WORLDEATERS:
AN ECOSOPHICAL CRITIQUE OF WESTERN INDUSTRIAL CIVILIZATION IN SELECTED NOVELS OF LINDA HOGAN AND URSULA K. LE GUIN

By

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ABSTRACT

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"Worldeaters" engages in an ecosophical literary analysis of Chickasaw author Linda Hogan's Solar Storms and Mean Spirit and science fiction writer Ursula K. Le Guin's Always Coming Home and The Word for World is Forest to address the question: is te civilized state, especially as seen in Western industrial civilization, a desirable mode of human existence? Case studies in human ecology, history and environmental science are used to augment this ecosophical analysis of the selected novels and of industrial civilization. Following the ecological interpretation of the novels to its logical conclusion, "Worldeaters" finds that in these novels, the authors propose a reclamation of the savage and a return to a rural-wilderness mode of human existence as preferable to the civilized state, particularly as exemplified with Western industrial civilization.

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to all my loved ones, both in the spirit world and here.

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My grateful thanks to my thesis director, Professor Lillian Heldreth, and to my thesis reader, Dr. Martin Reinhardt, for their helpful ideas, encouraging energy and much appreciated support. Many thanks also to my mother, Linda Cree, whose support of and assistance with this thesis have been invaluable.

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Finally, *miigwech* to the earth and the Great Mystery for all the inspiration she/he/it provides, especially for birdsong, the beauty of the night sky and the delight of a sunny day.

PREFACE

The primary academic root for this thesis evolved form a paper I did as an undergraduate for legal philosopher Mr. Mark Gonzalez at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, in his course on the American Indian Novel. The paper developed an earth-centered, utopian society, called "Etrall," pieced together from past and contemporary cultural artifacts, such as literature, movies, music, and stories of the indigenous-American cultures and the settler-American culture. The wish to continue this analysis of the earth relations of these cultures brought about my application to graduate school at Northern Michigan University.

While at Northern Michigan University, I was fortunate enough to enroll in two individual research courses that would eventually help my thesis tremendously. These included my Winter 2003 Directed Study of ecosophical fiction with Professor Lillian Marks Heldreth in which I wrote a paper titled "Worldeaters: Western Civilization and the Earth in Linda Hogan's Mean Spirit and Ursula K. Le Guin's Always Coming Home," and my Fall 2003 Research in which I had the opportunity to research Anishinaabe literature and earth science for Dr. Martin Reinhardt, the Director of Northern Michigan University's Center for Native American Studies, as part of developing an information base for a new Native American Studies class called "Kinomaage" or "The Earth Shows Us the Way."

Much of my thesis is informed by my rural upbringing and my family heritage. As a rural semi-nomad of the northern Great Lakes area, I grew up in the Northwoods in a milieu of social and environmental discussion and activism revolving around such

issues as the Anishinaabe treaty rights and the nuclear arms race. This fortunate set of circumstances provided me with an education most school systems would never give me. Additionally, my family is made up of stone-masons, lumberjacks and homemakers who take great pride in their woodlands (or savage) existence and in their "unofficially" metís ancestry. This perspective, as well as my rural upbringing, has greatly informed my writing of this thesis.

Linda Hogan, while "officially" Chickasaw, is also a mixed-blood. In her Dwellings: A Spiritual History of the Living World, she wrote, "It has been my lifelong work to seek an understanding of the two views of the world, one as seen by native people and the other as seen by those who are new and young on this continent" (11). Coming from the cultural background that she does and having grown up in countries outside the United States, Hogan offers a view of American removed enough to see clearly yet close enough to understand.

Ursula Le Guin is the daughter of Alfred L. Kroeber, the well-known anthropologist who worked and studied with Ishi, the last survivor of his Californian tribe. Being raise din such a way, with Western civilization continuously juxtaposed to numerous other societies, Le Guin developed an insightfully unique perspective on the world and on human cultures. As an illustration of this, in the introduction to The Word for World is Forest, found in Le Guin's book The Language of the Night: Essays on Fantasy and Science Fiction, Le Guin, in describing the Vietnam war as the impetus behind her writing the novella, says "it was becoming clear that the ethic which approved the defoliation of forests and grainlands and the murder of noncombatants in the name of 'peace' was only a corollary of the ethic which permits the despoliation of natural

resources for private profit or the GNP, and the murder of the creatures of Earth in the name of 'man'" (151).

In their cultural critiques, Le Guin and Hogan take on the responsibility of opening our eyes to the effect Western civilization has on the earth. Exploring their ideas in depth offers an opportunity to examine closely how certain cultural values and societal developments affect a society's relations with the earth.

I am aware that, given the prevailing usage of the term "savage," my examination of the nature of what it means to be civilized and what it means to be savage and my move to reclaim the savage in this thesis may, at first, be offensive to those who have too long experienced the denigrating attitudes of the dominant society. The promotion of Savage Pride in "Worldeaters," however, is both a way of resisting the urban paradigm's oppression and denigration of rural and wild lifestyles and of pointing to another, more sustainable way into the future.

This thesis follows the prescribed MLA format found in the MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing and the Department of English.

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INTRODUCTION

Ecosophical fiction is an emerging field of literary study. This body of literature differs from classic environmental essays in that it uses the narrative mode as ecological critique. As short stories and novels, ecosophical fiction recreates the modern American cultural story, radically questioning dominant cultural paradigms and contextualizing ecological lessons within the storytelling tradition. This growing body of literature rejects the Western industrial paradigm and sometimes rejects civilization outright. Chickasaw author Linda Hogan and science fiction writer Ursula K. Le Guin are among those ecosophical authors[1] most strongly writing against the empire of Western industrial civilization, particularly as it is expressed in North America. Two of Hogan's novels, Mean Spirit and Solar Storms, and two books by Le Guin, Always Coming Home and The Word for World is Forest, are the primary ecosophical works used in this paper's literary analysis.

Ecosophy is another name for deep ecology. As a school of philosophical thought, deep ecology examines the philosophical underpinnings of today's deepening ecological crises. Given the Western world's predominance in ecological mischief, ecosophy involves the cultural analysis of Western civilization and examines Western cultural assumptions while also undertaking the massive task of formulating cultural

[1] Other works of ecosophical fiction include Ray Bradbury's Dark They Were and Golden-Eyed, Ignatia Broker's Night-Flying Woman: An Ojibway Narrative, John Brunner's The Sheep Look Up, Linda Cree's Chippewa Ridge, Linda Hogan's Power, Wendell Berry's The Memory of Old Jack, , B.J. Chute's "Mr. Bodley's Oak" and Greenwillow, and Winona LaDuke's Last Standing Woman.

ethics that will help Western societies become ecologically balanced. Deep ecology draws on many cultural traditions in doing this, relying most often on those societies that are based on sustainable wilderness economies. Consequently, one will find much within deep ecology that resonates with the cultural values of traditionally tribal societies such as the First Nations of North America. The deep ecology espoused by Hogan, Le Guin and this analysis holds true to the basic tenet of ecosophy: all life, human or not, is sacred and deserves respect.

An ecosophical examination of Western civilization has many facets. Using a combined anthropological, historical and post-colonial approach offers a holistic, reality-based forum from which to discuss the Western world in an ecological context. Anthropology provides theories on human ecology (how human beings relate to the land and each other) and the relative benefits and drawbacks to various developments in humanity's history. Historical events help support the anthropological theories with historical evidence, and a post-colonial approach employs the perspective of those who have experienced the devastating effects of Western expansionism. In using a post-colonial approach, it is important to remember that human beings were not the only ones colonized; the land and non-human inhabitants of that land were and are victims of Western expansionism as well.

In Mean Spirit and Solar Storms, Hogan uses fiction to document historical events that expose the threat Western industrial civilization poses to the earth and, by intimate association, to the First Nations of North America. Mean Spirit describes the oil boom in 1920s Oklahoma Indian Territory while Solar Storms portrays the recent massive hydro-electric projects in Canada on Cree and Innu land. In Mean Spirit, the traditional Osage

have taken to the hills far from the reaches of American civilization. Those Osage who have *not* taken to the hills are threatened with murder and land destruction as Euro-Americans come into their land looking to profit from the oil boom and other money-making propositions. The "Beautiful Ones"[2] in Solar Storms are forced to fight off industrial civilization as it destroys their traditional lifestyle with major hydroelectric developments on territory they have inhabited for thousands of years.

Le Guin describes a future Western industrial civilization in both her novels discussed in this thesis. In The Word for World is Forest, she writes about life on another planet and explores the manner in which North American society would colonize wilderness planets in the future, given the traditional Western-style methods of imperialism. In Always Coming Home, Le Guin portrays the hypothetical effects industrial society will have on the American continent in the far future. Always Coming Home is more than a story, however. It is an intense fictional-anthropological analysis of the nature of civilization, industrialism, and the sustainable rural-wilderness society.

Hogan and Le Guin hold Western industrial civilization accountable for the destruction it has caused and for the cultural values it espouses that have led to this destruction. Both authors describe industrialism as an ecological disaster. Undoubtedly proponents of industrial civilization will point to such factors as the GNP to bolster the idea that industrial civilization is progress and that industrial growth leads to prosperity

[2] Hogan uses the phrase "Beautiful Ones" in Solar Storms to refer to the group of First Nations people threatened with hydroelectric development in Canada. The historical events she describes directly parallel events that confronted the Cree and Innu of Manitoba and the James Bay area of Canada in the 1970s and on into today.

and wealth. Their terms, however, are defined very narrowly, for their concepts of "progress," "prosperity" and "wealth" do not include a healthy earth.[3]

According to Le Guin and Hogan, industrialism is not the only problem. In fact, industrialization may not have been possible if certain values systems were not already in place to make industrialization possible. For Hogan and Le Guin, the very constructs of civilization are ripe for such exploitative systems as industrialism. Two aspects deriving from the nature of civilization make this possible: a separation from the land and a belief in the right of dominance over others deemed inferior, such as those in poverty, with darker skins, from rural or wild societies, and those who are not human.

Both Le Guin in The Word for World is Forest and Hogan in Mean Spirit and Solar Storms call for a reclamation of and a return to the savage. This involves a materially simplistic, land-based lifestyle that is based on sophisticated survival skills wherein one's relatedness to all life is not only recognized but cherished and respected. The Osage and "Beautiful Ones" of Hogan's novels as well as the Athsheans of Le Guin's The Word for World is Forest are depictions of people who are of the woods or wilderness and who directly depend on the land for survival. In Le Guin's Always Coming Home, the Kesh, as a low-tech rural-wilderness society, tribally organized and composed of small but permanent settlements, also represent a rejection of industrial civilization.

[3] A healthy earth would include biodiversity, the relative balance of ecosystems in the long-term and a state of the overall environment that allows for and encourages generally healthy organisms. With industrialization today, ecosystems around the planet are disrupted in major ways; mass numbers of species are pushed to extinction; and the general environment is such that organisms in unprecedented numbers are experiencing ill health (largely cancers), physical deformities and shortened lifespans.

Both Le Guin and Hogan resist the notion that civilization is a desirable state of human existence. The civilized lifestyle of Western industrial society in both authors' novels has so strong a tendency for destruction that it is not even considered a viable way of life. Hogan and Le Guin argue that the industrial West must be rejected in favor of a lifestyle that depends directly on the land.

Chapter One

BETRAYAL OF THE WILD:
An Analysis of the Terms "Civilization" and "Savage"

Those who resist Western industrial civilization come from both inside and outside industrial society and resist because of the recognition of the effects industrial civilization has on the real world, that is, on the interconnected world of living organisms. Many of the resisters are members of traditionally tribal societies, societies Western civilization historically considers as "savage" societies. Many of these resisters in industrial civilization have denied the "savage" label in fighting the Western empire, arguing instead that tribal societies are as civilized as the Western world. This argument, however, is an argument of subjugation, for it accepts the Western conception of "savage" and its notion that the civilized state is superior to the savage state of existence. This further feeds the Western conception of its own superiority, for, in being the instrument *to have defined* the meaning of civilization (the supposed standard for societal excellence), Western civilization in effect *becomes* the standard for societal excellence.

