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁶ A Moses, Collapse of Civilisation is the most likely outcome, *Voice of Action*, June 5, 2020, <https://voiceofaction.org/collapse-of-civilisation-is-the-most-likely-outcome-top-climate-scientists/> (accessed 8 June, 2020).

¹⁰³⁷ Navdanya, World Health Day, 2020, *YouTube*, (accessed 28 May 2020).

expanding the rebellion into ‘ever-widening, never-ascending circles’ of interconnected life and freedom”.¹⁰³⁸ Earth democracy is inclusive, however social contract is that men need know how to part of the women centred world, “they need to act like a good mother.”¹⁰³⁹

Stepping back into the imposed reality, it is clear that “There are strong connections between what is to be defended and how to do it.”¹⁰⁴⁰ What is worth repeating, is that “in its deepest formulation social defence implies the restructuring of social institutions to empower populations.”¹⁰⁴¹ Navdanya is a shining example of exactly that.

Empowering:

“A shift from anthropocentrism to recognition that we are part of nature and nature has Rights. It is leading to a shift from Gross Domestic Product GDP, and Gross National Product, GNP as a measure of wealth and prosperity to Gross National Happiness and Well Being, GNH, and a shift from fossil fuel intensive, monoculture and commodity based industrial agriculture to biodiversity based ecological agriculture”.¹⁰⁴²

Navdanya’s Earth University – *Biju Vidyapeeth* follows a continuum of human knowledge that is cosmologically created by the teachers and schools of the forests. By the mountains and water ways of the living planet earth. Following the Indian philosopher and writer Rabindranath Tagore, Navdanya explain that “*nature is not just the source of knowledge and freedom; it is the source of beauty and joy, of art and aesthetics, of harmony and perfection. It symbolizes the universe*”.¹⁰⁴³ From their viewpoint, seed, water, soil and food systems do not need to be governed or secured by the interests of capital or the geopolitical aims of powerful states. Parties which we accuse of perpetuating “bio-piracy and legalising “food totalitarianism.”¹⁰⁴⁴ At Navdanya, courses are designed to offer participants personal and collective experience of their processes of change and empowerment. In this way participants experience the resurgence of the real because they are part of a nascent earth democracy. While some may consider it inappropriate to focus on one individual, given the phenomenon of leaderless revolutions within contemporary global revolts and the multiple problems perceived with experts and their role in perpetuating profit over people. Vandana

¹⁰³⁸ I bid, Shiva, *This is not a Drill*, Foreword, V Shiva, *The Vandana Shiva Reader*, University of Kentucky Press, 2014, p.13.

¹⁰³⁹ H G Abendr, *Matriarchies are not just a reversal of patriarchies; A structural analysis*, International Academy *Haiga 2009*, <https://www.hagia.de/en/matriarchy/> (accessed 14 April 2019).

¹⁰⁴⁰ Ibid, Johansen and Martin, *Social Defence*, 2019, p. 159.

¹⁰⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴² Navdanya, *Jivak Kantri*, <http://www.navdanya.org/jaivik-kranti/> (accessed 20 June, 2020),

¹⁰⁴³ Navdanya, Earth University, <http://www.navdanya.org/site/earth-university/earth-university> (accessed 27 May 2020).

¹⁰⁴⁴ V Shiva, Ibid, *Peddling Poison, Oneness versus, Earth Democracy*, p. 79.

Shiva is not viewed as an expert in this way. Like all good mothers, she more of guide than a leader in the capitalist sense of the term.¹⁰⁴⁵

In her enlightening article based on participation in two of Navodaya's courses, transformative educationalist, Catherine Etmanski found that the participants she interviewed benefited in numerous empowering ways.¹⁰⁴⁶ Specifically, the holistic approach meant that "participants moments of joy and wonder were complemented by critical thinking and calls to action".¹⁰⁴⁷ Etmanski confirms that community based organisations such as Navdanya serve as critical sites of learning and building solidarity in the multiple informal networks working for food systems change.¹⁰⁴⁸

The paradoxes and privileges of flying in as a researcher are not lost on Etmanski, nor is the fact that there are initiatives, courses and alternative institutions that are doing what Navdanya does all over the world.¹⁰⁴⁹ As one of her interviewees noted, Vandana Shiva and Satish Kumar, the other head teacher at Biju Vidyapeeth provided him with the inspiration to travel from Bhutan to attend their courses. In response to being contacted a year later he was still spending half his time there and half his time in the Gross National Happiness (GNH) Center in Bhutan.¹⁰⁵⁰ It is hardly far-fetched to suggest that inspiration is crucial in the processes of personal and collective change. This is clear in Etmanski's academic research and in Navdanya's publications and coalitions of resistance.

Ong Namō Vandana Ji, Sat Nam. (I call and honour your name. Truth is my name).¹⁰⁵¹

In a recent news post, Navdanya point out that "...the health emergency we face today provides an opportunity to fix our broken food and agriculture systems and regenerate the health of the planet and our health."¹⁰⁵² Getting into the political thinking, Samuel Alexander, author of *Wild Democracy*, which is very similar to *Earth Democracy*, is right to that both communism and anarchism view the ideal society as stateless, the key antagonism

¹⁰⁴⁵ Ibid, MM Sing Decosas, *Ways of Seeing the Seed*, p 225.

¹⁰⁴⁶ C Etmanski, Seeds and stories of transformation, from the individual to the collective, *Journal of Transformational Education*, Vol. 16, 2018, p.151-167

¹⁰⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 13.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 164.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 165.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 15.

¹⁰⁵¹ K Kennedy, that is how I would put the expression/articulation in a transliteration of Hindi based on my own understanding of the language and my practice of Kundalini Yoga, as taught by Yogi Bajan.

¹⁰⁵² Navdanya, News, Grow your health, Return to Earth, *Navdanya.Org*, April 21, 2020, <http://www.navdanya.org/site/latest-news-at-navdanya/705-grow-your-health,-return-to-earth> (accessed, May 1, 2020).

is the role of the state in the process of becoming stateless.¹⁰⁵³ Navdanya is not explicitly anarchist or socialist. It would be possible to make a case that it is both because it is eco-feminist. For Alexander the eco-socialist argument supports the eco-anarchist. However, his view is that “in a crisis or collapse we may not be able to rely on state administration as eco-socialists suggest we will or should. We will then have to learn the art of self- government today.”¹⁰⁵⁴ Navdanya is reaching beyond politics and back into more traditional local systems. Shiva might not identify as anarchist, but she can certainly be seen as ally.

According to Singh-Decosa’s 2010 doctoral research, Navdanya uses the “paradigm of the Gandhian Satyagraha” to talk about resistance and to introduce processes of self-organisation that use local traditions and cultural notions to design collective resistance to multiple forms of domination.¹⁰⁵⁵ More recently, Cindy Connor put it this way in the wonderful, *Seed libraries and other means of keeping seeds in peoples’ hands*; “Educating and empowering people is what Vandana Shiva is all about.”¹⁰⁵⁶

Shiva has consistently pointed out that local protectionism is not the same as corporate protectionism.¹⁰⁵⁷ “The big shift taking place around the world is from the structural violence of the money machine to non-violent economies, from forced globalisation...to localisation through which we become co-creators with the earth...”¹⁰⁵⁸ Navdanya are working with the concept of the circular non waste economy. This view is shared within contemporary permaculture, in Buddhist Economics and, as it is being theorised by Shiva, as a form of Gandhian Political Economy.¹⁰⁵⁹

¹⁰⁵³ Ibid, Alexander, *Wild Democracy*, p. 10.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 13.

¹⁰⁵⁵ M M Singh Decosas, *Ways of Seeing the Seed: Navdanya’s Seed Satyagraha*, *PhD Thesis*, Simon Fraser University, Canada Fall, 2010 p. 207.

¹⁰⁵⁶ C Connor, *Seed libraries and other means of keeping seeds in peoples’ hands*, 2015 www.ebookcentral.proquest.com, created by une 20-05-10 18.17.47 2015, p.137

¹⁰⁵⁷ Ibid, Shiva, *Oneness*, p. 164.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 160.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Ibid, Shiva, *Earth Democracy*, spells these out, p 8-80; A Hunt Bardiner, (ed) *Mindfulness in the Market Place: Compassionate Responses to Consumerism*, Parralax Press 2005, collects the work of renowned engaged Buddhists such as Thich Naht Hahn and Joanna Macey; Ibid, C Ashwanden, *Permaculture and money*, five part series, <https://www.permaculturenews.org/category/why-permaculture/economics/> (accessed, 15 June, 2020). On human economies, See D Graeber, *Debt: the first five thousand years*, Melville House, New York, p. 1-43; K Kennedy, lectures delivered at CPACS and USYD, on political economy of peace, available at www.usyd.cpacs/research/.

Navdanya believe their alternative processes and institutions exemplify, “the real revolution”.¹⁰⁶⁰ As Connor sensibly suggests, “just check out what Navdanya are doing”.¹⁰⁶¹ You will find an annual A-Z agroecology course, an earth democracy course, a shakti eco-feminism course, over 15 books on seeds, living soils, food systems, health per acre and more. Various options from volunteering to fee paying and self-organised school tours are offered at Biju Vidyapeeth and most of their pamphlets and books are freely downloadable.

Shiva consistently recounts her own influences and the sources of her personal empowerment in her public speeches and interviews. Famously, “Influenced by the Chipko – tree hugging – movement led by women in the 1970s”¹⁰⁶² and through the knowledge she gained during her doctoral research on Quantum Physics. Shiva’s reflection is that she became a good student of the Chipko professors; the women who understood the principles of quantum physics through their knowledge of the forest.¹⁰⁶³ As one might expect of an earth-bound activist, living in, with and as a forest is something Shiva has learned from her biological family, the Chipko professors and the professors at the university. For Shiva, India’s organic Vedic heritage has been stolen, rebranded, and sold back to India, through the processes of colonisation.¹⁰⁶⁴ Re-claiming this heritage and affirming its truth is part and parcel of Navdanya’s experiments in decolonisation.

Reclaiming is also part of the broader struggle over the commons, in so called but clearly not, post-colonial societies, that shares multiple affinities with Navdanya. In the *Principles of Unity* within the movement of Reclaiming, “values stem from our understanding that the earth is alive and that all life is sacred.”¹⁰⁶⁵ Eco-feminism and anarchism have played central roles within reclaiming movements, just as they do in Shiva’s intellectual and cosmological alternatives and the movements working with Navdanya. Mia Ramnath’s careful analysis of India’s leftist history situates Shiva and her contemporary Arundhati Roy, as being

¹⁰⁶⁰ Ibid, Shiva, Peddling Poison, Stolen Harvest, Earth Democracy, pretty much in every speech between 2005 and 2015. From this point, resurgence of the real is common slogan.

¹⁰⁶¹ Ibid, C Connor, Seed libraries, p.6.

¹⁰⁶² Indian Development Review, In Conversation with Vandana Shiva, October 15, 2019, Republished with consent by *Intersectional Feminism India*, <https://feminisminindia.com/2019/10/15/vandana-shiva-interview-chipko-movement/> (accessed April 26, 2020).

¹⁰⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁴ R Mohotra and V Shiva in conversation; The Vedic origin of organic farming, *Infinity Foundation*, 4 February 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IxEb2XmiliE> (accessed 15 June, 2020).

¹⁰⁶⁵ Collective document, Principles of Unity, Reclaiming which I know took over 8 years to form, <https://reclaimingcollective.wordpress.com/principles-of-unity/> (accessed December 14 2019).

committed to intersectional, antiauthoritarian and non-hierarchical¹⁰⁶⁶ approaches to ecological and political justice. Furthermore, “the genealogy of both, can be traced through a selective synthesis of Gandhian and Socialist thought.....which is “tantalisingly analogous to the Western anarchist tradition.”¹⁰⁶⁷

From a feminist perspective, Vandana Shiva embodies a collaborative power with. “A capacity that can only be exercised through participation in communities developing “affiliative relations of care”.¹⁰⁶⁸ Courageously speaking out against patriarchal forces means being organised, informed and ready to present your evidence. As Shiva recently put it in an interview on *Democracy Now*, “before you can speak out, you need to do the research.”¹⁰⁶⁹

In an illuminating reply to Michael Spectre’s *Seeds of Doubt*, Shiva re-asserts her conscious intention to dedicate her life to protect the earth, its ecosystems and communities and she says there are four pillars of quantum physics that guide her work. “Everything is connected to everything, everything is potential, everything is indeterminate and there is no excluded middle.”¹⁰⁷⁰

Shiva and her earth family are a thorn in the side of capitalist patriarchy. In the truth wars, Navdanya’s satyagraha’s are literally seeds of truth. Openly pollinated, carefully stored, and shared farmer to farmer. Navdanya, “wanted to build a program in which farmers and scientists related horizontally rather than vertically.”¹⁰⁷¹ To date the movement has reached out to support and encourage hundreds of seed saving farms across India and internationally. According to Green Left author, Alan Broughton who visited Biju Vidyapeeth in 2017, Navdanya “have trained over 900,000 Indian farmers in organic methods, allowing them to convert from the chemical-based system introduced through the Green Revolution.”¹⁰⁷²

¹⁰⁶⁶ M Ramnath, *Decolonising Anarchism: An antiauthoritarian history of India’s liberation struggle*, AK Press, 2011 p. 242.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁸ S Jeppensen, *Toward a New Analytics of Power, Anarchism encounters the humanities and social sciences*, Chapter 7 Forthcoming, Routledge 2019. P. 11.

¹⁰⁶⁹ V Shiva and A Goodman, Oneness Versus the 1%; an interview with Vandana Shiva, *Democracy Now*, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GwxOxQ1AOEg>, 2019.

¹⁰⁷⁰ V Shiva, Seeds of Truth, Vandana Shiva and the New Yorker, Sciencenews.org <https://www.independentsciencenews.org/un-sustainable-farming/seeds-of-truth-vandana-shiva-new-yorker/> (accessed 20 July 2019) Published in response to M, Spectre, Seeds of Doubt, the *New Yorker*, August 2014. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/08/25/seeds-of-doubt>

¹⁰⁷¹ V Shiva, *Earth Democracy*, North Atlantic Books, California, 2005, this edition, 2015, p. 82.

¹⁰⁷² A Broughton, Vandana Shiva and the struggle to take back control of seeds, *Green Left*, Issue. 1164, December, India, 2017, p. 3.

Australian permaculture entity, *Milkwood*,¹⁰⁷³ describe Navdanya as a

“community of over 6 million farmer families that has established, 111 Community Seed Banks in 17 States across India, facts about seeds, living soils, foods, poisons on crops and women-led economies”.¹⁰⁷⁴

Navdanya are one of four links to seed savers Milkwood provide. Indeed, it is hard to find a serious and thoughtful contemporary discussion of seed saving that has not been influenced by Navdanya’s seed satyagraha.¹⁰⁷⁵ For Shiva, these are small efforts resisting the corporate threat to gain control of all life through a convergence of bio technology, digital technology and financial technology in which intellectual property rights have played a key role.¹⁰⁷⁶ Taking on the giants of the mis-named free market is not something one powerful woman can do, nor even something one alternative or intentional community of people can do on their own. Such fights require mass mobilisations.¹⁰⁷⁷

In the spirit of all nonviolent means possible, Navdanya take direct action within local and national politics including through the law courts and at international levels through human and other rights institutions such as the United Nations and its multi fashioned neo-liberal arms. They are allied with and anchored within broader movements of people prefiguring the “massive social change” that is needed in experiments with social defence.¹⁰⁷⁸

Yes, the theory is out there that it only takes 3.5% of a given population to bring about ‘regime change’ which in all countries is a large number of people but is this actually all it

¹⁰⁷³ E A Roy and A Gorman, Corona Virus Gardening boom overwhelms seed suppliers in Australia and New Zealand, *Guardian Australia*, April 8, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/08/coronavirus-gardening-boom-overwhelms-seed-suppliers-in-new-zealand-and-australia> (accessed 2 July, 2020).

¹⁰⁷⁴ Milkwood, Seed saving basics and starting your own seed bank, Resources, *Milkwood Education*, <https://www.milkwood.net/2020/04/26/seed-saving-basics-how-to-start-your-own-seed-bank/> (accessed 6 May 2020).

