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Radical ecology and critical theory : a critique of the environmental movement.

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RADICAL ECOLOGY AND CRITICAL THEORY:
A CRITIQUE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

A Dissertation Presented

by

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ABSTRACT

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The thesis of this dissertation is that the reconstitution of human subjectivity, theoretically and concretely, is necessary to adequately address the global ecological crisis and ongoing social and political domination and exploitation. Initial attempts to constitute this new ecological subject exist in the radical ecology movement (recognized by Rudolf Bahro and Herbert Marcuse in the 1970s), examined here through three primary branches of the radicalized environmental movement: deep ecology, social ecology, and ecofeminism. Aspects of this radical ecological subject are revealed in a critique based on the work of the early Frankfurt School

theorists--Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Herbert Marcuse. Adorno's understanding of negative dialectics, or non-identity thinking, is the primary source of categories for the analysis. Jurgen Habermas's critique of Adorno is rejected, and Habermas's "communicative action" theory is also found to be inadequate for radical ecological needs. Adorno's use of the concept/term "mimesis" provides a lever for prying open radical ecology's treasure of insights as well as its limitations. Each branch of radical ecology is examined with reference to its methodology or epistemology, its understanding of subjectivity, and their respective politics.

Deep ecology's deep questioning method, proposed by Arne Naess, is found to differ little from traditional philosophy and inadequately supports its claims about possibilities for identification with nature or the creation of a political identity or agency capable of adequately addressing ecological and social problems, this despite the successes of its political descendants, including Earth First! and Dave Foreman. Social ecology, elaborated by Murray Bookchin, expands the idea of subjectivity beyond its ability to provide the critical conceptual framework necessary to resolve the ecological crisis. Bookchin's critique and interpretation of the early Critical Theorists also fails. Ecofeminism, a diverse set of perspectives, must be approached cautiously while attempting to salvage consistent theoretical

categories which, combined with critical theory's insights, illuminate potentials for development of a future radical ecological subject. Useful categories include "feminist standpoint theory," the "ethic of care," psychoanalysis and other insights from the works of Luce Irigaray, Nancy Hartsock, Sara Ruddick and Drucilla Cornell.

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INTRODUCTION

The thesis of this dissertation is that the reconstitution of human subjectivity, both theoretically and concretely, is necessary to adequately address both the global ecological crisis and ongoing social and political domination and exploitation. Subjectivity and its relation to the destruction of nature has been a central concern in the more philosophical works of "radical ecology," a term used here to include the texts of deep ecology, social ecology and ecofeminism.[1] This work will examine recent radical ecological attempts to reconceptualize subjectivity, the methods or methodologies used which provide the bases of the respective conceptualizations, and the resulting claims about the possibilities for social and political transformation. The contrasting views of deep ecology, social ecology, ecofeminism and other forms of radical ecology have developed in an atmosphere of mutual critique. This has resulted in a steadily increasing sophistication, including a more open acknowledgment of both the many differences between these views as well as their basic agreements. However, even including their increasing subtlety and complexity, these attempts to develop a radical philosophy of ecology continue to fail to fulfill their claims to provide an adequate philosophical basis for radical ecological activity.

This dissertation attempts to more fully engage the tradition of critical theory, the "Frankfurt School," with the discourse of radical ecological philosophy. Specifically, the work of Theodore Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Herbert Marcuse will be drawn on to provide leverage for a critical evaluation of the relationship between a radical ecological subjectivity and the domination, exploitation and destruction of nature. Since there are significant differences among these "first generation" critical theorists as well, care must be given to acknowledge these differences and the subsequent impacts they may have on the critique of radical ecology. Critical theory proceeds out of the Western philosophical tradition, challenging that tradition on its own terms through "immanent critique," a process most fully developed in Adorno's work. One of the central themes of the early critical theorists was the development of the concept of "the domination of nature." The philosophical texts of radical ecology in its various facets have concerned themselves with many of the same themes as those of critical theory. In several instances Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse have already been appropriated by these more recent philosophies, although until now only marginally. This dissertation will argue in favor of a further elaboration and extension of the insights of critical theory into radical ecology's self-understanding. Simultaneously, it is argued, critical theory can be

developed by introducing insights from the philosophies of radical ecology. This should result in a richer understanding of both the current system of domination and exploitation, and insights into possibilities for its social, political, and ecological transformation.

Subjectivity and Ecology

Rudolf Bahro's work, although it does not belong to any of the three main categories of radical ecology examined here, provides an opportunity to formulate some of the central issues and concerns of radical ecology in the context of the actual historical engagement between critical theory and a contemporary ecological philosophy. Bahro's The Alternative in Eastern Europe was described by Herbert Marcuse as, "The most important contribution to Marxist theory and practice to appear in several decades."[2] Marcuse claimed Bahro's analysis was applicable to both actually existing socialism (a much smaller category now than in 1977) and late capitalism. Marcuse perceived in Bahro's work the possibility of a fundamental shift in the understanding of Marxism: "A decisive result is that historical materialism makes a genuine advance: the relationship between base and superstructure is redefined, the focal point of the social dynamic is shifted from objectivity of political economy to subjectivity, to consciousness as a potential material force for radical change."[3] It is a concern for

reconceptualizing subjectivity that marks the nexus of several contemporary philosophical developments, with an implied consequence of providing opportunities for the establishment of a new agent of social-political transformation. Exploration of alternative conceptions of subjectivity in the philosophical literature of radical ecology may contribute significantly to the development of the project of social transformation.

The various branches of radical ecology develop their respective critiques of existing society from a broad range of philosophical positions. For example, individuals who identify with the philosophy of deep ecology proceed from traditions as diverse as Buddhism, Native American culture, Spinoza, Heidegger, Marcuse and Foucault. Murray Bookchin, self-identified anarchist and prime-mover behind social ecology, has frequently relied on Kropotkin's idea of "mutual aid," while making Hegel's work a central methodological component of his project. Bookchin has also claimed to have been strongly influenced by Horkheimer and Adorno, although some of his harshest criticisms are aimed in their direction. Ecofeminist positions encompass perhaps an even broader range of traditions than either deep ecology or social ecology, although a general tendency until very recently had been for the ecofeminist debate to be split into opposing camps on the question of "women's spirituality." In this respect, ecofeminist debates echo those in feminist theory

generally which circulate around the questions of female subjectivity, embodiment, and "the feminine." Beginning from these diverse perspectives, these radical ecological philosophies attribute social and political conflicts and contradictions to different origins, however, they all recognize the "ecological crisis" as a fundamental contemporary problem, and "nature" as a central analytical category. These analyses of existing structures of domination, exploitation and destruction have led to corresponding proposals for the reconstitution of the concept of subjectivity. The respective understandings by these philosophies of the relationship of a transformed subjectivity to "nature" serve as the basis for new value systems with specific implications for ethical and political activity. Additionally, although not always explicitly acknowledged, this results in a reconstituted, specifically <u>political</u> subject, a necessary step in the transitional phase of any project seeking a "revolutionary" transformation of the existing social structure. What is required of critical social theory at this historical moment is an exploration of these attempts to constitute an "ecological subject," and the relation of the ecological subject to social transformation.

Ecology and Methodology

One crucial aspect of any critique of the philosophical currents of radical ecology is that of

methodology. Methodology, and epistemology, have been a primary concern in all attempts to develop an adequate philosophical understanding of present historical/ecological conditions. One example is the deep ecologists' methodology-based distinction between "deep" and "shallow" ecology. The deep ecology method was first suggested by Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, but most succinctly explained by deep ecologist/ecophilosopher Warwick Fox, "This sense of deep ecology is predicated upon the idea of asking progressively deeper questions about the ecological relationships of which we are a part. Naess holds that this deep questioning process ultimately reveals bedrock or end-of-the-line assumptions, which he refers to as fundamentals, and that deep ecological views are derived from such fundamentals while shallow ecological views are not."[4]

Social ecology also is based on a specific methodological approach, what Murray Bookchin calls a way of "thinking ecologically" which develops through "dialectical naturalism." This is his idiosyncratic appropriation of Hegel's dialectical method loosely combined with the theory of evolution: "Conceived as a naturalistic form of thinking--as dialectical naturalism--dialectics may be distinguished from Hegel's empyrean, basically anti-naturalistic dialectical idealism and the wooden often scientistic dialectical materialism of orthodox Marxists."[5]

Feminism has always viewed as problematic the relationship between epistemology, ontology and methodology, and this has carried over into ecofeminism. Early ecofeminist arguments frequently developed out of anthropological research into prehistoric societies. It has been extensively argued that these societies were at least matrilineal, if not fully matriarchal. Assertions about these (perhaps) goddess worshipping societies have been the basis for (re)establishment of some contemporary goddess religions and the subsequent development of elaborate rituals and myths. Ecofeminist concepts and theories have now moved beyond a direct association with goddess religions, but these origins still form an important component of many ecofeminist practices, and continue to attract much criticism. Although self-identified ecofeminists have recently introduced other theoretical perspectives, drawn from the larger feminist context, (including the tradition of critical theory), ritual and myth as methods of "woman's knowing" remain at the heart of much of ecofeminist philosophy, and its critique. Of course the concepts of myth and mimesis were also important in the work of the first generation critical theorists. It is even arguable that the relationship of reason to myth and mimesis is the very heart of Adorno's work, including the early collaboration with Horkheimer on the pivotal text of the Frankfurt School, Dialectic of Enlightenment.[6] It is clear from

this brief overview of radical ecology that questions of philosophical method, of interpretation and representation, will be at the heart of any critique of philosophical ecology.

Questions of philosophic method were also very much in the forefront of Theodore Adorno's work. Adorno of all the critical theorists was perhaps most scrupulous in his attention to philosophic method. Adorno, not uncritically, borrowed the form of the "constellation" from Walter Benjamin.[7] The philosophic constellation, a configuration of concepts "near" the object, is assembled to reveal what is normally concealed when concept and object are simply equated as they are in various forms of the "correspondence" theory of knowledge. Correspondence, or philosophical identification of concept with object, repeats the process of false reconciliation of humans and nature characteristic of idealism and positivism. A fundamental tenet of dialectics is that the object is not simply a thing but has a history of development and is always caught-up in this process. The manner of representing this process marks the differences between Hegel, Marx and their philosophical descendants, including the early critical theorists.

Adorno's critical theory most consistently attempts to sustain the tension between concept and object, avoiding a false identification or reconciliation, thereby creating a space for critical reflection. At its creative

best this results in the simultaneous development of dialectical method and awareness of possibilities for achieving critical or autonomous subjectivity. The ecology movement has, at its best, also attempted to incorporate the idea of self-development into its political practice. It may be philosophically and politically fruitful at this historical moment to attempt to bring these two streams of social theory, critical theory and the philosophies of radical ecology, together in the context of their common, self-developing, and emancipatory project. Adorno's employment of philosophic constellations to illuminate relationships of ongoing importance to Western philosophy (such as those between concept and object, subject and object, humans and nature, and so on), will be re-presented and developed throughout this work. However, some initial indications of Adorno's understanding of "negative dialectics" or "non-identity thinking" will emphasize the issues surrounding the concept of subjectivity: "Cognition of the object in its constellation is cognition of the process stored in the object. As a constellation, theoretical thought circles the concept it would like to unseal, hoping that it may fly open like the lock of a well guarded safe-deposit box: in response, not to a single key or a single number, but to a combination of numbers."[8]

Adorno's representation of the "constellation" in this example may seem overburdened with metaphors of

things and mathematics which might indicate the absence of subjectivity. But this is only one moment in the constellation's formation. He also emphasizes the objectivity of the subjective dimension elsewhere: "The subjectively created context--the 'constellation'--becomes readable as a sign of an objectivity: of the spiritual substance. What resembles writing in such constellations is the conversion into objectivity, by way of language, of what has been subjectively thought and assembled."[9]

Ecological Subjectivity and Green Politics

Two fundamental problems have continued to haunt the ecology movement. First, there continues to be a "fundamentalist versus realist" conflict, most publicly evident in the decade of the 1980s among the West German Greens, but also affecting the U.S. green movement. Fundamentalists tend to distance themselves from electoral politics because they believe politics is "part of the problem not the solution." Electoral politics, it is argued, reinforces the prevailing tendencies toward the acquisition and accumulation of various forms of power which are then used in the domination and exploitation of both humans and non-human nature. These "fundis" argue that any involvement with electoral politics inevitably results in contamination of principles and cooptation into the existing system, and therefore inadvertently legitimates domination and exploitation. Realists on the

other hand, in Germany the "realos," argue that some participation in electoral politics is strategically necessary and tactically beneficial. Participation in electoral politics, they contend, lends legitimacy to the Green Movement as well as being necessary for the transition to an ecologically sound society. In the U.S. this factionalization has been characterized as "municipalism" versus "Statism" by the social ecologists who come from a fundamentally anarchist tradition.

The second green political problem concerns the question of diversity within the movement and the compatibility between philosophies. Questions of difference and commonality, unity and diversity, are frequently dismissed or avoided within the radical ecology literature by claiming that benefits and strengths may be obtained through a tolerant eclecticism. Specifically and most explicitly, deep ecology tends to pride itself on its belief in the possibility of "many paths up the mountain." At the political level this becomes an argument for and about the structure and meaning of "pluralism." What must be questioned about this "deep" understanding of political pluralism and philosophical eclecticism is the assumption of a unitary, transcendent, or metaphysical meaning accompanying the journey of individuals toward self-understanding. Are the various philosophical and spiritual traditions in fact aiming at a common understanding, or are there important differences, generating not creative

tension but philosophical contradiction and political conflict? This question indicates a need to address the possibility of philosophical contradiction beyond simple adoption of a laissez faire attitude. The acceptance of eclecticism by deep ecology has been viewed by its critics as relativist, subjectivist, and nihilistic at best, and, at worst, as one more manifestation of its alleged fundamentally fascist tendencies. At a practical level, radical ecology's philosophical eclecticism and pluralist politics conflicts with the green ideal of consensus decision-making. This has been a continuing stumbling block for the U.S. green movement.[10]

Intentions

The basic structure of this work will be to take three major areas of radical ecology (deep ecology, social ecology, and ecofeminism) and examine them in turn. This will occur first, on the basis of their methodology, then on the resulting explicit or implied understanding of subjectivity, and finally, with respect to their views of the possibilities for social and political transformation generated from a reconstituted subjectivity. The common direction of this radical ecological project can be viewed as an attempt to establish a new "ecological subject." If the project is to be philosophically and politically coherent, its critical or theoretical configuration should anticipate (as well as be informed by) its political

content. Manifestation of actual social and political means of transforming society should be consistent with the idea of the ecological subject, and the ecological subject must be theoretically adequate to meet the challenges of social transformation. The ecology movement's actual political practice has included a method for representing the various aspects of items under consideration by the group concerned. This practice is what has generally become known as the process of consensus (or "consensus-seeking"). This is simultaneously a decision-making process, a means of community building, and, as leading practitioner Caroline Estes believes, "It is unifying, it is sharing, it is caring, it is non-dominant, it is empowering."[11] The processes of consensus-seeking, and philosophic representation through constellations, have an important similarity: the attainment of their emancipatory goals can only come about through a recognition of differences.[12] Estes: "Built into the consensual process is the belief that all persons have some part of the truth...and that we will reach a better decision by putting all of the pieces of the truth together before proceeding. There are indeed times when it appears that two pieces of the truth are in contradiction to each other, but with clear thinking and attention, the whole may be perceived which includes both pieces, or many pieces."[13] Although unlikely to frame the position in the same terms, due to his opposition to the

totalization of thought and its political counterparts, whether in the form of fascism, Stalinism, or mass culture, Adorno too had moments when there existed hope of reconciliation: "Utopia would be above identity and above contradiction; it would be a togetherness of diversity....The idea of a changed philosophy would be to become aware of likeness by defining it as that which is unlike itself."[14]

Adorno's concern for the relation of aesthetics and critical thought had an impact on his beliefs about the relationship of form and content, revealing itself in his own philosophical works in the question of style. In Minima Moralia Adorno elucidates the attributes of the properly written philosophic text, where the text's basic soundness can be judged by "whether it causes one quotation to summon another."[15] He explains that the philosophic text should resemble a spider's web, the spinning/weaving activity anticipating its object. Thought is then nourished on the objects opened by the illumination of philosophic conception. The unfolding of the object imparts vibrations to other objects hovering nearby, generating resonances which enrich experience.

A sympathy for the arachnid perspective, its sensitivity to the movements of the objects of its experience, is one motivation for this work.

ENDNOTES

1. There seems to be an ongoing attempt among commentators and theorists to coin new terms for categorizing the "green movement." This work will attempt to distinguish between the more mainstream "environmentalists" on the one hand, and the more fundamentally system challenging "radical ecologists" on the other. Instead of adopting recent neologisms or inventing ones of my own, I will try to refer to those who are attempting to change the existing ecological relationships between the human species and non-human nature as radical ecologists. These attempts are "philosophical" justifications for radical ecology. These philosophical efforts aim at more than the simple integration of the knowledge gained from ecological science into existing frameworks of social and political thought, they consciously attempt to justify a fundamental transformation of social and political structures as a necessary link to changed ecological relationships.

2. Marcuse, Herbert, "Protosocialism and Late Capitalism," Rudolf Bahro: Critical Responses, Ulf Wolter, Ed. (New York: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 1980), p. 25. Marcuse's comments were written for the November, 1978 "International Congress on and for Rudolf Bahro."

3. Marcuse, p. 26.

4. Fox, Warwick, Toward a Transpersonal Ecology (Boston: Shambhala, 1990), p. 92.

5. Bookchin, Murray, The Philosophy of Social Ecology (New York: Black Rose Books, 1990), p. 16.

6. Horkheimer, Max and Theodor W. Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1987). Works which include discussions of the importance of "myth" and "mimesis" in the thought of the early Frankfurt theorists include: Jurgen Habermas, The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity, Frederick G. Lawrence, Trans. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992); Susan Buck-Morss, The Origin of Negative Dialectics (New York: The Free Press, 1977), p.90-95; Lambert Zuidervaart, Adorno's Aesthetic Theory (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1993); Fredric Jameson, Late Marxism: Adorno, or, the

Persistence of the Dialectic (London and New York: Verso, 1990); Martin Jay, Adorno (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1984).

7. Buck-Morss, Susan, The Origin of Negative Dialectics, p. 90-95.

8. Adorno, Theodor W., Negative Dialectics, E. B. Ashton, Trans. (New York: Continuum, 1987), p. 163.

9. Adorno, p. 165.

10. Rensenbrink, John, The Greens and the Politics of Transformation (San Pedro: R.&E. Miles, 1992).

11. Plant, Judith and Christopher Plant, Eds., Turtle Talk (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1990), p. 100.

12. The idea of "consensus" has become central to Habermas's thought, specifically in relation to his concept of the "ideal speech situation." The U.S. Greens were preoccupied with the role of consensus decision-making through many years of their early efforts. John Rensenbrink discusses this debate in The Greens, see especially p. 202ff. For an extended discussion of the idea of consensus in Habermas's work see Thomas McCarthy, Ideals and Illusions (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1993), especially Chapter 7, "Practical Discourse: On the Relation of Morality to Politics."

13. Home! A Bioregional Reader, Van Andruss, et al., Eds. (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1990), p. 165.

14. Adorno, p. 150.

15. Adorno, Theodor, Minima Moralia (London: NLB, 1974), p. 87.

PART I.
CRITICAL THEORY MEETS THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

CHAPTER 1

CRITICAL THEORY AND THE ECOLOGY MOVEMENT

The historical relationship between critical theory and philosophies of radical ecology was first staged with Herbert Marcuse's comments on Rudolf Bahro's work.[1] Bahro's personal, philosophical, and political journey is revealing not only for its establishment of contact between critical theory and the ecology movement, but also to emphasize the historical importance of attempts to theoretically reconstitute "subjectivity." Any green alternatives to existing society will be strongly affected by the manner in which subjectivity is theoretically reconstituted.

Marcuse extended Bahro's analysis in The Alternative of "actually existing socialism" of the mid-1970s to apply to "late capitalism" as well. Marcuse viewed Bahro's analysis as an internal development of Marxism, advancing Marxism's understanding of historical materialism by emphasizing subjectivity as a potential material force for transformative change. It might be argued of course that theorizing the "revolutionary subject" has been the primary concern of "Western Marxism" at least since Lukacs, and it was certainly part of the Frankfurt School's concerns, appearing in the form of an exploration of the absence or elimination of the revolutionary subject under Stalinism, fascism, and mass culture. However,

there are at least two objections to this view. First, Bahro's specific idea of "surplus consciousness" is not explicitly theorized by the early Frankfurt School. Secondly, most interpretations of Adorno's work, and much of Marcuse's, have emphasized the fundamental elimination of potential or actual revolutionary consciousness, when understood as an effective agent of historical change.[2]

Bahro and Marcuse argue that the key for understanding why a shift in Marxist categories is needed is the increasing "intellectualization" of labor. Developments in the production process have resulted in surplus consciousness, "an energetic mental capacity that is no longer absorbed by the immediate necessities and dangers of human existence and can thus orient itself to more distant problems."[3] Surplus consciousness, Bahro argues, is increasingly available for the transformation of subjectivity, from its egoistic characteristics within commodity culture into a configuration which creates the possibility that some individuals become consciously aware of a need to identify with and enhance the "emancipatory potential of the life instincts." Marcuse attempts to develop his own critical theory by appropriating Bahro's understanding of the proletariat, traditional Marxism's "collective subject" of historical transformation. A consequence of a changed revolutionary subject is a shift in the source of system crises which, although retaining the central problem identified by Marx, the accumulation

of capital based on the profit motive, now additionally includes ecological limits to the expansion of production. What must be explained by Marcuse and Bahro is the necessity for this fundamental shift of Marxist categories, and the simultaneous movement of both subjectivity and the ecological crisis (crises) to center stage in this revised critical theory.

Marcuse's analysis begins with the reevaluation of the relationship of the interests of the working-class to the general interests of humanity. Late capitalism's capacity to compensate labor sufficiently to limit the more radical demands for satisfaction of "emancipatory interests" is viewed by Marcuse as "the central historical problem of revolutionary theory in our time."[4] The availability of a nearly infinite variety of commodities in the forms of material goods, and the status symbols of career and conspicuous consumption, work against a potentially revolutionary subject's radicalization of needs. There is no revolutionary demand for "happiness and gratification" because consumer culture is able to compensate for this loss.

The historical development of the system of production has required an increasing shift of labor to its subjective component, but it is in the realm of subjectivity that emancipatory needs eventually develop to a level where they may potentially exceed the system's capacity for compensation. Surplus consciousness develops

in all strata of society as the productivity of the system reduces the intensity of struggle for mere existence. Bahro argued that there develops a "dim awareness" throughout society of a more gratifying alternative to commodity culture. This dim awareness is brought more fully to consciousness by what Marcuse labels catalyst groups, including "the student movement, women's liberation, citizen's initiatives, concerned scientists, etc."[5]

Even though "surplus consciousness" is available at all levels of society, Bahro identified the "intelligentsia" as the potentially revolutionary subject in the "actually existing socialism" of the late 1970s. Marcuse elaborates on this point from the context of late capitalism, listing two reasons for the leading role of the intellectuals. First, "knowledge is power." Increasing intellectualization of the production process results in the increasing importance of the "intellectualized strata." Second, the compensatory interests of this segment of production cease to be of intense daily concern. In capitalist countries, intellectuals do not generally have as luxurious a life as other elites, however, they at least have the "privilege" of education; "Which can open the otherwise closed horizon of knowledge that transcends the existing state of things."[6] Due to the elitist structure of production under both socialism and capitalism, the privileged

position of the intellectual tends to be elitist as well. This helps explain Bahro's own elitism in The Alternative where he turns to a fundamentally Leninist position, advocating a vanguardist transformation of the actually existing socialisms of the mid-1970s.[7] Before continuing this saga which includes Bahro's later embrace, then abandonment, of the West German Greens, a further examination of Marcuse's analysis will help illuminate methodological and other theoretical implications for developing the critique of existing society.

Marcuse's Analysis

Marcuse asks, is it still possible to develop a theory of revolution, one more suited to the conditions of late capitalism? He answers that theory requires a fundamental revision of traditional Marxism's concept of class. Marcuse enumerates the components of Marx's theory of the proletariat, the class of potentially revolutionary consciousness, the revolutionary subject. Marcuse first emphasizes the non-identity between the "proletariat" and the "working-class." The working-class of late capitalism generally is not in the condition of extreme immiseration described in detail by Marx in the mid-19th century. Neither is the working-class, defined as those individuals in immediate or direct engagement in the process of material (object) production, any longer a majority of the population. Marcuse claims the traditional definition of

the worker is part of an untenable reduction of the category of labor, the identification of "labor" with manual labor. Intellectual labor under late capitalism remains in the same essential relationship to production as manual labor. White-collar workers, salaried employees and those who are "unproductive" are working-class to the extent "they do not share decision-making power over the means of production."[8]

Marcuse (and Bahro) argued for a broadening of the concept of class so that it includes all strata of the production process without fundamental decision-making power over production. How can the concept "class consciousness" then be revived? Marcuse has to this point only reestablished the identification of the proletariat with the majority of the population; this "collective worker" has the characteristics of "the people" rather than that of a class, and a fundamental historical problem with this formulation is that popular consciousness tends to be characterized by "conservatism and fascism."[9] Revolutionary subjectivity, Marcuse argues, is not that of a particular class as traditionally defined (the industrial proletariat), but is the "consciousness of individuals from different strata."[10] Potentially, these individuals may recognize their common interest and constitute a unified "collective intellectual", which was present (in 1978) as unorganized groups and movements.

It is at this point that Marcuse discusses the relation of subjectivity to what Bahro called surplus consciousness. In addition to surplus consciousness, Marcuse asserts that the other component of subjectivity is that of emotions, or "instinctual structure." Although surplus consciousness is the basis for the potential development of a radical critique of existing society and an understanding of how present conditions can be changed, this conscious understanding can be bought-off (compensated) before radical consciousness is translated into transformative action. The emancipatory interests of the subject, Marcuse argues, are a vital need "anchored in the instinctual structure of the individual." Here, where the analysis deals with the "life instincts" is where crucial differences between the two theorists' positions begin to appear and where possibilities emerge for further theoretical development, through an alternative, reconceptualized relation between subjectivity and nature.

Marcuse's subsequent comments on Bahro are essentially a recapitulation of the primary arguments in Eros and Civilization.[11] He argues that emancipation as a socio-historical process is linked to subjectivity and its "erotic basis." He distinguishes Eros from sexuality and sexual liberation which have been used in the form of "repressive desublimation" to reinforce class society. Eros, or the life instincts, borrowing from Freud, are the counterpart to the instincts of destruction. Eros drives

for "emancipation from socially determined surplus repression, for gratification and intensification of the life instincts."[12] For the full unfolding of the life instincts, liberation from capitalism, the performance (reality) principle, is necessary, that is, realization of the life instincts requires revolution. Nature, according to Marcuse, demands liberation in both its internal and external aspects, both subjectively and objectively. He is hesitant to accept a natural physical limit to capitalism; "The kind of nature that is suitable to capitalism may very well turn out to be an insurmountable limit of capital."[13] Here he speaks of an "unmastered residue" that might possibly block further capitalist development. These comments on the "natural limits to capitalism" are not couched in terms of wilderness, rivers, or animal species, but in the terms of Nature as "counter-image" to capitalist production processes. What primarily concerns Marcuse here are the "psychological roots" of the ecology movement; "Nature, experienced as the domain of happiness, fulfillment, and gratification, is the environment of Eros--the antithesis of the performance principle applied to nature."[14] He also links the performance principle to patriarchal domination, a gesture that begins to incorporate the women's movement into the analysis as well. For Marcuse it is the instinctual structure, specifically Eros, that grounds the potential for transformed consciousness.

It is also within this nexus of relationships, between economics, nature, feminism and life, that philosophies of radical ecology in their various contemporary forms attempt to elaborate a new concept of subjectivity. Marcuse's analysis helps establish an initial framework for evaluating the different theoretical positions which have been developed by deep ecology, social ecology, and ecofeminism. The ultimate ground for Marcuse's argument is personal experience, and it is the interpretation of that experience which provides the theoretical basis for transformative action: "The instinctual structure becomes emancipatory only in union with an emancipatory consciousness which defines the possibilities and limits of this realization and absorbs that which is merely instinctual into itself."[15] Marcuse rejects the assertion that emancipatory potential can be obtained through unmediated experience, and instead charges the "cult of immediacy" (which he associates with "escapist movements of the New Left") with being fundamentally reactionary. (This charge has recently been revived against the most politically active group of individuals who identify with the philosophy of deep ecology; Earth First!.) After forcefully stating the reactionary nature of political action based on immediate experience, Marcuse again addresses the process of capitalist domination and exploitation of both internal and external nature. If experience must be mediated to

prevent its reidentification with the logic of domination, where is revolutionary consciousness initially to be developed? The "social process of revolution" begins, Marcuse responds, with individuals for whom emancipation has become a "vital need." Marcuse contends that these individuals have already "advanced beyond the Ego."[16] This philosophical position requires a specific understanding of instinctual structure, the primary drives of Eros and destruction. Marcuse claims Eros and Thanatos "already imply other human beings." The instincts are always already more than individual experience, "they are drives of the individual, but of the individual as 'species being.'"[17] Marcuse's brief re-presentation of his previous works continues with the claim that the "journey inwards" (Bahro's expression) of the Ego will encounter others (society) and the Other (nature), not as limits to the Ego, but as "powers constitutive of it." Marcuse asserts that should the "journey inwards" stop at the "unmediated Ego" this Ego will return to the fetishism of the commodity world, a return to the given, the presently dominant, established culture. However, the initial <u>motivation</u> for the journey inward, the desire for immediate experience, comes from a "comprehending subjectivity that goes beyond the Ego."[18] The Ego trapped in capitalist society must rely on an unmediated experience of the life instincts in order to bring emancipatory interests to the level of conscious vital

need. Why is this not a tautological argument? How can experience occur <u>without</u> the mediation of the Ego which is formed in consumer society? How can experience unmediated by this Ego be called anything other than "immediate", and therefore, according to Marcuse's argument, be anything other than reactionary? Because, Marcuse claims, immediate experience is always already mediated by a "dimly aware" subjectivity which then uses experience as a "verifying criterion."[19]

Summarizing, Marcuse develops Bahro's idea of "surplus consciousness" (that which is not captured in commodity culture) a consciousness which makes available to the individual a dim awareness of the possibility of a different more gratifying existence. The reality of a possible alternative social existence is then confirmed in "immediate experience." A similar understanding of the structuring of experience occurs in traditions deep ecologists adopt as possible paths to an ecological consciousness. These alternative traditions are stated in very different, frequently religious, terms. (A similar turn to religious terminology is a surprising aspect of Bahro's later statements.) Marcuse's remaining analysis may help shed light on ecological activists' current strategies. He argues that the overwhelming power of the "established apparatus of domination," makes it necessary to turn scattered resistance into a virtue. The strategy of local and regional bases of rebellion is an

acknowledgment of the inability to centralize oppositional forces, but it is also a strategy that "anticipates the objective tendencies toward disintegration in the existing society."[20]

The Red and the Greens

Rudolf Bahro, in a 1980 introductory essay to a collection of his speeches and articles, attempts to present reasons for Marxist socialists to become Greens. At this stage, his thinking is still identifiable as more socialist than green by the direction of his reasoning, revealed in the initial question of why socialists should be green, rather than why greens should be socialists; "The ecology movement and the Green party are of such great importance for us because they act as a catalyst for a new political self-conception and practice on the part of the left."[21] This statement condenses many issues which have haunted the development of green politics throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s. What is the relation between "the Left" and green politics? How is the new political subject to be understood or reconstituted? What does it mean for the ecology movement to be a "catalyst?" How do ecological insights into the human-to-nature relationship challenge the assumptions of socialist theory? In 1980 Bahro, released from East German prison, moved to West Germany where he saw himself as something of a theoretical and political maverick,

although he maintained a leading role in West German Green Party politics. Initially he emphasized the tentative and schematic nature of his attempts to address the ecological crisis from a socialist perspective. Socialism and Survival originates in this transitional period which coincided with the emergence of the West German Green Party (Die Grunen).

The political atmosphere at the time was dominated by several important developments: the shift to the right in the West with the elections of Thatcher, Reagan and Kohl; the prospects of the Soviets going to a launch-on-warning system in response to the introduction of Pershing II and cruise missiles into West Germany; and the increasing political activism of the "new social movements." It was from this background that Bahro explained the position of the ecology movement relative to general social change and to the rethinking of socialist politics: "The different currents of this new social movement cannot be artificially separated. They merge at least partially into one another, since what they speak to in the individuals involved appears not in isolation, but in association. Often, the distinction is made only according to which motivation is decisive for the particular individual. The ecology movement seems to bring together the greatest number of motivations, adding them together and tending to integrate them."[22]

This indicates not only a recognition of the historical importance of the new social movements for a transformational politics, but also the centrality of ecology to that politics. Bahro also emphasizes the importance of personal, individual motivation for transformative political action. These observations place the efforts toward a fuller theoretical understanding of the relation between subjectivity and ecology high on the agenda of the contemporary debate over the possibilities of social and political resistance. Bahro's analysis of the relationship between socialism and the ecology movement was initially presented in an economisticly oriented language not significantly different from that which might be used by any capitalist of enlightened self-interest, a language radical ecologists label "reform environmentalism." This reform position is the simple recognition that, "If the whole enterprise of expanding industrial production is continued...we shall be faced at the end of the day with a production machine that is grinding to a halt for want of supplies of materials, yet without whose operation the given population cannot be maintained."[23] This is an expression of the basic understanding of the limits to growth which result from physical (un)availability of production materials, the increase in world population, and the ever increasing level of commodity consumption. Bahro's solution, like many others, is partly based on a theory of basic needs,

which he contends are "quite reliably ascertained by anthropology."[24] It is here in a theory of needs that economics and ecology confront each other directly, and where a reconstituted ecological subject might contribute a new perspective on "needs."

Bahro, when speaking from the Marxist-socialist tradition, addressed the confrontation between economics and ecology in terms of working-class interests, but he later argued that the working-class perspective should be transcended in order to establish a new basis for analysis and action. It was Bahro's repeated return to the centrality of the ecological crisis that transformed his analysis of working-class interests into an analysis of general human interests. Bahro converts from red to green when he states, "Yet ecology, this concept that originally denoted 'only' a discipline in natural science, refers in the present connection to human interests, and interests of humanity, that strike deep into the social space, and in this comprehensive sense it precedes and goes beyond economics."[25] Bahro again, but more radically, rejects the traditional analysis that identifies working-class interests with the revolutionary subject, the site for Marxists of the theoretical and practical resolution of social contradictions. This theoretical shift has practical political implications; "The organizing factor which can bring the alternative forces together and give them a social coordination (as must be desired) will in

the future not be any particular interest, but rather a long-term human interest."[26] With this Bahro redefines "universal interest" and his Marxism must be rethought: "What is really radical is to think from the standpoint of the interests of humanity as a whole....Here it is apparent that the ecological position is also the radical socialist one. To sketch out a project for this, a counter-project to the blind calculation that prevails in the system of power, is equally in the general interest and in our own personal interest, i.e. it is also our own most basic concern."[27]

Catching the Green Spirit

Bahro makes some interesting and surprising initial attempts at conceptualizing the ecological subject. His theoretical development after his move to West Germany seems at first to take Marcuse's work as its point of departure. He rejects Marcuse's "one-dimensionality pessimism" and contends that there still exist "free energies" which alternative movements can tap. The question of the subject again arises in the context of the production system, here involving the physical constraints preventing substitution of commodities for individual identity. Bahro believes it may be possible for industrialization to continue to intensify but it will bring with it added threats to species survival. Bahro comes to believe the tendencies of domination were not

initiated in social but rather in "natural" history. Bahro states that there seems to be a general tendency toward self-destruction; its modern universal form--"exterminism."[28] He argues that human beings must overcome what he claims is the primary biological-evolutionary tendency of our species; acquiring knowledge for the mastery of external nature. His solution: the human species must oppose its own evolutionary tendency with a counterforce capable of reconstruction or demolition of "enchaining structures, for their disintegration, even for an exodus from them."[29] Bahro nominates the human "genotype" as the opposing force. What does he mean by "genotype"? "As I see it, the genotype is that social power present in every human being which the old prophets always evoked under the name God."[30] Bahro seems to argue, on the one hand that the human species' basic characteristic is a tendency to dominate nature, but, on the other hand, there is also an inherent tendency to preserve life through social knowledge. He is calling for a conscious <u>shift of emphasis</u> in what he believes to be the basic biological predispositions of the human species.

However unresolvably contradictory these "genetic" statements may be, from the early 1980s forward Bahro's statements are increasingly couched in religious terminology. The philosophical implications of this turn are captured in his explanation of the "God genotype":

"The place of God is where the development needs of our original nature converge, above all of course an inward place."[31] With this turn, Bahro abandons all traditional Marxist conceptualization, claiming Marx was "not materialist enough." Marx did not understand that "beneath" human consciousness is "human nature as a whole," and beneath that "nature." Marx misunderstood nature, viewing it as too passive. Alternatively, Bahro spiritualizes nature, leading him to conclude, "history is primarily psychodynamic." This means that now the basic transformative goal is the overcoming of that aspect of human nature which has "an aggressive warlike quality."[32] The means to overcome human nature, Bahro now believes, is the institutionalization of the insights of the inward journey of those like "Buddha and Christ." He disavows his work in The Alternative because, "In essence my concept of emancipation was then still located within the framework of the Enlightenment, with its emphasis on the communal appropriation of totality for the full development of individuality."[33] Bahro believes his earlier writing was "not the development of theory but the reconstruction of the Gospel."[34] The Gospel, he says ambiguously, in this case was East German Marxism. Bahro can no longer be a Marxist, he says, because to be a Marxist in the West means "to assent to the fact that a definite political-theoretical conception has been firmly established and still requires firm adherence."[35] He

instead identifies himself as a populist utopian socialist, although he intends to continue to appropriate "particular elements of Marxism," but no longer the "overall structure." He confesses to a "regression" in his thinking, indicating this is due to "the objective situation itself."[36] He understands his contribution to social change to be his shift of emphasis toward "the prophetic level," toward the "transformation of subjectivity" not only individually, but with a political goal. The development of humanity will consist of "an inward journey rather than external expansion." The political aim is "the 'reconstruction of God'...the recreation of spiritual equilibrium, within those levels of nature neglected by Marx where human consciousness comes into contact with the external world."[37]

In the early 1980s, Bahro claimed he could participate in Green Party activities because the Greens were "a grouping beyond the anti-religious Enlightenment."[38] Following his conversion, Bahro's new prescription for social organization has been small self-sufficient communes (usually no more than about 3000, no less than 100 people) that provide basic physical and social needs. This requires a change in values "such as can only succeed through what up till now has been described as religious experience."[39] In an apocalyptic tone he observes that coming changes will be greater than all other historic change. He is concerned that the

resistance to this spiritual change is too great at the present: "Probably we need, in order to lower the threshold of inhibition, a 'materialist' concept of God (which besides I do consider possible). The individual departure to God--to regaining one's original self, to experiencing unity with the Whole--and the collective departure into the kingdom of God (it has historically many names) are two sides of one and the same thing, which in the final analysis only go together."[40] After having aided the early development and success of the West German Green Party in 1980, in December 1984, on the occasion of an address to a Greens convention, Bahro compared the Greens to the Nazis, at which point he was marginalized within the Party as "an eccentric and troublesome one-man band."[41] In the spring of 1985 he resigned from the Greens, ostensibly for their parliamentary vote supporting a bill allowing the use of animals for medical research.

Critical/Ecological Methods

The explication of the philosophic journey of Rudolf Bahro was not performed as a definitive statement of radical ecology, green politics, or any corresponding understanding of subjectivity, but as a representation of those aspects of radical ecology that have become problematic for the green movement generally, and for the various philosophies of radical ecology to be examined here. Bahro's statements are an indication of the

insightful but problematic nature of much of radical ecological philosophy. Fundamental to all of these theoretical developments are the Western philosophic tradition's concerns with the relations between human beings and non-human nature and the relevance of this relationship for interpreting history. Within the Marxist tradition this has been expressed in the various attempts to develop the concept of historical materialism. Western philosophy's concerns with history, nature, and human nature have been stated predominantly through a dichotomous conceptual framework in which one term obtains a hierarchically superior status. This "bipolarity" can be observed in the philosophic treatment of, for example, the following paired concepts: subject/object, self/other, mind/nature, spirit/matter, masculine/feminine, man/woman, human/animal, and so forth. The Western philosophical tradition's fullest self-reflexive development and critique of these structures occurred in the texts of Hegel and Marx and their philosophical descendants. This "dialectic" tradition achieved its most advanced development through its immanent criticism in the work of Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse.

Habermas and the Ecology Movement

Marcuse's comments on Bahro were made in 1978. After Marcuse's death in 1979 a new generation of critical theorists would have to address the problems generated

from within critical theory and those resulting from ecological crises. The generally recognized successor to Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse is Jurgen Habermas, although his position relative to the first generation critical theorists is not unproblematic.[42] Habermas has reformulated much of the work of the early theorists and while doing so also directly addressed the philosophical basis of the ecology movement, prompting responses both from other critical theorists and from radical ecology philosophers.[43] One of the significant difference's between Habermas and earlier participants in the tradition of critical theory is revealed in his position on the relationship of the human species to external nature.

Thomas McCarthy wrote what is still the best introduction to Habermas, and has also translated some of Habermas's major works.[44] McCarthy's extensive work includes persistent criticisms of Habermas, original insights, and useful summaries of other critics' work. Examining the various criticisms will permit an update of the relationship between critical theory and the ecology movement first established in the Bahro-Marcuse encounter. These criticisms also illuminate the inadequacies of Habermas's version of critical theory for addressing the ecology crisis. Habermas's turn to a "communicative" or "discourse" ethic may have cost critical theory much more than was gained. After examining the adequacy of the Habermasian version of critical theory the question will

remain whether elements of the tradition of critical theory can be reclaimed and reconstructed to form a new framework, one able to combine insights from both critical theory and the ecology movement. Most importantly it can be asked if a new conception of revolutionary subjectivity, a new ecological subject, can take on the tasks of social transformation without succumbing to the power of the given, the system of domination. Can the ecological subject resist given society and liberate the potentials for an ecological future, or are all attempts to transform existing society to something qualitatively different fated from the outset to be consumed by the machinery of domination, exploitation and oppression?

Critical theory in the hands of Habermas has been radically transformed, the focus of its concerns fundamentally shifted. In the context of the attempt to develop the perspective or standpoint of an ecological subject, three especially important aspects of Habermas's transformation of critical theory can be identified. First, and most fundamentally, is the question of the shift in methodology by Habermas, which results in a "dualistic" theory. Habermas's position terminates in a philosophical position that denies the possibilities of acquiring "knowledge" of nature in any other manner than "instrumentally."

Second, Habermas views the "new social movements," except for feminism (although it is not clear which

feminism is being referred to here), as "defensive" movements, that is, they do not have the character of progressivism he attributes to early bourgeois and later labor movements. As a defensive movement the ecology movement, as well as alternative and countercultural movements, are viewed as primarily defending earlier ways of life against various threats, specifically, the economic and administrative "colonization of the lifeworld."[45]

Third, as a further consequence of Habermas's methodological changes, the connection with possible ecological themes can only occur indirectly via an idiosyncratic understanding of the democratic possibilities opened under communicative or discourse ethics. This connection between radical ecological and radical democratic positions is not made explicitly by Habermas himself, but has been attempted by some of his followers. It can be shown that these three aspects of Habermas's version of critical theory (the necessarily instrumental relationship to nature; the characterization of the ecology movement as defensive; and the availability of only indirect possibilities for relating critical theory to ecological concerns) make this an inadequate and unsuitable point of departure for developing a conception of an ecological subject with liberatory potentials. The alternative to Habermas is a return to the concerns of the earlier Frankfurt theorists, particularly those of Theodor

Adorno, which provide a more fruitful and adequate basis for conceptualizing an ecological subject.

Knowledge of Nature

Habermas has repeatedly claimed that the only relationship between humans and nature which yields "knowledge" is an instrumental relationship.[46] He believes nature must be viewed as an object for the potential benefit of humans if the relationship is to yield information beneficial for the self-preservation of the human species. He claims this is an anthropologically necessary relationship. Other "attitudes" may be adopted toward nature, but they will not yield knowledge that allows the human species to "progress" at the level at which modern science or "morality" has progressed.[47] In response to criticisms of this position, he replies; "While we can indeed adopt a performative attitude to external nature, enter into communicative relations with it, have aesthetic experiences and feelings analogous to morality with respect to it, there is for this domain of reality only one <u>theoretically fruitful</u> attitude, namely the objectivating attitude of the natural-scientific, experimenting observer."[48]

This position is largely a result of Habermas's adoption of a fundamentally Kantian framework which seeks the transcendental or quasi-transcendental conditions which form the basis of knowledge. Habermas does attempt

to shift the transcendental argument from its idealist origins to a materialism that responds to Marx. This fundamental shift away from the problematics of the early Frankfurt theorists', who relied on a largely Hegelian-Marxist analysis of society, is also at the heart of Habermas's rejection of much of the earlier work of Marcuse and Adorno specifically.[49] This transformation of critical theory's concerns is especially evident as it relates to the early theorists central concept of the domination of nature and their attempts to conceptualize the possibilities for a "reconciliation" with nature. These issues are also central to the ecology movement and any attempt to develop a philosophically adequate concept of ecological subjectivity.

McCarthy has sustained his criticism of this aspect of Habermas's work for nearly two decades now. McCarthy summarized his argument against Habermas's instrumentalist view of possible theoretically fruitful relations to nature in the work Ideals and Illusion.[50] The two fundamental criticisms Habermas attempts to assert against the early Frankfurt theorists are: (1) any attempt to develop a "philosophy of nature" will necessarily be unable to provide knowledge at the level of modern science; (2) any attempt to articulate a perspective of reconciliation with nature inevitably leads back to metaphysics.[51] McCarthy's early critique of Habermas's conception of cognitive possibilities, in the context of

an analysis of Knowledge and Human Interests, claims Habermas's understanding of "cognition" and "knowledge" requires a more explicit defense than was made at that time. On what grounds could such "attitudes" toward nature as the mimetic, poetic, playful, mystical or fraternal be denied "cognitive content"?[52] Habermas's response in later works was to attempt to define the meaning of the "progress of knowledge." He cited the example of modern science as providing the only adequate progressive attitude toward external nature.[53] McCarthy's response was that one can imagine alternative attitudes toward nature that at least complement our understanding of nature, for this his example comes from Habermas's own philosophical backyard in the form of Kant's "Critique of Teleological Judgment." McCarthy uses this example to dispute Habermas's claim that a philosophy of nature would necessarily revert to a form of metaphysics that would claim "a validity independent of and prior to science, that is, the form of an Ursprungsphilosophie."[54]

Ecocentric theorist Robyn Eckersley has also challenged Habermas on the assertion of the "progressive" aspects of modern science. She gives counter examples; "The farming and fishing techniques of many traditional cultures are often more 'efficacious' from a long term point of view than the modern agricultural, forestry, and fishing techniques that have so often replaced such traditional techniques."[55]

There is also an abandonment, in Habermas's formulation of critical theory, of the dialectical perspective of the subject-to-object or history-to-nature relationships that motivated the earlier Frankfurt School. As Henning Ottmann notes in his criticism of Habermas's position, "A will to control, whose legitimacy is based upon our need to survive and which is itself a threat to our survival, becomes dialectical. The technical interest in mastery over nature encounters nature taking revenge upon the boundlessness of the will to control."[56]

Combined, these criticisms can be viewed as a fundamental challenge to Habermas's assertions about the necessity of an instrumental relationship to external nature, and the progressivity of modern science. There are at least complementary attitudes toward nature that can yield "fruitful" results that go beyond reliance on "science" as the sole productive or "cognitively fruitful" means for interacting with nature. In the contemporary context this is more than simply one among other criticisms of Habermas's version of critical theory. It obtains the status of a fundamental challenge when the ecological crisis has assumed such enormous implications for the modern way of life. This form of crisis may threaten society's continued existence, and it certainly threatens the existence of other natural species, as well as the basic integrity of the planet's ecology. At minimum these criticisms indicate the responsibility of

the social theorist to investigate the question of whether, "It is possible to envision a philosophy of nature constructed after the transcendental turn as a nonfoundationalist, fallibilistic attempt to conceive of nature as a natura naturans that gave rise to, among other things, a species capable of communicating in language and thereby of giving its intraspecific relations the form of a moral order. Of course, this attempt would have to be constantly renewed in the light of our historically changing scientific and moral experience."[57] This envisioning of a new "philosophy of nature" can be seen as the theme of the philosophies of radical ecology as reflected in the disparate attempts of deep ecology, social ecology, and ecofeminism. Various critics and commentators have been all too eager to conflate contemporary philosophical positions within the radical ecology movement with Romantic philosophies of nature, and nature idealism. One of the responsibilities of radical ecological theorists is to reveal the differences between those older philosophies of nature and contemporary philosophies of ecology.

It is not surprising that Habermas, given his position on the possibilities of cognitive relations to nature, does not see the ecology movement as residing within the categorial framework of the tradition of movements of liberation. He believes the ecology movement is more correctly understood through the categories of

early romantic and escapist movements, thus deserving classification as a "defensive movement." In his general discussion of the "new social movements" Habermas categorizes only the feminist movement as progressive: "I will differentiate emancipatory potentials from potentials for resistance and withdrawal. After the American civil rights movement--which has since issued in a particularistic self-affirmation of black subcultures--only the feminist movement stands in the tradition of bourgeois-socialist liberation movements. The struggle against patriarchal oppression and for the redemption of a promise that has long been anchored in the acknowledged universalistic foundations of morality and law gives feminism the impetus of an offensive movement, whereas the other movements have a more defensive character."[58]

It is understandable that Habermas would consider the ecology movement defensive if we look at his brief analysis of "Green problems."[59] He divides these problems into two categories, the first he labels "largely abstract," such as industrial destruction of ecological balance, scarcity of nonrenewable resources, and "demographic developments." Keeping with Habermas's basically social democratic (in the German context) leanings, he views the appropriate response to these perceived problems as a call for technical and economic solutions, "which must in turn be globally planned and carried out by administrative means."[60] The second area

of green problems make us aware of the "inflexible limits to the deprivation of sensual-aesthetic background needs."[61] These "aesthetic" problems are the degradation of the urban environment, despoilation of the countryside through housing developments, pollution, impairment of health, and so forth. These "aesthetic" problems generate a defensive reaction whereby groups try to restore or protect a previous way of life. Habermas briefly discusses attempts to theorize ways of addressing the assaults on the lifeworld, theories which result in proposals for alternative institutional structures to those of modern Western society. He basically dismisses these attempts and links alternative movements to philosophical antimodernism and neo-conservatism. The problem with the movements are, he asserts, that they confuse the "communicative rationality" of cultural modernity with the "functionalist rationality" of economic and administrative action systems, the systems guided by money and power. Speaking of those attempts to develop alternative institutional structures, he writes, "However unrealistic these ideas may be, they are important for the polemical significance of the new resistance and withdrawal movements reacting to the colonization of the lifeworld...(The confusion of lifeworld rationality with system complexity) explains the fronts--which are out of place and obscure the real political oppositions--between the antimodernism of the Young Conservatives and the new

conservative defense of postmodernity that robs a modernity at variance with itself of its rational content and its perspectives on the future."[62]

Habermas and Radical Ecology

Despite these seemingly unambiguous categorizations of the ecology or green movement, others have attempted to integrate Habermas's version of critical theory with a vision of ecological rationality. Early in his career Habermas recognized that ecological questions would be one source of crises for advanced industrial systems, "Ecological balance designates an absolute limit to growth."[63] He speculated on the possible forms of the manifestation of the encroachment of economic growth on ecological balance and rightly indicated the high level of empirical uncertainty about ecosystems and technological development, but even in the early 1970s he had recognized the danger of what is now called global warming. His summary of the issue was brief but allowed him to conclude, "Nevertheless, these reflections show that an exponential growth of population and production--that is, the expansion of control over outer nature--must some day run up against the limits of the biological capacity of the environment."[64]

Timothy Luke and Stephen White have taken these observations as there point of departure in an effort to develop their implications for a Habermasian version of a

critical theory of the global ecological crisis. However, even though their analysis of the developing "information society" is well presented, there is little persuasive argumentation for how this version of critical theory can adequately address the ecology crisis. They acknowledge that Habermas has not dealt in any detail with the ecology crisis or with the current transformations resulting from global capitalist restructuring. Their comments are a useful supplemental analysis of current capital developmental trends, and include implications for comprehending how global restructuring involves the production of the type of subject, in the form of client and consumer, now necessary for the reproduction of the mode of production. This cogent analysis of present production conditions however does not lead to a persuasive argument for combining Habermasian critical theory with the insights of radical ecology.

In Luke and White's view, a shift in capitalism has occurred since the 1940s which may be represented as a gradual replacement of the centrality of industrial production with that of information production. They label this new form of production "informational capitalism."[65] The specificity of the analysis and its potential for illuminating the essential aspects of current capitalist restructuring make it compatible with, but more specific than, other recent attempts to characterize the present condition under various labels,

such as "post-industrialism," "post-modernism," "techno-capitalism," "the instrumental mode of symbolization," and so on.[66] Luke and White document the "informationalization" of capitalism since the second World War with a variety of statistics and examples, and attempt to show that this "qualitative shift" is still occurring. The shift has resulted in contradictions between two phases of industrial production. These contradictions in turn open opportunities for the emergence of an ecological transformation of society. They claim that U.S. transnational corporations have forged a transnational industrial regime since the 1940s using previously untapped natural resources, labor reserves, and consumer markets. In order to administer this truly global economy it was necessary to shift from an emphasis on traditional industrial production to informational-knowledge production activities. They claim an ironic effect of this shift in production has been the development of new interests by those who guide informational capital; the technical experts, managers, and professionals. These newly developing interests at least partially parallel the political agendas of ecological activists.[67]

Especially the U.S. economy, but also the Japanese and German economies are dominated by informationalized production of "words, images, and audio." The "informationalization" of agriculture and industry takes

place through biotechnology, genetic engineering, robotics, and computer assisted production generally. This conversion is not entirely frictionless however since it consumes vast amounts of capital, requiring the transforming corporations to endorse images and lifestyles they borrow from the alternative and ecology cultures. This results in corporate support for "voluntary simplicity," "frugality," "conspicuous conservation," "small is beautiful," and so on.[68] This corporate strategy creates a fundamental challenge for the green movement, the necessity of distinguishing its claims from the needs of capital restructuring.[69] Luke and White further claim that this capitalist transformation is also having the effect of restratifying the labor force along the lines of technical competence. Those who benefit from the restructuring, the experts, managers and professionals, are the crucial market for the new informationalized economy: those who are technologically incompetent are urged to follow the lead of the radical ecologists and become frugal and conserve resources. This necessary reduction in the material standard of living runs counter to the earlier consumerist ideology at the high point of industrial production. Restratification along lines of technological competence, claim Luke and White, "must also result in contradictions with many of the egalitarian-democratic myths underpinning mass electoral politics."[70]

The use Luke and White make of Habermas's idea of the "colonization of the everyday lifeworld" is of special interest in the present context, since the authors claim, "Through the production, circulation, and consumption of information, advanced corporate capital has directly modified the processes of cultural reproduction and identity formation in modern society."[71] This claim depends on a method of interpretation explicitly based on Habermas's work, but the same observations could be extracted from the work of virtually any of the critical theorists or even from most post-structuralist work. In fact, some of the assertions by the authors could be read as summaries of the early Frankfurt School studies of the "Culture Industry." These observations about the structure of advanced capitalism are not so important in themselves but are an indication of the continuation of effects identified more than a half century ago,

> Under corporate capitalism, all individuals qua consumers become capital assets. This mobilization of consumers through the colonization of their fragmentary consciousness directly boosts the productivity, profitability, and power of corporate capital's increasingly intensive, automated, and monopolistic industries....The first principle of this order is the fragmentation of consciousness through experts' definition and design of the lifeworld. In turn, consumers can exercise their "free choice" over the predesigned alternatives, which will deliver the need satisfactions required to fulfill their need definitions as they have been socialized under this colonizing regime to define them.[72]

Nearly the same claims were made by the earlier critical theorists, for example, by Adorno in Minima Moralia.[73] If the descriptive claims of the authors can be established through the perspective of critical theory generally, why should Habermas's schema be of special value, and what is the specific link between Habermas and radical ecology? Afterall, the observation that modern industrial society creates ecological crises is not unique to Habermas or critical theory.[74] There are two levels at which Habermas's efforts must be related to "green problems." First, supporters of Habermas must show the logical connection between his version of critical theory and a possible resolution of the ecological crisis. Second, at the practical or political level, the claims of the ecology or green movement as such must be shown to be compatible with Habermas's theory of communicative action.

The appropriateness of Habermas's theory for the ecology movement is questionable, as indicated in the observations above. How can his views of the ecology movement as "defensive," as a social movement of reaction and withdrawal, categorically related to what are generally viewed as primarily regressive, Romantic, and escapist movements, be squared with Luke and White's claims? They assert that "communicative ethics, when allied with the insights of radical ecology, can also help project the tentative outlines of an alternative model of modernity, which is both ecologically sound and more

democratic."[75] What exactly is the basis of this alliance other than temporal coincidence? Habermas's theory of communicative ethics is based on an analysis of social development and learning processes that drive the theory to claim the only fruitful relationship to nature is instrumental, and that democratic legitimacy is solely dependent on strict procedural qualifications. Radical ecologists are, nearly by definition, those who protest the instrumentalization of nature, and it is not clear whether the procedures of consensus-seeking used by some greens meet the abstract procedural standards of "discourse ethics."[76] Luke and White's interpretation of the compatibility of Habermas and radical ecology is not shared by many, neither from the perspective of radical ecology nor critical theory. One reviewer of one of the author's more recent works even labels it "a superficial interpretation of Habermas's treatment of new social movements."[77] But, contrary to the evidence, if we assume there is no a priori dismissal of the ecology movement by Habermas, how would his version of critical theory ally itself with the insights of radical ecological activists?

Logical Connections

In light of the earlier stated criticisms of Habermas's position that the instrumental mode of cognition alone produces knowledge with regard to external nature, it would seem to be questionable whether it is

possible to open a path between Habermas and radical ecology. McCarthy's criticisms, and many of the other relevant criticisms, were developed before the Luke and White article was published, so it is odd that these criticisms are not addressed. It must be assumed that the authors accept Habermas's response to the critics, especially on the relationship of knowledge to nature, as adequate.[78]

Since Habermas has not systematically dealt with either the issues of ecological crisis or the development of the informational economy, as the authors readily indicate, the extension of the theory of communicative action to the ecology movement must explicitly indicate the connections between them for the argument to be persuasive. Luke and White rely on two aspects of Habermas's theory to support their speculations on the possibility of an ecological continuation of modernity. First, the ecological crisis, although not entirely replacing Marx's analysis of capitalist crisis, is viewed as a potential threat to capitalist reproduction and therefore an impetus for transformation. Second, Habermas's theory of communicative rationality is used as a criterion to test the democratic potential of the radical ecology movement. Habermas seeks to maintain the differentiation of rationality into the "separate value spheres" which has taken place in "modernity." Habermas has argued that the fundamental problem of modernity is

the colonization of the moral and aesthetic-erotic spheres by an instrumental reason which should correctly be utilized only in relation to external nature. The different forms of rationality should be confined to their proper objects, or appropriate value spheres, reaching a "balance" with each other, instead of the present condition where the instrumental mode of rationalization has colonized the other spheres. The appropriate "balance" can be determined through the process of "coming to an understanding" governed by "validity claims" established through a philosophically proper understanding of the quasi-transcendental status of communicative ethics. Luke and White explain what they believe to be the potential of Habermasian critical theory,

> The increasing breakdown of the ecosystem, entailed by an infinitely expanding industrial civilization, may come to play a role as significant in reorienting human life as the one Marx felt the internal breakdown of capitalism would play. Ecological crises might function as the material catalyst for an economic and political transformation that could reverse the state-corporate colonization of the lifeworld and create forms of life in which the potential of modernity could be utilized in a more balanced fashion.[79]

It is the potential of modernity, in the form of a theory of communicative action, that followers of Habermas embrace. How do the positions of radical ecologists fit into this scheme? Is it even appropriate to use the term "radical ecologists" as if to imply the acceptance of a common self-understanding by those who use the term to

identify themselves? The two aspects of radical ecology Luke and White find compatible with communicative ethics are what would be labeled within the categories of the theory of communicative action as the "democratic" aspect and the "aesthetic" aspect. The democratic aspects of radical ecology (relevant in Habermas's scheme to the moral sphere of rationalization), are the activists' proposals for the institutionalization of participatory democracy, "Given the traditions and material level of Western industrialized societies, it is fair to say that the criteria of a communicative ethics would be met well by the sort of participatory and decentralized institutions proposed by radical ecologists."[80] This seems to be unproblematic as far as it goes, but there have been serious disagreements within both the German and U.S. Greens about what constitutes democratic procedures. This fact alone reveals a basis for the frequent criticism of Habermas's problematic and complex procedural understanding of communicative ethics.[81] What is to count as the "unforced force of the better argument" especially in the truly substantive context typical of radical ecological activity, where not only the competence of the participants is of importance but also where the necessities of time and historical circumstance must be considered? What is "unforced force" when the concrete interests and capacities to participate are themselves central issues? Are we not in fact always left with some

form of "compromise" except at the most abstract, analytical level?[82]

The authors, following Habermas, suggest that a balance between sphere's of rationality is the best that can be hoped for. Certainly it is unreasonable to hope for anything like a "reconciliation" with nature as was thought by the early critical theory, if this is understood as a sort of universal pacification. For the followers of Habermas, at best, "The aesthetic sphere could expand as the need for nondestructive ways of tending to nature became increasingly imperative."[83] They reject the "mostly misguided" attempts to "resubjectify nature, liberate animals, or accord rights to trees." They wish to retain modern "decentered" consciousness, consciousness differentiated into the three principle spheres of Kant/Habermas; practical reason, theoretical reason, and aesthetic judgment.[84] The current challenge "is not to cast about for ways of obliterating the cognitive-objectivating attitude toward nature (out of which science and technology arise), but rather to rethink the way in which that attitude relates to the aesthetic and moral-practical attitudes at the level of everyday practice."[85] However, according to Habermas this seems to limit the possibilities of relating to nature to a very narrow range. In Habermas's reply to McCarthy's and others' criticisms mentioned above, he only allows that, "While in our dealings with external nature we can indeed

have feelings analogous to moral feelings, the norm-conformative attitude to this domain of external nature does not yield any problems susceptible of being worked up cognitively, that is, problems that could be stylized to questions of justice from the standpoint of normative validity. On the other hand, the discussion from Kant to Adorno concerning natural and artistic beauty could provide grounds for the thesis that the expressive attitude to external nature opens up a domain of experience that can be exploited for artistic production."[86] It is therefore unclear how Luke and White's "ecological path to modernity" can have anything other that the traditional dualistic relation to nature, as object for domination and object for aesthetic contemplation. In Habermas's critical theory there is no logical relation between humans and nature that directly shifts perspectives from a logic of domination to an eco-logic. Habermas has admitted as much with the observation, "It is just as difficult to answer the basic objection of ecological ethics: How does discourse ethics, which is limited to subjects capable of speech and action, respond to the fact that mute creatures are also vulnerable? Compassion for tortured animals and the pain caused by the destruction of biotopes are surely manifestations of moral intuitions that cannot be fully satisfied by the collective narcissism of what in the final analysis is an anthropocentric way of looking at things."[87]

What do Luke and White identify as "ecological" about their alternative path of modernity? They emphasize the ambivalent potential of informational capitalism, which produces possibilities for an ecological future society, but certainly does not guarantee it. With capitalism's historical ability to appropriate attempts to negate it, it seems that the truly ecological future will occur only with great effort, "In beginning and being grounded in a modern welfare state that tends toward an increasingly extensive administration of economic and political life, any meaningful ecological critique also must recognize that transnational capital, at least at first, inescapably will moderate, limit, and define its revolutionary thrusts."[88] The first generation of critical theorists are assumed by Luke and White to be too "pessimistic" generally but especially toward science and technology. Too pessimistic to have been willing to view such phenomena as computerization and cable television as anything but "new instruments for more effective domination."[89] Luke and White basically argue for an ecological future on the basis of a specific vision of "decentralized, democratic communities."[90] They analyze the "concrete objective basis for ecological action" by projecting six "trends" which, unfortunately for these authors, have not all continued beyond their now recognizably anomalous appearance in the late 1970s and early 1980s. One of these basic "trends" (which seems to

have disappeared in the 1990s) is the transition to new "spatial-practical settings," forms of a "new mode of exurban existence."[91] It is curious that they extend the content of this idea, which comes from an overly optimistic reading of brief demographic changes, with concepts originating in Murray Bookchin's idea of "municipalization." This is curious or even ironic since Bookchin has systematically rejected Habermas's position, and for well argued, philosophical reasons. Bookchin's ideas about restructuring society come primarily out of libertarian and socialist anarchist traditions, not from either Marxism or American pragmatism. Like so much of academic and socialist discussion, Luke and White's approach does not so much approach the problem of the ecological crisis as a fundamental challenge to the traditional philosophical positions, as it views the ecology crisis as a new opportunity to revive old traditions or theories of democratic social change. Their "path" to modernity is the appropriation of radical ecological insights for furthering now traditional modern goals, which are basically humanistic or anthropocentric. These goals basically revolve around the attempt to enhance the power of the human species. "In the process of elaborating new ideas and forms of life, ecological activists can help initiate in broad segments of society the kind of reflective processes, based on Habermas's notion of communicative ethics, that have the potential to

demystify, decode, and repossess the material packages and behavioral scripts being produced by informational capital."[92]

It is true that "The new form of ideological struggle thus centers on the different meanings being reassigned to acts and artifacts in modern industrial life by informational capitalism," but which side of the ideological struggle do the Habermasians really end up? If "embedded in the ideas and practices of radical ecologists,"[93] is a perspective and an approach that can serve as "concrete guideposts for an alternative future where instrumental reason would be less imperial and the basic structure of society would be more in accord with the criteria of democratic legitimacy Habermas has derived from his communicative ethics,"[94] why do radical ecologists need Habermas? Does a Habermasian approach "serve as a corrective for some of the more romantic ideas of the ecological movement,"[95] or does it simply close off attempts to go beyond the differentiation of value spheres and the resulting modern form of consciousness? Habermas's approach provides only an abstract, process-oriented conception about the necessary conditions for uncoerced discourse. It does not make possible the direct confrontation with the central ecological problems now facing the world, such as global warming, species extinction, ecosystem collapse, and so forth. It only allows for the extension of the instrumental acquisition

of relevant knowledge from nature, or its appropriation through the production of artworks, which at best might induce reflection on social problems. Only a hypothetical, indirect possibility for addressing potential ecological catastrophe is illuminated in this approach. There is no compelling reason radical ecologists should adopt the critical theory of Jurgen Habermas when he, at most, has provided an abstract philosophical justification for what has been for many years an already successful concrete practice (consensus decision-making).

White has claimed that Habermas's work, "Can at best give us a minimal ethical orientation for politics."[96] There is no logical necessity connecting the logic of communicative action with the resolution of ecological crises. It would seem philosophically more promising to return to the concerns of the earlier critical theorists and their more direct attempt to overcome the "domination of nature." Rather than continuing within the theory of communicative action, radical ecologists should examine Habermas's break from the idea of a "reconciliation" with nature. Was the framework of the early theorists prematurely abandoned, leaving behind undeveloped potentials? Can the "aporias" of critical theory be overcome an infusion of radical ecological insight?

ENDNOTES

1. Marcuse, Herbert, "Protosocialism and Late Capitalism," in Rudolf Bahro: Critical Responses, Ulf Wolter, Ed. (New York: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 1980). Marcuse's comments were written for the November, 1978 "International Congress on and for Rudolf Bahro."

2. The early Frankfurt theorists generally, but Adorno more specifically and widely, have been charged with an excessive "pessimism" which is then read as a basic motivation for their distance from "politics." This reading lacks depth and fails to appreciate the full complexity and subtlety of their work, especially that of Adorno. For an insightful critique of the motivations, consequences, and inadequacies of the pessimistic reading, in the context of the general inadequacy of English translations of Adorno's work, see Robert Hullot-Kentor "Back to Adorno," Telos, 81, Fall 1989.

3. Bahro, Rudolf, The Alternative in Eastern Europe (London: Verso, 1984), pp. 256-257.

4. Marcuse, p. 28.

5. Marcuse, p. 29.

6. Marcuse, p. 40.

7. Bahro, The Alternative, p. 329, 400. See Andrew Arato's review of Ulf Wolter, Ed., Rudolf Bahro: Critical Responses, in Telos, 44, Summer, 1980, p. 153. Arato's critique of both Bahro and Marcuse is especially important in this context, where he examines the issue of Leninist vanguardism inherent in the position adopted by both thinkers, although Marcuse appears to be the more self-consciously aware and logically consistent with regard to the consequences of a positive evaluation of vanguardism, intellectual or otherwise.

8. Marcuse, p. 38.

9. Marcuse, p. 38.

10. Marcuse, p. 39.

11. Marcuse, Herbert, Eros and Civilization (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966).

12. Marcuse, Protosocialism, p. 41.

13. Marcuse, Protosocialism, p. 42.

14. Marcuse, Protosocialism, p. 42. Marcuse tends to collapse "nature" into a concept of "mother nature" where the "feminine" in nature is viewed as essential and the source of infinite pleasure, the "Nirvana Principle." See Marcuse, Eros and Civilization, esp. Part II; For a critical examination of this tendency in Marcuse, see P.J. Mills, Woman, Nature and Psyche (New Haven: Yale University, 1987), esp. Chapter 4, "The Domination of Nature."

15. Marcuse, Protosocialism, p. 45.

16. Marcuse, Protosocialism, p. 45.

17. Marcuse, Protosocialism, p. 45.

18. Marcuse, Protosocialism, p. 46.

19. Marcuse, Protosocialism, p. 29.

20. Marcuse, Protosocialism, p. 46.

21. Bahro, Rudolf, Socialism and Survival (London: Heretic Books, 1982), p. 15.

22. Bahro, Socialism, p. 107.

23. Bahro, Socialism, p. 104.

24. Bahro, Socialism, p. 104.

25. Bahro, Socialism, p. 111.

26. Bahro, Socialism, p. 115.

27. Bahro, Socialism, p. 119.

28. Bahro, Rudolf, "Notes for a Lecture on 'Dimensions of Exterminism and the Idea of General Emancipation'," Building the Green Movement (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1986), pp. 142-176. Bahro's idea of "exterminism" is based on Edward Thompson's

coining of the term from Latin roots. The idea expresses the present social condition and the presence of weapons of mass destruction; biological, chemical and nuclear. Although developed in the context of weaponry, this concept extends to all threats "of the mass destruction of humankind." Exterminism is used to designate "the last state of civilization," and the admission "that the logic of mass destruction of humankind has become the mark of the epoch." Transformation from exterminism to freedom, it is proclaimed, "Must bring about a mutation in the 'genotype' of society," an "anthropological revolution."

29. Bahro, Socialism, p. 153.

30. Bahro, Socialism, p. 153.

31. Bahro, Socialism, p. 153.

32. Bahro, Rudolf, From Red to Green (London: Verso, 1984) p. 215-216.

33. Bahro, From Red , p. 217.

34. Bahro, From Red , p. 219.

35. Bahro, From Red , p. 219.

36. Bahro, From Red , p. 219.

37. Bahro, From Red , p. 221-222.

38. Bahro, Building, p. 174.

39. Bahro, Building, p. 171.

40. Bahro, Building, p. 158. The "Exterminism" essay was written in 1983. The parenthetical comments are Bahro's.

41. Bahro, Building, p. 9.

42. For a basic overview of the relations between generations see David Held, Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas (Berkeley: Univ. of California, 1980). Ben Agger, The Discourse of Domination: From the Frankfurt School to Postmodernism (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern Univ., 1992). Douglas Kellner, Critical Theory,

Marxism and Modernity (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1989). The specific criticisms from the ecology movement will be more fully presented in the appropriate subsequent chapters.

43. In addition to Kellner and Agger, see On Critical Theory, John O'Neill, Ed. (New York: Seabury, 1976); Habermas and Modernity, Richard J. Bernstein, Ed. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT, 1988); Robyn Eckersley, Environmentalism and Political Theory: Toward an Ecocentric Approach (Albany: State Univ. of New York, 1992); Murray Bookchin, "Finding the Subject: Notes on Whitebook and 'Habermas Ltd.'," Telos, 52, Summer 1982, pp. 78-98.

44. McCarthy, Thomas, The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT, 1985); Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. I, McCarthy, Trans. (Boston: Beacon, 1981), Vol. II (Boston: Beacon, 1987); Legitimation Crisis, McCarthy, Trans. (Boston: Beacon, 1973; Communication and the Evolution of Society, McCarthy, Trans. (Boston: Beacon, 1979).

45. Habermas borrows the term "lifeworld" from Husserl using it to distinguish that aspect of human sociation generally conceived of as "everyday life" from "systems," specifically from the economic and political systems, which use money and power rather than communicative action to achieve their aims. See McCarthy, Introduction to the Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas; also Habermas's Legitimation Crisis, and The Theory of Communicative Action Vols. I and II.

46. For discussions of instrumental reason or purposive rationality in Habermas see O'Neill, Bernstein, and Eckersley.

47. Habermas's summary of his position on the relationship between instrumental reason and nature, and the inherent limits to other attitudes toward nature can be found in Habermas, Critical Debates, John B. Thompson and David Held, Eds., Chapter 12: "A Reply to my Critics." More extensive general discussions but with reference to this problem can be found in The Theory of Communicative Action, Vols. I and II.

48. Reply to my Critics, pp. 243-244.

49. Reply to my Critics, pp. 243-244. Jurgen Habermas, "The Entwinement of Myth and Enlightenment: Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno," The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity, Frederick G. Lawrence, Trans. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992).

50. McCarthy, Thomas, Ideals and Illusions (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1993).

51. McCarthy, Ideals and Illusions, p. 148. McCarthy, The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas, p. 67.

52. McCarthy, Ideals and Illusions, p. 148.

53. The beginning of the discussion between Habermas and McCarthy can be found with McCarthy's comments on Habermas's position as stated in Knowledge and Human Interests (Boston: Beacon, 1971), especially Chapter 2, "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel: Synthesis Through Social Labor." The discussion continues through McCarthy's The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas; Bernstein, Ed., Habermas and Modernity; Thompson and Held, Eds., Habermas, Critical Debates; and McCarthy Ideals and Illusions. Habermas's most forceful statement of his theoretical position, including the critique of Marx, Weber and Adorno comes in the final chapter of his Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. II.

54. McCarthy, Ideals and Illusions, p. 149. McCarthy also discusses the same points in "Reflections on Rationalization in The Theory of Communicative Action," and in Habermas and Modernity, Richard J. Bernstein, Ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), esp. pp. 189-190. The reference to Kant is to his Critique of Judgement: Part II.

55. Robyn Eckersley, Environmentalism and Political Theory: Toward an Ecocentric Approach (Albany: State Univ. of New York, 1992), p. 113. Also see Joel Whitebook "The Problem of Nature in Habermas," Telos, 40, summer 1979, pp. 63ff.

56. Ottmann, Henning, "Cognitive Interests and Self-reflection," Habermas, Critical Debates, p. 89.

57. McCarthy, Ideals and Illusions, p. 149.

58. Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. II, p. 393.

59. Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. II, p. 394.

60. Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. II, p. 394.

61. Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. II, p. 394.

62. Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. II, p. 396.

63. Habermas, Legitimation Crisis, p.41.

64. Habermas, Legitimation Crisis, p. 42.

65. Luke, Tim, and Stephen White, "Critical Theory, the Informational Revolution, and an Ecological Path to Modernity" in Critical Theory and Public Life, John Forester, Ed. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1985).

66. Kellner, Critical Theory, Marxism and Modernity; Ben Agger, The Discourse of Domination; Isaac Balbus, Marxism and Domination (Princeton: Princeton Univ., 1982).

67. Luke and White, p. 31.

68. Luke and White, p. 35.

69. A similar set of concerns is expressed in Socialist Review, Vol. 21, No. 1, Jan-March 1991, "Post Fordism: Flexible Politics in the Age of Just-in-time Production."

70. Luke and White, p. 36.

71. Luke and White, p. 36.

72. Luke and White, p.38-39.

73. Adorno, Theodor, Minima Moralia, E. G. N. Jephcott, Trans. (London and New York: Verso, 1991), esp. pp. 228-231.

74. It is fair to point out that Habermas did place the ecology crisis within his general theory of the "legitimation problems of late capitalism." Legitimation Crisis, p. 41ff. However, just as special credit can be extended for this early recognition, the attempt to redeem Habermas's later efforts, in relation to "green problems" and the ecology movement, therefore should be held to a higher level of accountability.

75. Luke and White, p. 23.

76. Rensenbrink, John, The Greens and Transformative Politics (San Pedro: R.&E. Miles, 1992). For Habermas's discussions of the structure of "universal pragmatics" see, Communication and the Evolution of Society, Thomas McCarthy, Trans. (Boston: Beacon, 1979); Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. I, McCarthy, Trans. (Boston: Beacon, 1981), Vol. II (Boston: Beacon, 1987).

77. Strydom, Piet, "Habermas and New Social Movements," review of Stephen K. White's The Recent Work of Jurgen Habermas: Reason, Justice and Modernity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), Telos, 85, (Fall 1990) pp. 156-164.

78. Habermas, "Reply to my Critics," in Thompson and Held Habermas, Critical Debates; and in Bernstein, Habermas and Modernity.

79. Luke and White, "Critical Theory, the Informational Revolution, and an Ecological Path to Modernity," in Critical Theory and Public Life, John Forester, Ed. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1985), p. 29. This position is based on Habermas's comments in "A Reply to My Critics," p. 262.

80. Luke and White, p. 25.

81. McCarthy, Ideals and Illusions, Chapters 6 and 7.

82. For a history of the conflicts among the West German Greens, particularly around the fundi-realo split and its manifestations in questions of democratic procedures and their relationship to democratic representation, see Werner Hulsberg, The German Greens (London: Verso, 1988). For a history of the U.S. Greens' similar problems with questions of procedure and democratic accountability see John

Rensenbrink, The Greens and the Politics of Transformation (San Pedro: R.&E. Miles, 1992). For Habermas's discussion of the "ideal speech situation" and its relation to communicative ethics, its counterfactuality, and the relation between consensus and compromise, see Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action, Christian Lenhardt and Shierry Weber Nicholsen, Trans. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991). The discussion in McCarthy, Ideals and Illusions, Chapter 7, addresses precisely this point. The general problems and a possible resolutive interpretation of Habermas's position on consensus and compromise can be found in Seyla Benhabib, Critique, Norm and Utopia: A Study of the Foundations of Critical Theory (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 313ff.

83. Luke and White, p. 30.

84. These were initially formulated in Kant's three critiques; Critique of Pure Reason, Critique of Practical Reason, and Critique of Judgement. As McCarthy has indicated of Habermas, "Like Kant, he distinguishes the types of practical reasoning and corresponding types of 'ought' proper to questions about what is practically expedient, ethically prudent, and morally right." Jurgen Habermas, Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action, Christian Lenhardt and Shierry Weber Nicholsen, Trans. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), "Introduction" (by McCarthy).

85. Luke and White, p. 30.

86. Habermas, "Reply to my Critics," pp. 248-249.

87. Habermas, Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action, p. 211.

88. Luke and White, p. 44.

89. Luke and White, p. 43.

90. Luke and White, p. 43.

91. Luke and White, p. 46.

92. Luke and White, p. 49.

93. Luke and White, p. 30.

94. Luke and White, p. 22.

95. Luke and White, p. 30.

96. White, Stephen K., Polity, Fall 1983, p. 163, review, "The Normative Basis of Critical Theory."

CHAPTER 2

THE CRITICAL, ECOLOGICAL ALTERNATIVE

The philosophies of radical ecology offer alternatives to what they variously label "reform environmentalism," "shallow" ecology, "liberal" ecology, and so on. These philosophies claim to establish a sufficient basis for radical ecological practices intent on a basic societal transformation. The goal of this reorganization of society would be to enhance and develop the potential of non-dominating, non-exploitative relationships between and among humans and non-human nature. This radical ecological critique of both existing society and "environmentalism" in many ways parallels critical theory's early critique of "traditional theory." This chapter will explore some of the limitations of environmentalism and versions of critical theory.

Radical Ecology versus Reform Environmentalism

The terminological distinction between "radical" and "reform" environmentalism originates in the writings of some self-identified deep ecologists. It is analogous to the category distinction critical theory makes between "progressive" and "affirmative" thought. The radical ecological texts speak for themselves here to reveal the differences between the "radical ecologist" and what can provisionally be called "environmentalists." Part of the

difficulty in developing an adequate concept of the "green" movement is its political and philosophical instability or immanent dynamic. The ecology movement can be interpreted through the dynamic tension which has developed between its various self-conceptions. These must be retained but brought more fully into conscious and critical awareness by any effort which attempts to develop an adequate conception of ecological subjectivity and politics.

One of the earliest attempts to understand the emerging green movement was Spretnak and Capra's Green Politics:

> The Greens consider themselves the political voice of the citizen's movements, that is, ecology, anti-nuclear-power, peace, feminist, and others. Most members of the Green party are also activists in one or more of those movements, and this diverse orientation is reflected in the wings, or factions, of the party: the visionary/holistic Greens, the Eco-Greens, the peace-movement Greens, and the radical-left Greens. A great deal of overlapping occurs with any categorizing of Green identities and some people say there are no actual factions, but clearly there are different priorities among the four clusters.[1]

Classifications of the various elements within the greens are constantly shifting, as each analysis attempts to impose a different typology on the elements of the movement as a whole. Lack of identity, of full coherence or consistency (self-sameness) within the movement, should be viewed as an indication of the adequacy rather than

inadequacy of the movement's attempt to address its "object," the ecological crisis/crises. In the spirit of critical theory, at least in that version most closely associated with Horkheimer and Adorno, it is necessary to critically evaluate the fragmented object in a "non-systematic" way. As Adorno never stopped proclaiming, what is not actually in harmony or reconciled with itself is not adequately conceptualized by merely abstractly reassembling its fragments into a balanced whole. Therefore, critical analysis or interpretation, from a critical ecological perspective, should not hold its purpose to be the establishment of a seamless web of philosophic or ecological truth and balance, but instead should assist the objects of its concern to "speak" of the suffering and contradiction that actually exist. Hope lies in a future which reveals itself in the immanent release, from within the object, of its potential for contributing to an "ecological mode of living."

Another early example of the effort to trace the development of the green movement, especially in the United States, was Brian Tokar's The Green Alternative: Creating an Ecological Future: "Early environmentalism developed on a somewhat separate track than the other movements of the sixties. It often had origins in mainstream efforts to conserve natural resources for longer-term use and in the efforts of wealthy elites to keep their part of the wilderness free from development

and from the intrusions of other people."[2] So there is some truth in the perception of an elitist and "romantic" bias in the early environmental movement, but by the mid-1960s the increasingly obvious signs of environmental destruction and potential catastrophe resulted in a shift in ecological awareness: "Environmentalism could not hold on to its exclusiveness and its undertone of elitism for very long. People looked back to the nature writings of the 19th century and discovered that, for people like Thoreau and John Muir, the protection of nature was intimately intertwined with social activism and a critique of industrial society."[3] By the early 1980s it was beginning to be possible to distinguish between environmentalism and a more radical perspective,

> Ecological issues are often approached in a rather piecemeal fashion, as environmentalists tend to champion their own pet issue in relative isolation from all of the others....A Green perspective encourages people to uncover the underlying causes of environmental problems in the habits and assumptions of the societies that have created them. At the same time, Green approaches to social issues need to be thoroughly informed by an ecological sensibility.[4]

Critical theory presently has a complex and often antagonistic relation to radical ecology. The above observations by "greens" may help to clarify Habermas's understanding of green problems and the ecology movement. To the extent that the elitist and single issue perspectives dominated early environmental efforts Habermas's characterization of the movement as "defensive"

is correct, but this is not now an adequate analytical response to the developing self-awareness of the green movement. Habermas acknowledged the volatility of ecological crisis and the responses to them.[5] His earlier observations were also limited not only in time but in space, since his comments were mostly directed toward events in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Other commentators on the green movement have taken the seemingly paradoxical position that the West German Greens had lost much of their Green or ecological content very early in their organizational life. Andrew Dobson distinguishes between "shades of green" providing the basis for his claim that the West German Greens quickly came to be dominated by the lighter shades of green. Dobson's light greens are what the deep ecologist would call "reform environmentalists," and are elements of the green movement oriented toward the critical theory concept of "affirmative" politics. Affirmative politics strengthens the given system of domination and its fundamentally instrumental logic.[6] Dobson argued that the "shades of green" analytical strategy, "Help(s) us to understand the apparently heretical suggestion that the West German Green Party is not a party of ecology in the sense in which I think we ought to understand the word....the less visible but more fundamental manifestations of the Green movement are greener than the West German Green Party."[7]

If critical theorists are too analytically rigid, and identify the elements of the Green parties as the Green movement, they will have largely missed the importance of "radical ecology." In his major work, which served to support the fundamentalist position of some greens, Murray Bookchin attempted to distinguish between ecology and environmentalism. Bookchin refers to his own form of ecological philosophy as "social ecology" (examined more closely in later chapters (6,7,8) as one of the central elements of a critical theory of radical ecology). Bookchin discusses the modern uses of the term ecology and its original use by Ernst Haeckel to characterize his investigations into the interrelationships between animals, plants, and their inorganic environment. Bookchin claims the early understanding of ecology has been replaced by a "very crude form of natural engineering that might well be called environmentalism."[8] Bookchin's definition of "environmentalism" succinctly captures the meaning associated with the term by contemporary radical ecologists of various hues, "By 'environmentalism' I propose to designate a mechanistic, instrumental outlook that sees nature as a passive habitat composed of 'objects' such as animals, plants, minerals, and the like that must merely be rendered more serviceable for human use."[9] Environmentalists then would tend to characterize nature as a collection of natural resources or raw materials to be put into use for exclusively human

purposes. It can be seen from this characterization that Habermas's position cannot be developed in a way compatible with the position of radical ecologists. Habermas's theory fundamentally violates the radical ecological dismissal of the human/nature conceptual dichotomy. This dichotomy is inherent in Habermas's philosophical view, limiting "knowledge" about nature to its instrumental aspects.