Instead of denying the "savage" label, we need to reclaim the term for what it actually refers to and shake it free of the cultural debris imposed on it by Western civilization. In other words, we must reform the Western conception of "savage" and see the savage lifestyle for what it really is. This reclamation of the savage is vital today during this time of ecological crises, for the West needs role models of societies that are ecologically viable, so it can learn how to become a sustainable human society on this planet.

According to the anthropological and dictionary definitions of civilization, the tribal societies of Le Guin's futuristic Kesh and alien Athsheans as well as Hogan's Osage and "Beautiful Ones" are not civilized peoples. Many post-colonial critics and others will no doubt argue with this assertion and point to the inherent racism of any interpretation of civilization that leaves tribal societies out of the definition of "civilization." However, in answering these objections, one must answer this question: is civilization a desirable state of existence?

In order to answer this question, an analysis of the terms "civilization" and "savage" is necessary. This discussion will arrive at three key conclusions: 1) civilization is a master of domination over others it deems as inferior, 2) civilization favors the urban world over the rural or the wild, and 3) civilization's survival depends on the colonization and/or destruction of the rural and the wild.

A discussion of the term "civilization" shows that civilization is inextricably linked to urbanization (or the appearance of cities and their cultural/economic environs). According to Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged[4] with Dr. Philip Babcock Gove as chief editor, "civilization" is linguistically rooted in the Latin "*civitas*" (412-413). "*Civitas*" is composed of the suffix "-*itas*" added to "*civis*" meaning "citizen," and "citizen" ultimately comes from "*cité*" meaning "city" (Gove 412, 411). Thus the term "civilization" is rooted in the word "city" and refers to the urban world. As historian Theodore Roszak writes in Person/Planet, "*Civilization* [is] the world made 'civil,' made citified, swept up into the urban order of things" (243).

[4] Published by Merriam-Webster Publishers.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines "civilization" as "a developed or advanced state of human society" (Online OED), and Webster's Third New International Dictionary describes "civilization" as "the stage marked by urbanization, advanced techniques (as of agriculture and industry), expanded population, and complex social organization" (Gove 413). According to anthropologists Fred Plog and Daniel G. Bates in their book Cultural Anthropology, the anthropological definition defines "civilization" as involving the emergence of cities, high population densities, centralized political power, economic stratification, labor specialization, agriculture, and hierarchically arranged religious systems (152).

The rise of agriculture[5] in various areas of the world encouraged portions of the population to forego the land altogether. While some argue that this was a liberation, it ultimately led to an oppressive societal structure—civilization. Tribal societies, having populations based directly on the land, tend to be egalitarian and often rely on individual responsibility and cooperation in maintaining a smoothly functioning and fair society. Civilization, however, encouraged the concentration of political, economic and religious power in urban hands. Thus anthropologists have linked centralized political power, economic stratification, urbanization and high population densities with the civilized existence.

[5] Horticulture involves the small-scale cultivation of plants, or gardening, in order to provide for a small number of people, such as one's family. Agriculture involves the domestication of animals and the cultivation of plants on a large-scale.

Despite this, many linear thinkers of the Western world believe the city's recent arrival on the evolutionary scene[6] is reason enough to assume that urban life is superior to all other lifestyles that have come before it. Indeed, the Western definition of this state of human existence reveals this bias. Webster's Third New International Dictionary intimately associates "civilization" (or the urban world) with progress and the human ideal. Words and phrases like "progressive," "advances," "a great step forward," "refinement" and a "high level of cultural and technological development" are all used to define "civilization" as are the phrases "urban comfort" and "city life" (Gove 413). "Civilization," then, is ultimately defined as an "advanced" state and an urban one, and as "an ideal to be striven for" (Gove 413).

Civilization involves the city's dependence on the rural areas for food and other resources. This reliance results in a virtual colonization of the areas within the city's immediate proximity, drawing on those areas for raw materials such as grain, lumber, and metal ore. In "Of the Natural Progress of Opulence" in his book An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, Adam Smith writes, "The town [. . .] may very properly be said to gain its whole wealth and subsistence from the country" (211). Urban populations, by the very nature of being *urban* populations, are no longer engaged directly in the art of survival. Thus separated from the land, they are dependent on rural-dwellers to provide them with food and other elements necessary for survival. Such production of food and other survival necessities demanded the farmer and other rural-

[6] Anthropologist Bernard G. Campbell, in his book Humankind Emerging, cites Jericho as the oldest known city, dating it at 10,000 years Before Present (BP); the first agriculture, the basis for civilization, is dated at 10,000 BP as well (495, 460).

dwellers become peasants, no longer working to produce to meet only their own needs but also working to produce enough to sustain urban populations.

Perhaps an urban power structure developed in order to ensure that the rural-dweller continued to produce these elements necessary to the urbanite's survival. The enforcement of feudal food appropriation taxes is one example of this. In fact, Webster's Third New International Dictionary defines "an inhabitant of a city or town," or "citizen," as one who "is entitled to the civic rights and privileges of a freeman" and says this is to be "contrasted with a rustic" (Gove 411). The term "rustic" refers to "an inhabitant of a rural area" or "rural person" (Gove 1992). In a manner similar to how "savage" is defined in relation to "civilization," the "rustic" is "one who is rude, coarse or dull" and "simple" (Gove 1992). The rural is described in decidedly denigrating terms, and it is apparent that the rural-dweller is considered at a level much beneath that of the urban-dweller. The rural-dweller is so far beneath the city-dweller that, by definition, the rustic is not considered a "freeman" while the citizen, or city-dweller, is.

Both capitalism and communism depend upon and approve of this subjugation of the rural and the wild to the interests of the city (civilization). As Marx illustrates in The Communist Manifesto, the bourgeoisie, in their capitalistic and industrial quest, "has subjected the country to the rule of the towns" (226). Marx approves of this subjugation, for he refers to this subjugation as part of the "wealth created by them [the bourgeoisie]" (Marx 227). Part of this wealth also includes the "[s]ubjection of Nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, *clearing of whole continents for cultivation*, [and the] canalization of rivers" (Marx 227, emphasis added). In short, Marx admires the industrial

development created by the bourgeoisie. He also writes that the bourgeoisie "has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural and has thus *rescued* a considerable part of the population *from the idiocy of rural life*" (Marx 226, emphasis added).

Adam Smith, regarding the use of the land in the market economy, writes, "In our North American colonies [. . .] uncultivated land is still to be had upon easy terms" (214). We know that these "easy terms" Smith so casually refers to involve "removing" the original inhabitants—the First Nations—from that land. The purpose of this forced acquisition is to initiate the "improvement of uncultivated land" (Smith 214). This cultivation of wild lands is necessary, according to Smith, because "the progressive wealth and increase of the towns [is . . .] in proportion to the improvement and cultivation of the territory or the country"; such cultivation is based on "disturb[ing] the natural course of things" (214). Smith proposes civilizing the wilderness in the interest of the city and the capitalist market.

Although the term "civilization" in the Western tradition attributes all high cultural achievements to the urban world (the city and its cultural/economic environs), the term "savage" in the West, according to Webster's Third New International Dictionary, is described as "marked by cruelty," "violent or extreme" and "boorish, rude" (Gove 2019). "Savage," in Western civilization, refers to people who are "brutal or inhumane" as well as to animals who are "ferocious" (Gove 2019).

There is nothing wrong with applying such adjectives when and where it is appropriate, for there are cruel, boorish and ferocious persons on this planet. The association of these adjectives with the term "savage," however, reveals much about the

Western world's cultural biases. While "savage" is defined as cruel, "violent," and "ferocious," it is also defined as describing people who are "living in a primitive state or belonging to a primitive society" (Gove 2019). In typical Western parlance, "primitive" almost always refers to "tribal." Further, according to Webster's Third New International Dictionary, savagery is found in those places that are "unsettled and uncultivated," "uncivilized" and, importantly, "not domesticated or under human control" (Gove 2019). "Savagery" itself, or the state of being savage, is defined simply as "wildness" (Gove 2019). Finally, the linguistic roots of the term "savage" are in the Latin "*silvaticus*" which means merely "of the woods, wild" (Gove 2019).

"Savage" essentially refers to inhabitants "of the woods, wild." The savage then is uncivilized, or, to be more precise, the savage is not of the city nor under the control of the city. Further, the West's conception of cruelty, violence, inhumanity and primitiveness is inextricably linked with savagery (or anything that is wild and not citified). As an example of this cultural bias, the respected English philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, in his Of Man (De Homine), described "the life of man" without civilization as "poor, nasty, brutish, and short" (405). At the root of it, the savage (*silvaticus*) is the opposite of the city (*civitas*); it is "wildness," but in the above Westerner's associations with the term, it is apparent that Western civilization finds savagery (or wildness) threatening and degrading to the human being.

It is important to note that the rural, as discussed by the earlier definition of "rustic," represents the middle ground between "savage" and "civilized" both in its definition and its geographical location. Although the rural is not "marked by cruelty" or considered violent as with the "savage", the rustic is described as "simple" and "rude,

coarse, or dull" (Gove 2019, 1992). Thus the rural is more accepted by the civilized mind than the savage, but both the savage and the rural are considered inferior forms of the human condition.

Chapter Two

WORLDEATERS:
Consuming the Planet

Western civilization is based on urbanization; it is defined by the existence of cities. Where there are cities, tribal societies are threatened and the rural is made a colony of the city in order to provide the urban-dwellers with food and other necessary means of sustenance. Where there are cities, wilderness does not exist and wild animals are endangered. Intentionally or not, civilization destroys what is not civilized, that is, it destroys that which is not citified. Civilization, at its most benign, does this in order to survive. As a survival mechanism, though, it is problematic.

As civilization expands, its population becomes larger and so does its economy. The demand for natural resources extracted from the surrounding areas increases as well, and the city sends colonizing missions into wilder areas. "Since the first appearance of urban life and state organization," writes anthropologist, John Bodley, in his book Victims of Progress, "the earlier tribal cultures were gradually displaced from the world's most productive agricultural lands and were relegated to marginal areas" (4).

With the advent of industrial civilization, marked by the emergence of industrial factories, the demand for resources grew furiously. In direct proportion, Western industrial civilization's expansionistic intrusion into the rural and wild areas of Europe and the rest of the world also greatly increased and continues to grow in the present day. As industrial civilization expands, the need for resources and laborers grows. Conveniently, removing people from the land, in various ways, frees the land for resource

extraction at the same time as it creates the need for these displaced people to find wage labor as a means to survive.

Industrialism cannot exist without civilization, for industrialism depends on the existence of cities for a labor force and for its tradition of colonizing rural areas for resources. As Roszak writes, "the industrial city aspires to absorb all the factors of production into its ownership and control, and perfects their economic rationalization. It takes over the land itself" (247).

Industrial societies thus far in human evolution have been marked by monied economies based on mass consumption and production as well as pollution of the air, water, soil and living organisms. They are technologically intensive, much more so than non-industrial civilization.[7] Furthermore, the industry-based economy permeates industrial civilization. Although smaller economies within industrial civilization may be oriented to non-industrial economies, such as tourism or service businesses, they are all intimately dependent on and participating in the larger industrial economy. There are few, if any, economies within industrial civilization that are not dependent upon industrialization in some essential manner.

[7] The Luddites of England are a good example of the effects industrialization can have. The Luddites made their living as hand-weavers in their own homes and were thus more independent as workers than those who made up the labor force of the factories in the cities. However, with the advent of industrialism (and the subsequent emergence of industrial civilization), factories and mechanical looms began to replace the hand-weavers of the countryside. Knowing full well that such mechanization threatened their livelihood, hand-weavers across England organized around a fictional Colonel Ludd and destroyed the mechanical looms. The English government hanged many of them for their participation in the Luddite rebellion, for they had threatened the means of industrial production. Those threatening the hand-weavers' means of production/survival, however, were never brought to trial.