¹⁰⁷⁵ Add stats on search seed saving in university eBooks and then add Navdanya, its clear...

¹⁰⁷⁶ Ibid, Navdanya.org. www.navdanya.org/bipiracy/PR (accessed 6 May 2020), Ibid, Shiva, *Oneness versus*, 2020, *Earth Democracy*, 2005, 2015 and in multiple interviews.

¹⁰⁷⁷ V Shiva, May Day Message, Regeneration International <https://regenerationinternational.org/2020/05/01/may-day-message-from-dr-vandana-shiva/> (accessed 21 June, 2020); Ibid, *Oneness versus*, p.25.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Ibid, Johansen and Martin, *Social Defence*, 2019, p. 84

takes?¹⁰⁷⁹ Wouldn't it always be more, don't all the international net-works, solidarities and undeniable interconnectedness mean something more than that. Coming from the ecological way of thinking, based as it is, on relational ethical values, mentioned in previous chapters as the multispecies turn show that international collective solidarity is much more than 3.5%. The numbers game, significant as it is to positivist and mechanistic thinkers, can only take you so far. Oneness itself contradicts the idea of revolution by numbers and statistics. Earth based movements such as Navdanya and extinction rebellion, have emerged and continue in a time where dissent has been increasingly criminalised and trust in the systems that most influence peoples' lives is failing.¹⁰⁸⁰

Prefiguring nonviolent alternatives is the challenge all satyagrahis take up. Madha Patkar put it this way, "People can't spend their whole time, fighting, fighting, fighting, we must also demonstrate that there are alternatives."¹⁰⁸¹ And, as the aphorism goes, once you have experienced something, it's hard to say that you didn't know about it. Or, wherever you go, that's where you are. How you got there arguably tells us something about what and who you are. A snapshot of the Navdanya journey, shows they, joined hands with the farmers' movement in 1991, in 1992 large conferences and campaigns mobilised around the GAAT in association with the farmers movement the Karnataka Rajya Ryota Sangha (KRRS).

¹⁰⁸² In 1992, the seed satyagraha was launched and in 1993, the first-year anniversary was celebrated in Bangalore with a gathering of 500, 000 farmers. Navdanya continue to work with governments, most recently in Bhutan and Sikkim, as part of their campaign to bring about an organic world by 2030. Vandana Shiva presented the award to the people of Sikkim when it became the world's first organic state.¹⁰⁸³ Further to this, states such as Kerala and large parts of Northeast India are following suit. Bill Gates might not be happy and capitalists are always going to say women cannot feed the world, or that small farmers simply cannot produce enough food. Shiva and Navdanya International are increasingly recognised as playing a crucial role in many positive transitions into agroecological farming. By doing this they are helping to expose the myth of scarcity that is also part of the history of patriarchy. Significantly, it is widely recognised within agroecology that "organic farming

¹⁰⁷⁹ See chapter 4 pp, where Chenoweth's work is brought into conversation with Martin.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Criminalising Dissent, *New Internationalist*, No. 508, 2017, p. 1-38; K M S Cartier, Murders of environmentalists have doubled in 15 years, *EOS.Org*, 9 August, 2019, <https://eos.org/articles/murders-of-environmentalists-have-doubled-in-15-years> (accessed 22 June, 2020); Commons count provided by *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_environmental_killings; widely reported on mainstream news, N Kilvert, Environmentalist activist killings double as corruption identified as key driver, *ABC* <https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2019-08-06/defending-environment-deadly-risk/11373130> (accessed 21 June, 2020).

¹⁰⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 16.

¹⁰⁸² *Ibid*, Shiva, *Earth Democracy*, p. 82.

¹⁰⁸³ Web desk, Sikkim becomes world's first organic state, *India Today*, July 22, 2019, add weblink. p. 3.

is a form of action of nonviolence.”¹⁰⁸⁴ Navdanya is empowering and training people for the possibility of social defence. Arguably, without them and their allied affinity farmers all over the world, there will be nothing left to defend.

Shiva sees these national and international alliances as being a “local-global, micro-macro symbiosis”.¹⁰⁸⁵ In the year 2000, Navdanya committed themselves to “defend and reclaim our fundamental freedoms related to land, forests, biodiversity, food and water”.¹⁰⁸⁶ Twenty years have passed and the threats to those fundamental freedoms have multiplied but, Navdanya still hold strong to the roots of their satyagraha and their ever-growing family of satyagrahis which now includes many people in the Extinction Rebellion.

Navdanya have taken on some of the largest institutions on the planet and won.¹⁰⁸⁷ They are respected and loved by many and have earned their reputation. Not because they are celebrities or because they are fabulously wealthy or because they run a command and control strategy, though there are peers of Shiva’s that are frustrated by her popularity and apparent lack of grassroots success.¹⁰⁸⁸ As the chain of comments to Tony Mitra’s, *Why I don’t like Vandana Shiva* suggest, they are both working within the same movements and aim to empower others to halt toxic agriculture.¹⁰⁸⁹ Tony wants Shiva to concentrate on disseminating facts and spend more time targeting governments. For him, Shiva is just too popular and risks becoming the type of leader she herself riles against.¹⁰⁹⁰ A broader view supports the suggestion that Navdanya have demonstrated their courage and achieved some of their aims in the same way that *La Via Campesina* (LVC) have.

Kloppenborg’s probing study of the struggle for seed sovereignty reveals the deeper significance of Navdanya. Particularly its solidarities and networked openness towards other movements.¹⁰⁹¹ Oneness, one humanity and the pursuit of gross national happiness through health per acre stand in stark contrast to gross domestic production of indignity and inequality imposed through monocultures and profit per acre.¹⁰⁹² Open, voluntary processes

¹⁰⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 87.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Ibid, Shiva,

¹⁰⁸⁷ Navdanya.org list a comprehensive archive of the major battles they have taken part in to date, www.navdanya.org/campaigns (accessed 22 June, 202).

¹⁰⁸⁸ T Mitra, Why I don’t like Vandana Shiva, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuMMRv5aivY> (accessed, 14 may, 2020).

¹⁰⁸⁹ Ibid. Comments.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Ibid, 7minutes.

¹⁰⁹¹ J Kloppenborg, Re-purposing the master’s tools: the open source seed movement and the struggle for seed sovereignty, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 2014, Vol. 41, No. 6, 2014, p. 1235.

¹⁰⁹² Ibid, Shiva talks, Ibid, Shiva, Reader, p.5. Ibid, Navdanya.org, *agroecology*.

of interaction through self-organised participatory actions and shared knowledge of these makes Navdanya what it is. They give it the shape of tightly woven and brightly dyed silk, the shape of resilience and the colours of health and happiness. They are empowering others to resist aggression and repression within the current ruling institutions and contributing to all efforts to move beyond the politics and civilisation of war.

Shiva's language and use of terms like symbiosis and autopoiesis is an indication of her contemporaneity and relevance within ecological philosophy of the sort produced by Bruno Latour, Timothy Morton, Bruce Pascoe and Donna Haraway. Recall, the crucial understanding of *sympoiesis* – 'making with'/collectively producing - explored by Haraway in *Staying with the Troubles*.¹⁰⁹³ They also reveal some interesting differences. For Haraway, "nothing is really autopoietic or self-organising,"¹⁰⁹⁴ because we earthlings are never alone. Rather than cast doubt on Shiva's ideas and expressions, Haraway really extends them and confirms their place in complex systems. Haraway suggests that *sympoiesis* "enfolds autopoiesis and generatively unfurls and extends it."¹⁰⁹⁵ The way I see it, she has given Shiva a big hug. I get the distinct feeling that both of them are worlding similar ideas. Haraway has proposed the Chthulucene for the period that outsteps time and begins to make "odkin."¹⁰⁹⁶

Renewing Gandhi's ideas so that they are appropriate for the times. Non co-operation with laws that enable biopiracy, the peddling of poisons and the very making of daily life illegal are simply not accepted by Navdanya and their unruly odkin. An open invitation is extended to everyone to participate in revolutionary change, by participating in the creation and defence of Mother Nature. Opposition to the alternatives being experimented with by Navdanya mostly comes from those in favour of "the money machine and the technology machine,"¹⁰⁹⁷ the system of the 1%.

Official responses: Patriarchy strikes back:

Official channels: institutional grievance procedures, regulatory bodies, special commissions, peak bodies, think tanks and law courts are part of the system of officialdom in which the 1% dominate. Official channels are set up in such a way that "everything from elections to courts is so familiar that it seems inevitable, the only possible way".¹⁰⁹⁸ Eco-feminists, anarchists and others have historically challenged the authority and inevitability

¹⁰⁹³ Ibid, Haraway, *Staying with the trouble*, p.58.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Ibid. p.85

¹⁰⁹⁶ Ibid, add the pages for this

¹⁰⁹⁷ Ibid, Shiva, *Oneness*, p. 53-147.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Ibid, B Martin, *Official Channels*, p.4.

of these on the basis that patriarchal domination of the earth's systems is also and at the same time a subjugation of women.¹⁰⁹⁹

Patriarchy is striking back at Shiva. And why wouldn't they, she has repeatedly called out their war. The war that dictates the social relations of a greedy money machine. The war Described as "one of the world's most powerful communicators"¹¹⁰⁰ because of her steadfast commitment to her work, and the clarity with which it is communicated. I feel with Vandana Shiva when she explains, the robber barons are increasing their wealth through biopiracy, peddling poisons and subverting democracy. Shiva is fighting hard, but we all know she does not have a gun, does not move around with armed bodyguards or a private militia. Her body, like that of Mother Earth is what is on the line. There is no way Shiva can account for what others do with her information, her philosophy clearly means that is up to them. Navdanya's resistance is intentionally grounded in nonviolent roles. No one expects Shiva to take up arms. Her roots, eco-feminist, agroecological and cosmic are nonviolent at the source. For Shiva, "the mechanical mind is the militarised mind, it is based on violence and leads to violence".¹¹⁰¹ Let's have a global or even a national debate about that.

Billionaires, such as Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg are openly courted by political parties, national governments who continue to sanction the militarisation of life on earth.¹¹⁰² It is no secret that the world's powerful militaries are funded and increasingly informed by the "robber barons" of today. But governments are funded by taxes and corporate bankers and financial system that will soon make workers useless. The patriarchs are armed, dangerous.

Although they present themselves as socially responsible, legitimate corporations that will save us all through their innovations and creativity. Feminists thus far and for complex reasons have been unable to dismantle patriarchy and collectively return to ecological civilisation and regenerate the politics of caring and sharing. As such, the imposed roots of

¹⁰⁹⁹ A Pinks, Food is a feminist Issue: Women reclaiming autonomy and protecting the planet, *Feminist Collections*, Vol. 37, Issue. 1-2, 2016, Ibid, Shiva, Reader, p. 9-15.

¹¹⁰⁰ Smithsonian Conservation Commons, *Earth Optimism Summit 2020*, introduction to Vandana Shiva, <https://earthoptimism.si.edu/2020-summit/speakers/dr-vandana-shiva/> (accessed 13 January, 2020).

¹¹⁰¹ Ibid, Shiva, *Oneness versus*, p. 22.

¹¹⁰² Refer to chapters 2 and 3; see A Kundnani, From Fannon to Ventilators: Fighting for our right to Breath, *TNI*, 7 May 2020, <https://www.tni.org/en/article/from-fanon-to-ventilators>; GRAIN, Gates Ag One; One more push to get farmers into high tech, *GRAIN Org*, <https://grain.org/en/article/6389-gates-ag-one-one-more-push-to-get-farmers-into-high-tech> (accessed 1 July 2020).

wars continue and deepen. The ethos is nicely captured in the slogan, “I’ll be post-feminist when we are post patriarchy.”¹¹⁰³

Eco-feminism:

Shiva has been calling patriarchy out since the publication of, *Staying Alive, Women ecology and development* published by Zed Books in 1998. In 1993 she co-published *Eco-feminism* with Maria Mies. Her work is listed as one of the top ten books on eco-feminism and it is noted by fellow ecofeminist, Greta Gaard, in her prudent revision of ecofeminism published in 2011, as being in the forefront of the development of eco-feminism. Particularly for Shiva’s role in linking “the colonial and patriarchal “development” of non-Western countries.”¹¹⁰⁴

In 2008, the year of the much publicised and horrific Delhi gang rape, her message on international women’s day was that “capitalist patriarchy has aggravated violence.”¹¹⁰⁵ Patriarchy is dependent on war and has perpetuated a “war on the earth, on women’s bodies and against democracy.”¹¹⁰⁶ Skip forward to the time frame of this research and Shiva is still on message, giving guest lectures and interviews across multiple mediums and platforms. One of her latest cuts to the point in my opinion. Entitled ‘Our stupidity will destroy us’, Shiva reveals that she is no prophet of doom, nor is she whipping up apocalyptic visions. To the contrary, she is an eternal optimist, much like her adversary, Bill Gates.

Shiva does not believe the earth will die, she knows, “we humans are dispensable.” Her message is that in this time of extraction and privatisation we will need women’s caring and sharing. She advocates a transition in which women will be the teachers of how to be human in the future.¹¹⁰⁷ Not all people gendered female are resisting patriarchy, and not all

¹¹⁰³ Ibid, G Gaard, *Ecofeminist Revisions*, p. 43 nicely sums up Gaard’s discussion of debates within broader feminism(s) and eco-feminism and repeats the slogan to make the point.

¹¹⁰⁴ L Napikoski, *Top Ten books about Eco-feminism*, Thought.Co, February 27, 2020, <https://www.thoughtco.com> (accessed 7 May 2020).

¹¹⁰⁵ A Goodman and V Shiva, International Women’s day message 2008, *Democracy Now*, YouTube, add the link,

¹¹⁰⁶ Ibid, Gaard, *Ecofeminism Revisited*, p. 3; W, LaDuke; Sex, Fossil Fuels and Matriarchal Economies, *Indiancountry*, 24 May, 2019, explains, “you don’t just wake up and hate patriarchy” leads into the nexus of the ruling paradigm, <https://www.indiancountrynews.com/index.php/columnists/winona-laduke/14729-sex-fossil-fuels-and-matriarchal-economics> (accessed 1 July 2020).

¹¹⁰⁷ V Shiva, excerpt from interview on Indian media, Our stupidity will destroy us, uploaded by Bolta Pitara a channel that focusses on social “upheavals” through news clips and interviews, mostly in India, *YouTube*, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPQFF7UhUtTzpfA8T7MF4RA> (15 June 2020).

people gendered male are patriarchal. I won't go down that rabbit hole here. Mona Eltahawy has provided contemporary examples of the who and how of people that, as she explains it, "are making peace with patriarchy."¹¹⁰⁸ Women do vote for Donald Trump, Jai Bolsanaro, Narendra Modi, Vladimir Putin, Recep Tayyip Ergogan. In a chilling description within her analysis of Black Lives Matter, Sara Magdulla captures the sentiment; "in the fight to achieve justice there is power in numbers and unity. However, for women, the fight for racial justice at the frontline of protest is also a fight for survival from the plague of patriarchy."¹¹⁰⁹

The robber barons are the patriarchs of the twenty first century whose vast wealth is now concentrated in speculative digital economies to the extent that one asset management group, the Vanguard group have assets of more than 5.1 trillion.¹¹¹⁰ This is 2 trillion is more than the whole of India's economy. Shiva has followed the money of Big Pharma and Big Agriculture for over thirty years. She is well known for working with others to expose the ways that chemicals designed for war were re-branded as fertiliser and pumped into our food systems.¹¹¹¹ Her enemies have reacted to these claims and responded with a more virulent strike back.

When asked at the June 2020 *Regeneration International* livestream conference, "How do you see this billionaires club using the Covid – 19 Pandemic as the basis of a digital dictatorship?" Shiva began by pointing to the 14 million US people who lost their jobs due to the lock downs, while at the same time, the US billionaires accumulated an additional 434 billion. Clearly, the billionaires are not subject to the consequences of pandemic emergency rules.¹¹¹² Why would they be when they have so much influence in the making of these rules? Lets' take the example of cash currency which, in India and so many other places, is according to Shiva, accompanied shortly after by an official visit from Bill Gates to government leaders.¹¹¹³

¹¹⁰⁸ Ibid, Eltahawy, *Seven Deadly Sins*, p. 12

¹¹⁰⁹ S Nigdalla, Burning the Cape, Opinion, Aljazeera, 6 June, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/burning-cape-200623101343651.html> (accessed 1 July 2020).