There has been, within radical ecology, an ongoing tension between Bookchin's thought and that of individuals who identify themselves as deep ecologists. The fusion and confusion of radical identities is part of the subterranean tension of the green movement. The difference between social and deep ecologists is not always readily apparent, even for as trivial a reason (among others) as the fact that Bookchin's work has been published in a collection of various authors under the title of "Deep Ecology."[10] In the same work, Arne Naess, the generally recognized originator of the term "deep ecology," reiterates his distinctions between his philosophy and that of "shallow ecology." Naess's terminological distinctions are represented through examples of the different slogans each type uses, but the distinctions ultimately can be defined on the basis of <u>deepness</u>, "The term <u>deep</u> is supposed to suggest explication of fundamental presuppositions of valuation as well as of facts and hypotheses. Deep ecology, therefore,

transcends the limit of any particular science of today, including systems theory and scientific ecology. Deepness of normative and descriptive premises questioned characterize the movement."[11]

Challenging the various self-understandings of radical ecologists are positions which can only be unsystematically clustered together under the heading "ecofeminism." There are a wide variety of understandings of ecofeminism, but they generally have developed out of the intersection of feminism with the ecology movement. Just as the feminist movement lacks philosophical and political unity or common self-understanding (or even an agreed understanding of the possibilities of a "self" to understand), ecofeminism cannot be reduced to a single definition. However, certain definitions have been offered in an attempt to function within what is deemed the "masculine" form which is argumentation, "We will begin by defining ecofeminism...I will present one perspective. Ecofeminism is a value system, a social movement, and a practice, but it also offers a political analysis that explores the links between androcentrism and environmental destruction. It is 'an awareness' that begins with the realization that the exploitation of nature is intimately linked to Western Man's attitude toward women and tribal cultures...."[12] Other ecofeminists emphasize other aspects of the contiguity of feminism and ecology. Spretnak, who has written

extensively on the "spiritual" aspect of ecofeminism, emphasizes the roots of ecofeminism in radical or cultural feminism. This tradition has attempted to theorize out of women's bodies and women's experiences, "Our sources of inspiration at the time were not Thoreau, John Muir, or even Rachel Carson (though we have certainly come to appreciate those beacons since then) but, rather, our own experiential explorations."[13]

Another general tendency, especially among U.S. greens, has been the rejection of political thought which has virtually any connection with Marxism, or the Left generally. This phobia has even been extended to "Eurocentric" thought. After explaining some of these rejections, John Rensenbrink, political science professor and green activist, summarizes the U.S. Greens, "The Greens are the harbingers of a new, more seasoned politics....they turn away from protest to concerted action through sustained organization for the transformation of society and its politics. They directly challenge the industrial mode of production, whether run by comrades or capitalists."[14]

This sampling of radical ecological self-understandings should begin to illuminate the elements of a constellation named "ecological subjectivity," or what can be called the concept of an ecological subject. This ecological subject-object is caught within a web or forcefield rippling with crosscurrents and tensions both

internally and in relation to the anti-ecological society it is a part. The ecological subject finds itself opposed to a modern subject which perceives itself in opposition to nature, a nature that can only be known in an instrumentalist sense, a nature which serves as a means to the self-preservation and development of the human subject. The current ecological subject itself is divided between that aspect which believes it is possible to reform the present system of industrialization and social domination, and its more radical incarnation. This more radical ecological subject is itself also internally fragmented into various elements. The fragments of the radical ecological subject sometimes resonate sympathetically, but more often are in a societal and movement-wrenching struggle over self-definition and self-understanding. One of the central questions for the radical ecological subject is whether the tradition of critical theory has any potential for initiating a sufficiently heightened self-awareness so that at least a partial resolution of its internal tensions becomes possible. The further hope is that the heightened self-awareness of the radical ecological subject might itself release hidden potentials which could further the realization of an ecological mode of living.

Critical and Traditional Theory

To speak of "critical theory" or "the Frankfurt School" is generally to mislead. Any attempt to summarize the work of the individuals associated with these categories, collectively or individually, will necessarily be an exercise in futility. However, by examining the relationship between critical theory and traditional theory, especially as the critical theorists themselves represented the relationship, the potential fruitfulness of a more intimate relationship between critical theory and radical ecology may be perceptible. One of the central texts in the tradition of critical theory is Max Horkheimer's "Traditional and Critical Theory."

Horkheimer begins his essay with the question, "What is theory?" and answers with a description of what the scientific response would be, something like; "The sum total of propositions about a subject, the propositions being so linked with each other that a few are basic and the rest derive from these."[15] The goal of such a theory is a universal or systematic science that attempts to encompass all possible objects of study under its deductive framework, these "objects" include human "subjects." Traditional theory arose with modern philosophy and Descartes' and other philosophers' development of the scientific method. Although this conception of theory, based on deduction through

propositions tending toward complete mathematization, originally was oriented toward non-human objects, it has become the standard model of theory for the social sciences as well. But Horkheimer does not leave his question in the hands of the self-understandings of the scientists. He indicates the extent to which scientific method does not have a transcendental or a priori status but rather how science is part of society as a whole and how the interests which dominate society dominate science and scientific theory: "The fruitfulness of newly discovered factual connections for the renewal of existent knowledge, and the application of such knowledge to the facts, do not derive from purely logical or methodological sources but can rather be understood only in the context of real social processes."[16] These real social processes include capitalism. Critical theory does not accept the belief that facts are simply present and must be accepted, that behavior merely adapts to their necessity. Instead, theory and the perception of facts are viewed as caught up in history, as products of development:

> The objects we perceive in our surroundings--cities, villages, fields, and woods--bear the mark of having been worked on by man. It is not only in clothing and appearance, in outward form and emotional make-up that men are the product of history. Even the way they see and hear is inseparable from the social life-process as it has evolved over the millennia. The facts which our senses present to us are socially preformed in two ways; through the historical character of the object perceived and through the historical character of the perceiving organ. Both

> are not simply natural; they are shaped by human activity, and yet the individual perceives himself as receptive and passive in the act of perception.[17]

This leads Horkheimer to an observation about the relationship between humans and nature that would be consistent with the observations of radical ecologists (and the early Marx), "The distinction within this complex totality between what belongs to unconscious nature and what to the action of man in society cannot be drawn in concrete detail." The possibility for a strictly dualistic basis of knowledge is eliminated.

Borrowing from the Marxist tradition, Horkheimer explains how the world cannot adequately be characterized as a harmonic whole, but is better represented as constituted through suffering and antagonism, including the antagonism resulting from class differences. The critical theorist takes these influences on the development of theory into account;

> The identification, then, of men of critical mind with their society is marked by tension, and the tension characterizes all the concepts of the critical way of thinking...Reason cannot become transparent to itself as long as men act as members of an organism which lacks reason. Organism as a naturally developing and declining unity cannot be a sort of model for society, but only a form of deadened existence from which society must emancipate itself.[18]

Who is the subject of critical theory? "Critical thinking is the function neither of the isolated individual nor of a sum-total of individuals. Its subject is rather a definite individual in his real relation to

other individuals and groups, in his conflict with a particular class, and, finally, in the resultant web of relationships with the social totality and with nature."[19] These observations serve Horkheimer to distinguish Cartesian or scientistic thought from dialectical thought (although dialectics itself must still be distinguished into its various varieties), "The acceptance of an essential unchangeableness between subject, theory, and object thus distinguishes the Cartesian conception from every kind of dialectical logic."[20] Horkheimer rejects identifying the emancipatory interest of escape from such a society, with the given situation of the proletariat, or the proletariat's self-perception of its interests. The critical theorist has a much more complex responsibility than simply accurately representing an oppressed class's given interests. The theoretician's "presentation of societal contradictions is not merely an expression of the concrete historical situation but also a force within it to stimulate change."[21] The function of the critical theorist is then, at least partially, to stimulate change by changing the awareness of individuals, particularly those with the potential to act in the interest of emancipation of society as a whole. Similarly, the radical ecological theorist's function is to stimulate that change in self-awareness of the potential ecological subject who, through its actions, can help bring into existence the ecological society.

Horkheimer speaks of the future dissolution of the society of domination and oppression as coming about through the "association of free men." The future, emancipated society will only be achieved after preliminary stages develop what are now only tendencies. This may result in many transitional moments, but the duty of the critical theorist is to persist in the theoretical development of those tendencies, even in spite of the most discouraging of existing circumstances:

> One thing which this way of thinking has in common with fantasy is that an image of the future which springs indeed from a deep understanding of the present determines men's thoughts and actions even in periods when the course of events seems to be leading far away from such a future and seems to justify every reaction except belief in fulfillment. It is not the arbitrariness and supposed independence of fantasy that is the common bond here, but its obstinacy. Within the most advanced group it is the theoretician who must have this obstinacy.[22]

With regard to the theoretical compatibility of critical theory and radical ecological theory, from the perspective of critical theory it can be argued that theory is only critical when earlier thought is taken up and transformed within the contexts of new historical circumstances and new needs. Transformation of earlier critical thought retains the interest in freedom: "The historical significance of his work is not self-evident; it rather depends on men speaking and acting in such a way as to justify it. It is not a finished and fixed historical creation."[23]

One of the problematic aspects of critical theory for a radical ecological subject is the element retained from the Enlightenment: instrumental domination. This element remains in the work of all the theorists except, perhaps, Adorno. It is an element of the domination of nature appearing frequently in those constructions of concepts around the idea of freedom, and in the relationship of freedom to the rational mastery of nature. This element of domination was present from the beginning, in those initial conceptions of the project of critical theory Horkheimer elaborated.

In its original conception, Horkheimer's version of critical theory followed the Marxist understanding of the development of productive forces,

> But the critical theory of society is, in its totality, the unfolding of a single existential judgement. To put it in broad terms, the theory says that the basic form of the historically given commodity economy on which modern history rests contains in itself the internal and external tensions of the modern era; it generates these tensions over and over again in an increasingly heightened form; and later a period of progress, development of human powers, and emancipation for the individual, after an enormous extension of human control over nature, it finally hinders further development and drives humanity into a new barbarism.[24]

This position would later be modified with the collaboration of Adorno, in the <u>Dialectic of Enlightenment</u>, where the dialectic of progress and barbarism is presented as having existed from the very beginnings of civilization.

Critical theory itself is viewed by Horkheimer, in this early essay, as an extension of the modern, and enlightenment projects, "A consciously critical attitude, however, is part of the development of society: the construing of the course of history as the necessary product of an economic mechanism simultaneously contains both a protest against this order of things, a protest generated by the order itself, and the idea of self-determination for the human race, that is the idea of a state of affairs in which man's actions no longer flow from a mechanism but from his own decision."[25]

The traditional philosophic form of the problem of emancipation, or freedom, is to contrast this concept with its opposite, necessity. In traditional philosophic terms it is the understanding of the concept of necessity in its relation to nature that is of greatest concern to the radical ecologist, and central to any further development of critical theory. Horkheimer attempts to clarify the differences between the positivistic, or scientistic, understanding of necessity and a <u>critical</u> understanding of the concept. For the scientist there is a strict separation of the object of study from the subject who proceeds scientifically:

> There is nonetheless a decisive difference when it comes to the relation of subject and object and therefore to the necessity of the event being judged. The object with which the scientific specialist deals is not affected at all by his own theory. Subject

> and object are kept strictly apart....The objective occurrence is independent of the theory, and this independence is part of its necessity: the observer as such can effect no change in the object.[26]

Horkheimer calls this the "Cartesian dualism of thought and being," and concludes that, "Necessity for them refers not to events which man masters to his own purposes but only to events which he anticipates as probable."[27] Here it can be seen that Horkheimer's understanding of freedom is that of the rational mastery of necessity, rather than simple adaptation to the ongoing processes of the world, whether economic, social, political or natural. For a subject who does not separate itself from the society of which it is a part, and who does not strictly separate knowledge from action, "If he encounters necessity which is not mastered by man, it takes shape either as that realm of nature which despite the far-reaching conquests still to come will never wholly vanish, or as the weakness of the society of previous ages in carrying on the struggle with nature in a consciously and purposefully organized way."[28] The future emancipated society will have carried out the rational mastery of nature and society as far as possible. Rational mastery of nature will therefore change the understanding of necessity itself, and be viewed as freedom rather than domination. Total domination is the state of present affairs where nature retains substantial power to inhibit social development, and social life is controlled by an

economic system that treats individuals like natural objects to be dominated. The human species has mastered neither natural process nor the society it created which itself has taken on the characteristics of a "second nature." The critical subject must then side with the original project of enlightenment,

> Both elements in this concept of necessity--the power of nature and the weakness of society--are interconnected and are based on the experienced effort of man to emancipate himself from coercion by nature and from those forms of social life and of the juridical, political and cultural orders which have become a straitjacket for him. The struggle on two fronts, against nature and against society's weakness, is part of the effective striving for a future condition of things in which whatever man wills is also necessary and in which the necessity of the object becomes the necessity of a rationally mastered event.[29]

In other words, "natural" necessity and "human reason" would coincide.

A fundamental question for a theory which develops with the changes in historical situations is to what extent will it have to be self-modifying. In the relation of theory to historically changing situations, the theory must change emphases, but not its fundamental self-understanding, "The historical development of the conflicts in which the critical theory is involved leads to a reassignment of degrees of relative importance to individual elements of the theory, forces further concretizations, and determines which results of specialized science are to be significant for critical

theory and practice at any given time."[30] Horkheimer's presentation of critical theory as interdisciplinary and social scientific, and his leadership in the late 1930s and early 1940s can be best understood as involving the ongoing development of his original understanding of the project of a critical social theory. It is this understanding that Habermas has relied on as a justification for a claim to the historical legacy of the Frankfurt School. He has attempted to return to an interdisciplinary approach which relies on empirical research from the social sciences as well as methodological and critical concepts reconstructed out of a variety of philosophical traditions.[31] The legacy of critical theory would be challenged if radical ecologists attempt to appropriate the insights of the earlier critical theorists for their new or additional purposes.

It is in the relationship between theory and practice that the work of the various critical theorists can be differentiated. The various understandings of this relationship result in different possibilities for a transformed world. In conceptualizing the relationship between humans and nature, including internal nature, critical theorists necessarily must present their understanding of the methodological or conceptual possibilities of interpretation. The constellation "critical theory" addresses and readdress the capacity to know and represent its own self-understanding. It must be

self-reflexive if it is to be "adequate" to its own concept. The tradition of critical theory has appropriated the conceptual framework of Hegelian and Marxist dialectics, but only to transform it. It began with a critique of the lack of self-reflexion on the part of traditional or positivist understandings of theory. However, in its criticisms critical theory also examined its own foundations. The problem for critical theory became the attempt to find some foothold for its own project. If critical theory is itself part of history, and history is tending toward a barbaric totalization of thought, how does critical theory confront the implication of its own inescapable inclusion in the logic of domination? On what basis can it make the critical judgement that the world should be otherwise? And if the world should be otherwise, what indications are there of the actual possibility of a future without domination, either an "emancipated" world, or a world that includes the ancient philosophical idea of the "good life"?[32]

Horkheimer's collaboration with Adorno on the Dialectic of Enlightenment generated a new phase of critical theory, one critics generally characterize as "dark" and "pessimistic." An extreme of pessimism has been the most common interpretation of Adorno's version of critical theory. It is this pessimism, resulting from the "totalization of critique," that Habermas has taken as the basis for his departure from the "philosophy of the

subject," his "linguistic turn" or change of paradigm to a "theory of communicative action."[33] If radical ecologists are to draw on the tradition of critical theory, it is crucial to determine if the earlier tradition still has the potential to offer concepts which might lead to an adequate understanding of the various problems related to the ecological crisis of the planet. "Adequacy" can be measured in this case by whether destruction of the global ecology can be halted and reversed. Might a turn toward Adorno's version of critical thought be more fruitful, illuminating the potential of the ecology movement, than a turn toward Habermas or other members of the tradition? How might Adorno's thought make it possible for the ecology movement to become more self-aware and potentially more effective? And fundamentally for critical theory, is it possible to develop a "politics" out of Adorno's work? The generally accepted view is that Adorno's thought eliminates the possibilities for political action except in some extremely esoteric, aesthetic and philosophic forms. This consensus must be challenged and the potential for generating concrete politics from his thought, as a result of a changed historical situation and additional critical concepts, must be demonstrated. Specifically, Adorno's thought must be shown to be able to address the assertions by Marcuse that the ecology and feminist movements contain revolutionary potential. Adorno's thought must be shown to contain the capacity to

address the ecological problems produced by the dynamics of industrial production and capitalism, problems Habermas has identified as capable of generating or contributing to a "legitimation crisis."[34] Can Adorno's thought generate a different set of conceptual alternatives not reducible to the Habermasian response, which has been found to be inadequate, simply calling for further development of technological and administrative (bureaucratic) domination?

Paradigm Shifts

Habermas developed his version of critical theory in opposition to what he saw as the shortcomings of the first generation of critical theorists' reliance on the "philosophy of the subject." Habermas criticizes the tradition of critical theory that follows from the tradition of Hegel and Marx, claiming it does not provide a sufficient categorial framework to understand intersubjectivity. According to Habermas, the heritage from German Idealism forced thought toward categories of "self-expression" which rely on a notion of an "essential" human nature which is then objectified through labor. This objectification of the "essentially human" results in a subject-object dialectic that is only able to understand intersubjectivity as a process of objective mediation between subjects. Habermas argues that the reduction of human action to a process based on a laboring subject (his

description of both Hegelian and Marxist dialectics) does not adequately address the other uniquely human characteristic; communicative interaction. To adequately address this second dimension a "linguistic turn" is needed to analyze communicative activity. It is within the structure of everyday language that Habermas detects the potential for normative guidance of human interaction. Contained within the structure of speech is an a priori, or "quasi-transcendental," assumption of validity. Action in the form of speech oriented toward mutual understanding has within it an implicit claim to truth. Based on this "quasi-transcendental" truth claim embedded within language Habermas develops the normative framework of discourse ethics.[35]

As previously indicated, there are fundamental problems with the theory of "discourse ethics" and its relation to the global ecological crisis. The Habermasian framework of critical theory does not provide an adequate way of conceptualizing the human to nature relationship. It claims the only "theoretically fruitful" attitude toward nature is that of instrumental rationality, in Habermas's categories: purposive-rational cognition. Additionally, it is doubtful that the formalistic structure of his argument can be retained when faced with the requirements of actual discursive confrontation. The "ideal speech situation" does not have sufficient normative purchase to make it a politically effective

basis for actual situational discourse. The conditions necessary for the normative aspects of discourse ethics to prevail occur in a very restricted universe of expertise and competence. The possibility of the transference or mediation from expert cultures, in the spheres of science, law and art, to that of everyday life activities has not been convincingly established. Rather than turn to a problematic theory of communicative ethics, if critical theory is to serve the practice of radical ecology it will have to address Habermas's critique and dismissal of the earlier positions within the tradition. Specifically, the basis for the rejection of the works of Adorno and Marcuse should be more closely examined. Additionally, the significant differences between Adorno and Marcuse must be addressed and resolved if possible, particularly on the two crucial issues of the possibility of a revolutionary subject, on the one hand, and the conceptualization of a "reconciliation with nature," on the other.

The central question for radical ecology and critical theory is whether it is possible to relate to nature in a way other than that which can be characterized as domination, or as the deep ecologists call it, "anthropocentrically." To answer this question it is necessary to determine the status of the logic that supports science and technology. Habermas rejects the possibility of scientific or technological development by any other logic than that of instrumental rationality.

Marcuse on the other hand has argued that a "logic of gratification" can replace the logic of domination and thereby transform all aspects of society including science and technology. Critical theorists who have returned to the first generation of the tradition to develop concepts to address the ecology crisis not surprisingly have nearly always returned to Marcuse.[36] Marcuse has claimed,

> The very concept of technical reason is perhaps ideological. Not only the application of technology but technology itself is domination (of nature and men)--methodical, scientific, calculated, calculating control. Specific purposes and interests of domination are not foisted upon technology "subsequently" and from the outside; they enter the very construction of the technical apparatus. Technology is always a historical-social project: in it is projected what a society and its ruling interests intend to do with men and things. Such a 'purpose' of domination is "substantive" and to this extent belongs to the very form of technical reason.[37]

Marcuse challenges Weber's claim that technical reason can be assimilated to reason as such. On the contrary, the use made of science and technology by the institutionalized forces of production, and the resulting growth in material production, is used ideologically, argues Marcuse, to claim that technical rationality is equivalent to reason. This results in a system of domination being presented as having ontological status by those who control production and ideology;

> In this universe, technology also provides the great rationalization of the unfreedom of man and

> demonstrates the "technical" impossibility of being autonomous, of determining one's own life. For this unfreedom appears neither as irrational nor as political, but rather as submission to the technical apparatus which enlarges the comforts of life and increases the productivity of labor. Technological rationality thus protects rather than cancels the legitimacy of domination and the instrumentalist horizon of reason opens on a rationally totalitarian society.[38]

Habermas does not disagree with Marcuse as far as it is true that the specific historical forms science and technology take depend on variable institutional arrangements. What Habermas argues is that the basic logical structures on which science and technology are based are necessarily purposive-rational (instrumental).[39] Scientific-technological "progress" is not a "project" of a specific historical constellation of forces, but "if based at all on a project, can only be traced back to a project of the human species as a whole, and not to one that could be historically surpassed."[40] There is no other logic to base science and technology on except purposive-rational logic.

Habermas sees the problem <u>not</u> as the need to challenge the fundamental logic of science and technology, but as the historical expansion of purposive-rational or instrumental logic into areas it does not belong, specifically into the "moral sphere." Here Habermas is guided by the fundamentally Kantian notion of the separation of reason into different value spheres with correspondingly different criteria of validity. This

theoretical strategy is a requirement imposed on Habermas as a result of the conclusions he reached in his critique of Marx. Habermas claims Marx did not adequately differentiate the category of "sensuous human activity." Habermas argues this concept should not be collapsed into the categories of objectification borrowed from German Idealism, but separated into two irreducible moments; labor (purposive-rational activity), and social interaction (communicative action). The logic of purposive-rational action is the proper sphere of science and technology and is necessary as long as the human species must appropriate external nature for the purposes of self-preservation. The forces of production expand control over nature through the use of technical knowledge. The claim to truth of technical knowledge is validated through success or failure. However, the species also reproduces itself through social interaction, adapting "inner nature" by means of normative structures of socialization. The normative structures under which this process takes place also require justification, that is, they must be justified through the discourse of "right." Therefore the idea of emancipation cannot be viewed as equivalent to scientific-technological progress, but must include the rationalization of social interaction; the extension of communication without domination.

For Habermas the subject-object relationship and the subject-subject relationship follow two distinctly different logics and should be rigorously separated analytically. It is precisely the extension of the subject-object relationship into the sphere of communicative action that is the problem. It is this expansion of purposive-rational thought to the moral and aesthetic spheres that Habermas addresses in his theory of communicative action. His theory of discourse ethics, based on a universal pragmatics of language, hypothesizes the "ideal speech situation" in an attempt to develop a normative basis for reversing the "colonization of the lifeworld" by instrumental rationality.

One result of this analysis is to view the "rationalization" characteristic of modern society as an irreversible process. Any attempt to unify the different and irreducible logics of the various value spheres would almost unquestionably result in a "de-differentiation" leading to what Habermas believes would be a regression of rationality behind the level achieved with modernization. This view of the possibility of a unity of value spheres, which Habermas believes can only be achieved through an unfortunate return to a level of worldviews typical of pre-modern society, has a devastating impact on the conception of a "reconciliation with nature." It is precisely on this point that he initiates the charges of mysticism and metaphysics against the earlier critical

theorists and those who read Marx through the lenses of the early philosophic manuscripts:

> I think I have learned from the tradition of Hegelian- Marxism, from the history of critical social theory from Marx to Benjamin, Bloch, Marcuse, and Adorno that any attempt to embed the perspective of reconciliation in a philosophy of history of nature, however indirectly it is done, must pay the price of dedifferentiating forms of knowledge behind whose categorial distinctions we can no longer retreat in good conscience. All this is not really an argument, but more an expression of skepticism in the face of so many failed attempts to have one's cake and eat it too: to retain both Kant's insights and, at the same time, to return to the "home" (Behausung) from which these same insights have driven us. But, perhaps, McCarthy or others will some day succeed in formulating the continuities between human history and natural history so carefully that they are weak enough to be plausible and yet strong enough to permit us to recognize man's place in the cosmos (Scheler), at least in broad outlines.[41]

The task facing radical ecology, and any critical theory that seeks to be relevant in the age of global ecological crisis, is the attempt to formulate "the continuities between human history and natural history."

Reconciliation and Otherness

Habermas attempts to return to Horkheimer's original version of critical theory through the development of a theory of communicative action. This is an attempt to respond to what he sees as the dead end of totalizing critique, what critical theory became after Adorno joined the Institute for Social Research. Dialectic of

Enlightenment is critiqued and revealed as encapsulating a philosophical position Horkheimer and Adorno are forced to occupy, a position which leaves them no place to turn for a normative grounding of critique. They cannot provide a justification for moving beyond a society and a social theory that have closed in on themselves. Is Habermas correct in his analysis of the aporetic character of early critical theory, or are there still potentials within that theory which have been unexplored? Is there also still a developmental potential within early critical theory that can challenge the "linguistic turn" and its own problematic structure?

Habermas's analysis of what he feels is the version of critical theory too strongly influenced by Adorno begins by tracing the development of the critique of instrumental reason. Because instrumental reason is traced back, in Dialectic of Enlightenment and subsequent work by Adorno, to the beginnings of the history of the human species, the fundamental problem for critical social theory becomes finding some aspect of reason that can ground the critique itself. Critical theory undermines its own claims to insight when it relentlessly criticizes the reason it itself uses for interpretation of the extension of instrumental rationality to the whole of society. The basis for securing the critique of instrumental reason is Adorno's and Horkheimer's adoption of the concept/term of "mimesis," an idea representing the

possibility of approaching the other of nature without domination. Possibilities for transcending the total critique of reason are then found in the aesthetic realm where the mimetic relationship to the other is produced or reproduced indirectly. Habermas rejects this solution and attributes it to a long line of thought within Western philosophy, "The aporias of the negative-dialectical self-transcendence of philosophical thought give rise to the question, whether this situation is not merely the consequence of an approach that remains rooted in the philosophy of consciousness, fixated on the relation of subjectivity and self-preservation."[42] Habermas answers the question with a "paradigm shift," from the "philosophy of consciousness (or subject)" to that of "communicative action."

Habermas's critique of the earlier critical theorists emerges from an examination of what he believes to be their relationship to a "scientistic tendency" in Marx's writings. Habermas claims Marx tends to reductionistically view his project of the critique of political economy as a form of natural science, making it a mere extension of "scientism" which ideologically dominates both capitalist and state socialist societies. Scientism is problematic since it has become the methodological and philosophical basis for the extension of instrumental reason into all spheres of society. A "scientistic" self-understanding "identifies the limits of

objectivating knowledge with the limits of knowledge as such" resulting in science and technology adopting the additional role of a legitimating ideology.[43] Marx viewed the application of science and technology to the process of production as not only part of a system of alienation of labor, but also as the basis for the development of the forces of production to the point where they could provide an opportunity for the transcendence of the capitalist system. The material abundance provided by the development of production capacities under capitalism required an equivalent rationalization of the relations of production, those property relations affecting the distribution of material wealth. Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse saw the extension of technical rationality into all spheres of human existence, including the "relations of production," as the basis of the domination of both internal nature and the relations between individuals. This expansion of instrumental rationality resulted in Adorno's claim that, contrary to Hegel, "the whole is false." The progressive function of science and technology which Marx's theory depended on is in this critical view reversed, and instrumental rationality is therefore viewed as merely a more complete domination of human labor. Technical rationality's use in the relations of production eliminates the possibility for the development of revolutionary subjectivity, in fact reducing subjectivity itself to a mere function of the

production apparatus. There is then no possibility of the development of consciousness to the point where it has the "power to burst the system."[44] This results in the collapse of resistant subjectivity and the development, in Marcuse's terms, of the "one-dimensional" society. Marxist dialectics collapses.

The problem for critical theory then becomes finding a basis for opposition to the total system, both theoretically and in the form of an actual or potential subject of social transformation/revolution. This has been a problem of central concern for "Western Marxism" since the 1920s. Although Horkheimer and Adorno rely heavily on his theory of reification they do not accept the understanding of human nature as stated by Lukacs,

> While the process by which the worker is reified and becomes a commodity--so long as he does not consciously offer resistance to it--dehumanizes him and cripples and atrophies his "soul," it remains true that precisely his human nature is not changed into a commodity. He can, therefore, inwardly objectivate himself completely against this existence of his.[45]

It is precisely the view that the commodity form reaches into the deepest regions of subjectivity that prompts the Frankfurt School, beginning in the late 1930s and continuing for at least the next two decades, to develop its theories of fascism and mass culture. The prophesied revolution of the proletariat had not taken place in the advanced capitalist countries, and where

socialism had taken hold it had developed into Stalinist totalitarianism. The consciousness of the proletariat had not become revolutionary, rather it was regressive and barbaric; "Horkheimer and Adorno investigate empirically the psychic mechanisms by means of which the revolt of inner nature is refunctionalized into strengthening the forces against which it is directed."[46]

It is Adorno who carries out the relentless critique of existing society to its logical conclusion, and it is this conclusion, Habermas argues, which results in the undermining of the critique itself. Adorno is fully aware that the critique of reason must necessarily result in the turn of critique back on itself. This results in the critical self-reflection of critique: "That element of truth encountered through concepts, beyond their abstract compass, can show itself only in that which is suppressed, despised and discarded by concepts. It is the utopian hope of cognition to open up what is conceptless by means of concepts without (thereby) assimilating it to them. Such a notion of dialectic raises doubts as to its possibility."[47]

It is here where negative dialectics has carried through its relentless critique to the point of challenging its own foundations that Habermas elaborates the inadequacies of its response. The fundamental question for critique as extended through negative dialectics, and for any radical ecology that attempts to

adopt this interpretative structure is, "How then can we explicate the idea of reconciliation"?[48] For it is only with the idea of reconciliation that there can be any hope of overcoming the false totality created by the extension of instrumental rationality to the point of total domination.

Habermas reads Adorno's call for a reconciliation with nature as a mystical-metaphysical regression, and as an opportunity for revealing the superiority of his own theory of communicative rationality:

> The paradox in which the critique of instrumental reason is entangled, and which stubbornly resists even the most supple dialectic, consists then in this: Horkheimer and Adorno would have to put forward a theory of memesis, which, according to their own ideas, is impossible. Thus they are only being consistent when they do not attempt to explicate "universal reconciliation" as Hegel had done, as the unity of the identity and nonidentity of spirit and nature , but let it stand as a code, almost in the manner of Lebensphilosophie. At most, we can circle around this idea, drawing on images from Judaeo-Christian mysticism; the formula of the young Marx regarding the dialectical interconnection between the humanization of nature and the naturalization of humans already referred back to this tradition.[49]

Habermas chides Adorno for not developing a theory of mimesis. Adorno, with Horkheimer, called for being "mindful" or "remembering" nature in the subject, a process which might result in the recognition that the "truth" of culture and enlightenment is their opposition to domination.[50] Habermas asks how the idea of

reconciliation can be related to the "mimetic impulses" in a way that is not merely intuitive. Can this idea be related not simply through an attitude of "mindfulness" but discursively, in the form of a concept. The problem is that the reduction of a mimetic impulse, which is the foundation of a concept of reconciliation, to a specifiable meaning is the reproduction of the activity of identifying thought itself. To define mimesis is to return the subject to the bonds of instrumental reason. Habermas distinguishes between Marcuse and Adorno on this point with reference to their later works. Marcuse attempts to escape the paradox, while Adorno "no longer wanted to get out of this aporia."[51] By embracing the paradox Adorno is only able to "gesticulate" toward expressions of the truth in autonomous art, since the truth cannot be represented directly in philosophical discourse. Because the truth of the mimetic relationship is non-conceptual, negative dialectics becomes an exercise in "models" that gesture toward what lies outside themselves. When Adorno moves out of "discursive thought" to the "mindfulness of nature," Habermas charges him with abandoning the "goal of theoretical knowledge" and "interdisciplinary materialism" originally articulated by Horkheimer as the project of critical theory. This articulation of the critical theory tradition, as a dedication to interdisciplinary materialism, is what Habermas views as the basis for the authenticity of his

own project. His interpretation of the early Horkheimer is offered as the source of legitimacy for viewing his theory of communicative action as an extension of the tradition. Be that as it may, Habermas still goes on to claim he is reconstructively following the intentions of Adorno's more theological, mystical version of critical theory.

Habermas claims the name "mimesis" is the name of what has been destroyed by instrumental reason. He believes Adorno cannot provide a conceptual framework to explain what is lost when instrumental reason first dominates nature and then is extended to the domination of society and its individual members. Curiously, Habermas claims the term mimesis also calls forth certain intended associations. It is here that Habermas's analysis suppresses that which is of the most interest to the radical ecologist, in order to justify Habermas's own project. He claims that "mimesis" calls for a concept of imitation, "which designates a relation between persons in which the one accommodates to the other, identifies with the other, empathizes with the other."[52] Habermas claims the intended association with imitation, and its implication with interpersonal relationships, cannot be reduced to the "cognitive-instrumentally determined subject-object relations." The mimetic capacity is impulse and "counts as the sheer opposite of reason."[53] He then argues that the "rational core" of mimesis can

only be "laid open" if there is a shift to the paradigm of linguistic philosophy where cognitive-instrumental rationality can be demonstrated to be properly understood as part of "communicative rationality." Habermas further quotes Adorno where the latter is providing some indication of the relationship of reconciliation and freedom, "The state of reconciliation would not annex what is unfamiliar or alien with philosophical imperialism; instead, it would find its happiness in the fact that the latter, in the closeness allowed, remains something distant and different, something that is beyond being either heterogeneous or proper."[54] Immediately following this quote Habermas asserts, "Adorno describes reconciliation in terms of an intact intersubjectivity that is only established and maintained in the reciprocity of mutual understanding based on free recognition."[55] He then continues his analysis, increasingly bringing out the structure of his own theory.

Habermas's explication of the term "mimesis" as well as the idea of reconciliation is done with an eye toward bridging the gap between his own project and that of the earlier critical theorists. What is of analytical importance here is the displacement of Adorno's text at the hands of Habermas, and the resulting repression of key elements. In Habermas's interpretation of mimesis he links it to imitation and conceives of this as an intersubjective phenomenon, but in the same gesture he

excludes the non-discursive elements of the idea of mimesis. If the point of Habermas's analysis is more than a mere reductivist dismissal of Adorno's thought; if instead it is an attempt at what he labeled in his reappropriation of Marx's theory of historical materialism as a "reconstruction," then it must be evaluated on its adequacy to this concept, a concept which has become increasingly central to Habermas's project as a whole.[56] As represented in Habermas's work reconstruction "signifies taking a theory apart and putting it back together again in a new form in order to attain more fully the goal it has set for itself."[57] If Habermas's reconstruction of critical theory is to be challenged, it must occur from several directions or levels simultaneously. First, it must be challenged on its own terms, showing that it is not adequate to the tasks it sets for itself. Second, to avoid a charge of simply repeating the problems of totalizing critique, and therefore arriving in the same aporetic fix as Adorno, an alternative version of the tradition of critical theory must be rescued from that supposed dead end. This might be achieved by developing those concepts and constellations within Adorno's thought. In addition to the concepts and non-concepts of reconciliation and mimesis, other terms of importance in this alternative reconstruction of critical theory will be "exact fantasy," suffering, nature, history, and, of course, domination.

There is considerable precedent for this alternative version of critical theory.[58] It can be viewed as the further development of the immanent critique of critical theory itself. It is sympathetic to the attempt not only of the early critical theorists, but the recent general trend of contemporary thought to overcome the "subject-object" dualism attributed to Western philosophy as a whole. Criticism of this attempt to overcome philosophical dualisms and their hierarchical structure is at the heart of Habermas's general critique of contemporary efforts of critical social theory of all kinds, not only those of the early Frankfurt theorists. He expounds on this in his The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity, condemning all efforts which have not made the turn toward the theory of communicative action, or attempted to complete the "unfinished project of Enlightenment."[59]

A two step, immanent critique of Habermas can be assembled from various sources already unconvinced by his efforts. Habermas can first be charged with unjustly dismissing Adorno's efforts to develop the concepts of mimesis and reconciliation. Rather than viewing "mimesis" as the opposite of reason and therefore irrational (thereby repeating the subject-object dualism at the level of the description of reason itself, as mind or spirit, opposed to nature), this term can more adequately be viewed as a representation of the "pre-rational."[60] A more consistent analysis of mimesis would indicate the

multiple meanings of the term that develop from its early use in Dialectic of Enlightenment.[61] The term is used not only as placeholder for nature, which comes to be dominated by instrumental rationality, as theorized in the work of the early critical theorists, but also as the stand-in for the non-dominating relationship of humans with nature, a relationship not reducible to communicative or discursive conceptualizations. It is this non-dominative relationship which the term mimesis represents in the work of Adorno. This non-dominative relationship is not reducible to a model based on intersubjective recognition, as Habermas asserts. Martin Jay quotes from Adorno's works on music to develop this double notion of mimesis, "Through its pure materiality, music is the art in which the pre-rational mimetic impulse asserts itself irreducibly and appears simultaneously in constellations with the march of progressive natural and material domination."[62]

The attempt by Habermas to reduce mimesis to a "rational core" of communicative rationality is unjustified. Adorno argued against the reducibility of a non-dominating experience of the relationship between subject and object to any model based on intersubjectivity. Adorno's work is more plausibly viewed as an attempt to explore the possibility of representing philosophically the conceptually unrepresentable experience of non-domination. Negative Dialectics and

Aesthetic Theory are more adequately understood as explications of a receptivity to nature or otherness in its different forms, a "sensuous receptivity" that is still possible, at least for Adorno, in the relationships of, at least, autonomous art. An understanding of sense, or receptive experience, is explicitly linked by Adorno to the rejection of metaphysical understandings of the subject and subjectivity. It is in the rejection of the idea of a constitutive subject, the central concern of the "philosophy of consciousness," that Adorno also rejects a philosophy which asserts the possibility for an exhaustion of meaning by the subject's self-constitutive activity, "The concept of sense involves an objectivity beyond all 'making': a sense that is 'made' is already fictitious. It duplicates the subject, however collective, and defrauds it of what it seemingly granted."[63]

The resurrection of Adorno's perspective from Habermas's unwarranted reductivist termination thus includes a defense against the further charges of mysticism, and any concomitant philosophical regression. Habermas believes this regression would be the unavoidable methodological consequence of a revival of the theological concept of reconciliation. From his earliest work, before the "dark" turn of the Dialectic of Enlightenment, and the death of Benjamin, when it would seem that the Kabbalistic influences on Adorno would be at their most unguarded, he

explicitly rejected the metaphysical understanding of concepts such as reconciliation;

> Authentic philosophic interpretation does not meet up with a fixed meaning which already lies behind the question, but lights it up suddenly and momentarily, and consumes it at the same time....Interpretation of the unintentional through a juxtaposition of the real by the power of such interpretation is the programme of every authentically materialist knowledge, a programme to which the materialist procedure does all the more justice, the more it distances itself from every "meaning" of its objects and the less it relates itself to an implicit, quasi-religious meaning.[64]

The operations of mimesis in any possible humans-to-nature reconciliation are not reducible to the conceptual structure of discourse, regardless of how communicative rationality is construed. Neither can the meaning resulting from the interpretation of the non-dominating experience of subject and object be legitimately dismissed as theological. The complex relationship between interpretation and the sensuous experience of the subject, even that found in the experience of autonomous art, cannot be reduced to the traditional terms of modern aesthetic rationality, of the harmonious reconciliation of subject and object. The experience of the possibility of a non-dominating relationship with "nature" must be represented very differently;

> All making in art is one long struggle to say what that made object itself can never be and what art itself can never know: that is what Geist or spirit means in aesthetics. And this is where the idea of

> art as the restoration of a repressed nature submerged in the dynamics of history comes in. Nature, whose imago art aspires to be, does not yet exist; what is true in art is a non-existent. It comes to coincide with art within that Other, which a reason fixated on identities and bent on reducing it to sheer materiality calls Nature. That other is, however, neither a unity nor a single concept, but rather the multiple.[65]

Adorno and Radical Ecology

The task facing a radical ecological entry into the tradition of critical theory must take these insights of Adorno and build on them. Included in this project must be a critique of Habermas which can be staged as immanent to the tradition of critical theory itself. This has been initiated elsewhere, including several confrontations with Habermas by Fred Dallmayr. A few preliminary gestures can help set the stage for the more extensive critique to follow. The above quotes from Adorno can be viewed not only as textual evidence to contradict Habermas's reading of Adorno, but simultaneously and implicitly as a counter-critique of Habermas from the perspective of an alternative version of critical theory. Dallmayr challenges Habermas's reading of the "discourse of modernity," especially his characterization of Hegel, and Nietzsche.[66] Habermas, rather than having escaped the "aporias of the philosophy of the subject" is shown to repeat the same problems, the antinomies and polar oppositions, of traditional metaphysics.[67] Habermas concludes his analysis of the discourse of modernity by

asserting "the difference between life-world and (communicative) rationality cannot be bridged or reconciled in modernity."[68] The increasing differentiation of society into independent spheres with their own logics or rationalities requires not the reconciliation of these rationalities at the level of "worldviews" and the everyday life-world, claims Habermas, instead modern society requires a "balancing" of the spheres, that is, the appropriate containment of the rationalities of the economic and bureaucratic/administrative systems (which are mediated by money and power, respectively). This "balancing" can be accomplished through the proper development of other spheres of rationality, those of morality and aesthetics, by the formal process of reaching agreements or consensus about the respective processes themselves. Dallmayr contends that this "solution" is absent of substance and fails to provide any support or grounds which might motivate participants in these discourses to even desire consensus rather than simply continuing the trend of modernity toward increasingly instrumental and strategic action:

> Little or no substantive changes seem required to accomplish this task or to correct pathological trends....As it seems to me, modern cleavages (Entzweiungen) and pathologies exceed the capacities of a balancing mechanism. In light of rampantly possessive lifestyles and the predatory thrust of technology, exiting from

> subjectivity involves more than procedural adjustments: namely, a substantive paradigm shift opening the subject to its otherness.[69]

These objections can be viewed, from the perspective of Adorno's negative dialectics, as pointing to Habermas's entanglement in identity thinking. He collapses the potentials of Adorno's discussions of mimesis and reconciliation into a framework that loses its substantive content. This content can then be returned to the communications theoretic framework only artificially from the outside. The theory of communicative action repeats, against its intentions, the process of metaphysics, of identifying thought. Nature maintains its position as material to be dominated, and subjectivity is to be reduced to normalcy, equivalence, consensus. Nothing escapes the desire to reduce all otherness to the self-sameness of the identifying subject.

However, having brought Habermas's theory of communicative rationality within the framework of immanent critique and ideology critique, revealing its complicity in the logic of domination is not the same as adequately addressing his critique of negative dialectics. Beyond indicating possible alternative conceptualizations of the constellation whose elements include mimesis and reconciliation is the need to address Habermas's charge of a residual "utopianism" which remains even after the totalization of critique. This is the real thrust of Habermas's charges of mysticism and metaphysics, which

result from his analysis of the early theorists' attempts to develop an understanding of the possibility of reconciliation of humans and nature in its various forms. The concepts of reconciliation and redemption required some vision of a future society, when conditions of domination and oppression would be overcome. If instrumental rationality has extended itself completely into all relations, to the point of evaporating all access to a subjectivity which could resist, what can ground the hope for a future society of true freedom and happiness? What grounds critical theory's own claims to access to a critical consciousness? Does not Adorno's position remain abstractly utopian, relativistic, aporetic? Previously, any historical, material critique found a transformative or revolutionary subject to pin its hopes on: "Marx was able to avoid the charge of utopianism in his day by being able to identify the subject of revolutionary activity with a class which, he argued, had the potential power to transcend conditions of domination."[70] The genesis of the Frankfurt efforts was the response to the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, the rise of fascism in Germany, and "mass culture" in the U.S., all of which seemed to deny the possibility of revolutionary subjectivity.

The challenge to radical ecology is to develop an interpretive framework that can adequately address the problems and questions of the tradition of critical theory, now within the historical context of a global

ecological crisis. The fundamental constellation of "the domination of nature" and other concepts and categories used by the early critical theorists must be combined with critical categories emerging under new historical circumstances. This process forms a new constellation; the radical ecological subject. This new constellation can be viewed as an attempt to at least partially answer the challenge to "succeed in formulating the continuities between human history and natural history so carefully that they are weak enough to be plausible and yet strong enough to permit us to recognize man's place in the cosmos."[71]

ENDNOTES

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2. Tokar, Brian, The Green Alternative: Creating an Ecological Future (San Pedro: R.& E. Miles, 1987), p. 40.

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4. Tokar, p. 79.

5. Habermas, Jurgen, "The current potentials for protest are very difficult to classify, because scenes, groupings, and topics change very rapidly." The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. II, p. 393.

6. Marcuse, Herbert, Negations: Essays in Critical Theory (Boston: Beacon, 1968), "The Affirmative Character of Culture," pp. 88-133.

7. Dobson, Andrew, Green Political Thought (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), p. 5.

8. Bookchin, Murray, The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy (Palo Alto, California: Cheshire Books, 1982), p. 21.

9. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 21.

10. Tobias, Michael, Ed., Deep Ecology (San Diego: Avant Books, 1985).

11. Tobias, p. 256; Arne Naess, "Identification as a Source of Deep Ecological Attitudes."

12. Birkeland, Janis, "Ecofeminism: Linking Theory and Practice," Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature, Greta Gaard, Ed. (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1993), p.18.

13. Spretnak, Charlene, "Ecofeminism: Our Roots and Flowering," Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism, Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein, Eds. (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990), p. 5.

14. Rensenbrink, John, The Greens and Transformative Politics (San Pedro: R.&E. Miles, 1992), p. 99-100.

15. Horkheimer, Max, Critical Theory (New York: Continuum, 1986), p. 188.

16. Horkheimer, p. 195.

17. Horkheimer, p. 200.

18. Horkheimer, p. 208.

19. Horkheimer, pp. 210-211.

20. Horkheimer, p. 211.

21. Horkheimer, p. 215.

22. Horkheimer, p. 220.

23. Horkheimer, p. 220.

24. Horkheimer, p. 227.

25. Horkheimer, p. 229.

26. Horkheimer, p. 229.

27. Horkheimer, p. 231.

28. Horkheimer, p. 230.

29. Horkheimer, p. 230.

30. Horkheimer, p. 234.

31. Habermas claims to be following the original research program as outlined by Horkheimer in early Institute papers, especially with regard to interdisciplinary research. The relationship of Habermas to Horkheimer and Adorno and the claims to the tradition of Critical Theory are discussed in Robert Hullot-Kentor, "Back to Adorno," Telos, 81, Fall 1989. For examples of Habermas's reading of the relation between Horkheimer and Adorno, in English, see The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity Frederick G. Lawrence, Trans. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992), and Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. I, last section.

32. For indications about Adorno's view of the relation of critical theory to the traditional topic of philosophy, "the good life," see the introduction to Minima Moralia.

33. Habermas discusses the need for the "linguistic turn" in critical theory and in philosophy generally in the final section of Vol. I of The Theory of Communicative Action. For an explication of the relation of Habermas's earlier work to the "linguistic turn" see Albrecht Wellmer, "Communications and Emancipation: Reflections on the Linguistic Turn in Critical Theory," in On Critical Theory, John O'Neill, Ed. (New York: Seabury, 1976).

34. Habermas, Jurgen, Legitimation Crisis, Thomas McCarthy, Trans. (Boston: Beacon, 1975).

35. Habermas, Jurgen, Knowledge and Human Interest Jeremy J. Shapiro, Trans. (Boston: Beacon, 1971); Communication and the Evolution of Society, Thomas McCarthy, Trans. (Boston: Beacon, 1979); The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. I and II., Thomas McCarthy, Trans. (Boston: Beacon, 1981 and 1987) (hereafter cited TCA I & TCA II).

36. Agger, Ben, The Discourse of Domination (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1992). Douglas Kellner, Critical Theory, Marxism and Modernity (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1989).

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39. See Thomas McCarthy, The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: MIT Press, 1985), pp. 20ff and Section 2.5.

40. Habermas, Jurgen, Toward a Rational Society (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), p. 87. McCarthy p. 22.

41. Habermas, Jurgen, "Questions and Counterquestions" Habermas and Modernity, Richard Bernstein, Ed. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991), pp. 210-211.

42. Habermas, TCA I, p. 366.

43. Habermas, TCA I, p. 367.

44. Marx, Communist Manifesto.

45. Quoted in Habermas, TCA, Vol. I, p. 368.

46. Habermas, TCA I, p. 370.

47. Quoted in Habermas, TCA I., p. 373, from Negative Dialectik, Gesammelte Schriften (Frankfurt, 1973).

48. Habermas, TCA I, p. 374.

49. Habermas, TCA I, p. 383.

50. Habermas, TCA I, p. 384. Habermas's translation; "Through such mindfulness (Eingedenken) of nature in the subject, in the achievement of which lies enclosed the misunderstood truth of all culture, enlightenment is opposed to domination as such...." Cumming translation; "By virtue of this remembrance of nature in the subject, in whose fulfillment the unacknowledged truth of all culture lies hidden, enlightenment is universally opposed to domination...." Dialectic of Enlightenment, p. 40.

51. Habermas, TCA I, p. 384.

52. Habermas, TCA I, p. 390.

53. Habermas, TCA I, p. 390.

54. Habermas, TCA I, p. 390, from Negative Dialektik, p. 192. The standard English translation reads, "The reconciled condition would not be the philosophical imperialism of annexing the alien. Instead, its happiness would lie in the fact that the alien, in the proximity it is granted, remains what is distant and different, beyond the heterogeneous and beyond that which is one's own." Negative Dialectics, p. 191.

55. Habermas, TCA I, p. 390.

56. Habermas discusses "reconstruction" in Communication and the Evolution of Society, especially p. 95. See also, McCarthy, The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas, pp. 276ff; Martin Jay, Marxism and Totality (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1984), Chapter 15.

57. Habermas, TCA I, p. 95.

58. The alternative versions of critical theory, the Adorno and Marcuse versions, and their remaining potentials for providing insight into the contemporary situation, have been approached in various ways. For an example of the development of the relationship of Marcuse and ecology see Douglas Kellner, Critical Theory, Marxism and Modernity. What will be attempted here is a philosophically more rigorous incorporation of several developments. An attempt is made to bring together a critique of Habermas, a more sympathetic reading of Adorno, and other developments not wholly alien to the tradition of critical theory from within radical ecological thought itself. There have been efforts to develop this alternative form of critical theory, although not explicitly with regard to the radical ecology movement. See Michael Reid "Going Beyond Habermas: Rethinking Critical Theory," Radical Philosophy 64, Summer 1993, p. 63. Also, Axel Honneth's Introduction to The Critique of Power, Kenneth Baynes, Trans. (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: MIT Press, 1991), although the brief consideration of Adorno's "rehabilitation" is staged by Honneth with respect to critical theorists who have adopted Habermas's version of critical theory.

59. Habermas, Jurgen, The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity, also see Cultural-Political Interventions in the Unfinished Project of Enlightenment, Axel Honneth, Thomas McCarthy, Claus Offe, and Albrecht Wellmer, Eds. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992).

60. Jay, Martin, Adorno (Cambridge: Harvard Univ., 1984), p. 156.

61. The term may or may not have been appropriated from Walter Benjamin, or more accurately, Benjamin's use

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62. Jay, Adorno, p. 156. Quoted from Adorno, "Ideen zur Musikosiologie," p. 17.

63. Jay, Adorno, p. 77, from "The Actuality of Philosophy," Telos 31, Spring 1977, p. 127.

64. Quoted in Jay, Adorno, pp. 77-78.

65. From Adorno, Negative Dialectics, p. 376.

66. Dallmayr, Fred, Margins of Political Discourse (Albany: State Univ. of New York, 1989), Chapter 3.

67. Dallmayr, Margins, p.71.

68. Dallmayr, Margins, p.67.

69. Dallmayr, Margins, p.72.

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71. Habermas, Jurgen, "Questions and Counterquestions," in Bernstein, Habermas and Modernity, p. 211.

PART II.
CRITIQUE OF RADICAL ECOLOGY

SECTION I.
CRITIQUE OF DEEP ECOLOGY

CHAPTER 3

DEEP ECOLOGY AND METHODOLOGY

Arne Naess and Deep Ecology Methodology

One of the primary philosophical justifications for the deep ecology aspect of the ecology movement comes from the work of Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess. It is his "deep questioning method" that forms the basis of the philosophy of deep ecology and the origin of the name. The deep questioning method has itself been questioned by some of those sympathetic to the general orientation of deep ecology, finding this justification for a "biocentric" or "ecocentric" understanding of human beings' relationship to nature inadequate. One of those critics, Warwick Fox, has attempted to salvage Naess's deep ecology work by emphasizing instead another aspect of Naess's methodology, that of identification. Fox also turns to humanistic psychology and its offshoot, transpersonal psychology, to provide a psychological justification for the deep ecological identification with nature. However, this too results in a problematic philosophical position, or in fact no philosophical position, a stance without logical justification, a stance Fox endorses for strategic reasons. The lack of logical justification is not in itself a disqualification of Fox's argument, but the consequences for political action based on a "self" resulting from the adoption of this

intuitionist method do create fundamental problems for any ecological politics.

The early critical theorists provide an alternative understanding of the relation of the human to nature (subject to object) relationship and its potential for an emancipatory political practice. With the concept of mimesis as used especially by Adorno, it is possible to orient a critical understanding of the relation to nature without falling into intuitionism, and without being trapped in the consequences of a "logical system."

Arne Naess and the Origins of Deep Ecology

Arne Naess has not published a work that explicitly and exclusively addresses the methodological foundations of the idea of deep ecology, however, these foundations or as he calls them "fundamentals" appear scattered throughout his published work, in other deep ecologists' work, and most importantly in a critical analysis by fellow "ecocentrist" Warwick Fox. Fox divides Naess's idea of deep ecology into three aspects, the formal, the popular and the philosophical, and critiques each, attempting to salvage the intent of the idea of deep ecology, but in the form of a "transpersonal ecology" based on insights from transpersonal psychology.[1] The "popular" sense of deep ecology is merely the recognition that a variety of philosophical and political positions now oppose themselves to the continuation of modern

industrial civilization as manifested in its relation to the global environment through multiple examples of ecosystem destruction and species extinction. Naess's "popular" sense of deep ecology is contrasted with the "fundamental" which challenges the present relationship to "nature" more fundamentally than the "environmentalists" who continue to desire the benefits of the modern industrial society while simply addressing environmental problems from within an ideology that views these problems as amenable to technological, administrative or other existing remedies. Those who do not question the basic assumptions of modern industrial society, but merely attempt to alleviate its most unpleasant or harmful effects on humans, are characterized as anthropocentric, reformist environmentalists. They have a "shallow" understanding of environmental/ecological problems. Those who have understood that the environmental crisis questions the fundamental assumptions and activities of modern industrial society have taken a "deep" perspective of the problems. Naess and his most prominent American proselytes, Bill Devall and George Sessions, believe anyone who deeply questions existing society's actions and consequences will come to a certain understanding of the ecological situation, an understanding which includes some common or general components as well as such specific understandings as that of the "intrinsic value" of the richness and diversity of life. One general fundamental

would be that the complexity and richness of the biosphere or planet is severely threatened, and requires immediate action in response.[2] Fox summarizes, "It is clear that the general orientation that they (Naess and Sessions) advocate is concerned with encouraging a supportive, live-and-let-live, or symbiotic attitude on the part of humans not only toward <u>members</u> of the ecosphere but even toward all identifiable <u>entities</u> or <u>forms</u> in the ecosphere."[3] Fox's point in the presentation of this aspect of Naess's position is to indicate the extent Naess is concerned with a "general orientation" toward ecological awareness, leaving room for a multitude of non-dogmatic approaches to solving the ecological crisis. However, the philosophical and political problems this position generate cannot be dismissed by adopting a laissez-faire attitude of tolerance when radically different results may result from equally "deep" philosophical or ecological positions. Naess's belief that all "deep questioning" will lead to a roughly equivalent general orientation to ecological problems is simply misconceived. Fox demonstrates this inadequacy in regard to the "formal" sense of deep ecology Naess developed. However, Fox wishes to retain the truth of the popular sense of ecology by reformulating Naess's "philosophical" sense of deep ecology with the help of transpersonal psychology.

Fox critiques Naess's formal sense of deep ecology examining its presentation in both published and

unpublished works by Naess. Naess's formal sense of deep ecology is heavily influenced by analytical philosophy and is established by definition, but it is the acknowledged possibilities for developing "deep" but ecologically destructive philosophical positions which is the troubling aspect of the formulation. Fox quotes extensively from the unpublished manuscript:

> The difference between the shallow and the deep movement is one of deepness of argumentation, and of differences in conclusions. In the shallow movement in favor of decreasing pollution and economy of resources, positions are tacitly assumed valid which are questioned in the deeper movement....I subscribe to the hypothesis that when the deeper issues are introduced in a debate, the conclusions tend towards those of the deeper movement....because "going deep" is the essential point, I recommend that a point of view might be characterized as "deep" even if it defended some of the most wasteful and socially destructive policies, namely, if it were derived from a coherent philosophy answering deep questions. Whatever philosophy, whether Western or Eastern, we take as a starting point, it will not be compatible with, or at least not suitable for a defense of, present unecological policies.[4]

Naess's procedure or method for establishing philosophical depth is to begin with an intuitively derived assumption which he calls a "fundamental" or a "norm." The details of the procedure are not of as much importance here as the consequences.[5] Deep ecology is defined in formal terms, not on the content or substance of the procedure, although Naess believes all deep questioning will result in the same general orientation

toward ecological problems. This leads Naess to the following challenge; "I am tempted to say that there will be no examples [of nonecocentric views being derived from fundamentals]. Serious attempts to find a deep justification of the way life on the planet as treated today... are doomed to failure. What I say is meant as a challenge; is there a philosopher somewhere who would like to try?"[6] Fox takes up the challenge and asserts, "It is my contention, which I propose to substantiate below, that Naess's intended meaning, that is, Naess's formal sense of deep ecology, does not constitute a defensible sense of deep ecology."[7]

Fox then uses Naess's formal methodology to show that both anthropocentric and anti-ecological positions can be established by positing certain "fundamentals" that have at least as much depth as Naess's intuitive assumption of "Self-realization!" (The exclamation mark is the idiosyncratic sign Naess uses to designate those "norms" that serve as the foundation for further norms and hypotheses. This helps explain the name of the most recognizable of the deep ecology activist groups, Earth First!.) Fox's counter examples begin with the two fundamental norms "Obey God!" and "Evolution!" which result in conclusions for practical action in the forms of domination of the earth and genetic engineering, respectively.[8] Since these alternative fundamentals are in fact actually held by many individuals in existing

society, the demonstration not only indicates the logical difficulties of Naess's formal understanding of the idea of deep ecology, but it also indicates the inadequacies of this sense of deep ecology for a radical ecological politics. Fox concludes that the formal sense of deep ecology is untenable, and if the popular sense of deep ecology is to be sustainable it will depend on what Fox characterizes as the "philosophical" sense of deep ecology. One of the effects of this challenge to the formal understanding of deep ecology is to question the term itself. Since vastly different results can be achieved by basing alternative normative systems on fundamentals that are equally "deep" but practically contradictory, the term "deep" itself seems to require rethinking. The original justification for the terminology is untenable, depth of questioning, so is there any way to retain what has become an important signifier in the ecological struggle? Fox prefers to abandon the term in favor of "ecocentric ecology," a term more directly indicating his belief in the importance of transpersonal identification. However, if Fox's own position is shown to be philosophically, logically and practically problematic, what status does "deep ecology" have, and can a more appropriate concept or concepts replace this radical ecological identity? Does an ecocentric or modified deep ecological approach to "nature" produce an alternative ecological subject, one

whose different awareness enables it to respond in a non-dominating or non-destructive manner toward nature?

Warwick Fox and Transpersonal Ecology

With the untenability of the "formal" sense of deep ecology, Fox turns to the "philosophical" sense that Arne Naess also developed. Before examining Fox's elaboration of the concept of "transpersonal ecology" it is necessary to understand the role of the process of identification in the development or maturing of what Naess calls the "ecological self." Naess claims the process of identification is at the heart of the development of the ecological self, "The ecological self of a person is that with which this person identifies. This key sentence (rather than definition) about the self, shifts the burden of clarification from the term 'self' to that of 'identification,' or rather 'process of identification.'"[9]

Besides Naess's unpublished work, Fox also examines other, published statements of Naess's understanding of the relationship between the process of identification and the ecological self. In "Identification as the Source of Deep Ecological Attitudes" Naess provides an extensive defense of his understanding of identification.[10] Naess claims those in the deep ecology movement have in common certain concerns and "ways of experiencing nature and diversity of cultures."[11] Naess has listed in various places some of the basic principles of his own deep

ecological philosophy. This version of deep ecology he calls an "ecosophy," and since he claims multiple, individual ecosophies are possible and encouraged, he labels his own version "Ecosophy T." Central principles of Ecosophy T are the concepts of self-realization, identification and the Self (with the capital S).

Naess further develops his understanding of the ecological self and its realization by distinguishing the deep ecological concept of "Self" from the "egoistic," utilitarian, or instrumental self, usually identified in psychology as the ego. In opposition to the egoistic self, Naess quotes several passages from various prophets and teachers to demonstrate his understanding of the Self, passages primarily derived from religious traditions especially that of Buddhism. Naess summarizes the insights by revealing, "Self-realization in its absolute maximum is, as I see it, the mature experience of oneness in diversity as depicted in the above verse."[12] Because of his reliance on these mystical and meditative traditions to indicate the intended concept of the Self which develops with ecological awareness, Naess feels it is then necessary to attempt to indicate the difference between the deep ecological understanding of the self and any mystical state. Naess rightly notes that the mystical traditions tend to stress certain aspects of experience that deny or dissolve the individual self into a "nondiversified supreme whole."[13] These mystical

traditions are also criticized from a positivist and scientific perspective for their vagueness and confusion, describing an experience that seems to be unsustainable in normal, everyday activity. Naess's understanding of the process of identification necessary for ecological Self-realization is a self-conscious attempt to deal with the objections to the mystical or meditative conception of a non-egoistic ecological consciousness. The burden of the position is to indicate how it is possible to develop a "wider self" through a process of identification that does not collapse all distinctions into an undifferentiated oneness or wholeness. Naess defines the process of developing the ecological self, "Identification is a spontaneous, non-rational, but not irrational, process through which the interest or interests of another being are reacted to as our own interest or interests."[14] This understanding of identification leads to the "obliteration of the experience of distinction between ego and alter, between me and the sufferer."[15] It is of course this claim that generates the problems connected to the charge of mysticism. Naess says this experience of identification with the other in joy as well as in suffering, is only momentary or intermittent, and retains the recognition that there are different individuals. However, it is exactly this relation between identity and difference, and the resulting questions it raises about the possibility for retaining the uniqueness of the

individual, and for its potential for spontaneous or free activity, that is central to so much of contemporary radical social theory and can be found as a core concern of the early Frankfurt theorists.

Naess claims that "shallow" ecology or environmentalism, attempts to explain or explain away deep, intense or wide identification as a psychological function of the ego, "In western social science, self-realization is the term most often used for the competitive development of a person's talents and the pursuit of an individual's specific interests (Maslow and others)."[16] Instead of understanding identification as merely the intensification of the structures of the ego (which includes "altruistic" activity that is little more that self-interest "rightly understood"), Naess borrows from Spinoza to indicate an alternative understanding of the self which "strives to develop its essence." In this borrowed understanding, the urge of the self to "persevere in one's being" is not merely an urge to survive, but is a "natural" urge toward "higher levels of 'freedom' (<u>libertas</u>)."[17] This is a form of wider identification which should not be confused with an altruism based on the suppression of selfishness, the sacrifice of one's own interest for the sake of others. In the unecological, psychologistic understanding of altruism there is the requirement of "alienation" if someone is to act in the interest of another. According to Naess, alienation from

one's own interest prevents full maturation of the individual, so altruistic behavior is immature behavior. Alternatively, alienation and identification with others should be understood as opposites. Naess argues that the world or "reality" consists of original "wholes" which have become fragmented through human "development." Rather than viewing the world as does the dominant understanding which asserts isolated items or things become lumped together to produce recognizable information, "reality consists of wholes which we cut down."[18] So for Naess identification is a reversal of our alienation from the real world and our true interests, "In other words: there is not, strictly speaking, a primordial causal process of identification, but one of largely unconscious alienation which is overcome in experiences of identity."[19] Furthermore, the process of identification is a "natural" process in that it is the consequence of the maturation of the individual. This understanding of the process of identification, according to Naess, is in opposition to the dominant form of psychology founded on the ego-alter (subject-object) distinction or duality. The eco-philosophical necessity of "altruistic" behavior is eliminated with that distinction, "The psychology and philosophy of the (comprehensive) Self insists that the gradual maturing of a person <u>inevitably</u> widens and deepens the self through the process of identification."[20] This is a strong

statement about (male?) ontogenetic and phylogenetic development. It requires an answer to the question, "What makes this maturation "inevitable" and how is it, more specifically, a process of identification?" A critical questioning of this position must address not only the status of the various identities and totalities involved, but their relationship to history, to the ongoing interaction between society and nature, and the transformation of the possibilities of identification which have taken place as a result of historical change.

Naess begins to address this problem of history and the conditions under which the process of identification can occur: "The notion of maturing has to do with getting out what is latent in the nature of a being. Some learning is presupposed, but thinking of present conditions of competition in industrial, economic growth societies, specialized learning may inhibit the process of maturing. A competitive cult of talents does not favor Self-realisation. As a consequence of the imperfect conditions for maturing as persons, there is much pessimism or disbelief in relation to the widening of the Self, and more stress on developing altruism and moral pressure."[21] When Naess speaks negatively of moral pressure he is implying a specific understanding of morality, that of Kantian morality, with the same distinctions Habermas makes between morality and ethics.[22] Naess argues that the emphasis on a moral solution is

necessary for those who attempt to solve the problems of increasing alienation from the perspective of a radical distinction of ego and alter, of subject and object. Kantian inspired animal rights philosophies call for moral action, such as not inflicting suffering on animals, not because of the animal's suffering itself, but because of the effect it has on the human subject. As Naess explains, "When we decide ethically to be kind to them, it should be because of the favorable effect of kindness on us--a strange doctrine."[23] Naess asserts that "suffering" is "perhaps the most potent source of identification," because of the spontaneous reaction to the suffering of other creatures by human beings, which occurs "naturally" unless "special social conditions" inhibit that spontaneity. Spontaneous acts of goodness toward the suffering would not be considered moral actions by Kant, but rather would be labeled "beautiful." Against Kant, Naess favors the beautiful action over the moral.[24]

If this appreciation of the beautiful act as an indication of deep identification still seems inadequately defined, and unsatisfying as a coherent philosophy of deep ecology, it is a problem Naess himself recognizes:

> The above seems to point in the direction of philosophical mysticism, but the fourth term, Self-realisation, breaks in and reinstates the central position of the individual--even if the capital S is used to express something beyond narrow selves. The widening and deepening of the individual selves <u>somehow</u> never makes them

> into one "mass". Or into an organism in which every cell is programmed so as to let the organism function as one single, integrated being. How to work out this in a fairly precise way I do not know. It is a meager consolation that I do not find that others have been able to do this in their contemplation of the pair unity-plurality. 'In unity diversity!' yes, but how? As a vague postulate it has a specific function within a total view, however imperfectly.[25]

Even with Naess's faith in the possibilities of Self-realization and his insistence that deep ecology is not just another form of mysticism, he shares with critical theory two views about the present. From the deep ecological perspective contemporary history is not one of "progress" but of catastrophe, "Human conduct still today as a pioneer invading species present (sic) a catastrophic cultural lag. It is a conduct systematically counteracting the process of identification with its fruit of compassion and living light on Earth."[26] This catastrophic view extends beyond simply a cultural lag, "The increasing destruction plus increasing information about the destruction is apt to elicit strong feelings of sorrow, despair, desperate actions and tireless efforts to save what is left....So far as I can see, the most probable course of events is continued devastation of conditions of life on this planet, combined with a powerless upsurge of sorrow and lamentation."[27]

Ecocentric Remedies

Warwick Fox has attempted to further develop the concept of ecological identification by introducing the work of transpersonal psychology into the deep ecology philosophical position outlined by Naess, but even this effort retains the vagueness that gives deep ecology the appearance of mysticism or romantic nature worship. Fox examines three varieties of identification: personal, ontological and cosmological. Personal identification is the familiar form of the process of identification, those people and objects closest to us, the ones we encounter on an everyday or intimate basis that are most readily assimilated to our sense of self. Immediate family may be regarded as essentially part of self even to the extent that one's life may be sacrificed to protect those with whom we identify. Fox rejects personal identification as an adequate basis for deep ecology since it can as easily produce aggressive and dominating behavior as nurturance and caring. Those or that which is farthest removed from one's identifications may in fact be viewed as a threat to those closest to the self, that is, those furthest away will be perceived as the threatening "other." Although deep ecologists tend to speak as if their identifications are personal identifications, Fox argues that this is largely due to the difficulties of putting into words the

wider or deeper identifications characteristic of those who share the understandings of deep ecologists.

Fox's briefest treatment is given to ontological identification, "Ontologically based identification refers to experiences of commonality with all that is that are brought about through deep-seated realization of the fact _that_ things are."[28] Fox states that ontologically based identification is notoriously difficult to put into words, but that it is probably a common experience and one that is developed through the practice of Zen Buddhism. Fox also states that Martin Heidegger has come closest to putting this sense of identification into words. Fox emphasizes how this feeling is one of astonishment or amazement at "the manifestation of Being," that, "Things _are_! There is something rather than nothing!" He claims this experience of the world can be obtained on an on-going basis, not just in brief moments of mystical rapture. This on-going experience results in a "deep but impartial sense of identification with _all_ existents." Quoting one of the leading proponents of the Heideggerian version of this deep ecology, Fox notes that this experience leads to a certain type of action, the tendency "to let beings be, to let them take care of themselves in accord with their own natures.[29] But Fox explicitly associates this form of identification with mysticism, first by quoting Wittgenstein on the meaning of the mystical, and then by indicating that the experience

itself can only be obtained through what are generally considered mystical disciplines, "If one seriously wishes to pursue the question of ontologically based identification then one must be prepared to undertake arduous practice of the kind that is associated with certain kinds of experientially based spiritual disciplines."[30]

The third basis for deep ecological identification is cosmology which for Fox is closely related to ontological identification but allows more people into the deep ecological household, including those who come to deep ecology by way of the science of ecology:

> Cosmologically based identification refers to experiences of commonality with all that is that are brought about through deep-seated realization of the fact that we and all other entities are aspects of a single unfolding reality. This realization can be brought about through the empathic incorporation of <u>any</u> cosmology....This means that this realization can be brought about through the empathic incorporation of mythological, religious, speculative philosophical, or scientific cosmologies.[31]

Central to this cosmological identification is the idea of a "single unfolding reality." Fox claims the insight into the fact of human participation in the single unfolding reality is <u>capable</u> of being "provoked" by traditions as diverse as "the world-views of certain indigenous peoples (e.g., of some North American Indians), the philosophy of Taoism, or the philosophy of Spinoza." In addition to mystical or quasi-mystical traditions, Fox

also believes that modern science provides the means for deep ecological awareness, "Modern science is providing an increasingly detailed account of the physical and biological evolution of the universe that compels us to view reality as a single unfolding process."[32]

Fox prefers the cosmologically based form of identification because of its advantages over personal or ontological identification. Personal identification as a basis for deep-realization of the single unfolding process, has a tendency to lapse into egoistic identification where that which is closest and most like one's self is defended at the expense of that which is most different from one's ego. Family, friends, fellow countrymen will receive the benefits of identification, while nature, especially in its non-warm, non-fuzzy, forms are more likely to be not only undefended but positively dominated and exploited. However, personal identification still provides the model for much of the language of deep ecological identification. Ontological identification, wonder at the fact <u>that</u> the world is, does not provide much ground for communication of the individual's experience of identification with the rest of nature. Cosmological identification on the other hand, general accounts of <u>how</u> the world is, are able to be communicated symbolically, that is, cosmological identification can be communicated through a range of traditions, from "the communication of scientific, speculative philosophical,

religious, and mythological views to the communication of vivid visual images such as mandalas and the kinds of images that have been presented here in which entities have been conceived of as leaves on a tree."[33] Fox completes his plea for a transpersonal ecology by claiming that:

> In terms of politics and lifestyles... transpersonal forms of identification are expressed in actions that tend to promote the freedom of all entities to unfold in their own ways....Actions of this kind include not only actions that consist in "treading lightly" upon the earth (i.e., lifestyles of voluntary simplicity) but also actions that respectfully but resolutely attempt to alter the views and behavior of those who persist in the delusion that self-realization lies in the direction of dominating the earth and the myriad entities with which we coexist.[34]

Negative Dialectics and Identity

This overview of the "methodological" basis of the philosophy of deep ecology indicates three areas needing critical reflection. First, as Fox indicates, the deep questioning method does not result in uniform conclusions about the actions individuals should take in regard to nature and other human beings. This results in Fox's turn to the idea of identification which Naess also proposes as a fundamental aspect of deep ecological awareness. Expanding on this insight, Fox proposes that "cosmological identification" is the most adequate means of achieving the necessary ecological awareness for addressing current

ecological crises. Finally, among the forms of cosmological identification which "might" supply the epistemological basis for a more adequate deep ecology, or an ecocentric transpersonal ecology, is modern science. A critical examination of the adequacy of transpersonal ecology must examine more closely, more "deeply," Fox's claims about identification and more specifically the relation of identification to modern science.

Theodore Adorno's "negative dialectics" offers an alternative approach to the concerns of the deep and transpersonal ecologists, which is more consistent philosophically and addresses the problems of the relationship of access to knowledge to identity formation at a deeper or more self-reflexive level. Negative Dialectics was the title of Adorno's last completed full treatment of the problems of philosophy and specifically of the situation of the human domination of nature. Negative dialectics was an attempt to develop philosophically an approach to the relationship of cognition or awareness to "nature," yet seeks to understand that relationship while still honoring the difference or uniqueness of that which is not the subject of cognition. In the deep ecological language this was an attempt to understand "identification" without reducing the object of cognition to a mere manifestation of the constitutive power of the subject. Negative dialectics rejects the Hegelian solution to the contradictions

between subject and object, between human subjectivity and nature, that manifests itself in a dialectical reconciliation of subject and object, in Absolute Knowledge and the Absolute Subject. Negative dialectics rejects the claim that the negation of the negation is positive, that is, that the outcome of the struggle between the subject and object is harmony or reconciliation, at least not in the actual world in which we live. The idealist reconciliation occurs only abstractly leaving the actual conflicts and contradictions of everyday life unchanged.

The deep and transpersonal ecological approaches, at least in their philosophical representations, present an understanding of the process of identification which very much resembles the Hegelian or idealist solution of the problem of the alienation or contradiction between humans and nature. When identification of the self with the world is viewed as an identification with a larger Self, this results in philosophical difficulties corresponding to those typical of idealism. Naess and Fox realize this in their attempts to rescue the concepts of individuality and diversity from the tendency of identification to collapse into identity, the lack of differentiation between the particular beings or entities of the world. If identification with the world results in a reconciled Self, it has the philosophical and political implications of a totalizing perspective and possible totalitarian

politics. The uniqueness or essential difference of that which is not the self, or the subject, may collapse into a mere manifestation of the self. Fox attempts to address this in his discussion of "personal" identification and its difference from cosmological identification. Personal identification tends to result in all those behaviors associated with "possessive individualism," the desire to control and dominate that which resists reduction to self. Fox also points out the frequent use of the language of personal identification even by those who might be cosmologically identified, but he fails to explore this beyond the simple recognition of the utility of using familiar terminology to explain the concept of identification. The necessity of using the terminology of personal experience is a clue to the problem of cosmological identification. The examples Fox uses to explain the idea of cosmological identification, Buddhism, Taoism, modern science, all have a common tendency which makes them cosmological, that is, they tend to collapse the individual or particular into the general or universal. The felt necessity to use the terminology of personal identification is an indication of the only partially acknowledged philosophical inability of ecocentrism to provide an adequate response to the need to give full credit to the particular and individual. Personal and cosmological identification are in tension because they tend to result in the opposing tendencies of

individualism and totalism or holism. The means of ecological identification described by Naess and Fox, either religious or scientific, lack the conceptual distinctions necessary to fulfill the task of generating ecological awareness, especially the establishment of critical ecological consciousness capable of an analysis of existing social, economic and political structures which would enable coherent radical ecological practice. Instead of mystical religious traditions, positivist science, or psychologism, what is required is a means of interpreting the relationships of subjectivity and objectivity that can represent the full richness of those relationships without sacrificing the human subject to a fateful nature or making nature a mere material for domination and exploitation serving the aggrandizement of the ego and humanity.

Negative dialectics is an attempt to honor the particular, the unique in the other, through a philosophical interpretation of the relationship of subjectivity to nature, including the fact subjectivity is one manifestation of the objectivity of nature. In Adorno's last two major works, Negative Dialectics and Aesthetic Theory, he attempts to accomplish what Fox and Naess seem to be striving for; a way of interpreting the situation of human beings in the world in a way that provides opportunities to resist the prevalent, "hegemonic," ideology of domination which has resulted in

the increasing destruction of external nature and the crippling and suffering of human beings, both physically and "psychologically." One of the major difficulties in confronting negative dialectics is Adorno's necessary insistence on the impossibility of reducing philosophical interpretation to a single fundamental or principle. According to negative dialectics, the analysis of the "object" under consideration must be given full recognition of its uniqueness, difference, or otherness, but, in the tradition of dialectical analysis, this recognition must also acknowledge the history of the object, and the history in the object--those impacts and elements of society which penetrate the object as well as the interpreting subject. Interpretation, both negatively and dialectically, necessarily results in a layered complex of mediations between the object and the interpreting subject. Compounding the difficulty of interpretation is Adorno's assertion (contra Hegel) that the whole is not rational, is not the true. On the contrary, the whole is the false, that is, the world is not tending to a synthetic resolution of its contradictions in a positive absolute, but rather the tendency is toward unreconciled catastrophe. Negative dialectics is sometimes also called immanent criticism, immanent contradiction, or non-identity thinking. Asserting the importance of recognizing the non-identity of subject and object, or of word and thing, is not to say

that there is no recognition of the importance of identity (or "identification") for cognition and for practice:

> But the ideal of identity must not simply be discarded. Living in the rebuke that the thing is not identical with the concepts is the concept's longing to become identical with the thing. This is how the sense of nonidentity contains identity. The supposition of identity is indeed the ideological element of pure thought, all the way down to formal logic; but hidden in it is also the truth moment of ideology, the pledge that there should be no contradiction, no antagonism. In the simple identifying judgment, the pragmatist, nature-controlling element already joins with a utopian element. "A" is to be what is not yet. Such hope is contradictorily tied to the breaks in the form of predicative identity. Philosophical tradition had a word for these breaks: "ideas".[35]

Adorno is making several claims in this statement that are relevant for the problems of identification and "methods" of philosophical interpretation. To suppose that psychological or philosophical identification is simply a matter of discipline or technique is to be blind to the impact of the contradictions and conflicts of society which impact those disciplines, techniques or methods themselves. The transpersonal ecologist's reliance on religious and scientific disciplines to generate a reconciled ecological consciousness is an idealistic misrecognition of the place of suffering and exploitation present in the world. It is not possible to overcome the contradictions of society simply by individual identification with the world, because the

world is a false totality, a false whole, as the result of the actions of human domination which have existed with the beginnings of human history, but which were intensified with industrialization and capitalism. (There are significant differences between those philosophers of ecology who attempt to identify the fundamental cause of ecological destruction with industrialization itself or with capitalism as the dominant mode of production. Perhaps rather that attempting to choose between the two as to which is more essential, it would be more worthwhile and consistent with negative dialectics to examine their interrelationships and see how they have been linked or mediated with each other and with other elements of identity thinking and its various forms of material practice.) To identify with the whole is only part of the process of overcoming the domination of nature, since identification would necessarily involve identification with a contradictory whole there is no avenue to immediate access to the truth of the ecological situation. Naess's representation of identification as the process of overcoming alienation, thereby returning to a fullness-of-experience, or an original, immediate relation to nature, is an idealistic and romantic delusion with unavoidable reactionary consequences. Rather than viewing identification as an avenue of immediate access to truth, or to "right living" or primordial "dwelling," identification can be viewed as an anticipation of the

"not yet" of the "utopia" to come, an existence unavailable in the existing world, a nature which has yet to exist, not even in the mythic past. This "not yet" can only come into being through the adequate interpretation of the existing situation, an interpretation which indicates how the other of nature is repressed, how suffering manifests itself. An adequate interpretation would bring this repression and suffering to consciousness, as part of the mediation of the present fragmented ecological consciousness with that future world where contradiction and the ideology of domination no longer exist, "Utopia would be above identity and above contradiction; it would be a togetherness of diversity."[36]

Adorno agrees that identification may lead to the desired relationship with nature, but he rejects assertions that the reconciliation with nature is possible in its full sense in a world of suffering and catastrophe:

> For the sake of utopia, identification is reflected in the linguistic use of the word outside of logic, in which we speak, not of identifying an object, but of identifying with people and things. Dialectics alone might settle the Greek argument whether like is known by like or by unlike. If the thesis that likeness alone has that capacity makes us aware of the indelible mimetic element in all cognition and all human practice, this awareness grows untrue when the affinity--indelible, yet infinitely far removed at the same time--is posited as positive. In epistemology the inevitable result is the false conclusion that the object is the subject.[37]

Adorno does not deny the awareness generated in the identification with others, but he returns to the observation that the process of identification has the idealist tendency to posit in the other the self or subject of identification. The danger is of projecting onto the other the characteristics of the self and subjecting the other to the needs of the self as an extension of the process of the domination of nature. Identification can only retain what is intuitively perceived as true by retaining the qualitative affinity recognized in the process of mimesis. Adorno claims mimesis is a mode of cognition that allows the possibility of knowledge without domination. What is required however is a comprehension of this process that goes beyond deep ecology's mystical practices of expanded consciousness to a knowledge that can be achieved without sacrificing the uniqueness of the particular, a uniqueness which makes every entity an object of ethical consideration for its own sake. Deep ecology and transpersonal ecology have no interpretive strategy capable of indicating right ecological action even after the broader identification or increased ecological awareness has taken place. Both Naess and Fox view their position as "non-coercive" because there is no "necessity" attached to the attainment of ecological awareness. They seem to believe that the abdication of the responsibility for establishing a means of mediating between potential intuitive awareness,

coherent philosophy, and the political, is an advantage, something like a liberal toleration for free speech. Instead, this laissez-faire ideology produces a radical disjunction between their individual advocacy of ecocentric views and their belief in the necessity of a heightened ecological awareness. They each provide arguments for the benefits of identification with the rest of nature, and an intensified need to defend the Self from the destruction of existing society, but then provide no basis for this link except an ambiguous hope that the Self-identifying individual will choose the deep or transpersonal ecological path. Both contend that there will continue to be conflict, even among or between those who have achieved ecological awareness. However, Fox seems to argue that this "necessity" of human nature can be overcome even against the evidence of the ecological crisis itself,

> Understanding this fact [the transpersonal understanding of the self] enables us to see why transpersonal ecologists reject approaches that issue in moral "oughts"...and why they do not attempt to prove the correctness of their views in such a way that their conclusions are morally binding on others. In both cases, the reason is that they are not interested in supporting approaches that serve to reinforce the primary reality of the narrow, atomistic, or particle-like volitional self. For transpersonal ecologists, given a deep enough understanding of the way things are, the response of being inclined to care for the unfolding of the world in all its aspects follows "naturally"--not as a <u>logical</u> consequence but as a <u>psychological</u>

consequence; as an expression of the spontaneous unfolding (development, maturing) of the self.[38]

Never mind that the world seems to contradict this assumption of the relationship of human maturation to the desire to care for nature. Never mind that modern western philosophy, including the Habermasian version of critical theory as well as most versions of ecosocialism, which view maturity as the increasing ability to form abstract moral concepts and act in a specifically moral world of discourse, where non-human nature can only be "maturely" seen as an object for technical control and human use.[39] At least Naess has the intellectual integrity to recognize the dilemmas of his position, "The above seems to point in the direction of philosophical mysticism...." And even though he attempts to reinstate the centrality of the individual with the fundamental "Self-realization!" he realizes he has not made an argument for this position, merely asserted a hope, "The widening and deepening of the individual selves <u>somehow</u> never makes them into one 'mass.'"[40] What is needed is a coherent explanation of the links between identification with others and philosophical and political positions that use the insights thus generated as a basis for a practice that can halt and reverse the tendency for ecological and social destruction and catastrophe, not a speculative hope in a questionable process of "natural" maturation.