In Mean Spirit, Hogan refers to Western industrial civilization as a society of worldeaters, of people who consume the land, the earth, all life and cultures in order to make money: "In places the banks were black from oil seepages [. . .] and there were rusted oil drums stuck in stagnant pools along the area [. . . .] Many of the fields had been burned black, and those that were not burned had been overgrazed by hungry cattle the worldeaters had raised" (274). The "worldeaters," those who raise the cattle in Mean Spirit, are also the same people who drill the earth for oil. Oil baron John Hale is one example.

Hogan also refers to the Euro-Americans in Solar Storms as worldeaters when she discusses the situation of an elder, Miss Nett, whose homeland has been destroyed by military test flights, resource extraction and will be flooded as part of the dam construction (295). Hogan describes one of the construction employees as having "sharp, worldeating teeth" (Solar Storms 308).

In Mean Spirit, Western civilization is portrayed as turning sustainable cultures into worldeaters as well. Euro-American John Hale, "one of the first men to bring cattle to Indian Territory" (Hogan Mean Spirit 54), spreads the worldeating disease. The special grass he introduces in Oklahoma, "which fattened the cattle quickly" thus ensuring speedier profits, "had roots so strong they spirited away the minerals and water from other trees and plants, leaving tracts of land barren-looking. Moses Graycloud called it 'Hale Grass'" (Hogan Mean Spirit 54). For Hale, the destruction of an ecosystem is simply "a good investment" (Hogan Mean Spirit 54) just as for Western

civilization the forced assimilation[8] of indigenous peoples is considered essential to a "successful" industrial civilization. Indeed, "Hale Grass" turns the Osage who buy into his scheme into worldeaters themselves. They soon find they "had no choice themselves but to become meat-eaters with sharp teeth, *devouring their own land and themselves in the process*" (Hogan Mean Spirit 54, emphases added). Because of the effects it has on the land and the people, "Hale Grass" is soon termed "Hell Grass" (Hogan Mean Spirit 54).

The West continues to view industrialization as progress. According to anthropologist John Bodley, however, "[i]t is increasingly apparent that civilization's 'progress' destroys the environment [. . . and] modern civilization may become a victim of its own progress" (1). Winona LaDuke affirms this when she writes,

> You cannot make an argument to me that the United States is sustainable. You cannot. You cannot make an argument to me that the United States is sustainable, because there is no way that a society that causes so much extinction—an industrial society that caused the extinction of over two thousand nations of indigenous people—is sustainable. ("Honor the Earth" 180)

While tribal societies represent a sustainable way to live with earth, the West has ignored this sustainable model. As philosopher Vine Deloria, Jr. writes in God is Red: A Native View of Religion, "Western industrial societies have not heard the call of either the lands or the aboriginal peoples" (292). In its drive to civilize the earth, Western society has adopted a policy of assimilate or annihilate when it comes to uncivilized

[8] Although assimilation may be benign, as in when a person *chooses* to adopt a certain cultural paradigm, the assimilation policies of the North American governments toward Native Americans have been decidedly destructive in their methods, objectives and results.

societies. This is most unfortunate not only for the land and the tribal societies affected by Western civilization, but also, as Bodley points out, for Western civilization itself.

Tribal societies, the cultures most frequently associated with the term "savage," offer a path of living on the earth that differs greatly from that of Western civilization. Although tribal societies are not perfect, there is much evidence to suggest they offer a higher quality of life,[9] and it is certain they relate to the land in much more sustainable terms than does Western industrial civilization. "Tribes are small-scale sovereign nations that tend to manage local ecosystems for long-term sustained use [. . .] tribal systems tend to expand more slowly" than industrial civilizations, writes Bodley (3). As a result, they have time to observe and analyze their impacts on the ecosystem and to change their ways if those ways are proving destructive.

Modern Western industrial civilization's rapid pace of production, consumption and expansion leaves very little opportunity for reflection on the effects that production, consumption and expansion have on the ecology of Earth. This has led to a consumption of the planet on an unheard of scale. Western civilization has become, in effect, what Hogan's worldeaters.

Since the city-dweller does not interact with the land in the same way as a person who lives directly off the land, the urbanite is relatively oblivious to the effect his or her consumption has on the land. With the emergence of industrialism, materialistic consumption increases tremendously, and as a result, so do the demands on the earth. This consumption combined with the urbanite's ecological obliviousness produces what

[9] In fact, some anthropologists, such as Marshall Sahlins, theorize that tribal societies are the truly affluent societies given their abundant leisure time, longevity and overall excellent health.

Native activist Winona LaDuke has called the "predator/prey relationship that industrial society has developed with the Earth and subsequently, the people of the Earth" ("Mothers of Our Nations" 213).

As worldeaters, industrial societies see the earth as a resource to be exploited as cheaply as possible. Native American activist Russell Means says,

> As far as their effects on indigenous people and our sacred Grandmothers are concerned, both capitalism and Marxism worship 'efficiency' and rationalism [. . . They] see, for example, not a lovely mountain lake to be enjoyed for the sense of beauty and wonder it evokes, but a resource to be developed into a product to be consumed or applied or exploited. When the mountain has been pulverized to gravel spread on roads and the lake has been turned into a cesspool of industrial contaminants, the Eurocentric thinker is happy long enough to consider his quarterly profit statement—an abstraction. Reality—the lake and the mountain—and the joy of its existence are gone forever. (Where White Men Fear to Tread: The Autobiography of Russell Means 401)

According to Bodley, "industrial civilization is uniquely capable of consuming resources at tremendous rates" (9). It is "uniquely capable" of consuming the earth. For industrial civilization this is a dubious distinction at best, for "this does not make it a more *effective* culture than low-energy tribal cultures, if stability or long-run ecological success is taken as the criterion of 'effectiveness'" (Bodley 9).

"[S]tability or long-run ecological success," however, is not considered a measure of true achievement within the context of Western industrial society. On the contrary, the standards used to determine social achievement in Western industrial civilization involve the ever-increasing accumulation of monetary and material wealth. This standard for success encourages the worldeaters in their destructive ecological habits.

Measuring societal success by monetary and material wealth in Western civilization both depends on and fuels a paradigm favoring greed and self-interest.[10] This greed and self-interest, while historically a factor in the cities' oppression of tribal people, began to intrude on the world monolithically after the Industrial Revolution (Bodley 4). Bodley writes,

> The acceleration in the world population growth rates and their relationship to industrial progress have been well documented [. . . .] Almost overnight the industrialized nations *literally ate up* their own local resources and outgrew their boundaries. This was dramatically apparent in England, where local resources comfortably supported tribal cultures for thousands of years, but after 100 years of industrial progress the area was unable to meet its basic needs for grain, wood, fibers, and hides. (5-6, emphasis added)

As industrial civilization's demand for resources grew, it looked to other areas of the planet for these resources and subjected those areas to pillage and plunder campaigns that have yet to come to an end.

[10] Indeed, perhaps only a society like Western civilization could produce a philosopher such as Ayn Rand whose philosophy is based on the idea that selfishness is a virtue. See her essay "The Virtue of Selfishness" as an example of this.

Chapter Three

SUPERIORITY COMPLEX:
The West's Aggressive Ethnocentrism

In order to maintain its materially affluent lifestyle and fuel its continuing growth, Western industrial civilization depends on the exploitation of lands beyond its own territorial bounds. Western industrial civilization excuses this dependency with the belief that it is culturally superior to the societies it destroys in obtaining the requisite resources. This deeply ingrained, often unrecognized, ethnocentric belief is part of the West's superiority complex.

Le Guin's The Word for World is Forest, written as a response to the Vietnam War, explores the effects that an industrial society with a superiority complex can have on forest/tribal people. The Athsheans in the novel are the forest people. They live in a tribally organized society and depend on the forest in its wild[11] state for their survival. Importantly, they are a pacifistic culture forced to deal with the imperial militaristic arm of an industrialized Earth.

Athshe is a planet thickly covered in forest. "[T]hey want the forest: the trees for wood, the land to plant grass on," says Selver, the Athshean protagonist, referring to the humans from Earth as he repeats information gleaned from Lyubov, the Terran

[11] The wild state does not imply a lack of cultivation as many species cultivate the land in various ways such as bees gathering pollen, crows building nests, trees dispersing seeds, bears harvesting honey and so forth. It can be argued that such small-scale, subsistence-based cultivation is simply the normal activity of a lifeform interacting with its surroundings.

anthropologist (Le Guin The Word 44). The Terrans have "come from another place which is not the forest," Selver says, "the trees there are all cut down [. . . .] It is clear that they want our forest for themselves" (Le Guin The Word 44). In fact, "robot cargo ships" are sent from Athshe, "four a year, each carrying about 30 million new-dollars worth of prime lumber back to Mother Earth" (Le Guin The Word 76).

Not only do the Terrans come uninvited to Athshe to live, they radically alter the ecology to fit their Terran tastes. The Athsheans depend on the forest for the continuation of their way of life, and the planet Athshe has evolved as a forest planet. Thus its planetary ecosystems are currently adapted to a forest ecology. Yet, because the people from an industrial civilization on Earth want the lumber, the Athshean forests are cut down. In the place of the once-dense forests, open fields are created where the Terrans will plant Terran seeds to grow Terran crops to feed Terrans colonizing the planet Athshe.

"[T]his world was made for men," says Captain Davidson, one of the military leaders of the Terran colonizing expedition and the antagonist in The Word for World is Forest (Le Guin 2). The obvious arrogance in this statement need not be clarified, yet it is a sentiment that prevails in Western civilization. In European relations with other cultures, "notions about the inferiority of non-Europeans provided a justification for European settlements, trading practices, religious missions and military activities," writes post-colonial critic Ania Loomba in her book Colonialism/Postcolonialism (58); these same notions, as expressed by Captain Davidson, are at work in the Terrans' colonization of Athshe. The greed and self-interest of the Terrans supersedes the rights of the planet and of the Athsheans. The Terrans thus epitomize the ideology of Manifest Destiny.

"Because of the power at their disposal," writes Bodley, "industrial peoples have becomes so aggressively ethnocentric that they have difficulty even imagining that another life style—particularly one based on fundamentally different premises—could possibly have value and personal satisfaction for the peoples following it" (16). Captain Davidson is representative of this arrogance. "Cleaned up and cleaned out, the dark forest cut down for open fields of grain, the primeval murk and savagery and ignorance wiped out, it would be a paradise, a real Eden" (Le Guin The Word 2). For Davidson, savagery, here literally a life of the woods, is one of "primeval murk" and "ignorance"; it is primitive, a remnant of the past having no relevance to the "advanced" Terran civilization. The meanings Davidson applies to the savage lifestyle come from the Western conceptualization of "savage," a conceptualization redolent with images of aggressiveness, violence, and cruelty. This image of savagery, then, is used in justifying the Terran plunder of the planet Athshe. Le Guin's depiction of the Terrans on Athshe directly parallels the Western world's historically documented interaction with non-Western cultures.

Greed and self-interest are integral to the themes discussed in Mean Spirit as well. In one example, "eagle hunters [. . . .] marksmen from the East [. . .] traveled across the continent [. . .] in order to shoot eagles out of the balmy Oklahoma sky" (Hogan Mean Spirit 57). They travel in "plush new trains" indicating their status as relatively well-off people able to afford such luxury (Hogan Mean Spirit 57). They are "invisible among the crowds of merchants that filled the streets" (Hogan Mean Spirit 57) suggesting that they are kin to the merchants, purveyors of goods for monetary return. Further, the eagle hunters "blended in with the con men who sold lottery tickets and the hard gamblers who

brought in their own yards of green felt on which to deal their slick cards" (Hogan Mean Spirit 57). Indistinguishable from "con men" and "hard gamblers," the eagle hunters are thoroughly described by association as crooked, deceptive, greedy and dishonest.