¹¹¹⁰ Ibid, Shiva, *Oneness*, p. 48.

¹¹¹¹ Interviews: V Shiva, Winona La Duke, Joel Salatin, Helena Norberg Hodge add the others, *The Worm is Turning, Ecological Farming, the Real Revolution*, DVD and information, <http://thewormisturning.com/thefilm.html> (accessed 1 July 2020).

¹¹¹² V Shiva, Regeneration International, Dr Vandana Shiva on Digital Dictatorship and how the 1% are profiting from Covid-19, Live stream, *YouTube*, June 3rd 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3dVhbnIRGM> (accessed 16 June, 2020).

¹¹¹³ Ibid, 7 minutes.

For Shiva, the richest philanthropist Foundation in the world, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) is led by a man who is “carving out new colonies” and imposing “totalitarian ideas based on One Science, One Agriculture and One History.”¹¹¹⁴ This foundation is stacked with executives from the big extractive industries, the big vaccine industries and the big data industries.¹¹¹⁵ On the surface of it (the marketing and the rhetoric), the robber barons believe what they are doing will “empower people to lift themselves out of poverty,” especially women. “That they can save lives by delivering the latest in science and technology to those who most need it.”¹¹¹⁶ Shiva is doing her best to make sure that the patriarchs do not become the real revolution that she is working within.

Moushumi Biswas 2017 Doctoral thesis used content analysis, eco-feminist theory and rhetoric in an attempt to understand both Navdanya and Monsanto in relation to the Indian state, which it found, “walks in tandem with multinational corporations and other foreign powers on this new path to colonialism, which is neo-colonialism in neo-liberal time.”¹¹¹⁷ Biswas’s research follows the debate between Shiva/Navdanya and Monsanto through their respective web pages and other publications. Among the interesting findings is the absence of the word hunger in Shiva/Navdanya communications while it is central to Monsanto’s. Biswas found that Monsanto perpetuated a myth and then made itself the hero through its use of particular discourses within agriculture, food security and global capital.¹¹¹⁸

*“The analysis of the common but contrasting key concepts in both web sites, show how the power play has been unfolding between a corporate who uses corporate social responsibility and development rhetoric and an individual and founder of a non-government group who is counter arguing with the help of ecofeminist, anti-colonial, counter hegemony rhetoric”.*¹¹¹⁹

The climate emergency and the global pandemic have ramped up the mega- rhetoric’s and the stakes in the battle between patriarchy and Mother Earth. It is increasingly clear that technological advances in artificial intelligence may render billions of humans useless and that vulnerabilities in health, well-being and technological literacy push billions into distress. The ruling 1% embrace an eco-modern view of reality, they are excited by the dangers of climate change, species extinctions and driven by the possibilities of new technological

¹¹¹⁴ Ibid, Shiva, Oneness, p. 116.

¹¹¹⁵ Ibid, Shiva, p. 117-120. See also R J Burrowes, the elite coup, add in the three updates,.

¹¹¹⁶ Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Our Mission, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.org, <https://www.gatesfoundation.org> (accessed 14 June 2020).

¹¹¹⁷ M Biswas, *Seeds of Neocolonialism in Mega-Rhetorics of global development and feminist resistance*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Texas at El Paso, August 2017, ProQuest No. 10621843

¹¹¹⁸ Ibid, p 115-118.

¹¹¹⁹ Ibid, Biswas, p. 123.

solutions and the power they see this will bring them. Eco-moderns, as Clive Hamilton puts it, “can be seen as the most articulate representatives of the dominant economic-political system.”¹¹²⁰ Recapitulating enlightenment patriarchs, like Francis Bacon, eco-moderns are rushing into total dominance and control of the earth’s systems. Bio-politics, geo-engineering and artificial intelligence, in this view, will create an even better civilisation, one in which humans transcend and negate the limits imposed upon them by the planet they currently live on.¹¹²¹ Shiva knows the history, she has been dwelling on it and collaborating with others to understand to prefigure alternatives.

Navdanya have a broader cosmological view of life on earth, they are getting on with living within ecological limits and regenerating the earth’s vital systems. Not trying to escape, overcome or master them. To support their resistance, they are working with and learning from their “ancient *Aranya Sanskruti*, of learning from forests and nature.”¹¹²² Commons versus individual rights, responsibilities and earth based sovereignty continue to ground the reasons for their resistance.¹¹²³ Private property is theft of commons, for Shiva, Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) are simply another form of theft. For the “money machine” the (IPRs) are proof of capitalist innovation, progress and development. For Navdanya, they are an imposition of neo-colonial, eco-modern patriarchal authority.

The most significant thing Shiva has noticed in her reflections on the still unfolding, Covid-19 emergency is the rise of infectious diseases created by the destruction of other species habitats, particularly over the past two hundred years of industrialisation. “This particular epidemic has been given a crown status,” she says. The thing that is significant, and Shiva spells it out, is the “poison cartel” aka the patriarchs, have declared a war against microbes and we are walking microbes.”¹¹²⁴ Patent 060606 was given to Gates in March 2020 which increases the theft of our data and the surveillance of our bodies, minds and hearts.¹¹²⁵ Structures are being built for permanent surveillance not just for temporary health

¹¹²⁰ Ibid, C Hamilton, *Defiant Earth*, p. 23

¹¹²¹ Ibid, Hamilton, p. 21-26, Ibid, Morton, *Ecological Thought*, T Morton, *Being Ecological*, Pelican, Random House, 2018 p. 43-46.

¹¹²² Navdanya, Earth University, *Navdanya.Org*, www.navdanya.org/bija-vidyapeeth (accessed 18 June 2020); ibid, Shiva, *Earth Democracy*, p 80-89; Ibid, *Oneness*, p.

¹¹²³ Ibid, Haraway, *Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chuluthcene*, 2017.

¹¹²⁴ Ibid, 10-12 mins.

¹¹²⁵ R J Burrowes, *The Elite Coup: Fighting for our humanity, our liberty and our future*, *Nation of Change*, May 29, 2020, <https://www.nationofchange.org/2020/05/29/the-elites-covid-19-coup-fighting-for-our-humanity-our-liberty-and-our-future/> (accessed 24 June 2020); Fullfact.Org, examines the controversial, Patent 060606, <https://fullfact.org/online/bill-gates-patent-microchips/> (1 July 2020); for a broader view see, The Corbett Report, How Bill Gates Monopolised Global Health, Episode 377, *The Corbett Report*, 1 May 2020, <https://www.corbettreport.com/gateshealth/> (accessed 1 July 2020).

measures. As Shiva and others insist this particular epidemic raises profoundly democratic questions. No wonder patriarchy is striking back, its future is at stake. For what it is without its subjects, the people it claims it will develop and save. Shiva has been threatened, discredited and misrepresented.¹¹²⁶ As Louis Proyect points out, there is a “rogues gallery of bio-technology” advocates of genetic modification and the green revolution, “gunning for Vandana Shiva”.¹¹²⁷

Typical of attacks on Shiva, are claims that she is anti-science, irrational, deluded and dangerous. Nothing new here. The 2014, *Seeds of Doubt, Seeds of Truth* encounter, was followed up in 2016 by a bloated and similarly false ‘review’ of Shiva’s early eco-feminist monograph. In ‘The eco-philosophy of Vandana Shiva: A critical review of staying alive, women, ecology and development’, Conrad Rossi slams Shiva’s scholarship, research and very being. Rossi’s claims Shiva’s book would at best receive a pass because of its false claims and lack of scientific research. He does not engage with broader eco-feminism at all, nor does he note that his review is of a book that is 15 years old and has been followed by over 20 more books.¹¹²⁸

I found that the review was largely a personal attack. An attempt at painting Shiva as a crazy woman who “surrounds herself with sycophants” and poses a danger to modern scientific progress. Clearly, Rossi and Spectre have not been listening. Eco-feminism and ‘earth based’ movements *reject* the determinist, dualistic and instrumentalist views of modernity. Rossi’s review, as one of the commentators points out, acknowledges that Shiva is one of the most respected of anti GMO activists. In the last paragraph it does say that the counter enlightenment forces that Shiva represents occasionally make good decisions.

The crunch is his claim that Shiva is unwilling to learn, has romanticised indigenous peoples and filled the debate with rhetorical landmines, making it impossible to criticise her.¹¹²⁹ Rossi has clearly not been to Biju Vidyapeeth, nor has he read the corpus of eco-feminist scholarship and environmental science of Rachel Carson, Val Plumwood, Greta Gaard, Mary Daly, Winona La Duke, Ariel Salleh, Carolyn Merchant, Starhawk, just to name some of the more prominent, ecofeminists. Nor has he familiarised himself with the ecological politics and philosophy of Haraway, Latour and others. Like many, Conrad Rossi has underestimated the role of ecofeminism and its antecedents. These show how “allegedly new fields such as animal studies... are now “discovering” theoretical perspectives on interspecies relations and standpoint theory that were developed by feminists and eco-feminists decades ago.”¹¹³⁰ This is how hegemonic masculinity makes it look like their targets have no friends or allies. Critiques written by supporters of the status quo based on claims of irrationalism

¹¹²⁶ Ibid, Shiva, *Seeds of Truth*, 2014.

¹¹²⁷ L Proyect, Gunning for Vandana Shiva, Counterpunch, August 22, 2014, p.4.

¹¹²⁸ Ibid, Conrad-Rossi, A critical review, p. 8,9.

¹¹²⁹ Ibid, p 7, 8.

¹¹³⁰ Ibid, Gaard, *Review of Ecofeminism*, p. 27

and essentialism do not stack up with contemporary environmental philosophy or science. They are a form of structural gaslighting, where Shiva is singled out and separated from her contexts and inter relations with others. Those others for Rossi, Spectre and their ilk, “are the suffering voices who will soon speak out against the demagogue.”¹¹³¹

Skip ahead to 2019 and the letter from 40 university based scientists and researchers in the fields of bio-technology, agriculture and plant physiology, to the *Woods Institute for Environmental Studies* at Stanford University. In their letter, the scientists ask the directors of the faculty if they are “unaware of Dr Shiva’s anti- scientific rhetoric to support unethical positions.”¹¹³² On the surface of it, their critique is slightly more convincing than some others. It is also par for the course within the ‘theatre’ of science wars, truth wars and the pace of change. The scientists, demand to know “how much she will be paid for her appearance”.¹¹³³ The reply, from Students for Sustainable Stanford (SSS), who co-wrote a response was that she was paid the same itemised amount as all other international visiting key note speakers, \$8000.¹¹³⁴ The 40 oppositional scientists claim Shiva, “speaks nonsense” in relation to GMO seeds, are gobsmacked at her suggestion that fertiliser be banned and outraged at her “capacity to offend”.¹¹³⁵

According to the convenors one of the reasons Vandana Shiva was selected was because like Dr Schneider, whom the event honours each year, she “has dedicated her life to fighting climate change, protecting natural resources and mobilising individuals around the world to take responsibility for the future of the planet.”¹¹³⁶ The organisers are acutely aware that Shiva has sometimes overstepped the mark. In their words, “she has made incendiary statements in her career, some of them are untrue”.¹¹³⁷ However, on balance they believe Shiva has also made huge contributions to defending indigenous knowledge and has brought important challenges to the ongoing, polarised scientific debates around food and agriculture, gender and technology. The annual talk does not proceed to endorse particular views but to encourage critical thinking.

¹¹³¹ Ibid, Conrad-Rossi, p. 9.

¹¹³² G M Taggliabue and H Miller, Letter regarding Dr Shiva and anti-scientific unethical stances, 16 December, 2019, *European Scientist*, <https://www.europeanscientist.com/en/features/letter-regarding-dr-vandana-shivas-anti-scientific-and-unethical-stances/> (accessed 29 June, 2020).

¹¹³³ Ibid, p. 4.

¹¹³⁴ Students for Sustainable Stanford (SSS), On inviting Vandana Shiva, *Stanford Times*, January 29, 2020, <https://www.stanforddaily.com/2020/01/29/on-inviting-vandana-shiva/> (accessed 19 June, 2020).

¹¹³⁵ Ibid, *Letter regarding Dr Shiva*.

¹¹³⁶ Ibid, Students for Sustainable Stanford, n.p.

¹¹³⁷ Ibid.

The students ask the pertinent question; “Should she be denied the microphone because some of her statements have been proven false”? No, “SSS believe we can invite a controversial speaker because of her insights on environmental justice and activism, without sponsoring every single statement she makes”.¹¹³⁸ This and similar debates are as informative as they are important. Dr Vandana Shiva is an advocate of agroecology, food sovereignty and organic food systems, as such she is recognised for her role in broader ecological, political and social justice issues. Many of the “charged criticisms of the lecture came from people with ties to the chemical industry, that does not invalidate their views, but it does reveal the various interests of stakeholders in this debate”.¹¹³⁹

In *her Seeds of Truth*, defence, Shiva explained her academic and scientific background which was misrepresented “because it did not suit Spectre’s narrative.” Shiva calls out other misrepresentations which are purposeful because Spectre is a senior journalist. Shiva takes aim at the way the seed saving caravans that met and spoke throughout Europe in 2016 are spoken of as pilgrimages and fairs, things that are unscientific and easily brushed off as not serious enough to deal with important matters. Shiva put it this way, “writing about European governments, universities and movements accurately would not suit Spectre’s intention because the strong resistance (including from governments) to GMO’s in Europe is based on science.”¹¹⁴⁰ Shiva thanks Spectre for pointing out a math issue in one of her counts, aside from that concession, she methodically goes through the claims, and in my view hits the nail on the head when she shows how the “half-truths” about who she is and what she has done with who, are designed to “break the established connections between GMOs, seed patents and IPR’s.”¹¹⁴¹ The effect of this is to “mislead his readers to echo Monsanto’s attempt to hide the catastrophic implications of seed monopoly and BT cotton’s failure in India as it tries to enter new BT cotton markets in Africa based on India’s success.”¹¹⁴² I suggest the misinformation around the cyclone in Orissa is where Spectre really came undone. He did not mount a counter defence. If he did, I could not find it.

Dis and misinformation is part of the strategic communications plan of the 1%. In a similar story to Brian Martin, Shiva describes the manipulations that led to misinformation on her Wikipedia page and the behind the scenes discussions of this.¹¹⁴³ Manipulation of information for political reasons reveals the functions and infrastructures of “the deep state”¹¹⁴⁴ and the extent people are willing to go to when they feel threatened by ideas and

¹¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁴⁰ Ibid, Shiva, *Seeds of Truth*, 2014, p.4.

¹¹⁴¹ Ibid, p. 7.

¹¹⁴² Ibid, p. 9.

¹¹⁴³ B Martin, *Official Channels*, 2020, p. Ibid, Shiva, *Seeds of Truth*, p.

¹¹⁴⁴ E Curtis, The Shallow, Deep state goes, Deep, *off-guardian*, June 7, 2020, aptly summarises the trajectory.

people that challenge their own. Making false claims is so common that both Martin and Shiva have decided not to waste time continuing to correct them on Wikipedia. There are more important things to do. Shiva and those whose affinities are also eco-feminist, agroecological, revolutionary nonviolent and more generally earth bound are a thorn in patriarchies side. Let's hope it stings!

Clearly, Vandana Shiva has a solid and dynamic core of behind the scenes support and has accepted her front-line position. Indeed, it seems she was born and grew into this role.¹¹⁴⁵ Just as a spade is a spade, so too, a thief is a thief. Shiva is not the first nor will she be the last person to insist that rich and powerful, individuals such as Bill Gates and Jeff Bezos and companies such as Blackrock are thieves.¹¹⁴⁶ "Bill Gates is after all "one of the main reasons for her latest book."¹¹⁴⁷ Shiva may have been born into the privileges, that to varying degrees any Hindu in India who is not born an untouchable. Cars a part of the reason why India is the capital of toxic city smog. Caste war unlike class war, is a specifically Indian and specifically Hindu form of social imposition that is both aggressive and repressive.¹¹⁴⁸ Anyone working for social defence would not avoid this.