Immanent criticism or negative dialectics begins with the object of interpretation and attempts to weave a conceptual net that suspends the object "momentarily" to reveal the process it contains, including that to which it is potentially becoming. In the historical situation that is the culmination of destruction and where neither the "individual" nor "nature" truly exist, the process of identification in the here and now does not lead to the truth of the ecological situation but to an indication of its negative existence, the absence of an adequate understanding of a reconciled subject and object, history and nature. What is possible is not an immediate access to original nature, or ecological truth, but the awareness that true nature would be radically otherwise than it is at present. What is necessary is not simply a mystical identification with nature and a subsequent defense of its "essential" characteristics as established by personal assertion or scientific certainty, but an interpretive strategy capable of grasping the contradictory and antagonistic world in its complexity.

In Negative Dialectics Adorno proposes a theory of philosophy which attempts to do justice to the non-identical, to that which is not the subject. The challenge for radical ecology is to interpret this theory and its context, the critique of philosophy and its application to aesthetics, and translate it into a fully ecological understanding and interpretive strategy. One

of the aspects of philosophy closely related to Naess's deep ecology which Adorno addresses is that of intuitionism, specifically that of Bergson. Again, the problem of intuitionism is its attempt to attain immediate insight without the help of philosophical interpretation:

> Although it takes an effort to develop, the intuitive mode of mental conduct does continue to exist in fact as an archaic rudiment of mimetic reactions. What preceded its past holds a promise beyond the ossified present. Intuitions succeed only desultorily, however. Every cognition including Bergson's own needs the rationality he scorns, and needs it precisely at the moment of concretion. Absolutized duration, pure becoming, the pure act--these would recoil into the timelessness which Bergson chides in metaphysics since Plato and Aristotle. He did not mind that the thing he groped for, if it is not to remain a mirage, is visible solely with the equipment of cognition, by reflection upon its own means, and that it grows arbitrary in a procedure unrelated, from the start, to that of cognition.[41]

Adorno is asserting the necessity of philosophical interpretation of the experience of intuition and of reflection on the interpretive process itself. So, even if intuition does contain the truth related to the continuation of mimetic possibility it only escapes idealist metaphysics and its consequent abstraction of insight from its socio-historical context through reflection on its own possibility. If ecological awareness is going to go beyond mere affirmation of the existing ideology of domination, whether as reformism or

in more brutal authoritarian forms, then deep ecology must move beyond a naive belief in immediate access to the truth of nature. The problem for radical ecology is to develop an interpretive "method" which results in an ecological understanding of the relationship of society and nature that gives full credit to the non-identical as well as the contradictions of existing society. This becomes even more challenging when consideration is given to the various critiques of Adorno's critical theory which explicitly rejects the orthodox interpretation of the possibility of the revolutionary subject, a subject corresponding to the actually existing members of the industrial proletariat. An additional problem to be included in these considerations are those interpretations of Adorno's alternative conception of a resistant subjectivity which assert that he fails to provide an adequate conception of an alternative subjectivity, or that he retains it only in the form of isolated individuals dedicated to the "esotericism" of aesthetics and critical thought. Besides these problematic relations to the possibility of critical practice there is the question of the suitability of Adorno's position for the ecology movement. After all, Adorno was dedicated to the immanent critique of philosophy and aesthetics, "cultural forms," and rarely addressed what are now seen as the primary concerns of the ecology movement, those much more physical, apparently less "cultural," phenomena such as

acid rain, toxic wastes, and vanishing species. If Adorno's critical theory is to provide a potentially adequate interpretive framework for radical ecologists it must yield two possibilities most of its critics deny it is capable of; a revolutionary subject beyond the contemplative individual, and, closely related, an interpretive structure which neither evaporates into mysticism nor simply imposes idiosyncratic judgments on its object of analysis.

The encounter between Adorno's critical theory and radical ecology must then engage the two areas of subjectivity and politics. What are the insights and limitations of the deep ecological or transpersonal subject or Self, and how might deep ecology and critical theory cross-pollinate to produce a more adequate interpretation of our ecological situation? How would this new, potentially revolutionary, ecological subject interpret specific or particular claims previously made about how to proceed in addressing the problems of the collapse of the global ecosystem to the extent that the planet may not be able to support human life? Even more specifically, how would a radical ecology informed by critical theory address the deep ecology proposal for increased wilderness preservation and its struggle with the ideology of economic growth?

ENDNOTES

1. Fox, Warwick, Toward a Transpersonal Ecology (Boston: Shambala Publications, 1990).

2. Fox, Toward, pp. 114-115.

3. Fox, Toward, p. 116.

4. Fox, Toward, quoting Naess, p. 94.

5. Fox details the "four-level derivational model" in his explication. Other explanations can be found in Arne Naess, Ecology, Community and Lifestyle, David Rothberg, Trans. and Ed. (Cambridge, Great Britain: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989). Hereafter cited as Ecology.

6. Fox, Toward, pp. 133-134.

7. Fox, Toward, p. 131.

8. Fox, Toward, pp. 134-140.

9. Fox, Toward, p. 249. From Naess, "Self-realization: An Ecological Approach to Being in the World," p. 35.

10. Naess, Arne, "Identification as the Source of Deep Ecological Attitudes," in Deep Ecology, Michael Tobias, Ed. (San Diego: Avant Books, 1985), hereafter cited as Naess, Identification.

11. Naess, Identification, p. 258.

12. Naess, Identification, p. 260.

13. Naess, Identification, p. 261.

14. Naess, Identification, p. 261 (emphasis in the original).

15. Naess, Identification, p. 261.

16. Naess, Identification, p. 263.

17. Naess, Identification, p. 263.

18. Naess, Identification, p. 262.

19. Naess, Identification, p. 262.

20. Naess, Identification, p. 263 (emphasis in the original).

21. Naess, Identification, p. 264.

22. Habermas, Jurgen, especially, Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action, Christian Lenhardt and Shierry Weber Nicholsen, Trans. (Boston: MIT, 1990).

23. Naess, Identification, p. 264.

24. Naess, Identification, p. 264.

25. Naess, Ecology, p. 173.

26. Naess, Ecology, p.183.

27. Naess, Identification, p. 269.

28. Fox, Toward, p. 250.

29. Fox, Toward, p. 251, including quote from Zimmerman, "Toward a Heideggerean Ethos for Radical Environmentalism," Environmental Ethics 5, 1983, pp. 99-131, quotes from pp. 102 and 115.

30. Fox, Toward, p. 251.

31. Fox, Toward, p. 252.

32. Fox, Toward, p. 253.

33. Fox, Toward, pp. 260-261.

34. Fox, Toward, p. 268.

35. Adorno, Theodor, Negative Dialectics (New York: Continuum, 1966), p. 149-150.

36. Adorno, Negative Dialectics, p. 150.

37. Adorno, Negative Dialectics, p. 150.

38. Fox, Toward, p. 247.

39. See for example Jurgen Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. I, Thomas McCarthy, Trans. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1981), and Chapter 2 above.

40. Naess, Ecology, p. 173.

41. Adorno, Negative Dialectics, pp. 8-9.

CHAPTER 4

DEEP ECOLOGY AND SUBJECTIVITY

The deep, transpersonal, or ecocentric ecologists represent the self as the key to answering various ecological problems, including the general or overall ecological crisis which is also believed to be a crisis of the spirit. A central difficulty the ecological self or subject faces is in the relationship of its general or universal perspective to the uniqueness or particularity of individual entities. Can the ecological identification the ecocentrists argue for provide the level of ecological awareness needed to reverse the problems of ecological destruction and at the same time honor the uniqueness of individuals? Both Naess and Fox recognize the potential problem of a self-identification which identifies with nature generally but then cannot be linked with the needs of individual entities except by appealing to a process of "natural maturity" the ecologically identified self (Self) undergoes. A critical examination of this position must question the status of this natural maturity and the more generally held belief in some teleologically directed universal process of development of human beings. The problems associated with a belief in teleological human development should also be examined in the context of the problematic theories about the processes of identification. This examination can be carried forward

by addressing several specific questions resulting from these problematic beliefs. First is the question again of the possibility of an immediate access to knowledge achieved in the process of identification. Is not the identifying self, as well as that with which it identifies, marked by the contradictions and conflicts of society, so that identification does not give immediate access to an originary truth of pristine nature? An alternative more socially and historically situated understanding of the processes of identification would then present, at best, an opportunity to critically examine the mediations between society and nature at various levels. This would result in the need for a theory of society as much as an understanding of ecological science. Second, to what extent is the claim of universal identification and natural maturity the claim of a specific class, race, gender, and so forth? Deep ecology has already been criticized for its assumptions about gender, and it is important to reemphasize this critique and extend it to include an encounter with the perspective of negative dialectical or non-identity thinking. Finally, Naess limits the ethical or moral implications of the process of identification with the wider self of nature by returning to the idea of the need for individual self-preservation based on a theory of "vital needs." What is a vital need and how might vital needs change historically and in response to the

development of individuals and ecosystems? Is there any escape from the traditional problem of distinguishing between true and false needs?

Critique of Self-identification

Various authors have challenged the deep ecology understanding of identification, putting into question the type of self or subjectivity assumed by these radical ecologists. Tim Luke has challenged the deep ecology understanding of subjectivity by, in part, relying on the insights of Horkheimer and Adorno and the tradition of critical theory.[1] Deep ecology depends on the two fundamental values of "self-realization" and "biocentric equality," and it is the process of developing an ecological awareness of these fundamental values and their resulting consequences which Luke critiques. Luke claims the deep ecologists take an anti-Enlightenment stance which includes anti-industrial, anti-technology (neo-Luddite) and neo-primitive elements. His final judgment of deep ecology is that it is deeply flawed, projecting an idealized reconciled humanity onto nature, and implying a need for what could become a "new discipline of ethical surveillance (self-administered by the subject in Taoist meditation, Buddhist self-in-Self introspection, and mythic Native American purification rituals) to reconstitute human subjectivity within natural subjectivity."[2] The question here is whether the deep

ecology insights can be preserved if these criticisms are valid; a rescuing of these insights not by means of the philosophy of deep ecology, but with an extended critical theory based primarily on the work of Theodor Adorno.

Luke summarizes the deep ecological project, "By citing new norms to constrain humanity's destruction of the ecosphere, deep ecologists aspire to overturn the Enlightenment schema underpinning advanced industrialism's instrumental rationality. In adopting examples they see in primal cultures, deep ecologists believe they can effectuate Nature's reenchantment, the development of nondominating sciences, and an emergence of a new ecological society by creating new forms of human selfhood."[3] The development of a nondominating science was of course at the heart of the Marcuse-Habermas debate and a basic reason for Habermas's rejection of Marcuse's call for a "logic of gratification."[4] The epistemological status of science is also related to Habermas's charge against Horkheimer and Adorno of mysticism, since Habermas sees no other possibilities for science to relate to nature than through technologies that are fundamentally tools of domination. The relationship of a non-dominating radical ecological version of science, the "reenchantment" of nature and its affect on new forms of "selfhood," can be addressed within the context of Luke's critique of deep ecology by way of a critical response.

George Sessions and Bill Devall have done most to extend Naess's "ecosophy," beyond its sometimes idiosyncratic assertions, in an attempt to develop the "common themes" of deep ecology. One of Luke's fundamental criticisms of deep ecological subjectivity is that it does not meet its claim to represent a radical new form of ecological consciousness, but instead should be seen as merely replicating many of the characteristics of modern individualism, and that the assertions about possibilities for the development of this ecological consciousness are in fact class based. His central criticism of the deep ecological understanding of the self, or subjectivity, focuses on its reliance on questionable means for attaining this subjectivity, not the goal of elimination of the prevailing worldview of present society with its instrumental rationality and domination of nature. Whether using the deep questioning method, Taoism, Buddhism, or other traditions for raising personal consciousness, the deep ecologists seem to be open to the objection that they have abstracted these traditions out of their social-historical context. This seems to be true of the appropriation of the religions, and of Native American peoples' beliefs and ritual practices. This abstraction has two consequences: first, it fails to acknowledge the authoritarian societies the traditions developed within and reinforced; second, it is not at all obvious how these traditions and rituals,

especially those of "primitive" people, can be translated into contemporary social conditions.

The heart of the problem of the deep ecology understanding of subjectivity is the lack of an adequate treatment of the relationship between history and nature. Luke claims the deep ecologist projects the need for personal liberation onto "Nature" and in so doing projects what is actually one particular aspect of the ecosphere (the human) as the expression of the whole of nature. This is comparable to the Marxist understanding of false consciousness, where the bourgeois or capitalist class asserts that its class position has achieved the truth of history and is the representative of the progressive development of history, and which manifests itself in various specific forms including that of the nation-state, private economy, individualism, and so forth. The falseness of the assertion, its status as ideology, is the result of mistakenly taking the particular as the universal. In the bourgeois idealism of Hegel, reconciliation of subject and object, or society and nature, becomes metaphysical when development of the dialectic between the two opposing phenomena achieves its ultimate realization in subject-object identity, the Absolute Subject. Luke claims the deep ecology philosophy repeats this ideological construction in two ways. It too is class based, but, in addition, it is an expression of the particularity of the human species, it is

"anthropomorphic," the ultimate sign of failure for deep ecological ethics. Luke summarizes this conclusion, "Nature in deep ecology simply becomes a new transcendent identical subject-object to redeem humanity. By projecting selfhood into Nature, humans are to be saved by finding their self maturation and spiritual growth in it....Nature, then, becomes ecosophical humanity's alienated self-understanding, partly reflected back to itself and selectively perceived as self-realization, rediscovered in biospheric processes."[5] This process takes its most "alienated" form in the return to Gaia mythology where the earth is viewed as self-regulating meta-subject. Perhaps the issues involved can be clarified, and an alternative conception of the relationship of society and nature be advanced, by examining the manner in which Adorno approached a fundamentally similar philosophical and political riddle.

An examination of Adorno's understanding of the relationship between society and nature, or history and nature, indicates the continuity of his thought throughout his years as critical philosopher. Two works in particular, the essay "The Idea of a Natural History" and his late work Negative Dialectics reveal a consistent theoretical position in this fundamental area. The argument for this continuity and consistency in Adorno's work was first put forward by Susan Buck-Morss.[6] Adorno begins his exploration of the relation of nature and

history by distinguishing his understanding from those of a "history of nature" or a nature as simply an object for natural science, "However, I do not overstep myself if I say that the real intention here is to dialectically overcome the usual antithesis of nature and history. Therefore, wherever I operate with the concepts of nature and history, no ultimate definitions are meant, rather I am pursuing the intention of pushing these concepts to a point where they are mediated in their apparent difference."[7] For Adorno then the concepts of history and nature interpenetrate and can only be developed in a process of analysis. However, as a preliminary approximation of the difference, Adorno strongly associates the status of nature to that of myth, "The concept of nature that is to be dissolved is one that, if I translated it into standard philosophical terminology, would come closest to the concept of myth." This understanding of the concept of myth means "what has always been, what as fatefully arranged predetermined being underlies history and appears in history; it is substance in history."[8] Then of course it becomes necessary to more fully explain the relation of nature and history, "History means the mode of conduct established by tradition that is characterized primarily by the occurrence of the qualitatively new; it is a movement that does not play itself out in mere identity, mere reproduction of what has always been, but rather one in

which the new occurs; it is a movement that gains its true character through what appears in it as new."[9] This understanding of history as a relationship to the new is the basis for its distinction from myth, and can be viewed as central to what will become negative dialectics and its criticism of Hegelian, Marxist and Heideggerian philosophical positions.[10] For example, in the section of Negative Dialectics on "Natural History" Adorno uses Marx against dogmatic Marxists to extend the critique of Hegel. After quoting a long passage from the introduction of Capital which includes Marx's assertion, "I comprehend the development of society's economic formation of society as a process of natural history..."[11], Adorno explains Marx's meaning against the interpretation of the Marxists. What is being argued, asserts Adorno, is the status of the "natural laws" of capitalism. The "law of capitalist accumulation" is conceived as an inevitability of natural processes, as the "law of nature," a naturalization of history that serves to mystify the exploitative process of capitalism. The reason it can be called a law by Marx is because of its appearance to the subjects of society, "That law is natural because of its inevitable character under the prevailing conditions of production. Ideology is not superimposed as a detachable layer on the being of society; it is inherent in that being."[12] The status of these "natural laws" is not that of ontological inevitability, but of something to be abolished, a

possibility because they are historical, that is, made by human beings. Adorno knows this is true because of the purpose of Marx's work, "This is confirmed by the strongest motive behind all Marxist theory: that those laws can be abolished. The realm of freedom would no sooner begin than they would cease to apply."[13] For Adorno then, Marx's concept of the laws of capitalism is used to reveal the workings of domination, a process that has become so extensive, he argues, that what is in fact historical appears to have the status of the "natural." This fulfillment of domination is best exemplified in the philosophy of Hegel, where spirit comes to dominate all existence, finally rising to the status of a "second nature." But rather than the unfolding of necessity as Hegel contends, this is the formulation of the "bourgeois consciousness," a consciousness that views its power to rule as an expression of natural necessity, veiling its program of self-interested domination, "Spirit as a second nature is the negation of the spirit, however, and that the more thoroughly the blinder its self-consciousness is to its natural growth. This is what happens to Hegel. His world spirit is the ideology of natural history. He calls it world spirit because of its power. Domination is absolutized and projected on Being itself, which is said to be the spirit."[14] Adorno's critical theory is based in the argument that this domination has extended itself to the totality of society, leaving only fragments and

marginal existences to mark the possibility of its overcoming. When the "bourgeois consciousness" represents this to itself it reverses the human and the natural and mystifies history as fate;

> To that consciousness nothing appears as being outside any more; in a certain sense there actually is nothing outside any more, nothing unaffected by mediation, which is total. What is trapped within, therefore, comes to appear to itself as its own otherness--a primal phenomenon of idealism. The more relentlessly socialization commands all moments of human and interhuman immediacy, the smaller the capacity of men to recall that this web has evolved, and the more irresistible its natural appearance. The appearance is reinforced as the distance between human history and nature keeps growing: nature turns into an irresistible parable of imprisonment.[15]

This leads Adorno to again assert the reason for considering the antithesis of nature and history as both true and false. The two are opposites as a result of what human beings have done with respect to nature, dominating it, making it the "other" to be dominated, and feared. It is feared because it can potentially overwhelm the subject. The opposition is false to the extent that philosophy constructs its categories in such a way that it conceals the truth, the truth that history is used to conceal the historical nature of existing domination and exploitation. The unveiling of this requires a critical interpretive approach to the relationship, "History can be considered from two sides, divided into the history of nature and the history of mankind. Yet there is no

separating the two sides; as long as men exist, natural and human history will qualify each other." This is a quote from Marx, which Adorno emphasizes to "irritate dogmatic materialists."[16] Of course the necessity of interpretation invites the question of its relation to practice, especially a transformative or revolutionary practice and its relation to an "ecological politics."[17]

This excursus through Adorno makes it possible to more fully explore Luke's objection to the deep ecological subjectivity. Deep ecology points to the various religious and philosophical traditions to legitimate its understanding of the process and consequences of identification. Included in the list of approved means to larger identification is the participation in outdoor activities, including "fishing, hunting, surfing, sunbathing, kayaking, canoeing, sailing, mountain climbing, hang gliding, skiing, running, bicycling and birdwatching."[18] Luke points out that many of these activities are those of "industrial tourism," activities of "overstylized modes of corporate consumerist leisure."[19] Many of these activities require a class position within existing consumerist capitalism that allows for considerable consumption of leisure time as well as the physical means of participation, a position that could result in the philosophy of deep ecology being labeled an "ideology of white-collar intellectuals or professional-technical workers" who are simply defending

their privileged lifestyles. The identification which occurs in such activities will tend not to be that of merely another "citizen" in the biosphere of equality, or even one of equality in the sphere of social relations, but an identity complicit with a mode of production, consumption, and reproduction that replicates systematic domination and exploitation of nature in its various forms. In addition, the knowledge acquired through the "reenchantment of Nature" will not be that of immediate truth but that which is mediated through history, and through nature's entwinement with history, as both Adorno and Marx indicate. What is lacking in the deep ecological understanding of subjectivity and its relation to identification is sufficient distinction or differentiation of different types of self or subjects and a more concrete or specific understanding of the process of identification itself, one that does not leave us with largely abstract notions of the self and of nature. Without an explicit acknowledgment of the relationship of the possibilities of self-realization, or self-identification with the means to actualize those possibilities, the deep ecology philosophy threatens to remain abstract, contradictory and potentially a contributor to a social situation of intensified domination and exploitation, all in the name of both "defending external nature" and "disciplining internal nature." Luke questions the practical consequences of

these adventures of outdoor self-realization and identification, "Who will make such goods [composite surf boards, hang gliders, and eighteen-speed trail bikes] or produce food while others seek self-realisation and biocentric equality?"[20]

Can the deep ecology philosophy be altered to bring about a viable understanding of the possibilities of self-identification with nature? Or are there such fundamental contradictions within the position that some alternative conception of the relationship of society to nature, and of individuals to society must be developed?

Different Identities

One aspect of the ecocentric understanding of the process of identification that is most problematic is its tendency to abstractly acknowledge the importance of history and situation as they relate to the processes of identification, but then fail to adequately take this into account in cases where "defense" of nature actually occurs. Marti Kheel has highlighted these problems by analyzing deep ecology's claims with the use of the primary feminist category of gender. Kheel argues that central to both deep ecologist and ecofeminist thought is an opposition to "axiological or value theories" which attempt to establish universally binding, logically derived criteria for determining moral values, which result in systems of rights and obligations.

Alternatively, both assert the need for a transformed, ecological consciousness as necessary for the existence of a relationship between society and nature that is not one of domination and destruction. Deep or transpersonal ecologists call for self-realization, or Self-realization!, in an attempt to establish this greater ecological awareness. One of the assumptions of this self-realizing identification is that it will necessarily lead to defense of the rest of nature as a process of "natural maturity." Kheel argues that the deep ecological understanding of the process of identification is in fact a masculine process of identification with potentially destructive consequences for nature, thus revealing the inadequacy of the deep ecological understanding of ecological consciousness.

Kheel claims the difference between deep ecology and ecofeminism is their alternative views of the root cause of "our environmental malaise."[21] Deep ecologists or ecocentrists view anthropocentrism as the root of ecological problems, while ecofeminists conclude that it is "androcentrism," not humans but "men and the masculinist worldview" which are ultimately responsible for ecological problems. Kheel traces the ecofeminist analysis of androcentrism to Simone de Beauvoir and her work The Second Sex which provides an explanation of the process whereby nature and women are objectified as men acquire their sense of self. Kheel also relies on

psychoanalytic "object relations theory" to explain how the formation of male identity requires a two-stage process of disidentification with the mother. Identity formation is not only a difference or differentiation of individual egos but of gender specific difference. Dorothy Dinnerstein is cited as showing how the male not only disidentifies with the mother and women, but with the rest of nature as well. Object relations theory explains masculine development of identity as a process of objectification of the other--both of women, and nature generally--and the desire of the male for unity with the original mother figure, a desire to "reexperience the original state of union."[22] Whether the psychoanalytic or ecofeminist reduction is adequate to address the ecological crisis is itself open to critical examination, but what is of interest here is how this analysis reveals the limits of present deep ecology philosophy.[23]

One of the key assertions of the deep ecologist/transpersonal ecologists is the consequence of identification with nature as a whole. Once the individual matures in his identifications he will then begin to react to nature as one's self and protect and defend it both as a whole and in its particulars, similar to how one would tend to act in situations requiring the narrowly construed ego's struggle for self-preservation. The only reason to kill would then be for "vital needs." As Arne Naess has explained,

> A specific feature of human make-up is that human beings consciously perceive the urge other living beings have for self-realisation, and that we must therefore assume a kind of responsibility for our conduct towards others....The principle of biospheric egalitarianism defined in terms of equal right, has sometimes been misunderstood as meaning that human needs should never have priority over non-human needs. But this is never intended. In practice, we have for instance greater obligation to that which is nearer to us. This implies duties which sometimes involve killing or injuring non-humans...The dimensions of peripheral needs of humans must be compared with vital needs of other species, if there is a conflict.[24]

Naess discusses the relationships of equality, identification, killing, vital needs, and rituals;

> This does not imply that one acts, wishes to act, or consistently can act in harmony with the principle of equality. The statements about biospheric equality must be merely taken as guidelines. Even under conditions of intense identification, killing occurs. The Indians in California, with their animistic mythology, were an example of equality in principle, combined with realistic admissions of their own vital needs. When hunger arrives, brother rabbit winds up in the pot. 'A brother is a citizen, but oh, so temptingly nutritious!'--this exclamation is too easy: the complicated rituals which surround the hunt in many cultures illustrate how closely people feel bound to other beings, and how natural it is to feel that when we harm others, we also harm ourselves. Non-instrumental acts develop into instrumental.[25]

Kheel's analysis centers on the writings of Jose Ortega y Gasset and Aldo Leopold. What these two have in common is a love of hunting, the point of the analysis being that even those who are killing for sport claim to

be deeply identified with the nature they destroy. The "naturalness" or inevitability of development or maturity associated with the process of identification with "nature as a whole," as claimed by the deep/transpersonal ecologists, does not in fact occur. Aldo Leopold's relationship to hunting is of special interest since he is frequently cited in the deep ecology literature, especially that of Earth First!, as someone who had an especially heightened since of ecological awareness. Leopold, in A Sand County Almanac, developed the idea of the "land ethic" which claims human beings should be "just plain citizens" within nature as a whole. If someone were to exemplify the consequences of radical ecological identification with the whole of nature it would be reasonable to believe it would be someone like Leopold. However, he makes fundamental claims about the relationship of hunting and identity:

> The instinct that finds delight in the sight and pursuit of game is bred into the very fiber of the race....the man who does not like to see, hunt, photograph, or otherwise outwit birds or animals is hardly normal. He is supercivilized, and I for one do not know how do deal with him....Some can live without opportunity for the exercise and control of the hunting instinct, just as I suppose some can live without work, play, love, business, or other vital adventure. But in these days we regard such deprivations as unsocial. Opportunity for exercise of all the normal instincts has come to be regarded more and more as an inalienable right.[26]

As Kheel points out, this individual who seems to epitomize so much of what deep ecologists believe is a strong advocate of sport hunting, which seems to be in direct contradiction to the claims by the deep ecologists of the necessary development of concern for other entities "for their own sake" as the individual becomes increasingly identified with the whole of nature. Rather than a "natural" process of maturing, the non-destructive, non-dominating behavior idealized by the ecocentrists is a product of social and historical factors as well as the "vital needs" of the human organism. The ecocentric reliance on a theory of "normal" development or maturing of the individual human being is in fact a return to some notion of an ontological essence, some "necessary structure" of "human nature." This conception does not adequately consider the role of history, of "socialization," through family, economics, politics, and so forth. What is required instead is an understanding of the mediating links between the process of identification and the development of an ecological awareness adequate to the problem of destruction and catastrophe, in both its "ecological" and "social" forms, for both the individual and the community. The quote marks indicate the dominant use of the language which includes assumptions of identity and duality, of a nature separate from history and society. Much of the concern of a theory of non-identity or negative dialectics is to emphasize the impossibility

of the exclusion of the idea of nature from society, and the reverse. All concepts necessarily include their opposite.

Kheel extends her analysis in an attempt to capture the sense of deep ambivalence of those dedicated to hunting and killing. The ambivalence is generated by a conflict between the desire to be one with nature again, but at the same time to retain what is uniquely human. However, what seems to be uniquely human, as it is frequently represented by many of the heroes of deep ecologists, is a characteristic of those identified as male. Ortega is quoted to indicate this deep ambivalence toward the hunt, the animal, nature, and self-identity: "Nor can it be other wise, because man has never really known what an animal is. Before and beyond all science, humanity sees itself as something emerging from animality, but it cannot be sure of having transcended that state completely."[27] The analysis continues with the indication that this ambivalence is a result of the yearning for unity, but fulfillment is made impossible by the death of the animal. In object relations theory "it is only when the boy child transforms his mother into an object that his identity can be formed. In a similar way, animals have become objects in the eyes of these men."[28] What results is the opposite of the deep/transpersonal ecologists' claim for the processes of maturity and Self-identification, the other is not honored for its own sake,

but becomes a sacrifice to the development of (male) identity. The "merging" with nature as a whole results in the death of the particular animal, "The significance of the reduction of the animal to object status is that the relationship to the animal becomes more important than the animal itself."[29] Even those most closely identified with the deep ecology movement, Bill Devall and George Sessions, who have worked with Naess to develop a deep ecology platform, include hunting as "an 'especially useful activity' that, with the 'proper attitude,' can help encourage 'maturity' of the self."[30]

Kheel fully understands the claims by Naess, Fox and others that they do not intend to sacrifice the individual for the sake of identification with the larger whole of nature, but the examples of Ortega and Leopold make clear that the process of identification cannot be assumed to result in a natural maturity assuring the commonality of purpose among deep ecologists. This would seem to be a basic problem for deep ecological ethics. Does Leopold's statement constitute a sufficiently "vital need" of the individual human being to justify the killing of another being?

Kheel returns to the principles of object relations theory to summarize the importance of her analysis, "This preference for identification with the larger 'whole' may reflect the familiar masculine urge to transcend the concrete world of particularity in preference for

something more enduring and abstract....Ecofeminists must be prepared to examine more deeply the unconscious drives that fuel the self that one seeks to expand."[31]

One response to this argument has been briefly attempted by Bill Devall who directly addresses Kheel's criticism. The response is framed in regard to the history of suppression of "the erotic" and the possibilities for alternative sexual identity. He argues that the feminist or ecofeminist analysis that concentrates on the difference between male and female forms of identification tends to intensify the "battle between the sexes" or the "sexual problem." Devall believes the "sexual problem" cannot be resolved through the "impact of feminism and popular sex therapies" but instead requires a turn to "earth-bonding experience."[32] Implicitly criticizing Kheel's reliance on object relations theory, but more explicitly any theoretical position related to psychoanalytics, Devall states,

> When psychologists focus more on human relationships than on relationships which involve us in nonhuman nature, they do not move us into wild territory. We only touch the surface of the pond if we deny the empowering energy of eros and sexuality in the web of relationships of our ecological self. Eros can be expressed through different sexual modes and different genders may express eros energy in innovative ways. Recalling eros from banishment and integrating it through our practice requires moving from our minimal self further into wild territory, listening to feelings long suppressed. In Marcuse's terms, what is required is a new radical sensibility that draws

on the qualitative, elementary, preconscious world of experience.[33]

Devall acknowledges that the "primary worlds of experience" are "probably influenced by gender" and cites studies by Carol Gilligan and others that "provide evidence that women find rewards in establishing particular relationships, rich in texturing, meaning, and affective layering."[34] From this it at first appears that Devall is on the path to an expanded understanding of the role of gender identity in any attempt to develop a greater self-identification, "In our examination of different ways to explore ecological self, it is wise to remember the complexity of relations between gender identity, sexual roles, sexual preferences and socialization."[35] However, what he presents with the one hand he removes with the other. There is no acknowledgment of the depth with which gender identity inhibits some possibilities and enhances others, and there is little acknowledgment of the extent gender identity structures all social relationships. Instead he attempts to collapse the differences of gender or sex, "Both women and men participate in engendering new life. Bringing forth new life is part of the creative process of sharing and discovering meaning. Humans produce or engender in a larger context, but not alone. Humans engender because they are connected, physically, emotionally, erotically, with the widening circle of energy. Men and women have

their own experiences only in context of this larger circle."[36] This is a reduction of matters of sexuality and gender identification to a question of reproduction.

Devall attempts to offer non-Western conceptions of a multiple-gendered self to deflate the feminist argument that the root of the "ecological crisis" is best viewed as a product of androcentric or patriarchal culture. He admits that feminist critiques have "provided powerful insights exposing the once hidden assumptions under which modern civilization operates," but he rejects what he views as an attempt to reduce deep ecology to a branch of feminism. The feminist argument is viewed instead as a limited concern of interhuman problems which falsely pushes nature into the background. Devall fails to acknowledge the ubiquity of the problem of gender identity for the project of a wider self-identification, "Anthropocentrism remains the central concern of deep ecology. The ecological crisis has complex psycho-sexual roots. In this historical era we can continue intellectual tasks of uncovering historical causes of the crisis and at the same time move beyond divisiveness to explore ecological self."[37] For Devall, moving beyond the divisiveness means to move beyond the "sexual problem," that is, to put all this intellectually fashionable feminist criticism and other "intellectual tasks" in their proper place and get on with the real business of exploring the ecological self, which has merely incidental

or historically contingent relations to gender identity. The real work of addressing the ecological crisis, the movement into the "wild territory" involves releasing suppressed ontological possibilities,

> Only to the extent that self-identification with bioregion or the larger Self emerges from existing connections with individual lives can deep ecology enter into feminist ecophilosophy....Healing requires bringing forth that which is suppressed in our culture....We need to overcome, as a positive task, our dichotomy. We need each other. We need powerful ontological insights...Our ontological crisis is so severe that we cannot wait for the perfect intellectual theory to provide us with the answers.[38]

Devall is saying that the relationship of gender to identity is of little consequence compared to a "deeper," "ontological" problem of the human species' destruction of nature. He seems to imply that everyone should give up this foolish intellectualizing and go to the woods and get ecologically Self-identified. Feminists should be concerned with the real problems of the world not these secondary issues of inequality.

Critical theory has also suffered from an androcentric blindness or at least an inadequate examination of the differences between masculine and feminine relationships to the issues central to critical theory, including the domination of nature. Nancy Fraser has developed a critique of Habermas's version of critical theory that is not simply an addition to the other critiques discussed earlier (see Chapters 1 and 2). In

this critique, Habermas is shown to have made unacknowledged assumptions about the structure of society and about the capacity of his categories of analysis to offer an adequate interpretive framework for the project of emancipation. Fraser argues these assumptions, when critically analyzed, reveal an androcentric bias in Habermas' version of critical theory. Fraser concludes with some recommendations for the direction in which a more adequate critical theory of society would have to take;

> One crucial requirement is that this framework not be such as to put the male-headed nuclear family and the state-regulated official economy on two opposite sides of the major categorial divide. We require, rather, a framework sensitive to the similarities between them, one that puts them on the same side of the line as institutions that, albeit in different ways, enforce women's subordination, since both family and official economy appropriate our labor, short-circuit our participation in the interpretation of our needs, and shield normatively secured need interpretations from political contestation....What we need instead is a framework capable of foregrounding the evil of dominance and subordination.[39]

Her additional criticisms include the point that there is a need to acknowledge the ways the socialization process within the family are structured by gender identities, and that this has consequences beyond what Habermas claims are the major problems of the welfare state and its relation to capitalism, family life, and the "public sphere."[40]

Although not entirely on the same grounds, the other theorists associated strongly with the early Frankfurt School of critical theory, Horkheimer, Marcuse and Adorno, also suffer from gender myopia in much of their analysis.[41] However, Marcuse and Adorno did address the status of women in existing society. Marcuse even went so far as to identify the women's movement as one of the hopes for an emancipatory political practice.[42] Adorno, always cautious about asserting any positive political program, did provide insights into women's situation, which have become central themes in later developments of feminism, although not directly linked to his observations,

> Because the final emancipation of women was so self-evident to socialist programmes, there seems for a long time to have been no need to think through the concrete position of women....The impossibility of liberating women under the present conditions is attributed not to the conditions but to the advocates of freedom, and the frailty of emancipatory ideals, which brings them close to neurosis, is confused with their realization....[43]

Adorno is claiming that women, as the victims of a society of oppression, have been blamed for their status instead of the blame being attributed rightly to the social conditions themselves. One of Adorno's frequent targets for criticism was dogmatic Marxism and then actually existing socialism, especially the Stalinist version. The discrimination against women which kept them from employment in the paid sector and tied to unpaid

household work did not protect them from the oppression of economic conditions;

> By virtue of her distance from the process of production she retains certain traits which characterize the human being who is not yet entirely in the grasp of society...She rarely takes part as subject in historical development. The state of dependence to which she is confined mutilates her....Following this line of thought, one might reach the conclusion that women have escaped the sphere of production only to be absorbed all the more entirely by the sphere of consumption, to be captivated by the immediacy of the commodity world no less than men are transfixed by the immediacy of profit. Women mirror the injustice masculine society has inflicted on them--they become increasingly like commodities....[44]

The liberation of women then does not occur simply by moving from unpaid to paid labor. The different, gendered, positions in "exchange society" are each expressions of the operations of the production-consumption system. A truly free society would remove both types of domination, "Hope cannot aim at making the mutilated social character of women identical to the mutilated social character of men; rather, its goal must be a state in which the face of the grieving woman disappears simultaneously with that of the bustling, capable man, a state in which all that survives the disgrace of the difference between the sexes is the happiness that difference makes possible."[45]

Even though the early critical theorists develop critiques which offer possibilities for a gender sensitive social theory, and specific comments on the workings of

domination and exploitation with regard to women, their positions fundamentally do not include a nuanced discussion of the specific mediations which would constitute an adequate critical analysis. However, some indication of the relevance of an ecofeminist informed critical theory may be produced by a closer examination of the deep ecology reliance on the concept of "vital needs."

Vital Needs

Deep ecologists, including George Sessions and Arne Naess, have attempted to move beyond the simple invocation for self-realization and wider self-identification by providing a list of "Basic Principles" which, it was hoped, would summarize deep ecological insights after its more that 15 years of practice, and be "understood and accepted by persons coming from different philosophical and religious positions."[46] This is a list of basic principles, a "platform for a deep ecology movement" which consists of eight points that Naess and other deep ecologists argue they have in common. Position number three includes the statement that "Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs." The richness and diversity referred to are the "richness and diversity of life forms" as values "in themselves" which contribute to the "flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth."[47] The remaining points or principles essentially refer back to this idea of vital

needs, resulting in assertions that human population should be reduced, that public policy affecting economics, technology, and ideology must change, and that those who understand these principles have an obligation to try to directly or indirectly implement the needed changes. The principles, including the idea of vital needs, have been discussed and explained in various contexts. In Devall and Sessions' understanding, "The term 'vital need' is left deliberately vague to allow for considerable latitude in judgment."[48] They claim this need for latitude in judgment is a result of different climates and other related bioregional situations, including "differences in the structures of societies as they now exist," for example, "for some Eskimos, snowmobiles are necessary today to satisfy vital needs."[49]

Again, Luke's critique of deep ecology dwells on the implication of the idea of vital needs for a politics of deep ecology, "If humans have no right to reduce the diversity of life, except to satisfy vital needs, then what are the standards for identifying vital needs?"[50] For Luke this brings up basic questions about deciding whose vital needs take precedence when different entities are in conflict. Are humans allowed to fight diseases by killing viruses and bacteria? What about introduced species which are destroying ecosystems, should they be wiped out or are they just part of nature evolving into new forms? The few examples provided by deep ecologists

in response to these types of questions seem to Luke to be a form of "soft anthropocentrism," the smuggling in of human values at the expense of other entities, "People will continue to cut and burn trees, kill and eat plants and animals, or isolate and kill germs to fulfill vital human needs or protect the integrity of humanly defined ecocommunities...After deep ecological training, it appears that a ritual prayer, the right attitude of respect, or compassionate loving gratitude will rationalize and legitimate softer anthropocentric actions."[51]

Luke may be too harsh in his judgments. This is partially a product of the selective quotations he uses to support his position, quotes that link diverse philosophical positions on the basis of their own self-identification but which may in fact be contradictory. The most philosophically unsatisfying versions of deep ecology are those that attempt to link it with established religions such as Buddhism. Perhaps a more genuine critique would examine the more philosophically coherent philosophy of deep ecology's founder, Naess, although one of the primary limitations of his position, it is true, is the cultivation of a tolerant acceptance of anyone who wants to be included within the deep ecology tent. To the extent Naess, Devall, Sessions, et al. endorse the tendency to ecumenical inclusion of all faiths they are deserving of Luke's criticism and closely fit his

characterization, "Deep ecology in the last analysis is 'utopian ecologism.' As a utopia, it presents alluring moral visions of what might be; at the same time, it fails to outline practicable means for realizing these ecologically moral visions."[52] This conclusion is in fact based on a very selective sample of "deep ecologists" and may not be appropriate if the more philosophical and less mystical versions of the philosophy are examined.

A closer examination of Arne Naess's position reveals several similarities to critical theory, particularly that of Marcuse. However, an analysis of the critical theorists' explicit expressions of the links or mediations between society, nature, and the individual, may serve to correct some of the shortfalls of the deep ecology analysis, extending it and opening additional theoretical and practical possibilities. The place of needs in an adequate critical theory of society, or a critical theory of ecology, must be linked to the possibilities of politics and its relation to the situation of emancipation or the good life. An analysis of needs apparently requires at least two interconnected approaches. The first theoretical necessity is to acknowledge the impossibility of predetermining the content of needs in a situation of emancipated and ecological consciousness. This results in some acceptance of the fact that the establishment of needs must take place within the context of need interpretation in something like a "public

sphere." Secondly, for the ecologically or critically aware, the content of need interpretation must begin with the distinction of something like "vital needs" or "true needs" from wants, wishes, or false needs.

The classic critical theory expression of this problem occurs in Marcuse's One Dimensional Man where he attempts to distinguish true from false needs;

> "Truth" and "falsehood" of needs designate objective conditions to the extent to which the universal satisfaction of vital needs and, beyond it, the progressive alleviation of toil and poverty, are universally valid standards. But as historical standards, they do not only vary according to area and stage of development, they also can be defined only in (greater or lesser) contradiction to the prevailing ones. What tribunal can possibly claim the authority of decision?
>
> In the last analysis, the question of what are true and false needs must be answered by the individuals themselves, but only in the last analysis; that is, if and when they are free to give their own answer.[53]

Adorno, in his essay on "Society" discusses various attempts to define society and its components and finds them wanting. They tend to inadequately reflect on the effects of the processes of abstraction and reification, like that of "role playing." In one of the scattered examples of Adorno's idea of the alternative society of the future, he indicates a relationship to needs, but this indication is stated, as Marcuse says is necessary in existing conditions, in the form of contradiction;

> A genuine theory of society ought to be able to move from such immediate observation of phenomena towards an understanding of their deeper social causes....[the notion of the genuine society] would go far beyond the trivial idea that everything is interrelated. The emptiness and abstractness of this idea is now so much the sign of feeble thinking as it is that of a shabby permanency in the constitution of society itself: that of the market system in modern-day society....Profit comes first. A humanity fashioned into a vast network of consumers, the human beings who actually have the needs, have been socially preformed beyond anything which one might naively imagine, and this not only by the level of industrial development but also by the economic relationships themselves into which they enter, even though this is far more difficult to observe empirically. Above and beyond all specific forms of social differentiation, the abstraction implicit in the market system represents the domination of the general over the particular, of society over its captive membership. It is not at all a socially neutral phenomenon, as the logistics or reduction, of uniformity of work time, might suggest. Behind the reduction of men to agents and bearers of exchange value lies the domination of men over men....The form of the total system requires everyone to respect the law of exchange if he does not wish to be destroyed, irrespective of whether profit is his subjective motivation or not.[54]

Doug Kellner, in an examination of these issues, expresses concern with the position exemplified by the above Adorno statement. He believes the early critical theorists failed to distinguish between consumerism and consumption, at least sufficiently to be able to acknowledge the possibility of decisions about consumption that may not be completely supportive of the system of domination and exploitation by the capitalist system.

This is an attempt on Kellner's part to move away from the totalizing critique, a move which allows for the possibility of "inventive and creative" activities of consumption by individuals, enabling them to "grow and develop as human beings." This results in an alternative view of the potentials of individuals under existing society, "Consumption can thus be a rational, life-enhancing activity that increases one's human powers and fulfills genuine human needs. Consequently, rather than denouncing commodities and consumption per se, we should try to discriminate between valuable and worthless or dubious commodities, and dehumanized, fetishized consumption as opposed to creative, life-enhancing consumption."[55]

Deep ecologists then must provide criteria to distinguish vital needs from non-vital or false needs if they are to meet the demands of their critics, but they must also explain the criteria for interpreting those needs in such a way that they can be defended within the sphere of public discourse. Nancy Fraser discusses the difference between what she calls the "discussion of need satisfaction" and "the politics of need interpretation."[56] Any interpretation of needs claims would have to be justified. Fraser attempts to explain what such an interpretive justification would have to consist of;

> First, there are procedural considerations concerning the social processes by which various competing need interpretations are generated. For example, how exclusive or inclusive are various rival needs discourses? How hierarchical or egalitarian are the relations among the interlocutors? In general, procedural considerations dictate that, all other things being equal, the best need interpretations are those reached by means of communicative processes that most closely approximate ideals of democracy, equality, and fairness....In addition, considerations of consequences are relevant in justifying need interpretations. This means comparing alternative distributive outcomes of rival interpretations....In sum, justifying some interpretations of social needs as better than others involves balancing procedural and consequentialist considerations. More simply, it involves balancing democracy and equality.[57]

Fraser's position sounds very much like that of Habermas with his attempt to establish a communicative ethic to rejuvenate the "public sphere." In fact, Kellner too follows his above observations with an appeal to the critical theory efforts of Habermas,

> Habermas has been proposing sustained public discussion of needs, values and public policy. His argument that we must revitalize the public sphere and engage in debate about crucial social, political and ethical issues is relevant to the topic at hand. Following Habermas, Critical Theory can help to promote public debate on needs, commodities and consumer practices so as to aim for democratic consensus on these issues. Such debate could be connected with discourse on values and the good life....[58]

However, Fraser indicates her version of needs interpretation and its justification is significantly different from the Habermasian version, "In its first-order normative content, this formulation is Habermasian.

However, I do not wish to follow Habermas in giving it a transcendental or quasi-transcendental metainterpretation. Thus, whereas Habermas purports to ground 'communicative ethics' in the conditions of possibility of speech understood universalistically and ahistorically, I consider it a contingently evolved, historically specific possibility."[59]

The underlying difficulty with the deep ecology approach to needs and their interpretation is a continuing vacillation about the status of needs as ontologically derived and therefore to a great extent expressing a desire for transcending or quasi-transcending the need for historical interpretation, thus denying the fundamentally historical character of needs as they are produced by the operations of the system of production and consumption. This may be an indication of a fundamental conflict within need interpretation, one that cannot be resolved at the theoretical level but which is instead only possibly addressed in actual discussion by individuals, through their ecocentric interpretations of the needs of their local ecocommunity. We again return to the question of whether deep ecology involves any criteria, including substantive criteria, for need interpretation in actual local discussion.

There is recognition in deep ecology, or at least by Naess, of the impossibility of simply relying on market systems to determine distribution of need satisfaction.

Naess distinguishes between various aspects of need interpretation, "Classical economics concerned itself with a substantial part of human needs. The perspective was both philosophical and practical. Modern economics tends to narrow down the perspective and to substitute demand on the market for human needs. Ecosophy asks for a re-establishment of the classical perspective, adding insights from cultural anthropology."[60] Naess also recognizes that the existing system of "representation" and its intricate links to the interests of large corporations does not meet the requirement for public discussion of needs and need interpretation. He explains how politicians and "energy experts" speak of increasing energy "needs" by attempting to equate them with "human needs" instead of making the more appropriate distinction that energy needs are a product of the market and the standard of living in consumerist cultures.[61] Naess explores in some detail the relation of economics and ecosophy, tracing the ideas of economics and politics to the classical Greek understanding of the terms, describing the science of economics as "household management" and the polis as a "community of households." He devotes a full chapter to this discussion including the observation that deep ecology has tended to ignore economic discussion, and that he is providing a partial response to criticisms which have focused on this gap. One of his basic points is that current economic measurements are fundamentally

inadequate for dealing with the ecological crisis. The measures do discriminate between types of needs, "In GNP there is no place for a distinction between waste, luxury, and a satisfaction of fundamental needs."[62] In summarizing his chapter on technology and lifestyle Naess also connects needs to technological development, "The ecosophical basis for an appraisal of technique is the satisfaction of vital needs in the diverse local communities."[63]

Naess thus is aware of the necessity of developing an interpretation of needs that takes history and social conflict into consideration, although it is unclear to what extent he believes society penetrates individual consciousness in its structuring of needs. The discussion of the possibility of self-identification with nature would indicate a strong belief in the voluntary ability of individuals to alter their need structures, or alternatively, that the wider ecological self-awareness is a product of increased maturity, seen as a "natural" process. Criticisms of both of these positions have indicated that deep ecology has not adequately addressed the question of the depth of penetration of the psyche of individuals by the operations of the present economic and sexual order. Besides the examples already given, and the alternative view of Adorno about the depth of structuring of needs interpretation by an oppressive society, it is only necessary to point to such phenomena as bulimia and

anorexia nervosa as examples of where individual will or choice is an inadequate explanation of the distortion of "needs hierarchies" even at the most basic or "vital" levels.[64]

Even though the description of needs by deep ecology tends to take on positivist or transcendent characteristics, there is the recognition of the desirability of determining actual need structure in local settings, including the consideration of non-human needs. In this context, Naess discusses the control of "life spaces" and the closeness or remoteness of control as a function of self-preservation, or the satisfaction of "basic needs."[65] He attempts to link the political program of local control of decision-making to his understanding of needs, "The next ecosophical principles to be incorporated are those of self-sufficiency, decentralisation, and autonomy. These social principles are first to be linked to their biological counterparts."[66] He then curiously discusses need satisfaction in terms of "control," the intent being to explain that satisfaction of needs, in order to be ecologically coherent, should be the result of utilizing resources closest to hand. As need satisfaction becomes reliant on ever more remote sources, it generates an increasingly unstable set of relationships, "Increase of remoteness correlates with increase of dangers, of inadequacy of powers of self-preservation and therefore

with decrease of Self-realisation potentials."[67] Naess then connects these observations about biological and human needs to the correlated social practices, "By the degree of local self-sufficiency and autonomy we shall understand the degree to which the living being has its sources of basic need satisfactions, or more generally sources of Self-realisation, nearby in the life space and, secondly, to what degree the organism has adequate control of this area to satisfy its needs."[68]

In comparing competing needs of different organisms, specifically of humans to non-humans, Naess offers another principle, "Responsible decisions closely require one to consider the entire norm system. The dimensions of peripheral needs of humans must be compared with vital needs of other species, if there is a conflict."[69] Naess's distinctions between needs--biological, species specific and class specific--lead him to ask if "non-biological" needs are in fact needs or whether they are better understood as wishes. The implicit underlying question being, "What is the relation of social structure to the formation of needs."[70]

Finally, the interpretation of needs ultimately depends on individual experience and therefore on the processes of identification. Naess makes critical comments on the relation of the "happy consumer" to the type of consumption of outdoor activity that serves to reinforce capitalist practices, but he still advocates the

importance of outdoor activities, "Understanding of anything in nature begins with direct experience, but this soon stimulates reflection."[71] He recognizes the necessity of interpretation or reflection on the experience of nature and the relation of the interpretation of nature to the determination of needs and their satisfaction. For Naess, the mediation provided by reflection serves as a link to the necessity of preservation of wild nature. The reason for protecting wilderness areas for other than human utility is still perceived as a human need, but a need that develops in consequence of increased maturity, "These propositions suggest that to ascribe value to animals, plants, landscapes, and wilderness areas independently of their relation to human utility or benefit is a philosophically legitimate procedure. To relate all value to mankind is a form of anthropocentrism which is not philosophically tenable."[72]

Naess then attempts to unite the connections between the issues of self-preservation, moral action, and the relation of "beautiful actions" to the environment, "A person acts beautifully when acting benevolently from inclination. Environment is then not felt to be something strange or hostile which we must unfortunately adapt ourself to, but something valuable which we are <u>inclined</u> to treat with joy and respect, and the overwhelming

richness of which we are inclined to use to satisfy our vital needs."[73]

The practical consequence of this stance has been the emergence of the radical ecological group Earth First! and its defense of wilderness and wildness. The question of the relation of the philosophical justification of deep ecology to its political application should now be considered. It is only in this relation of philosophy to social and political change that deep ecology, and radical ecology generally, can be adequately evaluated.

ENDNOTES

1. Luke, Tim, "The Dreams of Deep Ecology," Telos, No. 76, Summer 1988, pp 65-92. Hereafter cited as Dreams.

2. Luke, Dreams, p. 83.

3. Luke, Dreams, p. 83.

4. See Chapter 2.

5. Luke, Dreams, p. 81.

6. Buck-Morss, Susan, The Origin of Negative Dialectics (New York: The Free Press, 1977). Adorno's essay "The Idea of Natural History" can be found in Telos, No. 60, (Summer 1984), pp. 111-124.

7. Adorno, Natural History, p. 111.

8. Adorno, Natural History, p. 111.

9. Adorno, Natural History, p. 111. This assertion resonates with Marx's that all previous history is actually a pre-history, that awaits the true history of the communist society.

10. Adorno, Theodor, Negative Dialectics (New York: Continuum, 1966). Hereafter cited as ND.

11. Adorno, ND, p. 354. Marx, Das Kapital, Vol. I, (Berlin, 1955), p. 7.

12. Adorno, ND, p. 354.

13. Adorno, ND, p. 355.

14. Adorno, ND, p. 356.

15. Adorno, ND, pp. 357-358.

16. Adorno, ND, p. 358. Marx, German Ideology.

17. This issue will be dealt with in the next chapter as far as it relates to deep ecology and to its primary concern of wilderness preservation.

18. Luke, Dreams, p. 86, from Bill Devall and George Sessions, Deep Ecology (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1985), p. 70.

19. Luke, Dreams, p. 86.

20. Luke, Dreams, p. 87.

21. Kheel, Marti, "Ecofeminism and Deep Ecology: Reflections on Identity and Difference," in Reweaving the World, Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein, Eds. (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990), p. 129.

22. Kheel, p. 131.

23. These issues will be examined in Section III below on ecofeminism (Chapters 9-11).

24. Naess, Ecology, p. 170-171.

25. Naess, Ecology, p. 174.

26. Leopold, Aldo, A Sand County Almanac, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1966), originally published in 1949, p. 227.

27. Kheel, p. 133, originally, Ortega y Gassett Meditations on Hunting, p. 88 (see Diamond and Orenstein, p. 297).

28. Kheel, p. 133.

29. Kheel, p. 133.

30. Kheel, p. 135. Quoted from Devall and Sessions, Deep Ecology, p. 188.

31. Kheel, p. 136. An examination of these issues will take place in Chapters 9-11.

32. Devall, Bill, Simple in Means, Rich in Ends (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1988), pp. 54-57.

33. Devall, Simple, p. 54.

34. Devall, Simple, p. 54.

35. Devall, Simple, p. 55.

36. Devall, Simple, p. 55.

37. Devall, Simple, p. 57.

38. Devall, Simple, pp. 55-57.

39. Fraser, Nancy, "What's Critical about Critical Theory? The Case of Habermas and Gender," in Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p. 138.

40. Fraser, p. 138.

41. The near sightedness of the early Frankfurt School theorists' treatment of women's experiences is examined in detail by Patricia J. Mills in Woman, Nature and Psyche (New Haven: Yale, 1987).

42. Marcuse, Herbert, "Marxism and Feminism", Women's Studies 2 (1974), pp. 279-288.

43. Adorno, Theodor, Prisms (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990), p. 82.

44. Adorno, Prisms, p. 82.

45. Adorno, Prisms, p. 82.

46. Devall and Sessions, Deep Ecology, p. 70.

47. Naess, Ecology, p. 29, also in Devall and Sessions Deep Ecology, p. 70, also in Naess "Deep Ecology and Ultimate Premises," Society and Nature, Vol. 2, Sept.-Dec. 1992, p. 114, among other places.

48. Devall and Sessions, Deep Ecology, p. 71.

49. Devall and Sessions, Deep Ecology, p. 71.

50. Luke, Dreams, p. 87.

51. Luke, Dreams, p. 88.

52. Luke, Dreams, p. 90.

53. Marcuse, Herbert, One Dimensional Man (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), p. 6.

54. Adorno, Theodore, "Society," in Critical Theory and Society: A Reader, Stephen Eric Bronner and Douglas Kellner, Eds.(New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 270.

55. Kellner, Douglas, Critical Theory, Marxism and Modernity, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 161.

56. Fraser, Nancy, Unruly Practices, Struggle over Needs: Outline of a Socialist-Feminist Critical Theory of Late Capitalist Political Culture, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), pp. 161-187.

57. Fraser., p. 182.

58. Kellner, Critical Theory, p. 162.

59. Fraser, p. 187. See, Jurgen Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 1, Thomas McCarthy, Trans. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984); Communication and the Evolution of Society, Thomas McCarthy, Trans. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979); Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action, Christian Lenhardt and Shierry Weber Nicholsen, Trans., (Boston: MIT, 1990).

60. Naess, Ecology, p. 33.

61. Naess, Ecology, p. 25.

62. Naess, Ecology, Chapter 5, and p. 113.

63. Naess, Ecology, p. 102.

64. Discussions of anorexia nervosa, bulimia and other specific "disorders" can be found in much of the feminist literature including P. J. Mills, Woman, Nature and Psyche (New Haven: Yale, 1987), pp. 135ff

65. Naess, Ecology, pp. 204-05.

66. Naess, Ecology, p. 204.

67. Naess, Ecology, p. 205.

68. Naess, Ecology, p. 205.

69. Naess, Ecology, p. 171.

70. Naess, Ecology, pp. 206-07.

71. Naess, Ecology, p. 181.

72. Naess, Ecology, p. 177.

73. Naess, Ecology, p. 85.

CHAPTER 5

DEEP ECOLOGY AND POLITICS

The philosophy of deep ecology has manifested itself in the radical ecology movement most directly in the element known as Earth First!. The group has grown from a VW van full of radical "cowboys" into an organization with its own Journal, educational foundation, and supporters that number in the thousands if not tens of thousands. This development has taken place since 1980, and includes events that landed co-founder Dave Foreman and others in prison for "ecoterrorist" activities.[1] By the mid-1990s the group had members, or those who identify themselves as Earth First!ers, across the U.S. and around the world. The brief history of Earth First! is mostly that of actions taken in order to save "pristine" wilderness areas and the biological diversity and spiritual potential of these fragments of ecosystems. This dynamic history continues at what seems like an accelerating pace even though most of its original leadership has distanced itself from the highly activist group, a distancing not because of its radicalness, but the opposite. The charges against the organization by its founders are based in the belief that it has grown into the type of organization it was originally conceived against, one characterized as increasingly bureaucratic, bogged down with internal bickering and now controlled by "social justice" critics

whose "leftist agenda" derails the movement which began as a defense of wilderness with "no compromise."[2] Some of the founders have moved on to concentrate almost solely on the expansion of wild areas in the world and especially in North America. Although the anatomy of the various actions to defend specific parts of the natural world would provide useful lessons on the group and the motivations of individual members, as well as on responses by the system of domination and exploitation that is destroying the planet piece by piece, what is of most concern in the present context is the relationship of radical ecological resistance to the assertions about its philosophical underpinning--deep ecology. Examining the relationship of theory and practice will require drawing on actual examples of confrontation between the radical ecologists and the dominant economic, political and social system. However, history as such is not the present concern, rather what is required philosophically at this point is the critical evaluation of the relationship between the philosophy of deep ecology and its radical practice. Three aspects of this will be considered here: first, evaluation of the place of "wilderness" in the self-understanding of the activists; second, their use of the tactic of monkeywrenching; and finally, the potential of the concept of the "bioregion" as a basis for future political organization. Another way to understand these issues is by attempting to address the question, "How does

the defense of wilderness relate to the theory of self-identification propounded by Naess and Fox?" In respect to critical theory's potential contribution to this exploration, it can be asked, "Does Adorno's use of the concept of mimesis offer an alternative conceptual approach which can simultaneously better explain the actions of the radical ecologists and their contradictions, and then indicate an analysis which can more adequately guide future radical ecological activity?" Also important will be an analysis and understanding of the extent to which the actions of these radical ecologists are "revolutionary" and what is meant by the term. Especially interesting in this respect is the question of why the activists claim to be non-revolutionary yet official police organizations identify them as terrorists? Finally, does the commitment to wilderness, bioregions and a general ecosystems approach to ecological problems provide an adequate basis for a post-domination-of-nature society, or does the concept of bioregions need to be supplemented not only with a vision of future politics, but also by an analysis that can adequately address the relationship of the ecological crisis to current social and cultural crises, crises which are also a manifestation of the <u>internal</u> domination and colonization of nature.

Nature and Identity

The heart of the Earth First! movement is its "no compromise" stand with regard to wilderness. Wilderness preservation and restoration is the basis for all subsequent action;

> In a true Earth-radical group, concern for wilderness preservation must be the keystone. The idea of wilderness after all, is the most radical in human thought--more radical than Paine, than Marx, than Mao. Wilderness says: Human beings are not paramount, Earth is not for Homo sapiens alone, human life is but one life form on the planet and has no right to take exclusive possession. Yes, wilderness for its own sake, without any need to justify it for human benefit. Wilderness for wilderness. For bears and whales and titmice and rattlesnakes and stink bugs. And...wilderness for human beings. Because it is the laboratory of human evolution, and because it is home.[3]

For the deep ecologist, the primary reason for preservation and extension of wilderness is to keep intact the processes of evolution, which represent various journey's along different ecological paths expressed through the genetic material and behaviors of individual species. Wilderness is necessary to preserve biological diversity. The rate of species extinction is greater now than any time in natural history, even greater than the fabled die off of the dinosaurs.[4] The activities of radical Earth First!ers then are aimed at restoring the means for evolutionary processes to continue even if--or as most believe, when--human beings make it impossible for

their own species to continue to exist. The goal of these activities is not to establish a sustainable society, but to simply make possible the continuation of the evolution of complex life with the remaining genetic material and intact ecosystems that are available: "We must envision and propose the restoration of biological wildernesses of several million acres in all of America's ecosystems, with corridors between them for the transmission of genetic variability. Wilderness is the arena for evolution, and there must be enough of it for natural forces to have free rein."[5] What Foreman proposes is not a better managed system, and not simple preservation of existing "wild" sites, but the extension of wilderness with no ultimate boundary. The limits of his neo-primitivism are unclear, "Keep Cleveland, Los Angeles. Contain them. Try to make them habitable. But identify big areas that can be restored to a semblance of natural conditions, reintroduce the Grizzly Bear and wolf and prairie grasses, and declare them off limits to modern civilization."[6] In his argument for putting Earth first, Foreman insists that native diversity and the evolution of life should be placed highest on any value system. The protection of standards of living or any other human interests are secondary, "In everything human society does, the primary consideration should be for the long-term health and biological diversity of Earth. After that, we can consider the

welfare of humans. We should be kind, compassionate, and caring with other people, but Earth comes first."[7]

One of the enduring difficulties with Foreman's position, and one that has led to charges of racism, is the value system that develops out of this uncompromising defense of genetic diversity, the "refusal to use human beings as the measure by which to value others." This problem goes beyond Earth First!'s insistence about civilization's tendency toward anthropocentrism to what many claim is the group's underlying misanthropy. The most notorious of these value dilemmas comes when evaluating disease and famine in relation to human populations, "Human suffering resulting from drought and famine in Ethiopia is tragic, yes, but the destruction there of other creatures and habitat is even more tragic."[8] Foreman links this assertion directly to the philosophy of deep ecology or "biocentrism." It is through this philosophy that Foreman attempts to justify his position,

> The dominant philosophy of our time (which contains Judeo-Christianity, Islam, capitalism, Marxism, scientism, and secular humanism) is anthropocentrism. It places human beings at the center of the universe, separates them from nature, and endows them with unique value. EF!ers are in direct opposition to that philosophy. Ours is an ecological perspective that views Earth as a community and recognizes such apparent enemies as "disease" (e.g., malaria) and "pests" (e.g., mosquitoes) not as manifestations of evil to be overcome but rather as vital and necessary components of a complex and vibrant biosphere.[9]

This privileging of the natural over the human has the characteristics of a simple reversal of the culture-nature duality, and therefore may succumb to the same conceptual structuring, revealed in the type of analysis of rationality which critical theory emphasizes. Horkheimer and Adorno examine these fundamental processes in Dialectic of Enlightenment. The purpose of Horkheimer and Adorno's examination of enlightenment is not simply to abandon "enlightenment" or human reason, "The accompanying critique of enlightenment is intended to prepare the way for a positive notion of enlightenment which will release it from entanglement in blind domination."[10] The two main theses of the work are that "myth is already enlightenment; and enlightenment reverts to mythology."[11] These theses are examined in specific relation to two examples, the first of which involves an interpretation of the journeys of Odysseus in the Odyssey. They illuminate the "difference and the unity" of "mythic nature" and the "enlightened mastery of nature." An examination of this example of the relationship of myth and enlightenment, the dialectic of enlightenment, may aid in understanding the philosophical issues and problematics of the philosophy of deep ecology.

Horkheimer and Adorno examine the Homeric poem of the adventures of Odysseus from a unique perspective.[12] The hero is viewed as the prototypical example of the "bourgeois individual" and the story of his adventures is

interpreted as a story of the creation of the bourgeois self. More generally, Odysseus's adventures represent the various stages of development of self-identity. More directly, the tale is interpreted as recounting both the development of subjectivity generally, and particularly its bourgeois or individualistic form. Odysseus is confronted with various challenges to his survival, and to his individual autonomy. These challenges appear in various forms of nature or fate, where impulse or instinct tempt the hero to abandon the self in exchange for pleasure or happiness. Odysseus overcomes these temptations and challenges through various, often clever, means, which result in the hero's denial of his desires in the service of preservation of the self. The different episodes of the adventure involve overcoming internal and external nature in order to retain the identity of the self:

> The very spirit that dominates nature repeatedly vindicates the superiority of nature in competition....Only consciously contrived adaptation to nature brings nature under the control of the physically weaker....Imitation enters into the service of domination inasmuch as even man is anthropomorphized for man. The pattern of Odyssean cunning is the mastery of nature through such adaptation. Renunciation, the principle of bourgeois disillusionment, the outward schema for the intensification of sacrifice....He just pulls through; struggle is his survival; and all the fame that he and the others win in the process serves merely to confirm that the title of hero, is only gained at the price of the abasement and mortification

> of the instinct for complete, universal, and undivided happiness.[13]

The mastery of nature is achieved through clever calculation, what the authors will call instrumental rationality. This "rational" domination of nature is understood as the control of fate or mythic forces, and results in a self that is formed through the limited processes of instrumental rationality. The domination of external nature is accomplished by way of the internal domination of the self:

> The deception in sacrifice is the prototype of Odyssean cunning; many of Odysseus' strategems are, so to speak, inset in a contest of sacrifice to natural deities. All human sacrifices, when systematically executed, deceive the god to whom they are made: they subject him to the primacy of human ends, and dissolve his power; and the deception of the god carries over smoothly into that practiced by the disbelieving priests on the believers....By calculating his own sacrifice, he effectively negates the power to whom the sacrifice is made. In this way he redeems the life he had forfeited.[14]

In this interpretation then, sacrifice is an early form of "rational exchange" whereby the sacrifice enables humans to gain control of the actions of the gods, of the mythic forces of fate, of nature, and of men. Examination of the specific episodes of Odysseus' journey become for the critical theorists an examination of the history of western civilization since, as archaic prototype of the bourgeois individual, Odysseus anticipates what will be the general structure of later society. The Odyssey is

something of a model for understanding certain aspects of modern society.

The entire journey of Odysseus and the details of the critical theorists' analysis is not possible or needed here, but a few examples will help illustrate their concerns about the relationship of myth and enlightenment and indicate some further directions for development. In their analysis of the episode in which Odysseus escapes Polyphemus the Cyclops, Horkheimer and Adorno interpret this as a depiction of the stage or phase of "brute egotism" in human development,

> Polyphemus represents a later stage in world development--the barbaric age proper, one of hunters and herdsmen. For Homer, barbarism can be defined as the absence of any systematic agriculture, and the lack of any systematic organization of labor and society governing the disposal of time. This is an already patriarchal tribal society, grounded on the subjection of the physically weaker, but as yet unorganized by the yardstick of fixed property and its hierarchy.[15]

Odysseus (Udeis) and some of his crew are held captive by the Cyclops, and it is through clever deception that Odysseus escapes although in the process he loses some crew members to the ravenous Cyclops. Odysseus' ruse is to answer the Cyclops' question of Odysseus' identity by adopting the name "No-man" or "Nobody." When Odysseus (Udeis) attempts to escape after blinding the Cyclops, the Cyclops' pleas for help to the other members of his tribe become ineffectual after they ask for the name of the

offender, and he answers, "No-man" (Udeis) has escaped. Odysseus takes advantage of the relationship of language to what it refers, that is, the difference between "the word" and "the thing." In this case, "Udeis" has two meanings, both as a proper name and as "no one." Odysseus is then moving in a space of thought that is different from that of the mythic. This development in conceptualization, according to the critical theorists, resembles that reasoning which supports the system of contracts. The earlier form of reason was unable to distinguish word from thing,

> The sphere of ideas in which the decrees of fate irrevocably executed by the figures of myth belong, is still innocent of the distinction between word and object. The word must have direct power over fact; expression and intention penetrate one another. Cunning consists in exploiting the distinction. The word is emphasized, in order to change the actuality. In this way, consciousness of intention arises: in his distress, Odysseus becomes aware of the dualism, for he learns that the same word can mean different things.[16]

It is in the use of the ambiguity of the relationship of word and thing that Odysseus is able to save himself, but only by denying himself, "Odysseus' two contradictory actions in his encounter with Polyphemus, his answering to the name, and his disowning it, are nevertheless one. He acknowledges himself to himself by denying himself under the name Nobody; he saves his life by losing himself."[17]

Another example supports the critical theorists' claims about this process of development of instrumental

rationality, the domination of nature, and the formation of the "autonomous individual," in their discussion of the hero's encounter with the goddess Circe. Circe tempts the crew with beauty and sexual pleasure. This episode of the tale represents a higher phase of development, beyond the simplistic egoism of the Cyclops. This is the point of development of magic and the use of ambiguous illusion, "The magical story of Circe refers back again to the magic stage proper. Magic disintegrates the individual, who once again succumbs to it and is thus made to revert to an older biological species."[18] Circe is able to "take the erotic initiative" and so for the critical theorists represents the type of the prostitute. Circe has an ambiguous nature, both corrupter and helper, a mythical mixture of both water and fire gained from her immortal ancestors. The magical spell which she uses on the crew turns them into swine, unlike her previous victims who became again undomesticated creatures of the wilderness. The men are liberated from the repressed nature that had made them individuals, "selves," and thereby achieve an illusion of "redemption." This form of redemption is represented as a delusion by Homer as indicated by the theorists, "But because they have already been men, the civilized epic cannot represent what has happened to them as anything other than unseemly degradation, and in the Homeric account there is hardly any trace of pleasure."[19]

The critical theorists' analysis continues with comments on the status of women in the bourgeois-patriarchal social order. They especially note that the ritual used by Circe in working her magic is the repetition of the process by which women themselves are subjugated. Women "under the pressure of civilized judgment" identify with the image that civilization presents of them, weak and defenseless, but also desirable, "As a representative of nature, woman in bourgeois society has become the enigmatic image of irresistibility and powerlessness. In this way she reflects for domination the pure lie that posits the subjection instead of the redemption of nature."[20]

In their analysis of Odysseus' overcoming of Circe's power, Horkheimer and Adorno's interpretation is inadequate in that it too rigidly focuses on that aspect of sexual relations, particularly marriage, that lends itself to concepts related to those of exchange society. To be more fully adequate to that which it analyzes, in addition to the analysis of exchange relationships, the interpretation requires the independent analysis of patriarchal relationships. It is true that Odysseus is able to resist Circe's temptations with the help of an antidote received from the god of commerce and the market. But Odysseus is still threatened by the sexual power of Circe, so, with sword in hand, he forces her to swear to an oath that if he has sex with her she will not use her

powers: "The oath is intended to protect the man from mutilation, from revenge for the prohibition of promiscuity and for male domination, which--as a permanent deprivation of instinct--is nevertheless a symbolic self-mutilation on the part of the man."[21] But as P. J. Mills has indicated, the critical theorists have failed to see that the oath is one-sided, "They miss the double standard in the oath, for what is clearly prohibited is female promiscuity. Odysseus indulges in sex with Circe and curtails her relations with other men, even though he is married to Penelope."[22] For Horkheimer and Adorno the oath is an early form of the marriage contract. In their analysis pleasure is degraded to love as ideology. Circe renounces the power of her desire and Odysseus is no longer able to enjoy the full pleasure of sexual surrender. This, they argue, is a precursor of the "frigidity" of the bourgeois marital relationship where the marriage contract is an expression of love as ideology, performing "its work of deception about the hatred of competitors."[23] But the analysis of this contractual relationship is incomplete, it fails to address the full inequality of the contracting parties, and does not fully indicate the coercion of the contract. Horkheimer and Adorno emphasize the resulting "solitariness" that results from a world of exchange where competition invades all aspects of life, but it is not only the injustices of unequal exchange that are revealed

by the circumstances of the oath. As Mills indicates, "What is not mentioned is that man and woman have never been equal in love in patriarchal society; love as ideology has always been more deadly for woman than for man. The defeat of female desire, the defeat of female power in love, is extracted from Circe through trickery and the threat of violence."[24]

In the ensuing analysis of Odysseus' return to his homeland, Horkheimer and Adorno attempt to show the power of the remembrance of suffering, but by neglecting the specificity of the previously discussed relations of marriage, they fail to appreciate the gendered character of the suffering. Circe's oath was a renunciation of promiscuity on her part, but it did not apply to Odysseus's own actions. When he returns to his kingdom he questions his wife's fidelity and disguises himself in an attempt to discover the truth. He finds that Penelope has resisted the suitors who have pursued her in the 19 year absence of the king, but other female members of the court have not been so faithful. Horkheimer and Adorno complete the story, "In Book 22 of the Odyssey, there is a description of the way in which Odysseus' son punishes the faithless women who had reverted to prostitution....The passage closes with the information that the feet of the row of suspended women 'kicked out for a short while, but not for long.'"[25] Mills points out that the description of the women as prostitutes is Horkheimer and Adorno's

invention, an indication of their (male) blindness to the fact that the women did no more than Odysseus had done with Circe. Horkheimer and Adorno's account of the meaning of that last line hinges on the universal character of suffering and the remembrance of that suffering indicated in the structure of the passage. However as Mills responds, "Horkheimer and Adorno see this episode as an account of atrocity in which we cannot forget the victims or their agony, but this is to see a generalized brutality in what is a specifically female death inflicted on women for violating codes of sexual behavior set up by men."[26]

Robert Hullot-Kentor also seizes on the final image of the dying women to help refute the interpretation of Adorno which Habermas has fostered and which is unable to bear the weight of its assertions. Hullot-Kentor focuses on the analysis of the Odyssey as an example of what he believes is Adorno's fundamental philosophical innovation, "the unity of the self is the work of a sacrificial cunning."[27] Accomplished in sacrifice is the exchange as equivalents something of less value for something of more value. As the acts of sacrifice develop, as the process of substitution is extended, cunning is developed. Cunning should be understood here in relation to the history of philosophy, specifically to Hegel's understanding of the cunning or ruse of Reason. Dialectical development occurs through the actions of

individuals through history, but without their awareness of the ultimate ends to which history progresses. Reason progressively actualizes itself, eventually achieving Absolute Knowledge, but it does so "behind the backs" of the subjects involved. The individual subjects are "sacrificed" to the ultimate purposes of Reason. Hullot-Kentor asserts that Adorno's writings are based on the reversal of what is in Hegel a process of domination. This process of both abstract and concrete domination is typical of western civilization. The highest forms of this process of "domination by substitution" are scientific and mathematical, such as in physics. The reversal of the process of domination requires the recognition of the futility of this process of sacrificial substitution, "Adorno shows that the overturning of sacrifice, and the movement toward the development of cunning inheres in the dialectic of sacrifice."[28] After commenting on the analysis of marriage and property in the Odyssey essay, Hullot-Kentor indicates the analyses' common direction, "The reversals of marriage and property are only instances of the basic issue of the possible reversal of mediation with which Dialectic of Enlightenment is concerned: the reversal of subjectivity from the domination to the liberation of nature."[29] He quotes Adorno on the relation of sacrifice to a society beyond the present one, "Odysseus is at the same time a sacrifice for the abrogation of sacrifice. His masterful

renunciation, as a struggle against myth, stands in for a society that no longer demands renunciation and domination: one that masters itself, not in order to coerce itself and others, but for reconciliation."[30] The thrust of Hullot-Kentor's argument is that all of Adorno's works are dedicated to revealing the internal tendency of sacrifice's service of cunning or reason, but which eventually becomes aware of its own futility, creating the possibility of its reversal from domination to liberation. The internalization of sacrifice is the establishment of self, sacrifice took place to preserve the self, but, "The internalization of sacrifice is the establishment of the principle of identity as the principle of the self."[31] The self-identical self cannot be sacrificed because there is no substitute for it. The point is made by Adorno, "The self is precisely the human being to whom the magical power of substitution is no longer attributed. The establishment of the self severs that fluctuating unity with nature that the sacrifice of the self claimed to achieve."[32] The struggle against nature, and its mythical forms, required a process of sacrifice that eventually produced the possibility of a self with its continuing identity, the self-identical self. The basis for the critique of sacrifice, sacrifice established in the operations of that instrumental rationality which cunningly offered the unequal exchange as if equivalent, itself develops out of the process of sacrifice. Reason,

the unity of the general and particular, is the principle of identity, "Reason means, according to its own form, something like the idea of the reconciliation of the universal and the particular."[33] The non-substitutable self, the self-identical self, the imitable self, is essentially different from or other than nature, yet when this self forgets that it is nature it also forgets the purposes for which it was formed, says Adorno, "In the instant in which men sever the consciousness of themselves as nature, all of the purposes for which they struggle to preserve themselves, social progress, the intensification of material and intellectual forces, indeed consciousness itself, are vitiated."[34] Reason, as the principle of identity, attempts to control the world, nature, by reducing it to itself. This "second nature" becomes as imprisoning as the mythic nature that inspired sacrifice. The extension of control and domination would be characterized in later works by the critical theorists as the "totally administered society." It is only through the memory of itself as always and still part of nature that the self can obtain freedom from its self-built prison of second nature, "Precisely reason that no longer takes itself to be absolute, that recognizes itself as nature and no longer as something absolutely opposed to nature, precisely this reason that is conscious of itself as nature, ceases to be mere nature."[35]

Hullot-Kentor explains how Adorno's aesthetic theory understands art as mourning the sacrifice it produces, an act of remembrance which transforms domination into the possibility of liberation. This is a result of the similarity of art to society, "The same process of the domination of nature that society carries out occurs within the art work; the same sacrificial act of reason is carried out by art through its construction."[36] The sacrifices carried out in the actual domination of nature are justified as "necessary" by the self-preserving reason, the principle of identity. Art can mourn the sacrifice by "undoing" its self-identity. Adorno compares this self undoing of art to the weaving and unweaving that occupied Penelope as she waited for Odysseus,

> Homer's story of Penelope, who every evening pulls apart what she wove during the day, is an unconscious allegory of art: what the cunning woman does to her artifacts is what art actually does to itself. Ever since Homer's poem, this episode is not what it is easily mistaken to be, an addition or vestige, but rather a constitutive category of art: through this category art absorbs the impossibility of the identity of the one and the many as an element of its unity. Art works, no less than reason, have their form of cunning.[37]

Hullot-Kentor indicates the hanging of Penelope's maids is one of those moments of the self-undoing of art, where the memory of the unnecessary sacrifice points to the possibility of a society beyond domination,

> The memory has two aspects: it contains not only what was undergone, but the possibility of the fairy

> tale's long ago and far away, which predicates the happily ever after. In reflection on this dialectic at a standstill...enlightenment comes to terms as the consciousness of the uselessness of sacrifice. In this consciousness, reason recovers its telos.[38]

Memory of Deep Ecology

One of the most troubling assertions contained in the philosophy of deep ecology, and in Foreman's understanding of it, is the role of "intuitive awareness" in acquiring knowledge of the correct relation between humans and nature:

> We can all recognize that linear, rational, logical left brain thinking represents only part of our brain and consciousness. Rationality is a fine and useful tool, but it is just that--a tool, one way of analyzing matters. Equally valid, perhaps more so, is intuitive, instinctive awareness. We can become more cognizant of ultimate truths by sitting quietly in the wild than by studying in a library. Reading books, engaging in logical discourse, and compiling facts and figures are necessary in the modern context, but they are not the only ways to comprehend the world and our lives. Often our gut instincts enable us to act more effectively in a crisis than does careful rational analysis.[39]

This incipient anti-intellectualism, a reflection of American "pragmatism" and radical "actionism," takes on ominous characteristics with the additional uncritical embrace of the "natural" side of humans, reminiscent of Nietzsche's idolization of the beast,

> We reject the New Age eco-la-la that says we must transcend our base animal nature and take charge of our evolution in order to become higher, moral

> beings. We believe we must return to being animal, to glorying in our sweat, hormones, tears, and blood. We struggle against the modern compulsion to become dull, passionless androids. We do not live sanitary, logical lives; we smell, taste, see, hear and feel Earth; we live with gusto.[40]

This emphasis on action and animal nature is again the simple reversal of the nature-culture duality characteristic of identity thinking. This reversal does not eliminate the inherent tendency of conceptual domination, it merely sides with the opposite term in the struggle, there is no "reconciliation." Foreman however, does occasionally acknowledge the difficulties of obtaining the truth,

> Of course, even for a collection of counterculture back-to-the-landers, cutting-edge post-liberal thinkers, and radical preservationists, it is not easy to question the entire European experience on this continent. While we want to be a product of this land--of Turtle Island, as the Indians named North America--we are a product of nearly four centuries of English colonization here, and of eight millennia of Western civilization.[41]

As was discussed previously concerning the relationship of immediate experience and knowledge, it is clear that Adorno does not accept the legitimacy of the claim to immediate truth, that alternatively there is needed a critical interpretation of experience to reveal its truth content. The claim of deep ecology and of Foreman of being able to achieve immediate truth intuitively is ideological to the extent it serves as complete justification of eco-defensive actions and to the extent that it denies the deeply penetrating structures of

society into the mental processes of the individual. The intuitive experience of the wilderness devotee may contain an element of "higher truths," but this intuitive recognition requires an interpretative response, at minimum interpretation is needed to translate intuitive knowledge into strategic and ethical action, such as monkeywrenching. In the context of Aesthetic Theory, Adorno attempts to justify the necessity of critical interpretation of intuitive experience and relate it to truth content. Perhaps there are sufficient affinities between the aesthetic experience Adorno examines and the wilderness experience Foreman promotes that, with appropriate "refunctioning" of concepts responding to the difference in their "objects of interpretation," a more adequate critical interpretive framework can be provided for the radical ecology movement.[42] Specifically, what is now needed is a more nuanced understanding of the mediations between society and nature, their mutual determinations, and the necessity of their simultaneous consideration for both theory and action.

What is of concern here is the relationship of experience to intuitive knowledge and how this can be interpreted to provide a more secure footing for the actions of radical ecology which aim at the eventual establishment of an ecological society at peace with nature. This depends on how experience, specifically the experience of "nature," is transformed into knowledge.

Critical Theory and the Primitive

It may help to clarify what is at stake here by examining Adorno's understanding of the prehistory of science and art, and the potential of transforming their purposes. The status of intuitive knowledge is at the heart of the criticisms of deep ecology which have attempted to portray it as essentially fascist.[43] Adorno and Horkheimer's attention to the elements of fascism and its relationship to "primitive" experience may illuminate the potential problems of deep ecology's current philosophical strategy.

Key to understanding the early critical theory work on these issues is the concept/term mimesis, "a foundational concept never defined."[44] Nature appears as an overwhelming force to the early human, a force that must be appeased or fooled,

> Only consciously contrived adaptation to nature brings nature under the control of the physically weaker. The ratio which supplants mimesis is not simply its counterpart. It is itself mimesis: mimesis unto death. The subjective spirit which cancels the animation of nature can master a despiritualized nature only by imitating its rigidity and despiritualizing itself in turn. Imitation enters into the service of domination inasmuch as even man is anthropomorphized for man. The pattern of Odyssean cunning is the mastery of nature through such adaptation.[45]

Modern reason has "degenerated" as it has imitated the nature which it has come to dominate. A vicious,

lifeless circle of domination is perpetuated. The "rational" society comes to dominate the individual as much as "nature" ever has. The role of enlightenment was seen as the path to the overcoming of myth and mythlike nature. Enlightenment is the effort to dissolve myth,

> Enlightenment has always taken the basic principle of myth to be anthropomorphism, the projection onto nature of the subjective. In this view, the supernatural, spirits and demons, are mirror images of men who allow themselves to be frightened by natural phenomena. Consequently the many mythic figures can all be brought to a common denominator, and reduced to the human subject.[46]

Enlightenment asserts that everything of meaning is available to the reason of "man." Through formal logic and its mathematicization in science the world is made calculable, predictable, and most importantly available for utilization by man. The earliest conversion of myth, from explanation of the world and projection of the human to potential control and use, took the form of magic, a precursor to science, "Myth intended report, naming, the narration of the Beginning; but also presentation, confirmation, explanation: a tendency that grew stronger with recording and collection of myths. Narrative became didactic at an early stage. Every ritual includes the idea of activity as a determined process which magic can nevertheless influence."[47] However, within magic, nature was not organized conceptually as so many examples of a common characteristic; the specificity or uniqueness of

the object of magic was constitutive of the relationship of the actions of the priest or shaman to its potential influence in inducing other events:

> Magic was not ordered by one, identical spirit: it changed like the cultic masks which were supposed to accord with the various spirits. Magic is utterly untrue, yet in it domination is not yet negated by transforming itself into the pure truth and acting as the very ground of the world that has become subject to it. The magician imitates demons; in order to frighten them or to appease them, he behaves frighteningly or makes gestures of appeasement. Even though his task is impersonation, he never conceives of himself as does the civilized man for whom the unpretentious preserves of the happy hunting-grounds become the unified cosmos, the inclusive concept for all possibilities of plunder.[48]

It is not the invisible power of nature as a whole that the magician seeks to influence, instead there is still the recognition in these actions of the specific qualities of the object influenced, "In magic there is specific representation. What happens to the enemy's spear, hair or name, also happens to the individual; the sacrificial animal is massacred instead of the god. Substitution in the course of sacrifice marks a step toward discursive logic."[49] Even though magic honors the uniqueness of the individual it attempts to influence, in this attempted influence against the mythic or fated character of the world, the repetition of nature, it also becomes the first attempt to "identify" nature, to reduce nature to category and example. The critical theorists

argue that the identifying and controlling of nature is the essence of science:

> Science prepares the end of this state of affairs. In science there is no specific representation: and if there are no sacrificial animals there is no god. Representation is exchanged for the fungible--universal interchangability. An atom is smashed not in representation but as a specimen of matter, and the rabbit does not represent but, as a mere example, is virtually ignored by the zeal of the laboratory.[50]

Science attempts to demythologize or disenchant the world, but it does so at the expense of the uniqueness of each individual. Magic retained an affinity for individuality by its use of mimesis, "Like science, magic pursues aims, but seeks to achieve them by mimesis--not by progressively distancing itself from the object."[51] Mimetic magic still recognizes the affinities are similarities between self and other, between the human and the "other" in nature.