Later in the book, these eagle hunters kill "three hundred and seventeen" eagles during their hunt and intend to sell these dead eagles as souvenirs (Hogan Mean Spirit 110). When Belle, an Osage elder, sees the "three hundred and seventeen carcasses" and begins to remove the dead eagles from the back of the hunters' truck, the hunters complain that "[s]he [is] ruining the eagles they planned to sell, undamaged, as souvenirs" (Hogan Mean Spirit 110). To the hunters, it is not damaging the eagles to kill them. Their only concern for the eagles comes after they have been killed, when they are in a form ("carcasses") from which the hunters can make money. Thus the hunters are not so much concerned with the damage to the eagles as with the damage to their potential profits.

In another scene, just as a spiritual ceremony is about to begin at an Osage woman's house, participants in the ceremony are intruded upon by American government officials. "They were looking for moonshine and gin, those men who interrupted the holy. They were tax men. Flying revenuers. They were looking for other spirits" (Hogan Mean Spirit 246). Further, "[t]heir sacred eagle" is described as "on paper and coins" (Hogan Mean Spirit 246). As the eagle in the context of Hogan's novel is a symbol of what is sacred, the fact that the American government puts "[t]heir sacred eagle [. . .] on paper and coins" indicates that for the Americans money is what is sacred. The eagle, sacred to various and numerous Native American cultures as a living being, is

only sacred to the Americans when that eagle is reduced to a non-living thing, a mere image, connected with money.

Hale, a white man, is central to the violence committed in Mean Spirit. It is Hale who is responsible and indicted for the murders of numerous Osage people whose land was rich with oil, and whose oil revenues, upon their death, through various manipulative schemes, became available to Hale. When he is on trial for murder, "his circle of stolen money and power" is described as having "built him far beyond human feeling" (Hogan Mean Spirit 326).

Hale's involved schemes are defended by a minor co-conspirator, Mardy Green, as he gives his testimony at Hale's trial:

> [Green] simplified the war against the dark-skinned people; they were in the way of progress. Everyone needed the land, the oil, the beef-fattening grass, and the water, and all was fair, he told them. "We have to go on, as a race, I mean." He looked earnestly at the eyes of the others. "It's like clearing the land for your farm, or hunting the food you eat. They shoot deer, don't they? Well, maybe you would call that a plot," he said, "or call it murder, but here it's just survival." (Hogan Mean Spirit 327)

Green thus summarizes the West's view of the earth and non-Western peoples; here the values of greed and cruelty coalesce into one common root: cultural self-interest sanctified by the doctrine of Manifest Destiny. If one does not buy into Western cultural values, Western civilization, according to Hogan, considers that person "in the way of progress" and as thus expendable. If they (living "obstacles" to "progress") are killed (removed from "obstructing progress"), they are not murdered but are instead sacrificed in the name of survival of the Western people. "Whatever holds out against us—the peasant, the nomad, the savage," writes Roszak, "we [Western civilization] regard as so much cultural debris in our path" (243).

As a result of this superiority complex, "[E]arth [i]s a tamed planet," according to Captain Davidson in The Word for World is Forest (Le Guin 2).[12] For the captain, this means Earth has come under the complete domination of humankind. Within the context of the definition of civilization, it means Earth has been domesticated, brought under human control and is no longer wild. In contrast, Athshe in The Word for World is Forest is a wild, forested planet and thus perfectly exemplifies the definition of a savage planet. According to Captain Davidson, however, "[t]hat's what he was here for: to tame it [. . . .] And it would be his world. For that's what Don Davidson was, way down deep inside him: a world-tamer" (Le Guin The Word 2-4).

The business of world taming depends on a superiority complex, and its proponents go to extensive lengths to denigrate and destroy those who refuse to convert to Western civilization. The superiority complex extends beyond the human family to the non-human world. "I like to see things in perspective," Davidson says, "from the top down, and the top, so far, is humans. We're here, now; and so this world's going to go our way" (Le Guin The Word 5). Following the long-standing Western cultural concept of "The Great Chain of Being," since reiterated many times over in various Western scientific literature such as René Descartes's Discourse on Method, Davidson firmly places human beings at the top of the heap.

Western civilization applies this very same conceptual framework to the Earth. In films such as Contact, directed by Robert Zemeckis and based on the novel by Western

[12] Perhaps one of the flaws in Le Guin's The Word for World is Forest is that she implies a thoroughly "tamed" planet can survive. However, the severity of the earth's domestication in this novella may not be as thorough as it seems, and thus perhaps some semblance of ecological integrity continues to hold the planet's death, or at least its uninhabitability, at bay.

scientist Carl Sagan, the only intelligent life the human beings are aware of is human or alien. In fact, the protagonist of the film expresses feelings of loneliness that are only assuaged by her realization that intelligent life other than humans exists. However, that intelligent life is not on earth; it is elsewhere in the cosmos. In other words, human beings are the superior species on Earth because, according to the film's themes, they are the only species on our planet with detectable intelligence.

The themes of Contact reflect the perceptions of Western civilization today. Although controversy continues to rage in Western civilization over such horrors as animal testing and experimentation, the supporters of such testing and experimentation often cite the supposed emotional and intellectual inferiority of non-human species as justifying their not being treated with moral consideration. The yowls, whines and other vocalizations of non-human animals dissected alive or otherwise put through tremendous pain are dismissed as the mere reactions of an organic machine indicating nothing.

Davidson in The Word for World is Forest epitomizes this same self-centered paradigm. The Athsheans, or "creechies" as the Terrans call them, are described by Davidson as "tough" and as having "terrific endurance" (Le Guin The Word 10). However, he says, "they don't feel pain like humans" (Le Guin The Word 10). René Descartes, the greatly admired Western philosopher, believed this about other animals as well, so much so that he conducted vivisections on living non-human animals to satisfy his curiosity on such matters as to how their circulatory systems functioned. Davidson further exemplifies this Cartesian paradigm by adding, "hitting [an Athshean] is [. . .] like hitting a robot for all they feel it [. . . .] Probably they've got more primitive nerves than humans. Like fish" (Le Guin The Word 10).

Davidson's worldview is based on the supposition that (Terran) humans epitomize and thus define what makes an evolutionarily advanced species in much the same way that Western civilization believes it epitomizes and thus defines what makes an advanced human society. Davidson also supposes that evolution is a linear concept with adaptations acting as indicators of a species progress toward advancement. That is, he does not recognize successful evolutionary adaptations as adaptations *suited to particular environments*. For example, in an aquatic environment, a fish is the advanced species and the human, even with technological compensations, is hopelessly maladapted.

According to Davidson, the Athsheans are "going to get rubbed out sooner or later, and it might as well be sooner. It's just how things happen to be. Primitive races always have to give way to civilised ones. Or be assimilated" (Le Guin The Word 2). This is part of the mythology of Manifest Destiny whose sole purpose is to clear the way for Western civilization. Those non-Westerners who are not killed are forced to assimilate into Western civilization, or at least Western society attempts to force their assimilation and goes to great lengths to do this. As Davidson says, "getting rid of the creechies was going to be the only way to make this world safe for the Terran way of life" (Le Guin The Word 83). The Terran ecologist, Gosse, echoes this sentiment: "You know the [Athsheans] are going to get plowed under, and probably wiped out. It's the way things are. It's human nature" (Le Guin The Word 105).

In this passage, not only is Manifest Destiny associated with "the way things are," it is also attributed to "human nature." That is, Manifest Destiny assumes if one's own culture does not dominate the world (or other worlds as in The Word for World is Forest), then another culture will, for, the mythology supposes, all human beings have an

inherent desire to dominate others. It is interesting to note that while civilization is a societal mode based on the domination of humans and non-humans, tribal societal modes are based on cooperation.

Manifest Destiny, one manifestation of the West's superiority complex, is fueled by racism and an extreme self-centeredness or self-preoccupation. "The fact is," Colonel Dongh, a Terran, argues in The Word for World is Forest, "that these creechies are a meter tall, they're covered with green fur, they don't sleep, and they're not human beings in my frame of reference" (Le Guin 64). Even after the attack on the Terran camp by Athsheans angry at the colonists' effects on Athshe and Athsheans, Colonel Dongh says, "We'll just keep on shipping the lumber [from Athshean trees] home [to Earth], and look out for ourselves" (Le Guin The Word 71). Further, according to Gosse, the Terran ecologist, "To log off a forest doesn't, after all, mean to make a desert—except perhaps from the point of view of a squirrel" (Le Guin The Word 72). In other words, the squirrel's point of view is not worth considering; the Athsheans point of view, people who would most certainly see such an operation as desertification, is not worth considering. In fact, no one's point of view is worth considering unless the Terrans say it is. Terrans believe Terrans determine what is relevant and what is not, and everything falls in order from that starting point.

Le Guin is not being fanciful about such situations. Recently on the Bad River reservation in northern Wisconsin, according to ethnographer Thomas Vennum, Jr. in his book Wild Rice and the Ojibway People, the Anishinaabeg, "with incomes already well below the poverty line" depend on "wild rice to supplement other food sources and get them through the winter" (286). Some also "sell a modest amount of rice to tourists"

(Vennum 286). However Euro-Americans with enough money to buy vacation homes in the area "wanted sport fishing, water-skiing, and motorboating" (Vennum 286). In order to ensure their enjoyment of these recreational sports, these Euro-Americans "frequently weeded out the rice and prevented Indians from harvesting" (Vennum 286). Vennum attributes such Euro-American acts that undermine the traditional Anishinaabe lifestyle to racism. "Having failed to turn Indians into farmers or induce them otherwise to conform to the life styles of Euro-Americans," he writes, "the dominant society, still not ready to accept Indians for who they are, perceives their culture as foreign. This attitude [. . .] surfaces repeatedly in blatant racism and open confrontation, sometimes resulting in violence" (Vennum 292-293).

The destruction of wild rice and other such plants providing subsistence for indigenous populations is also done on a global scale. Winona LaDuke and Brian Carlson, in their publication Our Manoomin, Our Life: The Anishinaabeg Struggle to Protect Wild Rice, write "some 90% of the remaining [plant] species on the earth are found in Native communities, as industrialism, monoculture and 'progress' have destroyed most of the remaining biodiversity in the world" (9). These plants are threatened, however, because corporations, such as Monsanto and Dupont, are searching for "potentially commercially valuable genes and seeds" (LaDuke and Carlson 9). Once such genes are discovered, Monsanto and their ilk move to patent the plants. "Norcal Wild Rice, in Woodland, California ha[s] successfully patented wild rice," write LaDuke and Carlson, "US Patent number 5955.648 is a patent on *zizania palustris*" (11). This patent "uses 'cytoplasmic genetic male sterility"' making the wild rice plant more commercially viable while also threatening the survival of truly *wild* wild rice, for if such

a “terminator seed” is introduced into the wild species, reproduction will be greatly reduced (due to sterility of the male seed) unless coerced by human manipulation (LaDuke and Carlson 11-12).

Such genetic engineering of foods represents yet another attempt to control all that is still independent of Western civilization. The West, as exemplified here and with the Terrans in The Word for World is Forest, is a culture with a superiority complex. It believes all other cultures and all other species, regardless of their rights as the first occupants of lands colonized by Western civilization, must make way for Western civilization, and it will go to incredible lengths to accomplish this.

Chapter Four

THE WAR ON SUBSISTENCE:
Industrialism and Tribal Societies

Industrial civilization requires its citizens be dependent upon a monied economy for survival. Tribal subsistence societies, in contrast, encourage the skills necessary for community and individual self-reliance. According to Bodley, "[i]ndependent tribal peoples with viable economies" have very little need or desire for goods they cannot provide for themselves (119).

Interestingly, as Western industrial civilization destroys the planet, it seeks to eradicate those societies that have adapted to balanced living within their bioregions—the tribal societies. Although civilization historically threatened tribal and rural societies, according to Bodley, the advent of industrialism led to "an explosive growth in population and consumption called 'progress'" within the Western world "which led to an *unprecedented* assault on the world's tribal people and their resources" (4-5).