I make no argument that Shiva or Navdanya have transcended the hideous system, but I suggest it is part of what they are very consciously attempting to do. In defence of claims that she is elitist Shiva explains, "Shiva is not a Brahmin name."¹¹⁴⁹ Her parents, she said, "consciously adopted a caste-less name as part of their involvement in the independence movement which included a fight against the caste system."¹¹⁵⁰ Shiva, unlike the small percentage of Brahmins who own and control most of India's wealth, media and politics, is not on the list of the worlds' rich list, nor is Navdanya listed on the stock exchange. Nahendra Modi is not a Brahmin either but that has not stopped him "being more blatantly and ruthlessly anti-Muslim than any other Indian politician."¹¹⁵¹

¹¹⁴⁵ Ibid Decosas, other interviews with Shiva point to her family background in conservation and her socio economic position within India, see for example, *Indian Development Review* (IDR), Interview with Physicist, Activist and Eco-feminist, Dr Vandana Shiva, 19 October, 2019, <https://www.youthkiawaaz.com/2019/10/idr-interviews-dr-vandana-shiva/> (accessed 14 January 2020).

¹¹⁴⁶ Ibid, Shiva, Oneness versus, this particular interview at a working group in Africa calls for nothing short of war against Gates and Bezos and explains how their wealth in the trillions more than the GDP of India.

¹¹⁴⁷ Ibid, Shiva, Regeneration International, livestream, June 2020.

¹¹⁴⁸ A passionate and historically relevant analysis of caste can be found, A Roy, *The Doctor and the Saint, Caste, race and the Annihilation of Caste: The Debate Between B.R. Ambedkar and M. K. Gandhi*, Haymarket Books, Chicago, 2017.

¹¹⁴⁹ Ibid, V Shiva, *Seeds of Truth*, p. 6.

¹¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹¹⁵¹ Ibid, Roy, *The Doctor and the Saint*, p. 121,

Following the sociologist, John Stewart Mills, we might once have called the 1%, the power elite, now-a-days the names vary, examples include the deep-state, the corporate fascists, digital dictators, and I am sure there are many more.¹¹⁵² Just how Modi will eventually deal with Navdanya and its outspoken leader is yet to be seen. It would certainly provoke a Hindu backlash if he were to overtly attack, arrest or terrorise Vandana Shiva. She has an international reputation and solidarity. As well as solid local evidence of the success of agroecology and multiple successful satyagrahas that assert truth and challenge unjust laws. She is proud of the laws that Navdanya helped shape, “the laws that protect farmers and protect bio-diversity in India, forged post the world trade organisation debates of 2008-2010.”¹¹⁵³ Between 2018 and the time of writing many of the rights and protections Navdanya helped bring into law in India have been changed or watered down.¹¹⁵⁴ Increasingly they are expected to be removed as India’s geopolitical alliances tentatively shift towards the United States. That all happened quickly and is why India’s farmers have occupied the approaches to the capital city and they don’t intend to go home.

Popular authoritarian leader Narendra Modi has entered alliances with Donald Trump and meets regularly with Bill Gates and others representing capitalist interests. Summing up her message to Modi prior to his 2016 visit to the US Shiva said, “The United States has functioned as a rogue nation by not signing on to global treaties protecting bio-diversity rights.”¹¹⁵⁵ She asks Modi, “how can we let a rogue set the terms of our *Vasaudhiva Kutumbakam*? I hope Modi Ji will take our *Vasaudhiva Kutumbakam* seriously, including when it comes to intellectual property rights and his conversations in the White House.”¹¹⁵⁶ Shiva is clearly playing to Modi’s Hindu fundamentalism known as Hindutva and represented by the BJP. Shiva can get away with it, for now. There are multitudes of others that cannot.

India is a nation engaged in multiple internal wars, is nuclear armed and has since its independence from British colonialism developed to become the world’s largest social democracy.¹¹⁵⁷ Contemporary analysis suggest it is democratic and socialist in name only. Sadly, the ideology of Hindutva accompanied by its commitment to neoliberalism drive

¹¹⁵² N Chomsky, Fascism, Showmanship and Hypocrisy in the age of Trump, *Global Policy Journal*, 2018, <https://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/blog/21/06/2018/noam-chomsky-fascism-showmanship-and-democrats-hypocrisy-trump-era>; C T Hunter, Capitalism and the throttling of Democracy in India, *off-guardian.org* <https://off-guardian.org/2020/06/25/capitalism-and-the-throttling-of-democracy-in-india/>; V Shiva, Doctor Vandana Shiva on the PM Narendra Modi’s trip to the US, Indra Shekhar Sing, *YouTube*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SR2IUai_ZhY (accessed 24 June, 2020).

¹¹⁵³ Ibid, Shiva, *Oneness*, On Modi trip.

¹¹⁵⁴ Add references from original outline of chapter on the Indian State written in the COC.

¹¹⁵⁵ Ibid, Shiva, *On Modi trip to US*, 2016.

¹¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁵⁷ Add the citations, one from government defence and security India, two from secondary sources – in files.

unimaginable corruption, violence and suffering. Kashmir was cut off from the world for over three weeks in October 2019; Citizenship Tests and wars against tribal peoples and multiple workers strikes keep India's military and police system busy. Modi has been filmed admitting to mass murder in Gujarat. Roy and others call it a pogrom.¹¹⁵⁸ More recently, Anuradha Bhasin reports of the plan "to bring the Israeli model to Kashmir".¹¹⁵⁹

If Navdanya was founded by Muslims or a Dalit, it seems reasonable to suggest that it would not have the existence it does today. Shiva is using her privileges and status to empower others. She has not travelled the world and produced books and speeches for decades simply for her own benefit. Navdanya exists to bring the earth to life. If the toxic masculine systems cannot control food, they cannot control society. In this way, any woman that empowers others and shares their knowledge of agroecology and ecofeminism as widely and inclusively as they can, is top of the drone assignation list. But taking a leader out never stopped a genuine revolution, the experiments in Rojava are making that clear. And they are doing it in solidarity with Navdanya, as woman challenging femicide, crimes against females all over the world.

In her prescient PhD, *Millets from the Margins*, Prita Rajalakshmi Chandrasekaran spent seventeen months undertaking ethnographic research with multiple stakeholders in the food wars, from a tiny village in the Himalaya to the transnational institutions of Rome.¹¹⁶⁰ It should come as no surprise, post our journey with earth based movements, thus far, that Chandrasekaran found that "as environmental conditions like drought become more generalised and publicised, crops cultivated to meet the changing needs of agrarian producers" that were traditionally rejected by capitalist agriculture are now being 'rediscovered'.¹¹⁶¹ Succinctly, "plant life once categorised as primitive, coarse and unfit for human consumption is now imbued with the potential to drive human 'progress' and secure human futures".¹¹⁶² Navdanya is of course mentioned in this research. It is situated in the same geographical area and as Chandrasekaran confirms, the area is strongly influenced by Gandhi who held special affection for the region.¹¹⁶³ After Gandhi's death "his student Kasarla Bhen returned to Kausari to start a girls-school to educate 'rural activists' and inspire

¹¹⁵⁸ A Roy, *The End of Imagination*, Haymarket Books, 2016, p. 5; A Kundnani, From Fannon to Ventilators: Fighting for our right to Breath, TNI, 7 May, 2020, <https://www.tni.org/en/article/from-fanon-to-ventilators> (accessed, 2 June, 2020).

¹¹⁵⁹ A Bhasin, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/bringing-israeli-model-kashmir-200614173626456.html> (accessed 27 June, 2020).

¹¹⁶⁰ PR Chandrasekaran, *Millets from the Margins: Value, Knowledge and the Subaltern practice of Bio-diversity in Uttarakhand India*, *The City University of New York*, PhD thesis, 2016.

¹¹⁶¹ Ibid, p. 3.

¹¹⁶² Ibid.

¹¹⁶³ Ibid, p. 58.

de-colonial movements in the area”.¹¹⁶⁴ Shiva is called out by Chandrasekaran because “scholars attuned to caste and class have accused her of presenting an idealised image of the *Pahar* as an ideal egalitarian society” and for her linking of British colonialism with “a moment of violence and decline.”¹¹⁶⁵

She follows this with only one citation and her personal summary in which the claim is made that Shiva’s organisation Navdanya is hierarchical and removed from the grassroots and “her scholarly work criticised for the oppositional manner in which it associates deforestation with masculine and colonial violence.”¹¹⁶⁶ Indeed, that is true on eco-feminist grounds. Once we get past that, it is clear through Chandrasekaran’s research that Navdanya have been involved with multiple local, national and international groups and that they work in a similar way to La Via Campesina.¹¹⁶⁷ The importance of Navdanya’s seed bank in response to GAAT in 1991 is recognised in the timeline of seed saving movements in India and Navdanya’s role in research and experience in cultivating and saving seeds of local millets forms part of the literature that is used in the research. Navdanya is part of the journey. Certainly, Shiva like most leaders has her critics but she is also “popular among many.”¹¹⁶⁸

Agroecology: The re-emergence of a nonviolent system of farming.

For Navdanya, agroecology can mitigate the effects of climate change and enhance our resilience and potential to rejuvenate bio-diversity and living, soil, water, food and knowledge.¹¹⁶⁹ Its processes and scientific basis brings food to the center of life and in this way, agroecology is part of the transformation of food systems necessary to prevent *Eutropia*, mass starvation and disease. Consensus has been formed in ecological farming around.

*eliminating soil and water loss and improving soil structure; increasing bi-diversity by including a much richer mixture of symbiotic plants and animals; that farm size should be kept small so that farmers can manage them; that food yields be measured by nutrient value and input and that it should focus on providing a safe, healthy local supply of food.*¹¹⁷⁰

Critically Cribb, whose work now spans multiple books and key works of interdisciplinary

¹¹⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 60.

¹¹⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 61.

¹¹⁶⁶ Ibid. Footnote, No.23.

¹¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 255

¹¹⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 60.

¹¹⁶⁹ V Shiva & Masuki, Agroecology: the sustainable response to a planet under threat, Navdanya International, 2012, <https://navdanyainternational.org/agroecology-the-sustainable-response-to-a-planet-earth-under-threat/> (accessed 1 July, 2020).

¹¹⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 257.

knowledge in relation to human survival has noted that, “an approach that combines innovation and tradition has emerged, one that could transform the way we grow food. It’s called agroecology” and it is taking off globally.¹¹⁷¹

Navdanya, through their alternatives of ecofeminism and their prefiguring of earth democracy have defended and researched traditional indigenous crops, seeds and farming methods in their co-commitment to agroecology. Coming back to the millet that Chandrasekaran found was rejected, marginalised, has suddenly been redeemed as useful, civil and fabulous by capital. Navdanya found that “Millet, which is far more nutritious than rice and wheat uses only two hundred to three hundred millilitres of water, compared with the twenty five hundred needed for the Green Revolution.” If India cultivated its local millet, it could grow four times more food.¹¹⁷² As Shiva says, “we do not need to go the Monsanto way, we can go the Navdanya way

For Navdanya, “Agroecology, in essence, is the philosophy of relishing all edibles that nature produces and, at the same time, of nurturing nature to allow it to blossom with its bio diversities”.¹¹⁷³ It includes all sorts of ecological farming including the permaculture movement.

“The permaculture movement today consists of a loosely affiliated network of individuals and projects, connected through permaculture courses, workshops and online forums and local, national and international convergences.”¹¹⁷⁴

It faces criticisms for its insularity and lack of decolonial solidarity. In their probing research, Sass Ferguson and Sarah Lovell, conducted research into permaculture which as they say, “has received little systemic scrutiny in the scientific literature”.¹¹⁷⁵ Their research looked at participation by looking at self-identified roles, race, gender and socio-economic factors and in this way explored the role of structural factors on participant roles. Significantly they used “multidimensional national indices, development, inequality and ecosystem vitality”¹¹⁷⁶ for

¹¹⁷¹ Ibid, p.258.

¹¹⁷² Ibid, Shiva, *The Reader*, p. 253.

¹¹⁷³ Navdanya, What is Agroecology, Navdanya.org, <http://www.navdanya.org/site/2017-03-29-08-02-10/what-is-agroecology> (accessed 3/06/19).

¹¹⁷⁴ R S Ferguson and S T Lovell, Grassroots engagement with transition to sustainability diversity and modes of participation in the international permaculture movement, *Ecology and Society*, Vol. 20. No. 4, December, 2015, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26270300> (accessed 1 January, 2020), p. 5.

¹¹⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 1.

¹¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

the 45 countries included in the survey sample. Their research is welcome and telling. Participation is slightly higher among women who are 53% of permaculturists and 96% are white.¹¹⁷⁷

They suggest further research is necessary especially in relation to access, diversity and the socio-economic constraints that shape these factors.¹¹⁷⁸ Of note is their links to other research that shows the *“permaculture worldview is reflected in a model of change that mostly spurns systematic engagement with existing institutions in favour of direct intervention into the means of subsistence, ...under the stewardship of local individuals and communities”*.¹¹⁷⁹ Permaculture is a transition movement that as Ferguson and Lovell suggest, despite its many strengths, faces the same struggles around inclusion and diversity as other environmental movements with their origins in the global north.

Conclusion:

Navdanya and its current leader Vandana Shiva empower others to think differently and to act in the interests of our common Mother Earth. When the layers are pulled back, critiques of Shiva are critiques of ecofeminism, though this is usually not acknowledged. Navdanya offer an alternative that reaches into the depths of social defence by thinking and producing possible futures of health, happiness and nonviolence. They do not avoid the problems of the day or pretend that they alone can change the world.

“The signs are loud and clear. We are living in the 6th mass extinction, driven by limitless greed of the 1%...we forget that we are one humanity, one planet, that together as diverse species, diverse cultures, we have the creative power to stop extinction through non-cooperation at every level, beginning each of us and expanding out into ever-widening, never-ascending circles of interconnected life and freedom”.¹¹⁸⁰

Navdanya is one of many groups that have forged international and planetary alliances that are united by a common desire to rethink our relationship with the earth and to build a different set of political and economic institutions as a counter force to neoliberal globalisation and the violence that patriarchy has instantiated.¹¹⁸¹ In their case, the radical potential of social defence is evident through their philosophies and through their processes or ways of doing and being Earth Democracy. In good company with Alexander’s Wild Democracy, it sets a precedent and maintains a momentum that is fit for life on earth and

¹¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 12.

¹¹⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 8.

¹¹⁸⁰ Ibid, Shiva, This is not a Drill, foreword, p. 3and7.

¹¹⁸¹ Ibid, Crews, Social Movements and Earth Bound People, 2019, p.82.

this calls for a quantum leap in our imaginations, our intelligences, our capacity for compassion and love, as well as our courage for creative nonviolent resistance.¹¹⁸²

¹¹⁸² Ibid, Shiva, Oneness, p. 171.

Appendix-2: In the context of life and death – Rojava and Social Defence.

Rojava: In the context of life and death nonviolence is a privilege and social defence becomes a revolution at the level of common sense.

Introduction:

The experiments of Rojava are also about the age of women. It meets social defence in the grassroots building resistance to patriarchy and creating Democratic Confederalism taking place in Northeast Syria. This chapter brings Rojava into the realms of caring and sharing. Unfortunately, and Aum circle is unlikely to be an effective way for Rojavans to de-escalate the criminal violence of the Syrian and Turkish States or the international super states that keep the wars churning over in the Middle East.

Subtitles guide the reader through the chapter.

Rojava is understood by some but not all, at the official peacebuilding level as an example of a Zone of Peace, within the Syrian Civil War. This line of thinking emerged between 2011 and 2014 and more precariously since.¹¹⁸³ There are no official peacekeeping forces defending Rojava. The promised end of organised mass destruction of life in wars has not arrived. The robots who will do the dying for us might be coming but they are not here, yet. In the context of military systems change, wars overflow boundaries and limits and previous categories such as battlefield, combatant and hostilities, no longer have any stable or officially agreed meaning.¹¹⁸⁴ The Free Women's Units Star is the armed branch of the women's movement that sees itself as the field of legitimate self-defence of the freedom struggle.¹¹⁸⁵ Ocalan describes this as self-defence and from the perspective of common sense, this is what it is. Women who have suffered some of the worst brutality from, war, the father of all things, are creating an emergent theory of *Jineology*, the science of women. Women and men of Rojava have appropriated the prison writings of Abdullah Ocalan and they are making of them what they can. If it really is the age of woman, then Ocalan's predicted third sexual rupture is patriarchy's fatal blow.