Science in its ideological forms is extended into a means for the control of human nature as well, and thus acquires the characteristics of the very nature it first wanted to control. Science, in the hands of a society dominated by the exchange principle broadly understood, transforms the individual into a mere example of universal processes, a speciman available for control and manipulation. The history of "development" from magic to science, from myth to enlightenment is also a story of the return into the mythic, of renewed confrontation with

fateful necessity, "Mythology itself set off the unending process of enlightenment in which ever and again, with the inevitability of necessity, every specific theoretic view succumbs to the destructive criticism that it is only a belief--until even the very notions of spirit, of truth and, indeed, enlightenment itself, have become animistic magic. The principle of fatal necessity...."[52]

The tendency toward ever increased domination is not confined to science or only directed toward external nature, but is also the tendency of philosophy and the confinement of subjectivity to rational calculation. Adorno calls this tendency "identity thinking." If philosophy is to break the hold of the logic of domination then it must become aware of the alternative possibilities of thought lodged in the repressed fragments of mimesis that remain,

> While doing violence to the object of its syntheses, our thinking heeds a potential that waits in the object, and it unconsciously obeys the idea of making amends to the pieces for what it has done. In philosophy, this unconscious tendency becomes conscious. Accompanying irreconcilable thoughts is the hope for reconcilement, because the resistance of thought to mere things in being, the commanding freedom of the subject, intends in the object even that which the object was deprived by objectification.[53]

Philosophy must make conscious the potentials of the objects it responds to, potentials suppressed in the activities of identifying thought, including the various forms of substitution or exchange. The "exchange

mentality" and processes of substitution are ideological in that the non-identical is claimed to be identical. Borrowing from Hegel, Adorno asserts that "yielding" to the object is the only way for its possibilities to be expressed. However, if the Hegelian system is followed, thought merely returns on itself as a reflection of the subject not the revelation of the object. Adorno does not simply reject Hegelian dialectics, but radicalizes it and its already radicalized forms as presented by Marx. Adorno attempts to rescue the insights Marx had from the Marxists who captured the critical philosophy. The rescue is dedicated to the individual and the particularity of nature, "If the thought really yielded to the object, if its attention were on the object, not on its category, the very objects would start talking under the lingering eye."[54] But the theoretician is not simply a quietistic, meditative mystic,

> True practice, the totality of acts that would satisfy the idea of freedom, does indeed require full theoretical consciousness....But practice also needs something else, something physical which consciousness does not exhaust, something conveyed to reason and qualitatively different from it...The part of action that differs from the pure consciousness...the part that abruptly leaps out---this is spontaneity.[55]

The problem of the spontaneous response to the object of interpretation is the mistake of seeing in the object what is actually in the self. This is the basis of the analysis of "Anti-semitism" in the Dialectic of

Enlightenment. Central to this analysis is the relationship of mimesis to projection and false projection. Projection is tracked to its animal origins and the attempt to survive,

> In a certain sense all perception is projection. The projection of sensory impressions is a legacy of our animal prehistory, a mechanism for self-preservation and obtaining food, an extension of the combative impulse with which the higher animals--with pleasure or pain--reacted to movements, irrespective of the intentions of the object. In human beings projection has been automatized, like other attack and defense behaviors which have become reflexes.[56]

The process of projection, like that of mimesis (which is not entirely different), is refined or extended with the development of civilization. This development occurs both at the social and individual levels;

> The system of things, the fixed universal order of which science is merely an abstract expression, is ...the unconscious product of the animal organ in the struggle for existence, of automatic projection. But in human society, where affective and intellectual life are differentiated with the formation of the individual, the latter requires an increasingly firm control over projection; he must learn at one and the same time to refine and inhibit it. By learning to distinguish between his own and extraneous thoughts and feelings under the force of economic necessity, a distinction is made between without and within, the possibility of distancing and identifying, self-awareness and the conscience. Further consideration is necessary to understand the controlled projection, and the way in which it is deformed into false projection--which is part of the essence of anti-Semitism.[57]

The "system of things" is the set of relationships which are established as the abstracting, identifying self internalizes its impressions of the world. This process of the human organism is necessary for survival, and also results in the formation of the "individual." However, this formation is unstable, requiring extreme effort to sustain it. The "projection" of the outside world into the individual psyche, is the formation of the self or subject, and requires the development of control of the process itself. A false projection in a sense reverses the process, what is perceived as external is actually a representation of the subject. The important distinction here in the critical theorists' explanation is between true and false projection, and the subsequent impacts these will have on the individual. The formation of the individual is a product of this process of projection:

> In order to reflect the thing as it is, the subject must return to it more than he receives from it. The subject creates the world outside himself from the traces which it leaves in his senses: the unity of the thing in its manifold characteristics and states; and he therefore constitutes the 'I' retrospectively by learning to grant a synthetic unity not only to the external impressions, but to the internal impressions which gradually separate off from them. The real ego is the most recent constant product of projection.[58]

The process of projection is a creation of both the external world and the internal world (the "I"), simultaneously. But the constancy of the external world,

the stability of the object, is a product of the subject's relation to the object, which, as nature, is in a state of constant flux. The object's identity is imposed by the subject. This "synthetic unity" of the object is the basis for the unity of the subject, and the objectivity of the subject. These considerations go far beyond what has thus far been presented as deep ecology.

Any attempt to overcome the domination of nature and therefore create a world in which real freedom and happiness are possible must recognize the necessary role of critical interpretation in that effort. The rescue of nature will also be a rescue of reason and can only be accomplished by attending to what is not identical to reason;

> Only in that mediation by which the meaningless sensation brings a thought to the full productivity of which it is capable, while on the other hand the thought abandons itself without reservation to the predominate impression, is that pathological loneliness which characterizes the whole of nature overcome. The possibilities of reconciliation appears not in certainty unaffected by thought, in the preconceptual unity of perception and object, but in their considered opposition. The distinction is made in the subject, which has the external world in its own consciousness and yet recognizes it as something other. Therefore reflection, the life of reason, takes place as conscious projection.[59]

Critical interpretation is "conscious projection," the subject aware of the process that results in the "synthetic unity" of the object, of nature. Again, the

danger is a false projection, one that does not make the necessary distinctions between self and the independent objects of the external world:

> Anti-semitism is based on a false projection. It is the counterpart of true mimesis, and fundamentally related to the repressed form; in fact, it is probably the morbid expression of repressed mimesis. Mimesis imitates the environment, but false projection makes the environment like itself. For mimesis the outside world is a model which the inner world must try to conform to: the alien must become familiar; but false projection confuses the inner and outer world and defines the most intimate experiences as hostile. Impulses which the subject will not admit as his own even though they are most assuredly so, are attributed to the object--the prospective victim.[60]

False projection is a repressed mimesis, where the self or subject is projected onto the external world. This false projection, which results in the fear of the other and the subsequent attempts to master or dominate it, is a key to understanding the various forms of oppression and exploitation, including those based on race, gender, class, and other natural categories. To overcome domination requires the internalization of the external while honoring the particularity or individuality of all aspects of the external world.

Foreman has an understanding of enlightenment not so far from the implications of Adorno's analysis,

> Do not misunderstand my words. I seek after wisdom and enlightenment, too. I go alone into the

> wilderness in quest of visions...I try not to delude myself with my own self-importance....Reality is out there. In the Big Outside. And my action in defense of it--raw, rank, brawling, and boorish as it may be--is vastly more important than all the enlightenment with which I can swell my head in the several score years in which my consciousness exists.[61]

Monkeywrenching

Monkeywrenching is one of the primary means of uncompromising defense of the Earth. The term is borrowed from Ed Abbey, but Foreman has done the most to take it from the somewhat romanticized novel form to actual widespread use in the radical ecological movement. Foreman continues to defend eco-tage tactics by placing them within a philosophical and practical framework. Monkeywrenching has the characteristics of nonviolent anarchism. Foreman's first claim in the defense of monkeywrenching is that it is nonviolent,

> Monkeywrenching is nonviolent resistance to the destruction of natural diversity and wilderness. It is never directed toward harming human beings or other forms of life. It is aimed at inanimate machines and tools that are destroying life. Care is always taken to minimize any possible threat to people, including the monkeywrenchers themselves.[62]

Monkeywrenching is also "truly individual action." It is necessarily so because of the usually illegal nature of the activities, carried out with the hopes of not being caught, therefore requiring the utmost in secrecy. However, two particular incidents indicate the difficulty of defending the nonviolence position in conjunction with

the necessity of secrecy. The most notorious case of ecotage gone awry may be a recent "tree spiking" case that resulted in injuries, although most Earth First!ers claim the incident does not have the characteristics of a true monkeywrenching activity.[63] The logger who was injured was sawing a tree that had been "spiked" but without notification of the activity, so that the likelihood of eventual injury to timber workers was fairly high. This contradicts the supposedly ethical and strategic use of this technique by the eco-defenders. All potentially injurious actions should be minimized, usually by fully informing potential victims.

The other aspect of monkeywrenching, its requirement of secrecy, reveals the two-edged nature of the activity, as it landed several ecoteurs in prison. Earth First!ers and their associates were arrested after beginning to execute plans for toppling electrical power line support towers. When a small group of activists began to ecotage the tower they were surrounded by scores of FBI agents. The FBI had penetrated the radical ecology movement on the grounds that the ecotage activity is a form of terrorism.[64] Foreman was arrested as a co-conspirator in the action because he had helped the group obtain some limited financial support although everyone insists he had no direct knowledge of what the money was being used for.

The questions of nonviolence and the need for secrecy require an explicit defense because their conjunction is

not recognized by those who come out of the tradition of civil disobedience, including the civil rights actions in the U.S. Direct action in defense of civil rights received substantial philosophical and spiritual justification through the writings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his reliance on the thoughts and actions of Gandhi and Thoreau. It may be illuminating to compare the arguments of Foreman and King to find where they converge and diverge in an attempt to determine if changed historical circumstances indicate a necessary change in tactics as well.

Foreman views monkeywrenching as a "deliberate and ethical" activity which is <u>not</u> revolutionary. He claims it is not the aim of ecodefense to "overthrow" any social, political, or economic system, "It is merely nonviolent self-defense of the wild." This defense is aimed at keeping "industrial civilization" out of nature and to speed its retreat from areas that should be wild.[65] Foreman likens monkeywrenching to the Boston Tea Party of 1773 and to the work of the Underground Railroad preceding the U.S. Civil War.

The philosophical and ethical dimensions of Foreman's defense of ecodefense may be most fully revealed in direct comparison to the defense of the activities of the civil rights movement by Dr. King. King indicated there are four basic steps in any non-violent campaign:
"(1)collection of the facts to determine whether

injustices are alive, (2)negotiation, (3)self-purification, and (4) direct action."[66] We can compare the relation of the four steps outlined by King along with his additional comments on direct action to the activities of the Earth First!ers. The beginnings of Earth First! fit well with the King model of nonviolent campaigns. As indicated by Rik Scarce in his study of Eco-Warriors, the founding members of Earth First! almost uniformly came from activist backgrounds that had included full participation in the establishment. Many were lobbyists and representatives of environmental groups, some attempting to develop comprehensive wilderness plans with Congress and the Carter administration in the late 1970s. Foreman is a prime example of this very conventional citizen activist profile; briefly a Marine, Wilderness Society lobbyist, committed to rational argumentation and negotiation. The decision to abandon conventional environmentalism for radical ecological activity came only after long years of negotiation and compromise, which the radicals finally realized had in fact resulted in near total victory for the forces of economic growth and ecosystem destruction.[67] But the justification for the Earth First! movement is not the same as the justification for specific acts of monkeywrenching. Foreman offers many examples of individual actions in his general defense of monkeywrenching. The high level of scientific knowledge and investigation of the "facts" by Earth First!ers is

evident in the detailed arguments that take place in the pages of their Journal. However, it is not as clear what the role of negotiation is for Earth First!. Their "no compromise" stand would seem to rule out any negotiation, yet in forming the group it was recognized that the more radical stand they would take would make mainstream environmentalism appear moderate and reasonable and thereby open room for negotiation for the mainstreamers.[68] Foreman's direct comments on the difference between civil disobedience and monkeywrenching seem to indicate significant deviations from King's position,

> Overlooked here are the fundamental differences between civil disobedience and monkeywrenching. The goal of civil disobedience in most cases is to reform society or some aspect thereof by conscientiously and nonviolently violating the law (as in a blockade), thereby appealing to the public and reasonably fair authorities with the rightness of one's cause and personal integrity. In other cases, it is to witness against evil being done, to refuse to acquiesce to the evil, and thereby to grow spiritually. In both cases arrest and punishment are integral elements of the action.[69]

In characterizing Earth First! civil disobedience he claims its motivations have differed from those of "Gandhi and the Civil Rights movement." Civil disobedience by the ecologists is "goal-directed" rather than spiritually directed, "Many Earth First!ers would argue that thwarting destructive projects is the purpose of the civil disobedience they commit. Although this has been my motivation when participating in civil disobedience, it is

not the classic strategy of civil disobedience."[70] But in examining Dr. King's actual arguments and uses of civil disobedience it is not so clear that the differences are those Foreman cites. King asks what the purpose is of direct action and answers the complaints against it,

> Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks to dramatize the issue so that it can no longer be ignored....So the purpose of the direct action is to create a situation so crisis-packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation.[71]

Foreman does not give enough credit to the civil rights movement or the radical ecology movement; not to the civil rights movement because it goes beyond a stereotype of simply seeking idealistic truths and spiritual redemption, and not enough to the radical ecologists for acting in a philosophically coherent manner, action which does not require hero-like sacrifices of their "enlightened elite." Foreman misunderstands his own argument,

> Monkeywrenching can also be seen as a sophisticated political tactic that dramatizes ecological issues and places them before the public when they otherwise would be ignored in the media, applies pressure to resource-extraction corporations and government agencies that otherwise are able to resist "legitimate" pressure from law-abiding conservation organizations, and broadens the spectrum of environmental activism so that lobbying by mainstream groups is not considered "extremist."[72]

Even though this parallels exactly the arguments of Dr. King about the goals of civil disobedience and their relationship to tactics, Foreman characterizes this aspect of his argument simply as "Machiavellian" as mere means-to-an-end, but this is to misunderstand Machiavelli as well as King. Machiavelli's advice to the prince was to use whatever means necessary to obtain or retain his purposes, that is, that the end justified the means. But this can lead to a contradiction of means and ends, and ethical incoherence. Typically, Machiavelli advocated various means to gain political power, power that then became the means for any chosen purpose. However, the means to alternative ends tends to become the goal itself, so that the purpose of political power becomes an end in itself and therefore essentially morally bankrupt. King argues that the means must be consistent with the end, "that ends and means must cohere" and "the idea that means must be as pure as the end," not that the means must be an end in itself, as Foreman implies.[73] Foreman seems to want to present monkeywrenching as a means to an end, the end being the promotion of biological diversity. The question is whether monkeywrenching in its actual practice is consistent with the ultimate end of expanded wilderness and the protection of biological diversity, usually stated by the deep ecologists in ethical terms as the right of particular forms of life to exist "for their own sake."

It would be more philosophically convincing to build on King's observations about the relationship of just and unjust laws, which King attributes to the earlier thought of Saint Thomas Aquinas. In this argument a "just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God."[74] King argues that the civil rights demonstrators were acting consistently with this higher law and the segregationists were not. Foreman uses the same type of appeal to higher laws as justification of direct, and usually illegal, action, "When we break unjust political laws to obey higher ethical laws, we must guard against developing a laxity toward standards in general. Indeed, when one deliberately engages in civil disobedience from time to time, one needs to attend to just laws with an even greater sense of responsibility."[75]

King also gives further evidence of the difference between just and unjust laws by claiming that when the majority inflicts a code on the minority that is not binding on itself, this is unjust, or "difference made legal," but when the majority compels a minority to follow a law that it is willing to follow itself, this is just, or "sameness made legal."[76] King continues this moral justification of direct action by stating that true peace exists when there is respect for the dignity and worth of human personality. The deep ecologists are arguing for respecting the dignity and worth, or the "intrinsic value," of other non-human entities. They indicate that

this is not an impossible or even unusual attitude to take toward non-human nature by citing the rituals and prayers of pre-modern native peoples when they would need to take the life of another being, or would in some other way actively intervene in the relationship with non-human nature. King furthermore indicates the necessity for the public character of direct action,

> One who breaks an unjust law must do it openly, lovingly...and with a willingness to accept the penalty. I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and willingly accepts the penalty by staying in jail to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the very highest respect for law.[77]

King uses the same examples as Foreman, the Boston Tea Party as a positive form of civil disobedience, and Hitler's use of what were legal means to produce a society that practiced genocide.[78] What is required of Earth First!, or the followers of deep ecology, is to extend the philosophical justification for their actions not distance themselves from them. However, it is unclear whether the more accurate model for radical ecological actions is civil disobedience style direct action, or Vietnam and Central American style guerrilla war. The crucial differences between strategies and justification have significantly different impacts on social change. Foreman's understanding about the relationship of direct action to publicizing the actions seems ambivalent if not

contradictory. He claims that monkeywrenching actions do not now require publicity and that public pronouncements invite increased police actions, "Monkeywrenching has now received adequate media attention, it can be argued, and can now be carried on effectively without publicity....In certain cases, publicity about an action may still serve a worthwhile purpose; this must be determined individually." But on what basis should the individual decide to go public and how does this relate to possible arrest, jail time and fines? Foreman states, "The goals of monkeywrenching are to block environmentally destructive projects, to increase the costs of such projects and thereby make them economically unattractive, and to raise public awareness of the taxpayer-subsidized devastation of biological diversity occurring throughout the world."[79] It would seem that "silent" monkeywrenching only partially accomplishes its goals if it fails to actively engage the public on the political and ethical levels, instead of merely privatizing the struggle. The insistence on the secretiveness of the lone ecowarrior carries with it the undertones of the myth of individualism which lies at the heart of the ideology of domination and destruction. Foreman seems to recognize the dilemma but does not adequately address the issues. After repeatedly denying the intention of reforming society or seeking its revolutionary overthrow, he asks, "How do you change society when you are apart from it? How do you understand

yourself when you deny the social environment that produced you? How can you gain support for your goals and actions when your behavior alienates potential supporters?"[80] He returns to the guerrilla war analogy to emphasize that even in violent confrontation, the "wise guerrillas know that they are part of society and need support from the population base."[81] It would seem the more consistent and powerful argument and tactic would be to follow Dr. King's insight about the need to use direct action as a means of mobilizing potential supporters and the consciences of the opposition.

On the one hand Foreman awaits the day when the truly free society will have realized the bioregional and wilderness visions of reinhabitation and neo-primevalism. On the other hand, he claims to be against "reform" and unsupportive of "revolution." This combination of being for and against radical change results in a reactive if not fully reactionary response to the abuse of nature, one without a long-term strategy,

> Monkeywrenching, on the other hand, is aimed not at reforming society but at thwarting destruction. Although a similarly high level of deliberate and ethical behavior is required, spiritual growth is not a specific goal of ecotage (although it may be a side benefit). What is important is stopping the damage; the monkeywrencher, like the guerrilla fighter, is more effective when avoiding capture and being able to return again and again.[82]

But the guerrilla fighter has long-term purposes, to defeat the enemy, to drive them from the homeland, to establish an alternative way of life. Foreman's argument seems to contradict itself; arguing for an expansion of wilderness and reinhabitation of bioregions, but at the same time to claim no political objectives of reform or revolution, just the objective to "thwart."[83] But in proclaiming the objective to thwart the government and its industrial supporters of "development" Foreman relies on a too simple analysis of the historical and political basis for the legitimacy of the U.S. government.

Under closer examination, it is questionable whether Foreman is taking his own arguments seriously. Perhaps he is practicing monkeywrenching at another level, a version of "paper" monkeywrenching, "In addition to illegal ecotage, monkeywrenching can be thought of as a strategy that includes entirely legal techniques and that operates within the system, too--it is known as 'paper monkeywrenching' in such cases."[84] Are the inconsistencies of his position, especially where they appear most polemical and hyperbolic, in fact the paper monkeywrenching of a weathered old cunning coyote from the Southwest? Maybe his observation of others is a representation of self,

> Sometimes, when I hear public statements about monkeywrenching, I feel like a Coyote strolling through a Texas cow town and I tuck my tail between

> my legs and drop my ears low on my head and make tracks to the hills as fast as I can. Surprisingly often, though, when I'm expecting a load of buckshot or at least a hard-pitched rock in the ribs, I catch a wink and a corner-of-the-mouth smile and know someone's putting out leftovers on the back porch. It's important, in this funny place called America, to differentiate between what is said publicly and what dark heresies lurk in the quiet behind a pair of eyeballs.[85]

In his chapter on "Strategic Monkeywrenching," where he reiterates the need for secrecy, for keeping the book on the subject (which he wrote and promotes) "out of sight," and on the need to choose targets carefully to avoid the FBI (which arrested him) and other police forces, it is possible to detect a wink from Foreman's back porch when he explains the strategic importance of bumper stickers, "Any conservationist bumper sticker may mark one as a suspect in some rural areas. Careful ecoteurs may even try camouflage--an American flag decal or NRA sticker. Non-monkeywrenchers like me should continue to brandish 'I'd Rather Be Monkeywrenching' bumper stickers."[86] A slight smile can be glimpsed when he says he would not encourage anyone to monkeywrench, but in a footnote to such an unexpected statement, he adds, "More important, I would not want to <u>dis</u>courage anyone from monkeywrenching. Those willing to commit ecotage are needed today as never before. The advice I offer here is merely that--advice."[87] The smile gets a little broader and includes a wink,

> While I have of necessity hung up my pearl-handled wrenches for good, if I were sitting around a wilderness campfire with a few old friends, smoking a good cigar, and musing about the future of monkeywrenching in the most general of terms, I might say to George and Bonnie that I have a few ideas for monkeywrenchers who don't want to get caught and who want to be as effective as possible.[88]

And of course the little wilderness campfire should never be understood as a hangout for radicals, "Of course, the above comments are just maunderings around the fire, smoke rings blown into the night air, desultory accompaniments to the hooting of owls. The kind of casual talk you might have heard in a seedy Boston waterfront tavern in, say, 1773...."[89]

Bioregionalism

If Earth First!ers, present and former, and deep ecologists generally, view the retention and expansion of wilderness as the primary focus of their political agendas, then how do human beings fit into this neo-primeval world? Foreman and others suggest that "bioregionalism" is the most compatible form of social organization to enhance the goals of deep ecology, which center around the protection of biological diversity. Bioregional groups met in the first North American Bioregional Congress in the Ozarks in 1984. However, bioregionalism as a way of life had gathered sufficient momentum by 1978 that the first books dealing with the topic began to appear, including Peter Berg and Raymond

Dasmann's Reinhabiting a Separate Country. Reinhabitation is a form of "living-in-place" which,

> Means following the necessities and pleasures of life as they are uniquely presented by a particular site, and evolving ways to ensure long-term occupancy of that site. A society which practices living-in-place keeps a balance with its region of support through links between human lives, other living things, and the processes of the planet--seasons, weather, water cycles-- as revealed by the place itself. It is the opposite of a society which makes a living through short-term destructive exploitation of land and life.[90]

Foreman summarizes this concept of social organization, "Bioregionalism, then, is fundamentally concerned with dwelling in place, a concept far removed from the suburbs, cities, and farms of our continent. Reinhabitation involves adapting yourself to the place instead of the place to you; it means becoming part of a community already present--the natural community of beasts and birds and fish and plants and rivers and mountains and plains and sea."[91]

The idea of bioregionalism presents problems of political organization especially as it relates to ideas about the level at which community decisions should be made which impact the relation between society and nature. Foreman rightly points out that under present conditions the adoption of strict local control of a bioregion would have devastating ecological consequences,

> While local control of the land is fine in theory and as a long-term goal (after we truly appreciate this

> land and agree to adapt ourselves to it instead of the other way around), let us remember, for example, that we would have little protected Wilderness or other natural areas in most of the Western states if it were up to the state-level politicians or rural residents of those states....Congress is a shining beacon of ecological enlightenment when compared to most state legislatures or, worse yet, to a rural county commission.[92]

Foreman views the process of converting society from its present incarnation, emphasizing technology, industry and growth, to one which is ecologically aware, as that of "reinhabitation." The bioregion would center around the expansion of wilderness areas, but would include "natural corridors established to allow for the free flow of genetic material between them and to such preserves in other bioregions."[93] This process is not one of mere preservation of existing systems but would at least initially, require active intervention, "In many cases, temporary transitional management will be needed to help nature restore suitably large areas to wildness. Extirpated native animals should be introduced if possible. If salmon streams need to be repaired, clearcuts rehabilitated, prairies replanted, roads removed--then that becomes the hands-on work of reinhabitation."[94]

The central political question for this project of reinhabitation is how it relates to present political structures. One of the problems of addressing the needs of the bioregions is how those needs can be represented. The bioregionalists see the bioregion as a substitute or

supersession of the nation-state. Peter Berg has attempted to express the necessity of transforming politics from its nation-state basis to the bioregion,

> It's time to develop the political means for directing society toward restoring and maintaining the natural systems that ultimately support all life. Bioregions are the natural locales in which everyone lives. Reinhabitation of bioregions, creating adaptive cultures that follow the unique characteristics of climate, watersheds, soils, land forms, and native plants and animals that define these places, is the appropriate direction for a transition from Late Industrial society.[95]

In an interview with The New Catalyst, Berg has gone into some detail about the relationship of bioregional possibilities as an alternative to the nation-state, "Bioregion as a location is an ecological context. Who are you?--I am a person who lives in a place that contains other life, in ecosystems, and I am part of those processes; I am part of my bioregion. You can be part of your bioregion, but it's getting harder and harder to be a member of a nation state, in good faith, because the planetary biosphere doesn't have nation states."[96] Berg explains the idea of the bioregion as an organizational principle that develops out of the expansion of the idea of ecology beyond its narrow understanding as a scientific field. Berg believes the ideas of ecology will have as revolutionary an effect on life in the future as physics has had since the early days of the modern period. Even the word ecology only came to mass consciousness with the

work of Rachel Carson in 1963 with the publication of Silent Spring, "These ideas from the natural sciences started to come over into popular consciousness not as tools to disassemble nature, but to see it, to see its sanctity."[97]

In commenting on the relationship of bioregion to nation-state, Berg also attacks the myth of the proletariat,

> What is the role of the nation state? It seems that it's a very destructive one from a biospheric point of view. Not only is it replaceable, it probably must be replaced by another view. Should my considerations be humanity? Or should they be human species in the biosphere? Probably human species in the biosphere. Should they be the workers of the world: No, the managers have to lose their chains, too. What is the purpose of growth in the economy? What is the purpose of progress? It seems that they're destructive purposes.[98]

Berg compares the dying "industrial" society to the emerging ecological one,

> In the industrial era, the image was material progress, transforming things, mutating things, changing their being, their shape, their chemistry, their nuclear components, changing everything about them! Whereas I think self-reliance, sustainability, climax, states of succession--those are good images for the ecological era. And a lot of people can relate to them. They have a lot of lessons to teach about human interaction.[99]

Berg believes the new ecological consciousness will manifest itself in terms of "political locatedness." This will result in a "bioregional consciousness" that will

seek political autonomy for the separate bioregions, but Berg's vision seems naive and idealized in retrospect,

> In Europe, the boundaries of ethnic peoples can often be considered roughly bioregional....As nation states become more desperate to control their situations, they impose more on the regions, bioregions, and ethnic peoples, and by so doing create in them a desire for a separate identity, and a feeling of deliberate repression of their values.[100]

Against these assertions, the "ethnic cleansing" at the root of the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia should give pause to any utopian assertion of the "natural" tendency toward harmony should humans organize themselves politically on the basis of a fetishized localism. Finally, Berg puts the emerging ecological consciousness in political revolutionary terms;

> For us to become liberated from such late-industrial forms of control, it seems to me that we need an image, a vision without which we cannot survive. That's what 'freedom' was, beginning in the 18th century. Freedom suddenly became a flame. People would die for freedom. Think of the Paris Commune: people were so desperate to revise society in an egalitarian way that they seized part of Paris and said, 'We will live or die to be this way.' Well, I see us literally dying and not living if the depredations on the planet continue. and so a vision that is worth living for is what I'm hoping to get from wilderness.[101]

The North American Bioregional Congress has met since 1984, and the bioregionalists involved have developed complex and thoughtful approaches to the development of bioregional politics and consciousness. Bill Devall,

committed to deep ecology and bioregionalism states, "Bioregional movements are political and social expressions of our vital need to be part of, not apart from, the place wherein we dwell."[102] Although bioregionalism may contain the potential for new political forms, for abandoning nation-states and multinational corporations, it has not sufficiently addressed the repression of internal nature which when released may take its revenge in new levels of domination such as in the former Yugoslavia, a revenge of nature modeled on fascism. Foreman recognizes that the goals of the radical ecologists presently have an unachievable utopian quality about them, and in this he may share some of the pessimism of critical theory,

> Perhaps it <u>is</u> a hopeless quest. But one who loves Earth can do no less. Maybe a species will be saved or a forest will go uncut or a dam will be torn down. Maybe not. A monkeywrench thrown into the gears of the machine may not stop it. But it might delay it, make it cost more. And it feels good to put it there.[103]

ENDNOTES

1. Scarce, Rik, Eco-Warriors: Understanding the Radical Environmental Movement (Chicago: Noble Press, 1990), especially Chapter 5.

2. The internal debate on the importance of social critique and its relationship to the radical defense of wilderness is addressed in seemingly every issue of the organization's newspaper, Earth First! Journal, PO Box 1415, Eugene, OR 97440.

3. Foreman, Dave, Confessions of an Eco-Warrior (New York: Harmony Books, 1991), p. 19.

4. Foreman, Confessions, p. 1.

5. Foreman, Confessions, p. 7.

6. Foreman, Confessions, p. 19.

7. Foreman, Confessions, p. 36.

8. Foreman, Confessions, p. 26.

9. Foreman, Confessions, p. 27.

10. Horkheimer, Max and Theodor Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment (New York: Continuum, 1987), first published in German, 1947.

11. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. xvi.

12. P. J. Mills reexamines the critical theorists' interpretation of the Odyssey with more focused attention on women's experience and how this disrupts the interpretation, changing the implications for the "master-slave dialectic." Patricia Jagentowicz Mills, Woman, Nature and Psyche (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

13. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 57.

14. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 50.

15. Horkheimer and Adorno, pp. 64-65.

16. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 60.

17. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 60.

18. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 17.

19. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 70.

20. Horkheimer and Adorno, pp. 71-72.

21. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 72.

22. Mills, p. 185.

23. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 73.

24. Mills, p. 186.

25. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 79.

26. Mills, p. 187.

27. Hullot-Kentor, Robert, "Back to Adorno," Telos 81, Fall 1989, p. 20.

28. Hullot-Kentor, Back, p. 20.

29. Hullot-Kentor, Back, p. 22.

30. Hullot-Kentor, Back, p. 23. From Dialectic of Enlightenment, p. 56, the translation is modified by Hullot-Kentor. The inadequacies of the current translations of Adorno's works is one of the difficulties Hullot-Kentor points to, which, besides the overly influential interpretation of Habermas, have resulted in fundamental misunderstandings of Adorno in the U.S. Included in those misunderstandings is the evaluation of Adorno as "pessimistic."

31. Hullot-Kentor, Back, p. 23.

32. Hullot-Kentor, Back, p. 23; Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 51, translation modified.

33. Hullot-Kentor, Back, from Adorno's unpublished lecture series, "Einleitung in die Moralphilosophie," p. 157.

34. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 54, translation modified by Hullot-Kentor, Telos 81, p. 23.

35. Adorno, Moralphilosophie, p. 193, Hullot-Kentor's translation, Telos 81, p. 24.

36. Hullot-Kentor, Back, p. 25.

37. Adorno, Theodor, Aesthetic Theory, Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, Eds., C. Lenhardt., Trans., (London: Routledge, 1984); new translation by Hullot-Kentor from Aesthetische Theorie, Rolf Tiedemann and Gretl Adorno, Eds. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971), p. 278, in Telos 81, Fall 1989, p. 26.

38. Hullot-Kentor, Back, p. 26.

39. Foreman, Confessions, p. 29.

40. Foreman, Confessions, p. 34. With Foreman's mythic love for beer (Is the favorite Pacifico, Stroh's, Schlitz, or maybe Hamm's?), it seems that the last words of the sentence should be not only living life with gusto, but in the "land of sky blue waters" as well.

41. Foreman, Confessions, p. 45.

42. Comments on Adorno's use of the term "refunctioning" can be found in Susan Buck-Morss, The Origin of Negative Dialectics, for example, p. 95.

43. The critique of deep ecology as a form of fascism, or as having fascist tendencies, has occurred in various places including George Bradford, How Deep is Deep Ecology? (Hadley, Massachusetts: Times Change Press, 1989). Other critics have characterized the ecology movement as a whole as fundamentally fascist, see, for example, Anna Bramwell, Ecology in the 20th Century: A History (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1989).

44. Jameson, Fredric, Late Marxism: Adorno, or, the Persistence of the Dialectic (London and New York: Verso, 1990), p. 64.

45. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 57.

46. Horkheimer and Adorno, pp. 6-7.

47. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 8.

48. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 10.

49. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 10. For an examination of many of these issues within recent anthropology see Michael Taussig, Mimesis and Alterity (New York: Routledge, 1993).

50. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 10.

51. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 11.

52. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 11.

53. Adorno, Theodor, Negative Dialectics (New York: Continuum, 1966), p. 19.

54. Adorno, Negative, pp. 27-28.

55. Adorno, Negative, p. 229.

56. Horkheimer and Adorno, pp. 187-188. It would be very illuminating to compare this discussion of "projection" with Borch-Jacobsen's idea of "mimetic identification" discussed in the later section on ecofeminism (Chapters 9-11).

57. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 188.

58. Horkheimer and Adorno, pp. 188-189.

59. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 189.

60. Horkheimer and Adorno, p. 187.

61. Foreman, Confessions, p. 53.

62. Foreman, Confessions, p. 113.

63. See Rik Scarce, Eco-Warriors: Understanding the Radical Environmental Movement (Chicago: Noble Press, 1990), pp. 74ff. Spiking is the insertion of nails or other objects into trees about to be logged. The "spikes" destroy the chainsaw blades and may damage sawmill blades and possibly cause injuries to workers.

64. Scarce, pp. 86ff, and Foreman, Confessions, Chapter 13.

65. Foreman, Confessions, p. 115.

66. King, Martin Luther, Jr., A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr., James M. Washington, Ed. (San Francisco: Harpers, 1986), p. 290. The present quotations are from "Letter from Birmingham City Jail," April 16, 1963, and from the Nov. 16, 1961 speech to the Fellowship of the Concerned on "Love, Law and Civil Disobedience."

67. Scarce, Chapter 5; Foreman, Confessions, pp. 15-16.

68. Foreman, Confessions, p. 18 and Chapter 19.

69. Foreman, Confessions, pp. 131-132.

70. Foreman, Confessions, p. 131, footnote 1.

71. King, Testament, pp. 291-292.

72. Foreman, Confessions, p. 144.

73. King, Testament, p. 45.

74. King, Testament, p. 293.

75. Foreman, Confessions, p. 170.

76. King, Testament, p. 294.

77. King, Testament, p. 294.

78. King, Testament, p. 50; Foreman, Confessions, pp. 119, 121-122.

79. Foreman, Confessions, pp. 118-119.

80. Foreman, Confessions, p. 170.

81. Foreman, Confessions, p. 170.

82. Foreman, Confessions, p. 131.

83. Foreman, Confessions, p. 145.

84. Foreman, Confessions, p. 145.

85. Foreman, Confessions, p. 118.

86. Foreman, Confessions, p. 164.

87. Foreman, Confessions, p. 162. It makes one wonder what the conditions of his parole or probation might be....

88. Foreman, Confessions, pp. 162-163.

89. Foreman, Confessions, p. 166.

90. Foreman, Confessions, p. 44. Quoted by Foreman.

91. Foreman, Confessions, p. 44.

92. Foreman, Confessions, pp. 46-47.

93. Foreman, Confessions, p. 49.

94. Foreman, Confessions, p. 49.

95. Berg, Peter, "More Than Just Saving What's Left," Home!: A Bioregional Reader (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1990), p. 14.

96. Berg, Peter, "Bioregional And Wild!: A New Cultural Image..." in Turtle Talk: Voices for a Sustainable Future (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1990), p. 23. The New Catalyst, P.O. Box 99, Lillooet B.C, Canada V0K 1V0.

97. Berg, Bioregional, p. 24.

98. Berg, Bioregional, p. 25.

99. Berg, Bioregional, p. 26.

100. Berg, Bioregional, p. 26.

101. Berg, Bioregional, p. 29.

102. Devall, Bill, Simple in Means, Rich in Ends (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1988), p. 67.

103. Foreman, Confessions, p. 23.

SECTION II.
CRITIQUE OF SOCIAL ECOLOGY

CHAPTER 6

SOCIAL ECOLOGY AND METHODOLOGY

Social Ecology and critical theory are in a complex relationship. The philosophy of social ecology is primarily the work of one person, Murray Bookchin, who has attempted since the 1950s to combine the insights of radical social thought with those of ecology and evolutionary biology. His first book, under the pseudonym of Lewis Herber, Our Synthetic Environment, was published in 1962, the same year as Rachel Carson's Silent Spring. However, the most complete statement of his philosophy is found in The Ecology of Freedom in which Bookchin brings together ideas and observations from more than twenty years of thought into a sustained argument for the development of an ethics grounded in ecology and evolution. This claim for an "objectively grounded" ecological ethics is the focus of social ecology and the source of its influence on the radical ecology movement. It is also the basis for many criticisms which come from two principle directions; the deep ecologist or ecocentrist wing of the ecology movement, and from critical theorists who fundamentally identify with the work of Habermas. Bookchin himself at times argues that social ecology is an extension and correction of the work of the early critical theorists, Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse. Any serious examination of the philosophy of

social ecology must also examine these relationships. In this chapter Bookchin's claims for the adequacy of his approach for addressing the ecological crisis, that his "dialectical naturalism" overcomes the limitations of other philosophies of radical ecology as well as the problems of the various versions of critical theory, will be explored. In the next chapter the resulting social ecology understanding of subjectivity will be examined to determine its adequacy for addressing the ecological crisis. Chapter 8 will then provide an overview of the resulting recommendations or restrictions on politics as they relate to the subject of social ecology.

Dialectical Naturalism

Bookchin has attempted to summarize the philosophical basis for social ecology in the term "dialectical naturalism."[1] It is frequently difficult to understand what Bookchin's arguments actually mean as is evident from the wide range of interpretations his work receives, as well as his own responses to criticism. At the risk of yet another misinterpretation it will be helpful to summarize the major thrust of his argument.

Bookchin conceives of his work as an attempt to combine the insights of dialectics with those of a theory of natural evolution. He traces his understanding of dialectics from Aristotle to where it reached its "high point," in the logical works of Hegel, but, Bookchin

argues, Hegel's was not the fullest possible development of dialectics. This can only occur, he claims, by "naturalizing the dialectic."[2] This dialectic differs from the dualism that Plato offered, a dualism which underlies what Bookchin calls "conventional reason." Conventional reason is controlled by the identity principle (the critique of which was the primary concern of all of Adorno's work), "Conventional reason rests on identity, not change; its fundamental principle is that A equals A, the famous 'principle of identity,' which means that any given phenomenon can be only itself and cannot be other than what we immediately perceive it to be at a given moment in time. It does not address the problem of change."[3] Conventional reason seeks logical consistency, the application of the identity principle, but does not explore the process of change systematically as a process of development that includes reason itself. The Platonic dualism of identity and change, claims Bookchin, "echoed" through Western philosophy until the nineteenth century when dialectical thinkers explored how "unity itself actually consists of the unity of opposites."[4] Bookchin claims Hegel basically solved the paradox of how "self-persistence" is achieved through change. Dialectical reason expresses the developmental notion of reality by claiming that A equals both A and not A. An entity is not only what it is at this moment but also what it is becoming. It contains a latent potential which, under

appropriate conditions, will come to manifest itself. This is sometimes expressed as the identity of identity and non-identity, or the unity of opposites. Bookchin claims "dialectic" has been misused, even by Hegel, who made it into a cosmological system resembling a theology, as Absolute Knowledge, the result of the unfolding logic of the contradiction and resolution of the contradiction, of identity and non-identity. This was "even labeled 'God' by Hegel."[5] In order to correct this theological misuse of dialectic, Bookchin proposes to introduce the idea of the theory of evolution into dialectical thought.

Bookchin sees the dialectic, when combined with a post-Hegel theory of evolution, as the solution to the philosophical problems of the ecology movement. He generally characterizes other forms of philosophies of ecology, especially deep ecology, as mystical and irrational. The danger presented by these other ecological philosophies is that most of their concepts are "unnecessarily vague," and in their worst forms they are misanthropic, anti-intellectual and contain the potential for a very reactionary politics.

A crucial point in Bookchin's explication of the origins of dialectics is his claim that dialectics, and dialectical reason, must be emphasized as a "process" and should not be viewed simply as a "method." Dialectical reason is not only a way of thinking about causality or a way to analyze the relationship of an entity to what it

might become, but is also an ontology, a description of the objective world, "Dialectic is also, in fact, an ontological form of causality. It is, in effect, both a way of reasoning about causality in the form of a development and, simultaneously, an account of the objective world. Logic, in Hegel's work, joins hands with ontology."[6] The logical categories are developed by means of what Bookchin calls "eductive thinking" (as distinct from deductive or inductive which he identifies with conventional reason), so that the "category" develops toward its latent or implicit possibilities. The dialectical development of the categories is part of the process of the Becoming of Being, that is, dialectical "causation" is the "differentiation of potentiality into actuality in the course of which each new actuality becomes the potentiality for further differentiation and actualization."[7] Bookchin understands Hegel and Aristotle's interpretation of causality as "emergent," the becoming explicit of the implicit in the "unfolding of its latent form and possibilities."[8] Hegel uses the example of the development of an acorn into an oak tree to indicate that development does not "go in just any direction," in indefinite change, but toward that which fulfills its potential. In Hegel's "theologically influenced" language, a thing or phenomenon must unfold or develop toward its perfection, and if it fails in this unfolding of its potential it is "inadequate" to its final

form or idea, it is "imperfect." Hegel's theologically influenced understanding of contradiction is expressed in the working out of the dialectic, "The whole course of the dialectic culminates in the 'Absolute' which is 'perfect' in its fullness, wholeness, and unity."[9]

Bookchin claims his own dialectical naturalism overcomes this theological understanding of development inherited from Aristotle and Hegel, "Dialectical naturalism, on the contrary, conceives contradiction as distinctly natural in the sense that things and phenomena are incomplete and unactualized in their development--not 'imperfect' in any idealistic or supranatural sense."[10] Dialectical naturalism, instead of terminating in an absolute, whether labeled the Ideal or God or something else, attempts to "advance a vision" of ever-increasing fullness or wholeness that includes a "richness of differentiation and subjectivity."[11] It is in the relationship of evolution to subjectivity that most criticisms of Bookchin's project have been generated. Bookchin's understanding of the relationship of dialectical naturalism to subjectivity is at the core of his attempt to develop an "objective ethics" that could serve as a guide to ecological action and the development of an ecological society. A closer examination of the relationship of dialectical naturalism and subjectivity will take place in the next chapter, but a brief overview will serve to introduce two other "methodological" issues;

Bookchin's rejection of Marx, and the rejection of the early Frankfurt School position, which is staged on related but not identical grounds.

Bookchin understands social ecology as presenting an alternative to the "despair" of the "Frankfurt School" over its inability to adequately address the "problem of objective ethics."[12] Bookchin claims the establishment of an objective ethics would provide guidance for the development of "ecocommunities" which would live in balance with nature, and just as importantly, would constitute a liberated and truly just society. Bookchin believes the establishment of an objective ethics is possible based on the philosophy of social ecology. By "ecologizing" the dialectic received from the tradition extending from Aristotle through Hegel, he believes dialectics can be removed from its absolutist tendency and provide the possibility for the development of subjectivity without any predetermined terminal point. To achieve this, Hegelian dialectics must be "greatly modified," beginning with a shift of emphasis from the notion of "strife," most often translated as "antithesis," toward differentiation and "mutuality." Bookchin's dialectical naturalism replaces strife or conflict as the basis for progress with an "ecological view" of progress as the growing or increase of self-consciousness and mutuality. He claims "the organic" creates forms, relationships, processes and environments for itself

through its metabolic activity, and this activity of self-maintenance involves a "rudimentary subjectivity."[13] The organism must be able to identify itself in at least some basic form for it to maintain its life-form as a unique whole. But beyond maintenance of its organic integrity, Bookchin claims the organism "strives" to become other that what it is, "Conceived dialectically, organic evolution, like social development, is, in a very loose way, subjective in that life-forms and the communities they establish, strive to be other than what they are."[14] This striving of life yields "increasing degrees of subjectivity" as qualitatively new "attributes" and "interrelationships" are actualized from the potentials of life. This qualitatively new form of life can occur at the level of biotic, communal, or social organization. The emergence of new degrees of subjectivity expresses and radically conditions "the fact that a new potential has emerged, opening a new realm of possibility with its own unique self-directive mode of activity."[15] Viewed historically and cumulatively the results of the actualizations of potential "constitute a developmental continuum." Bookchin summarizes this view of dialectics,

> Emerging from this superb, basically Hegelian, ensemble is a world that is always ethically problematic, an ethics that is always objective, a recognition of selfhood and subjectivity that embodies nonhuman and human nature, and a development from metabolic self-maintenance to rational self-direction that thereby locates the origins of reason

> within nature, not in a supramundane domain that exists apart from nature. The social is thus wedded to the natural and human reason is wedded to nonhuman subjectivity through processes that are richly mediated and graded in a shared continuum of development.[16]

But this basically Hegelian dialectics needs a theory of evolution as a corrective to the "hard teleological predeterminations" it acquired from the Greeks and from Christianity.[17] It is "only ecology that can ventilate the dialectic" and bring about an end to the "hard teleology" of previous versions of dialectics. The inclusion of ecology in dialectics makes it "co-extensive with natural evolution."[18] A theory of natural evolution that ecology provides would not only correct the hard teleological tendencies of dialectic, but the dialectic would then serve as a "source of meaning" for natural evolution; not only a source of rational meaning, but also *ethical* meaning. As part of the natural world, human beings must inevitably intervene in nature, Bookchin asserts, and the result of this "natural" intervention is the creation of a "second nature" out of first nature, "By second nature, I mean humanity's development of a uniquely human culture, a wide variety of institutionalized human communities, an effective human technics, a richly symbolic language, and a carefully managed source of nutriment."[19] This second nature was produced through a "highly graded" and "many phased" evolution resulting in social institutions, various forms of human interaction,

and "in the best of cases, a mutuality between first and second nature that enriched both natures."[20]

The ecological crisis then is a crisis of "the emergence of society out of biology" that resulted from the contradictions of "hierarchy, domination, patriarchy, classes, and the State."[21] This understanding of the origins of the ecological crisis is what prompts Bookchin to use the term "social ecology," which is intended to emphasize the social origins of the crisis, and the fact that the "resolution of this social crisis can only be achieved by reorganizing society along ecological lines, imbued with an ecological philosophy and sensibility."[22] The resolution of the social crisis requires an objective ethics which can be found in dialectical naturalism. Humanity is the "embodiment of nature rendered self-conscious and self-reflexive," at least potentially. This is not the present social condition since this potential is currently "filled by blind market-oriented interests and an egoistic marketplace mentality."[23] Bookchin states that an objective ecological ethics has not yet been "rationally developed," but at a minimum this future ethic must include the idea of "human stewardship of the planet."[24] Planetary stewardship would involve the "radical integration" of first and second nature, including the development of new ecocommunities, ecotechnologies, and "an abiding ecological sensibility that embodies nature's thrust towards self-reflexivity."[25]

This would be nature acting on itself "rationally" based on "coordinates created by nature's potential for freedom and conceptual thought," an objective ethics attempting to define "what-could-be" as the realm of "objective possibility."[26] In a truly ecological society second nature would be first nature rendered self-reflexive, thinking nature could now self-consciously "guide its own evolution." Ecological society would be a transcendence of both first and second nature in what Bookchin calls a free nature. This would not involve a collapse of either first into second nature or vice-versa, as each would retain its "specificity and integrity." Bookchin claims this simply would be an expression or extension of natural evolutionary tendencies, "Humanity, far from diminishing the integrity of nature, would add the dimension of freedom, reason, and ethics to first nature and raise evolution to a level of self-reflexivity that has always been latent in the very emergence of the natural world."[27] This does not give humans free rein over nature since natural evolution also "confers responsibility" on human beings because of their unique capacities to think conceptually and "feel a deep empathy for the world of life."[28] Humanity thus has the responsibility to reverse the destruction and devastation of the biosphere, to intervene in natural processes, and potentially to be as creative as "natural evolution itself." This understanding of the potential and responsibilities of

human beings shifts the analysis of ecological problems to the question of the ways human beings will intervene in nature. Whether "humanity" will become conscious of itself as a tendency in natural evolution or not, whether human beings come to act as responsible moral and ecological agents, is a social problem, according to Bookchin, which requires a specifically social ecology for its solution.

In various contexts Bookchin has elaborated on why he believes other philosophical orientations would not adequately address specific ecological problems, or the ecology crisis generally. Deep ecology has received severe criticism for its irrational, mystical and frequently reactionary tendencies.[29] He has also rejected various forms of systems theory and other neo-positivist attempts to conceptualize the ecological crisis, frequently making use of arguments that closely resemble those of the early Frankfurt School.[30] He also rejects orthodox Marxism in much the same way, but extends his criticism of Marxism to the "Neo-Marxism" of the critical theorists, including Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse. Bookchin's critique of the critical theorists hinges on his understanding of the relationship between domination and hierarchy. Even though this understanding is the basis for Bookchin's claims about the fundamental differences between social ecology and early critical theory, it is not clear what he believes to be the

continuing link between the two. He sometimes seems to fundamentally dismiss critical theory but at other times appears to be declaring himself the rightful heir to the earlier project, in opposition to Habermas. This position forces Bookchin to respond to attacks not only from deep ecologists or ecocentrists, but also from the Habermasian wing of critical theory, a response that includes a challenge to its claim to the heritage of critical theory;

> It is tragic that Adorno could not remove what Buck-Morss calls "the taboo against positivity." To do so would entail a "reconstruction" of humanity's relation with nature in terms of a radical social ecology according to which the graded (i.e. mediated) development of natural history into social history ceases to be teleologically pregiven in the emergence of capitalism and the notion of humanity's domination of nature--a notion of domination that has its roots in the domination of human by human....Social ecology, which was unknown to the Frankfurt School except in a very technical form, could have provided the mediations that would have spared nature philosophy and a naturalistic ethics from the stigma it acquired as a result of a static Hellenic ontology, National Socialist "folk philosophy" and Marxism's "diamat."[31]

Even though in his battle with those faithful to Habermas, Bookchin seems to nestle close to Adorno and early critical theory, at other times he leaves the impression of an unbridgeable gulf between critical theory and social ecology: "Despite some recent nonsense to the effect that the 'Frankfurt School' reconnoitered a nonhierarchical and ecological view of society's future,

in no sense were its most able thinkers, notably Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, resolutely critical of hierarchy and domination. Rather, their views were clearly pessimistic."[32] The difference between critical theory and social ecology, in Bookchin's interpretation, seems to depend on the "resoluteness" of the critique of hierarchy and domination. The respective critiques of hierarchy and domination therefore require a fuller analysis. Before moving to that task however, the charge of "pessimism" deserves comment. Bookchin reiterates the charge in several places with phrases such as "Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer's dark pessimism," or "Reason, whose defeat at the hands of Horkheimer and Adorno evoked so much pessimism among their colleagues."[33] The arguments of Hullot-Kentor against Habermas's "pessimistic" reading of Adorno would also apply to Bookchin's charges, but it is not necessary to look any further that Bookchin himself to weaken the charge of pessimism; "To simply designate Adorno 'pessimistic' is a cheap shot."[34] It is in the explanation of why the description of Adorno as "pessimistic" is unfitting that Bookchin stakes his claim most clearly to the legacy of the early critical theorists,

> Adorno was a transitional figure whose pulsating contrariety and focus on the non-identity of the object with the concept advanced a powerful perspective for clearing the air of ossified notions of reason, history, progress, conformity, and

> conceptual fixity. It is ironical that this perspective has been developed in radical social ecology rather than in the sterile world of neo-Marxism. Unfortunately, Adorno did not advance his dialectic of domination into a dialectic of hierarchy--for here he would have had to embrace those haunting "ghosts" of anarchism against which he cautioned the New Left.[35]

Social ecology's claim to have developed Adorno's perspective on non-identity is dependent on Bookchin's ability to clarify the difference between domination and hierarchy, and place the concern with hierarchy at the center of the analysis of the ecological crisis.

Domination

Bookchin tends to collapse Horkheimer and Adorno's understanding of the domination of nature into an orthodox Marxist or economic reductionist perspective based on the subsequent required interpretation of Marx's own understanding of the relationship of domination to labor. Bookchin believes the critical theorists' analysis of reason and of the trajectory of civilization are dependent on a certain Marxist understanding of the domination of nature,

> Indeed, human reason, in their view, was hopelessly tainted by its origin (as they understood it) as a means for dominating nature--a vast, presumable civilizatory enterprise that also required the domination of human by human as mere instruments of production. Marxist theory saw human servitude and the development of classes as unavoidable steps in humanity's 'tortured' march toward freedom from material want and, hopefully, from social domination itself.[36]

Bookchin claims this understanding of the process of civilization was taken for granted as fundamental by all members of the Frankfurt School, and it was this conception of the role of domination in the development of civilization that eventually led to their "fatalism." This Marxist basis of their analysis led them to conclude that any attempt at liberation or emancipation was "hopelessly tainted by the need to dominate nature and consequently 'man.'"[37] Bookchin is claiming that Marx's emphasis on the necessity of the domination of nature for human survival and for the development of human subjectivity imposes a burden on his theory which logically results in an inevitable total instrumentalization of human reason and society. Alternatively, Bookchin argues, domination is "thoroughly social" in that it begins within society and is then transferred onto the relationship of humans and external nature. This is the basis for the centrality of the "social" in social ecology,

> Various modes of social institutionalization, not modes of organizing human labour (so crucial to Marx), led to domination. Hence, domination can be removed only by resolving problematics that have their origins in hierarchy and status, not simply in class and the technological control of nature. Domination, in effect, is not eluctably wedded to human survival in a "hostile" natural world, as Marx and the Frankfurt School believed, but to far-reaching institutional changes.[38]

Bookchin claims the relationship of domination to nature is "radically reversed" in social ecology in comparison to the Marxist understanding. The domination of nature did not begin with interaction with nature as a basis for survival, but as part of the institutionalization of social relationships based on "natural" differences, most importantly differences that result in the development of "gerontocracies" in which the young were "placed in varying degrees of servitude to the old," and in patriarchies where women were placed into the servitude of men. Since the domination of nature did not start in the effort to "control" nature or natural forces, nature then can be seen as a "ground for freedom" as opposed to the basically "Victorian image of nature" which views it as "blind, mute, cruel, and stingy." These claims must be examined in detail to illuminate the real differences and similarities between social ecology and critical theory, and to generate possible alternative interpretations of the self-understanding of the critical theorists.

Bookchin's understanding of the thrust of the critical theory argument and its limitations is dependent on the relationship he sees between critical theory and Marxism. Bookchin's analysis of Marxism is done largely through the spectacles of a scientistic interpretation. Bookchin admits that the question of the "scientific methodology" of Marx can be read in many ways, but he

chooses to read it in a fairly narrow sense. Bookchin's central concern here is with the "scientistic" Marx who attempts to reveal the "natural laws" of economic movement. Especially of concern to Bookchin is Marx's claim that "the economic formation of society...is a process of natural history." Bookchin claims it is in the Marxian dialectic's claims about the concept of "lawfulness" that the project shows its ultimate theoretical and political bankruptcy.[39]

The crucial issue here is how to read Marx's interpretation of capitalism and its place in "natural history." Bookchin's reading exemplifies the typical critique of Marx's tendency toward "scientism, economic reductionism, and technological determinism." It is claimed that Marx views the objectification of nature for human purposes as the fundamental relationship between humans and external nature, that in fact it is precisely to the extent that the human species makes nature an object of production that it can be distinguished from other animal forms of life. History, as the history of class struggle, is the story of the appropriation of production surplus by a ruling class at the expense of the laboring ruled class. With capitalism, the process of exploitation is extended in all directions, but, in this version of the interpretation, capitalism also revolutionizes all relationships in society and makes possible a new form of society which will eliminate the

exploitation of labor through class structure. One of the central questions then is the "necessity" of capitalism and the extent to which the domination of nature is viewed as the basis for the future free society. Under Bookchin's interpretation, and the orthodox Marxist interpretation, the domination of nature must extend itself as far as possible to pave the way for eventual emancipation. The development of technology is then viewed as the basis for freedom, since only complete domination of nature makes nature the totally subjugated object of ever expanding human needs. The ability to fashion nature as desired is the sign of human freedom. Technical control of nature is then the project and definition of human reason. The organization of society is therefore challengeable only on the basis of its rationality, that is, its ability to dominate nature in order to extract use from nature that fulfills human needs. Society is challenged on the basis of its rationality in this narrow, instrumental, sense. In Bookchin's version of this story,

> Marx, while he may have joined Hegel in a commitment to consciousness and freedom as the realization of humanity's potentialities, has no <u>inherent</u> moral or spiritual criterion for affirming this destiny. The entire theory is captive to its own reduction of ethics to law, subjectivity to objectivity, freedom to necessity. Domination now becomes admissible as a "precondition" for liberation, capitalism as a "precondition" for socialism, centralization as a "precondition" for decentralization, the state as a "precondition" for communism.[40]

Bookchin interprets this to mean that domination can only be challenged on the basis of the "objective laws" Marx has described in economic terms, where domination is "elevated to the status of natural fact." Even though Marx did not intend the rise of totalitarian society as the embodiment of a society based on these understandings of domination, his understanding of the domination of nature means there are "no inherent ethical considerations in his theoretical apparatus" that would lead in another direction.[41] This lack of an ethical orientation outside the domination of nature is for Bookchin "the fatal flaw" of Marxism that then carries over into Frankfurt School thought, creating the absence in critical theory, or so Bookchin claims, of a grounding for an "objective ethics."[42]

There are of course other interpretations of Marx, but the most important in relation to Bookchin's assertions is that of Adorno. One of the central questions for determining the difference between Adorno's negative dialectics and Bookchin's social ecology is: What is the relation between domination and history, or domination and society or culture? Bookchin asserts that critical theory is still in the "thrall" of Marxism, in particular the scientistic version of Marxism that views domination not only as a necessary moment in the dialectic of freedom and necessity, but domination as the very basis of freedom, a domination destined to continue even after a

"proletarian victory." Central to this perspective is Bookchin's claim about the status of "natural law" in Marx's work, and the necessarily instrumental approach to nature that this entails. Bookchin acknowledges that a scientistic reading based on the Preface to Capital may be objected to on the basis of other passages in the Grundrisse as well as in Capital itself, but, he insists, the scientistic reading is the more authentic, "What decisively unites both the scientism of physics and the Marxian Dialectic, however, is the concept of 'lawfulness' itself--the preconception that social reality and its trajectory can be explained in terms that remove human visions, cultural influences, and most significantly, ethical goals from the social process."[43] Bookchin includes the "Frankfurt School" in this assessment,

> Like Marx, the Frankfurt School had a typical Victorian image of nature. Nature was seen as a "domineering" force over humanity that human guile--and the class rule--had to exorcise before a classless society was possible. The Frankfurt School, no less than Marxism, in effect, placed the onus for domination on a "blind," "mute," "cruel," and "stingy" nature, not (let me emphasize) only on society.[44]

Bookchin establishes only two interpretive possibilities, a dichotomously structured choice of positions, regarding the issue of the domination of nature; either the domination of nature begins with the human domination of nature, necessarily extending into the whole of society, and presenting itself as the avenue to

freedom (this being "Marxian dialectics"), or, (according to social ecology) the idea of domination originated in the domination of one part of society over another, and only then extended to the unnecessary domination of nature.

At one level this can be seen as merely a restatement of the difference between Marx and Hegel in their respective interpretations of the master-slave dialectic. For Hegel the struggle for self-consciousness involves the "struggle unto death" between two consciousnesses which, if it does not end in death for one of the parties, leads to the enslavement of one by the other. The paradox of self-consciousness is that the slave, in working on nature in order to serve the master, finds his consciousness objectified within the nature on which he works. Ironically, the slave comes to see his "self," rather than that of the master, objectified in the world. Marx alters this labor theory of self-objectification to ground his claim that within the interaction between humans and nature in the working-up of nature into useful objects can be found the beginnings of the domination of nature and of the creation of the truly human species. Similarly, the common participation in labor by the proletariat in the factory serves as the basis for the development of "class consciousness" which eventually leads to revolution.

Bookchin is reenacting this Hegelian versus Marxian understanding of the basis for social domination but in

slightly altered terms. Bookchin believes his innovations, based on the inclusion of his theory of evolution and on his interpretation of the origins of "civilization," are a more adequate interpretation of the origins of domination, and therefore provide a more coherent basis for overcoming domination. The claims made for social ecology depend on the adequacy of Bookchin's understanding of the relationships between evolution and subjectivity, between hierarchy and domination, and on the adequacy of alternative interpretations of these. The difference between social ecology and critical theory hinges on the interpretation of natural history in relation to social history. This is the reason for Bookchin's concentration on the relationship in Marxism between domination and "natural law" and the resulting possibility for a society free of domination, that is, free of the "necessity" of domination.

How might Marx be otherwise interpreted, or more importantly, do the members of the early Frankfurt School subscribe to the interpretation Bookchin attributes to them? Specifically, does Theodore Adorno hold to this understanding of Marx, and, if not, where can we locate a break in the chain of the history of domination, or in Adorno's terms, an end to the dialectic of enlightenment?

Adorno interprets Marx as fully within the dialectic tradition, not simply as another positivistic scientist. An adequate interpretation of the claim in the Preface of

Capital that the comprehension of the economic formation of society is a "process of natural history" revealed by its "natural laws" requires a truly dialectical understanding of natural history and the status of "natural law" within that history. Adorno claims that Marx rather than Hegel most fully understood that, "The objectivity of historic life is that of natural history."[45] This understanding does not reduce society to the deterministic, fatalistic, predictability of matter in motion, but conceives of the structures of domination in society as having the force to continue despite the consciousness of individuals. The status of the operations of domination are "laws" because of their ideological status,

> The so-called law of nature that is merely one of capitalist society, after all, is therefore called "mystification" by Marx....That law is natural because of its inevitable character under the prevailing conditions of production. Ideology is not superimposed as a detachable layer on the being of society: it is inherent in that being. It rests upon abstraction, which is of the essence of the exchange process. Without disregard for living human beings there could be no exchange.[46]

This "natural law" has the same status as myth, it is both true and untrue. It mystifies a relationship as "natural" that is in fact thoroughly social and therefore potentially changeable. The structures of domination act as a law, as a "universal," because they act "over the

heads" of the particular subjects involved. Marx makes this clear,

> Actually expressed by the law of capitalist accumulation that has been mystified into a law of nature is thus only the fact that its nature excludes any decrease in the degree of labor's exploitation, or any increase in the price of labor, which might seriously threaten the constant reproduction of the capital proportion, and its reproduction on a constantly widened scale. It cannot be different in a mode of production that has the worker exist for the need to utilize existing values rather than the other way round, having objective wealth exist for the worker's need to develop.[47]

Adorno elaborates on this interpretation of Marx, but in a way that does not collapse Marx's understanding of the relationship of society and nature into the scientistic understanding Bookchin attributes to him. The scientistic interpretation of Marx may have been necessary for critics to adopt at a certain time in history, when the Soviet dominated interpretation of the "sacred texts" was the orthodoxy with which all opposing views would organize themselves, but with the political collapse of that totalitarian state it is appropriate to develop interpretation and critique on a more rigorous reading. If the object of criticism then is the systematic distortions of Marx, Adorno would be in agreement with the gist of Bookchin's claim,

> Only such a perverter of Marxian motives as Diamat--which prolongs the realm of necessity by avowing that it is the one of freedom--could it occur to falsify Marx's polemical concept of natural legality from a

> construction of natural history into scientivistic doctrine of invariants. Yet this does not rob Marx's talk of natural history of any part of its truth content, i.e., its critical content.[48]

To emphasize the point once more, Marx's characterization of the workings of capitalism as "natural law" is intended as both accurate description and ironic observation. It is "lawful" to the extent it is mystified to appear as if it is simply a manifestation of the "necessity" of nature, "The totality of the process does appear as an objective context arising by natural growth. It is indeed due to the interaction of conscious individuals, but neither seated in their consciousness nor subsumed under them as a whole."[49] The irony is to use the language of "natural science" to describe a thoroughly social phenomenon. But at yet another level of reflexion, the natural-social distinction loses its dichotomous structure and must be thought dialectically,

> Such a social concept of nature has a dialectic of its own. The thesis that society is subject to natural laws is ideology if it is hypostatized as immutably given by nature. But the legality is real as a law of motion for the unconscious society, as Das Kapital, in a phenomenology of the anti-spirit, traces it from the analysis of the commodity form to the theory of collapse.[50]

It seems clear that the Diamat or scientistic interpretation of Marx's critique of capitalism was not adequate either "hermeneutically" or historically. Bookchin's (or Habermas's) reductions of the critique must be viewed as largely strategic in an effort to legitimate

their own projects, but this does not mean that there is not an element of truth in the scientistic interpretation.[51] Adorno explains some of the motivation for Marx and Engels's stress on the need for an "economic" revolution as a consequence of their struggles with the anarchists over leadership of the revolution, a struggle against the anarchist tendency to concentrate on the need to abolish the State and its institutional structures. A revolution against the State would merely be a "political" revolution, "The revolution desired by (Engels) and Marx was one of economic conditions in society as a whole, in the basic stratum of its self-preservation; it was not revolution as a change in society's political form, in the rules of the game of dominion."[52] To the extent the solution of domination was seen to lay in the rational planning of economic activity, the limits of Marx's vision became apparent with the actual structure of the Soviet State. Adorno seems to claim that the actions of then "actually existing socialism" served as an indictment of economic reductionism even in its most subtle and dialectical form. Marx and Engels's belief in the centrality of economic revolution was inadequate,

> Their _imago_ of the revolution put its stamp upon the image of the primal world; the overwhelming weight of the economic contradictions in capitalism seemed to call for its derivation from the accumulated objectivity of what had been historically stronger since time immemorial. They could not foresee what became apparent later, in the revolution's failure

> even where it succeeded: that domination may outlast the planned economy (which the two of them, of course, had not confused with state capitalism)-- a potential whereby the antagonistic trend shown by Marx and Engels, the antagonism of economics toward mere politics, is extended beyond the specific phase of that economics.[53]

Domination is not solved through state planning of the economy, in fact it may intensify. Whether the Soviet state embodied true socialism is beside the point, domination could no longer be viewed as solvable by the simple attempt to plan production. This prompts Adorno to speculate about the possibilities of an alternative vision of a free society, a vision that does not collapse into mere economic administration. He implies that the future society would have to be based on another understanding of domination besides simply that of economic necessity,

> Touched upon by events of the twentieth century, however, is the idea of historic totality as a calculable economic necessity. Only if things might have gone differently; if the totality is recognized as a socially necessary semblance, as the hypostasis of the universal pressed out of individual human beings; if its claim to be absolute is broken--only then will a critical social consciousness retain its freedom to think that things might be different some day.[54]

This criticism, of a social theory that views the world as a totality, especially an economic totality, implies that a return to the individual and non-identical may provide an important perspective for understanding the possibilities for an emancipated future. As Martin Jay indicates in his study of Adorno,

> In the future, Adorno implies, a different kind of cognition freed from the constraining power of collective subjectivity in its objectified form, may be possible....Likewise, the genuinely particularized individual will replace the pseudo-individual of modern mass society as one moment in the force-field of peace. And most utopian of all, the object will once more regain its rightful place alongside the individual and collective subject in a dialectic of mutually supportive non-identity.[55]

The individual is one aspect of Adorno's concern with the non-identical and the particular, but it is only in relationship to the universal and society that these have meaning. To honor the non-identical, identity thinking must both occur and be thought against. This is what gives Adorno's works their paradoxical and sometimes enigmatic quality. In describing the relationship between individual and society, even though he is pointing to the need to rescue individuality from its submersion in mass society, Adorno indicates the individual cannot be simply abstracted by thought from the matrix of society, but neither is it appropriate to view society as the simple adding up of the actions of its individual members. The individual and the cognition of the individual are historical products in an extended sense, where human history merges with natural history. The individual subject thinks through concepts that are dependent on the (dialectical) connection between subjectivity and experience. Adorno rejects any attempt to radically separate the transcendental from the empirical subject,

> To be judged, then, is the relation between individual and transcendental subject. The individual one is a component of the empirical world, as has, since Kant, been stated in countless variations. But its function, its capacity for experience--which the transcendental subject lacks, for no purely logical construct could have any sort of experience--is in truth far more constitutive than the function ascribed by idealism to the transcendental subject.[56]

The individual is not to be placed above or outside of history either, although its "thinking" cannot do without the "transcendental" moment,

> Nevertheless, the concept of transcendentality reminds us that thinking, by dint of its immanent moments of universality, transcends its own inalienable individuation. The antithesis of universal and particular, too, is both necessary and deceptive. Neither one exists without the other--the particular only as defined and thus universal; the universal only as the definition of something particular, and thus itself particular. Both of them are and are not. This is one of the strongest motives of nonidealist dialectics.[57]

This issue of the relation of the empirical subject or the individual to the notion of the transcendental becomes especially important when considering Bookchin's claims about the basis for social ecology's evolution-infused Hegelian dialectic. Adorno emphasizes the inseparability of subject and object, individual and society, particular and universal, in a way, as we will see in the next chapter, that Bookchin minimizes at crucial points. For Adorno the social and historical

origins of concepts, or the "formality" of individual thought, must not be forgotten,

> The subject's reflection upon its own formalism is reflection on society, and results in a paradox:...the form-giving constitutive elements have social sources, but on the other hand,...they are objectively valid....The paradox is likely to be at one with the subject's objective imprisonment in itself. The cognitive function, without which there would be neither difference nor unity on the subject's part, had emerged from a source. It consists essentially in those form-givers; as far as there is cognition, it has to be carried out along their lines even where it looks beyond them. They define the concept of cognition. Yet they are not absolute; they have come to be like the cognitive function itself, and their disappearance is not beyond the realm of the possible.[58]

For any alternative society to exist in the future it would require new forms of cognition which, Adorno implies, would be related to changes in the "division of labor" which impact the forms of cognition and individuality itself. The individual arises from the species' necessity of self-preservation, that is, the individual does not exist prior to "society." This observation resonates with the claims about the early history or "pre-history" of subjectivity explored by Horkheimer and Adorno in Dialectic of Enlightenment. Adorno in the late essay "Subject and Object" reiterates the position on the development of the individual as a product of evolution, or natural history,

> But the priority thesis is absurd only as long as the individual or its earlier biological form is

> hypostasized. In the history of evolution, a more likely presumption would be the temporal prius, or at least the contemporaniousness of the species. That 'the' human being antedated the species is either a Biblical reminiscence or sheer Platonism. Nature on its lower levels teems with unindividuated organisms. If, as more recent biologists claim, humans are actually born so much more ill-equipped than other creatures, it probably was only in association, by rudimentary social toil, that they could stay alive; the principium individuationis would be secondary to that, a hypothetical kind of biological division of labor. That any single human should have emerged first, archetypically, is improbable. By the faith in such an emergence, the principium individuationis, historically fully developed already, is mythically projected backwards, or onto the firmament of eternal ideas. The species might individuate itself by mutation, in order then, by individuation, to reproduce itself in individuals along lines of biological singularity.[59]

Of course the priority of the individual is central to the philosophy of liberalism, and the object of much of Marx's criticism. The problem for historical Marxism became the place of the individual in socialist society. The individual's place was one of mostly meaninglessness in much of socialist history. One of the primary motives of the early critical theorists was to rescue individuality from mass society in its various forms: fascist, state socialist, or monopoly capitalist. Motivated against this economic reduction of the individual into a mere cog in the machinery of production was what Martin Jay has explained as, "Adorno's philosophical defense of the contingent, suffering, empirical subject, that ethically materialist moment in his thought."[60] Bookchin denies the possibility of

ethical claims by critical theory primarily because of the connection the critical theorists make about the domination of nature, its relation to Marx's understanding of human labor, and the difference of labor from mere animal activity.[61] Central to the critical theory claims about these relationships is their treatment of the emergence of identity, the "prehistory" of subjectivity, which is at the core of the "dialectic of enlightenment." Bookchin must challenge this "natural history" of the subject if his claim about the priority of "social domination" is to hold true. The claims he is forced to make about the "origins" of domination depend on his understanding of hierarchy and on his understanding of the differences between his conception of domination and that of the critical theorists.

Hierarchy

Bookchin rejects critical theory as an adequate approach to the problems of the ecology crisis because, for example, Horkheimer and Adorno are not "resolutely critical of hierarchy and domination."[62] This claim depends on Bookchin's understanding of domination and hierarchy and also the meaning of "resolutely critical." Bookchin rejects the understanding of domination that is tied to Marx's claim that human labor involves the necessary domination of nature, "The argument that our abuse of nature subverts the material conditions for our

own survival, although surely true, is crassly instrumental. It assumes that our concern for nature rests on our self-interest, rather than on a feeling for the community of life of which we are part, allbeit in a very unique and distinctive way."[63] This sounds very much like the argument of the deep ecologists, particularly Naess, and their rejection of the merely utilitarian arguments of environmentalism. It is also similar to the deep ecologists' call for wider "Self-" identification. Before rushing to reduce social ecology to just another variation of deep ecology however, Bookchin's understanding of the difference between social ecology and critical theory should be inspected more closely. Bookchin does not view the relationship between the human subject and its object, nature, as one of estrangement or alienation, on the contrary, "It is becoming a cliché to fault 'separation' as the source of apartness in our highly fragmented world. We must see that every process is also a form of 'alienation' in the very non-Marxist sense of differentiation in which the whole is seen as the richly varied fulfillment of its latent potentialities."[64] Bookchin's vision of alienation and differentiation is one of "self-expression or self-articulation" where the "other" is viewed as part of a "whole." He does not deny the existence of antagonism, but claims this can be overcome by "struggle" and "reconciliation." Bookchin claims conflict and the attempt to control nature (an

alternative formulation of the phrase "domination of nature") are not the only way to understand natural evolution and social antagonism, but that, "The reality of conflict must never override the reality of differentiation as the long-range character of development in nature and society."[65] For Bookchin, human society is an extension of natural evolution seen as the "flow of derived phases as well as a shared development from the simpler to the more complex." Evolution consists of ever greater "unity-in-diversity," complexity, and variety, viewed as indicators of life's participation in its own evolution. Diversity is not only a source of ecological stability, but the expression of "freedom" at the core of evolution itself, "Diversity...may also be regarded in a very fundamental sense as an ever-expanding, albeit nascent, source of freedom within nature, a medium for objectively anchoring varying degrees of choice, self-directiveness, and participation by life-forms in their own evolution."[66] However, this evolutionary freedom is not identical to human freedom, "The dim choices that animals exercise in their own evolution are not the will that human beings exhibit in their social lives. Nor is the nascent freedom conferred by natural complexity the same as the rational decisions that human beings bring to the service of their own development."[67] Although here highlighting the difference between the animal and the human, Bookchin is claiming that there is no "rupture"

between human will and freedom (conceived as "self-consciousness and self-reflection") and natural history. Human will and freedom are aspects of nature in which all phenomena are emergent, "graded" forms of a potentiality which manifests itself in various forms, including the human, in the process of evolution.

This raises two questions, first, when does "domination" then arise, and secondly, what is the role of "scarcity" in the struggle for self-preservation, that necessity of controlling nature for biological reasons recognized by Marxists, liberals, and others? Bookchin discusses these issues in the chapter "The Emergence of Hierarchy" in The Ecology of Freedom. Bookchin asks a series of questions which imply there are ways of considering the relationship of humans to nature which are alternatives to the "Marxist" model. Among other questions he asks, "Is it a given that nature is 'stingy' and that labor is humanity's principal means of redemption from animality?" Of course he has already loaded the question both with the use of the term "redemption," and with his previously articulated economic determinist interpretation of Marx, one which reduces Marx's argument to a demand for a necessarily increasing domination of nature if humans are to achieve "freedom." The questions he asks imply a choice between interpretations, either "society" effectively exploited nature to build a surplus at which point one "class" of people appropriated the

surplus for themselves (the Marxist interpretation), or groups (or "strata") within society appropriated the technology and surplus and then constituted themselves as a "clearly definable ruling class."[68] Bookchin summarizes his series of questions by identifying the issue he wants to address, "I am asking not if the notion of dominating nature gave rise to the domination of human by human but rather if the domination of human by human gave rise to the notion of dominating nature."[69] He proposes a set of key indicators that should show which of the interpretations is the more adequate. In this proposed set of dichotomous choices, he opposes culture to technics, consciousness to labor, and hierarchies to classes as the categories that explain the opening or closure of possibilities for human history.

Bookchin argues that hierarchies resulted from natural differences, but were not strictly speaking "caused" by natural difference. The natural differences between young and old, and women and men became social differences as the males and elders began to "institutionalize" roles within the emerging social structure, roles that changed the balance of power between members of the early human groups, finally resulting in the emergence of "rulers." Bookchin denies "domination" existed in the earliest "organic" societies, the "early world" based on "matriarchy." Domination did not exist because the ideas of "domination" and "rule" did not

exist, contrary to the claims of "anthropologists like Levi-Strauss" or "feminists like Simone de Beauvoir."[70] This distinction about the "ideas" of domination or rule serves as a first indication that Bookchin is not using terms in anything like Marxist or most other contemporary thought. In his elaboration of the emergence of hierarchy, the concern is not so much with whether there are actual relationships of domination or power but with the ideas that then become the basis for further structuring of relationships and there generalization,

> Not until distinctly social interests emerge that clash directly with this natural matrix and turn the weaknesses, perhaps the growing tensions, of organic society into outright fractures, will the unity between human and human, and between humanity and nature, finally be broken. Then power will emerge, not simply as a social fact, with all its differentiations, but as a concept--and so will the concept of freedom.[71]

Recognition of the importance Bookchin places on the necessity of the existence of the concept before a relationship can properly be called domination, power, or whatever, is central for comprehending his fundamentally idealistic and subjectivistic orientation. This orientation is partially obscured by his claims for the "naturalization" of the dialectic by means of his idiosyncratic theory of evolution.

This element of social constructionism is more explicit in Bookchin's recent responses to deep ecology criticism. He clarifies his distinction between the "idea

of dominating nature" and "actual domination of nature" in response to criticism from Robyn Eckersley and Warwick Fox,

> I do not know how often I have to repeat that there is a distinction between the idea of dominating nature--an ideology--and actually dominating nature. The domination of nature is an oxymoron that is absolutely impossible to achieve if only because all phenomena are, in a broad sense, "natural". Eckersley, however, ignores the fact that my writings focus on the idea of domination of nature, not on the actual dominating of nature, which I repeatedly, indeed emphatically, claim is impossible.[72]

Bookchin claims he is not "exclusively" concerned with whether a specific society "actually" damages an eco-community, even if it is to the extent of extinction of species. His concern is with the "systematic" factor in social life of the "idea of controlling nature."[73] Bookchin summarizes this curious formulation for understanding the ecological crisis;

> I am also concerned with whether it (a given society) ideologically identifies human progress with the idea of dominating nature. I am concerned, in effect, with a broad cultural mentality and its underlying sources--notably, the projection of the idea of social domination and control into nature--not with transient behavior patterns that come or go as a result of opportunistic, often historically short-lived circumstances.[74]

This assertion allows Bookchin then to disassociate himself from a deterministic reading of his statements about the relationship between hierarchy and the domination of nature. In this way he can reject

criticisms that point out that hierarchical societies have and could exist that do not dominate nature, and conversely, egalitarian societies have or could exist that do. This seems to mean, for Bookchin, that the "domination" of nature does not occur until a society consciously invokes the "idea" of domination in its relationship with nature. Domination of nature cannot occur, by definition, until the idea of domination has come into existence with the "warped" development of society, "I emphasize intentionality and the historical experience provided by our emergence out of a distorted second nature.... I speak of the idea of dominating nature as 'emerging' out of hierarchy in my theoretical works--that is, that I conceive of hierarchy as a historical presupposition for the idea of dominating nature."[75]

In this increasingly subjectivist, tautological argument, it becomes necessary to indicate the point of contact between hierarchy and domination. Bookchin calls for an examination of the "logic of history" by "looking at the past from the standpoint of origins."[76] He then provides a narrative of the beginnings of social life, an "origin" that reaches back into the matricentric "organic" societies that are "difficult to detail," and only gradually evolve into hierarchical social systems. It is claimed in this story that the "biological facts" of age, sex, and ancestry, are not turned into the basis of hierarchy and domination by the "early organic societies."

This requires Bookchin to speculate on the phases of social change that brought these "ideas" about. In "preliterate" communities "women" lack the male's mobility, basically because of their domestic tasks that revolve around the care of the human infant. This "primal division of labor" limits the woman to basically sedentary ways of life while the males become ever more proficient in the fundamentally violent activity of hunting and the associated activity of group defense. The biological differences between men and women in primal society then lead to a necessary, but "complementary" division of labor, but the division of labor leads to the formation of very different social spaces,

> For not only hunting, but also defense and later war are part of the male's division of labor. Insofar as these responsibilities require the conscious administrative coordination of people and resources, they are not merely hard biological facts of life; instead, they are uniquely social facts, or what we in the modern world, are likely to call political.[77]

The domestic and "civil" spheres then are not in conflict in the primal society since the division is a reflection of the biological necessity of the sexual division of labor, and the roles within society are still structured on the basis of the "biological facts" of age, sex and ancestry. But the "raw materials" for the hierarchical society yet to come are in place, and it is now that the important step is taken away from the harmony of organic society toward the emergence of the

hierarchical society and the spread of the idea of domination.

Bookchin claims that in the division of labor the sexes complement each other economically but that the young and the old do not. The elder members of the group come to be "vital repositories of knowledge and wisdom," but this knowledge and wisdom forms the basis for the elders' function in what is becoming a distinctly social and cultural sphere. The old become conscious of the social as a result of necessity, a matter of survival, since their waning physical powers make them aware of their "vulnerability to natural forces," a weakness that can only be alleviated by the development of "social power" and a specifically "hierarchical social power." The old are the architects of social power and its hierarchical institutionalization. Even if only "unconsciously," the old begin to develop "a certain amount of cunning and self-interest" which becomes the awareness and hatred of natural necessity which presents itself as the increasing possibility of death. In their resentment the old turn this natural necessity against the young in the form of "cruelty accomplished through social means." This constitutes the beginnings of a change in nature,

> Nature begins to take her revenge on the earliest attempts of primordial society to control her. But this is nature internalized, the nature in humanity

> itself. The attempt to dominate external nature will come later, when humanity is conceptually equipped to transfer its social antagonisms to the natural world outside. By drinking at the magic fountain of wisdom, however, the educators are educated into the temperament of repressive rationality.[78]

However, age alone is not a sufficient basis for the development of "institutionalized hierarchy" since everyone must get older. The "primordial balance" among members of the community had previously been maintained through a "parity of privileges" for the old, so that, for Bookchin, what is problematic is how the elders attempted to institutionalize these privileges in a way that developed into a repressive hierarchy. He draws on anthropological studies to indicate how the elderly tended to also function as "medicine-men" who acquired social power from the rituals they frequently controlled, "Social power begins to crystallize as the fetishization of magical power over certain forces of nature."[79] With this observation the shaman becomes the "strategic figure in any discussion of social hierarchy" as this person "solidifies the power of the elders." Bookchin represents the shaman as occupying a position of "professionalized power," specialist in the division of labor, specialist in fear, mediator between the "suprahuman power of the environment and the fears of the community."[80] Bookchin then elaborates on the process whereby power is institutionalized in hierarchies and developed into systems of domination, or "epistemologies of rule."