As an example of this, Bodley cites a 1964 incident in Pakistan. The Pakistani government wished to develop an area known as the Chittagong Hills (Bodley 10). According to the plan devised by scientists hired by the Pakistani government, a member of the scientific team, W. E. Webb, writes, the tribal people of the Chittagong Hills "will have to become wage earners" ("Land capacity classification and land use" 3232). As wage earners they will depend on the industrial system to provide them means with which to earn a wage. Instead of relying on their traditional methods of food gathering, the scientists have determined that the tribespeople will "purchase their food from

farmers practicing permanent agriculture on an intensive basis" (Webb 3232). Webb says "a whole system of culture and an age-old way of life cannot be changed overnight, but *change it must, and quickly*" in order to implement the "integrated development" plan that will, according to the scientists, result in "optimum land use" (3232, emphasis added).

"For many indigenous peoples," writes Winona LaDuke, "the reality is as sociologist Ivan Illich has suggested: development practices are in fact a war on subsistence" ("Traditional Ecological Knowledge" 87). The tribal peoples of the world occupy territories rich with resources desired by industrial nations. "We are the peoples with the land—land and natural resources required for someone else's development program and amassing of wealth," says LaDuke ("Mothers of Our Nations" 213). In order for tribal nations to become part of the industrial empire, they must be forced into what historian Theodore Roszak refers to as "the empire of cities" (251).

As most tribal societies are reluctant to relinquish their subsistence lifestyles in favor of civilization and industrialism, the industrial civilizations of the world have devised ways of removing tribal societies from the lands they occupy, often by undermining the viability of a tribe's subsistence lifestyle. "[O]utside coercion and deliberate manipulation have usually been necessary both to destroy the tribal economy and to carefully channel its conversion into a market-oriented economy," writes Bodley (114).

Hogan describes this manipulation in Solar Storms as the Canadian government implements the construction of massive hydroelectric projects. "Agents of the government insisted the people had no legal right to the land," says Angel, the

protagonist of Solar Storms (Hogan 57). "Overnight many of the old ones were forced to move," Angel continues, "These [. . .] people, my own people [. . .] had lived there forever, for more than ten thousand years, and had been sustained by these lands that were now being called empty and useless" (Hogan Solar Storms 58). In this forced removal, "a way of life would end," for the other animals of the area such as "[t]he caribou and geese were affected, as well as the healing plants the people needed" (Hogan Solar Storms 58).

Significantly, Hogan cites removal as "yet another act of displacement and betrayal" (Solar Storms 58). Western culture, in its fight to make the world fit for civilization, destroys land and the lifestyles that have evolved over thousands of years to be most suitably adapted to their bioregions. Western industrial civilization, itself a product of only a few centuries, demands the destruction of these time-tested sustainable lifestyles in the name of "progress." Such destruction also benefits Western civilization in that it produces what Stanley Diamond, in his introduction to Primitive Views of the World, calls the "conscripts of civilization" (vi). In forcing the "Beautiful Ones" and other similar people from their lands, Western industrial civilization leaves these people little choice but to join industrial civilization and its monied economy simply to survive. This is a form of forced assimilation. Once within industrial civilization, the displaced people have to struggle to retain their connection with and understanding of the land.

At times, the extensiveness of industrial destruction seems a deliberate attempt to decimate any viable *and independent* subsistence lifestyle lived on the land. In Solar Storms, the military conducted low-level test flights over the same land slated for flooding from the hydroelectric construction. "NATO jets had scared off what was left

of the wildlife," writes Hogan (Solar Storms 295). Further, the military was "using the land as a bombing practice range. The noise was horrifying, and now there were no deer" (Hogan Solar Storms 295).

Historically, in the 1950s the U.S. and other Western militaries began using areas over Innu land in northern Canada for low-flying military test flights, and the number of flights has increased dramatically since then (LaDuke "Innu Women and NATO: The Occupation of Nitassinan" 231-232). These low-level flights are "considered to be too dangerous over populated areas" and produce sonic booms whose shock waves have been known to "lift the water off the lake and tip a canoe and can drive animals insane: foxes have been known to eat their kits, geese to drop their eggs mid-flight, as a consequence of the sonic boom" ("Innu Women and NATO" 233, "Like Tributaries to a River" 55). The population of non-human animals in the area has greatly declined as a result, and because of this, according to LaDuke, "the people are forced off the land, into wage work and into welfare" ("Innu Women and NATO" 233).

In Solar Storms, this same land being used for military practice is also slated for flooding from the hydro-electric projects. Before the flooding, workers are brought in to "strip" the land of its timber and other resources (Hogan Solar Storms 295). The Canadian government assists this industrial development by sending in soldiers "to protect the laborers" from the inhabitants of the land (Hogan Solar Storms 295). Knowing full well that the people have made their homes in this area for millennia, the Canadian government, hydro-electric corporations and military view the natives of the land as a menace to development and as something to be dealt with violently if they do

anything to interfere with the industrial development planned for their area. This is eerily similar to Mardy Green's defense of Hale's murdering Osage people in Mean Spirit.

In both Solar Storms and historical reality, the military and industry pose such harm to the land and its inhabitants that they make it very difficult for people and other forms of life to survive there. Perhaps that is part of the plan. As anthropologist Bodley writes, "tribal cultures represent a rejection of the materialistic values of industrial civilization, yet tribal individuals can be made to reject their traditional values if outside interests create the necessary conditions for this rejection" (13). If Western industrial civilization undermines the viability of a life lived on the land, the inhabitants are forced to move off the land and become part of industrial civilization in order to survive. The land itself, previously potentially protected by the legal rights of the human beings who inhabit it, is then left unprotected in the human world and is vulnerable to industrial exploitation.

Aside from acting as the impetus behind the removal or distancing of tribal people from the land, industry often pollutes enough of the land to make subsistence economies difficult for generations to come. Vennum cites one historical instance of such a situation:

> Throughout the treaty period [. . .a]s whites clear-cut virgin forests, drilled for and extracted minerals, or otherwise removed what they wanted from the land, they were rarely careful to clean up, often leaving ore tailings, sawmill wastes, and other ecologically unsound residue. In many instances such pollution has had an adverse effect on traditional food resources. After the 1873 Treaty Number Three opened the Rainy River area [in Canada] to settlement, for example, wastes from lumbermills in addition to commercial overfishing by non-Indians using pound nets severely damaged the breeding population of sturgeon. As wastes from the Fort Frances, Ontario, pulpmill were pumped into the river from 1905 to 1910, the spawning grounds of the fish were further polluted, causing a

> decrease in sturgeon population from which it has never fully recovered. Mercury dumping by the Reed International paper mill at Dryden, Ontario, has caused pollution to the English-Wabigoon-Winnipeg river system so severe that all commercial fishing has been banned. This deprived the Grassy Narrows Ojibway of food and income directly and indirectly. (287)

As recently as December of 2003, these same Grassy Narrows Anishinaabeg were fighting to stop the clear-cutting of forests they depend on for subsistence gathering.

In Solar Storms, Hogan describes land that becomes unfit for habitation because of such industrial development. "[T]he fish were contaminated from the damming of water and mercury had been released from the stones and rotting vegetation," she writes (Hogan Solar Storms 273-274). Because of this, "[t]hat year there would be no fishing camp" (Hogan Solar Storms 273). The people are unable to eat the fish because the fish has been contaminated by mercury.

According to LaDuke in her book All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life, "The most significant mercury contamination levels in North America [. . .] are now present" in the land of the Cree, Innu, and Inuit as a result of the hydroelectric projects, and contamination levels are at least 600% higher than "safe" levels (62). Wisconsin sociologist and earth advocate, Al Gedicks, in his book The New Resource Wars: Native and Environmental Struggles Against Multinational Corporations writes that although the Cree depend on fish consumption for survival, the Canadian government, instead of halting construction on dams in the area to prevent more mercury contamination, has told the Cree to limit their consumption of fish in the area (17).

As the Cree and Innu have lived on this land according to the rhythms of the seasons for millennia, such disruption caused by the dams and other ecologically

irresponsible projects is major, for they are intricately linked to the rhythms of the land for their survival. As an indication of how much the Cree depend on the migration rhythms, LaDuke mentions that the Cree have not four but six seasons to the year "based on the migrations of caribou, geese, sturgeons, and other relations, and on the ebb and flow of ice and water" (Foreword 104). This connection also provides them with a knowledge and understanding of their territory that Western industrial civilization lacks. Worse still, as Western society continues its industrial expansion, it destroys or severely disables those cultures that have developed this knowledge and understanding of the land. Such know-how comes from centuries of living intimately with the land; it is something that cannot be learned overnight from a book as the complexity of such knowledge requires extensive experiential/cultural learning.

As these cultures are undermined and destroyed, a cycle is implemented wherein the savage are made into urban-dwellers and become separated from self-sufficiency, a connection to the land, and an understanding of the nature of the earth. They in turn help in the growth of civilization. As the urban population grows so too does the demand for land on which to build and from which to extract natural resources. This extraction displaces other savage people who in turn become civilized or urbanized and thus contribute even more to the expansion of civilization. Throughout this cycle, the number of urbanized people continues to grow as the population of wilderness dwellers steadily declines.

Industrial civilization, however, is proving itself unsustainable. "[S]tarvation, ill health, and poverty," writes Bodley, "are actually related to civilization and industrialization" and not to tribal societies (14). Further, in its drive to maintain the

affluence of its over-consumptive population, Western industrial civilization comes to rely on aggressive control of other people's resources, for, according to Bodley, "few, if any, industrial nations can now supply from within their own boundaries the resources needed to support further growth or even to maintain current consumption levels" (6-7). Deep ecologists George Sessions and Bill Devall in their book Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered, believe we should label such societal developments properly:

> The ultimate value judgment upon which technological society rests—*progress* conceived as the further development and expansion of the artificial environment necessarily at the expense of the natural world—must be looked upon from the ecological perspective as unequivocal *regress*. (48)

Interestingly, the solution industrial nations find is not the obvious one. Instead of reducing their levels of consumption and finding ways to live a simpler and more sustainable lifestyle, they invent various "sacred" missions that essentially destroy sustainable societies and thus enable them to gain control of the resources within these other people's territories. One of these missions, according to Bodley, became, in the late 1800s, "a sacred duty to spread [. . .] civilization to the world [. . .] major imperialist powers met in 1884-1885 at Berlin to set guidelines for the partitioning of Africa [. . .] pledged support for the civilizing crusade and promised to assist missionaries and all institutions" dedicated to this duty (15). During their meeting in Berlin, these imperialist nations wrote the General Act of the 1884-1885 Berlin Africa Conference which stated that they would "educate the natives [. . .] to teach them to understand and appreciate the benefits of civilization" (qtd. in Bodley 15).

In a similar vein, King Leopold II of Belgium wrote a small treatise at the end of the nineteenth century, entitled by the Belgian government for presentation at the United

Nations in 1953 as "The Sacred Mission of Civilization," wherein the "desirable spread of civilisation" involves "means of action which confer upon us dominion and the sanction of the right" and include "[w]ars" to establish the Europeans' "effective superiority" over the first inhabitants of Africa (127-128). The Europeans, then, will show themselves to be "the all-powerful protectors of [the Africans'] lives and their property [and] benevolent teachers of whom they [Africans] have so great a need" (Leopold 130).

The League of Nations in 1919 set up a mentoring program for tribal societies described in the 1919 League of Nations Article 22 as designed to help those "people not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world" (qtd. in Bodley 15). The League called this mentoring "a sacred trust of civilization" (Article 22 qtd. in Bodley 15). According to Bodley, however, "this sacred trust proved to be a profitable colonial booty for the trust powers because it gave them the internationally recognized right to exploit the resources of thousands of square kilometers of formerly nonstate territory while making only token allowances for the wishes of the native people involved" (15). By setting themselves up as "advanced" nations, as mentors in the process of civilization, the League of Nations was able to gain access to and control of tribal resources.

Even today, we are given missions to bring democracy, development, education and other Westernizing/civilizing influences to the non-Western world, particularly those areas with the resources Western industrial civilization desires. The recent Operation Iraqi Freedom is one example of this. The American Peace Corps is another example in its continuing mission to visit "developing" countries in order to bring civilization to the

"backward" areas of the world. In addition, a recently proposed bill in the United States Congress calls for developing the countries in "poverty" in order to put an end to the anger, cited as caused by a lower level of development, that fuels terrorism[13] (United States Congress HConRes 392, Woolsey "Alternatives to War").