¹¹⁸³ A Nordagh, Exploring Peace in the Midst of War: Rojava as a Zone of Peace, *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, Vol16. No.1, 2021, Ekie Welt, add name and details, UMea, UNSC,

¹¹⁸⁴ B P Bloomfield, G Burrell, T Vurdubakis, Licence to Kill? ON the organisation of destruction in the 21st Century, *Organisation*, Vol. 24. No4. 2017, p. 441-455, DOI://10.1177/135058417700404.

¹¹⁸⁵ S Siqueira De Miranda, Women, Life Freedom: The Struggle of Kurdish Women to promote Human Rights, MA, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, September 2015, p. 32. (yes, it needs a weblink)

When approached as a zone of peace, Rojava fails because it only fits two of the categories that make a zone peaceful. Violence is off limits in such places.¹¹⁸⁶ Violence is also off limits for women in patriarchal cultures, so that is everywhere. Women's agency in war and peace was largely disregarded until the mid – 1990s, and even now their participation is categorised through a dichotomy of victim or peacemaker.¹¹⁸⁷ The instrumental use of an outdated legal system and rapidly evolving lethal technology is keeping Rojava from providing an example of participatory, feminist and ecological democracy. Notably it the war, not the science of women that is always featured on mainstream news. Bringing Rojava into revolutionary nonviolence is one sure way to pierce the separations of the ruling capitalist culture and the violence of toxic masculinity. I don't have to give the women of Rojava a gun. They decided that for themselves within their contexts. I have no right to tell them they would be better off chanting AUM.

Moving into the infinite details:

With the election of Jo Biden in 2020, US troops are back in Syria, various peace accords have been signed and embargos have been placed on Bashir Al Assad's autocratic regime in Syria.¹¹⁸⁸ Many reports are available on the state of the occupation, the serious breaches of human rights and war crimes but none have had any significant impact within the UNSC. Russia and China have used their vetoes five times since 2014. The latest resolution, S/RES/2585 of 2021, renewed the mandate for cross-border humanitarian aid delivery inclusive of COVID 19 vaccinations, inter alia via the Bab al-Hawa border crossing, to all parts of Syria without discrimination.

The 2016 election of Donald Trump and the 2018 Turkish Invasion of Afrin worsened the situation. Compounding this are the shifting fault lines of the international dis-order. Evident in the transitions of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) systems to come to agreement on moves towards resolving the Syrian War. The powers with the veto: the US. China. Russia, France and the UK continue to pursue different geopolitical, economic and national sovereignty interests. Compounding this is the international effort to defeat ISIS and the continuation of the wider War on Terror. The election of Jo Biden in the US in 2020 and the global pandemic along with rising international solidarity and pressure from below and within the international system are changing the dynamics again.

¹¹⁸⁶ Ibid Nordagh, 2021, A Nordagh, War, Peace and Ideologies: Approaching peace in war through Democratic Confederalism and the war in Rojava, M A Peace and Conflict Studies, Umea University, 2019,

¹¹⁸⁷ P Tank, Kurdish Women in Rojava: From Resistance to Reconstruction, *Die Welt, Des Islams*, Vol.57 (2017), 404-428.

¹¹⁸⁸ Ibid, Emergency Committee, News, add link, add UN Security Council resolutions and dates,

In theory Rojava should not exist. It should not exist because powerful nations decide and build peace by exploiting common resources and profiting from the proliferation of weapons of collective mass destruction. The UNSC and its processes directly impact Rojava's prospects of everyday survival. The UNSC exists with the express purpose of protecting future generations from war. In Rojava people are doing this themselves. Rojava should not exist because, "everyone is afraid of people doing things for themselves" as David Graeber put it on his return from a solidarity visit in 2016.¹¹⁸⁹

But it does exist, and it does imagine and prefigure a solution to the Kurdish question, the Middle East questions and to global questions whose solutions have not been resolved, before or within wars allegedly waged in pursuit of democracy during the 21st century. In the spirit of truth telling and then acting as if that truth is real, Rojava is explored in this thesis as an experiment in anarcho pacifism which for me is also a form of what is called revolutionary nonviolence.

Organised war meets organised liberation:

As Prof John Cox put it, based on his thirty year relationship with the Kurdish question, "this is a pressing matter of human rights but also a really exciting issue of human liberation."¹¹⁹⁰

What began as a very small group of unofficial female fighters that had taken part in the liberation of Jazira (CIZIRE) canton in the city of Derik has become a women-led armed social defence force with principles, rules and practices, like any other defence force. "They generally do not attack and operate on the principle of retaliation."¹¹⁹¹ Commanding positions in the YPJ are rotated and new members and married women with children are not allowed to fight on the front lines.¹¹⁹²

This is not a solution which fits any theory perfectly, it is an evolving revolutionary situation in which people are experimenting with their truth and acting like that truth is real. Hopefully it helps humans manage the transitions out of toxic masculinity and join the Navdanya way. The women of Rojava and their international defenders, I am obviously one, are in the same global struggle as Vandana Shiva, their processes are interlinked within global solidarity, their visions empower women and each busy creating a participatory democracy.

¹¹⁸⁹ Ibid, D Graeber, Foreword, 2016, p. 3.

¹¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹¹⁹² Theory of the Rose, complete the citation.

In 2018 the International Commune agreed on three principles of internationalist participation, these are to learn, support and organise.¹¹⁹³ They completed the *Sehid Helen Qerecox Internationalist Academy* and have since then produced a report on their first year of solidarity activity. In 2018, they began the campaign to *Make Rojava Green Again*, together with the self-administrations' responsible entities for ecological work. Several people from the international have died in Rojava, including a person from Australia and Helen from Britain. Young European women are training and defending Rojava voluntarily. Their video stories appear in media available through the commune's website and other solidarity websites. Their participation is not overplayed and the seriousness of the situation means that all care is taken to decolonise international solidarity and not turn it this grassroots revolution into a western charity. Social defence is unruly, it is envisioned as a system in which all distinctions relevant to human survival are no longer necessary because everyone is responsible for doing what they can. Dependency and charity happen within the rules based order, there is no place for them in the concept of social defence, or Earth Democracy or Jineology and Democratic Confederalism.

The previous UNSC renewal of the *Access for Aid Mechanism* was due to run out on July 10, 2021. Predictably, this led to mounting humanitarian concerns and from the perspective of the UNSC, would become yet another humanitarian tragedy that the members had to deal with. In the vote to keep access for aid, such as food, water and now covid- 19 medical supplies open to the cantons of Rojava, twelve members voted in favour of the renewal resolution, while three members: China, the Dominican Republic and Russia abstained.¹¹⁹⁴

Numerous organisations such as Amnesty International and Oxfam have criticised many of the UNSC outcomes. The Global Center for the Responsibility to Protect, details sixteen UNSC vetoes that blocked action and accountability.¹¹⁹⁵ They report "nearly 13 million people have been displaced – the largest number displaced by any conflict in the world."¹¹⁹⁶ The Council on Foreign Relations recently published articles suggesting that "Turkey is facing serious cracks in Erdogan's regime,

¹¹⁹³ <https://internationalistcommune.com/join-the-revolution/>

¹¹⁹⁴ UNSC, Documents For Syria, list at August 7, 2021, https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un_documents_type/security-council-resolutions/?ctype=Syria&cbtype=syria

¹¹⁹⁵ Global Center for the Responsibility to Protect, Risk Level, <https://www.globalr2p.org/countries/syria/>

¹¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

“while it is unlikely that Erdogan is in danger of being overthrown, his capacity to maintain control across the country seems compromised, raising the prospects for large-scale protests, increased violence and political struggles at the summit of the state.”¹¹⁹⁷

In 2018, following perceived threats from Russia, the Swedish Government issued a national document, “If Crisis or War Comes,” explaining inter alia that: The Swedish population has a duty to contribute to Sweden’s system of total defence. This means that everyone that resides there and is between the ages of 16 and 70 can be called up to assist in various ways in the event of threat of war. The document cautions the population to prepare independent stores of food, water, power, communications and emergency systems and offers a checklist. Existential threats from cybersecurity attacks are high on the list. In Australia we are woefully underprepared for crisis and war and at risk of becoming a proxy if crisis and war get worse.

Sweden is also notable in that it is officially in dialogue with and listening to the representatives of AANES. According to the trusted Middle East news service, *Rudaw Report*, Sweden has offered 10 million Euro support to Rojava as well as affirming its continues solidarity and shared views.¹¹⁹⁸ The Autonomous Administration of Catalonia is preparing to recognize the AANES in a show of solidarity which is expected to pass the Catalan Parliament. As they say, the solidarity is welcome because “the model of communalism will create a peaceful solution in the Middle East.”¹¹⁹⁹ In this context where organised war meets organised civil resistance the Rojava revolution minus a complete focus on who has the guns and how many people are killed is an example of grassroots social defence.

The failures of electoral democracy:

Ayla Akat Ata is a Kurdish woman who followed the footsteps of trailblazing Kurdish woman, Leyla Zena, into mainstream Turkish politics. Zena became a local Mayor and was later imprisoned for speaking in Kurdish in the Turkish parliament that she was elected to participate in. Ayla, who was one of Abdullah Ocalan’s defence lawyers, has also taken a role in local governance, national peace talks, and has taken part in organising the Free Women’s Congress, (KJA) that was formed in Turkey in 2015 and is “anti-nationalist and anti-militarist.”¹²⁰⁰ Ayla is part of the Rojava revolution, one of many women risking their lives to build a feminist, autonomous administration that has put women in all decision

¹¹⁹⁷S A Cook, Cracks are growing in the Erdogan Regime, *Council on Foreign Relations*, August, 2021. <https://www.cfr.org/article/cracks-are-growing-erdogan-regime>

¹¹⁹⁸ <https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/syria/03072021>

¹¹⁹⁹ <https://anfenglish.com/news/catalonia-prepares-for-recognition-of-north-and-east-syria-53602>

¹²⁰⁰ Ibid, L Dauden, p.

making processes. Providing “evidence of women ‘making ourselves powerful’ and building new life all around them.”¹²⁰¹

Ayla Akat has been held in maximum security prison in Turkey since October 26, 2016, her lawyers were not notified that she had been charged with running a terrorist organisation, she is still in jail.¹²⁰² Campaigns to free her, along with hundreds of other un-armed as well as armed women and men across what had once been Kurdistan. The Anglo-French Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 proposed a typical cartography of violence, dividing the Kurdish people between four modern nations: Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria.¹²⁰³ In 1923, the Treaty of Lausanne, in which Turkey gave up its remaining claims to what was left of the Ottoman Empire, failed to mention the Kurds. Since then, they have constituted one of the largest groups of stateless people on the planet.¹²⁰⁴

Summing it up nicely Yasin Sunca explains the revolution, “was the outcome of a face-off between a century long status quo and a great upheaval in the region.”¹²⁰⁵ Historical revolutionary processes, both the revolutions of the hegemony, the capitalist nation state, and those movements arising from the bottom, led by the stateless, the forcibly assimilated and those others left to die of poverty and other solvable problems. The Kurdish question remains unresolved because “power constellations reconfigured the region in such a way that doomed-to-fail nation-states were formed arbitrarily.”¹²⁰⁶

The most significant political parties are the PYD, the Democratic Union Party that was formed in Syria in response to the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the *Partya Karkeren Kurdistanî* PKK. Since 1998, the latter has fundamentally and substantively changed from being a Marxist – Socialist armed movement in pursuit of a Kurdish national state, into a

¹²⁰¹ C Power, Peace in Kurdistan, Campaign for a peaceful solution of the Kurdish question, Jenology – science of women, science of revolution, September, 2019, London, add link, ¹²⁰² Ibid.

¹²⁰³ E W, Schoon, The paradox of Legitimacy: Resilience, Success, and the Multiple Identities of the Kurdistan Workers Party in Turkey, *Social Problems*, Vol. 62. No. 2, 2015, p. 267. Doi:10.1093/socpro/spv006; M Al-Kati, The Kurdish Movement in the Arab World: The Syrian Kurds as a case Study, *AlMuntaqa*, vol. 2. No. 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10/31430/almuntaqa.2.1.0045>, p; M Carter, *Serkeftin: A Narrative of the Rojava Revolution*, Zed Books, 2019; V Baird, Betrayed Again, *New Internationalist*, July/August, 2020, p. 15; S Patton, Organisational Relations of Kurdish Political Parties and Their Evolution, PhD, University of Melbourne, August, 2019, Orchid ID: 0000-0001-6646-480X

¹²⁰⁴ S L Potiker, Obstacles to Insurrection: Militarised Border Crossings Hindering the Rojava Liberation Struggle, *Anarchist Studies*, Vol. 27. No. 2, 2019, p. 3.

¹²⁰⁵¹²⁰⁵ Y, Sunca, The International and the Rojava Revolution, in, *Mapping the world and making the global*, p 105-124, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/9783839455296-009>

¹²⁰⁶ Ibid, Y Sunca, p. 109, 110.

coalition of self-organised and self-governing systems of administration within the territorial borders of Syria. The post-colonial situation for Kurds, “was exclusion and fundamental deprivation of their human rights.”¹²⁰⁷

Rojava recognises itself and positions itself through the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES)¹²⁰⁸ also referred to as the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria or West Kurdistan.¹²⁰⁹ Each of these regions borders Turkey “like boats in a sea of enemies.”¹²¹⁰ Afrin is divided from the others by the Euphrates river and all were divided by areas held by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, ISIS. These areas had a pre Syrian War population of 3.5 million people spread across 187 villages, towns and cities.

In Rojava previous differences have given way to the formation of mutual relations in which Kurdish, Syrian, Turkman, Assyrian, Yazidis and Chechen’s are working together.¹²¹¹ Kongra, formerly Kongreya Star, the women’s union in Syria that “reached out to women’s groups in Turkey and across the region and indeed the world,”¹²¹² had a significant role to play in the organisation of the revolution.¹²¹³ The PKK and the Partiya Yekitiya Demokrat (PYD) had years of experience and were well placed, having been instructed by Ocalan to read Bookchin’s work, to put the synthesis of his and related ideas now taking root and making sense, into action. “Efforts at actualising Democratic Confederalism, should not be expected to cohere with Ocalan’s writing from a maximum security prison.”¹²¹⁴

Taking the leader down has never stopped a genuine revolution:

In this case as in many others, the leader’s imprisonment is a source of solidarity. These experiments are taking place in light of the mature thinking and prison writings of Ocalan, For him:

¹²⁰⁷ Ibid.p. 112.

¹²⁰⁸ Rojava Information Center.Org, Background – Key Facts, <https://rojavainformationcenter.com/background/key-facts/>

¹²⁰⁹ N Behikhani, W Hamelink and N Weiss, Theorising women and war in Kurdistan: A feminist and critical perspective, *Kurdish Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 2018, p.5-30.

¹²¹⁰ A McCoy, **copy in from, locate.**

¹²¹¹ M, Yegen, Armed Struggle to Peace Negotiations: Independent Kurdistan to Democratic Autonomy, or the PKK in Context, *Middle East Critique*, Vol, 25. No. 4, 2016, p. 365-383, DOI: 10.1080/19436149.2016.128162. Ibid, P Dinc, 2016.

¹²¹² S Mohamad, in Kurdish Women Making Revolution, Documentary, Emergency Committee for Rojava, *YouTube*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFPf1-GL71c>.

¹²¹³ Ibid, M, Yegen, *Middle East Critique*, Vol, 25. No. 4, 2016, p. 365-383, DOI: 10.1080/19436149.2016.128162.