Bookchin's argument is loaded, or overloaded with idiosyncratic understandings of concepts, specifically those of domination and hierarchy. Even though Bookchin argued that the critical theorists were too beholden to Marx's conception of domination, that the domination of nature over human beings had to be overcome before freedom was possible, he also recognized they had included criticism of the domination of "men over men." However, Bookchin believes they completely ignored or even accepted the problem of hierarchy. How then would Bookchin explain Adorno's statements about hierarchy while discussing the subject-object dialectic? The subject-object dialectic is the form of the argument about the relationship between humans and nature on which Adorno focuses. This form of the argument is inherited from the development of dialectical thought since at least German Idealism, extended through Hegel and Marx. Bookchin would certainly recognize the subject-object dialectic as an important if not the central issue in the problem of the domination of nature, especially since he makes the issue of subjectivity, particularly the subjectivity of nature, so central to his own project. Bookchin in fact very closely links his theoretical project to Hegel's attempt to resolve the subject-object dialectic, asserting that dialectical naturalism is the most adequate solution to the problems raised by Hegel's notion of the Absolute Subject and Absolute Knowledge. Adorno also rejects

Hegel's solution to the problem of the subject-object dialectic, which resolves it into the supremacy of the subject, and he likewise rejects the opposite solution, the supremacy of the object. In fact, Adorno goes so far as to claim, "The purpose of critical thought is to abolish the hierarchy."[81] This can be read as a statement about the basic attitude of critical theory towards the issue of hierarchy. Hierarchy, in all its forms, is unacceptable to critical theory, hierarchy where either "side" of the dialectic attempts to assert dominance. Bookchin's understanding of hierarchy is too narrow, as is his attempt to define the domination of nature as the "idea" of domination. The consequences of his argument are not only that its idiosyncrasies produce vast confusion rather than illumination regarding the relationship of society to the ecological crisis, but it also occludes the insights available from other philosophical positions, including deep ecology, Marxism, feminism, and critical theory.

Bookchin's philosophy of social ecology, as he applies it to alternative interpretative frameworks, results in systematic blindness. This is especially true in regard to his interpretations of Marx and critical theory. Bookchin quotes from a section of Horkheimer and Adorno's Dialectic of Enlightenment to provide evidence of the lack of resoluteness of the critical theorists against hierarchy and domination, and to counter claims that the

critical theorists "reconnoitered a nonhierarchical and ecological view of society's future."[82] The key sentence for Bookchin's interpretation of one section of "The Transformation of Ideas into Domination," a discussion about "uncompromising individuals," is the last sentence of the section: "The history of the old religions and schools like that of the modern parties and revolutions teaches us that the price for survival is practical involvement, the transformation of ideas into domination."[83] Bookchin (mis)reads this as Horkheimer and Adorno's endorsement of domination and hierarchy. In fact the passage should be read as exactly the opposite, as a condemnation of the procedures of hierarchy and domination. In the preceding paragraphs the authors discuss the relationship of "ancient history" to its repetition in "more recent times." The "uncompromising individuals," like John the Baptist, the cynics, and individuals from the tradition of the Upanishads, are mistakenly understood, they argue, if they are interpreted as simply one in a series of stages of progress in the main tendency of their respective societies. They are more correctly read as pointing toward "left-wing ideas split off from the powerful cliques and parties." This is a perfectly apt description of the early Frankfurt School's self-understanding. The authors emphasize this radical difference in their characterization of the "uncompromising individuals" and their "anarchic"

organization, "The uncompromising people who are recorded in history did not lack all forms of organized society, otherwise not even their names would have been handed down to us. They set up at least a certain systematic doctrine and rules of conduct."[84] These individuals did not establish a religion but "merely" founded "an order," and they also criticized and developed philosophies, even "a theory of the state." Like the critical theorists who rejected capitalism and state socialism, the uncompromising individuals "set greater store by the idea and the individual than by administration and the collective. They therefore arouse anger." These individuals "may have been in favor of unity and cooperation but they were not able to build a strong hierarchy." Adorno's endorsement of the essay form, for example, can be read, should be read, as following in the line of these anarchic, uncompromising individuals who, "Neither in their theory (which was lacking in unity and logic), nor in their practical behavior (which was not adequately coordinated) did their being reflect the world as it really was." The world as it really was, was and is, a world of domination and hierarchy, a world no self-respecting uncompromising individual would want to "reflect" either in their thought or their actions. The critical theorists' additional comments in this passage, on the Buddha and asceticism, attempt to reveal how even radical thought can be compromised by a "real talent for

organization." These examples should be read as indicative of the ambiguous character of the relationship of asceticism and materialism, and how the avenues of radical change should always be considered problematic in there ambiguity. The history of religions, schools of philosophy, modern parties, and modern revolutions indicate the repetition of the same message: when radical ideas enter into social practice they seem to always become complicit with domination and hierarchy. What were once critical insights, or revolutionary ideas, become tools of domination. The critical theorist, or radical ecologist, is faced with a dilemma, how to relate radical thought to radical action: "The critic who talks thus may speak the truth in the eyes of the civilizing philosophers, but he is not in step with the course of social life."[85]

It is essential at this point to turn to the problem of the creation or transformation of radical ecological subjectivity and its political consequences, this time as they are theorized by Murray Bookchin.

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RADICAL ECOLOGY AND CRITICAL THEORY: A CRITIQUE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

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by

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CHAPTER 7

SOCIAL ECOLOGY AND SUBJECTIVITY

Social ecology's conception of subjectivity depends on Bookchin's understanding of evolution. It also depends on his refusal to accept conflict or antagonism between the human organism and non-human nature as a fundamental aspect of the subject-object relationship. He does not accept, as do nearly all Western philosophers, that humans must struggle to appropriate from nature the necessities of life. Bookchin's is a basically indefensible philosophical position, as it is represented in the central work The Ecology of Freedom, a position he has since partially backed away from, but without fully acknowledging the consequences for the philosophy of social ecology as a whole. The constellation of concepts this problem revolves around include scarcity, necessity, freedom, domination and subjectivity. Bookchin no longer uniformly asserts that there is no natural scarcity with which the human organism must adapt itself, but he has not adequately dealt with the way this change of position affects his understanding of critical theory and its reliance on the assumption that human beings necessarily must labor on nature to fulfill their metabolic needs. The critical theorists, and most of Western philosophy, attempt to connect this biological necessity to the formation of subjectivity. They therefore must examine

the subject-object relationship to determine how the process of concept formation produces differences between human metabolic activity and the unconceptualized processes of biological maintenance developed by other life forms. The necessity of understanding the relationship of concepts to things requires some theory of language, and therefore some understanding of socialization and psychological development. In the philosophy of social ecology it is clear that the production and reproduction of the "symbolic order" is under-theorized as a result of Bookchin's early refusal to fully examine alternative understandings of the necessities of metabolic activity. The fundamental structure of the philosophy of social ecology is put in question by an inadequate theory of language, thus requiring a salvage operation if the genuine insights Bookchin does offer are to be retained.

Subjectivity and Teleology

Bookchin develops his understanding of human subjectivity by examining the development of subjectivity in nature through its various stages, phases, or "grades." This development ranges from the inorganic through simple organic molecules, to cells, organisms, and finally to human beings. What interests Bookchin is the way nature has evolved; through an inherent self-identifying activity, required of any complex compound or organism if

it is to continue its existence beyond a momentary conjunction of randomly colliding atoms. For an organism to live there must be some capacity on its part to identify itself over time, so that it can maintain its integrity, grow, develop and reproduce. Bookchin represents evolution as an "immanent striving" of nature, a description meant to distinguish his understanding of evolution from what he charges is the Darwinist or Neo-Darwinist over-emphasis on random changes of genetic structures, competition between and among species, and, therefore, a fundamentally directionless process of development. He rejects evolutionary biologists' arguments, like those of Stephen J. Gould's, about the processes of evolution. He particularly rejects the use of examples, like the Burgess Shale fossil record, which biologists normally cite as evidence of the accidental characteristics determining survival of particular species. Instead, Bookchin argues the proliferation of species, before the cataclysm that destroyed so many of them, was an indication of the "fecundity" of nature, an example not of accidental influences or randomness in evolutionary development, but of an immanent, ubiquitous "striving of life for ever more complex development." This striving for life, according to Bookchin, necessarily also means the striving for more complex forms of subjectivity. Borrowing from other evolutionary theorists and naturalists, especially Kropotkin, Bookchin believes

it is more accurate to view the "fitness" of an organism as that which is best able to help others survive. He explains Kropotkin's concept of "mutualism" in terms of the "symbiotic" relationships that develop between and within organism which lead to the increased development of all organisms. Bookchin claims that evolutionary fitness is "rarely biologically meaningful as mere species survival and adaptation."[1]

Bookchin's emphasis is a much needed corrective to those theories of evolution that place all adaptive activity in the categories of competition, scarcity, and conflict, however, he goes beyond correcting the one-sidedness of the crude Darwinistic interpretations to a similarly one-sided support of the ideas of cooperation, symbiosis, and mutual aid. The work of biologists like Lynn Margulis and James Lovelock seem to strongly undermine early theories of evolution that did not take into account the impacts of species on their environment and the way these activities could feed back into the survivability of the species themselves and of life in general. The culmination of this capacity of organisms to modify their own environments is of course the "Gaia Hypothesis" as defined by Lovelock, "This postulates that the physical and chemical condition of the surface of the Earth, of the atmosphere, and of the oceans has been and is actively made fit and comfortable by the presence of life itself. This is in contrast to the conventional

wisdom which held that life adapted to the planetary conditions as it and they evolved their separate ways."[2]

Bookchin goes beyond the claims made by the originators of this theory about the self-maintaining activity of life by combining these observations with his understanding of the self-identifying activity of organisms. He considers this self-identifying activity to be a form of subjectivity, even in as rudimentary a case as the individual cell's need for self-maintaining recognition. This leads Bookchin to further claim that, "Life is necessary not only for its own self-maintenance but for its own self-formation. 'Gaia' and subjectivity are more than the effects of life; they are its integral attributes."[3] Although the Gaia Hypothesis as presented by the biologists is persuasive, it is problematic to link life's self-maintaining characteristics to an immanent teleology of subjectivity as Bookchin asserts. This assertion is problematic both because of the teleology of the argument, and because of the lack of sufficient distinction between human and non-human subjectivity.

The characterization of evolution as involving some basic self-identity is a genuine insight. Organisms must be able to distinguish their own structure from that which they are not. But to characterize this simply as subjectivity is onesided if there is not the simultaneous acknowledgment of the organism's conflict with what is non-identical to it. The organism is in a dialectic

between itself and what is other than itself, and therefore is inadequately understood if characterized simply as the development of subjectivity rather than as a manifestation of a dialectic of subjectivity and objectivity, or identity and non-identity. The same is true of the concepts of mutualism and symbiosis, which are only understandable as they are constituted by their opposite, or by that which is in contradiction to them. Bookchin must minimize the negating forces of nature in order to raise up his constructions of the concepts of mutualism, complexity, and subjectivity to the level of an objective ethics. These concepts do provide some critical purchase for understanding the limits of the currently dominant characterizations of nature and evolution, especially as these are transposed uncritically into justification for egoistic competition and an ever-expanding global capitalism. However, Bookchin makes claims for his alternative concepts that go beyond their genuine critical value to a specific teleological understanding which is unnecessary and cannot be adequately supported.

The matter of the philosophy of social ecology's teleology has been at the center of much of the criticism it has received, and Bookchin's clarifications in response have done little to eliminate the problems. In his most developed single work, he specifically discusses the relationship of his philosophy and teleology,

> Finally, from the ever-greater complexity and variety that raises subatomic particles through the course of evolution to those conscious, self-reflexive life forms we call human beings, we cannot help but speculate about the existence of a broadly conceived telos and a latent subjectivity in substance itself that eventually yields mind and intellectuality. In the reactivity of substance, in the sensibility of the least-developed microorganisms, in the elaboration of nerves, ganglia, the spinal cord, and the layered development of the brain, one senses an evolution of mind so coherent and compelling that there is a strong temptation to describe it (as)..."inevitable."[4]

But Bookchin does not want to confuse this inevitability of mind with the strong claims of Hegel and others who are bound to a "hard" teleology. Bookchin wants to retain the idea that human subjectivity is the "actualization of potentiality," the manifestation of an immanent striving within substance itself, but he is unclear about what relationship he perceives between this and the concepts of fortuity, uncertainty, and randomness. Bookchin rejects the Darwinist interpretation that random change is an integral factor in the evolution of species, but this would seem to verge on making the evolution of the specific forms of life, particularly human self-conscious life, a teleological inevitability, present in essence at the beginnings of the universe. Bookchin denies this inevitability but in an unsatisfactory way,

> Our notion of teleology need not be governed by any "iron necessity" or unswerving self-development that "inevitably" summons forth the end of a phenomenon

> from its nascent beginnings. Although a specific phenomenon may not be randomly self-constituted, fortuity could prevent its self-actualization. Its "telos" would thus appear as the consequence of a prevailing striving rather than as an inevitable necessity."[5]

This passage seems to invite two very different interpretations. The passage could mean that human beings are in fact the expression of a single universal subjectivity that elaborates itself through time, eventually bringing into being the human organism capable of self-consciousness. Human subjectivity would then be the inevitable expression of the striving universe unless some catastrophe strikes, stopping evolution towards the unique manifestation of this potential. Fortuity, or chance is then a block to the development of human subjectivity which is the goal of the immanent striving of nature. Alternatively, the striving of nature toward subjectivity might manifest itself in a variety of self-conscious or self-reflective forms. The rejection of the idea of the "inevitability" of the human form of self-conscious, self-reflective subjectivity in this alternative interpretation would be an acknowledgment of other possibilities, or potential other forms, of self-consciousness.

The difference in interpretation has real consequences, most importantly in what we accept as reason, and therefore what will be considered a rational society. Bookchin views human subjectivity as essentially

a common human capacity and an expression of the "high degree of orderly continuity" in "first nature." This continuity is the "actualization of potentialities" which result in ever more complex and more "self-aware or subjective" life-forms.[6] This evolutionary continuity of development results in life-forms capable of conceptualizing, understanding, and communicating with each other in "increasingly symbolic terms." This is most fully developed as conceptual thought and language, the distinguishing characteristics of the human species,

> The human species has these capacities to an extent that is unprecedented in any existing life-form. Humanity's awareness of itself, its ability to generalize this awareness to the level of a highly systematic understanding of its environment in the form of philosophy, science, ethics, and aesthetics, and finally, its capacity to alter itself and its environment systematically by means of knowledge and technology, places it beyond the realm of the subjectivity that exists in "first nature."[7]

What this capacity to alter nature means for political action will be taken up in the next chapter. What is of importance here is the relationship of the domination of nature to conceptualization and language, a symbolic order which is uniquely human, a symbolic order that, according to some feminist theories, is fundamentally a male order rather than a universally human order.[8] If the present symbolic order is inevitable, except for the possibility of the termination of the human species, then the structure of that order has potentially

disastrous results for women. Alternatively, if the current symbolic order is merely one expression among a variety of possible symbolic orders then a space is open for challenging the existing order.

The possibilities for the development of subjectivity also have consequences for non-human nature. Bookchin goes beyond merely stating that human subjectivity is a product of the development of nature to conclude that humans are constituted to intervene in first nature, that humans "can consciously change the entire realm of 'first nature.'"[9] It is how Bookchin characterizes this capacity to intervene in first nature that has concerned many of his critics, and especially problematic are the purposes of the intervention,

> Humanity has been <u>constituted</u> to intervene actively, consciously, and purposively into "first nature" with unparalleled effectiveness and alter it on a planetary scale. To denigrate these capacities is to deny the thrust of natural evolution itself toward organic complexity and subjectivity--the potentiality of "first nature" to actualize itself in self-conscious intellectuality.[10]

There are two concerns which emerge from this formulation of dialectical naturalism. First, how strongly do we read the human species and its symbolic order as the expression of the tendency, directionality, or goal of natural evolution. Second, how should that tendency, directionality, or goal be projected into the future. The extent of the transparency or opaqueness of

human subjectivity must be determined in order to justify human intervention into first nature in its effort to "develop its potential." However, beyond Bookchin's formulation, the potential of nature must be considered not only in terms of subjectivity but also in terms of non-subjectivity, or in more conventional terms, in its objectivity. These issues come together in Bookchin's attempt to relate human rationality to natural subjectivity, "Whether or not we decide to select reason as the most complex expression of subjectivity, the graded emergence of mind in the natural history of life is part of the larger landscape of subjectivity itself."[11] Bookchin understands "mind" as more than the activity of the human brain, as including the "human body as a whole" as an embodiment of natural history. Whether it is the embodiment of all of natural history or simply one aspect of it is more to the point.

Ethical Subjects

Bookchin argues that "ethical imperatives" result from an ecological interpretation of nature but these cannot be established except with the actual existence of a truly ecological society. The present society is incapable of determining these ecological ethics because of its "sensibilities" which are structured by the imperatives of capitalism. Bookchin argues that an interpretation of nature linked specifically to the

immanent development of subjectivity is the only way to conceive of a "wholeness" of nature that makes its "resurrection" possible. He claims the critical theorists were unable to provide a sufficient interpretation of nature to accomplish the goal of "resurrection," specifically, "The flaw in Horkheimer and Adorno's works on reason stems from their failure to integrate rationality with subjectivity in order to bring nature within the compass of sensibilite. To do so, they would have had to understand the message of social ecology, a realm that was completely outside their intellectual tradition."[12] Bookchin claims Horkheimer and Adorno too closely adhered to Marxism for them to bridge the gap between nature and subjectivity, that they were too easily led into considering the subjectivity of nature as mere mysticism. The result is the collapse of their critique of reason into another form of instrumentalism, and the advocacy of yet another philosophy which views nature as object for human manipulation. Bookchin claims social ecology can lead us out of this aporia toward the development of an adequate, objectively grounded ethics that will enable the transformation of "existing sensibilities, technics, and communities along ecological lines."[13] This ecological sensibility would then create the possibility for ethical intervention in nature,

> Then an ecological community might well recover its sense of place in its specific ecosystem by allying itself with its natural environment in a creatively reproductive form--a form that spawns a human symbiotic sensibility, a human technics that enriches nature's complexity, and a human rationality that enlarges nature's subjectivity. Here, humanity would neither give nor take; it would actually participate with nature in creating the new levels of diversity and form that are part of a more heightened sense of humanness and naturalness.[14]

Bookchin engages critical theory again a few paragraphs later, but this time it is Marcuse he chooses as a target and rightly so. The focus of the attack is Marcuse's conventional Enlightenment bias of seeing human freedom as resulting from an ever more thorough domination of nature. Bookchin quotes Marcuse's assertion that the pacification of nature, "presupposes the mastery of Nature, which is and remains the object opposed to the developing subject."[15] However, Bookchin then inadequately discusses the central point of Marcuse's observations, that human interaction with the rest of nature involves both "necessity" and "freedom," only to justify his own alternative understanding of nature. Bookchin's conception of nature is difficult to defend, but central to the consistency of his philosophical position,

> There is no "cruelty" in nature, only the predation (and mutualism) around which natural history has evolved its structures for sustaining life and ecological balance. There is no "suffering" in nature, only the unavoidable physical pain that comes with injury. There is no "scarcity" and "want" in nature, only needs that must be satisfied if life

> itself is to be maintained. Indeed, the material fecundity of nature...might have completely stunned its earliest hominid offspring, had they even been mindful of "scarcity" as a social category.[16]

The "social category of scarcity" is important to understanding Bookchin's project of reconciling humanity and nature. Social ecology's solutions for resolving the problems of the domination of nature will not focus on the "economic" problems of scarcity, and neither will there be an attempt, like that of the early critical theorists, to evoke a relationship to non-identical nature that includes the inescapable moment of domination within the process of abstraction or conceptualization itself. Instead Bookchin will evade the problems of "scarcity" and reject any attempt to understand the complexity of the concept of mimesis and its relationship to reason and an alternative conceptuality in which nature and humanity may be reconciled.

It is unclear how Bookchin understands the problems of conceptualization and the subject-object relationship of critical theory and especially of Adorno's negative dialectics. In a reference to the position of Horkheimer and Adorno on reconciliation, Bookchin contends, "The function of an ethical philosophy does not entail a mimetic reduction of ethics to its source."[17] But it is not clear how he interprets the critical theorists' emphasis on mimesis or how his notion of natural subjectivity differs from the mimetic. Adorno especially

incorporated mimesis into his understanding of the possibilities and forms of criticism and of a truly free world. Its in the understandings of the concepts of domination, mimesis, subjectivity and nature that critical theory and social ecology must be differentiated.

Scarcity, Natural and Social

Bookchin's claim that there is no "scarcity" in nature requires closer examination. In discussing the emergence of hierarchy Bookchin briefly focuses on the idea of scarcity and suffering,

> Scarcity is not merely a functional phenomenon that can be described primarily in terms of needs or wants. Obviously, without a sufficiency in the means of life, life itself is impossible, and without a certain excess in these means, life is degraded to a cruel struggle for survival, irrespective of the level of needs. Leisure time, under these conditions, is not free time that fosters intellectual advances beyond the magical, artistic, and mythopoeic. To a large extent, the "time" of a community on the edge of survival is "suffering time." It is a time when hunger is the all-encompassing fear that persistently lives with the community, a time when the diminution of hunger is the community's constant preoccupation.[18]

Bookchin extends the concept of scarcity by indicating there is both biological and cultural scarcity. Cultural scarcity is a result of socially induced scarcity that potentially could be alleviated since the technological means are present for its elimination, however, the social structure actually creates a system of needs that work against their satisfaction. His

conclusions about socially or culturally induced scarcity are not novel, and a much more complex elaboration of this phenomenon is available from other sources, such as Marx.

What is of particular interest here is Bookchin's assertions about the relationship of biological scarcity to the emergence of human culture. He seems to claim different meanings for the term "scarcity" depending on the immediate focus of his arguments, asserting there is no scarcity in nature (only needs that must be satisfied) at one point, but then indicating an analytical distinction between biological and cultural scarcity at another crucial point in his argument. Also, in his battle with the Habermasians, Bookchin has claimed to have "modified" his views about scarcity and post-scarcity, stating, "capitalism has given 'scarcity' a unique character."[19] But it is not clear from this admission whether or not he believes scarcity exists always and generally in nature, or if it only exists in various distinct forms, corresponding to specific "cultures" (what Marx would call "modes of production").

There are a number of objections which have been voiced with regard to Bookchin's understanding of evolution and ecology, objections which if substantiated would have various impacts on the overall philosophy of social ecology. First, it is not clear that subjectivity can be taken as the telos, however "soft," of natural

evolution, when it seems more appropriate, as some deep ecological theorists have argued, to consider mere survival itself as the primary thrust, or measure of success of evolution.[20] This deep ecological critique leads to one particular political or ecological demand: the preservation of species at viable population levels, in ecosystems of long-term survivability, in order to continue the process of evolution. The "continuation of evolution" would include both survival of existing species and the potential for further speciation. This fundamentally ecological and neo-Darwinian position does not depend on the expansion of the idea of subjectivity to the whole of nature. This criticism charges Bookchin with reinserting hierarchy in the conceptualization of nature by making subjectivity the measure of evolutionary progress. If human subjectivity is the ultimate measure of the development of subjectivity in nature generally the human is again placed in a hierarchical relationship to the non-human or the "under-developed subjectivity" of other forms in nature.

Related to the criticism of the emphasis on subjectivity is an objection to social ecology's additional assertion that there exists a tendency toward increased complexity in natural evolution. As has been pointed out by Bookchin's critics, the Gaia hypothesis itself does not indicate that complexity as such is an assurance of the survivability of life on the planet;

sometimes a reduction in complexity increases the likelihood of survivability.[21] Without subjectivity and its closely related idea of complexity as the overall or primary tendency of natural evolution, the links between dialectical naturalism and anarchism begin to lose their strength. The dependency of social ecology on a questionable theory of evolution has led some critics to charge that Bookchin is merely using ecology selectively for the purposes of an anarchic Utopian vision that otherwise is difficult to defend philosophically.[22]

These arguments tend to challenge Bookchin's position based on the available evidence from ecological science and from arguments within evolutionary biology, but it is not clear that the "facts" can settle the issues since the interpretation of the tendencies of evolution condition the status of those facts themselves, and for Bookchin these "facts" are a fundamental matter of contention (for example, the fossil record itself).[23] Bookchin's argument about the relationship of actuality to potentiality cannot be dismissed simply because the present state of the physical and biological sciences have alternative assumptions about the construction of the universe. Instead of criticizing the philosophy of social ecology from the outside, on the basis of what are basically objectivist arguments (however correct they may in fact be), the only fruitful way of revealing the limitations of

Bookchin's position is from the inside--immanently, critically.

The point at which the philosophy of social ecology distinguishes itself from Marxism and critical theory is at the interface between nature and culture. There are crucial gaps in Bookchin's arguments in exactly those places where he attempts to distance himself from critical theory, and it is precisely at these crucial turning points that a reinterpretation of the arguments of critical theory may provide a more adequate resolution to the difficulties in which social ecology finds itself. The relationships between natural scarcity, domination, and hierarchy form the constellation which, if unlocked, should allow an alternative vision of the ecological future to emerge.

Bookchin attributes to Marxism as a whole, and to critical theory's use of Marx's understanding of the relationship of human labor to nature, a particularly narrow or "orthodox" understanding. The central charge concerns what is involved in the appropriation of the metabolically necessary means of existence for the human species. Philosophically it is a question of developing concepts which sufficiently convey a description of the phenomenon without unduly prejudicing our understanding with inappropriate metaphorical and historical resonances. The two terms of most concern are domination and hierarchy, which Bookchin claims are most properly

understood as "social" terms, so social in fact that he claims the "domination of nature" could not exist until after hierarchy existed. He takes hierarchy to mean, in its initial form, the elevation of one group of human beings above another, specifically, elder males above the young and the females.

Central to the comparison of social ecology to other radical ecological critiques and to critical theory is Bookchin's unconvincing assertion of the meaning of the idea "domination of nature." By shifting the meaning of the terms, Bookchin not only obfuscates the arguments of those he criticizes, but also renders his own position problematic. Like many others from a traditional socialist background he uses a semantic play within the term "domination" to ground the claim that domination of nature is impossible.[24] Bookchin claims to be concerned with the "idea" of domination, defined as society's systematic identification of its own progress with that domination, the domination of external nature being merely an extension of the already present domination of human by human. Since the domination of human by human precedes the domination of nature by humans, according to Bookchin, the location for addressing ecological problems is found fundamentally in social relations. This is the reason for his emphasis on the necessity of certain democratic forms of organization when discussing the future ecological society, a much different emphasis than that of deep

ecology, for instance, which tends to concentrate on the situation of actually existing life-forms in various ecosystems and the actions needed to preserve their biological integrity. This is at the core of the disagreement within the green movement in the U.S., if not the world, between those who emphasize social justice issues and those who primarily seek wilderness preservation and species protection. These two alternatives are not simply complementary positions. As the fundamental disagreements between deep and social ecologists have intensified they have increasingly mutually questioned the philosophical grounding of their respective political actions.

Critical theory made the domination of nature a central concept in its critique of society. It is important to examine the alternative understanding of this concept within critical theory and how Bookchin has misinterpreted this understanding. A reexamination of the concept of the domination of nature should also open new potential for building on social ecology's understanding of subjectivity.

The critical theorists like many radical ecologists use the terms domination, mastery, and control interchangeably to describe the relationship of human to nature.[25] However, this slippage in terms does not seem by itself to alter Bookchin's critique. His claim that the domination of human by human as the basis of hierarchy

establishes what he believes are categories of analysis that are more fundamental than those which come from Marx's analysis of human labor and nature.[26] Bookchin claims, "Horkheimer and Adorno (and the Frankfurt School generally) do us a great disservice by imputing domination to the emergence of reason as such."[27] He indicates that the critical theorists' understanding of the relationship of domination and reason "reveals the basic difference" between their theoretical strategy and his own. He quotes Horkheimer,

> From the time when reason became the instrument for domination of human and extrahuman nature by man--that is to say, from its very beginnings--it has been frustrated in its own intention of discovering the truth. This is due to the very fact that it made nature a mere object, and that it failed to discover the trace of itself in such objectivization, in the concepts of matter and things not less than in those of gods and spirit.[28]

Bookchin emphasizes that the difference between the critical theorists and his own position is that domination, according to social ecology, begins with the domination of human by human. But in his further elaboration of this point Bookchin seems to be missing the basic argument of critical theory, "Indeed, even after the emergence of hierarchy, reason's objectification of phenomena was largely centered on the domination of 'man by man,' long before 'nature idolatry' succumbed to secular philosophy and science."[29] Bookchin seems to be equating critical theory's understanding of reason's

relationship to nature with the emergence of philosophy and science as traditionally understood, not with conceptualization as such. He is also claiming alternatively, that social ecology goes "behind" or before philosophy or science to an earlier social formation when social hierarchy first presents itself. Is this what Bookchin is claiming or is there another interpretation of his objection to critical theory? What are the critical theorists claiming about the relationship of reason to the domination of nature, and how do they conceive of conceptualization itself?

Bookchin gets closer to the crux of the problem when he briefly examines the concept of "exchange" and how it is used by Horkheimer and Adorno. In their analysis of the Odyssey they write,

> The step from chaos to civilization, in which natural conditions exert their power no longer directly but through the medium of human consciousness, has not changed the principle of equivalence. Indeed, men paid for this very step by worshipping what they were once in thrall to only in the same way as all other creatures. Before, the fetishes were subject to the law of equivalence. Now equivalence has itself become a fetish.[30]

Bookchin's remarks on this observation reflect the same reasoning as in his defense of his concern with the idea of domination. He claims there was not a "sensibility of exchange" present in the primordial world, that that sensibility did not exist until the marketplace had been established. There seem to be at least three

alternative ways of approaching Bookchin's objections. If he is claiming that some thing or some relationship does not exit until the concept for it exists, then this would seem to be idealism and social constructionism at its worse. If it is meaningful to say that domination does not exist until the idea of domination exists, or that exchange does not exist until the idea of exchange exists, it must be equally true that dinosaurs did not exist until the idea of dinosaurs existed, or that the world was not round until the idea that the world was round existed. This is absurd. Alternatively, Bookchin may be claiming that the understanding of exchange in its fullness was not available to early humans, and this is of course a true, but trivial, observation. What is being argued by the critical theorists, regarding exchange, is one aspect of their dialectical understanding of history. The potential, that is, before the full actualization of the idea of exchange expressed itself, existed partially or in a limited form in the primordial relationships of humans to nature. A fully developed exchange sensibility of course could not have been available to early humans, if we understand that fully developed sensibility to require the immersion in market society. What is really of interest here is the claim that the first glimmerings of an understanding of exchange, a proto-exchange, or, using Walter Benjamin's terms, an Ur-exchange, was taking place. The validity of Bookchin's objection to the idea of

exchange being used to describe early humans' relationship to nature depends on whether the description fruitfully opens the question of the domination of nature to critical reflection, and whether it does so in a manner which makes for a more adequate critique of existing society than does social ecology.

The issues surrounding the idea of exchange are examined by the critical theorists in two different arenas, the subject-object relationship as expressed in the emergence of the ego or human subject in the attempt at self-preservation, and in the shaman's use of ritual, magic and sacrifice to mediate between humans and the spirits. Bookchin provides an alternative narrative of the role of the shaman and the emergence of the ego.

For Bookchin, "the shaman is a strategic figure in any discussion of social hierarchy" and therefore this role is at the heart of the problem of domination. The shaman, usually male, effects changes in the status of the elders and their privileges. The shaman is a "specialist in fear" who "professionalizes power."[31] The shaman is a mediator between the powers of the environment and the "fears of the community," who uses magic and divination as his means. Bookchin views the shaman as an early form of political manipulator, "the incipient State personified." The shaman is always under threat of retaliation should his charms fail and thus must insure his own survival by creating structures of support and ongoing power through

mutually advantageous alliances. The shaman as "quasi-religious formulator" is the creator of "the ideological mythos that crystallizes incipient power into actual power."[32] Alliances tend to be formed between elders and young warriors, while myths establish ongoing authority, and, when combined, these alliances and myths constitute early forms of political institutions and political coalitions. Bookchin claims these proto-political forms already tend to exaggerate the aggression and violence of the "masculine temperament" of the "patricentric" community. At this point systematic domination comes into being as a result of the hierarchy of the elder males over the young and over women. True class relationships have yet to form since the principles of "organic society, usufruct, complementarity" and "the irreducible minimum," are the norm, so no specifically economic exploitation is systematically involved. Wealth as such is suspect and elaborate means are involved to become dispossessed of what could only appear as "bewitched concretized power."[33] This means for Bookchin that there is a period of emerging social hierarchy and domination of human by human which occurs prior to economic exploitation, "We must fix this <u>pre</u>class, indeed, <u>pre</u>economic, period in social development clearly in our minds because the vast ideological corpus of 'modernity'--capitalism, particularly in its western form--has been designed in large part to veil it from our vision."[34] Bookchin claims

the mystification of these earlier stages of domination of human by human occur even in such concepts as "primitive communism" and "matriarchy." For example, within the idea of primitive communism is the "insidious concept of a 'stingy nature,' of a 'natural scarcity' that dictates communal relations--as though a communal sharing of things is exogenous to humanity and must be imposed by survival needs to overcome an 'innate' human egoism that 'modernity' so often identifies with 'selfhood.'"[35] Likewise, Bookchin proclaims, the idea of matriarchy assumes that women ruled society before men, so the idea of matriarchy does not challenge domination, it simply alters which gender will dominate. Both of the examples again reveal the narrowed interpretive framework from which Bookchin operates. Primitive communism does not imply a need to overcome innate human egoism, but rather a necessary cooperation for group survival as a whole. Bookchin reads the term through the lenses of his theory of the emergence of hierarchy not through those which view cooperation as economically necessary. And to view matriarchy simply as another form of domination is to ignore its possible radically different structure.[36]

The role of the shaman, according to social ecology's "origins" narrative, was later expanded to that of a priesthood due to the frequency of failure of the shaman's attempt at intervention into natural events. Divination and magic could then be replaced by a theology--a rational

explanation of the history and origins of men and gods. What previously were individual technical failures of the shaman could now be interpreted as the moral failure of the community. In addition, the systems of command and obedience developed by the shaman later could be used by others desiring power, specifically the "military fraternity" of the warriors, who in time became the nobles and lords of the feudal manors.

Closely related to this narrative of the origins of domination is Bookchin's understanding of the emergence of the human self or subject. Central to the idea of the development of the human subject must be some understanding of the process of distinction or separation of the human from non-human nature. Bookchin argues that this separation should not be viewed as based in an "epistemology of rule and domination, or worse, class relationships and exploitation."[37] Instead he calls for the development of a phenomenology of the self that adequately takes into account the other aspects of self-formation: conciliation and participation. Bookchin claims the "I" which emerges from the "welter of its" is not the product of antagonism, since antagonism, in Bookchin's view, is based in fear, a thoroughly <u>social</u> experience which must be learned. Bookchin is responding to the modern, or bourgeois, notion of the self as fundamentally competitive, of human subjects as antagonistic egos seeking ever increased opportunity for

the expansion and expression of power, most succinctly stated by Hobbes in the phrase of a "war of all against all." But in his counter-image Bookchin's alternative understanding of the ego is itself one-sided, "Had reason, with its capacity for calculation, been used to divide and destroy rather than unite and create, the very human quality of humanity would have turned upon itself and the species immolated itself ages ago, long before it devised its armamentarium of modern weaponry."[38] A brief review of the history of war and genocide should subdue the impact of such overly optimistic, near Utopian claims. However, even though he overemphasizes the peaceful and cooperative side of human actions, by pressing forward with this understanding of the conciliatory and participatory possibilities of human subjectivity Bookchin does provide some theoretical potential for the development of radical ecological thought.

Bookchin claims the alternative human subjectivity, repressed in a society structured on the basis of antagonism, competition, and limitless power-seeking, was expressed in earlier societies in their relationships to external nature. Here he returns to the themes of shamanism, magic and animism. Bookchin cites as confirmation of this understanding of early human-to-nature interaction the tendency of preliterate peoples to treat the objects and life-forms of nature as other subjects, even to the point of attempting to "reason" with

them as they would with another human being. There is no radical separation of spirit and body, of mind and matter in this organic form of knowledge,

> Preliterate epistemology tends to unify rather than divide: it personifies animals, plants, even natural forces and perfectly inanimate things as well as human beings. What are often mere abstractions in our minds acquire life and substance in the preliterate animistic mind. To the animist, man's soul, for example, is his breath, his hand, his heart, or other such clearly substantial entities.[39]

It is in attempting to explain the apparent violation of the "conciliatory epistemology," itself a result of the preliterate "conciliatory sensibility" (appearing in the use of magic and ritual), that Bookchin makes claims at odds with those of critical theory. The understanding of magic and ritual in organic or "primitive" societies requires some interpretation of the role of mimesis and its relationship to the process of conceptual abstraction. In question is the operation of magic and ritual and how it mediates between the human community and the external world,

> By magically imitating nature, its forces, or the actions of animals and people, preliterate communities project their own needs into external nature; it is essential to emphasize that external nature is conceptualized at the very outset as a mutualistic community. Prior to the manipulative act is the ceremonious supplicatory word, the appeal to a rational being--to a subject--for cooperation and understanding. Rites always precede action and signify that there must be communication between equal participants, not mere coercion. The

> consent of an animal, say a bear, is an essential part of the hunt in which it will be killed.[40]

Bookchin's discussion is a response to Horkheimer and Adorno's understanding of the relationship of myth and magic to the domination of nature, and the ascendancy of instrumental rationality in modern society. At issue is the possibility for an understanding of reason not reducible to an instrument of calculation, an understanding of reason that provides a relationship to nature without domination. Bookchin must deny the presence of fear in nature, just as he must deny the presence of domination in the relationship of human beings to the nature they must appropriate out of metabolic necessity, because these concepts undermine his understanding of hierarchy and its relation to liberatory reason. The philosophy of social ecology requires a return to the origins of human social relationships in which fear, domination, and conflict are absent, but a return which is at the same time also fully conscious or aware of this past and therefore able to raise up, or resurrect, nature into a new state of "free nature." This would be a return to a non-dominating subjectivity, a dialectical "Aufhebung" to a higher level of development with greater diversity, complexity and self-reflection. Bookchin views the critical theory project as doomed from the beginning because it includes the "negative" aspects of subjectivity--fear, antagonism, domination--as present

at the beginning of the development of human beings. The "dialectic of enlightenment" as a "dialectic of domination," according to Bookchin, is "actually no dialectic at all--at least not in its attempt to explain the negation of reason through its own self-development."[41] The fundamental project both social ecology and critical theory share is the attempt at a recovery of reason from its collapse into instrumental rationality.

Central to this disagreement are different understandings of the relationship of mimesis and reason. For Bookchin, "simple mimesis" as an integral part of magic and ritual, implies a unity with the "object." Bookchin represents this unity as the recognition of the object's "subjectivity."[42] For Adorno mimesis is the recognition by the human of the uniqueness of the object, not its common participation in subjectivity,

> The shaman's rites were directed to the wind, the rain, the serpent without, or the demon in the sick man, but not to materials or specimens. Magic was not ordered by one, identical spirit: it changed like the cultic masks which were supposed to accord with the various spirits. Magic is utterly untrue, yet in it domination is not yet negated by transforming itself into the pure thought and action as the very ground of the world that has become subject to it. The magician imitates demons; in order to frighten them or to appease them, he behaves frighteningly or makes gestures of appeasement. Even though his task is impersonating he never conceives of himself as does the civilized man for whom the unpretentious preserves of the

> happy hunting-grounds become the unified cosmos, the inclusive concept for all possibilities of plunder.[43]

With the development of rationality, or the dialectic of enlightenment, in which magic becomes science, the relationship of the unique, different or non-identical to the human subject collapses into the unity of the identical and universal, as quoted previously,

> In science there is no specific representation: and if there are no sacrificial animals there is no god. Representation is exchanged for the fungible--universal interchangability. An atom is smashed not in representation but as a specimen of matter, and the rabbit does not represent but, as a mere example, is virtually ignored by the zeal of the laboratory.[44]

In the change from magic to science the self becomes increasingly identified with nature as a whole, the individual entities with their unique spirits become examples of the spirit of nature as a whole, a spirit that is then identified with the human, "In place of the local spirits and demons there appeared heaven and its hierarchy; in place of the invocations of the magician and the tribe the distinct graduation of sacrifice and the labor of the unfree mediated through the word of command."[45] This elimination of the particular or unique aspects in nature continues until human subjectivity has engulfed all of nature in its self affirming project until finally, "Man" assumes the power of "God" and turns the unique potentials of each being into means for his own ends. Each individual example of nature is simply another

instance of the unity of nature, its identity as material for manipulation, "Disqualified nature becomes the chaotic matter of mere classification, and the all-powerful self becomes mere possession--abstract identity."[46] What is important in the discussion of these "origins" of domination is the development and extension of instrumental rationality to the totality of thought, where this development began, and where an alternative reason remains. At the time of meaningful magic the kernel of the development of instrumental reason was present but still remained to be developed, "In magic there is specific representation. What happens to the enemy's spear, hair or name, also happens to the individual; the sacrificial animal is massacred instead of the god. Substitution in the course of sacrifice marks a step toward discursive logic."[47] This is not the same as saying that the substitutions involved in magic and ritual in preliterate society had the full blown characteristics of logical analysis or that this society had the understanding of the binding contract of "equivalent exchange" as in modern market societies. In modern society abstraction serves to radically separate subject and object, to identify the object with its concept without remainder, to eliminate in thought the uniqueness of the particular entity. In magical mimesis this radical split between subject and object does not operate,

> Like science, magic pursues aims, but seeks to achieve them by mimesis--not by progressively distancing itself from the object. It is not grounded in the "sovereignty of ideas," which the primitive, like the neurotic, is said to ascribe to himself; there can be no "over-evaluation of mental processes as against reality" where there is no radical distinction between thoughts and reality.[48]

For the critical theorists domination begins with abstraction, with the substitution of concept for immediate experience of the thing or object. This process of abstraction is tied to the process of domination in labor, the transformation of nature into a use for humans, "The universality of ideas as developed by discursive logic, domination in the conceptual sphere, is raised up on the basis of actual domination."[49] For the critical theorists the animal's world is a world without concept, "It lacks any word to seize the identical in the flux of phenomena, to isolate the same species in the alternation of specimens, or the same thing in altered situations." The animal does have the capacity for recognition but it is very limited, the "flux of things" has no permanency about it, there is no definite past and no expectation of a future. The animal is both enclosed within itself and exposed to the world, "An animal answers to its name and has no self."[50] The animal can experience fear, pain, sorrow, but not true happiness, since happiness requires the concept, a way to resist the emptiness of the flux of the world, a way to bring the world to a halt for a moment. The animal lives in a world of "stifled urges and

unbounded passion" without the capacity to "apply the brake of cognition to their destiny."[51] Adorno would elaborate on these themes in later works where he explored the relationship of the concept to the identifying subject. The concept is a way of controlling nature and of establishing the human subject or ego, "In truth, all concepts, even the philosophical ones, refer to nonconceptualities, because concepts on their part are moments of the reality that requires their formation, primarily for the control of nature."[52] So for Adorno, human thought is a process of identifying, of eliminating the non-identical by identifying the concept with the thing, "Yet the appearance of identity is inherent in thought itself, in its pure form. To think is to identify."[53] But this is not to indicate the absence of any hope of going beyond the identical, of possibilities outside of the domination of nature; in fact, dialectics "is the consistent sense of nonidentity." The "untruth of identity" is that "the concept does not exhaust the thing conceived."[54] This non-identity inheres in the concept itself, referring as it does to something outside itself, it is constituted also by what it is not. The development of philosophy, along negative dialectic lines (and maybe in the direction of a revised dialectical naturalism), helps to reveal the non-identical in the conceptual,

> Philosophy is the most serious of things, but then again it is not all that serious. A thing that aims at what it is not a priori and is not authorized to control--such a thing, according to its own concept, is simultaneously part of a sphere beyond control, a sphere tabooed by conceptuality. To represent the mimesis it supplanted, the concept has no other way than to adopt something mimetic in its own conduct, without abandoning itself.[55]

The process of producing the "primacy of identity," in its various forms, must have, according to Adorno, involved an "unspeakable effort" on the part of the species.[56] The emergence of the I or the ego makes possible the perception of freedom and unfreedom (unfreedom viewed as the constraint the environment imposes on the subject). The "naive subject" simply opposes itself to its environment, not understanding its own inclusion in nature, seeking a "spiritualized" realm beyond that of natural causality. The subject desires to be master over nature, but its true freedom requires revelation that it is in fact reflecting rather than escaping from the domination of nature,

> To dominate this conditioning, consciousness must render it transparent. The thought, by means of its freedom, turns back to itself as to its subject, and its sovereignty also leads to the concept of unfreedom....It is the nature-controlling sovereignty and its social form, dominion over people, that suggest the opposite to our consciousness: the idea of freedom. Its historical archetype was he who is topmost in hierarchies, the man who is not visibly dependent.[57]

Freedom would require escape also from the domination of the I, of the subject identical to itself through

domination of the object, the other. The idea of freedom trades on a world before the ego, before the constant I made possible through the identifying concept,

> The dawning sense of freedom feeds upon the memory of the archaic impulse not yet steered by any solid I. The more the I curbs that impulse, the more chaotic and thus questionable will it find the pre-temporal freedom. Without an anamnesis of the untamed impulse that precedes the ego--an impulse later banished to the zone of unfree bondage to nature--it would be impossible to derive the idea of freedom, although that idea in turn ends up reinforcing the ego. In spontaneity, the philosophical concept that does most to exalt freedom as a mode of conduct above empirical existence, there resounds the echo of that by whose control and ultimate destruction the I of idealistic philosophy means to prove its freedom.[58]

Before the subject's relation to nature becomes transparent, and this is still not so, the old way of things predominates. The dialectic of enlightenment is the attempt to be free of nature's power to dominate the human species by controlling that power of domination for the species' own purposes. Nature is controlled according to dominating reason by applying the right concepts to all its parts, and can only then escape the primordial fear of the all powerful other of nature, "Man imagines himself free from fear when there is no longer anything unknown....Enlightenment is mythic fear turned radical....Nothing at all may remain outside, because the mere idea of outsideness is the very source of fear."[59] Fear is controlled by the naming or conceptualization of

that which is feared, the power of unknown nature to dissolve the individual subject. This dissolution is not that of subjectivity into objectivity, but loss of the individual self,

> What the primitive experiences in this regard is not a spiritual as opposed to a material substance, but the intricacy of the natural in contrast to the individual. The gasp of surprise which accompanies the experience of the unusual becomes its name. It fixes the transcendence of the unknown in relation to the known, and therefore terror as sacredness. The dualization of nature as appearance and sequence, effort and power, which first makes possible both myth and science, originates in human fear, the expression of which becomes explanation. It is not the soul which is transposed to nature, as psychologism would have it; mana, the moving spirit, is no projection, but the echo of the real supremacy of nature in the weak souls of primitive men.[60]

This understanding of the relationship of word to thing and its development out of fear is in sharp contrast to Bookchin's own understanding. Bookchin claims the word was part of ritual and common life, "But the ritual of the word in the form of incantations and work songs reminds us of a more primordial sensibility based on mutual recognition and shared rationality."[61] The primitive relation to nature is not one of fear and the struggle to continue individual and collective existence, but of mutual respect and the recognition of the "object's subjectivity." This understanding is not merely in reference to the already advanced social forms of ritual

and ceremony, but includes a basic understanding of conceptualization itself.

Bookchin's understanding of the relationship of the particular to the universal with respect to language is wholly inadequate. He concedes there was recognition of particularity in the primitive world, "a sense of particularity in the manifold of this experiential unity." The "animist" could distinguish bear from bison and from human being, by name and even aesthetically, as cave paintings indicate. What is very curious is Bookchin's equation of "universal" with "spirit" in a very narrow, overly literal sense,

> The repressive abstraction of the individual bear into a bear spirit, a universalizing of the spirit of bears that denies their specificity, is I suspect, a later development in the elaboration of the animistic spirit. In rendering the individual bear subject to manipulative forms of human predation, generalization in this form marks the first steps toward the objectification of the external world. Before there were bear spirits there were probably only individual bears.[62]

For Bookchin then the hunting and killing of the bear is not a manifestation of domination, mastery, or control of nature by humans. These do not exist until the individual bear is conceptualized as a mere representation of the bear "spirit." There is a confusion here in the relationship of particular and universal. At the moment of differentiation involved in conceptualization, of applying a general concept to an individual object there

is movement within the dialectic of particular and universal. The distinction between species, bear from bison from human, for example, is already a movement of contrast between the particular and the universal, without literal reference to "spirit." The uniqueness of the individual animal has been at least partially dissolved in its reduction to the member of a species, into "a bear." In this way, one aspect of the non-identity of the individual being or entity is violated at the moment of its conceptualization. To attempt to claim the universal is not operating within language or conceptualization until there is explicit reference to "spirit" is to crudely identify the universal with a theological and metaphysical understanding of the concept of the universal. But this misidentification of the universal with the theological meaning of the term "spirit" is exactly what Bookchin does,

> By abstracting a bear spirit from individual bears, by generalizing from the particular to the universal, and further, by infusing this process of abstraction with magical content, we are developing a new epistemology for explaining the external world. If the individual bear is <u>merely</u> an epiphenomenon of an animal spirit, it is now possible to objectify nature by completely subsuming the particular by the general and denying the uniqueness of the specific and concrete. The emphasis of the animistic thereby shifts from accommodation and communication to domination and coercion.[63]

But the shift has already occurred with the reduction of the individual to the member of a species, the

particular to an example of the universal. The concept "bear" has already partly eliminated the non-identity of the individual animal, which could only be retained in something like a "pure nominalism." Social ecology's desire to respect or honor the "uniqueness of the specific and concrete" coincides with that of critical theory, but the relationship of reason to this possibility is deeply embedded in the process of conceptualization itself, according to critical theory. Bookchin cannot accept this, more adequate, understanding of the dialectic of the particular and the universal because it would implicate identifying reason as containing an element of repression from the very beginning. This immediately puts the discussion of the possibilities of freedom back before the institution of social hierarchy to the more fundamental problem of the relationship between human and nature. The very formation of the individual ego, which is a manifestation of the adjustment to reality required by the physical limitation on the organism, is an aspect of the domination of nature both external and internal. Bookchin's understanding of the dialectic of particular and universal cannot address the repressive qualities of language and conceptualization as such. Adorno on the contrary retains the initial insight of Hegel without "hypostatizing" spirit in Bookchin's Hegelian manner,

> We know that Hegel, in his chapter on master and servant, develops the genesis of self-consciousness from the labor relation, and that he does this by adjusting the I to its self-determined purpose as well as to heterogeneous matter. The origin of "I" in "Not I" remains scarcely veiled. It is looked up in the real living process, in the legalities of the survival of the species, of providing it with nutriments. Thereafter, Hegel hypostatizes the mind, but in vain. To succeed somehow, he must blow it up into a whole, the total spirit.[64]

The I, the ego, emerges for Hegel, Marx and the critical theorists in the encounter between the human organism and external nature, in the necessity of metabolism. Different understandings of the resulting potential for freedom is what later marks their different philosophical positions. Adorno would repeatedly return to the relationships between self-identification, conceptualization, and the taking-in, or incorporation, of external nature as the other. He typically would indicate the relation of concept to identity as that of devouring, of eating the other.[65] There is a gap in Bookchin's understanding of subjectivity between the relationship of metabolism and human conceptualization. Bookchin does acknowledge the intimate link between subjectivity and metabolism, "In the organic world, the metabolic activity of life-forms constitutes the sense of self-identity, however germinal, from which nature begins to acquire its rudimentary subjectivity."[66] However, Bookchin does not see metabolic activity as simultaneously the maintenance of self-identity and the destruction of the non-identical,

its absorption or incorporation of the other into the self. Bookchin's dialectic of subjectivity becomes one-sided as a dialectic of identity incapable of adequate acknowledgment of the coercive effects on the non-identical, especially as this occurs at the human level where conceptualization facilitates the control of nature.

Women and Reason

Social ecology's conception of subjectivity also impacts how reason is related to the differences between men and women. Remember, Bookchin argues the "natural" differences between men and women, basically revolving around reproductive biology, as well as women's smaller physical size, creates a "natural" division between their respective sphere's of activity, "The female is a specialist in child rearing and food-gathering. Her responsibilities focus on nurture and sustenance. From childhood she will be taught to identify with such 'feminine' traits as caring and tenderness, and she will be trained in comparatively sedentary occupations."[67] In addition, the woman is the source of community in the earliest organic societies,

> The blood-tie and the rights and duties that surround it are embodied in an unspoken oath that comprised the only visible unifying principle of early community life. And this bond initially derives from woman. She alone becomes the very protoplasm of sociality: the ancestress that cements the young into lasting consociation, the source of the blood that

> flows in their veins, the one who nourishes a commonality of origins, the rearer who produces a mutuality of shared physical and spiritual recognition that extends from infancy to death . She is instructress in the basic ways of life, the most indisputable personification of community as such, conceived as an intimate familial experience.[68]

It was "woman" who made the human species different from others by her emphasis on the sharing of food as a "consistent communal activity" and as a "universally social phenomenon."[69] It was woman who provided the basis of civilization, the model of the "Mother Goddess," and the creator of the original golden age,

> We cannot ignore the fact that woman's foraging activities helped awaken in humanity an acute sense of place, of <u>oikos</u>. Her nurturing sensibility helped create not only the origins of society but literally the <u>roots</u> of civilization--a terrain the male has arrogantly claimed for himself. Her "stake in civilization" was different from that of the predatory male: it was more domestic, more pacifying, and more caring. Her sensibility ran deeper and was laden with more hope than the male's, for she embodied in her very physical being mythology's ancient message of a lost "golden age" and a fecund nature.[70]

In Bookchin's social ecology the emergence of domination results from the male's usurpation of women's place in the creation of civilization, at least its symbolic usurpation. Although hierarchy begins with the institutionalization of the shaman's role as an aspect of the authority of the elders, soon it is the elder men only who rule, extending patricentric relations to full patriarchy,

> Woman increasingly lost her parity with man as the latter gained social ascendancy over the domestic sphere of life with the expansion of his civil sphere. Patricentricity and finally patriarchy came completely into their own. By the same token, woman became the archetypal Other of morality, ultimately the human embodiment of its warped image of evil.[71]

Under patriarchy woman represents the opposite of the male "moral" development of civilization, because she shows the signs of inferior nature in her very being, in her smaller size and weaker body. Woman becomes the very source of the concept of domination, "Even before man embarks on his conquest of man--of class by class--patriarchal morality obliges him to affirm his conquest of woman. The subjugation of her nature and its absorption into the nexus of patriarchal morality forms the archetypal act of domination that ultimately gives rise to man's imagery of a subjugated nature."[72] Bookchin identifies a linguistic link between women and nature,

> It is perhaps not accidental that nature and earth retain the female gender into our own time. What may seem to us like a linguistic atavism that reflects a long-gone era when social life was matricentric and nature was its domestic abode may well be an on-going and subtly viable expression of man's continual violation of woman as nature and of nature as woman.[73]

But Bookchin argues against those such as Simone de Beauvoir who claim that under patriarchal morality woman is reduced to a generalized Other who is opposed, negated and contained. Alternatively, he argues male morality "particularizes this otherness into a specific hatred of

her inquisitiveness, of her probing subjectivity and curiosity."[74] Woman haunts male "civilization" with the fear that her powers have not been fully exorcised, powers which inhere in the ability "to reproduce the species, to rear it, to provide it with a loving refuge from the 'unfriendly world,'" and in woman's powers of material achievement, including food cultivation, pottery, and weaving, all of which provided the basis for the emergence of male civilization. But, Bookchin insists, the domination of woman is not a denial of "woman's" subjectivity,

> Ironically, there is no denial, here, of woman's subjectivity but a shrieking fear of her latent powers and the possibility that they may be stirred back into life again. Hence, patriarchal morality must bring her into complicity with the male's ever-tremulous image of her inferiority. She must be taught to view her posture of renunciation, modesty, and obedience as the intrinsic attributes of her subjectivity, in short, her total negation as a personality.[75]

From this indication of woman as the negative of the masculine image of morality and civilization, an image that echoes that of Horkheimer and Adorno,[76] it is not clear how Bookchin's dependence on the idea of maternal care or "mother love" should be interpreted, especially with regard to the issues of separation and alienation. Bookchin rejects what he sees as Hegel's over-reliance on an antagonistic understanding of alienation (the German "Selbstentausserung") which he claims is more accurately

translated as "self-detachment" rather than alienation. Bookchin views alienation, separation, or self-detachment as based not on antagonism but on "wholeness, fullness and completeness" resulting in the further assertion that Hegel's understanding of negativity is more adequately understood as an annulling of the "other" not in the since of annihilation but "in order to absorb it into a movement toward a richly variegated completeness."[77] Bookchin rejects the "strictly theoretical" or "strictly intellectual" strategy Hegel adopts for resolving the paradox of alienation. Bookchin proposes to examine the more concrete "juncture of biology and socialization" that occurs with human birth and early childhood development, with the intention of uncovering a basis for reason not reducible to merely instrumental terms. It is in the relation between child and mother that Bookchin finds the most important influences on the development of human reason, "Biology and socialization, in fact, cojoin precisely at the point where maternal care is the most formative factor in childhood acculturation....Reason comes to the child primarily through the care, support, attention, and instruction provided by the mother."[78] The long period of biological dependency which allows the "mental plasticity" of the young human the ability to acquire knowledge also allows the development of strong social bonds with "parents, siblings, and some kind of rudimentary community."[79] It is curious that here

Bookchin emphasizes socializing agents beyond the mother, as he does in an example of the socialization of Hopi children, but he continues to use the term "maternal" to explain the origins of liberatory reason. He does superficially address this potential threat to the idea of a liberatory maternal reason by noting the "mother-infant relationship is the initial step in the socialization process--the cradle in which the need for consociation is created."[80] But this still begs the question of whether it is specifically a female who must be the care giver, and it also begs the question of how much the physiology of the baby requires physical contact with concrete objects and with other humans, regardless of sex or gender. At issue is how much of the development of reason is a tactile experience and exactly the relationship this has to "the mother."

Bookchin paints a picture of maternal care as one of utopian "mutual support, concern, and love" opposed by "civilization" which is "a massive enterprise to undo the impact of maternal care, nurture, and modes of thought on the character structure of the offspring."[81] Civilization changes this caring, nurturing character into one that is "shapeless, unfeeling, and harsh" so that humanity will be accepting of "war, exploitation, political obedience, and rule." This warping of human character is an undoing of the human's animal first nature as well as its human second nature acquired as a child. It is a violation of

the atmosphere of "dependency and protective custody" the child experiences "in the arms of its mother."[82]

The liberatory reason formed under the mother's care, and repressed by civilization, has the characteristics of an ecological reason, a specific liberatory rationality, "For it is not only love that the mother ordinarily gives her child, but a rationality of 'otherness' that stands sharply at odds with its modern arrogant counterpart. This earlier rationality is unabashedly symbiotic."[83] In this sentimental idealization of the mother-child relationship, Bookchin also claims the mother's love is "a spontaneous, unconditional sentiment of caring, free from any reciprocating obligations by the child," but even more importantly it results in a "rationality of deobjectification" or a "resubjectivizing of experience" in which the other is in a "logical nexus of mutuality."[84] Contrary to scientism, or to Marxism, claims Bookchin, this leads to a view of the other not as alien or alienated but as "the active component that it always has been in natural and social history." These observations on mother love then lead Bookchin to characterize libertarian rationality as involving the observation of the other in an "ethical context," representing an ecologized notion of self-detachment that emphasizes "wholeness, completeness, and fullness." Finally, connecting this idealization of the mother-child relationship to the needs of the philosophy of social

ecology, Bookchin indicates the essential features of reason,

> A libertarian rationality raises natural ecology's tenet of unity in diversity to the level of reason itself; it evokes a logic of unity between the "I" and the "other" that recognizes the stabilizing and integrative function of diversity--of a cosmos of "others" that can be comprehended and integrated symbiotically. Diversity and unity do not contradict each other as logical antinomies. To the contrary, unity is the <u>form</u> of diversity, the <u>pattern</u> that gives it intelligibility and meaning, and hence a unifying principle not only of ecology but of reason itself.[85]

Bookchin believes the "formal structure" of dialectical and analytical reason would need to change little to be able to accommodate this ecological and libertarian rationality. He acknowledges the presence of an "other" to libertarian reason that is "antagonistic and oppositional," a "parasitic" rationality as opposed to the "mutualism" of libertarian reason. He asserts "symbiotic" reason is composed of both the mutualistic and the parasitic. At this point in his analysis of a more complex understanding of reason, one approaching that of critical theory, instead of offering the needed analysis of a dialectic between mutualism and parasitism, "symbiotic reason" then is collapsed into an identity with "mutualism."[86] Bookchin associates mutualism with "an ethical context of virtue" against the parasitism of a "value-free context of utility and efficiency." This is a simple exclusion or marginalization of "parasitic" reason.

In the now one-sided characterization of reason, the mutualism of libertarian reason "objectively validates" social ecology's concept of the good, that is, the ability to form concepts of the good comes from the "natural history of subjectivity." Humanity is an expression of natural history, subjectivity developed to the point of rational self-awareness, and this capacity for self-awareness generates another human potential, "As a unique agent of consciousness, humanity can provide the voice of nature's internal rationality in the form of thought and self-reflective action. Libertarian reason seeks to consciously mitigate ecological destruction, in the realms of both social ecology and natural ecology."[87]

This justification of libertarian rationality, which contains the potential to produce a "third" or "free" nature, is open to criticism from several directions. It is openly one-sided in its emphasis on subjectivity viewed in a "mutualistic" sense. Bookchin acknowledges this bias but indicates it is preferable to what he views as the only alternative, a bias in favor of a rationality based on control, manipulation, domination, and estrangement;

> Libertarian reason would advance a contrasting view in its orientation toward ecological symbiosis, but doubtless this can be regarded as a bias that is neither more nor less justifiable than the bias of authoritarian rationalism. But biases are not formed from mere air. Not only do they always exist in every orientation we hold, but their impact upon thought is all the more insidious when their

existence is denied in the name of "objectivity" and a "value-free" epistemology.[88]

But this dichotomization of choices does not exhaust possible ways of thinking about reason. The limitations of a one-sided philosophy of social ecology may have significant consequences for a politics of ecology.

Bookchin's characterization of the principles of ecology and evolution are also questionable, and should they not hold up to a critical examination based on physical or empirical evidence the fundamental basis of the philosophy of social ecology would be destablized. The questionable assertions about the status of physical evidence includes his representation of early human life in utopian, or golden age, images, nearly free of conflict or struggle among humans and between humans and nature. His reliance on questionable anthropology makes his position vulnerable to a fundamentally damaging critique should additional contradictory anthropological evidence appear, thus placing him at the mercy of the sort of objectivizing science he opposes.

Finally, his representation of motherhood in idyllic terms has been challenged by recent feminist investigations, as well as more than a century of psychoanalytics. The development of rationality in the child has probably never been as Bookchin indicates, but certainly the development of subjectivity differs between the male and the female child, a problem not addressed by

Bookchin. This is but one indication of the reduction of subjectivity into a uniform essence in the philosophy of social ecology. A more detailed examination of the specific relations of subjectivity and motherhood is necessary to understand the consequences and potentials of maternal care. This is also necessary in examining alternative forms of early child care not dependent on the natural mother, and to confront what seems to be a bias toward traditionalistic family structure in Bookchin's analysis. These issues of motherhood and female subjectivity, how they have been addressed in feminism, and their consequences for radical ecology, will be examined in the final section of this work. But before turning to the relationship of ecofeminism to radical ecology and critical theory, an examination of the impact of the philosophical limitations of social ecology on radical ecological politics is in order.

ENDNOTES

1. Bookchin, Murray, The Ecology of Freedom (Palo Alto, California: Cheshire Books, 1982), p. 361. Hereafter cited as Ecology.

2. Lovelock, James E., Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979, 1987), p. 152.

3. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 363.

4. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 364.

5. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 355.

6. Bookchin, Murray, The Philosophy of Social Ecology (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1990), p. 41, hereafter cited as Philosophy.

7. Bookchin, Philosophy, pp. 41-42.

8. This is of course the whole point of much of feminist social theory, for examples see essays in Feminism/Postmodernism, Linda Nicholson, Ed. (New York: Routledge, 1990), and Feminists Theorize the Political, Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott, Eds. (New York: Routledge, 1992), and Chapters 9-11 below.

9. Bookchin, Philosophy, p. 42.

10. Bookchin, Philosophy, pp. 42-43.

11. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 276.

12. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 276.

13. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 277.

14. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 277.

15. Quoted, Bookchin, Ecology, p. 277.

16. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 278.

17. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 278. For a more extended discussion of the concept of mimesis in relationship to ethics, but without much direct discussion of Social Ecology, see Section III on Ecofeminism below.

18. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 67.

19. Bookchin, Murray, "Finding the Subject," Telos, No. 52, Summer 1982, p. 90.

20. Manes, Christopher, Green Rage (Boston: Little, Brown, 1990), p. 161.

21. Dobson, Andrew, Green Political Thought (London: Unwin Wynam, 1990), p. 43.

22. Young, John, Sustaining the Earth (Cambridge: Harvard, 1990), p. 133.

23. Bookchin, Philosophy, p. 40.

24. Bookchin, Murray, "Recovering Evolution," Society and Nature, Sept.-Dec. 1992, pp. 156-157. Similar arguments about the "authentic" meaning of the term domination have been made by other critics of critical theory and radical ecology. See David Pepper, eco-socialism: from deep ecology to social justice (London: Routledge, 1993), esp. Chapter 3.

25. Leiss, William, The Domination of Nature (New York: Braziller, 1972), pp. 12ff.

26. Bookchin, Murray, Toward an Ecological Society (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1980), pp. 208-209ff.

27. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 283.

28. Bookchin, Ecology, pp. 283, 284. From Max Horkheimer, The Eclipse of Reason (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 176.

29. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 284, fn.

30. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 148. From Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), p. 17.

31. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 83.

32. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 84.

33. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 85.

34. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 86. Here again we witness the reduction of a concept, "economics," to a narrow understanding, with the result that its use by others in its more general meaning can be pointed to as an example of philosophical contradiction or inadequacy.

35. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 86.

36. See Chapters 9-11 for discussions of alternative visions of early and possibly future woman centered societies.

37. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 97.

38. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 98.

39. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 98. Bookchin relates how this animistic thinking pervades even Greek thinking at the time of Plato and Aristotle, that things with souls were part of the larger cosmos which also had a soul. This, he claims, is a source of much confusion in modern attempts to understand the Greeks. Ecology, p. 99.

40. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 99.

41. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 272.

42. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 99.

43. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, pp. 10-11.

44. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 10.

45. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 8.

46. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 10.

47. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 8.

48. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 11. The references in quotes are to Freud's discussion of the relation of "primitive man" to modern neuroses. See Freud, Totem and Taboo.

49. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 14.

50. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 246.

51. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 247.

52. Adorno, Theodore, Negative Dialectics (New York: Continuum, 1966), p. 11.

53. Adorno, Negative, p. 5.

54. Adorno, Negative, p. 5.

55. Adorno, Negative, p. 14.

56. Adorno, Negative, p. 148.

57. Adorno, Negative, p. 220.

58. Adorno, Negative, pp. 221-222.

59. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 16.

60. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 15.

61. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 99.

62. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 100.

63. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 100.

64. Adorno, Negative, p. 198.

65. Adorno, Theodor, "Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda," in The Essential Frankfurt School Reader, Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt, Eds. (New York: Continuum, 1990), p. 125; Negative Dialectics, pp. 22-23.

66. Bookchin, Philosophy, p. 172.

67. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 79.

68. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 53.

69. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 59.

70. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 60.

71. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 120.

72. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 121.

73. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 121.

74. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 122.

75. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 122.

76. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, especially "Man and Animal," pp. 245-255.

77. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 304.

78. Bookchin, Ecology, pp. 304-305.

79. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 304.

80. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 305.

81. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 305.

82. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 305.

83. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 306.

84. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 306.

85. Bookchin, Ecology, pp. 306-307.

86. The terminological distinctions also are fundamentally in error. It would be more accurate to say that mutualism is composed of symbiosis and parasitism, but again this would disrupt Bookchin's reliance on the concept of symbiosis as the fundamental thrust of evolution. Also, the function of parasites in evolution, as well as in diversification of species, is more complex and less one-sided than Bookchin indicates. See Lynn Margulis and Dorion Sagan, Origins of Sex: Three Billion Years of Genetic Recombination (New Haven: Yale, 1986), especially Chapter 6; also Stephen Jay Gould, Ever Since Darwin: Reflections in Natural History (New York: Norton, 1977), especially Chapter 14.

87. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 307.

88. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 307.

CHAPTER 8

SOCIAL ECOLOGY AND POLITICS

The philosophy of social ecology attempts to combine the insights of ecology with a social analysis to produce a vision of a future liberated, ecological society. Any philosophy of radical ecology must address the connections between ecology and social institutions including the problem of the "naturalistic fallacy," the relationship of "ought" to "is." Bookchin claims dialectical naturalism overcomes this problem and provides an objective ethical basis for policy decision-making and fundamental choices about the institutional structure of society. A critical exploration of this "objective" basis for politics must begin with social ecology's claim about the relationship between its theory of evolution and its vision of democratic institutions, particularly as developed in the ideas of municipalism and confederalism. Fundamental relationships requiring close scrutiny are those between Bookchin's understanding of the evolution of subjectivity and the other basic concepts of social ecology, including complexity, diversity (sometimes discussed in the terms of "unity in diversity," or differentiation), mutualism (or complementarity, or symbiosis), and spontaneity (or participation), and how they are transposed into "objective values" for political and social institution building. Earlier critiques of Bookchin's theories on the

relationship between evolution and subjectivity questioned whether the arguments linking ecology and liberatory institutions were anything other than personal preference, rather than logical or rational relationships. Of specific concern has been Bookchin's assertions about the directionality of evolution, and his understanding of the application of ecological principles to the political sphere of human activities. If Bookchin's understanding of evolution is fundamentally flawed, and if his characterization of the relationship between reason and subjectivity is also flawed, then how does this change the "objective" status of the liberatory and democratic institutions he advocates? The reverse can also be asked; if the political and social institutions he advocates fulfill fundamental requirements of freedom and justice in the human community, do they provide an acceptable means of addressing ecological problems? In other words, although Bookchin's vision of a municipalist and confederalist institutional structure for a future ecological society may not be a simple extension of the evolution of nature's subjectivity, it may still be true that these ideas presently represent the most adequate means for addressing ecological and social problems from a radical ecological perspective.

Another way of looking at this problem is as a relationship of means and ends. Does the means of self-government, in the form of municipalism and confederalism,

cohere with the end of ecologically viable relationships between the human species and the rest of nature with which it is inextricably intertwined? All of radical ecology fundamentally agrees that the nature-culture conceptual duality has a real effect on the human species' attempt to dominate nature. This domination has extended itself to the point of ecological catastrophe for other species, and to a questioning of the ultimate viability of the human species on this planet. The problem for a philosophy of radical ecology is to first produce an analysis of the relationship of ecological problems to society that goes to the root of the problem, and secondly, to provide the basis for a vision of an ecological society that can resolve ecological problems while still promoting human aspirations for freedom and happiness.[1] This must be said because, as many authors have pointed out, it is perfectly possible to envision an authoritarian or totalitarian society that could establish long-term relationships of ecological sustainability. Part of the reason for Bookchin's emphasis on the "idea" of the domination of nature as the ideological underpinning of a society was to avoid the deterministic reading of social ecology which interprets it as claiming that only hierarchical societies produce ecological destruction, or that the absence of hierarchy necessarily will result in the elimination of the domination of nature. Rather, it seems that the elimination of social

hierarchy, in Bookchin's view, is a necessary step toward the elimination of the domination of external nature, although not a sufficient one. By definition the elimination of hierarchy is a necessary step in the removal of domination of human by human, one form of the domination of nature. Consideration of domination of humans by humans, viewed as one expression of the "development" of nature, must be included in any radical ecological critique of the domination of nature. This seems to be one of Bookchin's principle disagreements with those deep ecologists who tend toward the misanthropic; they reenact the nature-culture dualism by simply condemning the human species, arguing for the simple preservation of other species until humans annihilate themselves. A consistent radical ecological philosophy must include the human species among the natural species that are to be freed from domination by human culture.

Municipalism and confederalism are the basic institutional structures for a future ecological society according to social ecology and should be explored from several perspectives. First, the relationship of the philosophy of social ecology to the institutions of municipalism and confederalism should be unraveled and evaluated on the basis of their philosophical coherence and consistency. Second, municipalism and confederalism should be examined on the basis of their claims to be the most adequate democratic institutional forms capable of

resolving the problems of hierarchy and the domination of human by human. Finally, the implications of social ecology for the resolution of actual ecological questions must be addressed. After completing this investigation of the political implications of the philosophy of social ecology as it now stands, it will be shown to be inadequate to the tasks it has set itself, particularly its ability to: a) integrate social and political institutions into ecological requirements; b) demonstrate the internal consistency of the relationship of municipalism and confederalism to the ideas of freedom and democracy; and c) show that social ecology does not continue to dominate non-human nature in favor of human subjectivity.

Municipalism, Confederalism and Ecology

Independent of its relationship to the issues of ecology, Bookchin's examinations of the democratic forms of organization of municipalism and confederalism, as alternatives to authoritarian and representative republican forms of government, are significant contributions to the development of anarchist political theory.[2] The historical evidence and examples Bookchin has amassed are a direct challenge to fatalistic and reformist arguments that view the nation-state and liberal representative institutions as essentially unchallengeable. Much of the appeal of social ecology to

activists comes from its ability to offer concrete historical examples of alternative democratic institutional arrangements that do not degenerate into appendages of economic reductionism, but at the same time emphasize a connection to populist or grass roots democratic efforts, and without resorting to vanguardism. The relationship of these institutions to Bookchin's understanding of evolution is the starting point for an examination which will then open onto the issues of democracy and its relationship to a truly ecological and free society.

One of the frequently leveled charges against Bookchin is that he opportunistically connects his libertarian anarchist political ideology to the cause of ecology, that there is a great deal of shear opportunism involved in social ecology. At one level this seems to be totally misplaced. Bookchin was, as he frequently indicates, one of the first leftist radicals on the contemporary scene to place ecological concerns within a philosophy of radical social change.[3] His sensitivity to ecological concerns dates back to his earliest efforts to express the need to address societal problems within an ecological context, and in a philosophically coherent manner,

> The critical edge of ecology is due not so much to the power of human reason....but to a still higher power, the sovereignty of nature...but ecology

> clearly shows that the totality of the natural world--nature viewed in all its aspects, cycles and interrelationships--cancels out all human pretensions to mastery over the planet. The great wastelands of the Mediterranean basin, once areas of a thriving agriculture or a rich natural flora, are historic evidence of nature's revenge against human parasitism.[4]

If the criticism of Bookchin as philosophical opportunist is meant to indicate that he is simply riding the wave of new social movement activities and successes, the criticism is misplaced. It is much closer to the truth to say that Bookchin may have had a significant influence in aiding the development of the new social movements, especially the radical ecology movement. However, criticisms of Bookchin's philosophy of social ecology which focus on the emphasis he gives to some ecological insights while ignoring or suppressing others, and the convenient way these ecological insights coincide with his social and political analysis, are closer to the mark. In an effort to illuminate this issue it will be useful to first examine Bookchin's vision of future liberatory politics, then compare the resulting institutional arrangements to the demands of the ecological crisis, thus enabling us to evaluate whether the institutions actually provide an adequate solution. The two issues of primary importance then are the adequacies of Bookchin's understanding of ecology, and his emphasis on the resolution of social problems as the basis

for then resolving the problems of the domination of nature.

Bookchin has charged many of his critics with misrepresenting his position on libertarian municipalism, its relationship to the political sphere of human activity, and its impact on bringing about an ecological society.[5] Any summary runs the risk of oversimplifying or reducing the argument to its inessential components, an empty shell, in comparison to its full development in its original form. The following explication will attempt to avoid these pitfalls, but at the same time indicate the areas that have become problematic from a radical ecological perspective.

Bookchin has developed the ideas of municipalism and confederalism in many articles and other publications over a number of years, but his arguments have remained fundamentally consistent throughout.[6] What should be emphasized about this body of work are the envisioned institutional arrangements and their philosophical, political and ecological justifications. Bookchin argues that libertarian municipalism is fundamentally different in structure than other proposals which seek to radically alter social and political relations. In Bookchin's view, other proposals for transforming politics are merely additional techniques for holding power within "representative" government institutions or "parliamentary party" structures, not "a <u>moral</u> calling based on

traditionality, community, and freedom."[7] Many of Bookchin's statements about the basis of politics rely on his interpretation of classical Greek forms, and have led many critics to reduce his position to a simple romantic idealist longing for a mythic golden age of politics. Some statements do leave an impression of this tendency, for example, libertarian municipalism, "Involves a redefinition of politics, a return to the word's original Greek meaning as the management of the community or polis by means of direct face-to-face assemblies of the people in the formulation of public policy and based on an ethics of complementarity and solidarity."[8] As can already be seen by comparing the two preceding quotes, the basis for his alternative politics varies with the statement; from tradition, community and freedom, to complementarity and solidarity, to still other terms elsewhere, all representing the desired principles of social and political structure. The relationship of these varying political bases of action are not directly linked to the analysis of ecological problems, but flow from the general relations between hierarchy and subjectivity.

The basic structure of the social ecological society would consist of politics at the "municipal" level, at the level of what are now labeled cities and counties or townships. Higher level political structure basically would be merely coordinating levels of policy administration. Policy itself would be decided at the

municipal or local level. Local politics would consist of direct face-to-face democracy with an emphasis on developing a public sphere of discussion or dialogue. This public sphere, Bookchin argues, was typical in earlier places and times when parks, sidewalks, cafes and other meeting places served as arenas for discussion of common interests and public concerns. This he contrasts to "representative" systems where individuals scarcely take part in government except as constituent or consumer, thus lacking any meaningful participation in policy decisions. Bookchin is at pains to distinguish policy-making from the "administration of policy" as it would take place in a liberated society, "Policy is made by a community or neighborhood assembly of free citizens; administration is performed by confederal councils composed of mandated, recallable deputies of wards, towns, and villages."[9] The delegates to higher level coordinating bodies would be mandated to carry-out only the policies expressed by the true policy-making bodies at the municipal or local level, and would be subject to recall at any time.

Although the general tendency would be for the local community to move toward a self-reliant political and economic structure there are important reasons not to carry this goal to extremes. The confederation of municipalities would make possible the exploitation of certain economic advantages due to the uneven distribution

of resources. It makes no sense for a community to pursue self-reliance to the point of actual hardship and immiserating labor merely because local situations make certain products difficult to acquire. The confederation of municipalities would offer the opportunity to distribute goods according to need. In fact, Bookchin frequently cites Marx's maxim as the basis for economic decision-making. Bookchin rejects capitalism as an adequate economic structure; he claims its profit motivated imperative of "grow or die" destroys ecosystems and disempowers individuals from controlling their own lives. However, Bookchin also rejects the Marxist notion that a particular class can represent the general interests of society, and he therefore rejects such ideas as "workplace democracy" or "syndicalism" as anything other than complicity with the basic imperatives of capitalism. The general interest of humanity cannot be found in the strictly economic sphere, however,

> It would seem to me that the need to repair our relationship with the natural world is certainly a "general interest" that is beyond dispute--and, indeed, it remains the "general interest" advanced by social ecology. It may be possible to coopt many dissatisfied elements in the present society, but nature is not cooptable. Indeed, the only politics that remains for the left is one based on the premise that there _is_ a "general interest" in democratizing society and preserving the planet.[10]

Besides the economic necessity for confederation of municipalities, there also is a political necessity

involving the aims of democracy and the protection of individual rights. The danger of local control over policy is the temptation of "parochialism," which may degenerate into abuse of minorities and individuals. The enforcement of basic human rights is not a violation of local autonomy, according to Bookchin, rather, it is the recognition of the larger confederated community as a whole,

> If particular communities or neighborhoods--or a minority grouping of them--choose to go their own way to a point where human rights are violated or where ecological mayhem is permitted, the majority in a local or regional confederation has every right to prevent such malfeasances through its confederal council. This is not a denial of democracy but the assertion of a shared agreement by all to recognize civil rights and maintain the ecological integrity of a region. These rights and needs are not asserted so much by a confederal council as by the majority of the popular assemblies conceived as one large community that expresses its wishes through its confederal deputies. This policy-making still remains local, but its administration is vested in the confederal network as a whole. The confederation in effect is a Community of communities based on distinct human rights and ecological imperatives.[11]

The model of libertarian municipalism is incompatible with strategies to "nationalize" an economy, and incompatible with the continued existence of the nation-state. The libertarian municipalist strategy raises economics to the level of public concern and public policy making. In this, Bookchin feels comfortable in

acknowledging Marx's contribution to the analysis of capitalism, "Marx, to his credit, clearly demonstrated that the 'free market' inevitably yields the oligarchic and monopolistic corporate market with entrepreneurial manipulations that in every way parallel and ultimately converge with state controls."[12] He goes on to indicate that the concentrations of power produced by capitalism and the nation-state limit the possibilities for reducing pollution, recycling wastes and making sound use of regional raw materials.[13] But more to the point, the present economic and political structures make it impossible to develop a "truly ecological sensibility" as opposed to merely acting in an "ecologically responsible" manner, "We should not, I believe, lose sight of what it means to live an ecological way of life, not merely follow sound ecological practices. The multitude of handbooks that teach us how to conserve, invest, eat, and buy in an 'ecologically responsible' manner are a travesty of the more basic need to reflect on what it means to think--yes, to reason--and to live ecologically in the full meaning of the term."[14] The result of living in a society that was "radically veering toward decentralized, participatory democracy, guided by communitarian and ecological principles" would be individuals who would not consider it in any way reasonable to pollute the air or water in a manner that would damage others, and who would not consider legitimate any violation of another human being's

basic rights. The confederalist society would be fundamentally different from the present one premised as it is on self-interest, profit, and an exchange mentality, "I would like to think that a confederal ecological society would be a sharing one, one based on the pleasure that is felt in distributing among communities according to their needs, not one in which 'cooperative' capitalistic communities mire themselves in the quid pro quo of exchange relationships."[15]

Few democratic theorists have attempted to present such a complex vision of alternative social, economic, and political structures supported by historical examples of actual, although limited, alternative societal arrangements. For this reason if for no other, Bookchin deserves to be taken seriously by the radical ecology movement. What must be more closely examined though are the long-standing objections to these proposals. One general tendency of the objections to social ecology is to focus on a perceived impracticality of the suggestions. This pragmatist approach itself generally relies on reformist alternatives, including the retention of representative or parliamentary systems while converting to some form of economic "market socialism." The most prominent example of the use of this strategy has been the German Greens, who Bookchin repeatedly cites as an example of the strategy's failure. The realist (Realo) faction argued for pragmatic approaches to German politics which

has resulted in exactly the consequences the more fundamentalist greens (fundis) warned against. Besides the cooptation of green issues in parliament through a series of tradeoffs, the individuals who come to hold the seats themselves begin to make arguments for the retention of their own personal power.[16]

There are other questions about strategies of political transformation and democratic requirements that will be taken up in the next section of this chapter, but there remains the lingering question of the fit between the arguments for libertarian municipalism and the more strictly ecological basis of the philosophy of social ecology. Besides the pragmatist objections, there have been other criticisms, and these have been based on Bookchin's assertions about the directionality of evolution and the place of human subjectivity in nature as a whole. The pragmatist arguments have to a great extent been dismissed by Bookchin simply by claiming against them that simply because something has not happened before does not mean it could not happen in the future. Bookchin dismisses the pragmatists by attacking their fatalism, but he also relies on the historical evidence of an ongoing tension between the centralizing tendencies of the nation-state, on the one hand, and the decentralizing and democratic tendencies that have broken out in some of the most revolutionary periods of human history, on the other. It is only in examining competing strategies in

relationship to the ultimate goals of an ecological society that a decision can be made as to which is the most philosophically coherent, and which offers the best long-term prospects for resolving the problems of the domination of nature.

Bookchin has attempted to condense the discussion of the fundamental principles and the political implications of libertarian municipalism in several short essays including "Theses on Libertarian Municipalism."[17] He presents libertarian municipalism as performing a transforming role aimed at reaching the "anarchist ideals" of decentralized, stateless, collectively managed, and directly democratic communities. These confederated municipalities or "communes" form the framework for a liberated society "rooted in the nonhierarchical ethics of a unity of diversity, self-formation and self-management, complementarity, and mutual aid."[18] What is of special interest in this and most of Bookchin's other formulations of libertarian municipalism is the lack of direct reference to the principles and assumptions of his interpretation of ecological/evolutionary principles. If the criticisms of his interpretation of evolution and ecological principles are valid, what impact will that have on the transformative role of libertarian municipalism?

The strength of Bookchin's argument for municipalism and confederalism derives from its coherence relative to

democratic theory, and on his unrelenting criticism of capitalism, which he presents as a system which is fundamentally antagonistic to the full development of human beings. Bookchin views the municipality or city, or Commune, as historically the location not only of economic functions, but, more importantly, as the location of the transformation of the quasi-tribal "folk" united by blood-ties and custom into a "body politic" of citizens united by ethical values based on reason.[19] He continually emphasizes the role of reason for any meaningful politics which would replace the repressive system of parliamentarism and representation found in the nation-state, "Politics, as distinguished from the social and statist, involves the re-embodiment of masses into richly articulated assemblies, the formation of a body politic in an arena of discourse, shared rationality, free expression, and radically democratic modes of decision-making. The process is interactive and self-formative."[20] It would seem that the self-forming activity of politics provides the link to his understanding of ecological principles because it is tied to the fundamental "evolution of subjectivity" that expresses the basic "striving" of nature. In this way the interactions at the level of face-to-face democracy become an extension of the development of natural subjectivity,

> Selfhood is as much a function of "managing," or, preferably, communizing, as managing is a function of selfhood. Both belong to the formative process the Germans call bildung and the Greeks paidaia. The civic arena, whether as polis, town, or neighborhood, is literally the cradle for civilizing human beings beyond the socializing process provided by the family. And to put matters bluntly, civic "civilizing" is merely another expression for politicizing and rendering a mass into a deliberative, rational, ethical body politic.[21]

Since the striving of nature is toward ever more complex forms of subjectivity, society should develop institutions which further this process. Bookchin is arguing that the institutions which result in the fullest development of human reason contribute positively to the development of natural subjectivity. Developed human subjectivity would allow the human species to become the "voice of nature" as a whole.