The concept of "civilization" functions as a trumpet call to civilized people. It rallies them around the flag of civilization, proclaims civilization as the ideal human existence and imbues its supporters with a sense of a sacred mission to stamp out the ignorance and gloom of the savages in their uncivilized, untamed life of the woods or the wilderness. When the savages are civilized, they, too, often feel this call to bring the Word of Civilization to the heathen. When the savages civilize, they become spiritually as well as physically removed from the land; they come to rely on the infrastructure of civilization to provide them with their needs and wants, wants that evolve into simulated needs. The more people that become spiritually and physically removed from the land, from the wild, and the more industrialized a civilization becomes, the easier it is to exploit the land without objection. In fact, objections become difficult to raise, for the civilized person comes to depend on industrialization and a monied economy to survive. Thus civilization and industrialism come between the human being and the earth.

[13] There seems to be little awareness that this anger often stems from the exploitation that accompanies such development proposals, as seen in the novels of Hogan and Le Guin.

Chapter Five

SOUL MURDER:
The Role of Religion and the Destruction of Spirit

In Always Coming Home and The Word for World is Forest, Le Guin shows how the values of industrial civilization affect the lives and ecologies of tribal people. The narrator of Always Coming Home is an anthropologist of today who has "discovered" the Kesh, a rural-wilderness people living in the future long after industrialization in the United States has collapsed. The Kesh have developed a sedentary tribalism centered around an awareness of the earth. This form of society is organized tribally, meaning power is not typically centralized as it is in civilized societies, Kesh social relations are organized around clan structures, population densities are low enough to remain balanced with the local ecosystem, and horticulture, not agriculture, supplements the hunting and gathering. Although many tribal societies tend to be seasonally semi-nomadic, the Kesh remain in one area throughout the year. Their population never grows to the point where their small settlement expands into a city. In fact, the Kesh believe the city cuts one off from full knowledge and a full life, for they believe the city separates a person from the earth. They call this *living outside the world*.

Le Guin's Kesh are rural-dwellers, unlike the actual wilderness-dwellers depicted with Hogan's traditional Osage and "Beautiful Ones." Through a collection of various cultural artifacts including folktales, songs, poems, plays, descriptions of customs and one person's life story, Le Guin acquaints the reader with the Kesh and their cultural

paradigm. The reader also comes to know the Dayao, or Condor people, an oppressive, war-like society based on urbanization and the subsequent hierarchies of civilization.

In the Kesh short story "Big Man and Little Man," a story about the creation of a world,[14] Le Guin explores how Western religion functions as a mirror on Western civilization and its relation to the earth.

Big Man, like the Western God, is creator of the world, but he cannot get inside of it, "[s]o he made some people to go there, to go across. He made a Little Man and sent him across, inside the world. But he made him with his head on backwards" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 165). As will be discussed later, having "his head on backwards" indicates that this person, Little Man, does not know how to live in the world. Once inside the world, Little Man begins "complaining. 'I don't like it here,' he said. So Big Man put him to sleep and while he was sleeping made a thing *like a woman* out of dirt [. . .] It looked like a woman, it fooled Little Man when he woke up. Big Man said, 'Now you go there and breed'" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 165, emphasis added). Importantly, from a feminist perspective, this companion only looks like a woman but is not a woman. Thus Little Man is without female influence.

Little Man is analogous to Adam of the Christian "Book of Genesis," and Big Man parallels the Western god. Not only is Little Man created by Big Man as Adam was created by God, but females are made with whom both Little Man and Adam are commanded by their creators to breed. As Christianity, a Western religion, considers

[14] It may be helpful to think of this creation story as one of many. The story may be referring to the creation of one world, which creation does not exclude other worlds from having existed previously or from coming into existence in the future. "Big Man and Little Man" appears to particularly address the creation of the world of the Industrial Age.

Adam to be the first man, Adam can thus be considered the progenitor of contemporary Western man, or, in other words, Adam is the beginning of the process which, among other things, led to Western industrial civilization. As Little Man is analogous to Adam, he can also be seen as a symbol of Western Civilization.

Little Man "didn't belong there inside the world, he had no mother, only a father. So he killed whatever he was afraid of" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 165). To the Kesh, living "inside the world" involves being aware of one's ecological relations to the world. Interestingly, further analogies are drawn here between Little Man and Adam. Little Man is described as having "no mother, only a father" exactly like Adam, who is created only by a male god with no female deity mentioned in the story. Le Guin implies that this lack of a mother leads Little Man to kill "whatever he was afraid of" (Always Coming Home 165). The story goes on to say:

> He cut down every tree he saw, he shot every animal he saw, he made war on all the people. He made guns to shoot flies with, bullets to shoot fleas with. He was afraid of mountains and made mashers to flatten them, he was afraid of valleys and made fillers to fill them up [and so on . . . until e]verything was dying [. . .], everybody was poisoned. (Le Guin Always Coming Home 165-166)

In the end "the stink of poisoned things, dead things, dead people [. . .] came outside the world [. . . and] filled up Big Man's nose [. . . .] He turned away then and went away, farther outside [. . .] He had nothing more to do with anything" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 166).

It is only when Big Man, the parallel to the Western god, is "clean gone" from the world, that the world begins to piece itself back together again. "Coyote came. Where she walked she made the wilderness," Le Guin writes (Always Coming Home 166). It is

well-known that coyote is a trickster figure in various Native American traditions. This coming of Coyote, then, can be seen as a revival of the tribal society after civilization has used up and left the world. Using Little Man as a symbol of modern Western civilization as discussed above, this is what happens in the story "Big Man and Little Man": "Things went on, people went on. Only Little Man didn't go on. He was dead. He died of fear" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 166).

As Little Man's worldview contained one major deity, the Dayao civilization, too, worships one god, called One, who is "all-powerful" and of whom "human men are imitations"; One also created the universe "and gives it orders" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 212). The description of One as omnipotent reveals how highly the Dayao thought of power. By attributing omnipotence to their one sacred deity, they are signifying that culturally, the *ability* to wield power is very important. This omnipotence, when merged with the idea that One created the universe and now commands it, indicates that One possesses power over all things and *uses* that power. This implies that the Dayao deify both the *ability to wield* power over all things and the *actual use* of that power over all things. As this wielding of power is part of the sacred for the Dayao, it is godlike or divine in their cultural worldview to use one's power to control others if one has the power to do so.

Additionally, the Dayao believe "human men are imitations of" One. The use of the gender-specific pronoun is absolutely essential here, for in the Dayao society women are of inferior status. Here, men, as physical imitations of One, are given a mandate, or at least are granted full leniency, to imitate One in their actions as much as their social

status will allow. In other words, men have the right to wield power over those who are lower in status than they.

Finally, the Dayao also believe that "[t]hings are not part of [One] nor is he part of them, so you must not praise things, but only One" with the exception of the Condor and the Sons of the Condor who are also to be "praised and obeyed" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 212-213). While the universe may have been created by One, it is not the universe itself that deserves any praise, worship, or obedience, but only One himself and his chosen ones: the leader of the Dayao or the Condor; and the leader's sons, the Sons of the Condor.

This last is particularly significant when it comes to the earth relations of the Dayao. By separating the sacred creator from the creation, the creation itself loses the sanctity that might otherwise be inherent to it. This loss of sanctity, this mandated lack of praise regarding the universe of the natural world[15] when combined with the belief that men are actually "imitations" of One, relegates all of creation into the realm of those who are inferior to men. This relegation in turn opens up the possibility that men may, in performing their imitations of the godlike, exercise power over creation. In other words, the natural world is open for manipulation by human males, and in fact, such manipulation, given the Dayao worship of power, is expected of men.

[15] Terms like *nature*, *natural world* or *the environment* all imply that the earth and its life are spheres of life that co-exist with the human sphere while also remaining somehow separate. Given the structure of the English language, it is difficult to avoid speaking of the earth and the wild without implying that human beings are separate from all that is natural. This is an unintentional implication on my part and will be avoided whenever the constraints of the English language make it possible.

In Mean Spirit, Horse, an Osage elder, reprimands Christianity for a similar separation from the land:

> "Well, son," Horse said to the priest, "I think the Bible is full of mistakes. I thought I would correct them. For instance, where does it say that all living things are equal?"
>
> The priest shook his head. "It doesn't say that. It says man has dominion over the creatures of the earth."
>
> "Well, that's where it needs to be fixed. That's part of the trouble, don't you see?" (Hogan 273-274)

In the Genesis account of creation, God makes "man" in his "image and likeness" and declares that he shall "let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth" (Gen 1:4). Horse is one of many critics of Western civilization to point this verse out as one of the reasons Christianity has led Western civilization down the path of earth destruction.

Deloria takes Christianity's influence on the Western view of the world a little farther. For him, one of the major Christian tenets that has brought about the devastation of life on earth is the idea that the Apocalypse is the goal of history. As part of this, "the saved" will be taken to what Christians consider a better place than earth, and the earth itself will be destroyed. "In the Indian religions," Deloria writes, "man and the rest of creation are cooperative and respectful [. . .] In the Christian religion both are doomed from shortly after the creation event [the Fall of Adam and Eve] until the end of the world" (82). Christianity, while promulgating a belief in "man's" right to hold "dominion over" all of earth, as Horse in Mean Spirit points out, also, according to Deloria, encourages its believers to set their sights on a "better" world and *to look forward to* the destruction of the present one.

In contrast to the Christian worldview, in Hogan's novels when the earth is devastated, those who love it feel deep grief. In Mean Spirit, Lionel Tall, a Sioux healer, comes to the Osage in Oklahoma "to set up an altar and perform a sing, a ceremony for healing everyone, even the injured earth that had been wounded and bruised by the oil boom" (Hogan 213). However, because of the destruction done to the earth here, "[h]e knew he could not stay long or he, too, would lose his inner core of harmony. This was the problem with places in the world that had been broken" (Hogan Mean Spirit 213). "[B]roken" here may refer to things that have fallen apart, but it can also refer to living beings that have been tamed or whose spirits have been subjugated.

Hogan writes of the Osage people who have lost their "inner core of harmony." She writes of Tar Town, a settlement inhabited primarily by Osage people living in poverty, many of whom work or used to work for the oil companies as menial laborers.

> Seeing the once beautiful people living there in poverty and misery, Silver [a traditional Osage or Hill Indian] became very quiet. Belle thought how many *ruined great people* lived in that tar-paper village, *broken men* and *destroyed women* who had once been singers and kind mothers. Both Belle and Silver were silently afraid that the *sickness of despair*, as devastating as smallpox, might be contagious. (Hogan Mean Spirit 275, emphases added)

Belle's own grandson, Ben, living in Tar Town after his return from Indian boarding school[16] explicitly demonstrates this illness of spirit:

[16] The boarding school is, of course, one of America's attempts at cultural genocide, or, in different terms, at civilizing people who did not come from an urban way of life. The definition of "civilization" mentions that civilization involves the "perfect adjustment of the individual within the social framework" (Gove 413). This implies that if someone does not fit, they must be "adjusted" so that they do fit. "Adjustment," "assimilation," "acculturation"—in the context of Western civilization and tribal societies the true term is "cultural genocide." Interestingly enough, this cultural genocide happened (and happens) to be aimed at eradicating the *earth connected cultures* of Native American societies.