¹²¹⁴ Ibid, House Organ, Rojava, *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*, 2015, p.11

“the Kurdish question is to be treated as a fundamental question of democratisation. Our idea of a democratic nation is not defined by flags and borders. Our idea of democratic nation embraces a model based on democracy instead of a model based on state structures and ethnic origins.” I offer Turkey a simple solution. We respect the republic its unitary state structure and laicism. However, we believe it must be redefined and Kurds must be free to organise in a way that revitalises their culture and language and allows them to develop economically and ecologically.”¹²¹⁵

Ocalan has been Incarcerated in breach of international humanitarian laws and multiple conventions, treaties and road maps to peace, on Imrali Island off the Turkish Capital of Ankara since 1998. As Ocalan himself put it “I went to Europe as the Chairman of the PKK in order to promote a political solution” ¹²¹⁶to the Kurdish question that remained unsolved, predominantly in Turkey and Syria but also in Iraq and Iran.

The PKK’s declaration of a ceasefire in 1993 and the subsequent murder of one its strategists as well as “difficulties with hard line- pro military people within the PKK” led to the conflict playing out in Turkey but also amplifying across the region according to Ocalan. This led to the breakdown of political discussions. Syria had allowed Ocalan and others in the PKK to live in North- East Syria, but Ocalan eventually left Syria in 1998 in an attempt to find asylum in a country that did not consider him a terrorist. He almost made it to South Africa. The three female activists who were assassinated in Paris on August 19, 2013, founding member of the PKK, Sakine Cansiz, Fidan Dogan, representative of the Kurdistan National Congress in Paris and Leyla Saylemez, member of the Kurdish youth movement, seem to have traded their lives for Ocalan’s. Sarah De Miranda spent five years involved in a cyber ethnography of the Kurdish women’s struggle for freedom and human rights. “The National Intelligence Organisation of Turkey was quite literally responsible for the crime.”¹²¹⁷

A great opportunity was lost, according to Ocalan, when *“this U Turn in which I was abducted from Kenya with the backing of an alliance of secret services from different countries and the public expected to the conflict to escalate further.”*¹²¹⁸ This unexpected

¹²¹⁵ Ibid, Ocalan, *Political Thought*, Pluto Press, p. 27.

¹²¹⁶ A Ocalan, *The Political Thought of Abdullah Ocalan, Kurdistan Womans Revolution and Democratic Confederalism*, Pluto Press, 2017, p.17. Readers should note that Ocalan’s writing have been produced as part of his trials and ongoing defence and in isolation under huge military guard. He has not been able to view the published documents that have been made available by his legal team and international pressure

¹²¹⁷ Ibid, S De Miranda, MA, 2016, p. 24.

¹²¹⁸ N Ali Ali, Ibid, Foreword, p. x.

international mission to isolate Ocalan, the U turn, also provided the opportunity for his own self-criticism and re assessment of revolutionary strategy.

It is now well known that this U turn led to the dissolution of the PKK and the radical change in his thinking that has inspired fundamental change at multiple diverse levels of Kurdish resistance. Feminists have appropriated Ocalan's proposal of Jineology and are using it to liberate themselves which seems to precisely what he intended they do. The stigmatization of feminism in the Middle East means that the term feminism itself is rarely used but is replaced with local terms.¹²¹⁹ "In Iranian and Turkish Kurdistan and later in Syria's Rojava women have participated in politics and been actively involved in combat since the 1980s."¹²²⁰ This participation was used as part of an active process of state building.¹²²¹

Ocalan had asked the PKK to disarm.¹²²² He has admitted that he and his revolutionary comrades have had to make what they could of the new ways of thinking and apply them on the ground. Originally all efforts went into saving Ocalan's life as Turkey had handed him the death penalty. Reading about the femicide, internationally sanctioned because no one has been charged for the crime, it seems that fascist patriarchy simply destroyed three other lives.

Nonviolence alone has not been successful in global Occupy or in the Syrian War and activists are dispersed, dead, imprisoned, refugees or have become Rojavans.¹²²³ As such, and in view of Martin's consistency when it comes to non-state, participatory grassroots democracy that attends to the roots of violence and war and his acknowledgement of the fundamental role of anarcho feminism, along with his consistent admission that there is no way to know how social defence could come about, I read him as ambivalent towards violence because he leaves it in place, while making it clear that he is, at the same time working to overcome it.

All of this is ongoing. Therefore, it must be considered possible that Rojava will be suppressed and that 'ethnic cleansing', 'demographic re orienting', femicide will continue to take place and the risk of genocide will elevate from warning to crisis.¹²²⁴

¹²¹⁹ Bigikhani, Hamlink, Weiss, p.11.

¹²²⁰ Ibid.

¹²²¹ Ibid,

¹²²² Ibid, Ocalan, *Political Thought*, p. 17.

¹²²³ The Grass Roots in R Yassin-Kassab & L Al-Shami, *Burning Country: Syrian in Revolution and War*, (2019, Pluto Press, p 57-77 makes this clear from voices on the ground, the wider solidarity literature also affirms this as does the literature that attends to the question, What is Left for the Young, *New Internationalist*, No. 509 January/February, 2018 is particularly relevant for including American Brace Belden, who volunteered to fight with PJG in Rojava, Seize the memes of production feature on millennials, p. 22.

¹²²⁴ E Joeden-Forley, Genocide Watch Releases Genocide Warning for Kurds in the Middle East, Genocide Watch.Org, April 3, 2018, <https://www.genocidewatch.com/single-post/2018/04/02/genocide-watch-releases-genocide-warning-for-kurds-in-the-middle-east>

Until Rojava wins the war for the imagination and leads world disarmament, the capitalists that have thus far won that war, depend on recuperating the terms and ideas of their opponents, we can now see that anyone who loves Mother Earth and defends her vital systems is an enemy of the state. Rojava is not a brand. The people on the ground have made that clear. Whether it is the toxic masculinity held in place by traditional conservative patriarchy or modern heterosexual patriarchy it has been organised and legalised by capitalists, as a licence to kill.¹²²⁵ The Women's Self Defence units, The YPJ – *Yekinyen Parastina Jin*, has been a focus of mainstream global media and the source of much reflection within feminism and anarchism because it strikes the heart of patriarchy's darkness. Remove the profitable arms industry and the devastating narcotics business and Rojava becomes a model for social defence.

Prospects:

In Cemgil and Hoffmann's assessment, "even if a peace and accommodation of Syrian Kurdish autonomy were reached", demobilising and transforming society, so that Murray Bookchin's theory of radical democracy and ecology are not compromised by the more conventional dynamics of state formation and development, poses a challenge.¹²²⁶ "The promise of oil wealth, beyond local consumption, generating cash flows through exports, remains a potential breaking point, socially as well as ecologically."¹²²⁷ Rojava is surrounded by Petro States and its agroecology is threatened by chemical cartels, and other toxic practices that could easily disrupt its intent and efforts to regenerate organic, agroecological food systems. Turkey has already plundered Afrin's olive fields and is selling the fruit in Europe.¹²²⁸

Rojava's main economy is crude oil. Much of its fertility and agroecological capacities have been purposefully destroyed and/or subject to water shortages due to severe droughts and the geopolitical manipulation of water. Initiatives such as make Rojava Green Again, <https://makerojavagreenagain.org/> and Water for Rojava campaigns are part of international solidarity organised to assist Rojava regenerate its ecological systems. Their efforts are being hampered by Turkey because, via its's geography and superior military and international power, it is in control of 90% of the water that flows into the Euphrates River and 40 % of flows into the Tigris.¹²²⁹ As all of Syria's existing oil refineries were in the south

¹²²⁵ Ibid, S Kushefi Legal Anarchism, 2016,

¹²²⁶ Clems and Hoffman, complete the ref p.21.

¹²²⁷ Ibid, p. 22

¹²²⁸ <https://anfenglishmobile.com/features/olives-stolen-from-afrin-on-the-world-market-53884>

¹²²⁹ S Glynn, creating a Desert and Calling it Peace, *Green Left. Org*, 14 May 2021, <https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/creating-desert-and-calling-it-peace-turkeys-water-war-against-rojava>

of Syria, the Syrian Kurds and other minorities in the cantons of Rojava, had to build their own, DIY refinery.¹²³⁰

As Pinar Dinc put it, “the stateless Kurds offer two different models of self-governance in Iraq and Syria.”¹²³¹ In Iraq, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) “ held a referendum for an independent Kurdish state in September 2017, without much international backing” and in Northern Syria “ a region the Kurds refer to as Rojava (West Kurdistan) a non-statist/ stateless form of autonomy, also without regional and international backing.”¹²³² The possibility of sustaining a non- state, self-governing system within the state system is a focus of political analysis across the literature. Many predict global uprisings of the working class and the youth left behind and left for dead across the world evident in the scenarios I have discussed in previous chapters. # Pandemic-The Kurds may organise millions of human shields, nonviolent defenders, civil resisters and others whose privileges and individual decisions might enable such ‘body on the line’ without weapons, solidarity. No one can predict what will happen.

The current system is itself based in victorious violence.¹²³³ To say that everyone must put their faith in this system is not an overstatement because those in charge of the weapons systems have a legal, though not binding responsibility to protect civilians and abide by many other conventions toward the prevention and curbing of war. Even those facing genocide are expected not to use violence to defend themselves. Yet, it is well known that UN peace keeping forces are facing “budgetary constraints and blue helmet retrenchments”, the system is in crisis and transition and has “focussed its operations on stabilising governments, counter insurgency provides the doctrine.”¹²³⁴ The broader aim of protecting future generations from wars seems to be lost. This is what social defence is worried about.

Murray Bookchin’s work is available to all the major powers. But none of us can imagine the Australian Prime Minister, Scott Morrison asking all members of his party to read Bookchin. Clearly, iterations of Bookchin’s political theory can also be found within the global history of anarcho -communism- pacifism – feminism and the ecological thinking evident in Deep and Dark ecology, Zapatismo and the plethora of intersectional, gender, class, race, ability

¹²³⁰ D Bookchin and D Graeber, Emergency Committee, youtube add the details; Strangers in a Tangled Wilderness, A Small Key Can Open a Large Door, AK Press, 2015, introduction: A Mountain River has many bends p. 3-5.

¹²³¹ P Dinc, The Kurdish Movement and the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria: An alternative to the (Nation) State Model? *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 22 No. 1, p.47.

¹²³² Ibid.

¹²³³ A Nordhag, War, Peace and Ideologies: Approaching peace in war through democratic confederalism and the war in Rojava, *UMEA University*, 2019 MA in Crisis Management and Peacebuilding, p.

¹²³⁴ K M Kenkel and C Foley, Responding to the Crisis in the United Nations Peace Operations, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 42. No 2. 2021, 189-196. DOI: 10/1080/1353260.2021.1899543

and ecological resistance movements underway across the world. The ecofeminism of Navdanya and the Peasant Feminism of LVC as previous chapters have pointed out are all part of this wider international revolt against patriarchy, surveillance capitalism and the civilisation that has traded food for social war.

Rojava are part of The Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS/DAESH.¹²³⁵ Yet they have not had a voice in UN peace talks and their leader is still imprisoned. It remains to be seen what the US and its NATO allies will do, what Russia will do? ISIS fighters are reported to have far superior equipment and are “pumped up on amphetamines”, because their commanders include some of the wealthiest tribal leaders that run the drug, sex slavery and other business ventures that keep their economy growing. Business is put first, be it at the summit of the system of international states or throughout the various other zones of organised violence and dis-organised peacebuilding or in the Islamic militias organising in the cracks and crevices of failed states.

With the election of Jo Biden in 2020, US troops are back in Syria, various peace accords have been signed and embargos have been placed on Bashir Al Assad’s autocratic regime in Syria.¹²³⁶ Many reports are available on the state of the occupation, the serious breaches of human rights and war crimes but none are yet to have much impact within the UNSC. Russia and China have used their vetoes five times since 2014 yet the latest resolution, S/RES/2585, renewed the mandate of the cross-border humanitarian aid delivery mechanism to Syria.

Relational Processes of Empowerment:

“This is the first time since the 1930s that millions of people are experimenting in a stateless democracy. You would think it would be big news and that everyone would be discussing it, are you for or against it and so on but it is not.”¹²³⁷

David Graeber’s words resonate across the international solidarity movements that support Rojava and they confirm that people are listening to and responding to the Kurdish women’s call for global solidarity. As Graeber put it, “These are world historical things that I had never expected to see in my lifetime, we have a responsibility to take notice.”¹²³⁸

Availing ourselves of this responsibility is also a move toward our collective empowerment. This in turn bring us directly into back into the realms of social defence. Martin himself may well disagree with my reading of him in this thesis. However, he is also well aware that “peace movements remarkable campaigns have led to constraints on weapons systems and helped to deter war-making, (but) they have made little progress on developing and

¹²³⁵ <https://theglobalcoalition.org/en/>

¹²³⁶ Ibid, Emergency Committee, News, add link, add UN Security Council resolutions and dates,

¹²³⁷ ¹²³⁷ D Graeber, Emergency Committee for Rojava, Debbie Bookchin, You tube, 2019, add link

¹²³⁸ Ibid.

promoting alternatives to the military.”¹²³⁹ It is possible that Ocalan’s mature theories and the processes used by people on the ground as they experiment with Democratic Confederalism are practicing revolutionary nonviolence. Which for Martin:

*“can include challenging and building alternatives to patriarchy, capitalism, the state and other systems of inequality and hierarchy. Unlike the idea of revolution as capturing and wielding state power, revolutionary nonviolence rejects both violence as a means and the capacity to use violence as an end point.”*¹²⁴⁰

Rojava’s existing processes of empowerment are evident in its official documents and social contracts, its communal system of local representation; through its citizen policing, local conflict resolution systems and its municipal systems of regional defence which are currently undertaken by the YPG and PYG. It is also evident in the educational system, the Rojava University, which is an international initiative, including its Jinwar Village, where Jineology is being articulated and taught. There are also multiple short 8 week courses within local academies and an international network of solidarity institutions that disseminate news and resources and provide links to further networks.

The Women of Afrin have asked us to rebel in the name of love.

“From Rojava’s neighbourhoods to South America’s forests, from Europe’s streets to Africa’s plains, from the Middle East’s valleys to North America’s plazas, from Asia’s mountains to Australia’s plateaus; with our love which knows no borders and with our most revolutionary feelings, we embrace all women who intensify the struggle for freedom and equality.” ¹²⁴¹

Rojava’s young revolutionaries and the elders and leaders guiding them may well represent an ontology, epistemology and phenomenology of love.¹²⁴² In this way they are re-worlding politics which in part, explains the solidarity they formed. As Yagmur Savran put it, “now is not the time for the international left to be disputing the Rojava revolution.”¹²⁴³ Rather, they should, “show communitarian solidarity with the Rojavans in what is, arguably a fight for freedom and popular democracy against the forces of fascism.”¹²⁴⁴

Clemens Hoffman and Kamran Martin’s research has found that, “despite all the adversities, real everyday social life remains the key site of resistance to innovative and imaginative

¹²³⁹ Ibid, Martin, *Social Defence: A Revolutionary Agenda*, 2017, p. 2.

¹²⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 4.

¹²⁴¹ Kurdish Women Call for a Global Women’s Movement, 2018, wide solidarity distribution, copy over links,

¹²⁴² Ibid’s here and any new material used in possibilities.

¹²⁴³ Ibid.

¹²⁴⁴ Y Savran, The Rojava Revolution and British Solidarity, *Anarchist Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1, 2016, p7

praxis beyond the historical contours of capitalist sociality and interstate anarchy.”¹²⁴⁵ Thus the revolution of everyday life, in a continuum that is the basis of social anarchism, is the key site of self-organisation defence of Rojava’s vital social, political and ecological institutions. But this too is common sense. Despite the amazing work being done, claiming that daily life is the site of struggle is somehow still claimed as presenting something new.¹²⁴⁶

Official Documents:

Here I will address three of the official documents, The Social Contracts, the Women’s’ Law and the Statement of TEV-DEM, 2021 check date.

Rojava’s official documents, specifically their social contracts are inclusive of the diversity of peoples in Syria, Turkey, Iran and Iraq. Revolutionaries appear to be self-critical in the way that all people who took part in global Occupy Movements and followed them are aware of the possibilities that come when you take matters into your own hands. Things are constantly being re assessed and discussed in forums at the local and international level.

Solidarity Websites:

The Emergency Committee for Rojava, <https://www.defendrojava.org/>; Internationalist Commune, <https://internationalistcommune.com/> and International Initiative, Freedom For Abdullah Ocalan –

Peace in Kurdistan, <https://www.freeocalan.org/main>.