The only means of determining the implications of Bookchin's "social" emphasis in the philosophy of social ecology, for future policies in a free society, and for determining in what language the "voice of nature" speaks, is to examine the positions he and his followers have actually taken in the struggle within the green movement. There have been many issues on which to base this examination, but there are several that suggest themselves for closer viewing. The first are those concerning the relationship between feminism and social ecology, particularly the relationship of women to democracy and the "public sphere." The particular issues involved have included; the role of an "ethic of care" in radical

ecology (so frequently offered as a basis for politics by ecofeminists and other feminists); the politics of abortion and "reproductive freedom"; and the role of majority voting procedures relative to the process of consensus-seeking. In addition to the more strictly (eco)feminist issues, social ecology has also had to engage with two central concerns of deep ecology; wilderness preservation and over-population. Before looking at these specific instances of application of the principles of social ecology to policy problems and decision-making, it is fitting to note what Bookchin sees as the relationship of the intellectual to revolutionary social movements, which may be an indication of the status of his own comments within the relationship between theory and practice.

Bookchin believes the libertarian body politic, and by implication the libertarian ecological society, cannot be achieved without a "well-organized, programmatically coherent, highly-conscious libertarian movement." To meet these requirements there must be a radical "<u>intelligentsia</u>" that participates in "its own vibrant community life," individuals who are not to be confused with "the assortment of anemic intellectuals who staff the academies and institutes of western society." The danger of not developing an anarchist "stratum of thinkers" to provide vital new ideas for the movement is the stultification of thought into mere dogma. The

justification for the development of an intelligentsia within the movement, besides the development of ideas, is provided by the history of revolutionary change, "For all its shortcomings and failings, it was this radical intelligentsia that provided the cutting edge of every revolutionary project in history--and, in fact, literally projected the very ideas of social change from which the people drew their social insights."[22]

Women, Democracy and Social Ecology

Janet Biehl has written on ecofeminism from the social ecology perspective and examined its relationship to many of the issues already mentioned.[23] She closely follows Bookchin's arguments from The Ecology of Freedom and elsewhere in developing positions that more directly touch on the concerns of feminists and ecofeminists. Because of the consistency of her perspective with that of Bookchin it is reasonable to believe her positions on these issues reflect, or are consistent with, the philosophy of social ecology presented elsewhere. There are three issues which especially may illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of the philosophy of social ecology on policy issues; abortion, consensus decision-making, and an "ethic of care."

The position of social ecology on abortion and reproductive freedoms is intimately linked to the questions of ecological subjectivity. Biehl unreservedly

rejects one type of ecofeminist ethic, which P. J. Mills has labeled the "abstract pro-nature stance," which obliges all human beings to oppose abortion on the grounds that it is destructive to "life."[24] Biehl argues that this (abstract pro-life) ethic is taken from an interpretation of "first nature" that does not appreciate the difference between the potentials of human and non-human nature, specifically with regard to human subjectivity. Biehl follows Bookchin in asserting that human "second nature" has emerged from first nature as the expression of the potential for the development of subjectivity which occurs with the evolution of life. In addition, the distinctiveness of human beings includes their ability to create institutions that are "highly mutable" and therefore able to provide for radical or revolutionary changes in human behavior, unlike animals which are merely "genetically programmed" to react to their environment.[25] Although humanity has not fulfilled its potential in the history of civilization so far, the direction of fulfillment can be "educed" dialectically by examining the logic of development to determine "what society <u>should be</u>."[26] Present society is irrational and anti-ecological, but should become both rational and ecological by fulfilling its potential, "This potentiality, the 'should be,' becomes in the ethics of social ecology, the overarching standard of actualization and wholeness."[27] Social ecology is "critical" because of

this standard which establishes "the true actualization of humanity's potential." The dialectical critique indicates the direction society should take, which Biehl describes in Hegelian terms as an "Aufhebung" of first and second nature into "free nature," a "synthesis" of the two into the "form of a harmonious, conscious, and ecological" free nature where both "human and non-human nature come into their own as a rational, self-conscious, and purposeful unity."[28] Human consciousness, as an expression or product of natural evolution, is put into service of first nature "by diminishing the impact of natural catastrophes, and promoting the thrust of natural evolution toward diversity and ending needless suffering, thereby fueling the creativity of natural evolution through its technics, science, and rationality." The relationship between human and non-human nature would be (should be) governed by an "ethics of complementarity" in which "human needs and the needs of nonhuman life-forms would be joined in a complementary way so that there is a beneficial, reciprocal relationship between the two." This mutualistic free nature would result in a human society both nonhierarchical and cooperative in which, "Society's 'completeness' would be based on the 'completeness' of humans in their self-fulfillment as rational, free, and self-conscious beings."[29]

It is on the basis of this fulfillment of human subjectivity through the ability to make conscious ethical

decisions that abortion and reproductive freedom would be guaranteed, "In social ecology's ethics, in which first nature is a realm of increasing subjectivity out of which society emerges, women would have a right to reproductive freedom that is grounded in the emergence of society and natural evolution. As human beings uniquely capable of making ethical choices that increase their freedom in the context of an ecological whole, women's reproductive freedom would be a given."[30] What Biehl does not address is the impact of the potential of the fetus to be a full functioning human being capable of its own ethical decision-making. This possibility appears at first to take the same form in the justification _against_ abortion as she offers _for_ it. It would seem that a resolution of this seeming contradiction would depend on an argument very much like that offered by the U.S. Supreme Court in Roe v. Wade that a "compelling point of viability" is reached by the fetus at which time the community's interest in the "potential" for a meaningful life shifts, so that the "right" to an abortion is not absolute, but Biehl does not examine the issue that extensively. To simply assert that, on the basis of the fulfillment of human subjectivity, the right to "reproductive freedom," including abortion, is simply "given," is not to fully consider the implications of social ecology's emphasis on the development of the potential of subjectivity in _all_ of nature. As part of nature the fetus too possesses some

potential for subjectivity, but it is important to ask when that potential is actualized to the point of requiring consideration of the meaningful rights, or potential exercise of freedom, of the fetus along with that of the mother. This criticism does not necessarily imply the alternative is true, that the potential at conception becomes the standard for decision, only that, as stated by the social ecologists, there is no clear way of distinguishing between these choices.

The differences between women and men enter into other policy choices also. Biehl rejects "essentialist" interpretations of women's knowledge and social status asserting that women and men share a common natural history, with common abilities to create institutions, invent written language, and engage in rational thought, including self-conscious reflection. Women are not the "ontological difference" of men, rather they are "differentiations" of humanity's potential to achieve a "rich variegated wholeness." Biehl argues men and women have the potential to choose "different social roles" making possible a transcendence of the biologically determined sexual differences of nonhuman beings.[31] This interchangeability of roles is possible without humans "losing their sexual distinctiveness" (whatever that means). It is in the evolution of society beyond tribalistic "blood-ties" with their traditions, rituals, and incantations, and their contemporary reinvigoration as

advocated by some ecofeminists, that social ecology attempts to establish an "ecological ethics" grounded in "the potentiality of human beings to consciously and rationally create a fee ecological society."[32]

This analysis and interpretation of ecofeminism is used by Biehl in also attacking many proposals by ecofeminists and feminists alike who have attempted to develop an "ethic of care." The context for this critique is Biehl's discussion of the relationship of women to the democratic tradition.[33] Biehl defends the democratic tradition and its origins in ancient Athens against feminists who advocate an ethic of care against the "cold, abstract, individualistic and rationalistic" democratic ideal. Although Biehl interestingly narrates the origins of democracy in Athens, her critique of the ecofeminist and feminist arguments on the relationship of the ethic of care to democracy tend to reduce those positions to caricatures, resulting in an unsatisfying engagement with the issues at stake.

The feminist position which supports the value of an ethic of care is reduced in Biehl's analysis to the mere advocacy of a return to the private realm of "female virtues" connected to the "moral" values of "mothering, family life and feelings of caring (as well as sometimes the intuitions of mysticism)."[34] Biehl's interpretation reduces the expanding discourse on caring to a simplistic call for private life to replace the public sphere in

order therefore to replace the "potentials of reason" with emotion and irrationality, "By emphasizing the private realm and family over the political realm, it potentially enervates important aims of reinvigorating and reconstructing local political institutions along grassroots-democratic or libertarian municipalist lines."[35] The threat from the ethic of care, for Biehl just as it has been for the dominant tradition of Western philosophy since at least the Greeks, is the threat of irrationality invading the rationality of politics, of the logic of the household overwhelming the logic of the community. Biehl's critique is valuable in so far as it does address the limitations of those ecofeminist and feminist positions that tend to essentialize female subjectivity into a biologically determined knowledge about the world, not taking into account the effects of socialization, particularly identity formation in a patriarchal world. To the extent this criticism is aimed solely at those who attempt to attribute a "quasi-biological, even innate 'moral' sensibility" to women alone, Biehl is correct in asserting that it is a fundamentally questionable basis for grounding political theory and political movements. However, theories which present essentialized female knowledge as the basis of an ethic of care are not the most developed form of this position, and do not contain the potentials for

application to social and political theory that many find so promising.

For instance, Biehl, at least by the location of quotations, links Sara Ruddick with this position.[36] Precisely what is at issue for Ruddick is both the relationship of abstract conceptualization and rationality to the activity of "mothers," and how this "private sphere" is dismissed as the sphere of emotions and irrationality in the Western philosophical tradition, when, in fact, "maternal thinking" involves a great deal of very complex reasoning. Further, the problems encountered in caring for the other, especially when the care-giver is at a great advantage in power and reason, may have implications for transformation of the public sphere, in ways not reducible to a mere reflection of the private. This ethic is developed in order to address the disjunction in liberal moral theory between "the general and the concrete other."[37] Ruddick attempts to address the dismissive attitude which asserts mother's are merely "reacting naturally" in the process of caring for others. She resists the characterization of the "private sphere" as merely the sphere of emotions. Hers is an attempt to connect the activities of mothers with the complex theories of non-violence in the tradition of Gandhi and King, where, "The aim of nonviolent battle is responsible reconciliation in which crimes are named and responsibility for them is assigned." Ruddick is

explicitly looking for ways to theorize mothering that do not essentialize women into naturalistic protectors of latent subjectivity, but who actively engage in conscious efforts to reduce injustice and bring about peace, certainly goals not only compatible with, but central to any future ecological society. Ruddick explains the connection between maternal thinking and nonviolence,

> In examining maternal practice through the lens of nonviolence, I look for evidence of an ongoing attempt to renounce and resist violence, to reconcile opponents, and to keep a peace that is as free as possible from assaultive injustice. That is, I ask if there are principles in the practices of mothering that coincide with the four ideals of nonviolence....I aim to identify principles of maternal nonviolence that I believe could contribute to collective, public understandings of peacemaking. For my purpose, it is sufficient that there are <u>some</u> maternal practices actually governed by the ideals I articulate.[38]

She is not claiming all mothers follow a path of nonviolence with those they care for, and neither is she claiming that those who do follow this path actually achieve their aims at all times, what she is claiming is that maternal thinking cannot be as easily dismissed as Biehl and others indicate with the labels "irrational, emotional, and mystical."

It is especially curious that Biehl basically dismisses the ethic of care discourse considering the claims Bookchin made in <u>The Ecology of Freedom</u> such as, "For it is not only love that the mother ordinarily gives her child, but a rationality of 'otherness' that stands

sharply at odds with its modern arrogant counterpart."[39] It would have been a much more progressive strategy to address Bookchin's philosophical dependence, even uncritical reliance, on an almost idealized notion of mother-infant relationships, by addressing how this position is challenged by the work of feminists on the ethic of care and the development of identity, rather than to simply repeat an attack on those early ecofeminist theories that were admittedly also essentialist idealizations calling for atavistic retribalizations. This progressive understanding of the ethic of care is nowhere implied by Biehl, not even in the ritualistic repetition at the end of her critique of a call for the inclusion of the values of caring, nurturing and community into the "democratic tradition" in order to "enrich" that tradition. The crucial point to be made is the dualism invoked when an ethic of care is placed in the category of the irrational or emotional, and opposed to the "reason" of the public sphere, "The feminist challenge is to seek this infusion without rejecting the democratic tradition in favor of an atavistic return to tribal society, to fulfill the inclusive and egalitarian promise of polis, and to expand and reinvigorate the grassroots democratic tradition--with values of caring and community as well as with women's rationality."[40] The incoherence of the social ecology critique is made evident here as the "value of caring" is set in opposition to "women's rationality."

Biehl's critique also aims at the work of Nancy Hartsock, especially as Hartsock represents the relationship between the democracy of Athens and the psychology of the warrior-hero.[41] Hartsock makes limited claims for her analysis of the relationship between Greek masculine eros and democratic conduct, "The point I have attempted to make is that eros and power are deeply connected, and when eros takes negative, masculine forms that point toward death rather than life, the community as a whole will be structured by those dynamics."[42] Instead of a further examination, in the light of social ecology, of the relationship between the erotic and the rational in democratic decision-making, this connection is simply dismissed as a wish to return to the "ethics of the blood-feud," the social circumstance which, Bookchin argued, initially motivated the progressive escape toward new, universalistic, forms of justice.[43] Biehl dismisses Hartsock's argument as both psychoanalytic reductionism, and as incorrectly based on a masculine ideal taken from Homer and Greek myths. The newly emerging democratic code, argues Biehl, represented a qualitative social evolutionary advance over the earlier warrior-hero ideal.[44] Biehl's criticism hits home to the extent Hartsock's characterizations of masculine eros tends to be typically one-sided. However, there is an important insight contained in Hartsock's conclusion that the actual functioning of democracy retains a large element of

domination, frequently remaining unconscious or subterranean in more current forms. For example, evidence of the continuing influence of domination in democratic theory can be found in social ecology itself with regard to its position on the procedure of consensus-seeking in decision-making.

Biehl rejects both the ethic of care and the feminist charges that democracy is entangled with domination, on the basis of the fundamentally Aristotelian and Hegelian argument that the household is the sphere of the particular while the truly political or public sphere is representative of universal human concerns. In this understanding any call for inclusion of "private sphere" concerns risks regression to the norms of kinship relations and its grounding of justice in the blood-feud. Likewise the inclusion of considerations about the influence of eros and its association with the body threatens to undermine social ecology's understanding of democracy as it is linked to the development of reason and human subjectivity. This rationalist, modernist stance is fundamentally at odds with even the early feminist insight that the "personal is political." In addition, the refusal to seriously include the influence of the erotic and non-rational as an aspect of policy formation forces social ecology into a contradictory position in regard to democratic process. For example, Biehl attacks Judith Plant's and others' promotion of consensus decision-making

as potentially and historically a "tyranny of moral persuasion."[45] The central concern is about the relationship of consensus to the preservation of diversity in the context of addressing the needs of the community and the goal of "unity."

Which decision-making process, consensus-seeking or simple majority vote, more adequately resists tendencies toward political domination? Social ecologists have claimed that the consensus-seeking process has the effect of stifling dissent and that the goals of "unity" and "integration" are given "almost metaphysical, if not quasi-religious, qualities that smother personal independence and disagreement." But what is majority rule but the most blatant expression of domination in democratic form. Its underlying premise is that of exchange, that each person is equal, so that the simple quantitative summation of votes results in the most efficient form of decision-making. This reliance on the latent threat of force (the majority can "enforce" the decision) also results in the necessity of strong protection of individual "rights," as Bookchin had explicitly recognized in earlier works, because the majority is by definition likely to exclude significant numbers of others who do not agree on the policy decisions that are made.

Biehl also attempts to dismiss consensus decision-making by again linking it to the particularistic morality

of the kinship group, "Consensus is a form of decision-making most appropriate for small, intimate groups--for families and friends....But we encounter problems in larger, more heterogeneous, public spheres, where conflicts of opinion are not only inevitable but even desirable."[46] In this view consensus is a process that leads to homogenization and the demand for conformity rather than to the productive results of "conflict" of opinion. Claims that consensus-seeking attempts to achieve "collective wisdom" are simply dismissed as a mystification of what are actually tendencies toward collective suppression of the individual, of installation of fear into those who think critically, idiosyncratically or originally. Consensus-seeking, in other words, is merely a ploy for the demand to conform to conventional thinking.[47]

Admittedly some claims by Plant and others for the benefits of consensus are overstated, and the "fanatical" forms of this procedure do have a certain totalitarian aspect to them, but to reduce consensus-seeking to the instances of its abuse is certainly no less problematic than the reduction of the idea of democracy to the form of destructive eroticism. As John Rensenbrink has explained in his discussion of the development of the U.S. green movement there are important differences between the "pure" form of consensus and the generally practiced procedure of "consensus-seeking" that does not allow the

individual or small group the power to block all decisions by the community.[48] What is not examined by Biehl, or in most of the discussion of this issue in the social ecology literature, are the advantages of consensus-seeking. By requiring an attempt for consensus by the community, or, if consensus cannot be attained, an extraordinary majority to agree before action is taken or policy established, the community dialogue gives increased power to the individual relative to the group. It offers the possibility that the individual or the minority can potentially persuade the majority of the inadequacy in their reasoning, and in this way the consensus-seeking serves the development of human subjectivity in a very rationally designed procedure. Simple majority rule, especially for major policy decisions, not only tends to eliminate the possibility of inclusion of minority views within the final decision, but threatens the long-term legitimacy of the decision-making process itself since small changes in a few opinions can have enormous impacts on fundamental agreements about the conduct of society. Additionally, as mentioned before, when majority rule is used other measures must be taken to protect individuals as well as community stability. This is the reason for the necessity of a "bill of rights" or "declaration of human rights" and for the necessity of inclusion of extraordinary majority procedures even within representative democracies, such as in constitutional amendment and debating processes (for example, cloture in

the U.S. Senate). These additional measures assure that fundamental changes in rules or laws, and the requirements of rational debate, are perceived as legitimate by the people involved. To assert the primacy of majority rule, and the centrality of "conflict" of opinions, is to validate the charges that democracy is fundamentally a tool in the arsenal of the ideology of domination. When the individual simply represents a "vote," and quantitative superiority supersedes extended dialogue, and when conflict takes presence over common agreement, democracy has degenerated from a process of honoring the individual to the reduction of decision-making to the force of the stronger. For all the social ecology railing against representative democracy, the endorsement of majority voting procedures should be a priori suspect, if only because representative systems are all too willing to abide by "majority rule."[49]

Wild Ecology, Social Politics

Besides questionable adherence to some procedural rules, social ecology's emphasis on the social roots of the ecological crisis have brought it into sharp conflict with deep ecology on the issues of overpopulation and wilderness preservation. Although social ecology provides some telling criticisms of the cruder arguments of some deep ecology activists, it reveals its own one-sidedness

in the justification of its position on these most concrete political and ecological issues.

Bookchin has addressed the "neo-Malthusian" arguments of deep ecology about overpopulation by fundamentally adopting a dismissive attitude toward these concerns. He rightly criticizes the overly simplified restatement of Malthus, that population grows geometrically while food supplies grow arithmetically or additively, which deep ecologists frequently rely on to imply or assert that civilization is doomed. As Bookchin documents, the history of this argument has consisted of repeated assertions of the imminent destruction of society by massive increase in numbers of people, usually the poor, or those of ethnic and racial backgrounds other than those of the wealthy and powerful, who are supposedly reproducing at an unacceptable rate. Bookchin rightly argues that population questions cannot be separated from their link to issues of wealth distribution and technological development, but in the form Bookchin presents them these caveats are overstated. He is correct in emphasizing the non-comparability of human to other life-form populations with regard to population growth issues, because of the human potential to consciously change behavior.[50] Bookchin also rightly links much of the problem of hunger to the "grow-or-die" necessities of a capitalist social and economic system which destroys traditional sustainable economies, substituting cash crops

needed for national deficit financing for native cropping that insures the long-term health of the land and the people.[51] However, Bookchin goes beyond criticism of the inadequate deep ecologist arguments, which reduces the population problem to just another example of an ecosystem's "carrying capacity," to a justification for ignoring the potential of overpopulation on the grounds of technological optimism. Although it is true that some formerly fertile regions of agriculture were plundered for profit by European colonialists, it does not follow, as is implied by Bookchin, that with the withdrawal of capitalism, these regions, such as the Horn of Africa, can simply resume their previous productivity. The soil itself may have been depleted to such an extent that it will take generations of intensive care for anything like previous fertility to return. The agricultural capacity of despoiled regions is not simply present as unused potential to be recovered with the change of social and political institutions. Some regions, like the rain forests, can never be recovered, not only because of the losses of "fertility" but also because of the extinction of species that were integral parts of the ecosystems as a whole. Recovery of other areas cannot occur on a time scale that would have a significant impact on the food needs and other resource needs of the growing populations in these areas.

More disturbing though are yet other forms of Bookchin's technological optimism which lead to additional disagreements with the deep ecological perspective. He cites statistics on the growth of food production in the post-World War II period as if this trend could be extrapolated indefinitely into the future. In fact, many of the increases in food production in the period Bookchin cites, mostly 1950 to the early 1980s, were one-time only increases (such as those involving deforestation for agribusiness purposes), or involved agricultural techniques which have since been called into question, such as the increased use of pesticides and herbicides as well as genetic engineering. These technologies cause environmental damage which results in the long-term decline in the marginal increases in food production relative to their costs.[52] Bookchin is correct in criticizing deep ecology's often simplistic analysis of the problems of overpopulation, but he is also guilty of oversimplification. Without massive changes in human behavior in the next two generations the world population will double, and there is no one who has the technological optimism to assert that food production will be able to keep up with that level of increase.[53]

The other issue of central concern to deep ecologists has been wilderness, and it is on this issue that the deep ecologists have viewed themselves most distant from

Bookchin's social ecology. Dave Foreman and others have even left Earth First! in order to return to primarily wilderness preservation concerns which they believed were being increasingly subordinated to other more "social" ecological problems.[54] Other "ecocentrists" have increasingly acknowledged the interconnection of various ecological problems, like acid rain and global warming, with the need for wilderness preservation. Even Foreman now explicitly makes the social connections, including concerns for the disproportionate impact of ecological degradation on women, and the influence of racism on current environmental policy decisions by corporations and government.[55] Robyn Eckersley has most closely examined the various positions on wilderness preservation and calls it and population growth the two issues that act as a "litmus test" in distinguishing the ecocentric from the human centered forms of radical ecology, "The ecocentric stream is also noted for its greater readiness to advocate the setting aside of large tracts of wilderness, regardless of whether such preservation can be shown to be useful in some way to humankind. The anthropocentric stream, in contrast, tends to be more preoccupied with the urban and agricultural human environment. Large scale wilderness preservation tends not to be supported unless a strong human-centered justification can be demonstrated."[56] Beyond a simple ecocentric/anthropocentric distinction radical ecologists

are concerned with the impact an ecological ethics will have on policy decisions. The primary assertion made in social ecology is that its interpretation of the process of evolution, specifically the tendency for ever more complex stages of subjectivity to evolve, provides an "objective ethics" on which to make political judgments. However, for ecocentrists like Eckersley the issues of ecological ethics go beyond any human centered value system,

> Ecocentric environmentalism may be seen as a more wide-ranging and more ecologically informed variant of preservationism that builds on the insights of the other streams of environmentalism thus far considered. Whereas the early preservationists were primarily concerned to protect wilderness as sublime scenery and were motivated mainly by aesthetic and spiritual considerations, ecocentric environmentalists are also concerned to protect threatened populations, species, habitats, and ecosystems wherever situated and irrespective of their use value or importance to humans....In particular, ecocentric environmentalists strongly support the preservation of large tracts of wilderness as the best means of enabling the flourishing of a diverse nonhuman world.[57]

The question of the relation of subjectivity to diversity then is at the heart of the differences between deep ecology and social ecology, and it is with regard to the issue of wilderness that the two approaches have battled philosophically. Some of the difference has resulted from Bookchin's idiosyncratic use of certain terms, as well as from the wide differences in philosophical backgrounds or orientations of those on

either side of the issue. But beyond these interpretative disagreements there do seem to be substantive differences which could result in very different policy emphasis.

Bookchin claims the ecocentrists and deep ecologists have misrepresented and misinterpreted his positions both on wilderness, and on his understanding of the advisability and degree of human intervention into natural ecological processes.[58] It is true that Eckersley and others have exaggerated Bookchin's claims on some accounts, but it is also true that Bookchin's "polemical zeal gets a bit out of control" in his own responses and characterization of the opposing view.[59] The statements he makes concerning the capacity of humans to alter "first nature" are frequently very subtly qualified so it is usually not clear what the full implications of his statements are, making it quite understandable that his arguments about the limits to human intervention might be misunderstood or misinterpreted by others. For example, in denying that he advocates that humans "seize the helm of evolution" Bookchin does use terminology that raises disturbing implications,

> Free nature represents the "synthesis" of first and second nature in a qualitatively <u>new</u> evolutionary dimension in which "first and second nature are melded into a free, rational, and ethical nature" that retains the "specificity" of first and second nature divested of all notions of "centricity" (read: hierarchy) <u>as such</u>. The concept of free nature is meant to express precisely the "ethics of

> complementarity,"...in which human conceptual thought, placed not "over" first nature but in the service of both natural and social evolution, forms a new symbiotic relationship between human communities and the nonhuman eco-communities in which they are located.[60]

Concerns arise over what is meant by "qualitatively new evolution" and about what counts as a symbiotic relationship in the "ethic of complementarity." By emphasizing rationality and subjectivity there is an implication that human reason and human subjectivity become the standard toward which the rest of nature should be urged to evolve. This is the source of the charges against social ecology that it is "humanistic" or "anthropocentric," since it is feared that making subjectivity the center of the theory of evolution, and human subjectivity representative of the most developed form of natural subjectivity, will have the consequence of putting human needs and interests ahead of those of other species and the general evolutionary needs of ecosystems and biosphere. The fear is that human interests will be identified as those of the evolution of the planet as a whole, instead of recognizing that human interests are simply a partial interest in relationship to those of all forms of life. The fear is that human subjectivity will become the standard for the planet's biospheric evolution, and that consequently, some species or regions will be "ecologically" expendable because they fail to meet the needs of a developing "rational" subjectivity.

Part of the difficulty in interpreting Bookchin, besides his infamous lack of citations, especially in some of his most provocative accusations, is his tendency to state his positions in terms that are highly ambiguous. In responding to the charges of deep ecologists, he claims, "What is more troubling to me, however, is how so many of my deep ecology critics have themselves pushed the absurd idea that I oppose the wilderness preservation goals of Earth First!, or that I think Earth First! activists are 'eco-fascists.'"[61] Yet it is very easy to get these impressions from his writings. Bookchin frequently juxtaposes deep ecology views to those of fascism, and his statements on wilderness seem contradictory depending on where one looks.[62] In explaining the inevitability of human intervention into nature, Bookchin claims humanity is the "embodiment of nature rendered self-conscious and self-reflexive," necessitating human "stewardship" of the planet, "In advocating human stewardship of the earth, I do not believe it has to consist of such accommodating measures as James Lovelock's establishment of ecological wilderness zones or patching up environmental dislocations with half measures."[63] It is unclear what the difference is between Lovelock's wilderness zones and those of deep ecology, but in another context Bookchin is all for wilderness (Or is he?), "My own anarchist proclivities have fostered in my thinking a love of spontaneity, be it in human behavior or

in natural development. Natural evolution cannot be denied its own spontaneity and fecundity. That is why one part of our struggle should always be to protect and expand wilderness areas."[64] But what status does the qualifier "cannot be denied" have? Is the preservation of wilderness simply capitulation to natural "spontaneity" or is it integral to a future ecological society? Can the call for spontaneity be reconciled with other statements which resonate with the sounds of domination within reason itself, "That humanity was expelled from the Garden of Eden does not mean that we must turn an antagonistic face toward nature; rather, it is a metaphor for a new, eminently ecological function: the need to create more fecund gardens than Eden itself...Certain biotic and cultural imperatives cannot be ignored if our concept of an ecological society is to have integrative meaning and self-conscious direction."[65] The question is, how do we determine what those "biotic and cultural imperatives" are? Bookchin attempts to distinguish between the capacities and desirability of intervention in nature under the presently unfavorable circumstances of either state or corporate capitalism, and the more favorable interventions possible in a future ecological society, "As I have repeatedly emphasized, only in an ecological society can we hope that human ingenuity and technology will play an ecologically creative role."[66]

Again, what makes Bookchin so difficult to fully understand is not an inherent difficulty of the concepts he uses but the problematic ambiguity of the way they are stated. The differences between deep ecology and social ecology revolve around the theorized relation between human subjectivity, or identity, and non-human forms of these. In one of Bookchin's more extended discussions of wilderness he traces the idea back through its American proponents to Rousseau and the ambiguities of his understanding of nature. In this discussion, Bookchin again emphasizes the misanthropic consequences of a "retreat" into remote locations, by contrasting the ecologists' tendency to shun human contact, with the social function of tribal peoples' "vision quests." Deep ecologists are portrayed as captives of a "crude biologism," misanthropes who set the human in stark opposition to the natural. Although Bookchin emphasizes, or over-emphasizes, the misanthropic dangers of wilderness advocacy, he occasionally, briefly, will cite what are apparently acceptable, to social ecology, attributes of wilderness experience, "Wilderness, or what is left of it today, can give one a sense of freedom, a heightened sense of nature's fecundity, a love of nonhuman life-forms, and a richer aesthetic outlook and appreciation of the natural order."[67] But even this ambiguous acknowledgment does not address the concerns of the deep ecologists since Bookchin seems to view wilderness only in terms of its benefits to

human beings and only indirectly, through human intervention, considers the needs of the life-forms themselves within the wilderness. Bookchin's insistence that wilderness is a human designation and simply further evidence of human intervention is a trivial point since it is obvious that the designation "wilderness" is a social construction. What is of real concern is the place of human beings relative to the rest of earthly life. Does human subjectivity represent the fullest development of natural evolutionary tendencies, or is it merely one form of the evolution of life which cannot be reduced to stages, grades, or phases? What happens to the nature that is non-identical to subjectivity--which must exist for the concept of subjectivity to have any meaning--if we do not accept Bookchin's quasi-Hegelian solution which reduces all of existence to an expression of subjectivity? Perhaps this is the central question to pose to social ecology.

A clue to the correct interpretation of the fundamental ambiguities in the philosophy of social ecology is an analogy that Bookchin repeatedly uses, borrowed from Hegel, left intact and defended against criticism. The analogy is that of the acorn and the oak tree, the acorn representing latent potentiality that is actualized in the development of the fully grown oak. Bookchin has used the analogy in several works and always to make the same basic point, but in close examination it

becomes clear that the analogy, as others have indicated, too pointedly confirms the correct interpretation of social ecology.[68] In Bookchin's description of Hegel's analogy the emphasis is on the development of potential, and the directionality of development toward wholeness or fullness, "An acorn, for example, may become food for a squirrel or wither on a concrete sidewalk, rather than 'develop' into what it is potentially constituted to become--notably, an oak tree."[69] Bookchin rejects Hegel's emphasis on the antagonistic character of this process, the antagonism that generates the tension necessary to impel the process forward in time. Tellingly, Bookchin also extends the analogy to the birth process, "A thing or phenomenon in dialectical causality remains unsettled, unstable, in tension--much as a fetus ripening toward birth strains to be born because of the way it is constituted--until it develops itself into what it 'should be' in all its wholeness or fullness." Bookchin makes the acorn-birth connection elsewhere also, "What is potential in an acorn that yields an oak tree or in a human embryo that yields a mature, creative adult is equivalent to what is potential in nature that yields society and what is potential in society that yields freedom, selfhood and consciousness."[70] It is this development toward what it "should be" that provides the "objective grounding" for the ethics of social ecology. This is why Bookchin must so vehemently defend the analogy against alternative

interpretations of potentiality and possibility. The problematic nature of that ethics extends beyond the obvious difficulty of defending the abortion and reproductive freedom stance developed by Biehl. Robyn Eckersley has pointedly questioned the analogy, specifically its extension from the plant world to both the ontogenetic and phylogenetic developments of human beings. Concerning the individual human being and its ontogenetic development,

> It is a very confusing analogy since the similarities between an acorn and a human embryo are essentially confined to the growth patterns of the physical organism: they tell us nothing about consciousness or about what humans may properly value or do with their hands and tools. The analogy thus begs the question as to what characterizes a mature and fulfilled adult psychologically, intellectually, and ethically.[71]

At the societal or phylogenetic level, the level of species development, the limits of the analogy of the acorn are the limits of its similarity to society and the human species as a whole. Eckersley asks the appropriate questions of social ecology, "How can it be said that there exists some objective standard of fulfillment latent within human society itself, urging it toward mind and truth? Why are not <u>all</u> of the myriad potential paths of human development also objective and desirable ones in Bookchin's sense? What is it about Bookchin's evolutionary path of mutuality, diversity, and 'advancing subjectivity' that makes it the good and true path...?"[72]

In response to this criticism Bookchin attempts to explain the limits and advantages of the analogy, with varying degrees of success. The basic disagreement is about the appropriate conceptualization of the "myriad potential paths" of development. As Bookchin indicates,

> That an acorn was constituted over a long evolutionary process to become an oak tree and not a maple does not mean that it always becomes an oak tree. It may become food for a squirrel, for example, or land on a concrete sidewalk. But to place the kind of tree that an acorn was constituted to become on a par with the fact that it can also become a morsel of food is crassly to deny mind the right to distinguish between what an acorn "should be" as a result of aeons of evolution and what it happens to become owing to fortuitous events.[73]

But this understanding of directionality sacrifices the advances which have been made in our understanding of the evolution of nature to an abstract isolation of natural beings, to a bourgeois notion of the development of the individual (being). The analogy of the oak developing from potential in the acorn does not allow for its non-identity with the fully developed oak, a non-identity that also inheres in the acorn. The non-identity of its development toward the oak is the identity of its development with the ecosystem as a whole, of which it is a part, the ecosystem which includes the squirrel. One aspect of the acorn's potentiality, as constituted through natural evolution, is as food for the other life-forms that interact with the oaks, which are merely one among many species in the complex interaction of the ecosystem.

It is not beside the point to ask how the acorn relates to the other "myriad pathways of evolution" when the oak is considered in relation to the rest of the ecocommunity, rather than in analytic isolation as is so important for the functioning of idealist dialectics. The limits of the analogy are the limits of its idealist origins, with consequences that go beyond the trivial and threaten to undermine the "objective ethics" of social ecology.

The analogy and what it represents structure the relationship of the potentiality and directionality of the development of human subjectivity. It is this directionality of subjectivity which social ecology relies on to justify intervention into nonhuman nature. Bookchin claims he rejects Hegel's dialectic because of its attempt to embody the "idealistic universal Geist or Spirit," just as he rejects Marxist dialectic because of its "tilt toward a wooden mechanism."[74] Instead he offers dialectical naturalism as an alternative understanding of natural development that does not revert to a "cosmic subject" or to "mechanical forces." But this does not answer ecological questions about directionality of development and about the relationship of human subjectivity to the non-identical. Bookchin's attempt at clarification is inadequate,

> Dialectical naturalism retains the entelechial notions of dialectical philosophy, but modifies Hegel's concept of wholeness such that development

> does not terminate in an Absolute. Yet it still retains the notion of degrees of wholeness, of a completeness that, one hopes, can at least be approximated even if it can never be reached. Accordingly, it is indeed quite plausible to compare an acorn with a human fetus as an illustration of potentiality without asserting that a human adult has the degree of completeness and closure that one expects to find in an oak tree.[75]

Even though not terminating in an Absolute, subjectivity remains the standard of social ecology's ethics, and the inadequacy of Bookchin's analogy is inseparable from the idea of wholeness on which the ethic of complementarity depends, an idea of wholeness that is based in the idealist tendency of social ecology that views the oak as complete and closed. Current understandings of ecology will not allow for this understanding of closure in the individual being, nor does it allow for a sense of completeness in the processes of evolution. To substitute the idea of "approximation to wholeness" for full closure, or complete wholeness, is still to operate within the framework of idealism, to the detriment of the non-identical in nature. To reduce the process of evolution simply to an expression of the development of subjectivity is to reduce nature to a reflection of an essentialized notion of human beings. Further, the lack of differentiation within the idea of subjectivity inadequately takes into consideration the non-identical nature of subjectivity itself, a problem which has become of enormous concern for feminism. The possibilities of evolution that cannot be collapsed into

expressions of subjectivity are better expressed through a theory of non-identity than through dialectical naturalism. A theory of non-identity also opens more fruitful or "fecund" possibilities for the development of liberatory forms of subjectivity than does a philosophy that expands subjectivity into universal explanation.

ENDNOTES

1. One of the unusual complaints Bookchin occasionally makes is that the idea of happiness is too limited to serve as a socially progressive goal, instead he emphasizes pleasure. He rightly draws attention to the connection of the idea of liberation to pleasure, particularly as it relates to the removal of repression of the body in order to allow the free development of the senses and erotic gratification. The problem occurs with Bookchin's association of the idea of happiness with its idealist understanding which places happiness within an ascetic or intellectualized form of continual contemplation, thus reinforcing the mind-body split and reenacting, as a goal of human development, the subject's complete separation from physical nature. This is not the conception of happiness the critical theorists subscribed to, and they explicitly rejected the idealist understanding. The dangers from an emphasis on pleasure alone are those of crude materialism and hedonism, with their tendency to suppress the mediating role of subjectivity. Happiness seems to provide richer opportunities for development, philosophically and ecologically, than does pleasure, as a goal of the ecological society. Within critical theory, of course, Marcuse most directly addressed these questions; see Eros and Civilization (Boston: Beacon, 1954), and in Negations: Essays in Critical Theory (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), "Hedonism." These issues were also addressed by Horkheimer and Adorno in Dialectic of Enlightenment, and by Adorno in Aesthetic Theory, and other works. (See, for example, Prisms and Minima Moralia.)

2. See especially, The Limits of the City (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1986); Urbanization Without Cities: The Rise and Decline of Citizenship (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1992).

3. See Murray Bookchin, Post-Scarcity Anarchism, Second ed. (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1986). This is a collection of essays, including "Ecology and Revolutionary Thought" written in 1965.

4. Bookchin, Anarchism, p. 81.

5. See Telos, No. 52, and "Recovering Evolution," Society and Nature, Vol. 1, No. 2, Sept.-Dec. 1992.

6. Most of his major works include at least one chapter specifically on these ideas, but there are some which are more developed philosophically than others, see especially Remaking Society: Pathways to a Green Future (Boston: South End Press, 1990); Toward an Ecological Society (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1980); "Theses on Libertarian Municipalism," in The Limits to the City; and "The Meaning of Confederalism," in Society and Nature, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1993. (This article has been printed in other forms also. Many of these and other related articles and essays originate or are reprinted in Green Perspectives (hereafter cited as Perspectives), the newsletter of the Green Program Project, associated with the Institute of Social Ecology, P.O. Box 111, Burlington, VT 05402.)

7. Bookchin, Perspectives, No. 24, Oct. 1991, "Libertarian Municipalism: An Overview," p. 1.

8. Bookchin, Perspectives, pp. 1-2.

9. Bookchin, Perspectives, p. 3.

10. Bookchin, Perspectives, p. 6.

11. Bookchin, Perspectives, p. 3.

12. Bookchin, Perspectives, No. 2, Feb. 1986, p. 2. As Bookchin adds in the footnote, "The absurdity that we can persuade or reform the large corporations--to 'moralize' greed and profit, as it were--is typical example of liberal naiveté which a thousand years of Catholicism failed to achieve."

13. Bookchin, Perspectives, Nov. 1990, p. 2.

14. Bookchin, Perspectives, Nov. 1990, p. 2.

15. Bookchin, Perspectives, Nov. 1990, p. 5.

16. Hulsberg, Werner, The German Greens: A Social and Political Profile (New York: Verso, 1988).

17. Bookchin, Murray, "Theses on Libertarian Municipalism," in Limits of the City (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1986), pp. 164-184.

18. Bookchin, Theses, p. 166.

19. Bookchin, Theses, p. 166.

20. Bookchin, Theses, p. 169.

21. Bookchin, Theses, p. 169.

22. Bookchin, Theses, p. 173. The shortcomings of this position, if it were followed to its logical conclusions, resonate with both Bahro's and Marcuse's vanguardist proclivities.

23. Biehl, Janet, Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics (Boston: South End Press, 1991), and in Green Perspectives which she frequently co-edits with Bookchin.

24. Biehl, Rethinking, p. 127. See P. J. Mills, "Feminism and Ecology: On the Domination of Nature," in Hypatia, Special Issue on Ecological Feminism, Vol. 6, No. 1, Spring 1991. Also see Ecological Feminist Philosophies, Karen J. Warren, Ed. (Indiana University Press, 1996).

25. Biehl, Rethinking, pp. 125ff. Also Bookchin, The Philosophy of Social Ecology (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1990), hereafter cited as Philosophy.

26. Biehl, Rethinking, p. 127.

27. Biehl, Rethinking, p. 126.

28. Biehl, Rethinking, p. 126.

29. Biehl, Rethinking, p. 127.

30. Biehl, Rethinking, pp. 127-128.

31. What is meant by the "biologically determined sexual differences of nonhuman beings" is not clear since asexual forms of reproduction exist, and "non-heterosexual" sexual pleasure also exists among nonhuman beings.

32. Biehl, Rethinking, p. 129.

33. Green Perspectives, No. 16, June 1989, "Women and the Democratic Tradition: Part I," and Green Perspectives, No. 17, Aug. 1989, "Women and the Democratic Tradition: Part II."

34. Perspectives, June 1989, p. 2.

35. Perspectives, June 1989, p. 2.

36. Perspectives, June 1989, p. 2.

37. See the introduction to the excerpt from Ruddick in Ethics: A Feminist Reader, E. Frazer, J. Hornsby and S. Lovibond, Eds. (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1992). For a discussion of the issues involving the general and concrete in moral theory see Seyla Benhabib, Situating the Self: Gender, Community and Postmodernism in Contemporary Ethics (New York: Routledge, 1992), esp. Chapter 5, "The Generalized and the Concrete Other: the Kohlberg-Gilligan Controversy and Moral Theory."

38. Ruddick, Ethics, p. 442, 444.

39. Bookchin, Murray, The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy (Palo Alto, California: Cheshire Books, 1982), p. 306, hereafter cited as Ecology.

40. Perspectives, August 1989, p. 6.

41. Hartsock, Nancy, Money, Sex, and Power (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1983), especially Chapter 8, "The Erotic Dimension and the Homeric Ideal."

42. Hartsock, p. 202.

43. Bookchin, Ecology, Chapter 6 "Justice--Equal and Exact."

44. Perspectives, June and August 1989.

45. Biehl, Rethinking, p. 138.

46. Biehl, Rethinking, p. 138.

47. Biehl, Rethinking, pp. 136ff.

48. Rensenbrink, John, The Greens and the Politics of Transformation (San Pedro: R. & E. Miles, 1992).

49. Bookchin has himself indicated the character of majority rule in the discussion of the difference between face-to-face democracy and its representative forms, "modern 'adversary democracy' (is) structured around representation, hierarchy, and majority rule (itself based on competing interests)." The Modern Crisis (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1986). Yet in another context Bookchin relies on a concept of majority rule to assure the protection of human rights against parochialism, "In the case of libertarian municipalism, parochialism can thus be checked not only by the compelling realities of economic interdependence but by the commitment of municipal minorities to defer to the majority wishes of participating communities." Green Perspectives, Oct. 1991, p. 3.

50. It should also be noted that a variety of other animals have the capacity to alter their reproductive rates in response to environmental factors, although the exact links in this process are still poorly understood (for example, coyotes).

51. Perspectives, No. 8, July 1988, and No. 15, April 1989.

52. Much of the non-deep ecology literature on the "limits to growth" deals with these problems. For some recent discussion on these issues, outside of the deep versus social ecology framework, see Beyond Preservation: Restoring and Inventing Landscapes, A.D. Baldwin, Jr., J. De Luce and C. Pletsch, Eds. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

53. Although extensively criticized, the works underpinning much of the deep ecology position still have important observations to consider; the Worldwatch Institute Yearly Report; State of the World; and William R. Catton, Jr. Overshoot: The Ecological Basis of Revolutionary Change (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982).

54. Foreman, Dave, Confessions of an Eco-Warrior, (New York: Harmony Books, 1991), Chapter 17.

55. Defending the Earth: A Dialogue Between Murray Bookchin and Dave Foreman, Steve Chase, Ed. (Boston: South End Press, 1991).

56. Eckersley, Robyn, Environmentalism and Political Theory: Toward an Ecocentric Approach (Albany: State Univ. of New York, 1992), p. 29.

57. Eckersley, pp. 45-46.

58. Bookchin, "Recovering Evolution," Society and Nature, Vol. 1, No. 2, Sept.-Dec. 1992, pp. 149ff.

59. Bookchin, Recovering, p. 155.

60. Bookchin, Recovering, pp. 151-152.

61. Defending the Earth, p. 124.

62. For comparisons of deep ecology and fascism see, for example, Green Perspectives, April 1989; Green Perspectives, August 1992, "Ecofascism: Neither Left nor 'Up Front' but Far Right," by the editors (Biehl and Bookchin); and by implication, when used in relation to the "code" words of mysticism and intuitionism, in The Philosophy of Social Ecology, "Introduction."

63. Bookchin, Philosophy, p. 177.

64. Defending, p. 35.

65. Bookchin, Ecology, p. 343.

66. Bookchin, Recovering, p. 169, fn.

67. Bookchin, Murray, Remaking Society (Boston: South End Press, 1990), p. 153.

68. The acorn/oak analogy can be found in various places including; The Philosophy of Social Ecology, p. 28 and in "Thinking Ecologically," p. 180, fn 22 p. 195 which is collected in the same volume; The Modern Crisis, p. 13; "Recovering Evolution," Society and Nature, Vol. No. 2, Sept.-Dec. 1992, p. 163ff; also in Hegel's History of Philosophy.

69. Bookchin, Philosophy, p. 28.

70. Bookchin, Remaking Society, p. 13.

71. Bookchin, Divining Evolution, Society and Nature, Vol. 1 No. 2, Sept.-Dec. 1992, p. 130.

72. Bookchin, Divining, p. 131.

73. Bookchin, Recovering, p. 163.

74. Bookchin, Recovering, p. 164.

75. Bookchin, Recovering, p. 164.

SECTION III.
CRITIQUE OF ECOFEMINISM

CHAPTER 9

ECOFEMINISM AND METHODOLOGY

Ecofeminism is problematically related to both the ecology movement and to feminist theory. Attempts at a categorization or typology of positions relating ecology, feminism and ecofeminism will yield various results depending on whose definition of these terms is used. For example, the self-identification of "ecofeminists" historically began after the early development of both the ecology and feminist or women's movements. However, with continuing attempts to develop categories to clarify various conceptual and political relationships the question has been raised as to whether ecofeminism should more properly be viewed as an attempt to "synthesize" ecological and feminist insights, or whether it is best understood as a subfield or form of either radical ecology or feminist theory. This becomes a crucial question because of the different analytical categories used by the different theoretical frameworks. Both deep ecology and social ecology have had to address the implications of ecofeminist positions for their respective self-understandings, and, more recently, ecofeminists have come under criticism for not fully confronting feminism's own internal divisions and the resulting implications intra-feminist tensions have for a more specifically "ecofeminist" theory and practice. These concerns will be

addressed here by first examining some of the strands of ecofeminism which have developed out of what have been called "radical" and "cultural" feminism.[1] Also, a critical examination of current theory and practice of self-identified ecofeminists will help reveal the problems with many of these positions, and indicate the importance of pursuing more fully the links between feminism and the ecology movement. Second, a closer examination of the "subject" of ecofeminism is only possible by venturing into the increasingly complex conversation within feminism itself concerning the entertwined issues of methodology, subjectivity, and political possibility. Finally, more specific issues which have concerned ecofeminists, such as animal rights and an "ethic of care," raise political questions about which any adequate theory of radical ecology must provide some guidance. The possibilities for societal transformation of the liberal welfare-state, or "late capitalism," through participatory democracy must be more directly related to ecofeminist politics than it has been so far if radical ecology is to avoid the charges of impracticality and idealist utopianism.

Ecofeminist Emergence

The most problematic version of ecofeminism can be traced to its emergence from "radical feminism," that understanding of the women's movement which accepts the "essentialist" identification of women with nature, best

exemplified in women's mothering and nurturing roles, but which then attempts to reverse the androcentric evaluation of those qualities. This position accepts the claim that women are "naturally" better nurturers than men and that men are naturally driven to be aggressive and therefore solely responsible for the current culture of domination. In its most essentialist form this ecofeminism accepts the claim that the ecology crisis can only be adequately addressed by the ascendancy of women's values to the status of social and political norms. To accomplish this these ecofeminists support an attempt to recapture what is believed to be the original form of human society, matriarchy, which supposedly emphasized the values of relationship, nurturance, and an ethic of care and mothering. Included in most versions of this matriarchal myth is the worship of an "original Mother Goddess." This version of ecofeminism is frequently associated with "New Age" philosophies that emphasize mysticism, recovery of ritual, female shamanism, and various "occult" practices. This ecofeminism is obviously open to philosophical attack because of its irrationalism, essentialism, and regressive political implications.

This radical, essentialist ecofeminism has also been linked most closely with deep ecology and with various interpretations of the "spiritual" or "sacred" aspects of the ecology movement.[2] Any attempt to reduce the different self-understandings of these ecofeminis(t/m)s

necessarily will collapse what is non-identical about them into a category of identity, but to develop the concept of ecofeminism so it can be comprehended in relation to radical ecology and any future ecological consciousness it is necessary to indicate some common tendencies and their accompanying limitations and potentials. In its most mystical, irrational, and spiritual form this ecofeminism results in fundamentally reactionary political implications. For example, Gloria Feman Orenstein has attempted to develop an "Ecofeminism Ethic of Shamanism and the Sacred" which however lacks sufficient reflection about its political consequences.[3] Orenstein recounts her experiences as she was introduced to shamanism in the world of the Sami of northern Norway. Orenstein goes into some detail about the relationship of her teacher, a female Shaman with a long family heritage of Shamanism, and the teacher's relationship to her own culture's stories and legends about the behavior and importance of spirits. The details of Orenstein's training, including spiritual and shamanistic experiences, are not of central importance here. The "truth" or "objectivity" of the experiences are not being questioned, however, the translation of those experiences into a basis for political action, and the specifics of the political process used and its relationship to authority, are problematic. The relationships established by the student of shamanism with "ancestors," local culture and

traditions, and especially with the land, through observances of cycles of nature (equinox and solstice, the moon and the tides) and by eating and drinking from the available native sources of nourishment are unquestionably important in establishing a truly ecological relationship with that specific space and place of nature. However, when the principles of shamanism are translated into politics the consequences are much less benign than Orenstein implies. Orenstein criticizes the usual presentation of shamanism in the U.S. and its tendency to "universalize and essentialize" the various teachings. She claims this results in an ignorance of the "practical and political use to which shamanic powers can also be put."[4] She then gives an example in which women from Samiland practiced civil disobedience through a sit-in against the building of a hydroelectric power plant. The shaman leader of the women used "visions" to guide the action, and when the new Prime Minister, Gro Bruntland, did not speak with the women as promised, the shaman asked the women to tell her what they had been dreaming. The various dreams were interpreted by the shaman and these interpretations served as the basis for further actions which included a request for an audience with the Pope, and a visit to the United Nations in New York. The dreams served in this shamanistic world as legitimate bases for guiding political action. Although not resulting from the same analytical framework, critical theorists would have

no difficulty in accepting dreams as part of the repertoire of information available for interpretation of any political situation, especially considering the early critical theorists' heavy reliance on psychoanalytics.[5]

What is problematic is Orenstein's further observation that the shaman, "Took the visions of the women to be as relevant as those of a Shaman. She did not establish a hierarchy among women as visionaries in action.... Here is ecofeminism in action."[6] What Orenstein does not critically address is the fact that it was the shaman who was doing the interpreting and who then provided the recommendations for further political action. The collapse of the two leadership roles, the "spiritual" and "political," into a single site of power results in a form of political authority not based in any democratic participation, but constitutes authority as a result of a combination of heredity, spiritual privilege, and a particular or individual perspective. To assert that there is no hierarchy because all the participants' dreams were equally available for interpretation, fails to address the fact of hierarchy resulting from interpretation by a single "spiritual" authority. This is a blatant example of a regression to an historical period where political authority was derivative from spiritual authority, resulting in a pre-modern rather than a post-modern political agency. In fact, it is a collapse of the political back into the spiritual or religious, and is

fundamentally hierarchical and anti-democratic, reducing the political consciousness of the individual subject and making her subservient to a higher interpretive authority. This is a reenactment of a "masculine" assertion of power in the guise of feminine sensitivity and spirituality.

Many analyses of ecofeminism center on the distinction between two fundamental tendencies or historical origins of the movement and its theory; the spiritual on the one hand, and the rational or conceptual on the other. The spiritual strand, as exemplified by Orenstein, has been most fully developed by those such as Starhawk and Charlene Spretnak who claim ecofeminism develops out of the spirituality found in what has been most commonly called "cultural feminism." This spiritually guided cultural feminism emphasizes the differences in the experiences of women and men and the concomitant potentials for developing values which differ from those of the male dominated and dominant culture of the present. The defenders of spiritual ecofeminism trace the problems of domination of women and nature to the ascendancy of patriarchy. This story of patriarchal ascension requires acceptance of a questionable anthropological assertion that in some period before the patriarchal history of (male) civilization there was an extended period of matriarchy.[7] During this period not only was society supposedly arranged on the principles of the central figure of the mother, but the

spiritual/religious beliefs of these people revolved around Goddess worship. The political implication drawn from these assumptions and beliefs is that the overthrow or transformation of the existing relations of domination must be generated through a reemergence of the values of women and of the "feminine," which is then theorized in various ways. The specifics of the different ecofeminists' positions of course vary significantly, but much of their politics seems to be very compatible if not identical. It is the political implications of the assumptions of "spiritual ecofeminism" which have come under sustained attack. Janet Biehl, one of the most persistent critics, along with Bookchin and other social ecologists have condemned the spiritual ecofeminists as opening the door to a politics of mysticism with reactionary tendencies nearly indistinguishable from fascism.[8] To this extent the social ecology critique of spiritual ecofeminism overlaps and reinforces its critiques of deep ecology and the influence of "New Age" occultism on the ecology movement and society generally.

The criticisms of spiritual ecofeminism are well founded although there is a tendency to fail to acknowledge the real importance of this activity as part of women's lives. Spiritual ecofeminism often gives women a coherence and validation to their experiences otherwise overwhelmingly lacking in their everyday life. The great danger though is the extent to which these beliefs have

the effect of reinforcing patriarchal mythologies and acceptance of a kind of fundamental ontological difference between women and men which then has a direct bearing on the structure of society and the potentials of women to act politically. If women are viewed as having a unique access to certain values such as "caring" and "empathy" simply as a result of their physiology, then this is the most troubling of essentialisms because the implication is that there are unchangeable or fated roles for each sex to play in society. In this form of essentialist ecofeminism the call for elevation of women's values does little to challenge the existing practices of men, and reinforces the division of the sexes into "spheres," the very problem that generated the feminist movement in the first place. This implicitly undermines claims contained in the early feminist insight that the "personal is political." It must be generally acknowledged then that the criticisms against spiritual ecofeminism have a large element of truth in them, especially as they highlight the potential for undemocratic politics based on a hierarchy of spirituality. At its worst spiritual ecofeminism invites a politics of cultism whose basis of authority is the charismatic personality, a consequence not unforeseen by theorists of modern society and politics.[9]

However, and only after full recognition of the reactionary implications of any politics based in spiritual authority, other elements of spiritual

ecofeminism provide important alternative understandings and potentials for movements of political resistance which wish to abolish domination as a social organizing principle. The authentic insights of spiritual ecofeminism, such as the recognition of the importance of myth in the formation of a social order, and the reality of the difference in perception between most women and most men, touch upon themes of the early critical theorists and call for further development. This has been attempted by some who identify themselves with spiritual ecofeminism, but also, in significantly different ways, by others who identify themselves as deconstructionists, post-structuralists, post-modernists, or simply feminists who wish to avoid the implications of the claims deriving from essentialist assumptions and mystical authority.

Rational Ecofeminism

The term "rational ecofeminism" is used by Stephanie Lahar to distinguish other ecofeminist theorists' projects from those of the spiritual ecofeminists.[10] Rationalist ecofeminists and other feminist theorists provide theoretical resources which may help address gaps in the philosophies of radical ecology and in the work of the critical theorists. Ynestra King was one of the first individuals to attempt to pull together aspects of critical theory, radical ecology and feminism into an "ecofeminism."

In her early ecofeminist articles King attempted to connect the feminist movement with the ecology movement on a basis that was theoretically more intimately and coherently structured than simply as an "alliance of convenience." Observing that all human beings are natural beings and that western culture is founded on the "repudiation and domination of nature" she pointed out that the ecology movement was not necessarily feminist and that ecologists should understand that any attempt to address the crisis of nonhuman nature would only succeed if it connected the domination of nature with the domination of women. She asserted that a primary reason for "woman's" oppression is the association of woman with nature and that the hatred of both could be shown to be intimately connected and mutually reinforcing. King attempted to indicate why feminism and radical ecology need each other and how they can be brought together in a theory of ecological feminism or ecofeminism.

King borrows heavily from Bookchin's social ecology with its understandings of domination and hierarchy, however, she contends that social ecology is incomplete without a fuller inclusion of the issues addressed by feminism .[11] She asserts that the concerns of ecofeminism center around Western industrial civilization's opposition to nature and the "dialectical" interaction by which it reinforces the subjugation of women. She argues ecofeminism should reject hierarchy because no hierarchy

exists in nature and instead there should be an attempt to reestablish "healthy, balanced ecosystems" which will provide "ecological diversity" instead of the biological simplification processes which typify consumer market society. This re-establishment of balanced ecosystems should be by means of, and result in, a decentralization of political power; a politics that is "founded on common interests yet celebrates diversity." For the human species to survive it must achieve a new understanding of the relationship between humans and nature, and of the nature of the human body, by rejecting the "nature-culture dualism" which now dominates conceptualization. King states the unifying moment of the ecology and feminist movements when she claims, "The ecology movement, in theory and practice, attempts to speak for nature--the 'other' that has no voice and is not conceived subjectively in our civilization. Feminism represents the refusal of the original 'other' in patriarchal human society to remain silent or to be the 'other' any longer."[12]

King gives an account of the development of "Western industrial civilization" that is partly based on Carolyn Merchant's work. In King's interpretation, a "dualistic Christianity" overthrew an earlier belief system that included goddess religions, paganism and animism. With the subsequent "disenchantment" of nature the conditions were present for "unchecked scientific exploration and

technological exploitation." Increasingly, nature became "other" to be dominated, objectified and subordinated. Women also had previously been objectified and subordinated in patriarchal society, as well as having been identified with nature, thus both women and nature were "original others." King relies on Simone de Beauvoir's work as an explanation of the process of linking women and nature and to show how the work of civilization itself can be shown to represent a movement away from nature, Woman, and Mother.[13] According to Beauvoir's account, the oppression of nature and woman is an attempt by males to forget their mortality--all that is limiting, bodily, earthy. One response to this nature-culture dualism is for feminists to struggle for equality with men, to also make civilization. King rightly indicates the limits of this type of feminism whether in its liberal or socialist forms. This type of feminism does not question the nature-culture dualism, retaining the fundamental opposition of the human and the natural as it attempts to severe the connection between women and nature. This acceptance of the masculine nature-culture dualism results in a feminism that also tends to accept masculine identified goals as the only legitimate goals of culture. This has now been recognized by feminism as a fundamentally flawed conception of women's liberation, and is often referred to as "equality feminism." A mirror opposite feminism, the simple inversion of equality

feminism, also fails to challenge nature-culture feminism. This feminism simply seeks to reinforce women's identification with nature in an attempt to revalue that identification and retain its opposition to the male values of patriarchal rationality. This corresponds to those radical and cultural feminisms, including the spiritual feminisms emphasized by many self-identified ecofeminists, who view males and females as essentially different in their consciousness as a result of their physical-biological differences. This is the most common form of the feminist version of biological essentialism. King claims this position also does not question the nature-culture dualism and fails to recognize that "women's ecological sensitivity and life orientation" is a socialized perspective which could be eliminated through alternative socialization, including the restructuring of women's "day-to-day lives."[14] Thus, King would choose a direction for ecofeminism which would recognize nature-culture dualism as a cultural construction, allowing for the conscious adoption of some aspects of the woman-nature connection but without accepting masculine definitions of the purposes and values of civilization. Therefore, embracing aspects of the woman-nature connection is seen as an initial step which might eventually provide the grounds for envisioning and ultimately creating a free, ecological society.

King believes ecofeminism should include a self-consciously ecological perspective which would inform feminist analysis the way class and race have increasingly come to inform feminism.[15] Likewise, she claims ecology must become more self-conscious of feminist perspectives in its analyses. Of course this raises the question of which feminist analyses provide the appropriate perspectives for radical ecology and vice versa. The intersection of feminism, ecological science, and radical ecology is a much more complex and ambiguous space than King indicates. For example, her claims about the findings of ecological science as well as her claims about "the ecology movement" are largely filtered through social ecology. One such claim is that ecological science indicates there is no inherent hierarchy in nature but that instead it is hierarchy in human society which is projected onto nature. She also claims that a "basic principle of ecological science" is "unity in diversity," and that diversity in nature is both necessary and enriching. These claims are the same as those of social ecology, as is King's use of the term "harmony" to describe the most desirable relationship between humans and nature, and among humans.

It is questionable whether the term harmony or its correlate "balance" are actually appropriate terms for the findings of ecological science. It should be recognized that it is necessary to allow some "slippage" between the

terminology and categories of ecological science and their translation into the language of social and political theory, but in this case there are certain philosophic resonances that should inspire caution rather than unreflective adoption. Even if the terms are used in ecological studies it must also be recognized that these sciences are subject to the same problematics of masculine conceptualization as all other sciences.[16] The terms "harmony" and "balance" have the unmistakable ring of politics most closely associated with the tradition of idealism, especially its Platonic version. If women are to self-consciously choose to be identified with nature it should be with the fullest possible knowledge of the ambiguity of these concepts, the actuality of the ecological relations to which they refer, and with some awareness of their implication in the "logic of identity" and identification. These observations imply there are several considerations which must be further explored before the claims of feminism and radical ecology can be said to intersect, and even more importantly, whether they can continue on the road of resistance together or whether there will remain theoretical and political conflicts which cannot be resolved with current resources. Some of these considerations will include: an appropriate understanding of the limits of the concepts and emphases of ecological science; the relation of the belief in scientific objectivity to "women's knowledge," especially

as it has been theorized in "standpoint theory"; and the relationship of alternative forms of knowledge to science (which may also challenge Habermas' critique of Adorno).

First, a brief comment on the terms used by those who identify with the philosophy of social ecology and who tend to use these terms in Bookchin's idiosyncratic manner. Such terms as harmony, balance, diversity, and mutuality lack the specificity needed to describe the processes found in "ecosystems" or ecological complexes, and moreover have been severely restricted in Bookchin's writings by setting them in opposition to other terms like conflict, competition, parasitism and so on. This is not to dismiss the importance of these terms in offering an alternative to the social Darwinist and social biologistic interpretations of natural processes that have dominated political ideology and rhetoric for at least the last century or two, but it is to call attention to the frequently one-sidedness of these terms as they have entered into the discussions of radical ecology. An example of an alternative terminology which is more ecologically accurate and provides for a perhaps less philosophically loaded potential can be found in William Ophuls' and A. Stephen Boyan's Ecology and the Politics of Scarcity Revisited. Ophuls' original publication in the late 1970s needed to be updated to indicate the continuing and worsening ecological conditions of the earth, but also to correct some of the serious misreadings of his early

attempt to relate the ecological crisis to political philosophy. The revised version includes additional confirmation of the ecological trends toward crisis, but it also provides clarification of the connections between politics and ecology, and suggests some helpful categories of analysis borrowed from the rapidly expanding field of ecological science.[17] One particular concept seems especially important in the present context, that of the "climax" condition of ecosystems. As the authors explain, the climax ecosystem is a result of the process of natural succession, which is a consequence of the biosphere's status as a "dynamic and open steady-state system." There is now a standard narrative of ecological succession. Over long periods of time essentially bare rock becomes covered with lichens and mosses, then other microorganisms and insects gradually break down the rock into minerals and other compounds which become available for larger plants, even trees, and eventually animals, which then inhabit the once "barren" landscape. Gradually, early life-forms are replaced by others with habits more suited to the new conditions. The transformations of habitat is called ecological succession. As the "orderly succession" takes place, simpler ecosystems tend to be replaced by those which are increasingly complex, and in the "final" stage there is a temporary though frequently long-lasting condition called the climax ecosystem. Although this climax condition may last for many thousands of years it

will be eventually disturbed by stresses such as fire, earthquake, climate shifts, or--and of increasing importance--human beings. Humans have become expert at breaking climax communities and reaping the benefits of the stored energy potentials these communities represent. Humans have also become expert at harnessing the life-forms of the early succession processes, the pioneer species which rapidly convert sunlight through photosynthesis into more humanly usable forms. It is the consequences of these activities that are so devastating for the biosphere, "The dilemma is clear. Humans must have productive ecosystems in order to survive, but high productivity requires simple and even dangerously fragile ecosystems. Further, since the biosphere is highly integrated, other ecosystems are also simplified, natural cycles disrupted, materials lost, and the whole system of the biosphere rendered less stable."[18] The general trend of this human activity, the "maximization of productivity as narrowly defined by economists," leads to the inevitable conclusion that the ecosystem as a whole will collapse. Of course, maximization of productivity is the corollary of capitalism's maximization of profit, but productivity maximization is also the intent of those socialist philosophies that attempt to simply--more efficiently, rationally, or "equitably"--do what capitalism does. Humans break or simplify climax ecosystems and thereby endanger their own survival. The

authors go on to explain that there is no single climax condition, but a variety of climax states whose specific characteristics are dependent on variations of microclimate, distribution of species, soil composition, and so forth. Some areas never reach full climax, sometimes because of natural conditions like frequent hurricanes, but especially because of human intervention. There are even areas which have been in a state of "anthropogenic subclimax" for thousands of years, probably including the North American great plains and areas of Australia where indigenous peoples have used fire to alter succession patterns thereby inducing more humanly beneficial plants and animals. Anthropogenic subclimax can exist in even more intensely productive forms, such as in Asia, "Paddy land, which has been cultivated for millennia, is another human-made subclimax, one that mimics a natural marsh."[19] There are other examples of long-term or sustainable anthropogenic subclimaxes but they are now the exception. In most cases humans have simply reduced local ecosystems to a level below human sustainablity and moved on, frequently leaving behind conditions of desertification that cannot return to conditions similar to the earlier climax conditions for tens of thousands of years. These events are not limited to "Western industrial society" but were also typical of many ancient peoples, including the Greeks who have been so often held up by philosophers of various stripes,

including some ecofeminists, as providing insight into how to live "harmoniously" with nature.[20] The point of this example is to show that the implications of the findings of ecological science, even when it is not limited by reductionist, idealistic or masculine controlled concepts and explanations, provides complex and somewhat ambiguous political potentials. Since climax conditions are the "end" toward which ecosystems trend, if we want to maximize the "naturalness" of our relations with nonhuman nature there seems to be strong support from ecological science for the deep ecology emphasis on wilderness preservation and expansion. It is exactly on the basis of these "climax" observations and there relationships to biodiversity, biospheric survivability, and evolutionary continuity, that many Earth First! activists make their claims. But any human civilization beyond the neo-neolithic will require some simplification of ecosystems below full climax conditions. This does not mean however that we must sacrifice other species or the general vitality of the biosphere. The long-term sustainability of the anthropogenic subclimax systems characteristic of Asian paddy land, the Australian outback, and perhaps the English countryside until recently, provide examples of ecological and human sustainability which can be viewed as a starting point on which to improve. The general approach is related to a concept of mimesis, as Ophuls and Boyan describe, "The basic strategy of all these

compromise systems is to study the nature of the climax and then, instead of breaking it completely, to mimic it closely or to insert humans into the process as careful parasites that preserve the host while siphoning off as much food as possible."[21] And, the authors warn, this mimetic process is only appropriate for some parts of the planet, many others are too fragile for any cultivation, since they provide too little surplus "production" for human cultivation, and should be set aside as a "source of biological capital."[22]

Related to the problems of the appropriateness of the use of the terms of harmony and balance and their resonances with philosophical idealism, are concerns Patricia J. Mills has raised about Ynestra King's "abstract pro-nature stand."[23] King uses the language of Bookchin's social ecology in claiming that the "systematic denigration" of women, people of color, working-class people and animals is based on a "dualism" at the "root of Western civilization."[24] King claims this "mind-set hierarchy" originates in human society with the domination of human by human and more specifically by men over women. She claims the various movements against domination or for liberation are "internally related" and can be resolved by a "world-wide, pro-life, movement."[25] It is this language of "pro-life" that has troubled Mills and resulted in her critique of King's "abstract pro-nature stand."

Mills's argument is a critical appropriation of the work of the early Frankfurt theorists, especially that of Marcuse and Adorno. Her examination of ecofeminism is relies on the relationship of the domination of nature to the domination of woman which appeared in the early theorists' works. However, her criticisms have been rejected in a recent comprehensive work by Val Plumwood.[26] At issue is the attempt to "synthesize" feminism and radical ecology into a more adequate theoretical basis for resistance to domination, a more theoretically and politically developed position King called ecofeminism. What Mills questions is the manner in which this synthesis is achieved in King's work. It is claimed there are two basic problems with King's ecofeminism. First is the problem of the abstraction of "good" parts of various theories and their subsequent fusion without adequate examination of the contradictions and tensions between the theories from which the various concepts are abstracted. Secondly, there is not adequate attention given by King to the "regressive" or violent aspects of nature: nature "red in tooth and claw." The absence of consideration of the violence and conflict within nature results in a "harmonistic" view of nature such as when King makes claims about the possibilities or potential for reconciling humans with non-human nature. Mills emphasizes this point with respect to a key issue of

feminism, reproductive freedom, especially as this has appeared in the context of decisions about abortion.

Val Plumwood has subsequently criticized Mills, but it is not clear that Plumwood has rightly understood the critique of King. Plumwood's arguments are indicative of a general tendency in her work which has opened her own position to the criticism that it remains one-sidedly "cultural" without adequate attention to the material aspects of society and life.[27] As Mary Mellor has indicated,

> Although early in the book the author [Plumwood] clearly sets out the material basis of male-female culture-nature dualisms, she sees their centrality as based upon a cultural rather than a material domination. Consequently, the political challenge offered by the end of the book is a cultural one; we are to reject the "master's story" of conquest and control, capture and use, destruction and incorporation. Instead we are to create a new story drawn from the subordinated and ignored parts of Western culture such as "women's stories of care."
>
> The "we" here are new social formations built on "radical democracy, co-operation and mutuality". However, what the material basis of those formations are supposed to be is unclear. This is unfortunate because the basis of a material analysis and a more material political conclusion permeate Plumwood's book.[28]

The problem of the "materiality" of critique is also important in Plumwood's defense of Ynestra King. In summarizing Mills's critique of King, Plumwood states, "Mills has argued that those ecological feminists who reject the negative value that western culture has attributed to the sphere of nature (which I have argued

above is the core assumption of all ecological feminisms) have adopted an 'abstract pro-nature stance.'"[29] How is the "rejection of the negative value" of the sphere of nature to be understood here? Plumwood believes that Mills's proposal to "take account of the regressive moment of nature" in order to retain a basis for defending women's reproductive freedom, especially that of abortion, will result in a failure of the ecofeminist project. Plumwood's emphasis is on rejecting the "western construction of nature as an inferior sphere of exclusion." In rejecting "abstractly pro-nature ecofeminism," Plumwood claims Mills's argument would result in the abandonment of oneself to "necessity." This "necessity" would include acceptance of whatever may happen, without resistance, or, to follow Barry Commoner's maxim, accepting that "nature knows best." Plumwood asserts that it is not a matter of choosing between "treating 'nature' as our slave or treating it as our master." But is this what Mills is arguing, and is Plumwood's attempt to address the problem a true resolution of the difficulty?

What seems to be involved here is an apparent misreading of Mills's argument resulting from a lack of understanding of the developments in the critical theory of the early Frankfurt School. Plumwood seems to be criticizing Mills for a one-sidedness no one "influenced by the Frankfurt School" would be likely to make, at least

not in the simplistic, unnuanced manner Plumwood charges, "In short, what is involved is not, as assumed in Mills's argument, a simple reversal of the value of nature which embraces the category of nature without further deconstruction." At issue is the specifics of the use of the category of nature and how it must be theorized in any attempt to bring together the insights of feminism and the radical ecology movement. As Plumwood says, "We do not have to assume that nature is a sphere of harmony and peace, with which we as humans will never be in conflict. A rejection of the western treatment of nature implies a careful, critical and political look at the category of nature."[30]

Plumwood rightly states that the "assignment of women's reproductive activity to the sphere of nature" has been used to enforce the inferior status of women, and that this is one of the issues at the heart of "nature/culture dualism." What is problematic about her argument, however, is the inadequate analysis of the categories used in the critical theory inspired argument including: the status of "negative dialectics"; the treatment of the category of nature in this tradition; and how these relate to Plumwood's own use of the concepts of dualism and hierarchy. It is a fundamental error of analysis to assert that Frankfurt School influenced critical theory would be guilty in any simple sense of accepting any treatment of these issues from within a

"dualising framework which creates an opposition between the body and free subjectivity."[31] Plumwood makes counter recommendations about the appropriate direction for ecofeminism (as if these were absent from Mills's argument). Her recommendations include the assertion that a critical ecological feminist position would conceive human identity in "less dualistic and oppositional ways," and that "both women and men are part of both nature and culture," and so forth. This indicates a fundamental misunderstanding of Mills's critique and of the early Frankfurt critical theory.[32] Of particular concern is the lack of an indication of an adequate appreciation of the role of the concepts of "identity" and "non-identity" in the works of critical theory. This is revealed in Plumwood's evaluation of the Dialectic of Enlightenment as simply being about a masculine and instrumental rationality and its relation to the treatment of nature, without indicating the problematic status of all these terms.[33]

This apparent misreading by Plumwood and the status of her alternative, can only be fully established and adequately evaluated by reexamining Mills's original critique of Ynestra King. If Plumwood's reading is shown to be inadequate it will still then be incumbent on Frankfurt School influenced critical theory to develop radical ecological or ecofeminist theory in the areas which also remain inadequately developed in Plumwood's

alternative. In other words, can the potential of Plumwood's concepts of "radical democracy, co-operation and mutuality," or something like them, be more adequately developed by means of the categories of early critical theory and their subsequent transformations?

In reexamining Mills's argument it is important to first clarify the object of her critique. She was not criticizing ecofeminism in general, which is implied by Plumwood's comments, but instead had restricted her remarks to the works of only two individuals who made early attempts to combine the insights of both feminism and the ecology movement, one of whom was Ynestra King. Mills's critique begins with a review of the work of Isaac Balbus and focuses on his recommendations for attempting to provide a "neo-Hegelian" theoretical basis for the "reconciliation" of humanity with nature, of culture and nature. Mills argues against Balbus's assertion that the work of Horkheimer and Adorno is simply a footnote to Hegel. She alternatively proposes that the "problem of the domination of nature" is "most powerfully" articulated by these two and especially by Adorno in his later individual writings.[34] The relationship between humans and nature is complex and the overcoming of the domination of nature in its various forms will be correspondingly complex, "Within their critique of the domination of nature Horkheimer and Adorno distinguish the rational mastery of nature from its irrational forms, and they

contend that a new and qualitatively different relation between humanity and nature is possible. However, they also retain a tension between the liberatory and repressive aspects of nature."[35] It is the absence of recognition of the "tension" between different aspects of nature, and the subsequent claims of any philosophy or theory which relies on some notion of a "nature in-itself" that is fundamentally good or positive, which produces a problematic "abstract pro-nature stance," according to Mills. Advocates of a "naive" reconciliation of humanity with nature fail to consider the extent to which nature, in its various forms (non-human nature, society, the individual psyche), because of previous domination, also can be dangerous, distorting and compulsive. The domination of nature is an irrational extension of a tendency of nature which humans share as part of nature. It is in the extension of domination in the form of the instrumentalization of reason that reason is reduced to functioning merely as means and thereby loses its aspect of self-reflection. The domination of nature as the "lack of self-reflection" can only be overcome, argue the critical theorists, by the "remembrance" of nature,

> While these theorists search for a new relation to nature in terms of the historical possibilities of nature, they also analyze the regressive moments of nature that led to the rise of fascism. For Horkheimer and Adorno, German fascism, with its cry for a return to "blood and soil," was a form of nature's revenge on history: the "revolt of nature"

> against domination was transformed under fascism into an expression of the return of repressed nature in distorted and savage form.[36]

Nature "itself" does not then hold out the promise of emancipation or freedom, only the "memory" of nature can provide the alternative vision that opens onto a future free of domination. This aspect of self-reflection, the self-reflection of humans as nature, will include the tensions and complexity of the relationship between "freedom and barbarism," but, even so, an emancipatory promise remains as one aspect of the dialectic of enlightenment. As the critical theorists explained, "By virtue of this remembrance of nature in the subject, in whose fulfillment the unacknowledged truth of all culture lies hidden, enlightenment is universally opposed to domination."[37] It is the acknowledgment of this complexity in Bookchin's philosophy of social ecology which Mills finds better developed than in Balbus's neo-Hegelianism. However, Bookchin comes to rely on a nature that is a subject "in-itself," Mills argues, which fails to retain a "conceptual distinction between human self-consciousness and nature" as the critical theorists do. Mills asserts that this point of disagreement between social ecology and critical theory is the point of "the most fundamental issue raised by critiques of the domination of nature: the question of the relation between human self-consciousness and nature."[38]

To the extent Ynestra King's argument relies on this social ecological assumption it too is subject to criticism, but Mills's critique goes beyond this similarity. Mills argues that King appropriates aspects of social ecology and critical theory without confronting the contradictions which result. Mills's charge that King's position is an example of the abstract pro-nature stance can be examined in light of this further understanding of the relationship between social ecology and critical theory. Mills argues that King's endorsement of the identification of women with nature, because of women's historical position and in an attempt to combat the domination of both women and nature, has at least one unfortunate implication in that it tends to make women uniquely responsible for the liberation of all life. Mills makes a distinction between the early and later essays of King, but the problems remain unresolved even in the later attempts. In the early essay King says, for example,

> The ecology movement, in theory and practice, attempts to speak for nature--the "other" that has no voice and is not conceived of subjectively in our civilization. Feminism represents the refusal of the original "other" in patriarchal human society to remain silent or to be the "other" any longer. Its challenge of social domination extends beyond sex to social domination of all kinds, because the domination of sex, race, and class and the domination of nature are mutually reinforcing.[39]

What women should say for nature or others and how they should say it is not addressed by King except that she claims ecofeminism is a "vantage point" from which to speak.[40] The similarity of this ecofeminist vantage point to the complexity of "feminist standpoint theory" will be discussed shortly, but King's additional claims must first be further emphasized. In regard to the use of the idea of harmony as metaphor for reconciled nature, King states, "The goals of harmonizing humanity and nonhuman nature, at both the experiential and theoretical levels, cannot be attained without the radical vision and understanding available from feminism." King also asserts that the domination of women by men is at the root of all social domination, as is argued by social ecologists, "Ecofeminism draws on feminist theory which asserts that the domination of woman was the original domination in human society, from which all other hierarchies--of rank, class, and political power--flow." This seems to be an overstatement about feminist theory, although until recently an accurate generalization of the assumption of most feminist argument. The political and theoretical position that feminism is based on the assertion or recognition that male domination was the original or founding form of <u>all</u> domination is now receiving criticisms from within feminist theory itself, and is not implied in the work of the early Frankfurt theorists. King does indicate that the identification of women and

nature by radical and cultural feminists has in many cases resulted in the "romanticization of women as good," which she says fails to recognize the complexity of women's implication in domination.[41]

One of Mills's primary objections to King's later essays is that in her attempt to rectify earlier problems King identifies what needs to be accomplished in combining radical ecology and feminism, but then never provides the concepts and theoretical mediations necessary. For example, King identifies the need for a dialectical ecofeminist theory, "An ecological feminism calls for a dynamic, developmental theory of the person--male <u>and</u> female--who emerges out of nonhuman nature, where difference is neither reified nor ignored and the dialectical relationship between human and nonhuman nature is understood."[42] And again King calls for theory but does not provide it, "An analysis of the interrelated dominations of nature--psyche and sexuality, human oppression and nonhuman nature--and the historic position of women in relation to those forms of domination is the starting point of ecofeminist theory."[43] In detailing the list of philosophical and political problems which must be addressed, King also highlights the issues of science and knowledge, "A related critical area for a genuinely dialectical practice is a reconstruction of science, taking into account the critique of science advanced by radical ecology and feminism."[44] But again there is no

attempt to offer the concepts required except in general reference to various and contradictory theoretical and political practices.

This lack of theoretical or conceptual mediations to address the philosophical and political problems King recognizes has the effect of putting the problem of saving the world on the backs of women without the support of a coherent theory of ecofeminism. It is this combination of unique responsibility with a vague and general endorsement of "nature" which results in Mills's concern with the "abstract pro-nature stand" of this version of ecofeminism. Mills's concern with King's tendency to place the whole burden of resolving ecological and social domination on the backs of women can be supported simply by citing King's unambiguous assertions, "Practice does not wait for theory--it comes out of the imperatives of history. Women are the revolutionary bearers of this antidualistic potential in the world today." If there is any doubt as to how strongly to interpret this statement she later adds,

> We thoughtful human beings must use the fullness of our sensibility and intelligence to push ourselves intentionally to another stage of evolution. One where we will fuse a new way of being human on this planet with a sense of the sacred, informed by all ways of knowing--intuitive <u>and</u> scientific, mystical <u>and</u> rational. It is the moment where women recognize ourselves as agents of history--yes, even as unique agents--and knowingly bridge the classic dualisms between spirit and matter, art and politics, reason and intuition. This is the potentiality of a

rational reenchantment. This is the project of ecofeminism.[45]

Plumwood's characterization of Frankfurt School critical theory as simply concerning itself with instrumental reason, and as endorsing a nature-culture dualism (which she finds in evidence in Mills's critique of King), is a gross oversimplification of critical theory's understanding of the "dialectic of enlightenment" and a misreading of Mills's critique. As was previously indicated, Plumwood's own work is open to the criticism that it one-sidedly emphasizes the cultural aspects of an ecofeminist politics of transformation. With these criticisms of both King and Plumwood in mind an attempt can now be made to address the problems of dualistic thinking by developing concepts capable of adequately representing the cultural and material possibilities of radical ecological change. Before turning to feminists' and critical theorists' attempts to use the "concept" of mimesis to resolve some of these problems we need to first take a brief diversion to the issues surrounding the concept of "feminist standpoint theory" and its relationship to women's experiences and the related possibilities for an "objective" science, and an efficacious social theory.

Feminist Standpoint Theory

The concept of a feminist standpoint theory was first developed in the early 1980s, initially by Nancy Hartsock. The concept has evolved over time but many of its most characteristic features remain. Feminist standpoint theory is based on an analogy to Marx's theory of a proletarian standpoint which provides privileged access to a more adequate understanding of the workings of capitalism than is possible from the perspective of the capitalist. The claim is that there are systematic distortions, misrepresentations, and "perversity" in the view of the world from the position of those who dominate others, and that the experience of the dominated and oppressed provide a perspective from which can be developed a more adequate theory of society and the economy. Feminist standpoint theory's attempt to transform these insights for feminist purposes has come under attack for alleged problems of "naturalism" and "essentialism," and more recently for its inadequate psychological/psychoanalytical grounding. In what follows I want to first present a brief summary of the main claims of the theory, followed by some of the criticisms and responses to these claims, and finally look at some implications for "objectivity" and a feminist science, which has so far been most fully developed by Sandra Harding.