> Belle noticed the blood on [Ben's] hands. She stepped forward and lifted the stained cloth. In front of her, under the filthy cloth, was a golden eagle. Its head was turned to the side on a limp neck. Its golden brown wings stretched out in death. One of them with its pattern of smooth feathers was partially severed. It was a poor job of cutting. The bloody knife the boys had used was dull and the wing had been partially torn away from its body. There was a gunshot wound at the soft-feathered chest.
>
> Belle was frightened.
>
> Ben looked at her sorrowfully. "Grandmother," he said. His eyes pleaded with her to understand [. . . .] "We wanted to pray," he said. "We only wanted to pray." He began to cry and he did not even bother to wipe the tears from his face. (Hogan Mean Spirit 276)

Ben feels the need to connect spiritually. However, Ben was immersed in the assimilation policies of the boarding school and now lives in Tar Town where he is surrounded by "the sickness of despair" (itself caused by the cultural genocide policies of the American government and the life-destroying values of the oil industry). Surrounded by such soul-destroying elements, Ben no longer knows how to connect respectfully with the spiritual. Instead, in a confusion of spiritual need and spiritual emptiness, Ben kills the sacred in order to pray to the sacred. Diseased by the values and policies of Western civilization, Ben has lost touch with his soul.

Deloria believes "[e]ducation itself is a barrier to a permanent revival of tribal religions" (247). He is referring not only to the boarding school experience, an experience deliberately designed to prevent a "revival of tribal religions," but to the educational system in general. "As more Indians fight their way through the education system in search of job skills," Deloria continues, "their education will increasingly concentrate on the tangible and technical aspects of contemporary society and away from the sense of wonder and mystery that has traditionally characterized religious experiences" (247).

For Deloria, connection with the land is essentially spiritual; religion informs one's relationship with the earth, and religion stems from one's connection with the land. If a person is divorced from this connection with the land or if a person comes to disregard this spiritual connection with the land, that person's relationship with the earth will be adversely affected. Modern education isolates the individual from the experience of the earth and instead emphasizes training in the Western industrial paradigm. Today's schools essentially function as assimilation factories for all the students, attempting to ensure they are properly inured to the Western industrial worldview and the subsequent spiritual separation from the land that is integral to that paradigm. This helps explain Deloria's concern regarding the effects the modern educational system has on its students.

Bodley describes modern education as perilous in other ways as well. "Schools have served the double function of creating new needs and preparing individuals for their roles as consumers," he writes (120). Anthropologist Ivan Illich, Bodley continues, "has argued that this double function is one of the primary purposes of schools, even in highly industrialized societies" (120).[17]

Education *systems*, then, are often agents of subtle but forced assimilation; they are the means by which the culture instills its worldview in its students[18] and the means by which students' creative and intellectual competency, determined by the norms of Western industrial civilization, is judged. If we also follow Deloria's argument that

[17] One could argue that this is true *especially* in industrial civilizations.

[18] There are always those who resist such acculturation, however, as is evident with Bodley, Deloria, Hogan, and Le Guin. They are the exceptions, though, and not the rule.

schools alienate students from a spiritual connection with the land, then the educational systems of industrial civilizations serve not only to produce consumers but also to divorce people from the land. This causes great spiritual confusion.

In Always Coming Home, Le Guin also explores civilization's destruction of the soul. "A hundred years or more ago [the Dayao] obeyed one of their Condors who had a vision and said that One commanded them to build a city and dwell in it," she writes, "When they did that they locked their energy into the wheel, and so began to lose their souls" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 208). Terter Abhao, one of the Sons of the Condor, is described as having "changed his soul for his power" as well (Le Guin Always Coming Home 207). Possessing power over others results in loss of soul, according to the narrator in Always Coming Home. To take it farther, One, described as omnipotent (Le Guin Always Coming Home 212) also must have traded his soul in order to gain that power. According to Always Coming Home, then, civilization, the epitome of power hierarchies in that its anthropological definition involves economic stratification, hierarchically arranged religious systems, and centralized political power (Plog and Bates 152), strips those who hold the power within civilization of their souls. One, the essence of sanctity to the civilized or citified Condor, lacks a soul. Civilization, the pinnacle of human development in the eyes of civilized people, robs humanity of its soul.

Solar Storms also discusses what Hogan calls "murder of the soul," a crime said to be perpetrated by Western industrial civilization (Hogan 226). One victim of this soul murder is Angel's mother Hannah, a psychotically disturbed woman. Angel is told that her mother's possession by malignant spirits is a result of the "land killing," and a woman

tells Angel that "[t]he beginning of all this is that too many animals are gone" (Hogan Solar Storms 228, 245).

Many of the animals in Solar Storms were and are adversely affected by NATO's military practice and by the dams built at the behest of Western industrial civilization, and "[t]he devastation and ruin that had fallen over the land fell over the people, too" (Hogan Solar Storms 226). Earlier, Hogan writes, "[m]ost of the people at the territory's outermost edges had been resettled after having lost their own lands to the hydroelectric project, lands they'd lived on since before European time was invented. They were despondent. In some cases, they had to be held back from killing themselves" (Solar Storms 225).[19] Even Tulik, a strong man, says, "I don't have inner peace. I can't find it again [. . . .] why should the inside be different than the outside? This is what happens to humans when their land is destroyed" (Hogan 342).

The connection between earth and humans is made early on in Solar Storms when Angel says, "Our beginnings were intricately bound up in the history of the land" (Hogan 96). This is taken even further when Tulik tells Angel, "a person is only strong when they feel the land. Until then a person is not a human being" (Hogan Solar Storms 235). This definition is later intensified when Angel says, "Our lives in that place were being

[19] Suicide represents one of the leading causes of Native American deaths today, according to Ronet Bachman in her book Death and Violence on the Reservation: Homicide Family Violence, and Suicide in American Indian Populations (109). Bachman also writes that most Native American suicides involve the heavy use of alcohol and are committed most often by young men (109-110). The rate of alcoholism for Native Americans is "about 5.3 times the rate for the general U.S. population" as reported by the Indian Health Service in 1991, writes Jack Utter, author of American Indians: Answers to Today's Questions (190).

taken from us, the people removed from the land, water, animals, trees, all violated, and no one lives with full humanity without these elements" (Hogan Solar Storms 324).

Western civilization may consider itself separate, apart from nature, and thus able to, in René Descartes's words, "render [them]selves lords and possessors of nature" (50). Industrialism with all its mechanization may think it can replace nature and buttress this illusory separation with mere cultural values and assumptions. According to Hogan, however, despite these cultural illusions, at the root of it, humans depend on a healthy earth for mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing, and if severed from the land, human beings become sick, mentally disturbed, unhappy and do not have "inner peace."

Chapter Six

EARTH RELATIONS:
The Physical Effects of the West's Ecological Obliviousness on Land and Lifeforms

One of the core concepts in the Western paradigm is that of humanity's presumed separation from the earth. This separation arranges the universe so that human beings are superior to all else except the Western god; civilization reigns over savagery and man lords over nature. Thomas Hobbes, one of the Western philosophers whose ideas molded the Western paradigm, in his treatise Of Man (De Homine) writes that "the condition of mere nature [. . .] is a condition of war" from which humanity rescues itself only by obedience to a centralized political power *ergo* civilization (429). Uncivilized or "savage people," according to Hobbes, live in a "brutish manner" (402). René Descartes, another philosopher who shaped the Western worldview, says, it is not "that the brutes have less Reason than man, but that they have none at all" (47). The Kesh in Always Coming Home would say these cultural philosophies are evidence of a society that lives outside the world.

In Always Coming Home, the Kesh's concept of living inside the world differs greatly from their idea of living outside the world; the latter is the manner in which they believed the Dayao lived. Le Guin writes, a "Dayao man belongs to himself. He thinks everything else belongs to him, women, animals, things, the world [. . .] We call that living outside the world" (Always Coming Home 390). The Dayaos, as civilized people, live in the City of Man, and in their paradigm, anyone who is not a human male is considered a possession.

The concept of ownership implies a separation between the "owner" and the "owned," and this implies that the "owner" has power over the "owned." Thus this belief in ownership of the world separates the Dayao man from the world. It puts him outside the world and supports him in the false belief that he controls the world, both of which hinder him from connecting with and thus understanding the life that inhabits the earth and the life that is earth.

This idea of ownership over the earth is a foreign concept to many Native American people of the past and of today. In his book, Lame Deer: Seeker of Visions, co-written with Richard Erdoes, Lame Deer discusses where he feels the Western concept of ownership over the earth is leading us:

> [D]eep down within us [Native Americans] lingers a feeling that land, water, air, the earth and what lies beneath its surface cannot be owned as someone's private property. That belongs to everybody, and if man wants to survive, he had better come around to this Indian point of view, the sooner the better, because there isn't much time left to think it over. (46)

The ominousness of Lame Deer's statement is hard to ignore. If Western civilization continues to see itself as owner of the earth, and as therefore being invested with the power to control the earth and do with it as Western civilization sees fit, Western civilization (if not most or all of humanity and much of the other species on earth simply because of their mere temporal co-habitation with the Western world) will end up like Little Man and "his" world: dead.

Indeed, Western views of ownership over the earth have already produced horrifying consequences. Stewart Udall, former Secretary of the Interior under John F. Kennedy, in his book The Quiet Crisis, presents the past conflict of ownership ideologies between the tribal worldview of Tecumseh and the Europeans' civilized paradigm. In

replying to the Americans who wished to purchase land from a Native American society, Tecumseh says, "Sell the country? . . . Why not sell the air, the clouds, the great sea?" (qtd. in Udall 20). While Tecumseh apparently thought he was being outrageous in his statement, today "the air, the clouds, [and] the great sea" have almost all fallen under the domain of private ownership in modern Western society. With oxygen being *sold* to various peoples with respiratory diseases; with bottled water being *sold* by such corporations as Dasani, Evian, and Aquafina; with pollution credits, giving factories the right to pollute the air and water, traded and sold; and with various proposals to divert and sell Great Lakes water to areas that have gone beyond the carrying capacity of their water table, Tecumseh's statement about a seemingly outlandish possibility is becoming all too frighteningly real today.

The Western concept of ownership, of power over the owned, has brought about the commodification of the earth and its gifts. Such commodification would be an unlikely result from a more tribal perspective of the earth; for many Native American cultures "[l]and belonged [. . .] to their ancestors whose bones were buried in it" (Udall 20). From this viewpoint, the land is both a gift from the past and a gift to be kept healthy for the future; it is not something to be used up in order to produce as much profit as possible.[20]

[20] Some activists today, including Winona LaDuke, have proposed the addition of a "Seventh Generation Amendment" to the tribal, state and U.S. constitutions that states, "the right of citizens of the United States to use and enjoy air, water, sunlight, and other renewable resources determined by Congress to be common property shall not be impaired, nor shall such use impair their availability for the use of future generations" (LaDuke "A Seventh Generation Amendment" 276).

Donelle N. Dreese further explores the Western concept of ownership and how it leads to a commodification of the earth. Commenting on Indian author Simon Ortiz, Dreese, in her book Ecocriticism: Creating Self and Place in Environmental and American Indian Literatures, writes,

> The earth [in Ortiz's book] is regarded as sacred space, differing from Western perspectives that view land as real estate to be bought and sold in a commodity market [. . . .] An ecological consciousness with a sense of reverence [. . .] is necessary for environmental [. . .] continuity [. . . .] Tribes occupied certain territories, but occupation was not ownership. The landscape with its spiritual significance was considered a living entity beyond the scope of human claim or monetary value. That Europeans were parceling out patches of land and selling them for a price was seen as disrespectful and arrogant. (94)

As seen here, Western civilization, like the Dayao civilization, does not think of the earth as sacred, and this leads to a contemptuous treatment of the earth. George Santayana, in his 1911 speech, "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," chastises Western civilization for its *hubris* in this regard:

> [T]hose systems [. . .] which the European genteel tradition has handed down since Socrates [are . . .] egotistical [. . .] anthropocentric, and inspired by the notion that man, or human reason [. . .] is the center and pivot of the universe. That is what the mountains and the woods should make you at last ashamed to assert.

The vitality and *validity* of the land itself shames the arrogance of Western civilization.