Key media: ANF NEWS, <https://anfenglishmobile.com/>; Rudaw Media: <https://www.rudaw.net/english>

A new women’s run news agency has recently opened, First female news agency - <https://jinhaagency.com/en/all-news/content/view/1146>

Feminism:

Rojava’s revolution is anticapitalist and is, “substantially different to neoliberal feminism.”¹²⁴⁷ Jineology is the self-derivative feminism being articulated and experimented with shows that “Kurdish feminists are engaging with the extant feminist work and implementing it with Jineology, which relates specifically to Kurdish experiences.”¹²⁴⁸

¹²⁴⁵ C Hoffman and K Martin, Beyond Anarchy and Capital? The Geopolitics of Rojava and Revolution in Syria, *Geopolitics*, 2021, DOI: 10.1080/14650045.2021.1924944, p. 2.

¹²⁴⁶ Ibid, A Nordhas, UMEA MA.

¹²⁴⁷ ¹²⁴⁷ A Shahvisi, Beyond Orientalism: Exploring the distinctive feminism of democratic Confederalism in Rojava, *Geopolitics*, 2018, doi:10.1080/14650045.2018.1554564, p.8.

¹²⁴⁸ Ibid.

Kongreya Star, a confederation of Syrian and Kurdish women's organisations, is the umbrella organisation that supports the Rojava revolution through the science of Jineology.¹²⁴⁹

Kongreya Star seeks to continue historical feminist struggles and seek alternatives to those that have yet to break with capitalism.¹²⁵⁰ Women's wider voluntary participation in armed self and social defence is arguably the most compelling example of women's global efforts to fight back against patriarchy and reclaim their matriarchal backstories underway today. They adapted quickly to an evolving and unexpected situation in an impossible context of utterly invisible violence as Robert Burrowes has theorised it, as well as the obviously brutal violence, that is just another problem for men at the top to deal with.

Quite a lot has been said about the feminism at the heart of this revolution however as Arianne Shahvisi reminds us, "while Ocalan's influential writings have undoubtedly been pivotal in prioritising women's rights, women have for many decades played a prominent role in the PKK, and they have struggled for their place within the movement."¹²⁵¹ Can a man who has been in jail for over twenty years and whose existence cannot be confirmed really be leading these women? Or is it a case like every other revolution that leaders provide the inspiration and often the theoretical and philosophical basis. The women putting his ideas into practice and developing them in their own ways are also presenting their own philosophical and physical best. Let us stand with them and do the same.

In Australia, the ABC took down Egyptian feminist Mona Eltahawy because she argues women should be organising resistance and she is ambivalent in relation to violence because she leaves it in its place. Australians know the public media as Aunty, in this context that is a blatant insult.

Foreign Affairs:

"Rojava came into existence without sabre rattling and military rhetoric, it appeared unexpectedly and unpredictably in the midst of a situation where all hope seemed lost."¹²⁵²

Meredith Tax observes, "so far the United States has treated the Syrian Kurds as a short term ally and given them military but not overt political or economic support."¹²⁵³ There exclusion from the Geneva Peace talks to end the Syrian War is evidence of the ways in

¹²⁴⁹ Kongra Star, Charter, *KongraStar*.English, <https://eng.kongra-star.org/kongra-star-charter/>, p.4.

¹²⁵⁰ Ibid, Shahvisi, *Beyond Orientalism*, 2018, p. 8, Ibid, Kongra Star Charter, Kongra Star, economics, N Ali – Ali, Foreword, Ibid, the Political Thought of Abdulla Ocalan, 2019, p. vii – xviii.

¹²⁵¹ Ibid, p.2.

¹²⁵² A Hosseini, The Spirit of a Spiritless Situation: The Rojava Model of Political Development in the Context of the Middle East, *Critique, Journal of Socialist Theory*, Vol. 44.3, 2016, p.260, DOI: 1080/03017605.2016.1199631.

¹²⁵³ M Tax, The Rojava Model, How Syrian Kurds Govern, *Foreign Affairs*, 14, October, 2016, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2016-10-14/>.

which Rojavans are being mistreated and used as proxies within the big power rivalries and IR and international foreign affairs and global policy.

In their Final Statement to the International Forum on ISIS in 2019, The Rojavan Center for Strategic Studies (NRLS) which was held in North- East Syria had this to say,

*“despite the constructive role played by the self-administration of North and East Syria during the years of the Syrian crisis, the lack of participation of Syria's residents in negotiations to resolve the Syrian crisis is a gross injustice against the components of the region, which is a negative factor affecting the issue of security and political stability. Therefore, the concerned authorities and the international powers should involve the political administration in the north and east of Syria in the process of negotiations with adequate representation.”*¹²⁵⁴

They noted that the hundreds of international participants both physical and online *“appreciated the pioneering role played by the People’s and Women’s Protection Units (YPG and YPJ) in ending ISIS physical presence with support from the International Coalition Against Terrorism and they praised the secure stable conditions enjoyed by the self-administration areas...”*¹²⁵⁵

This lack of recognition and failure to learn from the experiments of Rojava does not bode well for social defence. On the other hand, it also suggests that Martin is absolutely right, State governments will do almost anything to prevent viable alternatives.¹²⁵⁶ In the case of Rojava, this is done officially through State Terror Laws and culturally through, mis, dis and lack of information as well as militarily through the military industrial technologies of 4th and 5th generation warfare. The injustice inherent in using someone as means towards a common end and then refusing to acknowledge their political and social system shows that global ethics are not in place. Just as it confirms the current dis-order, or totalitarian re-ordering of life on a planetary scale as we all of us, however differently head down the road of Totalitarianism.¹²⁵⁷

The Kobane Trials occurring in Turkey in 2021 bring us into the heart of the question and the problems facing a system in transition. An indication of the trajectory of the transition, assuming the system survives under the Biden Administration and beyond. As Kongreya Star report, <https://eng.kongra-star.org/2021/03/30/politicians-sentencing-cicek-kobane-on-turkish-territory-is-violation-of-international-laws/>. Cicek Kobane, is not a terrorist but has been sentenced to life imprisonment in Turkey, in flagrant disregard of its global obligations and international humanitarian laws and conventions.

David Graeber and many others have asked, why is the world ignoring the Kurds? Graeber asked this question publicly in 2014 and continued to work within the international

¹²⁵⁴ Rojava Center for Strategic Studies, July, 2019.

<https://nrls.net/en/category/international-forum-on-isis/>

¹²⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁵⁶ This is consistent across Martins’s published work on the topic, see chapter 3.

¹²⁵⁷ C J Hopkins, The Road to Totalitarianism, Off-guardian, August 2, 2021.

solidarity with Rojava until his untimely death in 2019. This is still the fundamental question in 2021. Rojava's revolution takes place at the level of common sense, it is also animated by the mature writings of Ocalan who as Patrick Huff suggests, is practicing a politics of reasonableness and has unleashed a re-enchanting of politics.¹²⁵⁸ The solidarity literature:

As the left collective House Organ put it "Hitherto inimical forces are being brought together and getting coordinated to build and defend a new, stateless, egalitarian society".¹²⁵⁹ The solutions are here, they are being experimented with, so why does the question remain suspended? Anyone who stands up for hopeful and positive responses is met with the official world view, "Armed force remains a key factor in international affairs."¹²⁶⁰ The United States cashed in on the war in Syria. In 2015, the US mission to defeat ISIS caused multiple fractures in the US government, revealed through Senate Debates, on the Iraq Question.¹²⁶¹

Despite numerous reasonable objections to the continued statement from Joint Chiefs of Command that the US strategy was working, it clearly was and is not. In 2020, global media giants widely reported the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq.¹²⁶² Donald Trump had of course twittered the policy of troop withdrawal and unilateral position of his administration. When that spectacularly crashed and Jo Biden was elected, the same news media organisations made it clear that America was back to lead the multilateral governance, security and economic systems of the free world.¹²⁶³

Following this, in 2021 it is reported that US president Biden will meet Iraqi prime minister, Mustafa Al-Kadhimi to continue talks about US withdrawal, particularly because Iraq is facing the prospect of being a proxy in a war between the US and Iran.¹²⁶⁴ Some troops have pulled out of Iraq, it not yet known what the US will do. What is clear, is their total support of Israel and their view of the threat posed by Iran's "malign activities in the middle east."¹²⁶⁵ While proxy wars in this part of the world are raging in Yemen and Syria, Iraq's

¹²⁵⁸ P Huff, complete ref.

¹²⁵⁹ House Organ, Rojava, *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, Vol. 26, No. 1. 2015, p. 1 of 15.

¹²⁶⁰ A. G Houston, AO AFC, Joint operations for the 21st Century, Canberra, May 2007, Chief of Defence Force,

¹²⁶¹ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-114shrg21326/html/CHRG-114shrg21326.htm>.

¹²⁶² NYTimes, BBC, SBS etc.

¹²⁶³ Ibid.

¹²⁶⁴ T copp and J Feldscher, Official deny troops are being pulled out of Iraq as Strategic Talks Near, Defence One.com, July 15, 2021, <https://www.defenseone.com/policy/2021/07/officials-deny-american-troops-are-pulling-out-iraq-strategic-talks-near/183805/>

¹²⁶⁵ The White House, June 23, 2021, Israel Defence Forces, Statement, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/06/23/statement-by-nsc-spokesperson-emily-horne-on-national-security-advisor-jake-sullivans-meeting-with-lieutenant-general-aviv-kohavi-chief-of-the-general-staff-of-the-israel-defense-forces/>

demise has not yet been announced, nor likely under Biden because of the major US and coalition mission, Operation Resolve. This reflects the official “unwavering resolve and deep commitment of the U.S and partner nations in the region and around the globe to eliminate the terrorist group ISIS and the threat they pose to Iraq, Syria, the region and the wider international community.”¹²⁶⁶

With ISIS now described as a remnant, Operation Resolve is working in Syria and Northeast Syria – under the auspices of USAID to assist hospitals already in decline and lacking equipment to cope with the pandemic.¹²⁶⁷ Officially ISIS have been defeated but still remain a threat according to the operations press releases of 2021. Moving into solidarity media and media from the middle east such as Rudaw.com, it is clear that ISIS, even if by other names, is active, profitable for the tribal chiefs commanding it, and the international community that is training people to fight it. Convenient for Turkey who are accused of facilitating ISIS access to Syria and employing mercenaries, young men, usually, left abandoned, freed from jail, stateless and otherwise abused. Official responses to Rojava now depend upon what the U.S will do vis-à-vis, Turkey and vis-à-vis, growing calls within a broadening international solidarity movement with the feminist revolution in Rojava and across the world. US statement here for 2021, <https://www.stratcom.mil/Media/Speeches/>

The rights base of the national security state:

The “erosion of international norms of war and Western commitment to them – are sufficiently serious to merit determined response from the United States”, according to the United States Institute of Peace, Syria Study Group’s final report of 2109.¹²⁶⁸ Yet the US continues to downplay the politics of Rojava and at the same time it forms military and economic alliances with them.

This suggests the US is primarily interested in maintaining oil flow and military power alliances rather than highlighting the anti-patriarchal, democratic and ecological systems created in North- East Syria and beyond. There seems to be no justification for not supporting Rojava if one’s nation is democratic, no justification for holding onto a system that has failed, is failing or will be reset through the military missions made possible by the pandemic.

¹²⁶⁶ <https://www.centcom.mil/OPERATIONS-AND-EXERCISES/OPERATION-INHERENT-RESOLVE/>

¹²⁶⁷ Operation Inherent Revolve, June press highlights, 2021, <https://www.inherentresolve.mil/Portals/14/CJTF-OIR%20Press%20Release-20210506-01-Life%20After%20Daesh%20Highlights.pdf>

¹²⁶⁸ Syria Study Group Final Report, September 14, 2019, *United States Institute for Peace*, <https://www.usip.org/syria-study-group-final-report>, the report was “mandated by US Congress” and will be referred to again in section 2 of this chapter; the consensus is evident in think tanks, such as the Australia Institute and broader liberal, capitalist order committed to the current or past US dominance in world politics.

In Australia, the military are out enforcing lock downs (stay at home orders) to secure the city from the Delta variant of Corona Virus. Meanwhile, essential workers are unable to afford rents because as essential workers their wages are far lower than those of lawyers, bankers and administrators whose skills have been turned into un-skilled labor. The world will not stop if corporate lawyers quit, it will not stop if the military system disarms and converts to earth repair. Rojava exists because locally, the military defending it on behalf of Syria pulled out, it continues despite being abandoned by the UNSC and threats of famine and genocide. Honestly what more would it take.

The US had assisted the Rojavans, whom they almost always misleadingly refer to as Kurds, Rojavans were not surprised when Donald Trump decided to pull the US out of Syria in 2019. Obviously, the left see this as a betrayal.¹²⁶⁹ Alarmed at the reports that divisions are emerging within the experiments of Rojava, Kongreya Star, said:

*"We expect the KDP, PUK and PKK to reach a common outlook on this crisis, and to solve the problem through political dialogue. We urge them to work together to preserve the freedom of the Kurdish people in all regions, which is the legacy of tens of thousands of martyrs, and to work towards national unity."*¹²⁷⁰

In Ocalan's thinking, previously held and romanticized ideological values held by the PKK led them to view war as states do, "as a continuation of politics by other means" and that this ought to be abandoned because it "was a blatant contradiction of our self-perception as a movement struggling for the liberation of society."¹²⁷¹ As such, Rojava's armed defence units are open to anyone (now over 18) and the overall defence of the society is the responsibility of "all of the individuals within the community"; the use of the military within this emergent system is specific to defence against existential threat.¹²⁷² Specifically, "in order to counter attacks from the statist system and to defend society in all its diversity."¹²⁷³

Ocalan at his philosophical best:

I love the way Aaron Mc Coy put it, "it was in prison that Ocalan transformed into his philosophical best."¹²⁷⁴ Due to his role in this revolutionary project Ocalan is viewed by many

¹²⁶⁹ Add other historical and geostrategic sources.

¹²⁷⁰ Kongra Star, No Kurd can remain silent in the face of the attacks on Makhmour and Zînê Wertê, <https://eng.kongra-star.org/2020/04/24/kongra-star-no-kurd-can-remain-silent-in-the-face-of-the-attacks-on-makhmour-and-zine-werte/>.

¹²⁷¹ A Ocalan, copy over ref, p. 18.

¹²⁷² Ibid, p. 136.

¹²⁷³ Ibid.

¹²⁷⁴ Ibid, A Mc Coy, p.13

as the Nelson Mandela of the Middle East.¹²⁷⁵ Not everyone agrees. Nadjie Ali Ali says in her foreword to the Pluto Press publication of his political thought; “Initially I was very sceptical.” However, as she explains, whilst the notion of a Kurdish national state still has currency across the Middle East, Ocalan proposes a non-state solution that does not seek to dismantle the existing state borders of Turkey or Syria, Iraq or Iran, he:

*“proposes a model of governance that diminishes state power in pursuit of radical participatory democracy within the boundaries of the existing nation states through federation and self-organisation.”*¹²⁷⁶

The legal issue for the international system is that the PKK is listed as a terrorist organisation in the US, Britain and Australia. Clearly the PKK and Kurdish existence in general is outlawed in Turkey. The two main strands of international solidarity are freedom for Ocalan and lift the ban.

Russia and China have not upheld the NATO position of the terrorist declaration and debates continue along with the campaign to free Ocalan. In many ways this is ludicrous because the PKK was dissolved. However, living history cannot be dissolved so easily. Actually, we know it can, but in this case it cannot while people maintain solidarity. Even where it has been criminalised as is the case in the UK. (add 2018 penalties). There are currently 7,000 Kurds on hunger strike across the world and many more on an involuntary hunger strike because they have no food.

None the less, it is clear that the PKK no longer officially exists and that the autonomous regions and the PYJ have declared they are not fighting for a party, an ethnicity or a state, they are fighting for their rights to exist and self-organise, their right to pursue peace in the same way that I can. In its reasons outlining why the PKK was relisted as a terrorist organisation in 2018, the Australian government have identified 23 synonyms for the PKK alone.¹²⁷⁷ Acronyms and multiple names abound in the mesh of political parties across the four belligerent and oppressive nation states: Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Sometimes it seems to me that acronyms control the world and like passwords the building blocks of cyber surveillance, its near impossible to remember a whole lot of them.