Hartsock initiated the development of feminist standpoint theory in response to a call for a "specifically feminist historical materialism."[46] Hartsock viewed the feminist standpoint as "an important epistemological tool for understanding and opposing all forms of domination."[47] If this claim is accurate then feminist standpoint theory should have something important to say about the difficulties radical ecologists have had in developing their own adequate basis for knowledge (however unacknowledged this has been in much of their own literature). Hartsock explains that she is expanding on the fundamentally Marxian argument that the "socially mediated interaction with nature in the process of production shapes both human beings and theories of knowledge." To achieve this she relies on the category of "labor" but in an appropriately expanded form, which she believes will aid in overcoming the omnipresent dichotomy of nature and culture. She claims traditional Marxism does not adequately addressed the situation of women's oppression because it tends to collapse women's experiences into a mere extension of proletarian experience. Alternatively, a feminist reevaluation of these claims will take Marx's critique in new and fuller directions,

> I will explore some of the epistemological consequences of claiming that women's lives differ structurally from those of men. In particular, I

> will suggest that like the lives of proletarians according to Marxian theory, women's lives make available a particular and privileged vantage point on male supremacy, a vantage point which can ground a powerful critique of the phallocratic institutions and ideology which constitute the capitalist form of patriarchy.[48]

Hartsock provides clarification of the meaning of a "standpoint," emphasizing the ways the relations between humans and their understandings of the natural world become systematically different when derived from the respective views of those who dominate and those who are dominated. One way the mystification of reality occurs in the descriptions of the world by the dominant class or group is through the categories used to explain the world. For example, the description of capitalism becomes mystified when presented in categories of "exchange," but the mists and mystery of capitalism become increasingly clarified when beginning from categories developed out of the workers' level of production. After appropriate quotes from Marx, Hartsock summarizes,

> Only by following the two into the realm of production and adopting the point of view available to the worker could Marx uncover what is really involved in the purchase and sale of labor power, i.e.--uncover the process by which surplus value was produced and appropriated by the capitalist, and the means by which the worker is systematically disadvantaged.[49]

By fully comprehending that "material life structures understanding" it can be shown how the perspective of the capitalist and his exchange mentality results in a series of hierarchically structured dualisms. In addition, this

perspective inverts the real world and makes it "perverse" in its pursuit of profits for profits' sake. The perversity of the telos of profits is seen from the alternative perspective, "The real point of the production of goods and services is, after all, the continuation of the species, a possibility dependent on their use."[50] A standpoint thus provides a way of recognizing the workings of various ideological productions which both attempt to legitimize the position of the dominant class and make it "real" by actually controlling the "means of mental and physical production." A standpoint is an achievement which reveals the inner workings of this process in its distortions and perversity, but it is importantly an "achievement," not simply an unmediated given which is obviously present for purposes of resistance: "The standpoint of the oppressed represents an achievement both of science (analysis) and of political struggle on the basis of which this analysis can be conducted."[51] Therefore, there is no simple access to the proletarian or the feminist standpoint; they require conceptual mediations developed within the process of political struggle.

Objectivity and Standpoints

One of the most able defenders of standpoint theory over the last decade or so has been Sandra Harding. Criticism of standpoint theory has come from two or three

principle directions. Non-feminist, traditional science, critics have made charges that feminist standpoint theory falls into the traditional problems of relativism. Harding has answered these objections with the concept of "strong objectivity" which uses the fact that all "knowledge" is historically or socially situated as a <u>resource</u> in scientific methodology rather than as a problem to be eliminated through ever more vigilant policing, and neutralizing of subjectivity. Traditional science claims to achieve "knowledge" rather than mere opinion by becoming more "value-neutral," and understands the "subject of knowledge" as universal, that is, it has no fixed historical or social position. Feminists understand this as the "disembodied" subject of traditional science and positivism. Feminist and other histories of science have disclosed that instead of being value-neutral, traditional science tends to reflect or represent certain class, gender and race assumptions found in the dominant class or groups in society. Typically, traditional science reflects desires, values and interests of capital, and of white males. Alternatively, Harding argues, in an extension of Hartsock's earlier work, beginning thought from the lives of the marginalized produces knowledge that is less partial and distorted than when begun from the activities of the dominant class or groups. The value or interest in "liberation from domination" then serves as a guide for the development of

standpoint methodology. This means that standpoint theory takes the traditional scientific methods of problem selection, research program design, concept construction, development of hypotheses, and so on, and puts them in the service of liberation movements. For Harding this means our understanding of scientific method and of objectivity must be transformed. For example, by starting thought from the experiences or activities of the marginalized a different set of problems to be explained presents itself when compared to the problems resulting from those who have an interest in continuing domination, oppression, and exploitation. Harding claims dominant groups are unable to generate what are the most critical questions about their received beliefs because the very pervasiveness of assumptions of racist and sexist systems, for example, make the beneficiaries blind to those assumptions. For traditional science, to start from overtly socially situated or "political" positions is to introduce bias into the method of science. For traditional scientists, it is politics and history that science attempts to escape. Harding responds that it is precisely this belief in the value-neutrality of science that is one of those blinding assumptions which can be brought to light with standpoint theory. By making these socially-historically situated assumptions visible, more consciously part of science, less partial and distorted knowledge can be developed. Harding importantly adds that this also

implies that the greater number of marginalized positions which can be represented in the scientific community the more accurate will be the picture of "reality" which can be developed. This places feminist standpoint theory in coalition with other standpoint theories and therefore with democratic politics. It is only by providing access to these structures of knowledge generation that the most objective (the least partial and distorted) knowledge can be systematically developed. This implies there would be more than one feminist standpoint in this research program as well, since the experiences and activities vary for women depending on many factors in addition to gender, class and race, such as place, age, sexual preference, and so forth. This is not relativist, argues Harding, because some "situations" are scientifically better as starting points; they make it possible to systematically question the process of concept formation and assumptions about the subject of knowledge. Some situations, those of the marginalized, allow more critical questions which in turn shape the selection of scientific problems and research agendas. Traditional science relegates these areas to the pre-rational and outside scientific investigation, claiming they are properly understood as consisting merely of competing opinions rather than as a resource for knowledge development. Traditional science believes starting from marginalized lives does not produce more value-neutral knowledge, that is, it does not produce

"objective" knowledge in the traditional sense--but again, this is impossible. Traditional science itself did not and does not produce this objective knowledge. Standpoint theory produces a more self-reflexive form of knowledge, less partial and less distorted and therefore more objective: strongly objective, rather than the weak objectivity of the un-self-reflective traditional science.

Harding recognizes that this means making the "subject of knowledge" an object of study just as all other objects are studied scientifically. This subject-object of study will produce conflicting accounts of the objective world because the positions from which they start are frequently in conflict. What is involved here is what Harding calls the "logic of multiple subjects."[52] This means women do not have any unique ability to generate knowledge, but rather knowledge is generated from the "position" which begins from the lives of the marginalized. So, men also can generate feminist insights.

In summary, for standpoint theory, subjects of knowledge are always already also objects of knowledge. To achieve maximally critical study of objects, begin from the perspective of the marginalized position. This means standpoint theory aligns itself necessarily with democracy advancing projects; epistemologically, scientifically, morally, and politically.[53] The strong objectivity of standpoint theory makes it possible to systematically

identify desires, interests and values affecting the choices and methods of science. Standpoint theory demands self-reflexion on the values and interests which enter into problem identification and concept construction. Value-neutrality is a myth and a mystifying illusion, and, alternatively, values and interests do not necessarily have "bad" scientific effects. While some values and interests aid domination and oppression, others may serve democracy and liberation.

Questions have been raised about this formulation of standpoint theory and have been elaborated elsewhere.[54] The remainder of Section III will note some of these concerns and at least one new one. These concerns include, first, how the subject investigating the lives of those in marginalized positions can put herself in that position sufficiently to generate the appropriately critical questions, to be able to "see" the problems. Second, what is the practical content of the normative values of terms like "democracy" and "liberation"? Certainly they will differ from the liberal and traditional socialist understandings, but what are some present visions of the transformed meanings of these political concepts? Finally, how can standpoint theory and other insights from the lives of those not in the dominant class or groups be applied specifically to the concerns of radical ecology? To borrow from the title of

a well known Native American story, "Who Speaks for Wolf"?[55]

Before turning to these final concerns in the next two chapters, an example of the alternative science which might develop from this understanding of science and objectivity is appropriate.

Practicing Science

Evelyn Fox Keller also has examined the relationships between gender and science and has generated insights and proposals into the possibilities of a new and more "objective" understanding of science. In her early work as a mathematical biophysicist she encountered an upsetting fact; science as it was then being practiced was "bound up with the idea of masculinity."[56] Like many other scientists, the work of Thomas Kuhn challenged her previous understanding of science and put the socially constructed character of science in the forefront of considerations about what good science is.[57] Kuhn and other historians of science had shown that extrascientific factors influenced such aspects of science as choice of problem and theory, concept formation, acceptable evidence, and so on. This meant that the proposition that science is ethically neutral or lacks any specific "interest" was in fact a reflection of a particular ideology. Feminist historians and sociologists of science have since used the category of gender to investigate the

partiality and distortions introduced in the prevailing concept of science. Keller has also attempted to find a way between the two most common feminist critiques of science. The first, as Harding pointed out, simply sees the need to include gender in what is otherwise an unchanged science, but this alternative has no systematic way of addressing gender influences on the practice of science. The other is the radical critique of science which, however, "fails to account for the effectiveness of science."[58] Rather than radically separating the concepts of science and gender, Keller attempts to examine what she calls the "science-gender system." Traditional understandings of science discount the influence of gender on the actual practice of science, while many radical "social-constructionist" critiques of science cannot adequately account for the "success" of science. "The fact that Boyle's law is not wrong must, however, not be forgotten. Any effective critique of science needs to take due account of the undeniable successes of science as well as of the commitments that have made such successes possible."[59] The interests of the scientific community are those of the individuals who make up that community, which has largely meant white, middle-class males. But one interest this group shares with most other humans is the "shared commitment to the possibility of reliable knowledge of nature." In order to obtain that reliable knowledge some adherence to certain procedures such as

"experimental replicability and logical coherence" are necessary if the "scientific venture" is to succeed. To uncover how gender impacts science and how it may more consciously be used to transform science is the task Keller sets for herself. In examining these questions Keller seeks to reveal how social, political and especially emotional commitments of individuals manifest themselves in the "social and linguistic practices that help determine, within the scientific community, the priority of interests and the criteria of success."[60] Keller embraces the pursuit of scientific knowledge as a "reclaimed" universal goal, but only to the extent that claims about the characteristics of science which are labeled "constant and indispensable" are subjected to thorough examination and when found to be particular, limited, historically situated and contingent, to be recognized as such. This, Keller believes, must result in a changed science, one reflecting different interests and goals, and which will be presented in a different language.

Keller's examination of the relation of gender and science begins from some basic observations. Although most cultures have attempted to seek "reliable knowledge of the natural world," how they have gone about that has varied, as has their very understandings of knowledge and nature. Across cultures, one of the most common metaphors of knowledge is that of sexual relations. Keller's

analyses of various historical examples of the use of sexuality as a metaphor for correct procedures of gaining knowledge are important and insightful and deserve inclusion in any extended examination of the possibilities for alternative understandings of the limits and potentials of a new science. However, this is not the primary focus here and it must be regrettably passed over to get at the more immediate concerns.

In addition to the historical examination of metaphors of gender and science, Keller also examines the psychological underpinnings of the idea of objectivity in science. She begins by noting that the desire for objectivity in science has traditionally meant the attempt to separate out from the object those projections of subjects involved in scientific investigation. It is the inclusion of these subjective projections which constitutes the unwanted "cultural bias" into what should otherwise be the "objective" characteristics of the thing under study. The modern scientist recognizes that earlier attempts to attain reliable knowledge of nature, including magic, astrology, and alchemy, as having in fact consisted in large part of projections of human "hopes, desires and fears onto the natural world."[61] What Keller is proposing is that modern science continues this practice of projection,

> It is a thesis of this book that the ideology of modern science, along with its undeniable success, carries within it its own form of projection: the projection of disinterest, of autonomy, of alienation. My argument is not simply that the dream of a completely objective science is in principle unrealizable, but that it contains precisely what it rejects: the vivid traces of a reflected self image. The objectivist illusion reflects back an image of self as autonomous and objectified: an image of individuals unto themselves, severed from the outside world of other objects (animate as well as inanimate) and simultaneously from their own subjectivity.[62]

Keller then examines aspects of subjectivity including the ways that particular concepts are developed--self and other, subject and object, femininity and masculinity--and how these are socially mediated, especially "first and most critically" by the family. Keller relies especially on the psychoanalytically inspired "object relations theory" as it has been developed in the interests of feminism by such individuals as Nancy Chodorow, Dorothy Dinnerstein, Jessica Benjamin, and Jane Flax.[63] One aspect of Keller's examination of the relationship between concept formation and psychological development is the differences in understanding of objectivity which can be related to the processes of acquisition of gender identity. Keller analyzes "objectivity" as it takes place in two forms which parallel gendered understandings of psychological "autonomy." The two forms she labels "dynamic" and "static" objectivity. She understands static objectivity as the pursuit of knowledge that begins with the splitting or severing of subject from object. This splitting has

the disadvantage of not involving any complex process of "disentangling" of the subject and object. By dynamic objectivity she understands,

> (A) form of knowledge that grants to the world around us its independent integrity but does so in a way that remains cognizant of, indeed relies on, our connectivity with that world. In this, dynamic objectivity is not unlike empathy, a form of knowledge of other persons that draws explicitly on the commonality of feelings and experience in order to enrich one's understanding of another in his or her own right.[64]

Keller claims that dynamic objectivity, although based on "continuity," also recognizes difference between self and other, allowing the possibility for insight into the "nature of self and other" when trying to "disentangle" them. She claims the state of awareness or perception necessary to achieve this disentangling of self and other is most closely related to the "state of being in love." The subject must achieve an intense interest in the object, so that self-interest recedes to the point of "total absorption in the object before one," a state of awareness not only common to those who are in love but also one "very familiar to young children." But this awareness of the object is not simply an infantile fascination with the other, rather it retains the self and other distinction in the service of the pursuit of "objective knowledge of the world."[65] Keller compares the focused awareness necessary for "perception of an object in its own right" in science with that of poetry and other

arts. The difference in the relations of subject and object in this common perceptual mode is a result of the goals for which the observations are made and knowledge is gained.

In present practice, science typically pursues purely instrumental goals, the "object-for-use." Rampant instrumentalization of thought can be seen it the pathological uses of this focused perception and are easily identifiable, but it goes beyond this to more "normal" behavior,

> One need not look as far as the pathology of sadism for evidence of the cognitive use of perception in the interests of domination or, more generally, for defensive or offensive purposes. Such evidence is suggested by the manner in which many quite normal individuals approach the new and unknown, as well as by the language they use to describe these encounters. In particular, I have in mind the aggression expressed in the common rhetoric of science.[66]

Keller then highlights some of the metaphors of aggression used in science and documented extensively in the feminist literature.[67] The further point is made that science as a social institution then tends to select those individuals whose emotional needs are met by this rhetoric of domination and aggression. This produces certain types of knowledge and power relative to the objects of knowledge and to the new and unknown.

It is Keller's contention that science does not have to put itself in the service of instrumentalism,

understood as power to dominate. There is an alternative understanding of the methods of science which still produces reliable knowledge about the world but does so by respecting the integrity of that which it studies. The structure of knowledge based in the will to dominate is a particular and ideological understanding of knowledge, which derives from social relations,

> The need to dominate nature is, in this view, a projection of the need to dominate other human beings; it arises not so much out of empowerment as out of anxiety about impotence. The feelings of power such domination brings are not only like the sense of power that can be derived from subjecting others to one's will; they are the very same feelings. In this sense, then, the dream of dominion over nature, shared by so many scientists, echoes the dream that the stereotypic son hopes to realize by identifying with the authority of his father.[68]

Alternatively, there is another basis for reliable knowledge, "While some scientists see their endeavor in predominantly adversarial terms, as contests, battles, exercises in domination, others see it as a primarily erotic activity."[69] Keller cites several scientists, both male and female, who attribute loving and erotic attitudes to their work as scientists. One of the larger points being made is that the community of scientists who determine what is "good science" tend to self select in becoming members of the community, and this selection is tied together with certain emotional and cognitive styles. The emotional and cognitive styles then also result in the selection of "compatible scientific styles of work,

methodologies, and even theories."[70] Keller then asks what the consequences for science and for the content of knowledge would be if the scientific community had other emotional needs and cognitive styles, that is, a "discourse predicated on different norms--on an ideal of dynamic rather that static objectivity." Keller then examines specific examples where "erotic rather that adversarial terms" have been used in the pursuit of scientific knowledge.

Exemplary of the alternative understanding and possibilities of science is Barbara McClintock (about whom Keller has written extensively), who received the Nobel Prize for her work in plant genetics.[71] Her discovery of "genetic transposition" established that genetic elements can move in large organisms (greater than single cell) in an apparently coordinated way from one part of a chromosome to another, thus challenging the orthodoxy of modern genetics. What Keller finds most interesting about McClintock, besides that she does not view herself as fighting for a feminist science, is the alternative vision of science she holds and how this translates into differences in methodology, concepts, and theory development. Keller views this alternative vision of science as being based in a "respect for difference."[72] This alternative view of science, claims Keller, can best be explained using gender as the fundamental category of analysis.

McClintock criticizes mainstream science for an inadequate humility as it fails to appreciate the "a priori complexity that vastly exceeds the capacities of the human imagination." Nature has a vast resourcefulness which is capable of addressing and exceeding almost any questions humans can ask of it. This presently results, according to McClintock, in an inadequate scientific methodology. Traditional, mainstream science seeks confirming evidence for what researchers believe is an answer they already have. The consequence of this approach is that disconfirming evidence is treated most often as a mistake or error rather that as the possibility of discovering something unique and new. Keller argues that McClintock's preferred approach results in a demand of scientific observers that they pay special attention to the "exceptional case." This means a "respect for individual difference" inhabits the heart of this alternative vision of an adequate science. In McClintock's case it meant focusing attention on an "aberrant pattern of pigmentation on a few kernels of a single corn plant" and the subsequent six years of research to explain the observation.[73] In this understanding of science the unique or exceptional is not seen simply as an example that proves or disproves a general law, but as an opportunity to make those exceptions or differences meaningful "in and of

themselves." This is a fundamentally different understanding of the purposes of science,

> In this respect difference constitutes a principle for ordering the world radically unlike the principle of division or dichotomization (subject-object, mind-matter, feeling-reason, disorder-law). Whereas these oppositions are directed toward a cosmic unity typically excluding or devouring one of the pair, toward a unified, all-encompassing law, respect for difference remains content with multiplicity as an end in itself.[74]

In this understanding of science there is a larger system of order but one not reducible in principle to a single law. Keller argues that the uniqueness of each organism indicates that the order of nature transcends human capacities of ordering. Instead of collapsing the individual into a mere example of a general law, preservation of the individual and recognition of their uniqueness become equally important aspects of the activity of science. Keller claims McClintock's description of her activities of observation can be best understood as a respect for difference that requires the highest form of empathy, that of love, "Love that allows for intimacy without the annihilation of difference. I use the word love neither loosely nor sentimentally, but out of fidelity to the language McClintock herself uses to describe a form of attention, indeed a form of thought."[75]

Keller claims this is all linked to the aims and goals of science. Change the aims and goals, and the methods, concepts and theories will also change. The

challenge then is to rename nature, to begin at the starting point of science. Barbara McClintock, as an example of a "successful" scientist, allows Keller to claim that an alternative understanding of science can still yield scientific results, "To McClintock, science has a different goal: not prediction per se; but understanding; not the power to manipulate, but empowerment--the kind of power that results from an understanding of the world around us, that simultaneously reflects and affirms our connection to that world."[76]

Finally, Keller reemphasizes the point that McClintock denies her work is "woman's work," but rather views it as an alternative theory within the basic framework of good science. The point here is that science may be more "pluralistic" and open to alternative theory construction than is usually represented by the "ideology" of science which currently prevails in theories of its legitimacy, if not in its actual practice.[77] However, Keller goes further, beyond McClintock's self-understanding, to assert that the increased inclusion of those who have a different relationship to the object of their study will have a transforming effect on the institution of science and what it considers legitimate, successful and "good" science. The consequence of inclusion of more women and others who relate to nature in this alternative way will be something other than merely a "complementary" understanding to the existing

ideologically masculine science. What will happen is more than the mere addition of women's vision to that of men. Keller believes there will be a, "thoroughgoing transformation of the very possibilities of creative vision, for everyone. It implies that the kind of change we might hope for is not a direct or readily apparent one but rather an indirect and subterranean one."[78] She believes a fundamental ally in this transformation is nature, which constantly challenges any terms used to name it. What is required in a new science, she believes, is the focusing of perception on the unique responses nature provides to our questions, "Paying attention to those responses--'listening to the material'--may help us to reconstruct our understanding of science in terms born out of the diverse spectrum of human experience rather than out of the narrow spectrum that our culture has labeled masculine."[79]

ENDNOTES

1. For attempts at a general typology of feminisms see, Alison Jaggar, Feminism and Human Nature (Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Allanheld, 1983); and Josephine Donovan, Feminist Theory (New York: Ungar, 1987).

2. Merchant, Carolyn, Radical Ecology (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), Chapter 5, "Spiritual Ecology"; Ecofeminism and the Sacred, Carol J. Adams, Ed. (New York: Continuum, 1994).

3. Orenstein, Gloria Feman, "Toward an Ecofeminist Ethic of Shamanism and the Sacred," Ecofeminism and the Sacred, pp. 172-190.

4. Orenstein, Toward, p. 188.

5. The relationship of critical theory to Freudian psychology is a considerable subfield of its own, see for example David Held, Introduction to Critical Theory (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), esp. Chapter 4; Susan Buck-Morss, The Origin of Negative Dialectics (New York: The Free Press, 1977); Morton Schoolman, The Imaginary Witness: The Critical Theory of Herbert Marcuse (New York: The Free Press, 1980).

6. Orenstein, Toward, p. 188.

7. For an alternative understanding see Joan Bamberger's, "The Myth of Matriarchy: Why Men Rule in Primitive Society," Woman, Culture and Society, Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, Eds. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974).

8. See Janet Biehl, Murray Bookchin, and other Social Ecologists on spiritual ecofeminism and its relation to reactionary, fascist politics. For examples and citations see above, Chapters 6-8.

9. See Max Weber on charismatic personality as the basis of political authority, Economy and Society Vol. II, Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, Eds. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), Chapter XIV.

10. Lahar, Stephanie, "Ecofeminist Theory and Grassroots Politics," Hypatia: Special Issue, Ecological Feminism, Spring, 1991, Vol. 6 No. 1.

11. King, Ynestra, "The Ecology of Feminism and the Feminism of Ecology," Healing the Wounds, Judith Plant, Ed. (Santa Cruz: New Society, 1989), hereafter cited as Reweaving.

12. King, Reweaving, p. 20. This observation will become increasingly important in this chapter's later examination of the role of science and feminism and in the next two chapters in relation to the question of how to represent the subject that is viewed as unrepresentable.

13. King, Reweaving, pp. 21-22.

14. King, Reweaving, p. 23.

15. For thoughts on the relationships of class and race to gender and how this presents fundamental challenges to feminism, see for example; This Bridge Called My Back, Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldua, Eds. (New York: Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, 1983); Elizabeth V. Spelman, Inessential Woman (Boston: Beacon Press, 1988); Conflicts in Feminism, Marianne Hirsch and Evelyn Fox Keller, Eds. (New York and London: Routledge, 1990).

16. See the many discussions that have preoccupied a good part of feminist theory in the last twenty years, especially, Donna Haraway, Sandra Harding, and others. The relation of the logic of the sciences to the development of a "feminist standpoint theory" will be addressed below.

17. Ophuls, Williams, and A. Stephen Boyan, Jr., Ecology and the Politics of Scarcity Revisited (New York: W.H. Freeman and Co., 1992), Afterword.

18. Ophuls and Boyan, p. 33.

19. Ophuls and Boyan, p. 34.

20. Runnels, Curtis N., "Environmental Degradation in Ancient Greece," Scientific American, March 1995.

21. Ophuls and Boyan, p. 37.

22. It is not entirely clear what this term "biological capital" means, although the authors refer to it as providing "security and well-being." Apparently this is related to the necessity of preserving large areas in climax conditions to help regulate global climate, as their later discussion of oceans indicate. However, this perspective has some ominously managerial overtones and continues to invite suspicions of authoritarian implications in the thrust of the argument. To phrase a further benefit of this approach as providing "amenity" values of a "varied and pleasant landscape" also implies a "bourgeois" aesthetic as critiqued by Adorno in his Aesthetic Theory. The case for wilderness can be supported through an alternative "aesthetic" understanding implied in Adorno's work, one which hinges on a more complex understanding of mimesis. (See Chapters 10 and 11). Ophuls and Boyan, p. 37.

23. Mills, Patricia Jagentowicz, Hypatia: Special Issue, Ecological Feminism, Spring, 1991, Vol. 6 No. 1.

24. King, Reweaving, pp. 106-107.

25. King, Reweaving, p. 107.

26. Mills, Hypatia. Val Plumwood, Feminism and the Mastery of Nature (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).

27. Mellor, Mary, Capitalism, Nature, Socialism, Vol. 5 No. 4, Dec. 1994, "Review Essay: Varieties of Ecofeminism," p.117.

28. Mellor, p. 121. (When is a materialist analysis not a materialist analysis? When it is a cultural analysis?)

29. Plumwood, Feminism, p. 37.

30. Plumwood, Feminism, p. 37.

31. Plumwood, Feminism, p. 37.

32. Plumwood, Feminism, p. 35, especially footnote 16, p. 35 and 200.

33. Plumwood, Feminism, p. 24.

34. Mills, Hypatia, p. 168.

35. Mills, Hypatia, p. 168.

36. Mills, Hypatia, p. 168.

37. Horkheimer, Max and Theodor Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, (New York: Continuum, 1987), p. 40.

38. Mills, Hypatia, p. 169.

39. King, Healing the Wounds, p. 20.

40. King, Healing the Wounds, p. 23.

41. King, Reweaving, p. 111.

42. King, Reweaving, p. 117.

43. King, Reweaving, p. 117.

44. King, Reweaving, p. 120.

45. King, Reweaving, pp. 120-121.

46. Hartsock, Nancy, "The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Ground for a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism," Discovering Reality, Sandra Harding and Merrill B. Hintinkka, Eds. (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1983).

47. Hartsock, Standpoint, p. 283.

48. Hartsock, Standpoint, p. 284.

49. Hartsock, Standpoint, p. 287.

50. Hartsock, Standpoint, p. 287.

51. Hartsock, Standpoint, p. 288.

52. Harding, Sandra, "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: 'What Is Strong Objectivity'?", Feminist Epistemologies, Linda Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter, Eds., (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), p. 65.

53. Harding, Rethinking, p. 69.

54. Feminist Epistemologies, Linda Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter, Eds., (New York and London: Routledge, 1993); Susan J. Hekman, Gender and Knowledge (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990); Engaging with Irigaray, Carolyn Burke, Naomi Schor, Margaret Whitford, Eds. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

55. Underwood, Paula, Who Speaks for Wolf? (San Anselmo, California : A Tribe of Two Press, 1991).

56. Keller, Evelyn Fox, Reflections on Gender and Science,(New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), p. 3.

57. Kuhn, Thomas S., The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, second edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

58. Keller, Reflections, p. 6.

59. Keller, Reflections, p. 11.

60. Keller, Reflections, p. 11.

61. Keller, Reflections, p. 69.

62. Keller, Reflections, p. 70.

63. Some of the important feminist appropriations of psychoanalysis include Nancy Chodorow, The Reproduction of Mothering (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); Dorothy Dinnerstein, The Mermaid and the Minotaur (New York: Harper and Row, 1976); Jessica Benjamin, The Bonds of Love (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988); Jane Flax, Thinking Fragments: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and Postmodernism in the Contemporary West (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), and Disputed Subjects: Essays on Psychoanalysis, Politics and Philosophy (New York and London: Routledge, 1993).

64. Keller, Reflections, p. 117.

65. Keller, Reflections, p. 119.

66. Keller, Reflections, p. 123.

67. See especially Carolyn Merchant, The Death of Nature (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980).

68. Keller, Reflections, p. 124.

69. Keller, Reflections, p. 125.

70. Keller, Reflections, p. 126.

71. Keller, Evelyn Fox, A Feeling for the Organism: The Life and Work of Barbara McClintock (New York: Freeman, 1983).

72. Keller, Reflections, p. 161.

73. Keller, Reflections, p. 163.

74. Keller, Reflections, p. 163.

75. Keller, Reflections, p. 164.

76. Keller, Reflections, p. 166.

77. Keller, Reflections, pp. 172-175.

78. Keller, Reflections, p. 175.

79. Keller, Reflections, p. 176.

CHAPTER 10

ECOFEMINISM AND SUBJECTIVITY

Although the call to develop scientific theory and political thought from the position of the marginalized may sound straightforward, and there are examples of important insights from these positions, it is not at all clear how adequate social and political theory can be consistently developed from the standpoint of women or others who are marginalized. How are we to write or speak or act from the position of the other, and what considerations--linguistic, political, sexual, racial, class, species, and so on--must be included in any such attempt? In this chapter the term/concept of mimesis will provide the focus around which both critical theory and feminism can be examined for useful insights to be applied to the development of a radical ecological, ecofeminist consciousness. Adorno, among the critical theorists, went the furthest in developing the idea of mimesis in relation to critical consciousness. Not only in Dialectic of Enlightenment but also in later works the idea of mimesis is a crucial element in the constellation of negative dialectics.[1] Within feminism there has been a growing interest in the use of mimesis to help illuminate the problems of women's domination by men. Among those feminist theorists the one who most self-reflexively uses mimesis in her work is Luce Irigaray. Several critics

have examined the role of mimesis in Irigaray's work and see it as central to an adequate understanding of what she is attempting to achieve.

Mimesis and Political Philosophy

In one of the earliest, if not the earliest, works of political philosophy, Plato's Republic, mimesis plays a central role in the constitution of the just political system. Although there are technical arguments over how many types of mimesis exist in Plato, it is unarguable that Plato does use mimesis as a principle of exclusion.[2] As Socrates argues, the leaders of the just polity must only behave in ways that reflect the goodness, courage, honesty, and so on. appropriate to their position in society, making it unacceptable for them to represent themselves otherwise, whether in daily life or even dramatically on stage, in comedy or tragedy. Therefore Plato prohibits, in the ideal republic, the taking on of the role of inferior sorts, such as women, in whatever appearance, whether young or old, in love, sickness or childbirth.(395e) The man of good character will impersonate only others of good character, even if these others have temporarily succumbed to the misfortunes of illness, love or drink, thereby appearing, for the moment, irrational.(396d) The good man basically will play only one role, that of he who is of good character, and will not play a "multiplicity of roles." Story-tellers and

poets who promote development of the good character will be allowed to stay while the others, especially the tragedians--those who represent the less than most noble and rational of characters--must leave. Mimesis, or what is usually translated as "representation," appears then at the heart of the education of the guardian class, and only a proper mimesis will be allowed. Representations of inferior characters, such as women, slaves and beasts, will be excluded.[3]

In Book 10 of the Republic, Plato explains why mimesis by painters and poets must be rejected, why the painting of a bed is misleading and a distraction from the desired focus on the true form of the bed. The painter and poet, the artist generally, makes only the appearance of the thing, not the true, real object. So the art of mimesis or representation is far distant from truth, and deals with mere appearance.(598b) The poets and similar artists must be excluded from the just state because their representations excite the emotions and encourage irrationality, thus undermining the basis of the just state: Reason. The poet, painter, and others who evoke an emotional response set a bad example for the lover's of truth who must rely solely on reason to gain access to the true knowledge necessary for the properly run polis. The poet also frequently encourages the memories of suffering, which, says Socrates, leads to a kind of embracing of victimization, the wallowing in irrationality, laziness

and cowardice.(604d) So the poets must be banned, not for mimesis itself, but for specifically what is represented: suffering, irrationality and the instinctual desires which lead those of good character away from knowledge and truth. Plato and Socrates leave open the possibility of the return of the poets, but their return may only occur if it is adequately justified, in prose form, and these purveyors of mimesis will find themselves confined to a restricted style.(606-608)[4]

Critical theory and feminist attempts to resurrect the idea of mimesis from its political banishment can be seen as challenging the exclusionary moves made repeatedly since the earliest of political philosophy. Although similar in their concerns, the attempts to redeem the idea of mimesis by critical theory and feminism are different both in their analysis and in their specific applications. It will be helpful to look at these treatments of mimesis by different writers, since the idea of mimesis and the alternative notions of subjectivity which flow from them speak to new and different political possibilities. The influence of Walter Benjamin on early critical theory provides an initial basis for examining this constellation of mimesis, subjectivity and alternative politics. Additionally, feminist understandings of the concept will more fully round out the concept's potential. Finally, and still further developed in the next chapter, Adorno's Aesthetic Theory and its central category of mimesis may

provide some leads for a future radical ecological or ecofeminist politics.

Benjamin and Mimesis

Adorno appropriated Walter Benjamin's understanding of mimesis and transformed it from a largely mystical or theological notion into one of the central elements of negative dialectics. As has been noted by several commentators and critics of critical theory, even though the concept of mimesis has been most closely linked to aesthetic philosophy, beginning with Plato and Aristotle, the critical theorists used the concept to travel a much more anthropological and socio-historical path.[5] As discussed earlier, Horkheimer and Adorno used the idea of mimesis as a route into understanding the "dialectic of enlightenment" with its beginnings in the magic of the shaman's imitation of nature. The discussion of mimesis in Dialectic of Enlightenment was prefigured in Benjamin's work but developed much further, first by the two critical theorists and then by Adorno alone. However, Benjamin's early presentation of the idea helps illuminate its later manifestations.

In his short essay "On the Mimetic Faculty" Benjamin begins not with an appeal to Greek discussions of literature but to Nature: nature itself produces similarities. For Benjamin the mimetic faculty is a subterranean force within even the most developed forms of

human activity, including language. The very ability to perceive similarities or resemblances is a manifestation of "the powerful compulsion in former times to become and behave like something else."[6] This compulsion to imitate, to be like the other, is exhibited in the earliest of human behavior, including child's play, where the child not only imitates adults, in language and in social roles such as doctor or teacher, but even as objects like a train or windmill. The mimetic faculty is one of the most basic of human activities, and is present generally in nature. According to Benjamin, this "gift" of recognizing and producing similarities has changed historically, from early forms of dance and magic to modern forms of language and technological reproduction. After this brief examination of the history of mimesis, Benjamin asks what has become of the mimetic faculty and what remains of its potentials. Has it increasingly decayed from its ubiquitous place in the magic and enchantment of ancient peoples, or has the mimetic faculty merely been transformed?

Benjamin addresses the question by discussing the historical transformation of the mimetic faculty, and its ability to recognize and produce "nonsensuous similarity." For ancient peoples even the sky provided opportunities to exercise this ability, as is seen in the various forms of astrology and in magico-religious ritual which was supposed to influence the powers of the heavens.

Language, both spoken and written, says Benjamin, is connected to the mimetic faculty. From the recognition of the onomatopoeic character of some spoken words, to the representational quality of hieroglyphs, ideographs, and ultimately poetry, "nonsensuous similarities" are in evidence.[7] In summary, Benjamin argues that this "faculty" leads from mimetic magic to the flash of recognition of our similarity to the "other" which manifests itself through language,

> It seems fair to suppose that these were the stages by which the mimetic gift, which was once the foundation of occult practices, gained admittance to writing and language. In this way language may be seen as the highest level of mimetic behavior and the most complete archive of nonsensuous similarity: a medium into which the earlier powers of mimetic production and comprehension have passed without residue, to the point where they have liquidated those of magic.[8]

The question for critical theory and radical ecology is whether mimesis has indeed passed into language without residue, and, if not, whether the mimetic faculty can be resurrected and be put to use in a manner which overturns the culture of domination.

Michael Taussig has attempted to use Benjamin's and the early critical theorists' ideas about "the mimetic faculty" to explore the relationship between colonizer and colonized, of Western/European "civilization" and the others it has attempted to dominate. Taussig characterizes the mimetic faculty as "the nature that

culture uses to create second nature, the faculty to copy, imitate, make models, explore difference, yield into and become Other." This capacity should be understood as a form of "sympathetic magic" when speaking of practices where "the wonder of mimesis lies in the copy drawing on the character and power of the original to the point whereby the representation may even assume that character and that power."[9] One of the central questions for Taussig originates in the discourse of postmodernism's concerns with the issues of "essentialism and constructionism." In his "anthropological" investigations Taussig primarily concerns himself with the "social constructions" of sex, race, nationality, and identity. He probes the history of mimesis and the "mimesis of history," the telling of the story of history as it is reflected back by those who have become its "objects." For Taussig then the investigation of mimesis is an investigation into the possibility of social transformation,

> If I am correct in invoking a certain magic of the signifier and what Walter Benjamin took the mimetic faculty to be--namely, the compulsion to become the Other--and if, thanks to new social conditions and new techniques of reproduction (such as cinema and mass production of imagery), modernity has ushered in a veritable rebirth, a recharging and retooling (of) the mimetic faculty, then it seems to me that we are forthwith invited if not forced into the inner sanctum of mimetic mysteries where, in imitating, we will find distance from the imitated and hence gain some release from the suffocating hold of

> "constructionism" no less than the dreadfully passive view of nature it upholds.[10]

This is an invitation to get past the dualism of essentialism and constructionism, and much of the empty debate of contemporary social and political theory. (This invitation to release through imitative distance is also a theme of Irigaray's work, as will become clear later.)

Taussig borrows from both Adorno and Benjamin in this attempt at theoretical transformations. Taussig examines modern technological reproduction as well as the magic of contemporary shamen to understand the mimetic faculty, "My concern is to reinstate in and against the myth of Enlightenment, with its universal, context-free reason, not merely the resistance of the concrete particular to abstraction, but what I deem crucial to thought that moves and moves us--namely, its sensuousness, its mimeticity."[11] Taussig quotes Adorno on Benjamin's writing style, the question of style existing at the heart of Adorno's own concerns with the form of presentation of philosophy,

> (Benjamin's) thoughts press close to its object, seek to touch it, smell it, taste it and so thereby transform itself. Through this secondary sensuousness, they hope to penetrate down to the veins of gold which no classificatory procedure can reach, and at the same time avoid succumbing to the contingency of blind intuition. The radical reduction of the distance of the object also establishes the relation to potential praxis which later guided Benjamin's thinking.[12]

In addition to addressing the potential to transform thought through mimetic representation, Adorno also, in

the quoted essay, is critiquing the classificatory thought that is positivist science just as he would do persistently throughout his life. Here is where the idea of the mimetic provides both a critique of the positivist understanding of knowledge and the potential for philosophic writing that will have implications for political practice.

Again, Taussig's concerns were also the concerns of the critical theorists as is evident in his attempts to draw out the theoretical underpinnings which motivate his work. Indicating the close relation of Adorno to Hegel, Taussig emphasizes Adorno's reversals of the relationship of universal and particular, and how mimesis becomes a key element in Adorno's critique, "For Adorno and, I think Hegel (with different consequences), the sensuous moment of knowing includes a yielding and mirroring of the knower in the unknown, of thought in its object. This is clearly what Adorno often has in mind with his many references to mimesis, the obscure operator, so it seems to me, of his entire system."[13] This "dialectical" way of knowing involves a "yielding" to the other, the immersion of the self in the other, a loosening of boundaries of identity. As Taussig indicates, "This strange mixture of activity and passivity involved in yielding-knowing, this bodily mirroring of otherness and even ideas, is in the center of much of Horkheimer and Adorno's elusive discussion of mimesis, and precisely in the activist possibilities

within such yielding lie serious issues of mimesis and science, mimesis as an alternative science."[14] But mimesis is no simple path to correcting domination, rather it has also been used to install and intensify domination. The most often cited demonstration of the repressive power of mimesis is that of anti-Semitism as Horkheimer and Adorno repeatedly emphasized in the early work of critical theory. Racism is also infused with the mimetic, where stereotypic imitation becomes a means of domination and repression, an indispensable element in the formation of the racist consciousness. Anti-Semitism and racism share with fascism the use of mimesis to direct the mimetic faculty, as the critical theorists analyzed it under the idea of the "organized control of mimesis." As nature rebels against its repression it is channeled in ever new, ever old directions useful for domination. Taussig identifies the uniqueness in the early critical theorists' analysis,

> What makes Horkheimer and Adorno's thesis distinctive is that far from being side effectual, racism is seen as a manifestation of what is essential to modern civilization's cultural apparatus, namely continuous mimetic repression--understanding mimesis as both the faculty of imitation and the deployment of that faculty in sensuous knowing, sensuous Othering. A question then arises in this version of the history of the senses--from mimesis to the organized control of mimesis--as to whether the mimetic faculty can escape this fate of being used against itself, whether it could be used against being used against itself?[15]

Can mimesis escape its fate in the "administered society" of late capitalism where commodity fetishism takes on ever greater dimension, becoming truly global, threatening the existence of complex life on the planet, as the heat of exchange "warms" the earth? Is it possible to develop a new science, an alternative symbolic order, an other subjectivity which does not succumb to the "alienation" and "objectification" Marx spoke of? Does a new or old mimesis offer access to an alternative to the various forms of identity thinking, manifested as racism, sexism, class conflict, and ecological destruction?

Mimesis and Psychology

Before going on to some feminist encounters with the idea of mimesis in addressing the problem of domination and patriarchy, it is important to note a problem in recent attempts to develop a "post-Freudian" and "post-Lacanian" theory of psychoanalysis, and therefore a problem in developing alternative theories and practices of women's subjectivity or consciousness. An important reason for the turn to Lacanian psychoanalysis by many feminists and deconstructionists has been Lacan's development of an understanding of subjectivity that addresses problems he saw with Freud's notion of the Ego.[16] Lacan develops the idea of the "mirror stage" (or mirror phase) of development to help explain/understand the formation of the Ego or the "I". One important

interpreter of Lacan has even concluded, "Some critics have called the concept of the mirror stage Lacan's myth (just as the instinct was Freud's, or the collective unconscious was Carl Jung's). Other commentators have described the mirror stage as Lacan's only piece of 'empirical' data."[17] It is in the relation between "empirical" data and the idea of mimesis that a fundamental problem may exist. As Elizabeth Grosz has demonstrated, Lacan's understanding of the mirror stage is indebted to an article on mimicry and psychology written by Roger Caillois. In Lacan's "Mirror Stage" article he develops his idea of the organization of an I by the infant, an organization which occurs even before it has the ability to use language. This "primordial form" of the I is based on the image (or _imago_) the infant forms of itself, an image that is "fictional" but which will have enduring effects on the subsequent "social determination" of the agency of the ego. Lacan's claim that this pre-linguistic self-image has determinate effects on the human organism is supported by reference to effects of visual identification in other species, specifically female pigeons and migratory locusts. This observation about the effects of psychic organization reverses the usual understanding which asserts that organismic development _precedes_ psychological. Lacan mentions that the female pigeon must see another member of its species at the appropriate time as "a necessary condition for the

maturation of the gonad of the female pigeon...."[18] The same effect may be induced, he notes, by simply placing the pigeon before a mirror. Lacan generalizes from this empirical observation to make larger claims for the phenomenon, "Such facts are inscribed in an order of homeomorphic identification that would itself fall within the larger question of the meaning of beauty as both formative and erogenic."[19] When this observation is broadened furthered to include identifications in a larger field it raises other issues and questions circulating around the ideas of self and other, "But the facts of mimicry are no less instructive when conceived as cases of heteromorphic identification, in as much as they raise the problem of the signification of space for the living organism--psychological concepts hardly seem less appropriate for shedding light on these matters than ridiculous attempts to reduce them to the supposedly supreme law of adaptation."[20] Lacan seems to be saying that the whole representation of the not-I, of all of space and its occupants, is bound up in this mimetic process. This may have important implications for the radical ecological understanding of "self-identification" especially as it has been articulated by deep ecologists. (See above Chapters 3-5 on deep ecology.)

Grosz' further observations seem to uncritically follow Lacan's subsequent citation of Caillois on mimicry and psychology. The statements by all three analysts

which follow from the observations of Caillois on mimesis then become, at least, unsettled if Caillois's claims are taken at face value. As Grosz interprets it, Caillois's exploration of the relationship of mimicry and spatiality was a "powerful influence on Lacan's notions of the mirror stage, the order of the imaginary, and psychosis."[21] In the original essay, Caillois examined the behavior of insects, specifically the way they "mimic" other insects and their natural environment. This exploration of mimesis then provided a model or "analogue" for the understanding of forms of psychosis. The analysis results from what he claims mimesis reveals about the relationship of an organism to the space it occupies, "Mimesis is particularly significant in outlining the ways in which the relations between an organism and its environment are blurred and confused--the way in which its environment is not distinct from the organism but is an active internal component of its identity."[22] This seems like a very promising observation, especially with respect to the deep ecology concerns with identification, and in fact is at the basis of insightful observations by Caillois, Lacan and Grosz.[23] However, it is the additional claims by Caillois which are problematic and which Grosz does not challenge. As Grosz explains,

> Caillois claims that mimicry does not serve any adaptive function. Its purpose is not to ensure the survival of the species through disguising the

> insect, hiding it from its predators. Mimicry does not have survival value, for most predators rely on the sense of smell rather than of vision. Mimicry has no value in the dark. Caillois considers mimicry a "luxury" or excess over natural survival, inexplicable in terms of self-protection or species survival. He abandons naturalistic explanations to seek some kind of answer in psychology. The mimesis characteristic of certain species of insects has to do with distinctions it establishes between itself and its environment, including other species. Mimicry is a consequence not of space but of the <u>representation</u> of and captivation by space.[24]

(Here we have the beginnings of a "constructionist" argument about the relationships between identity and difference.)

Grosz cites in a footnote the basis for Caillois's determination that mimesis has no adaptive value, that the ability to camouflage itself does not further the survival of the individual and the species. The passage from the article on mimicry and psychosis provides empirical observations as evidence for its conclusions. Caillois is quoted directly,

> Generally speaking, one finds many remains of mimetic insects in the stomachs of predators. So it should come as no surprise that such insects sometimes have other and more effective ways to protect themselves. And conversely, some species that are inedible and would thus have nothing to fear, are also mimetic. It therefore seems that one ought to conclude with Cunot that this is an "epiphenomenon" whose "defensive utility appears to be nul."[25]

However, the conclusions derived from these empirical observations are illogical and are better explained by modern ecological understandings of mimesis and its relation to evolution.

There are a variety of ways to understand mimesis and its role in adaptation for both individual and species survival. One form of mimesis is Batesian mimicry, involving false warning coloration of species which works to its advantage against predators. A distasteful or poisonous model is mimicked by a species that a predator would otherwise find edible and therefore seek out. Examples include viceroy butterflies which mimic distasteful monarch butterflies; clearwing moth mimics of bees and wasps, and so on. The mimic gains advantage as the predator learns to avoid the distasteful or poisonous model, however, the model is disadvantaged because the predators' encounters with the edible and harmless mimics increases the time required for the predator to learn of the model's potential harmfulness, thus resulting in the consumption of the less than desirable model. The learning time for predators depends largely on the ratio of mimics to models, indeed if mimics outnumber models at a specific time predators may not learn to avoid the models. This explains why the mimics are usually less numerous than the inedible model. It also helps explain why mimics frequently mimic several model species.

Another type of adaptive mimicry, called "Mullerian mimicry," occurs when two species which are both distasteful or dangerous mimic one another, such as bees and wasps, which both have characteristic black and yellow banding. Predators will encounter both species more

frequently than they would one species alone, therefore reducing the learning time necessary for the predator to avoid harm.

A third type of mimesis, "molecular mimicry," occurs with some parasites which disguise themselves as part of their hosts, "In this phenomenon, antigenic determinants of parasitic origin (known as eclipsed antigens) resemble host antigens to such an extent that they do not elicit the formation of host antibodies. This, of course, allows the parasite to dwell safely inside the host's tissues in a more or less uncontested fashion, protected from the host's immune response."[26]

The presence of mimetic insects in the stomachs of predators is not scientific proof or even a reasonable argument against the adaptive function of mimesis. Contrary to viewing it as an epiphenomenon with a "nul defensive utility," mimesis has a very broad explanatory power in species evolution. The question for Lacanian psychoanalysts and those who develop a metapsychology from his observations then is, how does this change the status of mimesis and "identification" in "the mirror stage, the order of the imaginary and in psychosis?" How does an alternative understanding of mimesis, one which recognizes its "natural" adaptive function, affect the possibilities of new subjectivities and a new relationship to nature?

Additionally, it should be noted, the focus by Caillois on the visual as the site of mimesis fails to

adequately account for other mimetic adaptations such as the calls of birds and other auditory imitative behavior such as bullsnakes' mimicry of the rattler. Vision and image are only one, although important, aspect of mimesis in evolutionary adaptation.[27]

Feminist Mimesis

The use of the idea or category of mimesis by women in the development of feminist theory has varied greatly, but it may be helpful to examine two basic ways it has been of use. The first consists of those who retain the largely aesthetic understanding of mimesis, the second goes beyond this to link the body or materiality to mimetic behavior and so comes closer to the strategy of Adorno who tends to combine the aesthetic with the "material," natural, or "anthropological" understandings of the term. Even when the category remains largely aesthetic it still has considerable critical power to reveal the usually hidden or unconscious processes of exclusion, marginalizing, or "othering" characteristic of patriarchal and dominating society. For example, Julia Kristeva achieves significant insights into the workings of language and the possibility of the "speaking subject" by examining "mimesis and the poetic language inseparable from it."[28]

Other women have also focused on the traditional notions of mimesis to provide critical analyses of

literary works and their relationship to politics and gender. Marjorie Graber has produced an excellent study on the idea of the hero, where she claims that "greatness" is an effect of mimesis. She combines analyses of the Wizard of Oz, baseball, Charlotte's Web, and other examples (including references to the Odyssey), to show how the idea of the hero is related to the attempt to "go home again," with the resulting play of phallic and maternal figures. As the hero attempts to return home, there is a deep ambiguity which arises in relation to the longing for origins. This is exemplified in the story of a certain hero and his relationship to the female spider's web (the web eventually raising "Wilbur the pig" to the status of cultural icon), "It is clear that the spider's transgressive and sexualized power, and, indeed, her relationship to the psychoanalytic figure of the phallic woman, renders her potentially threatening, as well as nurturant."[29] Graber concludes that imitation of greatness has become a staple of politics, whereby greatness is now "manufactured" by "spin-doctors," the politicians' image consultants. Greatness and the manufactured hero of politics are about the "fantasy of wholeness" which is also a "fantasy of control" through a powerful all-knowing agency or subject, divine or otherwise. Graber links the literary fantasies to the political, "It seems clear that anxieties about greatness in literature are closely tied to anxieties about

national, political, and cultural greatness, and that the more anxious the government, the more pressure is placed upon the humanities to textualize and naturalize the category of the 'great.'"[30]

An even more radical challenge to existing political arrangements, beyond deconstruction of the images and texts of the phallogocentric order, come from analyses which use the category of mimesis to examine the idea of subjectivity--how it is constituted, possible alternatives, and how they might be brought into being. This can be seen in the work of those who challenge the idea of mimesis as imitation, that is, of mimesis as a problem of representation of the truth. Plato's concerns were those surrounding the deceptive quality of mimesis, mimesis as imitative representation. Those who assumed the position of others risked losing their true selves to the irrationality which essentially marked those in inferior social roles, such as women. Beyond the danger of becoming too much like inferior beings, there was also the danger of accepting the poet's or artist's version of the truth. Poetic truth did not come through <u>knowledge</u> but was merely a <u>belief</u> which happened to be true. This presented the danger that those educated for political power might come to believe truth can be arrived at through deceptive means as well as through the light which reason sheds.

The relationship of truth to representation goes to the heart of the so-called "postmodern" concerns of recent social and political theory, especially as they have appeared within feminism. One version of the challenge to received understandings of subjectivity, and to subjectivity's relationship to mimesis, can be found in Ruth Leys's essay on gender and the "subject of imitation."[31] Leys draws on psychoanalysis to achieve insights she believes are not available to those who rely on "object relations theory," or those who simply reject the work of Freud, Lacan and others.[32] Leys claims an adequate psychoanalysis takes seriously the idea of the unconscious. She believes that without a strong understanding of the unconscious, feminist theories tend to relapse into dichotomous structures of analysis, such as those of Catherine MacKinnon and others who fundamentally see violence as a simple relation between the internal and the external, of victim and victimizer, "a point of view that inevitably reinforces a politically retrograde stereotype of the female as a purely passive victim."[33] Leys's own analysis focuses on the problem of dissociation or multiple personality disorder, and specifically on the role of hypnosis or "suggestion" in the history of identification of the "disorder" and in its place in the history of psychoanalysis. Her analysis relies on the work of psychoanalytic philosopher Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen and the central role he attributes to the

process of mimesis in the coming into being of the "subject."[34]

As Leys presents her study of the role of hypnosis in the treatment of dissociation, she aims at uncovering an alternative understanding of the concept of identification. She believes the question of how the process of identification takes place runs through recent feminist discussions of sexual identity and difference. What she attempts to do is bring the categories of psychoanalysis into that discussion, but this is not the same analysis as that of either Freud or Lacan. She borrows from Borch-Jacobsen's critique of Freud where he asserts that before there is a subject who has desire for some object there is a process of mimetic identification. He claims it is not the "primordial" process of desire which is at work in creating the desiring subject,

> What comes first is a tendency toward identification, a primordial tendency which then gives rise to a desire; and this desire is, from the outset, a (mimetic, rivalrous) desire to oust the incommodious other from the place the pseudo-subject already occupies in fantasy....If desire is satisfied in and through identification, it is not in the sense in which a desire somehow precedes its "gratification," since no desiring subject (no "I," no ego) precedes the mimetic identification: identification brings the desiring subject into being, and not the other way around.[35]

A compelling reanalysis of a central scene of Freud's development of psychoanalysis best demonstrates what Borch-Jacobsen means. The example is Freud's observations

on his grandson's game of "fort-da" played with a wooden spool tied to a string. The child throws the spool out of sight ("Fort") and then expresses pleasure when the spool is retrieved and is once again present before him (da). The child repeats the action over and over, delighting each time in the reappearance of the toy. Freud is perplexed that the child would cause his own discomfort only to be able to then achieve pleasure. Freud interprets the spool as a desired object, a substitute for the primary desired object of the mother. Freud accepts as explanation that the child is achieving mastery or control over the pain it experiences when its desires are unmet. The child masters the object rather than be forced to passively submit to it. As Borch-Jacobsen parenthetically summarizes Freud's position, "By sacrificing myself freely to the law or the destiny that determines me from the outside, I make it mine and thus I determine myself: this well-known schema of speculative dialectics no doubt counts for something in the fascination that this text has held for certain French psychoanalysts."[36]

Borch-Jacobsen has an alternative, at least as plausible, interpretation of the scene. Rather than see the act as that of moving within a paradigm of domination, from the passive to the active pole, does it not make more sense to see the game as a process of identification? The child identifies with the position of the mother, "It

ought to be obvious, indeed, that when the child abandons his toys (what he 'has'), he is treating them the way his mother treats him. In this sense, by throwing his toys away he is not so much sacrificing the mother as himself: he himself is drawing away from himself by playing the mother's role (the 'active role')."[37] This understanding of identification and the place of the subject disrupts accounts of desire in psychoanalysis in both its Freudian and Lacanian forms. This is an alternative understanding of subject formation beyond an economy of pleasure, "There is no goal orientation here, no calculation, no economy, at least not at first: desire is not oriented by pleasure, it is (dis)oriented by mimesis--and thus it lies beyond the pleasure principle."[38] Mimetic identification is what <u>orients</u> desire. This also means that the subject is an effect of the process of mimetic identification. Preceding all phases of development as theorized by Freud is a period of "transitivist indistinction of self and other," the period of mimetic identification before a subject, before the distinction between self and other, mimic and model. This mimetic identification cannot be remembered because there was no "specular distance" from which the subject might observe the action which could later be represented, "The representation involved (or that does that involving) does not belong to the order of the specular, the visible, the theoretico-theatrical (it

is not mimesis as mimesis has been understood since Plato and Aristotle)."[39]

The point of Leys's examination of multiple personality disorder in the context of Borch-Jacobsen's critique of traditional psychoanalysis is to illuminate the relationship of "violence and female subjectivity."[40] Leys makes several summary observations. First, she believes too much reliance is placed on a notion "of the already-constituted female subject" in which violence comes in from the outside to split apart what was a "functional plurality of component parts." This involves a "sexual coding" of gender, in her opinion, in which the female subject is represented as a passive or innocent victim. Alternatively understood, the effect of mimetic identification for victims of violence is seen in an inability to represent the violent act because there may be no "subject" who was standing outside the act, no spectator who could represent it like an unfolding drama. Like Freud's patients who come to the deepest point in analysis where they cannot represent the critical scene of trauma, but can only repeat the experience, the victim "experiences the suffering again."[41]

Additionally, and more generally, Leys is arguing for recognition of a deep ambiguity at the beginnings of subjectivity, "Thus one major implication of my argument is that identification, including identification with the

mother, is never a matter of pure pleasure: negativity and ambivalence are constitutive of subjectivity or alterity."[42] This means for Leys that she cannot accept Julia Kristeva's analysis of the pre-Oedipal, mother-child relationship as governed, in a heavily Lacanian influenced fashion, by the "Imaginary Father." Leys explains her reservations which result from the alternative theory of mimetic identification, "another way of expressing my distance from Kristeva is to say that on the mimetic paradigm love and hate--conflict--emerge prior to the point where we are used to locating them, not between subject and subject, or subject and object,...but at the very moment of the mimetic installation of the subject on a constituitively abyssal ground."[43] Leys further believes that the theory of mimetic identification leads to a "Foucauldian" understanding of power relations and of potentials for production of female subjectivity. That is, the "gendered subject" can best be viewed as the effect of "paranoid identifications with mimetic rivals" whose status itself is determined by "a 'subjugating' law in the Foucauldian sense."[44] This implies for Leys that there is no possibility of any naive return to a utopian politics that existed before the "Law" or any which would immediately emerge with "revolutionary overthrow." How exactly this psychoanalytic interpretation of mimetic identification jibes with Foucault's social theory is not explained, as it must be if it is to retain coherence.

This may be difficult considering Foucault's antagonism to the psychoanalytic project.[45]

Irigaray and Mimesis

Finally, Luce Irigaray has followed a "strategy of mimesis" in the attempt to begin a challenge to the current order, a challenge which might make possible "her aim to effect a shift in the position of the subject of enunciation."[46] In other words, Irigaray's project is to help make it possible for women to speak for themselves as themselves, when throughout social, political and philosophical history they have been silenced, spoken for and spoken about. Central to the conceptual apparatus Irigaray uses and opposes is Lacanian psychoanalytics. Irigaray is notorious for the difficulty involved in unpacking her language and style. Instead of making this a too simple summary of her concerns, for our present needs we can focus on her understanding of mimesis in relationship to the possibility of female subjectivity and do this through the elaborations of her writings by both sympathetic and critical commentators.

Without going into an endless analysis of Irigaray's relationship to Lacanian psychoanalytics and Derridean deconstruction, the place of mimesis can be unsystematically viewed for resemblances to the other perspectives of mimesis already examined and yet to be developed.[47] Without explicating the debate within

feminism over psychoanalytics generally and the reappropriation of Lacanian psychoanalytics specifically it is still helpful to establish some basic understandings of the categories and contexts which lead to the adoption of a strategy of mimesis. Rosi Braidotti has provided many helpful insights in her interpretations of Irigaray and helps to establish some basic outlines of the discussion, "For Irigaray, as for most poststructuralists, the subject is not a substance but rather a process of negotiation between material and semiotic conditions that affect one's embodied, situated self. In this perspective 'subjectivity' names the process that consists in stringing together--under the fictional unity of a grammatical 'I'--different forms of active and reactive interaction with and resistance to these conditions."[48] Several points should probably be made about this observation. The subject is a process, or better yet, this understanding of subjectivity is concerned with the "process of becoming-subject." The subject mediates between the "materiality" of the embodied being and the structures of language, and it does this in time, that is, the subject is fundamentally historical and material. The representation of the subject in language is through reference to an "I" which is fictional, that is, established through the fantasies produced by desire. As Braidotti interprets this, the process involves a constant shifting and negotiating of willful choice and unconscious

drives, "It implies that what sustains the entire process of becoming-subject is the will to know, the desire to say, the desire to speak, as a founding, primary, vital, necessary, and therefore original desire to become."[49] Leaving aside for the moment the possible conflict or compatibilities between this understanding of the founding moments of subjectivity and those implied or expressed by Borch-Jacobsen, the strategy of mimesis still does not self-evidently follow from Braidotti's observations. However, the necessity for the mimetic strategy can be seen as the consequence of the Lacanian understanding of the place of the subject in language and the resulting impossibility for "woman" to speak at all. Irigaray (like Derrida) interrogates the history of philosophy and the philosophy of history to show what has been excluded or marginalized. The excluded other is found to have the uncanny function of serving as the pivot or hinge of the philosophies, that is, the philosophy's "coherence" depends on that which it excludes. Irigaray seems to take this practice of following the trail of the marginalized and excluded further than Derrida by refusing to stop at the recognition of the aporetic gaps in philosophical and literary texts, refusing to accept the silences and exclusions as a functioning of the "feminine," as the mark of the possibility of masculine or phallic philosophy. Irigaray attempts to further interrogate this abyssal center of philosophy seeking to liberate the excluded

other from its servitude. Irigaray's project does not stop with the recognition of the functioning of the feminine, of "woman" and women in philosophy, literature, and politics, but attempts to establish the possibilities for a truly female subject who can speak for herself. She recognizes that subjects are formed in a complex system of "structuring effects" through "variables" such as, "sexual morphology," cultural identity, age, religion, and so on. However, for Irigaray as for most feminists, sexuality has a privileged place in the history of these structuring effects. As Braidotti indicates,

> Irigaray also acknowledges the privileged position granted to sexuality in Western practices of subjectivity. Sexuality is site of resistance and contradiction, and because the implications of the phallogocentric institutionalization of sexuality are so much more negative for women, feminists cannot afford to merely cast off their sexed identity: they rather need to critically and thoroughly repossess it.[50]

Feminist analyses of western civilization, and especially society under capitalism and continuing patriarchy, have shown how women have been systematically denied a voice in their own self-becoming. In the analyses which rely on the structural linguistics influenced understanding of Lacanian psychoanalytics, "woman" has been found to serve as the condition of possibility of language itself, and cannot itself be truly represented. For Irigaray then the mimetic strategy involves occupying the masculine position in order to

disrupt its claims and open a space for what is supposedly unrepresentable, the female subject. It is an attempt to raise a voice for those who cannot speak for themselves--not yet. This is a strategy of an alternative structure of representation, as Braidotti has explained,

> In my reading of Irigaray's strategy I have argued that her notion of "mimesis" amounts to a collective repossession by women of the images and representations of "Woman" as they have been coded in language, culture, science, knowledge, and discourse and consequently internalized in the heart, mind, body, and lived experience of women. Mimetic repetition as a textual and political strategy is the active subversion of established modes of the representation and expression of women's experience. In this respect the redefinition of the subject Woman/women as both representation and experience amounts to no less than a change of civilization, of genealogy, of a sense of history. Feminist countergenealogies are the inroads to a new symbolic system by women.[51]

The strategy of mimetic repetition is rooted in the psychoanalytic understanding of how to treat a disturbance of the patient or analysand which has resulted in the inability of the individual to fully experience what life has to offer. Freud's "talking cure" is the attempt to raise to consciousness what has been repressed into the unconscious but which still manifests itself in a symptomology that makes it impossible for the patient to adequately function.[52] For the analyst then the process of relieving the patient from the burden expressed by dysfunctional symptoms is centered around allowing the repressed contents of the unconscious to resurface to the

level of language. Margaret Whitford has argued that a psychoanalytic interpretation helps explain Irigaray's strategy of mimesis,

> In the individual psyche, unconscious phantasy is determining to the extent that it remains unconscious. When in the psychoanalytic process, it achieves an access to consciousness via language (what Irigaray refers to as symbolization or "the operations of sublimation"), it becomes possible to effect a shift or change in the phantasy which enables the analysand to change and brings about real transformations in the personality in the direction of greater flexibility and creativity, and less rigidity or repression.[53]

The current symbolic order is based on the male's acquisition of language which occurs with the development of the individual male Ego. This process is fundamentally dependent on the child's relationship to its parents. Without going into the details of the psychoanalytic account of the process, and without simultaneously noting additional or counter-tendencies resulting from Borch-Jacobsen's account of this process, it can still be said that under existing socio-historical conditions the process of identity formation for the male child involves the exclusion and separation of the mother from his "imagined" or fantasized identity. Whitford concludes that this is at the root of current social and political problems, "The scission of epistemology from its sources is linked to a model rationality (symbolized as male) in which the symbolic female is dominated or repressed, and 'transcended'. Irigaray suggests that this has led to the

apotheosis of rationality--modern technology--and to apparently unstoppable processes of destruction."[54] The rationality Whitford speaks of is a specific model based on the process of exclusion,

> Exclusion is a process governed by the male imaginary (i.e. identity, or A is A, involves exclusion: A is not B); another way of putting it is to say that it is the way the male imaginary deals with sexual difference. What is important is that rationality is categorized by Irigaray as male, not in order to oppose it, which would be self-defeating, but in order to suggest a more adequate conceptualization, in which, in psychoanalytic terms, the male does not repress or split off the female/unconscious, but acknowledges or integrates it.[55]

The strategy of mimesis then involves occupying the male position in order to disrupt it thus making a space for possible other, female subjects. This strategy also is necessary in another sense, implied in Whitford's observation that simple opposition to the male form of rationality would be dangerous and ultimately counterproductive. Simple opposition would merely amount to women returning to their place in the male order of exclusion. To simply proclaim a female rationality incommensurable to male rationality would be to reenact the dominant symbolic order based on the process of exclusion. As Whitford mentions, mimesis also serves an "ecological" function,

> We might note also that of the terms Irigaray uses: mimesis, mimetisme, masque, etc., one of them, mimetisme, usually translated mimeticism, comes from the domain of animal ethology and means 'camouflage'

> or 'protective colouring'. I think this may be relevant too. Irigary may be arguing, I think, that women also need to protect themselves against (re)assimilation and destruction by the masculine economy.[56]

Even more clearly, Whitford believes Irigaray understands the feminine as receptacle for the natural world, the male psyche's attempt to distance itself from nature,

> It is significant that Irigaray stresses that nature (the natural world) is not respected. This is not simply a version of ecofeminism (though it is that too), but part of her argument about the symbolic distribution, and the allocation of the "lower functions" to women. The symbolic distribution is hierarchical. What is being disrespected is those parts of himself that the male imaginary has split off and projected--into the world, on to women.[57]

At the risk of repeating the same point again, another observer of Irigaray's mimetic style, Judith Butler, has clearly and concisely presented the core of Irigaray's observations on the operations of Plato's philosophy of exclusion. Butler begins the exposition by observing the similarities between Irigaray and Derrida regarding the role of exclusion in philosophy and language,

> For both Derrida and Irigaray, it seems, what is excluded from this binary is also <u>produced</u> by it in the mode of exclusion and has no separable or fully independent existence as an absolute outside. A constitutive or relative outside is, of course, composed of a set of exclusions that are nevertheless <u>internal</u> to that system as its own nonthematizable necessity. It emerges within the system as incoherence, disruption, a threat to its own systematicity.[58]

Butler's analysis concentrates on Plato's Timaeus and a passage, "which is about the very problem of passage: namely, that passage by which a form can be said to generate its own sensible representation."[59] As Butler translates Plato's passage, there are three "nature's" involved in the reproduction, or the representation, of a Form, "The first, which is the process of generation; the second, that in which the generation takes place; and the third, that of which the thing generated is a resemblance naturally produced." Plato then asserts as example that we may "liken the receiving principle to a mother, and the source or spring to a father, and the intermediate nature to a child."(50d)[60] What becomes disruptive for Plato's explanation of reproductive mimesis, what becomes central to Irigaray's mimetic strategy, is the proclaimed unrepresentability of the mother/receptacle. Butler summarizes,

> In effect, the receiving principle potentially includes all bodies, and so applies universally, but its universal applicability must not resemble at all, ever those eternal realities (eidos) that in the Timaeus prefigure universal forms, and that pass into the receptacle. There is here a prohibition on resemblance (mimeta), which is to say that this nature cannot be said to be like either the eternal Forms or their material, sensible, or imaginary copies.[61]

But this "unrepresentable" cannot be identified with the mother, the womb, or any other "thing" which can be seen, anything which is "specular." So the "feminine" is not

representable at all. (Butler observes that Kristeva does in fact "conflate" the unrepresentable or "unthematizable" feminine or receptacle with maternal/nurse figures.)[62] Butler then asks how language attempts to capture that unrepresentable feminine "outside" of linguistic representation, "Is it not the case that there is within any discourse, and thus within Irigaray's as well, a set of constitutive exclusions that are inevitably produced by the circumscription of the feminine as that which monopolizes the sphere of exclusion?"[63] In Plato's attempt to exclude the feminine/female from the field of representability he initiates a tradition of western philosophy where the male subject is viewed as self producing,

> (Irigaray's) reading establishes the cosmogony of the Forms in the Timaeus as a phallic fantasy of a fully self-constituted patrilineality, and this fantasy of auto genesis or self-constitution is effected through a denial and cooptation of the female capacity for reproduction. Of course, the "she" who is the "receptacle" is neither a universal nor a particular, and because for Plato anything that can be named is either a universal or a particular, the receptacle cannot be named.[64]

But this is the aim of Irigaray's strategy of mimesis, to name the unnameable, or at least the unnameable within this all pervasive "phallic" order. As Butler indicates, Plato is himself forced to name the unnameable under the threat that a multiplicity of names may be assigned to it. Just prior to Plato's exclusion of the receptacle of

representation from the order of the representable, he indicates that a man must control his passions or appetites. If he is unable to control this "evidence of the soul's materiality" he risks succumbing to the irrationality of the material, and therefore he will increasingly resemble women and even "beasts." The male serves as the model which is only inferiority represented in women and animals. But an inferior copy still has some resemblance to the original and so invites some naming. The "feminine" invites philosophical contradiction. Plato claims the nature which supports the process of representation has no form, no ontological status, and so cannot properly be represented in language, yet he names this "receptacle" or space. If no name were provided then the system of representation would be threatened,

> Precisely because this receptacle can only occasion a radically improper speech, that is, a speech in which all ontological claims are suspended, the terms by which it is named must be consistently applied, not in order to make the name fit the thing named but precisely because that which is to be named can have no proper name, bounds and threatens the sphere of linguistic propriety, and, therefore, must be controlled by a forcibly imposed set of nominative rules.[65]

Irigaray's strategy then is to inhabit the language of the philosopher in order to reveal what remains as the condition of its own possibility even as it is excluded from representation. The strategy is to mime the passages which operate to exclude the feminine and present woman as

an inferior copy. The point is to show how what is excluded as unrepresentable is already within the system of representation. Mimetic representation will be repeated, reproduced, copied until "this emergence of the outside within the system calls into question its systematic closure and its pretension to be self-grounding."[66] In miming the philosophers and psychoanalysts Irigaray both violates the "prohibition against resemblance" and the "notion of resemblance as copy."[67] The system of representation is shown to be an effect of power, "Insofar as the Platonic account of the origin is itself a displacement of a maternal origin, Irigaray merely mimes that very act of displacement, displacing the displacement, showing that origin to be an 'effect' of a certain ruse of phallogocentric power."[68] Irigaray is playing with representation, using mimesis to disrupt the prevailing order and to make a space for an alternative representation from which women are not excluded, "To play with mimesis is thus, for a woman, to try to recover the place of her exploitation by discourse, without allowing herself to be simply reduced to it...so as to make 'visible,' by an effect of playful repetition, what was supposed to remain invisible: the cover up of a possible operation of the feminine in language."[69]

However, Butler is not satisfied with the strategy, for it seems in its miming to reenact the logic of identity it seeks to challenge. Why should the "feminine"

be identified with the space of unrepresentability? Butler insistently recalls the consequences of Plato's exclusions which go beyond the feminine,

> Plato's scenography of intelligibility depends on the exclusion of women, slaves, children, and animals, where slaves are characterized as those who do not speak his language, and who, in not speaking his language, are considered diminished in their capacity for reason. This xeno phobic exclusion operates through the production of racialized Others, and those whose "natures" are considered less rational by virtue of their appointed task in the process of laboring to reproduce the conditions of private life. This domain of the less rational human bounds the figure of human reason, producing that "man" as one who is without a childhood; is not a primate, and so relieved of the necessity of eating, defecating, living and dying; one who is not a slave, but always a property holder; one whose language remains originary and untranslatable. This is a figure of disembodiment, but one that is nevertheless a figure of a body, a bodying forth of a masculinized rationality, the figure of a male that is not a body, a figure in crisis, a figure that enacts a crisis it cannot fully control.[70]

Butler wonders if Irigaray's strategy, which tends to keep in place a heterosexual economy, might present the possibility of not only the feminine "penetrating" the masculine order of representation, but also the feminine the feminine, and the masculine the masculine, to the point where the status of the terms of feminine and masculine begins to destabilize. The destabilization of reason's claim to represent itself would then come from a variety of directions,

> To the extent that a set of reverse mimes emerge from those quarters, they will not be the same as each

> other; if there is an occupation and reversal of the master's discourse, it will come from many quarters, and those resignifying practices will converge in ways that scramble the self-replicating presumptions of reason's mastery. For if the copies speak, or if what is merely material begins to signify, the scenography of reason is rocked by the crisis on which it was always built.[71]

Mimetic Possibilities

The question now is, how do these observations by feminist theorists of representation and female subjectivity along with those feminist challenges to the dominant ideology of science come together in a way which addresses the concerns and claims of ecofeminism? Further, how might Adorno's development and transformation of Benjamin's understanding of mimesis stimulate new possibilities for radical ecology? How can the complex critique of male domination be articulated with radical ecology's central concerns about the destruction of nature? Can the idea/term/concept/process of mimesis enlighten us about the process of the domination of nature, especially those conjunctions of dominations which include women? Can the nature that is used by culture to create second nature be transformed once more to become the "culture used by nature to restore nature," to end its unnecessary destruction, and pointless suffering?

The strength of feminism has been its ability, based on its recognition of the unfreedom and suffering of actual women in their day-to-day lives, to generate a

variety of analyses which have revealed the depth and breadth of the domination of women under social systems controlled by and for the benefit of men. Further, women with feminist commitments have been able to show an adequate answer to the problem does not consist in a "liberal" solution of equal inclusion in the existing system. The problem of domination goes to the very structure of language and beyond to the unconscious imaginings of both men and women, to how we become gendered subjects capable of speech, and to the question of how the images, concepts and practices of society can be changed. Central to this desired change is the impossible image of the new world of the future to be formed in the present. What image(s) will spark the imaginations, open the unconscious, and provide the energy to motivate other individuals and new generations to continue hoping and struggling for a changed world, a world where suffering recedes and the ideas of freedom and happiness can truly fulfill themselves in concrete reality?

To ask these questions might seem to have already surrendered to an optimism contradicting so many representations of critical theory as the "Melancholy Science."[72] What I want to examine here is the similarity of Adorno's concerns to many of those voiced by feminism and ecofeminism. This is not an attempt to claim that the concerns or the concepts and terms used are the same, that

there is an identity between them, but it does seem correct to claim that the similarities are not fortuitous but result instead from the fact that they are related through the objects of their studies. This would be perfectly in keeping with Adorno's temperament and his belief that "Truth is objective, not plausible."[73] As Susan Buck-Morss has indicated,

> The uniquely individual experiences of critical subjectivity ran parallel because they focused on particulars which reflected the same objective reality, and it followed that collaboration was possible among intellectuals even when they worked alone. Nothing pleased Adorno more than when a friend came to similar insights independently, for he considered it a validation of their correctness.[74]

What needs to be examined here is Adorno's understanding of how the idea of mimesis helps illuminate an understanding of aesthetic phenomenon, including the relationship of aesthetics to: the domination of nature, subjectivity, and new possibilities (the not-yet).

Often mimesis seems to be equated with aesthetic behavior, as when the mimetic is represented as representation in poetry, painting, or music themselves. Adorno does not collapse mimesis into aesthetics,

> Aesthetic behaviour is neither mimesis pure and simple nor the repression of mimesis. It is a process set in motion by mimesis, a process also in which mimesis itself survives through adaptation. This process shapes both the relation of the individual to art and the historical macrocosm. It congeals in works of art in so far as they represent

> immanent movement, tension and the possibility of release of tension.[75]

Mimesis "survives" in the form of aesthetic behavior, but it is not unchanged, and this raises the question of the possibility of recuperation of the mimetic impulse, and of what forms a recovered mimesis might take in relation to a world freed of domination. Negatively, the triumph of one transformation of mimesis, "instrumental rationality," is the death of reason more broadly understood,

> Thinking begins to turn around in circles when it shrinks back from the task of sublimating mimetic behaviour. The deadly dichotomization of emotion and thought is a historical result that can be undone. Ratio devoid of mimesis negates itself. (Ends, the raison d'etre of raison, are qualitative and the mimetic faculty is a qualitative faculty.) This self-negation of reason, it should be added, is historically necessary: as the world objectively loses its openness, it tends to have less and less need for spirit, which is defined by its openness; indeed, the world has become quite intolerant of spirit.[76]

The intolerance for openness to otherness or the non-identical is a manifestation of "reified consciousness." Fredric Jameson has helpfully located within negative dialectics the place of the critique of capitalism Adorno borrows from Marx, and shown that it is intimately connected to a certain understanding of the psychology of the individual and to the figure of mimesis.[77] Capitalism as it consolidated itself especially from 1945 to the 1960s was also gaining increased control over

subjectivity. As Jameson argues, Adorno's writing moves between figures of private property and personal identity,

> The figures of the tendential restriction of the individual subject, and its increasing penetration by the social division of labor, rejoin the language of Capital itself, and Adorno can speak of an "organic composition of capital" within the psychic subject: that is to say, an increasingly higher percentage of mental machinery and instrumental operations as opposed to living human labor, to the free subjectivity whose role is ever more diminished. Now human creativity shrinks to machine-minding and reason to a fitful organic impulse.[78]

Reification for Adorno however, again, should not be viewed as identical to the crude or orthodox Marxist understanding of "alienated objectification of subjectivity" exemplified in the factory setting alone, although it is that too. Martin Jay makes clear that Adorno's understanding of reification owes as much to Nietzsche as Marx in that reification is better understand throughout Adorno's writings as "the suppression of heterogeneity in the name of identity."[79] Mimesis provides an avenue of resistance to reification, resistance to the near total suppression of otherness which still assumes the name of reason, but which has become a reason turned against itself, reduced to mere means. How can mimesis resist the logic of identity, the collapse of the unique characteristics of the particular or the individual into a positivistically manipulable variable? As Adorno explains, mimesis must become an ally of the new, "At the same time thrill is mimetic behaviour:

it responds to abstractness in mimetic ways. Now, it is only through the new that mimesis can be so firmly wedded to rationality that it will not regress, for ratio itself becomes mimetic through the thrill of the new."[80] Of course "the new" has also become an integral part of capitalism, especially "late capitalism" with its increasing reliance on fashion--change of style;

> In its original economic setting, novelty is that characteristic of consumer goods through which they are supposed to set themselves off from the self-same aggregate supply, stimulating consumer decisions subject to the needs of capital....Art has appropriated this economic category. The new in art is the aesthetic counterpart to the expanding reproduction of capital in society. Both hold out the promise of undiminished plenitude.[81]

The ever recurring image of the advertiser is the appearance of the new product which in its fantastic representation quenches the ideal consumer's never ending thirst for more. Capitalism portrays the answer to the end of suffering as the latest consumer item, art offers an alternative reality. Of course nothing would ever be so simple for Adorno as to say that the realization of the new would be Utopia, for "The new is the longing for the new, not the new itself. This is the curse of everything new. Being a negative of the old, the new is subservient to the old while considering itself to be Utopian."[82] How is the time after suffering to be represented? Here is the problem of representing the unrepresentable again, but this is an unrepresentable future not the unrepresentable

before the (male) subject. What light is shed by mimesis on the problem of the unrepresentability of the Utopian future?

The utopia of undiminished plenitude is the image art offers against the repetition of the same and suffering within the logic of identity and the domination of nature, but mimesis, as Adorno presents it, is at the core of art's mission, "Mimesis is the ideal of art, not some practical method or subjective attitude aimed at expressive values. What the artist contributes to expression is his ability to mimic, which sets free in him the expressed substance."[83] Adorno attempts to explain this freeing of the substance of the artist (which is not the same as subjective expression as usually understood in aesthetic philosophy), and he does this through discussion of the "linguistic character of art" (which should not be confused with language as one medium of aesthetic expression). The "linguistic construction" in art including writing such as by James Joyce, may develop to the point where discursive language is "subordinated" to "attempts to move from communicative to mimetic language."[84] The "speechless" language of art is a moment in art that has "priority" over even the "significative" in poetry, music, sculpting, for example. In art work, for example Etruscan vases, this key element is present in an individual form, "As for those vases, their similarity to language seems to say something like 'this is me' or

'here I come', asserting a selfhood which is not carved out of the interdependent totality of being by identifying thought but stands on its own. In the same way, a speechless animal, say a rhinoceros, seems to be saying 'I am a rhino.'"[85] This declaration on the part of the art work like that of the individual animal is an assertion of its uniqueness and of its participation in "spirit," as Adorno explains,

> It is as if art works were re-enacting the process through which the subject comes painfully into being. They do so by adapting themselves to the subject by means of the structural properties they acquire. Art possesses expression not when it conveys subjectivity, but when it reverberates with the primal history of subjectivity and ensoulment. Any kind of emotional <u>tremolo</u> that wants to capture this is a pale surrogate of this primary trembling.[86]

What is being imitated is the process which brings into being the unique and therefore inimitable. In addition, in Adorno's theory of aesthetics, mimesis has an ambivalent relationship within art, it is the basis for the critical subjectivity made possible by "authentic" art, but it also participates in that adapting function imposed by society's domination of the individual,

> This modification of mimesis is the constitutive act of spiritualization in art, prior to any reflection upon spirit which develops spiritualization further. Spirit is already posited in this modified mimesis by the work; perhaps spirit even occurs in the original form of mimesis itself, which would make mimesis the physiological progenitor, as it were, of spirit. On the other hand, modified mimesis has to bear some of the blame for art's affirmative essence because it

> mitigates pain, making it controllable within a spiritual totality without really changing it.[87]

For Adorno then, art remains within the sphere of "universal alienation" but it is at least partially less alienated to the extent that "in art everything passes through spirit" so that it is "humanized in a non-repressive, non-violent way." Art is forced to use the means of domination of nature to some extent in order to express the possibility of an alternative existence without domination, alienation or suffering. Expression in art then is part of the attempt to create a new subjectivity, "The emancipation of society from the predominance of material, economic conditions aims at creating a true subject which has been stymied so far. Seen from this point of view, expression reflects not only the subject's hubris but also its just complaint about the failure of subjectivity, expression being the cipher for the possibility of that subjectivity."[88] This cipher or hieroglyph of subjectivity is an image of a future possibility, where suffering is absent and pleasure and happiness reign. The moment of joy in art has a certain playfulness to it which, although it does not indicate art can be reduced to a form of play, implies for Adorno that freedom from repression will have certain childlike and "clownish" aspects,

> The attraction clowns have for children is the same as the attraction art has for them. Both kinds of attraction are rooted out by the world of adults,

> along with a third attraction: that to animals. Likeness to animals, however, is a human characteristic which is never entirely repressed by consciousness. There are instances of a sudden rediscovery of that likeness, instances which spell happiness for the individual. The language of little children and of animals seems to be the same.[89]

What can be taken from these observations by Adorno and feminists who are trying to find alternatives to the present order of dominating subjectivity? First, mimesis plays a fundamental role in the emergence of subjectivity. When combined with the discussion of mimesis in Dialectic of Enlightenment, passages on mimesis in Aesthetic Theory and elsewhere reveal a consistent concern with mimesis as a primordial influence on if not foundation for subjectivity. Mimesis has evolved through human history, and also natural history, in various directions from magic to science, art and elsewhere. In its metamorphoses however it retains a moment which challenges the overwhelmingly repressive uses to which it has been put. Examples of this moment can be found in areas of life which resist assimilation into the logic of identity and domination.

Adorno focused on art and critical philosophy as two of these areas in mutual need of each other. Critical philosophy and art formed the basis of his understanding of negative dialectics, which retains the hope of an alternative future, one freed of unnecessary suffering and open to the possibility of true happiness. Feminist women have focused their concerns on similar areas but even more

persistently on the problem of the domination of women and the practices of resistance which remain and which retain potentials for further development. Therefore, it is now time to turn to some feminist concerns which have more immediate ethical and political implications. Some of these observations about a possible alternative ethical basis for political action have been well developed, some have only been vaguely outlined or suggested. However, two areas which have been of consistent or recurring importance have been the issue of "animal rights" and that of the mother-child relationship. A guiding question for examining these issues is, "How can the above observations on mimesis and subjectivity aid in addressing these two concerns?" Finally, what are the more politically specific ramifications of "mimetic subjectivity" for radical ecology and its place in democracy?

ENDNOTES

1. See Theodor W. Adorno, Aesthetic Theory, Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann. Eds., C. Lenhardt, Trans. (London: Routledge, 1984); Minima Moralia (London: NLB, 1974); Negative Dialectics (New York: Continuum, 1966); Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment (New York: Continuum, 1987).

2. For a discussion of types of mimesis in Greek philosophy see, for example, the discussions in Essays on Aristotle's Poetics, Amelie Oksenberg Rorty, Ed. (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1992).

3. How does this square with Plato's inclusion of women in the guardian class? These women will resemble men.

4. Some of the wording quoted here is from the Penguin Edition translation.

5. Buck-Morss, Susan, The Origin of Negative Dialectics (New York: The Free Press, 1977), especially pp. 87ff. Also see Fredric Jameson, Late Marxism (London and New York: Verso, 1990); and Lambert Zuidervaart, Adorno's Aesthetic Theory (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1993).

6. Benjamin, Walter, "On the Mimetic Faculty," in Reflections (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), p. 333.

7. Benjamin, Mimetic, pp. 334-336.

8. Benjamin, Mimetic, p. 336.

9. Taussig, Michael, Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses (New York: Routledge, 1993).

10. Taussig, Mimesis, pp. xviii-xix.

11. Taussig, Mimesis, p. 2.

12. Adorno, Theodor, Prisms (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990), p. 240. A shortened quote is in Taussig, Mimesis, p. 2.

13. Taussig, Mimesis, p. 45.

14. Taussig, Mimesis, p. 46.

15. Taussig, Mimesis, p. 68.

16. Lacan, Jacques, "The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic experience," in Ecrits (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1977), p. 1.

17. Ragland-Sullivan, Ellie, Jacques Lacan and the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987), p. 16.

18. Lacan, Ecrits, p. 3.

19. Lacan, Ecrits, p. 3.

20. Lacan, Ecrits, p. 3.

21. Grosz, Elizabeth, Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 46.

22. Grosz, Volatile, p. 46.

23. Taussig also draws on this essay by Caillois to bring together a Benjamin inspired Marxism with psychoanalytical insights, resulting in an examination of modern technologies of reproduction like film and radio. But he also attends to "the womb as the mimetic organ par excellence, mysteriously underscoring in the submerged and constant body of the mother the dual meaning of reproduction as birthing and reproduction as replication." Taussig, Mimesis and Alterity, p. 35. His discussion includes the figures of Adorno and Julia Kristeva.

24. Grosz, Volatile, p. 46.

25. Grosz, Volatile, p. 215. Originally, Roger Caillois, "Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia," October 31 (Winter: 17-32), p. 24-25.

26. Pianka, Eric R., Evolutionary Ecology, 4th edition (New York: HarperCollins, 1988), p. 295. For a full discussion of mimicry see preceding pages in Pianka, pp. 290ff.

27. Pianka, p. 290.

28. Kristeva, Julia, "Revolution in Poetic Language," in The Kristeva Reader, Toril Moi, Ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 110. Kristeva's work deserves fuller treatment than can be provided here.

29. Graber, Marjorie, "'Greatness': Philology and the Politics of Mimesis," in Feminism and Postmodernism, Margaret Ferguson and Jennifer Wicke, Eds. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994), p. 270.

30. Graber, p. 275.

31. Leys, Ruth, "The Real Miss Beauchamp: Gender and the Subject of Imitation," in Feminists Theorize the Political, Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott, Eds. (New York and London: Routledge, 1992).

32. Leys, Beauchamp, p. 167ff.

33. Leys, Beauchamp, p. 168.

34. Leys, Beauchamp, pp. 171ff. Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen, The Freudian Subject, Catherine Porter, Trans. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

35. Borch-Jacobsen, Freudian, p. 47.

36. Borch-Jacobsen, Freudian, p. 33.

37. Borch-Jacobsen, Freudian, p. 33.

38. Borch-Jacobsen, Freudian, p. 34.

39. Borch-Jacobsen, Freudian, p. 39.

40. Leys, Beauchamp, p. 197.

41. Leys, Beauchamp, p. 202.

42. Leys, Beauchamp, p. 197.

43. Leys, Beauchamp, pp. 198-199.

44. Leys, Beauchamp, p. 199.

45. Foucault, Michel, History of Sexuality, Vol. I, (New York: Random House, 1980). There are numerous observations throughout the text on repression and psychoanalysis.

46. Whitford, Margaret, Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 7.

47. For analyses which include the concept of mimesis as important elements of Irigaray's writings see Engaging with Irigaray, Carolyn Burke, Naomi Schor and Margaret Whitford, Eds. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Elizabeth Grosz, Jacques Lacan: A feminist introduction (London and New York: Routledge, 1991); Margaret Whitford, Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine (New York and London: Routledge, 1991).

48. Braidotti, Rosi, "Of Bugs and Women," in Engaging with Irigaray, p. 118.

49. Braidotti, Bugs, p. 119.

50. Braidotti, Bugs, p. 120.

51. Braidotti, Bugs, p. 121.

52. I have avoided repeating the early claim of psychoanalysis that its goal was to allow the patient to function normally. The problem of "normalization" has been the starting point of many radical critiques of psychoanalysis as traditionally practiced, and as argued metapsychologically. Of course one of the most important challenges to Freud's theory of repression and the goal of normalization has been that of Michel Foucault, see his History of Sexuality.

53. Whitford, Luce Irigaray, p. 72.

54. Whitford, Luce Irigaray, p. 73.

55. Whitford, Luce Irigaray, p. 73.

56. Whitford, Luce Irigaray, p. 73.

57. Whitford, Luce Irigaray, p. 95.

58. Butler, Judith, "Bodies that Matter," in Engaging with Irigaray, p. 152.

59. Butler, Bodies, p. 152.

60. Butler, Bodies, p. 153.

61. Butler, Bodies, p. 153.

62. Butler, Bodies, p. 154.

63. Butler, Bodies, pp. 154-155.

64. Butler, Bodies, p. 156.

65. Butler, Bodies, pp. 156-157.

66. Butler, Bodies, p. 157.

67. Butler, Bodies, pp. 157-158.

68. Butler, Bodies, p. 158.

69. Butler, Bodies, p. 160. Irigaray, "The Power of Discourse," in This Sex Which is Not One (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1985) p. 76.

70. Butler, Bodies, p. 161.

71. Butler, Bodies, p. 164.

72. Rose, Gillian, The Melancholy Science: An Introduction to the Thought of Theodor W. Adorno (London: Macmillan Press, 1978).

73. Adorno, Theodor, Negative Dialectics (New York: Continuum, 1966), p. 41.

74. Buck-Morss, Origin, p. 85.

75. Adorno, Theodor, Aesthetic Theory, Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, Eds., C. Lenhardt, Trans. (London: Routledge, 1984), p. 455.

76. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 455.

77. Jameson, Fredric, Late Marxism: Adorno, or, the Persistence of the Dialectic (London: Verso, 1990), pp. 70ff.

78. Jameson, p. 71.

79. Jay, Martin, Adorno, (Cambridge: Harvard Univ., 1984), p. 68.

80. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 30.

81. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 31.

82. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 47.

83. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 164.

84. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 164.

85. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 164.

86. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 165.

87. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 165.

88. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 171.

89. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 175.

CHAPTER 11

ECOFEMINISM AND POLITICS

Major difficulties have developed for ecofeminism around the attempt to derive political guidance from the combination of radical ecological and feminist insights. These difficulties in relation to some of the more specifically political implications of ecofeminism will be emphasized in this chapter. An obvious connection between feminism and radical ecology has been women's involvement in the "animal rights" movement. Many ecofeminists now reject the arguments put forth by the earlier defenders of animal rights and have turned to alternatives which circulate around the idea of an "ethic of care." A second area of concern has been the politics of motherhood or the mother-child relationship, which has been central to feminist and especially psychoanalytically inclined feminists' theoretical development.[1] However, the analysis of motherhood takes on an added level of complexity when ecofeminists' concerns about the long-standing association of women with nature are included, especially as these impact issues of reproduction. The obvious problematic metaphor frequently used in connection to this complex of issues is "Mother Earth." Finally, although there has been increasing attention paid to practical political considerations, the "tactics" of ecofeminism, this now must be more directly related back

to the insights derived elsewhere, especially from cultural or radical feminism, if ecofeminism is to retain its philosophical and political coherence. To that end, new theories of radical democracy may provide important clues to the formation of a coherent and effective radical democratic ecological/ecofeminist politics.

Women and Animals

There has been widespread rejection by ecofeminists of the major theories based in either utilitarianism or Kantian ethics which defend "animal rights." For example, Deborah Slicer has shown how two of the most influential of these theorists, Peter Singer and Tom Regan, have failed to adequately take into account the context of moral decisions about animals, as well as not being able to include the specificity of concrete individuals in their reasoning. These utilitarian and rights arguments frequently narrow to questions about choices between certain classes of animals versus the human benefits from sacrificing the animal, such as whether medical research should be done on animals in order to save or prolong a single human life. As Slicer puts it, they demand a response to the question "Your daughter or your dog?"[2] Slicer associates these arguments with the "justice tradition" or the "ethic of justice," which relies on some essential, or "lowest common denominator" criterion by which to make the judgment about which animals deserve

moral or ethical consideration. The animal rights defenders are then criticized for the ethical inconsistencies associated with essentialism, "Singer and Regan, like their mentors the utilitarians and Kant, respectively, have an 'essentialist' view of the moral worth of both human beings and animals. This means that they propose a single capacity--the possession of interests--for being owed moral consideration."[3] The problem of essentialism in these cases, argues Slicer, is related to the lack of context and individual specificity. Certain relationships between the individual and others are bracketed out of consideration, such as those of family and friendship. The individual being under consideration is also abstracted from any specific history either of the situation or their identity, "Specifically, animal rights theories reduce individuals to that atomistic bundle of interests that the justice tradition recognizes as the basis for moral considerableness. In effect, animals are represented as beings with the <u>kind of capacity</u> that human beings most fully possess and deem valuable for living a full <u>human</u> life."[4] Slicer notes how these arguments retain features of a "masculine" sense of self which attempts a radical separation from all that is "other," a self which is unable to "recognize and respect" the other if it differs from what is deemed essential to the "human." This moral tendency has been shown to go beyond animal rights theorists to include many who

identify themselves as deep ecologists in their claims to seek to protect what they identify as part of themselves. In this form of deep ecology, the masculine self simply expands to include certain other beings, but which remain morally defensible only in terms of the extent they are like the self.[5] Generally, this involves the "assimilation of the other into the sameness of the self" where specific differences are erased. Alternatively, Slicer argues that difference rather than sameness can be the basis of a more adequate ethic, "There is no reason why animals' differences, independence, indifference cannot be grounds for caring, for relationships characterized by such ethically significant attitudes as respect, gratitude, compassion, fellow or sisterly feeling, and wonder."[6] This is an attitude she also associates with competent scientific practice, including some forms of animal research such as that done by Jane Goodall.

The justice tradition influenced arguments have further characteristics of masculine self-identity. Animal rights defenders tend to extract the moral situations from specific contexts in an attempt to establish ever more general, abstract and universal principles for decision making. Many details of the supposedly representative moral situations they examine, such as the "historical, social, economic, familial," and so on, are simply omitted.[7] This is purposely done to

eliminate consideration of specific differences in order to be able to acknowledge the criterion that is necessary for an appropriate moral decision. That quality which is the "same" in relation to principles of morality achieves a higher status than the other non-essential or different aspects of the situation. This has the intended result of establishing that there are some beings worth greater moral consideration than others. Slicer believes any feminist or ecofeminist ethic must not succumb to the "logic of domination" which she believes characterizes this form of argumentation, one which ultimately seeks a justification of some "subordination." Slicer draws on Karen Warren's explanation of this logic of domination and how it is based on dualistic and hierarchical thinking. Slicer believes that despite the beneficial effects which have been achieved by the animal rights theories, they have been shown to be too limited for the needs of ecofeminism, "Singer and Regan retain an unfortunate 'logic of domination' in their respective theories. Their atemporal, abstract, and acontextual characterizations of issues, of the values at stake, and of appropriate resolutions grossly oversimplify some of these highly complex issues, including the research one."[8] However, Slicer leaves undeveloped her call for an ecofeminist ethic which can integrate "affective responses" into its considerations. She does not deny that general principles are needed to guide moral decisions, but she insists that

"affective responses" also are appropriate and helpful in resolving moral and ethical dilemmas in everyday life where specific individual identities and context are important. Without developing her argument further she still asserts that, "An ecofeminist ethic will emerge out of individuals' concrete relationships and experiences and will recognize a variety of affective responses along with formal and abstract principles, all in their appropriate contexts."[9] Slicer then calls for other "feminist voices" to articulate the grounds for this ecofeminist ethic, which she believes can be developed in response to her "gut feeling" of antipathy toward the animal rights arguments.

As clues to this future ecofeminist ethic, in addition to work by Karen Warren and Marti Kheel, Slicer also mentions Sara Ruddick's writing on "maternal thinking." Before taking up the ethical possibilities of "maternal thinking" it may be illuminating to discuss another feminist's analysis of the animal rights issues, one which makes explicit reference to Horkheimer and Adorno's critical theory.

Josephine Donovan also includes in her examination of the animal rights theorists the ecofeminist critiques which reject the masculinist rationalism of the justice tradition in favor of some reliance on "sentiment or emotion." (Already obvious from these two examples is the tendency of the arguments between ecofeminists and animal

rights theorists to dichotomize.) After noting the validity of criticisms of the ecofeminist positions which tend to essentialize women's ways of knowing, Donovan concludes, "One cannot simply turn uncritically to women as a group or to a female value system as a source for a humane relationship ethic with animals."[10] Donovan like Slicer finds Regan's extension of natural rights theory inadequate for addressing moral dilemmas. However, she emphasizes that Regan actually argues against Kant who claimed "animals...are there merely as a means to an end. That end is man."[11] Kant argued this position as a result of attributing to rational beings an "absolute worth": rational beings are an end in themselves. Rationality was deemed the basic criteria for treatment; the possession of reason determines "inherent value." If a being possesses rationality it is a moral agent and should not be treated as a means. Regan, argues Donovan, rejects Kant's and nearly all of the Enlightenment thinkers' exclusive identification of rationality with human beings, and instead replaces the criteria of rationality with that of "complex awareness." However, this is in effect, claims Donovan, a way of reinvoking the rationality criteria by merely extending its applications to some other beings. She believes this does not provide an adequate basis for resolving some common moral or ethical dilemmas, "This criterion leaves open the question of severely retarded humans, humans in irreversible comas, fetuses, even human

infants. Regan's criterion in fact privileges those with complex awareness over those without."[12]

Donovan argues that Peter Singer's utilitarian position actually provides alternatives which "cultural feminism" may be able to "reformulate" to establish a viable ecofeminist ethic. The key concept of the utilitarian argument is not a reliance on rationality or complex consciousness, but "on the capacity to feel--or the capacity to suffer--as the criterion by which to determine those who are entitled to be treated as ends."[13] The acknowledgment of the capacity to suffer as the primary criterion for judgment of ethical or moral value is traced back to Jeremy Bentham.[14] Singer has elaborated this position which fundamentally claims that what applies to both humans and animals with respect to moral consideration is what they have in common, which is "sensibility" or "the capacity to feel pain and experience pleasure." In Donovan's summary of the utilitarian argument for animal rights the essence of the position is that "pain and suffering are bad and should be prevented or minimized, irrespective of the race, sex, or species of the being that suffers."[15] The fundamental problem with this position, she counters, is that Singer assumes that similar suffering must be valued equally. "Equal valuation" would require the adding-up of suffering on the various sides of the moral situation and coming down on the side which "suffers most." This requires a

"quantification of suffering" (suffering's "mathematization") which, claims Donovan, also leads to the "scientific modality" or consciousness which "legitimates animal sacrifice."[16] Donovan therefore rejects Singer's utilitarian theory of animal rights as simply another form of the "mode of manipulative mastery" and instead turns to "cultural feminism" for ethical insights.

Donovan summarizes what she believes to be the essence of cultural feminism's contribution to ecofeminism, "From the cultural feminist viewpoint, the domination of nature, rooted in postmedieval, Western, male psychology, is the underlying cause of the mistreatment of animals as well as of the exploitation of women and the environment."[17] Donovan notes that there has been a long-standing tradition of critique of "the logical fallacies inherent in the scientific epistemology," but indicates it was Horkheimer and Adorno in Dialectic of Enlightenment who "first made the connection between what Husserl called the 'mathematisation of the world' and the derogation of women and animals."[18] Donovan's attention to the critical theorists, in the present context, must be emphasized and expanded upon.

In Dialectic of Enlightenment it is pointed out that "In the impartiality of scientific language, that which is powerless has wholly lost any means of expression."[19]

Among the powerless are women and animals whose subjectivities and experiences are, according to Donovan, "erased or converted into manipulable objects."[20] This conceptual model then views all individuals, whether human, animal, or other, as mere examples in a "repeatable, replaceable process."[21] Donovan's quotes of the critical theorists show how scientific epistemology is part of the "material conditions of social domination" where scientists in physiological laboratories force now defenseless animals to give up information from their mutilated bodies. The authority to inflict this pain comes from the power of Reason which belongs to "man" alone. Those who do not meet the standards of Reason are inferior and only capable of knowing "irrational terror." The emotional consequence of this was that the (male) scientist was not to feel compassion for the irrational, no empathy for his victims. The responsibility for compassion and empathy, made necessary by the division of labor required for social domination, was placed with women. The process of consolidating the division of labor included the gendered division of social labor whose long history has been punctuated by especially significant moments of domination. One important moment is emphasized both by early cultural feminists and by the critical theorists--the witchhunts. As Donovan indicates, the control of "witches" was a symptom of the early modern period of history when there developed "the new need to

erase and subdue anomalous, disorderly (and thus feminine) nature."[22] As Horkheimer and Adorno also argued, these actions served to consolidate certain social powers and to abolish surviving forms of alternative social possibilities, "The witchcraft trials which the associated feudal racketeers used to terrorize the masses when they felt themselves threatened, served at once to celebrate and to confirm the triumph of male society over prehistoric matriarchal and mimetic stages of development."[23] Donovan connects these observations with cultural feminism's additional critique of the "Cartesian masculinization of thought." However, we can concentrate here on the additional meditations of the critical theorists on the connections made between the "dialectic of enlightenment" and women, animals, and the domination of nature. The critical theorists claim the "truths" achieved in laboratories of animal research are frequently applicable to humans, but to humans who have been distorted as much as the animals sacrificed. The facts and figures,

> The behaviorists...force from defenseless animals in their nauseating physiological laboratories stresses the contrast quite adroitly. The conclusion they draw from mutilated bodies applies not to animals in the free state but to man as he is today. It shows that because he does injury to animals, he and he alone in all creation voluntarily functions as mechanically, as blindly and automatically as the twitching limbs of the victim.[24]

Just as the animal subjected to laboratory research becomes an object for the repetition of acts of domination and a sign confirming that power, so too "woman" signifies the triumph of male domination,

> She became the embodiment of the biological function, the image of nature, the subjugation of which constituted that civilization's title to fame. For millennia men dreamed of acquiring absolute mastery over nature, of converting the cosmos into one immense hunting-ground. It was to this that the idea of man was geared in a male-dominated society. This was the significance of reason, his proudest boast.[25]

After the witch trials and with the consolidation of capitalism and the bourgeois class, women's culture becomes even more clearly a signifier of the domination of nature,

> The bourgeoisie profited from female chastity and propriety--the defense mechanisms left by matriarchal revolt. Woman herself, on behalf of all exploited nature, gained admission to a male-dominated world, but only in a broken form. In her spontaneous submission she reflects for her vanquisher the glory of his victory, substituting devotion for defeat, nobility of soul for despair, and a loving breast for a ravished heart.[26]

Therefore any turn to women "as they are," or as they occupy the space of "woman," for ethical guidance is problematic, as their "subjectivity" is infused with the practice of domination. Even notions of the female traditionally associated with art and beauty are manifestations of the domination of nature, "Woman has been made the caretaker of all things beautiful. The

modern female puritan eagerly took up the office. She identified herself fully with the status quo, with nature domesticated, not red in tooth and claw."[27] Too easily women have identified not with the wildness of nature, its independent moment of resistance to domination by men, but instead with the nature men have mastered, a nature "harmonized and beautified" to reflect the needs of the dominating class. However, even in these "harmonized" forms nature retains a moment of resistance to domination. Although art, beauty, and women do not immediately reflect a truth outside the structures of domination, they retain a double message which still might be heard, "Art, custom, and sublime love are masks in which nature reappears transformed into her own antithesis. Through these masks she acquires the gift of speech; out of her distortion emerges her essence."[28] Even though there are the distortions of domination which appear in all manifestations of culture there remains the independent moment of nature, the irreducibility of the object. However, even as they seem to be opening to theoretical possibilities of escape, the critical theorists (in an expression which lends credence to charges of extreme pessimism and hopelessness made so frequently against the founders of critical theory) lament the extent to which nature has been processed through the machines of domination, "The earth, now rational, no longer feels the need of an aesthetic reflection. The demonic element is

wiped out by directly applying the desired imprint on mankind. Domination no longer needs numinous images; it produces them itself on an industrial scale and uses them as a more reliable means of winning over the masses."[29]

In these reflections, the critical theorists link together women, animals and the working class as objects of the domination of nature, each manifesting in a particular way what they have in common. Beyond any simple economistic reduction, all of society operates under the same principle of the "logic of identity" whose "progress" consists of the elimination of the unique and the individual, attempting to establish a world where every object, every animal and human being, becomes another example of the general truth of domination. The process becomes ever more efficient, and ever more effective at colonizing any deviation. The critical theorists presented the culture industry (now probably more readily understood by its self-label as the "entertainment industry"), as one example of this process, "The culture industry, like science, seeks a standard to work to outside itself...in facts. Film stars are experts; their performances are protocols of natural behavior, a guide to approved responses. Producers and script writers produce models for proficiently adjusted conduct."[30] If the logic of identity results in a "totally administered society," from where will the models for an alternative future come? Nature perhaps? No, at

least not the nature "red in tooth and claw" which is beyond good and evil,

> Everything, it appears, depends on society, and even the most precise thinking must throw in its lot with the dominant social trends if it is not to degenerate into a mere fad. This realization binds together all the champions of reality; it accepts human society as a wholesale racket in nature. The voice that does not pursue the aims of one of the branches of that society throws its members into an ungovernable rage. It is a reminder that only that which exists to be broken still has a voice--namely, nature, from which the lies of nationalists and folklorists issue in streams. Whenever the voice is heard, even Momentarily, above the clamor of their chorus of yells, it is accompanied by the fearful reverberations which, as in every animal, sound even in one's own rationalized and broken heart. The tendencies revealed by such a voice are blind, yet ubiquitous. Nature herself is neither good, as the ancients believed, nor noble, as the latterday Romantics would have it. As a model and goal it implies the spirit of opposition, deceit, and bestiality.[31]

However (in a negative or negating moment always hovering just beyond their most pessimistic claims), nature may be able to serve as a model to the extent it is remembered, "Only when seen for what it is, does nature become existence's craving for peace, that consciousness which from the very beginning has inspired an unshakable resistance to Fuhrer and collective alike. Dominant practice and its inescapable alternatives are not threatened by nature, which tends rather to coincide with them, but by the fact that nature is remembered."[32] This remembering of nature is expressed, for example, by remembering those who have suffered from oppression

throughout history, "One of the basic human rights possessed by those who pick up the tab for the progress of civilization is the right to be remembered...This right demands that the marks of humiliation be committed to remembrance in the form of imagines."[33] The imagined image is a reminder, a reminder of "past historical suffering."[34] The images of the future will be negatively permeated by past suffering; the not-yet of nature continues to be indebted to the effects of past domination. Even images of natural beauty, or aspects of nature appreciated as beautiful, involve history which makes remembrance possible,

> There is no beauty without historical remembrance... Although nature here appears untamed and removed from history, this appearance belongs squarely to our own historical epoch, arising in critical opposition to social trends at a time when the network of social relations is so tightly woven that the individual rightly fears it may suffocate. By the same token, there is no room for natural beauty in periods when nature has an overpowering presence for man, as seems to be the case with peasant populations which are known to be insensitive to the aesthetic qualities of natural scenery because to them nature is merely an immediate object to be acted upon.[35]

Perhaps the dream of a time when wilderness will be so pervasive that its name is unnecessary will never come, at least if we have the courage to never forget the current state of the planet.

This discussion of natural beauty and its historical relation to the domination of nature prompts the question--how then can the alternative to domination be

represented? This is the reason for Adorno's turn to aesthetics: to art and the critical evaluation of art. Adorno argues that a critical philosophy attempts to put into concepts the process by which works of art attempt to speak of an alternative world,

> The restitution of nature hinges on the emergence of something that has escaped the fatefulness of nature. The more art is structured along objective lines, independent of subjective intentions, the more articulately does it imitate the model of a non-conceptual and non-significative language. This language may be the same as that in which the Book of Nature is written, to use a threadbare but beautiful metaphor of the sentimental age. On and through the trajectory of rationality, mankind becomes aware through art of what rationality has erased from memory. Second reflection serves to remind us of this. The vanishing point of this development is the insight--incorporated as a partial aspect in modern art--that the beauty of nature cannot be copied.[36]

Beauty in nature becomes a point for "second reflection" about the direction of reason. Although a moment in the process of self-reflection, the beautiful in nature does not then become the principle of aesthetics, "The beautiful in nature is different from both the notion of a ruling principle and the denial of any principle whatsoever. It is like a state of reconciliation."[37] For Adorno the "essence of natural beauty" is the "anamnesis" of "something that is more than just for-other."[38] What natural beauty suggests is an independent moment of nature irreducible to an object for human use or conceptual captivation. Neither does it mean that critical reflection on art and its relationship to the beautiful in

nature involves some "pointing" to a metaphysical transcendence of material life. Rather, art may provide a glimpse of a possibility which also appears in the beautiful in nature. It is a glimpse of the possibility of being more than just for-other. Art provides an image which is denied in a society reduced to instrumental rationality, to a world become means,

> Every act of making in art is an endless endeavour to articulate what is not makeable, namely spirit. This is where the function of art as a restorer of historically repressed nature becomes important. Nature does not yet exist. To the degree to which art pines after an image of nature, it represents the truth of non-being. Art becomes conscious of it in a non-identical other (which instrumental, identity-positing reason reduces to a material and which is called nature). This other is not some unifying concept but a manifold, for truth content in art is a manifold and not an abstract or generic concept....This corresponds to the plurality of things in general: they too defy identification.[39]

But then how does art function to provide images for imitation, what is the process of mimesis released in this understanding of aesthetics? What is the relationship between mimetic acts in the present and the future "utopia?" Adorno argues against any aesthetics which attempts to assert that art should function to represent the world as it is,

> (Art works) transcend longing because they relate to real historical being into which are etched the outlines of want or neediness. By retracing these outlines, art goes beyond mere being, passing over into objective truth, for want implies the overcoming of want. That which is--as an in-itself rather than

> as a conscious for-itself--wills the other. Art works are the language of this will; they are no less substantial than will itself. The elements of this other are all present in reality, but in order to come together they must be displaced, however slightly, and thus be brought into new constellations. Far from imitating reality, works of art actually show reality how this kind of displacement is effected--which points to the conclusion that we must reverse the copy theory of realist aesthetics: in a subtle sense reality ought to imitate art works, not the other way around.[40]

Art works are constellations of existing elements, but not simple reproductions of existing relationships. The mimetic moment in the new constellation of elements is not an act of simply copying or mirroring of reality but results in a displacement of current relationships. Art works are indicators of possibility, of the not-yet,

> By their presence art works signal the possibility of the non-existent; their reality testifies to the feasibility of the unreal, the possible. More specifically, in art longing, which posits the actuality of the non-existent, takes the form of remembrance. Remembrance joins the present to the past. Ever since the Platonic doctrine of anamnesis, the yet-to-come, the potential, has taken on the form of a recollective dream. Remembrance alone is able to give flesh and blood to the notion of Utopia, without betraying it to empirical life. All this, by the way, does not mean that illusion is absent: what is being dreamt does not exist: indeed, it never did exist. Still, spontaneous recollection brings to life empirical existence when it is harnessed to the imagery of art.[41]

Art illuminates the possibility of a nature which does not yet exist nor has it ever existed, a nature made possible through the mediation of subjectivity. However, this subjectivity is also not of the present, at least not in its dominant forms, not in any form which can be simply

copied. The transformation of subjectivity will involve a complex relationship of creation and destruction, of life and death, just as works of art destroy as they create. Works of art succeed to the extent they betray mimesis, "They kill what they objectify, tearing it away from its context of immediacy and real life. They survive because they bring death. This is particularly true of modern art, where we notice a general mimetic abandonment to reification, which is the principle of death. Illusion in art is the attempt to escape from this principle."[42] The "escape" from the principle of death, from reification, that reduction of life into a mere object, a thing, the reduction of the other into yet another example, depends on some possibility of humans acting otherwise. This is what is meant when Adorno speaks of the possibility of reconciliation,

> Spirit tones down its antagonistic essence and becomes conciliatory. This differs from what classicism meant by reconciliation. Reconciliation here refers to the mode of conduct of works of art in so far as they become conscious of the non-identical in their midst. By following the dynamic of self-sameness to the end, art works assimilate themselves to the non-identical. This is the stage of development mimesis has reached today. Reconciliation as method or mode of conduct is discernible at the present time in those works which have abandoned the traditional idea of reconciliation, works where the form prescribes intransigence....The utopia anticipated by artistic form is the idea that things at long last ought to come into their own. Another way of putting this is to call for the abolition of the spell of selfhood hitherto promoted by the subject.[43]

The overcoming of the spell of selfhood as it appears in the present dominant subject will require delving deep into subjectivity's self-understanding and touching it where mind and body meet,

> Subjectivity, later so-called, frees itself from the blind fear of the horrible but it is also its continuation. The subject is lifeless except when it is able to shudder in response to the total spell. And only the subject's shudder can transcend that spell. Without shudder, consciousness is trapped in reification. Shudder is a kind of premonition of subjectivity, a sense of being touched by the other. The aesthetic mode of behaviour assimilates itself to that other rather than trying to subdue it. It is this constitutive orientation of the subject towards objectivity which joins eros to knowledge.[44]

The possibility of an other subjectivity will make the cells of the organism tremble.

If it is a not-yet subjectivity which the existing subject shudders to encounter, then the question for feminism and ecofeminism is whether the alternative knowledge and ethics which they offer can serve as models of a mode of behavior which is mimetic without reverting to mere repetition of the existing system of domination, the mere continuation of instrumental rationality and reification behind a new mask.

(Earth) Mothers' Standpoint

Sara Ruddick has attempted to build on the insights of Hartsock, Harding and others who have elaborated a feminist standpoint theory of knowledge and politics.

Ruddick has specifically looked at the possibilities generated in the relationship of "maternal thinking" to feminist standpoint theory.[45] Ruddick relates her own biography and tells of how she began to encounter deeply politically committed feminist texts which forced her to begin to abandon what she calls her earlier "pluralist" beliefs, the "idea that there were many perspectives and hence many truths."[46] Becoming active in a women's peace group, she began to see how the "defense" establishment and much of society were dedicated to "organized, deliberate violence." It was in this context she encountered feminist standpoint theory and attempted to apply it to her previous understandings of maternal thinking. Hartsock's claims for feminist standpoint theory were related to the epistemic advantages of starting from "women's work" especially as it has been conceptualized as "caring labor." Ruddick's own concerns with motherhood and especially the mother-child relationship prompts her to inform the reader that "maternal work" does not exhaust the category of caring labor, but that it is a "central part of caring labor" and therefore "maternal thinking" should be considered a "constituent element of the standpoint that Hartsock envisions."[47] In bolstering the claim that motherhood involves caring labor, Ruddick explains that care workers are "immersed in the materials of the physical world," including human and other bodies. To provide care these,

usually female, workers depend on "practical knowledge of the qualities of the material world." In explaining the relationship of care giving to gendered thinking, Ruddick repeats Hartsock's object relations theory inspired description of the "abstract masculinity" which "characterizes dominant views."[48] Ruddick emphasizes the need to recognize the difficulty of articulating an alternative to the dominant, masculine, worldview, "Maternal thinkers know that they have learned to speak in the dominant languages, as do all members of a culture. To articulate maternal thinking they have had to cling to realities that they were in danger of forgetting and at the same time forge a way of thinking that is new."[49] Maternal thinkers, as care workers, join with other standpoint theorists to "articulate an engaged vision" which must be "struggled for and represents an achievement."[50] The possibility of a new way of thinking therefore can be linked to caring work,

> Caretakers work with subjects; they give birth to and tend self-generating, autonomously willing lives. A defining task of their work is to maintain mutually helpful connections with another person--or animal--whose separateness they create and respect. Hence they are continuously involved with issues of connection, separation, development, change, and the limits of control....Their task, as they have learned from the work of training children, is to articulate conditions of respect for unpredictable and as yet unimagined difference and variety among and within people.[51]

It would be all too easy to see this as another case of "complementary" spheres of activity, but Ruddick does not see this way of acting and thinking as simply the polar opposite of masculine thought, "The values of care do not stand to dominant values of abstract masculinity as the one reality stands to appearance; standpoint theorists know this, of course, but any dualistic formulations tend to reduce the richness and unpredictability both of the world and of the ways in which we think about it."[52] Ruddick then has the task of developing the ethical implications of this maternal thinking, and she does this by linking it with the emerging discourse on the ethic of care.[53] Criticism of the ethic of care as it has been developed by ecofeminists has centered on the problematic relationship of the ethic to "context" or "contextual detail." As Tom Regan has complained,

> Thus it is that a feminist ethic that is limited to an ethic of care will, I think, be unable to illuminate the moral significance of the idea that we (human) animals are not superior to all other animals... For where the care is unequal, and the vocabulary of duties and rights has no voice, one's ethical options seem to be exhausted.[54]

There is substantial truth to the criticisms of the care ethic as this ethic has so far been presented, especially within ecofeminism. However, the critics seem to be insensitive, or uncomprehending, of some aspects of the argument. The basic complaint, as it is almost always presented by those who support a moralist argument of

rights, is that the lack of moral rules invites the disaster of moral relativism "a radical relativism of values, where concepts of good and bad, right and wrong, admit only of individual interpretations--becoming, in fact, a mere registering of preferences--neither a person's feelings nor beliefs can provide ultimate answers to moral questions."[55] Whether a "radical relativism" of values is inherent in the ethic of care does indeed need to be addressed, but the demand for "ultimate answers," whether moral or otherwise, merely echoes the abstract, ahistorical thought feminists have so convincingly critiqued in so many contexts, and misses the point about the inadequacy of abstract or universal rules for deciding what is always an infinitely complex actual situation where moral choices are made. An additional complaint lodged against some versions of the ethic of care argument is that if it is interpreted primarily as calling for a "preservation of a web of relationships" then it will have the politically conservative tendency of preserving relationships of domination out of a tendency of the "caregiver" to prefer those closest and most familiar. An ecofeminist ethic then must answer to the charges of moral relativism and its implicit, and sometimes unselfconscious, acceptance of relationships of domination and oppression.

Additionally, Dennis and Kathleen Johnson have objected to the dualistic thinking which continues to

exist when the advocates of an ethic of care cite a concern for difference in opposition to an alleged concern for sameness by the "rights" supporters. As the Johnsons have indicated, "Here we find an ostensible defense of non-dualistic thinking based on an untenable dualism between identity (or 'sameness') and difference."[56] The claim to moral superiority by the rights supporters then is based on these inadequacies of the care ethic, "Our focus on the morally relevant features of disparate individuals is designed not as a reductive analysis of their essential natures but simply as a means of avoiding the vacuous proposals of 'life-based ethics' or the conservatism of an ethic of care."[57] Any alternative to the moral rights position which addresses the problem of "moral relativism" must also avoid the "intellectual trap" of condemning the dualistic logic of sameness and difference while affirming this dualism by its simple reversal. To uncritically accept difference, or diversity, as the criterion for moral decisions creates ethical dilemmas which simply mirror those which result from the valuing of sameness.

Although not advocating an ethic of care, Adorno's own ethical concerns may provide a depth of insight which may be lacking in the rights versus care argument as it has thus far been developed in the ecofeminist literature. The ethical dimension of Adorno's work has been most persuasively developed by Drucilla Cornell.[58] Cornell

examines the implications of Adorno's critiques of Kant and Hegel by first distinguishing between morality and ethics,

> For my purposes, "morality" designates any attempt to spellout how one determines a right way to behave, behavioral norms which, once determined, can be translated into a system of rules. The ethical relation, a term which I contrast with morality, focuses instead on the kind of person one must become in order to develop a nonviolative relationship to the Other. The concern of the ethical relation, in other words, is a way of being in the world that spans divergent value systems and allows us to criticize the repressive aspects of competing moral systems.[59]

Cornell's subsequent interpretation of Adorno's "ethical message" then can also be read as an implicit critique of those animal rights theories based in categories taken from Kant and Utilitarianism.

Adorno begins with but goes beyond Hegel's critique of Kant. He focuses on the repressive aspects of the Kantian subject, as Cornell explains,

> The Kantian subject, as a being of the flesh, falls prey to the endless striving to subjugate his own impulses and thus to secure the possibility of moral action. Reason is geared solely to the preservation of the subject, equated here with consciousness; because of Kant's separation of consciousness from the flesh, the subject is pitted against the object, which includes that aspect of the subject conceived empirically. Conceived in this way, the subject-object relationship necessarily gives rise to the master-slave dialectic. The master-slave dialectic is played out in our relations to nature, taken here to mean both against the external world of things, and against our internal "nature" as physical, sexual beings.[60]

Hegel's "system" was an attempt to address these Kantian "repressions" and the consequences of Enlightenment thought more generally which had produced "a radical divide between subject and object, mind and nature, and body and soul."[61] In Hegel's works the resolution of this division would then be a "state of reconciliation" or "Absolute Knowledge" which would consist of "self-recognition in absolute otherness." Adorno however understands reconciliation differently, "The idea of reconcilement forbids the positing of reconcilement as a concept."[62] The nonviolative relationship to the other cannot be reduced to a static, or transcendent concept, "The ideal of reconciliation can be shown or disclosed but not conceptualized."[63] This understanding of reconciliation is useful in addressing the moral rights defenders' concerns about the tendency for those who endorse difference as the basis for ethics to be caught up in dualistic (and hierarchical) thinking. This is also, simultaneously, an even more direct challenge to the search for "sameness" as the criteria for judgment. Cornell summarizes this ethical difference Adorno represents, "Reconciliation is the art of disunion that allows things to exist in their difference and in their affinity. Adorno, then, is a philosopher of reconciliation in a very specific sense. His defense of a reconciled state is presented in the name of the plural and of the different."[64] In order to "decode" Adorno's

"ethical message" Cornell elaborates on different elements of his work which he does not systematically separate, but which might be understood as the "constellation of ethics" in his writing. The three elements Cornell examines are the "unleashing of difference in identity," the "dialectic of natural history," and Adorno's concerns with reconciliation.[65]

Adorno's understanding of the non-identity of subject and object was discussed previously, but some of Cornell's observations on this aspect of negative dialectics may help put the ecofeminist rights versus ethics debate in another perspective. Cornell interprets Adorno's negative dialectics as developing further the insights from Hegel's dialectics, or as she describes negative dialectics, "Non-identity, in other words, is dialectics taken all the way down." Hegel's "reified Geist" or "deified subjectivity" fails to achieve the "reconcilement" at which his philosophical system aimed, "The attempt to achieve pure self-recognition in absolute otherness, in other words, violates the Other by denying its otherness to the Concept. Without the closure of the circle, the Concept can no longer fully incorporate objectivity as its own expression. The object, in other words, escapes ownership in its nonidentity with the Concept."[66] There is then a "constitutive outside" to any concept, or conceptual system, a "nonidentity" which disrupts the system. This nonidentity or negativity "is the escaped otherness"

inherent in the logic of identity, "The object can neither be grasped in its entirety by the Concept nor can it be known in its immediacy."[67] This understanding of nonidentity and negativity includes negative dialectics itself, "For Adorno, then, negative dialectics is not a method; nor is it simply material reality, as if material reality in its contradictoriness could be presented to us without mediation through concepts. Negative dialectics is instead the 'truth' of an unreconciled reality, or antagonistic entirety." As Adorno stated, reconciliation would be the overcoming of both negativity and the need for negative dialectics, "Regarding the concrete utopian possibility, dialectics is the ontology of the wrong state of things. The right state of things would be free of it."[68]

The "paradox" of negative dialectics then is that representation of negativity, of the non-identical, cannot be accomplished by simply presenting it as concept. Likewise, the "truth" of nature cannot be experienced immediately, or at least it is not available for simple translation into language, into concepts. However, the idea of constructing a "constellations of elements" to illuminate a specific "image" of the non-identical resurfaces at this point, this time as an aspect of mimesis as it manifests itself in the writing of philosophy and political philosophy. Cornell understands the "constellation" as a metaphor for the process of

decoding the "relational object" one wishes to understand. The object can only be known in its "context," which however should not be understood as simply external to the object. Adorno makes the point, "Becoming aware of the constellation in which a thing stands is tantamount to deciphering the constellation which having come to be, it bears within it."[69] Whether we are attempting to interpret fascism, advertising, animals as food, endangered species, or whatever, the interpretation must be sensitive to the "context" in which it is found, that constellation which is "relational" and historical to its core, and which is never simply "outside" the interpreted object. The interpretation or deciphering of the object involves the "mimetic capacity" which includes "modes of behavior" capable of being "receptive, expressive and communicative in a sensuous fashion."[70] These modes of behavior, which are the exercise of the mimetic abilities of humans, are the keys to overcoming the "spell" of a rationality which has turned on itself, threatening the survival of the self for which it evolved. The only escape from the total instrumentalization of the world is to redevelop what has been repressed in the "logic of domination"--mimetic capacity. This specific understanding of the relationship of mimesis to rationality is the key to understanding Adorno's critical theory, and may provide a possibility for radical ecology to overcome basic blocks to the achievement of ecological

consciousness and an ecological society. Cornell summarizes the role mimesis plays in Adorno's critical theory,

> Mimesis, in other words, is the capacity to identify with, in sympathy and in appreciation, rather than the ability to identify as, as is characteristic of instrumental logic. In this sense, knowledge through constellation does not privilege the subject's purpose over the object's "right" to be what it has become. In Adorno, mimesis is connected with the attitude toward the other he associates with utopia. Mimesis lets the object be. By so doing, mimetic capacity foreshadows the nonviolative relationship to the other, beyond the heterogeneous and beyond what is one's own, that can only be fulfilled in a redeemed world.[71]

Cornell adds that this "identification with" (I identify with the wolf) as opposed to "identification as" (I identify it as a wolf) should not be understood as a "return to intuition or immediacy." All identification and interpretation is mediated, and constellations can only be understood as a certain "misrecognition" that is inherent in "identity-logical thinking." There is no exhaustive or final interpretation of the object or its context, "For Adorno, the re-experiencing of the object as nonidentical is the experience of misrecognition, in which the subject literally runs up against the limits of conceptualization and is opened to the Other as other, the unassimilated. We can only know the object as it is in its different contexts, never immediately or as it is in its true reality."[72] This is not a recipe for relativism, because relativism relies on a "philosophy of

consciousness" position which privileges the subject over the object and understands the "object as a mere derivative of the subject."[73] What is achieved in the mimetic construction of constellations is not merely the expression of a particular subject, but is a release of the "substance" or content of the object. Remember, there is no radical separation of subject and object in (negative) dialectics, nor should the "interrelatedness of all things" be forgotten.[74] This way of understanding the ethical implications of negative dialectics even appears to echo the self-justification of some "animal rights" defenders who object to the charge of abstractness and decontextualization,

> Evolutionary theory leads us to expect continuities, not sharp breaks. It implies that, if we examine nature with an unbiased eye, we will find a complex pattern of resemblances as well as differences. We will find in humans, traces of their evolutionary past, and in other species...traces of characteristics that may be more or less well developed in us. This is true of those characteristics that make us "rational," no less than the others.[75]

(However, again note the animal rights defender's focus on rationality as the principle criterion of concern.) The negative dialectical self-reflection required to interpret "objects" in their constellations has the effect not only of releasing the "substance" of the object, but of making us aware of our fundamental infusion with the rest of the world, "Cogitative self-reflection yields a knowledge of

oneself as other, nonidentical, which in turn opens the self to the nearly suppressed mimetic capacity, the ability to identify with others through access to the other in oneself."[76]

In a world of domination and repression the substance released in the self-reflective interpretation of constellations will reveal the moment of suffering. It is this realization which forms the basis for the "ethical message" of Adorno's negative dialectics, and which has implications for social and political practice, "The physical moment tells our knowledge that the suffering is not to be, that things should be different. Woe speaks, 'go.' Hence the convergence of specific materialism with criticism, with social change in practice."[77] And contrary to the charges of pessimism against Adorno in particular, unhappiness at the suffering of others should not be the basis of despair but of hope. It indicates we still retain some of that capacity to feel for others and to long for a change, "Conscious unhappiness is not a delusion of the mind's vanity, but something inherent in the end--the one authentic dignity it has received in its separation from the body. This dignity is the mind's negative reminder of its physical aspect: its capability of that aspect is the only source of whatever hope the mind can have."[78] The question which has dogged those sympathetic to critical theory is how Adorno's interpretation of "negativity" can be turned into a

politics which is not simply philosophical interpretation or aesthetic esotericism. The same old point needs repeating every so often, "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it."[79]

Cornell repeats the charges against Adorno. In examining the "ethical, legal, and political significance" of liberal and deconstructionist accounts of justice and "right" she concludes that Adorno is left with "only negative dialectics" and no possibility of a "positive" representation of politics,

> To pretend that in this fallen world we could give an affirmative account of the conditions of truth or of justice would only further perpetuate the violence of idealism. Even in art, the possibility of redemption can only be shown negatively. To try to abstractly portray the conditions of redemption, to give form to the hope of reconciliation as if it existed now, only promotes accommodation to a fallen world. As a result, Adorno does not reflect on the conditions of justice and the relation of these conditions to positive law, either through a quasi-transcendental inquiry or through empirical analysis. Such a reflection is foreclosed by his negative dialectics. Even if his negative dialectics carries within it an ethical message that can be decoded, this message cannot be translated into an account of justice and its relation to law.[80]

Cornell's understanding of the meaning of "justice" here is important, for she defines a "positive" account of justice as being, "the elaboration of justice as a given set of descriptive conditions." Abandoning negative dialectics, Cornell then turns to Derridean deconstruction

and its emphasis on the necessity of judgment in any interpretation of laws to argue that "justice" can never be "reduced to merely following the rules."[81] She also emphasizes her concern with maintaining the "divide between law, established norms, and Justice" so that given laws are not equated with justice as such.[82]

It then must be asked, do the analyses of the roles of mimesis in critical theory, ecofeminist, and radical ecological interpretations of nature provide any comfort for the hope of creating a new politics? Can a new politics be imagined which could provide direction to the social practices of radical ecological consciousness and its hope for the end of suffering and the beginning of happiness?

(Eco)Feminist Politics

Before examining recent attempts to retheorize politics, by individuals sympathetic to feminism, it must be reemphasized that any attempt to begin to locate a radical ecological politics which might begin to address the multiple crises of nature that now confronts the planet will run up against the limits of conceptuality, and invite the danger of cooptation by the logic of identity and domination. Cornell also emphasizes this problem in her criticism of those who cling to the Habermasian inspired critical theory and who fail to absorb the claims by Irigaray and other philosophers

concerned with the place of "the feminine" in any symbolic/conceptual representations, "No one emphasized the limit of traditional philosophical discourse in the expression of political critique more militantly than Theodor Adorno. Feminism is radical because it demands that we re-think the 'origins' and the 'limit' of philosophical discourse, even as we are challenged to do so philosophically."[83] In what follows it should be kept in mind that in the attempt to glimpse what-has-never-been and what-is-yet-to-be existing concepts and logics fail us. This understanding of politics then is not to be viewed as a utopian vision of the end times but as a humble suggestion about where to begin again.

With the collapse of socialism worldwide and the remaining "communist" countries exhibiting all the characteristics of brutal repressions, radical social and political theorists have increasingly turned to an examination of the potential of some liberal democratic and civic republican ideas in the hope that these retain some transformative or "revolutionary" possibilities. Chantal Mouffe, for example, has attempted to address "the need for a new form of identification around which to organize the forces struggling for a radicalization of democracy." The need for new forms of political identification is a result of the fact that the old arguments developed out of "class politics" have become problematic, especially for feminists, ecologists and

others who do not fit neatly into the categories of economism. Crucial to establishing any radicalization of democracy is a redefinition of citizenship which recognizes its "intimate link" to any preferred future social, political, cultural, and economic community. Mouffe argues that any adequate understanding of citizenship must go beyond those offered by either the liberal or civic republican traditions even in their more recent neo-liberal and communitarian forms.[84] Without fully restaging Mouffe's explication and criticism of liberal and communitarian arguments about the relationship of citizenship to the political community some basic points need repeating. As Mouffe summarizes the argument of John Rawls and other liberals, their idea of citizenship "is the capacity for each person to form, revise and rationally pursue his/her definition of the good." Citizens then pursue their self-interest while respecting the "rights" of others to do the same. Communitarians criticize this understanding as paying to little attention to the "constitutive community" which is central to establishing the identities from which the beliefs about self-interest and the good are generated. The critique asserts that the liberal self enters into an "instrumental community" of previously defined interests and identity. However, as Mouffe indicates, the approach the communitarians endorse as an alternative to the liberal community of instrumentalism, "is the revival of

the civic republican view of politics that puts a strong emphasis on the notion of a public good, prior to and independent of individual desires and interests."[85] Mouffe believes the fundamental problem with the communitarian perspective is the threat to "individual liberty" which a "substantive" conception of the public good would entail. Mouffe sees a great danger in those critiques of liberalism which tend to degenerate into an endorsement of a "pre-modern" politics, and in their failure to acknowledge the "crucial contributions of liberalism" including, "the defence of pluralism, the idea of individual liberty, the separation of church and state, the development of civil society," all of which help to constitute modern democracy. This "controversy" can perhaps then be understood as yet another form of the recurring dilemma between "individual liberty" and "political participation."[86] In searching for a radical intersection between the concerns of liberty and democracy Mouffe surprisingly turns to an argument which usually is seen as reinforcing conservative values. After examining Michael Oakeshott's discussion of the modern state, Mouffe concludes that his idea of the "<u>respublica</u>" is worth recovering, "Oakeshott insists that the participants in a <u>societas</u> or <u>cives</u> are not associated for a common enterprise nor with a view to facilitating the attainment of each person's individual prosperity; what links them is the recognition of the authority of the conditions

specifying their common or 'public' concern, a 'practice of civility.'"[87] A description of this respublica or public concern therefore must be elaborated, "It is a practice of civility specifying not performances, but conditions to be subscribed to in choosing performances. These consist in a complex of rules or rule-like prescriptions, which do not prescribe satisfactions to be sought or actions to be performed but 'moral considerations specifying conditions to be subscribed to in choosing performances.'"[88] What holds the community together then is not a "substantive common good" but a "common bond" which is elaborated as "moral considerations of public concern." These considerations then become the "conditions" within which public or political discourse takes place. The "rules of civil intercourse" form the common concern and bring the citizens together, "The identification with those rules of civil intercourse creates a common political identity among persons otherwise engaged in many different enterprises."[89] Politics then is not seen as something done to express interests of those with pre-political identities, but rather it is about the formation of identities themselves,

> Politics is to a great extent about the rules of the respublica and its many possible interpretations, it is about the constitution of the political community, not something that takes place inside the political community as some communitarians would have it. Political life concerns collective, public action; it

> aims at the construction of a "we" in a context of diversity and conflict.[90]

However, identity as a citizen has a privileged status in Mouffe's new understanding of politics,

> In this case, citizenship is not just one identity among others--as in liberalism--or the dominant identity that overrides all others--as in civic republicanism. It is an articulation principle that affects different subject positions of the social agent while allowing for a plurality of specific allegiances and for the respect of individual liberty.[91]

The citizen of the radical democracy would experience a constant conditioning tension between their identity as a citizen and their other identities, such as feminist, ecologist, mother, artist, and so forth. In addition, "identity as citizen" itself will be multiple as there will not be any single authoritative interpretation of the "respublica."

Therefore, what Mouffe offers for consideration is an understanding of politics and citizenship which is deeply implicated in processes of identification. She also insists the construction of the identities in community as citizens is not to be viewed as a form of "alliance," "For it is not a matter of establishing a mere alliance between given interests but of actually modifying the very identity of these forces." Furthermore, this politics will affect the identities and interests of all citizens, "The creation of political identities as radical democratic citizens depends therefore on a collective form

of identification among the democratic demands found in a variety of movements: women, workers, black, gay, ecological, as well as in several other 'new social movements.'"[92] This "radical democratic conception of citizenship" then must be articulated with a "radical democratic interpretation" of the ideas of liberty and equality which when transformed could take into account, "the different social relations and subject positions in which they are relevant: gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc....."[93] The tensions between the principles of liberty and equality, on the one hand, and citizen and other individual identities, on the other, also imply there is no "true democracy" which can ever come into existence, "This is why a project of radical and plural democracy recognizes the impossibility of the complete realization of democracy and the final achievement of the political community. Its aim is to use the symbolic resources of the liberal democratic tradition to struggle for the deepening of the democratic revolution, knowing that it is a never-ending process."[94]

Kirstie McClure has taken up these ideas from Mouffe (and from Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau's earlier work) and used them to address the history of "pluralism" and how these new theoretical tools can be used to radicalize pluralist democracy, particularly as it is constituted in relation to the public/private split in liberalism.[95] She argues that understandings of liberal democracy as a

pluralistic process of interest adjudication have changed over time, and have had the consequence of challenging, sometimes explicitly often unselfconsciously, the liberal theory of the "subject of rights" in relation to state authority. The classic liberal subject retains rights against which the state must not impinge; the identity of this subject exists prior to the state and prior to any political participation. This liberal subject is known characteristically as the "autonomous self" or "unitary subject." In her examination of the radical potential of the idea of pluralism, McClure is attempting to address the criticism of defenders of feminism who believe the "autonomous individual is a necessary requisite to political agency."[96] This is true, she argues, only to the extent that the relationships of public to private and state to citizen accepted by liberal ideology remain in place. The radicalization of our understanding of these relationships will be an element in the simultaneous transformation of the categories of politics and the identities of the political actors. As McClure indicates, "Today's erasure of the boundaries between public and private is accomplished not through the incursion of public authority into a pre-existing private realm, but through a 'proliferation of new political spaces.'"[97] The new political spaces make "cultural representation and social practices" the multiple sites of political struggle. This understanding of political struggle means

that "claims" by the "pluralist social subject" should be addressed not to the authority of the state but at multiple sites, which include not only traditional political spaces but also the "social" and the "cultural," for example. This new, radically democratic struggle "opens the possibility of a quotidian politics--a politics which extends the terrain of political contestation to the everyday enactment of social practices and the routine reiteration of cultural representations."[98] The politically transformative possibilities thus envisioned are not simply another form of "interest group politics," but are expressed in a language close to that of the theorists of mimesis, "It suggests the possibility of a politics that begins not with the object of constructing similarities to address rights claims to the state, but opens rather with the object of addressing such claims to each other, and to each 'other', whoever and wherever they may be."[99]

McClure elaborates on the implications of her position for addressing concerns about political agency. This radical democratic politics does not restrict the understanding of political "agency" but rather extends it in all directions,

> Not only is its agency affirmed by recasting "the social" as a terrain of political contestation; it is extended further by insisting that its multiple identities are themselves not given as "natural kinds" but contingently constructed and reconstructed

> through the reiteration of cultural codes and through participation in the social practices through which these codes are enacted in daily life.[100]

These political identities then are not given but are "what one enacts" and which are enacted by "strategies of subversive repetition." The social codes are varied through the "performative reconfiguring (of) such constructions" which thereby increases the "political" participation of these radical democratic subjects, "In short, by recasting their production and reproduction of their own 'identities' as political investments, it constitutes their participation in culture itself as a political commitment."

The formation and re-formation of identities is a political act and helps constitute the political as such. In a slightly different context, and with reference to both Adorno and Irigaray, Cornell also seems to indicate where the politics of mimesis intersects a new practice of radical democracy,

> But this understanding of the subject does not mean that we have to choose between the politics of identity or the politics of difference. This other subject returns us, instead, to the theatricality of the enactment of a mimetic identification as the basis for feminist politics, an enactment which is always toward the future, because it enacts as constituted what has yet to be.[101]

What will become important then for the practice of a radical ecological politics which is critically self-reflexive is the taking up of the challenge of radical democracy and of feminist theory to self-consciously

transform ourselves with new identities. These new identities, and the new agents of politics they constitute, must include that openness to the other which Adorno calls for in his hope for the not-yet. Although not immune from stereotypic representation and self projection, attempts have been made by radical ecologists to develop a sensitivity to others in the world, and to practices representing the interests of those others who speak in other languages and muted voices. In the collaboration Thinking Like a Mountain, the rituals and procedures for participation in a "Council of All Beings" are offered. In the "Guidelines for a Council of All Beings Workshop" within the section entitled "Identifying with Another Life-Form" the initial phases of the process are summarized, "Through mourning and remembering, the workshop participants have opened to the universality of the life within them. They are ready to shake off their solely human identification and for a while imaginatively enter the experience of another life-form." The people involved then are urged to go out and "let themselves be chosen" by another being, an activity the participants often call a "Vision Quest" in which, "The participants are finding an ally to speak for in the Council."[102] A description of how participants might be guided in their identifications is included, "Ask them to request this being's permission to enter it, so they can imaginatively sense its body from within. Finally, let them ask the

being how it wishes to be represented and what symbolic form can be made as a mask to be worn in the Council." Then masks are made, meditation is encouraged, and the participants practice "speaking for" the being which has opened to them. "The Council of All Beings" is then held. There are alternations between humans and others, taking turns speaking and listening, until the council finally dissolves, sometimes in laughter, other times in sorrow or silence, or in some complex combination of emotions. The people then release the adopted life-forms and thank them for allowing the identifications. Then comes a time to reflect on the experience and to make plans for future actions and subsequent meetings.

ENDNOTES

1. See Nancy Chodorow, The Reproduction of Mothering (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); Isaac Balbus, Marxism and Domination (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

2. Slicer, Deborah, "Your Daughter or Your Dog? A Feminist Assessment of the Animal Research Issue?", Hypatia, Spring, 1991, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 108ff.

3. Slicer, Hypatia, p. 110.

4. Slicer, Hypatia, p. 111.

5. Slicer, Hypatia, p. 111. She quotes Marti Kheel, "The liberation of nature: A circular affair," Environmental Ethics, Vol. 7 No. 2, 1985, pp. 135-49; Jim Cheney, "Ecofeminism and deep ecology," Environmental Ethics, Vol. 9 No. 2, 1987, pp. 115-45; and Karen Warren, "The power and promise of ecological feminism," Environmental Ethics Vol. 12 No. 1, 1990, pp. 125-46.

6. Slicer, Hypatia, p. 112.

7. Slicer, Hypatia, p. 113.

8. Slicer, Hypatia, p. 114.

9. Slicer, Hypatia, p. 116.

10. Donovan, Josephine, "Animal Rights and Feminist Theory," Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature, Greta Gaard, Ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), p. 168.

11. Donovan, Animal Rights, p. 170. Originally, Immanuel Kant, "Duties to Animals and Spirits," as cited by Tom Regan, The Case for Animal Rights (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), p. 177.

12. Donovan, Animal Rights, p. 170.

13. Donovan, Animal Rights, p. 171.

14. Donovan, Animal Rights, p. 171. Jeremy Bentham, Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation, (1789).

15. Donovan, Animal Rights, p. 172. Peter Singer, Animal Liberation (New York: Avon, 1975), p. 8. Josephine Donovan, Feminist Theory (New York: Ungar, 1987), pp. 31-63.

16. Donovan, Animal Rights, p. 172.

17. Donovan, Animal Rights, p. 174.

18. Donovan, Animal Rights, p. 174. Edmund Husserl, The Crisis of European Sciences (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), pp. 23ff.

19. Donovan, Animal Rights, pp. 174-75. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment (New York: Continuum, 1987), p. 23.

20. Donovan, Animal Rights, p. 175.

21. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 84.

22. Donovan, Animal Rights, p. 176.

23. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 248. Donovan, p. 176.

24. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 245.

25. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 248.

26. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 249.

27. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 249.

28. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 249.

29. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 251.

30. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 252.

31. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, p. 254.

32. Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic, pp. 254-255.

33. Adorno, Theodor, Aesthetic Theory, Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, Eds., C. Lenhardt, Trans. (London: Routledge, 1984), p. 72.

34. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 96.

35. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 96.

36. Adorno, Aesthetic, pp. 98-99.

37. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 110.

38. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 110.

39. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 191.

40. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 192.

41. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 192.

42. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 193.

43. Adorno, Aesthetic, pp. 194-195.

44. Adorno, Aesthetic, p. 455.

45. Ruddick, Sara, Maternal Thinking (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).

46. Ruddick, Maternal, p. 127.

47. Ruddick, Maternal, p. 130.

48. Ruddick, Maternal, p. 131. Ruddick however does criticize object relations theory as relying too much on an analysis of psychological development of boys and girls which seems to depend on the family relationships typical of modern capitalist society or which exist "only in cultures which give excessive privilege to those characteristics" of "abstract masculinity" like separateness. Ruddick, Maternal, p. 268.

49. Ruddick, Maternal, p. 133.

50. Ruddick, Maternal, p. 133.

51. Ruddick, Maternal, p. 131, 134.

52. Ruddick, Maternal, p. 135.

53. Joan C. Tronto provided some early reflections on the ethic of care debates. See "Women and Caring: What Can Feminists Learn about Morality from Caring?", in Gender/Body/Knowledge, Alison M. Jaggar and Susan R. Bordo, Eds. (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1990).

54. Johnson, David Kenneth, and Kathleen R. Johnson, "The Limits of Partiality: Ecofeminism, Animal Rights, and Environmental Concern," Ecological Feminism, Karen J. Warren, Ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 113. Originally in Thomas Regan, The Thee Generation: Reflections on the Coming Revolution (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), p. 96.

55. Johnson and Johnson, p. 113.

56. Johnson and Johnson, p. 114.

57. Johnson and Johnson, pp. 114-115.

58. Cornell, Drucilla, "The Ethical Message of Negative Dialectics," The Philosophy of the Limit (New York and London: Routledge, 1992).

59. Cornell, Ethical, p. 13.

60. Cornell, Ethical, p. 14.

61. Cornell, Ethical, p. 14.

62. Cornell, Ethical, p. 15. Adorno, Negative Dialectics, p. 145.

63. Cornell, Ethical, p. 16.

64. Cornell, Ethical, p. 16.

65. Cornell, Ethical, p. 17. Cornell moves back and forth between the more current term "communicative freedom" (from Michael Theneuissen) and Adorno's reference to "reconciliation." The discussion of communicative freedom precedes that of reconciliation, pp. 15-16. Cornell subtly, throughout her essay, is critical of interpretations of Adorno which attempt to reduce negative dialectics to a pessimism and a "philosophy of

despair" or hopelessness. She quotes Adorno, "He who dies in despair has lived his life in vain." (Minima Moralia, p. 167) She says she takes him at his word "when he argues that his melancholy science should be placed in the region of philosophy devoted to the teaching of the good life." Adorno indicated the intimate connection between hope for the good life and the present state of suffering, "What would happiness be that was not measured by the immeasurable grief at what is." (Minima Moralia, p. 200)

66. Cornell, Ethical, p. 19.

67. Cornell, Ethical, p. 19.

68. Cornell, Ethical, p. 20.

69. Cornell, Ethical, p. 23. Originally, Adorno, Negative Dialectics, p. 163.

70. Cornell, Ethical, p. 23; Adorno, p. 163.

71. Cornell, Ethical, p. 23.

72. Cornell, Ethical, p. 24.

73. Cornell, Ethical, p. 24.

74. Cornell, Ethical, p. 24.

75. Rachels, James, Created From Animals: The Moral Implications of Darwinism, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 166. Quoted in Johnson and Johnson, p. 111.

76. Cornell, Ethical, p. 25.

77. Adorno, Negative, p. 204.

78. Adorno, Negative, pp. 203-204.

79. Marx, Karl, "Theses on Feuerbach," in Robert C. Tucker, Ed., The Marx-Engels Reader, Second edition (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), p. 145.

80. Cornell, Ethical, p. 181.

81. Cornell, Ethical, p. 182.

82. Cornell, Ethical, p. 182.

83. Cornell, Drucilla, "Rethinking the Time of Feminism," Feminist Contentions (New York and London: Routledge, 1995), p. 149.

84. Mouffe, Chantal, "Democratic Citizenship and the Political Community," Dimensions of Radical Democracy, Chantal Mouffe, Ed. (London and New York: Verso, 1992) p. 225.

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86. Mouffe, Citizenship, p. 228.

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PART III.
CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

THE ECOLOGICAL SUBJECT AND THE SPIRIT OF REVOLUTION

Radical ecological thought and the tradition of critical theory can be fruitfully articulated together by exposing the works of the philosophers of the ecology movement to critique and conversely by supplementing the work of the tradition of critical theory with the insights of radical ecologists. A critical theoretical approach to the philosophies of radical ecology reveals the extent to which they have failed to adequately develop the concepts of an "ecological society" and an "ecological subject" which might bring it about. The tradition of critical theory supplies a needed corrective to the sometimes regressive, sometimes anthropocentric, positions of deep ecology, social ecology and ecofeminism. But if the tradition of critical theory is to be true to itself it must open onto the truth of the ecology movement also. The "truth" of the movement can be located in two areas. First, the ecology movement has developed genuine insights into the possibilities of a "mimetic" relationship with nature that do not simply regress behind the categories of modern science nor simply assimilate themselves to an affirmation of the present culture of domination. Second, there exists the possibility for constructing a vision of a concrete historical subject/agent of social transformation which does not merely collapse the concept

of the revolutionary subject into the category of currently given empirical individuals, or succumb to the conception of a meta-subject "above" the everyday struggles of actual living human beings.

By examining the aspects of the various philosophies of ecology through the categories of methodology, subjectivity, and politics, the various aspects of the constellation which is presently called "radical ecology" or the "green" movement can be shown to be in a fruitful tension. This movement contains potentials and possibilities for both transformation toward a future ecological community <u>and</u> regression to further barbarism, to use the words of the early critical theorists, and it is only by becoming more self aware of these tensions and possibilities that radical ecologists can make appropriate theoretical and political choices.

Deep Ecology

Within the philosophy of deep ecology there is both a deep insight into the possibilities of a non-dominating relationship to nature as well as a disturbing tendency toward misanthropy. This tendency extends beyond its merely polemical use to an unfortunate essential blindness towards the categories of its own analysis. The work of Arne Naess serves as the philosophical foundation of much of the "deep ecology" element of the radical ecology movement. Naess's work reveals both the power and

limitation of the deep ecological approach. However, the methodology and subsequent claims of deep ecology has not enabled it to escape from traditional philosophical procedures and their limitations. The "deep questioning method" is little more than philosophy as traditionally conceived. It does not of necessity lead to foundational truth, but rather tends to return to long-standing, fundamental problems of ontology and epistemology. The deep ecology concept of identification with nature is also problematic, and remains unresolved even in the work of those who follow Warwick Fox in his attempt to develop a "transpersonal ecology." The concept of identification must be rearticulated to distinguish between a "projective" identification which, against the intentions of the radical ecologist, simply maps the prevailing categories of nature onto the world, and what may be called "mimetic identification" which understands nature differently from what is possible in current scientific or romantic concepts of nature. Mimetic identification has already been adopted as the basis for some innovative remedial and reconstructive ecological work, and while not achieving the ecological equivalent of the theological terms of "resurrection" or "reconciliation," at least this approach does not reduce nature to the categories of an instrumental rationality. Mimetic identification attempts to overcome the present conceptual system which has resulted in the domination of nature, which advances the

goal of simplification or reduction of nature solely for the purposes of human production and consumption.

The deep ecological subject attempts to deeply identify with the ecocommunity of which it is a part, but often this is achieved at the price of a mystical or metaphysical regression, leaving the ecological subject no rational basis for making moral or ethical distinctions between forms of life. Life as a whole is given absolute value and in this way devalues all individual life and the uniqueness of particular beings. The insights gained by seeing the world through categories of ecosystem and species may at the same time reduce the capacity to recognize the uniqueness of each member of the ecocommunity, especially the individual human beings who are collapsed into a single essential category, the human species, whose members are posited as having a universal character, typically represented as fundamentally selfish, destructive, and self-destructive. In failing to distinguish analytically the internal differences between human beings, especially with respect to the institutions and systems they have created, the deep ecologist does not provide a systematic analysis of the different effects which result from decisions by different individuals within human society. The CEO and the assembly line worker at a chemical company do not share equal responsibility for the decisions about polluting the environment. Although as a practical matter the deep

ecologists of Earth First! do know who is responsible for decisions such as clear cutting, as is clear in their Journal, they have not made a coherent theoretical link between their ecological and their political claims, or when they have, it has appeared in an all too reactionary and even racist form. For many who identify as deep ecologists, human reason is perceived as essentially the same as instrumental rationality leaving as the only apparent alternative for understanding the "truth" of nature a reversion to mythic explanations and mythic solutions.

Deep ecological politics has prided itself on development of mythologies of the eco-warrior, eco-heroes and eco-martyrs, thus opening the possibility of achieving the same paradoxical impact on the environment that the early critical theorists attributed to the dialectic of Enlightenment. The deep ecologists' overriding practical goal is to attempt ecosystem preservation based on an approach to political action which tends to repeat the patterns of domination lying at the source of the ecological crisis. In their analysis of ecosystems, the deep ecologists have a complex, advanced, empirical understanding of the intimate interdependence of human and non-human nature, but in their analysis of society they tend to simply project the categories of first nature onto society (second nature) and so dishonor what should be their fundamental insight: the irreducible uniqueness of

each species and each individual within the species, including those belonging to the human species. Deep ecologists frequently fail to honor the unique otherness of the individual human being. Recognition of individual human value should be compatible with their concern for the individual members of other species and for nature as a whole. Deep ecology must develop a social analysis that is able to generate social insights which attain the same advanced level of its insights into the appropriate ecological relationship to "non-human nature." For this reason deep ecology must turn more self-consciously and self-reflexively toward the insights of feminist theories.

Social Ecology

Social ecology continues to be burdened by its lingering anthropocentrism, a manifestation of the Humanism present in the tradition of anarchism from which it has evolved. Bookchin's categories are social categories. The natural world is interpreted through these social categories and thereby reduced to the social, the social categories themselves ultimately reflecting a particular and perhaps idiosyncratic understanding of Reason. The collapse of nature into categories of reason is the recurring problem of identity thinking, the conceptual domination of the other. This tendency manifests itself in Bookchin's work centrally in his understanding of the relationship of subjectivity to

evolution where "subjectivity" is found to exist everywhere in nature. In this way human reason becomes the standard for the future ecological society. His program of social transformation can be viewed as an updated version of an idealized notion of the Greek polis. Like nearly all socialist projections, it is a vision of efficiency and rational domination in the service of a material abundance which then becomes the basis of human emancipation. It seeks an indirect resolution of the conflict between human and nature by attempting to resolve social injustice first. Bookchin's ecologically aware, libertarian anarchist is to achieve freedom and justice through the rational dissolution of "hierarchy," and after this has occurred ecological remediation will be possible.

The social ecologist's assumption that subjectivity is the telos of nature is simply an expression of the hubris of human reason. It fails to recognize the uniqueness of each member of the ecocommunity and the non-teleological aspects of natural evolution. Man again becomes the measure of all things, and the development of "subjectivity" the highest goal of nature. The ecological aspect of libertarian anarchism is an honest and explicit acknowledgment of the constitutive precedence of non-human nature, and distinguishes it from early forms of philosophical idealism. However, for evolution to be read teleologically, biological and other physical sciences must be forced into a narrowed interpretation that, rather

than adequately integrating empirical knowledge of evolution into a general theory of human development, converts biological categories into indicators of moral necessity. Social ecology's analytic category that most obviously conflates biology and sociology is "symbiosis." The biological category "symbiosis" takes on social characteristics as "mutual aid." Here Bookchin is following Kropotkin. This philosophic strategy reduces the real conflicts and antagonisms of the natural and social worlds to matters of redefinition, it displaces natural or ecological struggles, shifting their meaning to questions of "social justice."

Bookchin's concept of municipalism is provocative and well supported by a counter-history of the development and destruction of civilizing tendencies. The fundamental difficulties emerge (besides in the inadequate response to the deep ecologists' insights into the necessity of the expansion of "wilderness") in social ecology's inadequate conception of technology and technological development. What criteria exist for technological development which do not simply repeat the criteria of rational domination? How is the teleological development of subjectivity to be viewed as anything other than human instrumental reason intensified, taking the form of the rational domination of social processes? Simply appealing to democratic procedures does not assure that nature will be viewed as anything other than the mere object of human purposes. Is

the teleology of nature simply an extension of the idea of self-preservation, thus inviting an intensification of instrumental reason, which would merely constitute the perfection of the practice of the domination of nature?

Ecofeminism

Ecofeminists do not have a common unified position and methodology, or even a common analysis of the ecology crisis. There are not even the commonalities that might be found between deep and social ecology. Ecofeminism is an element not only of the constellation "radical ecology" but also of feminism. When brought within the interpretive framework of critical theory, ecofeminism becomes an exceedingly complex web of structures and potentials difficult to disentangle theoretically. However, much of ecofeminist thought still revolves around the central radical ecological categories of nature and subjectivity, but which then attempt to include the concept of gender in their analyses. An examination of the concept of "the feminine" by feminists and ecofeminists has revealed the historical association of women with nature, and the historical devaluation of women's subjectivity with respect to male subjectivity. Much of the discussion of "women's experience" involves an attempt to establish the implications of the relation of that experience to the (masculine/patriarchal) idea of subjectivity. One "goal" of feminism has become the

redefinition or resymbolization of the relation of women's experience to the concept of subjectivity. Becoming a subject is a fundamentally problematic process for those of the human species identified/classified as women and as "other" in the androcentric or "phallocentric" world.

Those who attempt to recover a prior or pre-his-toric subjectivity frequently turn to cultural anthropology for empirical and philosophic support. This ecofeminism hypothesizes a pre-patriarchal culture that honored women, included goddess worship, and was organized through matriarchal, or at least matrilineal, relationships. One of the most problematic developments in this area is that of spiritual ecofeminism which has failed to address the problems of hierarchy which result from political interpretation by a single "spiritual" authority. This results in a political authority that is derived from spiritual authority, and a pre-modern rather than a post-modern political agency. This understanding of the relationship of politics to spirituality collapses the political back into the spiritual or religious. This produces a fundamentally hierarchical and anti-democratic politics, reducing the political consciousness of the individual subject and making her subservient to a higher interpretive authority. Instead of representing feminine sensitivity and spirituality it reproduces the typical structures of power only in disguise.

However, when traditional categories and concepts are retained, ecological and political practices tend to be guided by Enlightenment or rationalist impulses. Rationalist ecofeminism attempts to provide enlightened guidance of social development. This ecofeminism parallels very closely mainstream feminism which insists that women's reason is equally human reason and therefore entitles women to equal access to all rational democratic institutions and the legitimate exercise of power. Unfortunately this form of feminism seems to be largely content with acquiring for women the same powers of domination of nature which have for so long been uniformly controlled by men.

Much of recent feminism's concerns with subjectivity and identity revolves around the status of "the feminine" and its critical potential for restructuring symbolic and political orders. Efforts in this area attempt to transform the relations of women to society and politics by transforming the categories and concepts of Western philosophy and political thought. One especially significant effort along these lines has been that of Luce Irigaray and her interpreters and critics. This radical alternative form of feminism includes post-structural, deconstructive treatment of the concepts and categories of philosophy and political thought. However, the approaches to feminism and ecofeminism that challenge the entire

framework of philosophy and political thought have yet to establish other than a negating practice. In addition, radical forms of feminism and ecofeminism are forced to face the same charges Habermas makes against Adorno concerning the relation of philosophy to itself and political practice, that is, does the negativity of the critique preclude political action other than that based on some mystical or metaphysical notions of peace, reconciliation, or freedom.

One interpretation of this critical or "negative" thought asserts that participation in politics in the present liberal, parliamentary framework only serves to strengthen the bindings of oppression and domination. Those who oppose the atomistic individualism typical of this form of politics contend that political practice should instead be conceived as an attempt to construct alternative subjectivities and identities. However, efforts at (re)constructing identities have also had unexpected consequences, as feminism generally has found, when attempts to analyze women's experiences begin to include other categories such as race and class. It has become apparent that "women's experience" cannot be collapsed into a single descriptive category, but can only be adequately approached through the recognition of the uniqueness of individuals' experiences, while recognizing that this does not lead to the production of a philosophical or political "nominalism" because of the

necessary inclusion of social and historical context in the analysis. Interpretation of these experiences is further complicated by the frequent occupation by women of multiple categories of oppression and domination. Radical ecological insights force these analyses to recognize that under conditions of unfreedom "subject positions" of individuals or groups are established through a symbolic order in which social identities are at least partially constructed from categories of nature. The presently dominant or "hegemonic" symbolic order has been interrogated by "postmodern or poststructural" critics who have exposed the workings of these constructions of subjectivity. Adorno developed a very similar questioning of the dominant conceptual process and its relationship to subjectivity. He critically examined the conceptual operations by which the non-identical is reduced to the identical, incorporating it into the system of domination, and thus extending instrumental rationality to the point of its culmination in a "false totality." In efforts which echo many of the critical theorists' insights, feminists and ecofeminists have attempted, both in their philosophic examinations and political actions, to challenge imposed identities.

One area in particular where ecofeminism has begun to challenge earlier environmental values is that of animal rights. The challenge has been made through attempts to elaborate on the idea of an ethic of care, first discussed

by Carol Gilligan in her work on the differences in moral reasoning between women and men. The animal rights debate is a manifestation of the larger challenge in philosophy and politics to the "justice tradition" which seeks to define universal moral principles rather than develop an understanding of ethical obligations traditionally associated with a theory of "the good life." Ecofeminists have rejected the moralist animal rights claims for being abstract, ahistorical, and decontextualized, and thus offering little effective guidance for the many moral dilemmas faced in everyday life. Alternatively, by focusing on the everyday ethical decisions women frequently make, exemplified in Ruddick's understanding of "maternal thinking," a truly practical guide to moral principles may potentially be developed.

The attempts at redefinition or revaluing of women's differences from men and among themselves has been a very hazardous process, particularly when confronting the category of "nature." Feminist critique of Western philosophy fundamentally challenges its analytic categories, and therefore what has historically been much of feminism's own epistemological status. Few have pushed this critique as far as Luce Irigaray with her strategy of mimesis with its attempt to resymbolize the "feminine" and so create new possibilities for women's subjectivity. Others, such as Judith Butler, question why women should solely occupy the space of the "other" in this analysis,

suggesting that other others, including nonhuman others, must also be resymbolized creating multiple strategies of mimesis which might disrupt the current system of domination.

Although outside the discussion within ecofeminism, Drucilla Cornell has attempted to draw out the ethical implications of Adorno's negative dialectics. Cornell concludes that Adorno's negative dialectics fails to provide guidance for the crucial political questions concerning law and justice. The problem for feminists, ecofeminists and radical ecologists generally is to find the links both theoretically and practically which can tie the ethical insights which are generated when examining the idea of mimesis to the politics of radical democracy. An extension of the works of Mouffe and McClure, by combining them with the insights of Cornell on Adorno's ethics and Irigaray on the strategy of mimesis, may provide some of those mediating links between "mimetic ethics" and radically participatory democracy.

Critical Theory and Radical Ecology

Critical theory offers both a framework and a tradition of critique which help illuminate what otherwise remains opaque in the often contradictory elements of radical ecology examined in this work. However, for its part, radical ecology does provide empirical information and practical orientation lacking in the tradition of

critical theory. Radical ecology is an historical and empirical corrective, or developmental supplement, to the insights of early critical theory. Critical theory itself lacks unity, as can be seen in the conflicting positions of Marcuse, Habermas and Adorno. Marcuse foresaw the potential of the women's and ecology movements, but remained largely in the rationalist and humanist conceptual framework with its tendency to elitism and anthropocentrism. In Marcuse's work the position of the proletariat is simply, somewhat too expediently, replaced by the most advanced form of resistant consciousness existing at any given historical moment. In this way what is fundamentally an orthodox Leninist Marxism is retained although in a slightly altered form. Vanguardism remains, in Marcuse's critical theory, now in the privileged location of the contemporary intellectual strata.

Habermas's critique of Marcuse's call for a New Science and New Technology as the basis of a truly liberated society must be reconsidered. Critical theorists from Horkheimer through Habermas have agreed on the basic social and economic influences on the actual practice of science and technology, that is, social and economic structures are fundamental determinants of the objects and purposes of science and technology. Habermas's assertions about evolution and "technological progress" cannot sustain his critique of Marcuse and early critical theory. Natural evolution has not come to an

end, but takes on new forms in the dialectic of history and nature. A clearer understanding of our present predicament comes from understanding that evolution has become primarily devolution, through the destruction of species and the potential destruction of entire ecosystems, including the irrevocable disintegration of planetary ecology. It is possible this devolution may result in a final catastrophic global ecological collapse, destroying human "civilization" if not the species itself. Habermas's critical theory and its assumption of technologically productive "progress" is fundamentally challenged by the empirical evidence of ecological destruction. The understanding of science which Habermas relies on is also challenged by the critique of dominant views of science offered by those feminists, including Hartsock, Harding, and Keller, who have developed alternative understandings of objectivity, and who have shown that "reliable knowledge of nature" can be produced without limiting science to the role of shop foreman in the full extension of the domination of nature through instrumental rationality. Other more "erotic" methods and theories of science also produce reliable knowledge of nature and could be encouraged with a fundamental change of society.

From an ecological perspective, technological development must be viewed within a framework much more closely approximating Adorno's view of history. Modern

ecological history is the history of catastrophe. Habermas's position, viewed from the perspective of radical ecology and ecofeminism, appears both anthropocentric and androcentric. It is fully within the tradition of Western philosophy, a tradition extensively and importantly critiqued and deconstructed by feminism over the last few decades.

When ecological remediation and reclamation take place, not primarily for purposes of human aesthetic appreciation or simple human self-preservation, but in response to the needs of an ecosystem as a whole and of its individual members, then a fundamentally different approach to nature is taking place. Remediation and reclamation are not reducible to functions of the human system of production or commodity consumption. The human needs of self-preservation or aesthetic pleasure in these new ecological orientations are not central motivations for the interventions and non-interventions into ecosystems. These ecological activities demonstrate a perspective which views humans as only one element of the ecological community. This ecological perspective attempts to recognize the fundamental contiguity of humans and nature rather than attempting to find the definitive point of their separation. Human interests are preserved only to the extent they are part of the interests of the ecocommunity as a whole. Nature is not viewed as a collection of objects for manipulation and control, but as

a profound process that develops in not entirely predictable directions, and which exceeds conceptual possibility. Ecosystems tend to approach climax conditions, only interrupted by extraordinary and cataclysmic events of various kinds, and the movement toward climax conditions can be encouraged by human actions in reversal of our historical relationship to nature so far. The categories and concepts which guide the radical ecologists' interaction with nature tend to develop differently than those of a science and technology harnessed to the ideology of industrial production and continuous growth. If science shifts from a positivist acceptance of facts as given, toward a self-reflectiveness; if interventions into natural processes take place with the intent of reversing the destructive effects of industrial production; if scientist as well as non-scientists view themselves as unique parts of nature becoming aware of itself, rather than as superior beings with only the interests of their own self-preservation to limit their powers of domination and suppression of everything "other"--then, is this not a new science and new technology, based, if not on a Marcusean "logic of gratification," then on a self-reflexive eco-logic?

However justified or unjustified Habermas's theological reading of the early critical theorists, the actions of radical and not so radical ecologists, who attempt to repair, recover and reconstitute natural

ecosystems, do approximate a redemption of the claims of the concept of "reconciliation" as Adorno interpreted it. The reading of Adorno which understands him as calling for a mystical or metaphysical resurrection of nature is unfortunate at best and a cynical distortion at worst. To analytically reduce an entire body of work to metaphysics and theology on the basis of the use of the concept of reconciliation is a destruction of thought no less complicit with the forces of domination than one that reduces all thought to instrumental rationality. Adorno was neither mystic nor theologian. It is too easy to pull isolated quotes from a work, "reconstruct" it along reductionist lines, then attribute to it a set of paradoxes or aporias which find their sole solution in a "paradigm shift."

But regardless of the unwarranted attack on Adorno, the theory of communicative action seems increasingly problematic itself. If the limitations, which Habermas acknowledges, are taken seriously, the best that can be hoped from his change of paradigm is a gradual increase in the uncoerced mutual understanding of those involved in expert discourses. If the theory of communicative action is "true," consensus understandings reached within "expert" discourses should trickle down to the level of everyday life, thus reducing social injustice. However, it is still unclear how this trickle down ethics alone can have a significant impact on the ecology crisis. Only if

enough people were to recognize their self-interest in preserving at least a minimally viable global ecosystem, would democratic institutions begin to contain the economic and political systems responsible for the destruction of the environment. At any rate, this hope of communicative rationality would seem to be unable by itself to provide the motivation for individuals to act within the limited time available to combat ecological catastrophe, an event some analyses view as imminent.

However difficult it is to comprehend the concepts contained within the work of the early critical theorists, especially those of Adorno, they seem to offer more fertile ground for the development of radical ecological thought than does the framework of communicative action alone. The non-concept of mimesis may be of crucial importance in the development of an adequate philosophical and practical approach to the problems of ecological destruction and catastrophe. Development of a non-destructive mode of ecological interaction with nature can only be fully achieved by human beings who are capable of individually interpreting their everyday life activities from the perspective of ecological subjects and then representing them in a radically democratic manner. Until the planet and the social system residing on it have achieved a new ecological equilibrium, the truly ecological subject remains imaginary or utopian, but utopian in the sense of an "exact fantasy."

What is now needed is an "exact fantasy" as Adorno used the term and Buck-Morss has explained it.[1] What is needed is the translation of the facts of ecology, of nature, into words which themselves provide an image, but this image is that of a future possibility, one where the "reconciliation" of humans with nature will have taken place. This exact fantasy is accomplished through a mimetic transformation, not to be understood as a mere copying of the given, but as its metamorphosis, accomplished through the translation of existing elements into the image of the desired future. For the radical ecologist, the imagined future of a planetary ecological climax becomes the model for mimetic self-transformation.

The idea of an ecological society is an anticipation of a situation of reconciliation, an anticipation of the development of possibilities and potentials existing latently in the present damaged life, an anticipation of the elimination of reification and the flowering of otherness. The ecological subject will not be an absolute subject, for it recognizes what is non-identical to itself. It will not attempt to reduce the other to its own concepts, or to the needs of a production apparatus. The ecological subject's attitude toward the other is a willingness to let it be. The future ecological society assists the development of the other which occurs through its own impulses, in its own time. This will bring into

being a different world, one where the blossoming of what-we-are-not will reveal who we truly are.

ENDNOTES

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