The 2018 Australian, and other governments decisions to classify the PKK as a terrorist organisation is controversial and some members of the Australian Labour Party and the Greens as well as some independents have moved motions to delist the PKK and/or to recognise Rojava as a separate and legitimate democratic authority in its own right. This seems unlikely to go any further at this point in time. Covid has provided a cover all, for

¹²⁷⁵ Add in two of the articles, note google search.

¹²⁷⁶ Ibid, N Ali Ali, 2017, Foreword, p. xii.

¹²⁷⁷ Parliament of Australia, Kurdistan Workers Party Inquiry, September 20, 2018, https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Intelligence_and_Security/5TerroristOrgs/Report/section?id=committees%2Freportjnt%2F024208%2F26439

everything and the Middle East is a geography of multiple proxy wars that appear to have much to do with what the US, Russia and others in the international community decide.

Almost everyone agrees that Rojava is fragile. Sensible commentators also know that a participatory system is much more appealing than an authoritarian system. The Kurds have long lamented they have no friends but the mountains, they also know that a river has many bends.

Rojava is under constant threat of military attack, actual military attack, various embargoes and concerted efforts by Turkey to break the will of the revolutionaries.¹²⁷⁸ Along with constant efforts by western democratic nations to selectively engage with, as well as ignore Rojava and thus hide NATO's direct role in aiding Turkey, a member of NATO and strategically important to the imperial, capitalist system of international global rule.¹²⁷⁹ The system that Democratic Confederalism provides a solution to. Paying attention to Ocalan's challenging prison writings. It is clear that he is an organic intellectual and that he regards patriarchy, the nation state and capital as the main obstacles to solutions for Kurdish and other peoples of the Middle East and indeed the entire world. His intent is clear and reverberates globally where it is allowed to flourish. A Kurdish or other national state is "derived from the right of the people to self-determination. However, we regard this right as the basis for the establishment of grassroots democracies, without seeking new political borders".¹²⁸⁰

At the time of writing, in August 2021, the Turkish military and its allied mercenary forces, including formerly captured members of Daesh and other armed Islamic State soldiers and sectarian, Iranian and Syrian militias, are continuing a campaign of Genocide against Kurds in Syria.¹²⁸¹

Ocalan's abduction and imprisonment on Imrali Island, Turkey, has particularly impacted the societies in North East Syria because this is where he spent nineteen years of his life, prior to his imprisonment.¹²⁸² His imprisonment and isolation violates numerous international humanitarian laws and conventions that thus far, Turkey has refused to address.¹²⁸³ Further

¹²⁷⁸ D Bookchin and D Graeber, Revolution in Rojava, Emergency Committee for Rojava, Youtube, 15 May 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAJgq8H4L7U> ;

¹²⁷⁹ V Bird, Betrayed Again, add details,

¹²⁸⁰ A Ocalan, *The Political Thought of Abdullah Ocalan, Kurdistan Woman's Revolution and Democratic Confederalism*, Pluto Press, 2017 p.19

¹²⁸¹ Ibid, Emergency Committee for Rojava; L Radpey, Assessing International Law on Self-Determination and Extraterritorial Use of Force in Rojava, Lawfare, November 13, 2020, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/assessing-international-law-self-determination-and-extraterritorial-use-force-rojava>; P Boyle, Senate, unions call on Australia's government to oppose Turkish Invasion of Rojava, GreeLeft, October, 17, 2019, <https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/senate-unions-call-australia-government-oppose-turkish-invasion-rojava>;

¹²⁸² ANF, English, People of

¹²⁸³ International Peace Delegation, Clare Baker, Baroness Christine Blower, Prof. Radha D'Souza, Melanie Gingell, Rahila Gupta, Ogmundur Jonasson, Dr. Thomas Jeffrey Miley,

adding to the disgraceful behaviour of the Turkish state and its accomplices, the system of isolation imposed on Ocalan has been found by a recent delegation to have become a social system that isolates Kurds and others affiliated with them.¹²⁸⁴ According to the International Initiative and allied organisations fighting to free Ocalan, his isolation or more correctly torture has severely limited his communications. At the time of writing, it cannot be confirmed that he is alive. The message imprisoned and subjugated with him is quoted as it appears in the latest report from The International Peace Delegation Imrali.¹²⁸⁵

“When the prison window in Imrali was opened ajar in May 2019, Abdullah Öcalan said in his message: “There is an urgent need for a method of democratic negotiations, away from all kinds of polarization and the culture of conflict in the solution of problems. We can solve the problems in Turkey, and even in the region first and foremost the war—with soft power; that is with intelligence, political and cultural power instead of tools of physical violence.”

Conclusion:

Australian Simplicity advocate and author, Ted Trainer has pointed out, that Rojava is a social model for our future.¹²⁸⁶ Trainer nicely summarises Rojava’s communitarian ethos and social systems, as well as its political and ecological systems and finds them like those of simplicity and transition movements across the world. For him, “it should be evident that Rojava is confirming the basic Simpler Way claim that the required perspective for saving the planet is eco-anarchist, not eco-socialist.”¹²⁸⁷

Amid the political U turns and organised collective violence in the forever and everywhere wars of the here and now. The mantra of global occupy articulated and enacted by the privileged able to use nonviolence in the US, Australia, UK - NATO and its allied nations was also articulated and enacted using nonviolence in Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon, Sudan, Palestine and Syria, many of whom did not survive or achieve their aims. This is in sharp contrast to those involved in New York, Sydney, Berlin, London, Paris and Tokyo who had far more

Laura Quagliuolo, Roza Salih and Gianni Tognoni, The time has come to end isolation and free Ocalan, press release, International Initiative, *Peace in Kurdistan*, <https://www.freeocalan.org/news/english/international-imrali-peace-delegation-2021>, 14, February, 2021.

¹²⁸⁴ Ibid, n.p.

¹²⁸⁵ Ibid, International Peace Delegation, *ANF*, 2021.

¹²⁸⁶ T Trainer, Kurdish Rojava, Resilience.Org, February, 3, 2020, p

¹²⁸⁷ Ibid, Trainer, *Kurds of Rojava*, 2020 See also T Trainer, ed S Alexander, *The Collected Writings of Ted Trainer*, Simplicity Institute Melbourne, 2020.

chances of surviving yet also did not achieve their aims, immediately. Rojava is a clear expression of those aims because it is enacting a radical, participatory democracy.

In one of the most concise, kind and informative readings of the Rojava Revolution, *A Small Key can Open a Large Door*, the collective authors go further than acknowledging the works of Emma Goldman, Immanuel Wallerstein, Michel Foucault and Murray Bookchin as important influences in the thinking of the PKK and specifically in Ocalan's writings pre and post his imprisonment. They point to Zapatismo the orientation taken up in the anarchist turn in left political movements that was inspired by the Zapatistas.¹²⁸⁸ Accurately describing

*"the new type of leftist insurrectionary political configuration...that situated itself as a mode of liberation and leftist struggle that rejected hierarchy, party control and aspirations to create a State apparatus."*¹²⁸⁹

Like the leftist parties across the Kurdistan regions, the Zapatista had a history in the traditional left ideologies of the 19th and 20th century which by the 21st century had eroded in favour of autonomous, non-state systems of self-governance and direct actions. Ocalan "demanded that all PKK read Bookchin's, (Civilisation Narratives) his (Ecology of Freedom) was made recommended reading within the PKK."¹²⁹⁰

Thus, Bookchin's work is part of the Rojava Revolution and may have had more influence if Bookchin had been well enough to engage in the communication Ocalan had initiated with him.¹²⁹¹ Murray Bookchin passed away in 2006 and is sadly missed by the ecological grass roots – aka- anarcho left. The PKK on news of his passing "hailed him as one of the greatest social scientists of the 20th century and they vowed that his thesis on the state, power and hierarchy would be implemented in their struggle."¹²⁹² By providing an undeniable example of direct grassroots forms of governing within the State's enclosures Rojava is "historic for anarchists" because of its ambitions, unique circumstances and capacity to continue.

Women of Rojava have appropriated the prison writings of Abdullah Ocalan and are making of them what they can. They have international solidarity and work through consensus based decision making, process, have constructed social compacts and legal documents for their new society and for the international community. They are ready to engage in diplomacy, whenever the rest of the world is. Diplomacy means little when politics is being waged by war and states are making a killing of training society to kill and then watch this on TV. Everybody should be talking about how it is people have constructed a new society within the wars on people and the planet that are currently raging in the Middle East. This is no time for people to turn their backs on those whose context clearly means nonviolence is a privilege.

¹²⁸⁸ Ibid, *A Small Key*, complete. p. 19.

¹²⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 19.

¹²⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹²⁹¹ Ibid.

¹²⁹² Ibid, *Small Key*, p.20.

Appendix 3: Rojava Timeline.

Timeline:

2011-2012: On July 19, 2012, three regions of Northeast Syria (Afrin, Kobane and Jazira) declared their autonomy when the Syrian forces that had until then brutally controlled this area, backed by Turkey, but also under attack or held by Al-Nusra and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) withdrew.¹²⁹³

In 2012, The Movement for a Democratic Society – TEV DEM was formed to organise and develop the autonomous political system. During the later months of 2011 and into 2012, The People's Defence Units YPG and the Women's Defence Units YPJ were formed.

2014- 2017: By the close of 2014 the YPJ and YPG and their allies had helped to expel ISIS from, and hold, the city of Kobane. This was followed by a frenzy of orientalist and essentialist media representations of the YPJ women who defeated ISIS.¹²⁹⁴ In 2015 the Syrian Democratic Forces were created and followed by the formation of the Syrian Democratic Council.

In 2016 the Democratic Federation of Rojava and Northern Syria began redrafting a political constitution that updated the 2014 *Social Contract of the Autonomous Regions of Afrin, Jazira and Kobane*. As a social contract this is the legal basis that constitutes the foundation of the new society. The 2016 document, according to the Rojava Information Center, was formally adopted under the name of the Democratic Federation of Northeast Syria – “dropping the name Rojava to be more inclusive of Arab majority areas, particularly Manjib.”¹²⁹⁵

In August 2016, Manjib was liberated from ISIS control by the Syrian Democratic Forces SDF, and communes and civil administrative councils following the Rojava model were established.

¹²⁹³ M Knapp, A Flach and E Ayboga, *The Revolution in Rojava: Defence, The Theory of the Rose*, 2016, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1gk07zg.15>, details the complexity of shifting movements and state and non-state actors, of which Rojava is the latter in its aims, from an emic perspective by both being there and working within international solidarity collectives.

¹²⁹⁴ Add in the sources that deal with, Shahvisi, P Tank and two others.

¹²⁹⁵ Rojava Information Center, Timeline, Rojava, <https://rojavainformationcenter.com/background/rojava-timeline/>

2018- 2021:

In January 2018, Turkey and its proxy forces invaded Afrin, displacing 300, 000 mostly Kurdish people and in March the SDF withdrew. Sharia Law was imposed as human rights violations and war crimes escalated. In September 2018 Rojava responded by creating the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) which now has responsibility for seven regions, Jazeera, Euphrates, Afrin, Manjib, Tabqa, Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor.

In 2018 the Women's Union (note it is not a trade union) named Kongreya Star and its committees created the Kongreya Star Diplomatic Relations Committee and produced a charter document.¹²⁹⁶ Other key documents such as the Final Declaration of the third TEV-DEM Congress were produced in response to the war on Afrin and Rojava.

In 2018 Debbie Bookchin and others in solidarity with these experiments set up the *Emergency Committee for Rojava* in New York which has extensive resources and provides first-hand accounts of the various efforts underway to build international solidarity.

In 2018 international workers from the "Middle East, Asia, Africa, Europe, America and Oceania that had been working in different structures of the revolution in Rojava and Syria for many years" and who come from different political backgrounds organised the *International Commune* with the coordination of the youth movement of Rojava.

In 2019, the SDF defeated ISIS in Deir-ez-Sor. In October Turkey attacked and invaded Sere Kniye (Ras-Al-Ayn and Tel Abyad (Fire Spi) two cities in Northeast Syria post the US withdrawal from Syria ordered by Donald Trump. In 2021, 100 women shared stories of femicide and vowed to build a global movement to get the fascist patriarchs out.

¹²⁹⁶ Rojava Information Center, Key documents and background, <https://rojavainformationcenter.com/background/political-system-documents/>

Appendix: 4 Information for Participants

This is an invitation to participate in my research project, described below.

My name is Karen Kennedy and I am conducting this research as part of my PhD in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of New England. My research is supervised by Professor Helen Ware.

Research Project	Regenerative Culture and the Potential of Social Defence. This research began as a response to the question; “whatever happened to social defence”? asked by Brian Martin in 2014. Social defence was proposed as an alternative to the military in the 1970’s and 1980’s and early 1990. Since then, the concept is thought to have fallen of the agenda of activists. Through my research I have identified 4 key ideas/processes that support the potential of social defence. 1. That it is possible. 2. That it empowers people to take responsibility to work collectively against all forms of oppression and aggression. 3. That it will likely be resisted by governments and 4. Existing institutions will need to be replaced and alternatives created. The proposition grounding this research is that; vital aspects of any future system of social defence are well developed in the here and now within the alternatives of agroecology/ permaculture and/or anarchism/broad anti -authoritarian left. In this research these alternatives are considered part of today’s Regenerative Cultures. This research places particular attention on food systems because these are vital ecological, political and social systems that militaries currently ‘defend’ and ‘secure’ on our behalf. The central research question is:
Aim of the Research	What can be learned about “the radical potential of social defence” from other people/movements involved in the regenerative cultures?
Interview	As a participant, you will be emailed a short series of interview questions that you or your group are invited to respond to. A time frame of 3 months will be set and I

will be available to answer any questions you have via email. Proposed dates are 1 September – 30 November 2020.

Any insights gained from the interviews will be analysed in relation to the existing literature on social defence vis-a-vis the alternatives of agroecology/permaculture/anarchism/broad anti-authoritarian left. You can find key information on social defence at www.bmartin.uow.edu.au

Confidentiality

Otherwise, any personal details gathered in the course of the study will remain confidential. In this case, no individual will be identified by name in any publication of the results. All names will be replaced by pseudonyms which will ensure confidentiality. All texts including photographs of people and of places will be made available to participants.

Participation is Voluntary

Please understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary and I respect your right to decline this invitation and/or to stop participating in the study at any time without consequence and without needing to provide an explanation.

Questions

The interview questions will not be of a sensitive nature: rather they are related specifically to the topic of the research and will enable me to enhance collective knowledge of social defence and to learn how it might relate to the practices and modes of being that are evident within agroecology and anarchism.

Use of Information

I will use information from the interview as part of my doctoral thesis, which I expect to complete in March 2021. Information from the interviews may also be used in academic journal articles and conference presentations before and after this date. If participants do not wish to be identified, at all times, I will safeguard their identity by presenting the information in a way that will not allow them to be identified.

Upsetting Issues

This research does not deal with sensitive issues and information used to design and undertake this research is currently available in the public domain. It is unlikely that this research will raise any personal or upsetting issues but if it does you may wish to contact your local Community Health Centre

**Storage of
Information**

I will digitise all hardcopy notes and recordings of the interviews to be kept on cloud.une.edu.au, UNE's centrally managed cloud server managed by the research team. It will also be kept on a password protected computer. Only the research team will have access to the data.

**Disposal of
Information**

All the data collected in this research will be kept for a minimum of five years after successful submission of my thesis, after which it will be disposed of by deleting relevant computer files.

Approval

This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England (Approval No, HE19-164 Valid to 12/08/2020).

Researchers

Contact Details

Feel free to contact me with any questions about this research by email at kkenne27@une.edu.au or by phone on my mobile phone: +61490188537

You may also contact my supervisor Professor Helen Ware on 0267732442; email helen.ware@une.edu.au

Complaints

Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact:

Mrs Jo-Ann Sozou

Research Ethics Officer

Research Services

University of New England

Armidale, NSW 2351

Tel: (02) 6773 3449

Email: humanethics@une.edu.au

Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to further contact with you.

Kind regards,

Karen Kennedy

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