Western industrial civilization's assault on the earth harms not only the earth but human beings as well. Le Guin, in discussing the Dayao's war-making machines, writes:

> [T]he cost of making, maintaining, fueling, and operating such machines at the very height of the Industrial Age was incalculable, *impoverishing the planet's substance forever and requiring the great majority of humankind to live in servitude and poverty*. Perhaps the question concerning the Condor's [Dayao's] failure to build an empire with its advanced weapons is not why did they fail, but why did they try. (Always Coming Home 405, emphasis added)

With the benefit of hindsight that made the Dayao privy to the effects of industrialization (impoverishment of the planet, the degradation of the human condition), why would anyone attempt to industrialize? The question is an apt one for today as well. Western industrial civilization has several centuries of industrialism under its belt and should be aware of the adverse effects it has on earth and all life on earth, yet Western civilization continues to industrialize the world.

The rural Kesh recount the effects of industrialization in one of their stories:

> [The] people [who] were born wrong [. . .] tried to make the world. *All they could do was make it end again* [. . .] So *what they did caused fires and smoke and bad air* [. . . .] when it began to get better the people started coming back, but not very many, because there was sickness in the world. *Everybody got sick*, and no singing or bringing-in could heal them, the plants and animals and humans, all growing things, and even the rocks were sick; *even the dirt was poisoned* [. . . .] *Nothing was born right*. (Le Guin Always Coming Home 168-169, emphases added)

Like the Athsheans in The Word for World is Forest, the Kesh consider industrial humans as "born wrong." The parallels between this description and the reality of Western society's industrial pollution are too similar to ignore.

In another Kesh story, "A Hole in the Air," the Kesh tell of a "backward-head people" who eat "poisoned food" and whose fruit trees bear apples that "tasted like brass, like bluestone. The skin was poisoned" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 162). As these Kesh folktales are about the Industrial Age, it is easy to surmise that these "poisoned" foods and apple skins come from the various chemicals used in producing or growing these foods and the various pollutants that are almost omnipresent in our time. After returning home from his visit to the place of the "backward-head people" where they live "outside the world," the Kesh protagonist of "A Hole in the Air" lives only a small

number of days before "he died wholly [. . .] of grief and poison" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 163, 164).

Le Guin traces a horrifying fictional future brought about by the ecological devastation of industrial civilization as depicted in these folk tales. "As well as I could establish," the anthropologist studying the Kesh society begins,

> [b]oth diseases [sevai and vedet] express genetic (chromosomal) damage caused by long-lasting toxic or radioactive wastes or residues of the military-industrial era, widespread in soil and water, and leaching uncontrollably in the very highly contaminated areas. Vedet involved personality disorder and dementia; sevai usually led to blindness and other sensory loss, and degeneration of muscle control. Both diseases were painful, crippling, incurable, and fatal. (Le Guin Always Coming Home 511-512)

Further effects from "the residues of the Industrial Era" include "low birth rate, short life expectancy, high incidence of crippling congenital disease" as well as "the permanent desolation of vast regions through release of radioactive or poisonous substances [. . .] permanent genetic impairment" such as "sterility, stillbirth, and congenital disease" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 405, 167).

The effects of the "Industrial Era" are not seen by the Kesh as accidental byproducts of an industrial society. "In their view, human beings did not do things accidentally [. . .] what people *did* they were responsible for. So these things human beings had done to the world must have been deliberate and conscious acts of evil, serving the purposes of wrong understanding, fear, and greed" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 167). Le Guin goes on to say that "[t]he people who had done these things had done wrong mindfully. They had had their heads on wrong" (Always Coming Home 167).

In his book Farley: The Life of Farley Mowat, biographer James King writes, "According to [Canadian author] Farley Mowat, we do not understand that our self-interest lies in consistent, careful, long-range stewardship of the planet. Rather than thinking in decades or centuries, modern human society has tended to seize upon short-term exploitation of nature" (206-207). This myopic worldview leads to a massive and unprecedented assault on the lifeforms of the planet. While all forms of human societies and all forms of life on this planet depend on other life, both living and dead, in order to survive, Western civilization has assailed life on earth like no other human culture or animal species before.

This destruction is not akin to subsistence hunting. It is, in fact, far out of the realm of subsistence hunting, for subsistence hunters, whether they are Euro-American inhabitants of Michigan's Upper Peninsula or First Nations Cree in Canada, consider the health of the species they hunt and the effect of their hunt on the ecosystem of the area. "[Subsistence] hunters," writes anthropologist Hugh Brody in his book, Living Arctic: Hunters of the Canadian North, "do not share [. . .] urban consciousness. Their ideas and institutions [. . .] are radically unlike those founded in settled [. . .] societies" (13).

In Mean Spirit, Hogan takes on the issue of sport-hunting (as opposed to hunting for food). She implies that one of the aspects of Western civilization is deriving pleasure from the destruction of animal life. Stace Red Hawk, a Sioux person originally from South Dakota, read that

> Zebulon Pike had reported shooting in these hills, forest, and prairies 770 wildcats, 300 female bears, and 3,000 deer. Pike had written to invite people to come to the place where game was in abundance. And they arrived, on trains, on foot, on horseback. (Hogan Mean Spirit 267)

Not only do sport-hunters come in this passage, they came in large numbers, "like a flood, the people came," to participate in the killing of these indigenous animals (Hogan Mean Spirit 267). This is important in the critique of Western civilization for the hunt did not merely involve one person, or a few, with a great urge to kill anything that moved. Rather, this mass slaughter was caused by a high number of people, people who managed to find some form of transportation, "on trains, on foot, on horseback," to hunt "where game was in abundance."

The fact that American society *honored* Zebulon Pike (in a typically Western way) by naming Pike's Peak in Colorado after him, a mountain he "discovered," shows an approval, if not an outright admiration, for Pike. This adds to the impression that American culture, at least in the time of Zebulon Pike, approved of the wanton destruction of life Hogan depicts here.

At a carnival early in the book, Lettie, an Osage woman, and her boyfriend, Benoit, a mixed-blood, "stayed away from the shooting galleries, where a dime bought three shots at live birds. The Indians didn't approve of this practice and their numerous complaints about such cruelty had gone unheeded" (Hogan Mean Spirit 69). Much later in the book, Red Hawk and Lettie, while in a distant town to attend Hale's trial for murder, enter a restaurant peopled with European-American men enjoying cruelty vicariously: "[O]ne of the men told a loud story about rabbit hunting and the others nodded in such a way that Stace knew they'd heard the story for years on end and still not grown tired of how the rabbit screamed like a woman" (Hogan Mean Spirit 347).

Earlier, Belle, an Osage elder and the protagonist of Mean Spirit, and Silver, an Osage runner from the traditional Hill Indians, walk away from Tar Town, a poverty-

stricken settlement of Osage people whose spirits have been broken from their participation in the Euro-American world:

> When they found a clean place, one that seemed untouched by the destroyers they laid down on the green grass and gazed up at the night sky [. . . .] "You know, Europeans have different constellations than we do." Belle was thinking of the sky, how where she saw a man and a woman standing together, the one called sky and earth, they saw twin boys. And how where she saw two people holding one another, they saw a man and a weapon. (Hogan 277)

In the above passage, the Europeans are referred to as "destroyers," and their cultural values are discussed in terms of how they view the constellations. In the first constellation Belle speaks of, she sees both a male and a female presence in the stars. In both of the constellations discussed, the Europeans see only a male presence. This is reminiscent of Le Guin's Little Man, the one who "had no mother, only a father. So he killed whatever he was afraid of" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 165). Both authors imply that the lack of a strong feminine presence leads to destruction. Further, the second constellation Belle thinks on differs significantly between the Osage and European cultures. For Belle, the second constellation is one of love; for the Europeans it is about the destruction of life.

In Hogan's Solar Storms, the massive hydro-electric construction in the land of the "Beautiful Ones" causes much destruction of life. Floodwater from the dams "killed many thousands of caribou and flooded land the people lived on and revered" (Hogan Solar Storms 57). Angel tells us, "I'd heard what happened there, the caribou running across the flats as the water surged toward them, knocking them over, flooding their world, their migration routes gone now, under water" (Hogan Solar Storms 245-246).

In a case study of the James Bay dams built on Cree and Innu lands in the 1970s, LaDuke describes the death of the caribou that Hogan portrays, although Hogan has taken some liberty with time:

> The flow of water in the river has been radically altered from its natural path. At times, the flow may be increased or decreased by about 20 times the normal rate, *according to the electrical demand at the end of the powerline* [. . . .] In 1984 came the most deadly dam-release of water, precisely during the annual migration of the George's River caribou herd across the Canapiascau Reservoir. As a direct result, *over 10,000 caribou drowned*. (All Our Relations 62, emphases added)

Other animals are also affected by these dams. Flooding causes massive plant die-offs which in turn produce a certain bacteria with the ability to take the mercury that occurs naturally in plants and soil and convert it into methylmercury, a form of mercury that can bio-accumulate in animal bodies (Gedicks 17). Substances that bio-accumulate never leave an animal's body which results in the subsequent build up of such metals within the animal. Consequently, consumption of mercury-contaminated animals, such as a contaminated fish, only deposits the mercury built up in that contaminated animal into the body of the one who consumes the contaminated animal. In this way, those who eat higher up the food chain (i.e. the Cree in their subsistence dependence on fish) will develop significant amounts of mercury within their bodies. Not only do the Cree suffer from mercury poisoning, however, but the fish and other animals who depend on the fish for food, such as bear and other carnivores, also suffer.

Like the First Nations humans who live in the same area, the caribou and other animals have developed a lifestyle over millennia that is particularly adapted to their territory's terrain and ecosystem. Such massive disruptions as the hydro-electric dams discussed in Solar Storms cause much harm. Although the deaths of the caribou have

been noted in the larger context of the human world, no one can know how many other animal lives have been destroyed and disrupted by the flooding and water diversions of these dams.

According to Ann Ostberg of the Sierra Club International Committee in a 1999 article for the North Star Journal, "NSP electricity destroying Canadian Cree land," another hydroelectric corporation, Manitoba Hydro, has devastated 50,000 square miles of land, roughly the size of Wisconsin, in Cree territory (29 Mar. 2004). This devastation includes the destruction of "32 million acres of boreal forest," reversal of the Churchill River from a north-flowing river to a south-flowing one, the thawing of permafrost and subsequent erosion of shorelines, and the release of methane, a greenhouse gas, and methylmercury (Ostberg). Suicide reports of Cree in the area have reached as high as one in twenty people (Ostberg). As a result of all of this, Manitoba Hydro makes $1 billion each year selling cheap electricity to Northern States Power, a Minnesota-based company, that in turn supplies electricity at incredibly low prices to North and South Dakota, southern Minnesota, eastern Wisconsin and parts of Michigan (Ostberg). According to Ostberg, "These low rates, among the cheapest in North America, are possible because environmental and human costs have not been factored into the price" ("NSP electricity"). This cheap electricity led to plans to build major high-voltage transmission lines from Manitoba on into the United States (Ostberg), some of which are planned for northern Wisconsin despite vocal opposition from the rural north woods residents.

Although development is thought of as a positive concept in Western civilization, Hogan points out that industrial development destroys elements necessary for life. "If

development continued, there would be no drinking water left," Hogan writes (Solar Storms 274). As it is, "[t]he waterfowl that lived in the water and ate from its bottom were [. . .] becoming sick. Many of them were listless and thirsty before they finally died" (Hogan Solar Storms 274).

Even back in the Boundary Waters area of Minnesota at Adam's Rib, the small metís community Angel and her grandmothers are from, the dams cause much suffering. Here, too, trees and animals drown. "Dead fish lapped against the walls of buildings [. . .] the four remaining white pines would turn slowly into white skeleton trees, half under water," Angel says (Hogan Solar Storms 334). "In this flood," Hogan writes, "there would be no animals escaping two by two, no one to reach out for those who wander gracefully and far on four legs, to take hold of the wading birds with their golden claws [. . .] to carry to safety the yellow-eyed lynx, the swift dark marten" (Solar Storms 334). Further, when Angel returns to the land of the Beautiful Ones near the end of the novel, she describes "rivers drowned, a dead moose floating. A fast river had become nothing but a pond, green with algae, stagnant [. . .] There were floating trees, pines, fish" (Hogan Solar Storms 346).

At one point in their journey, Angel and her grandmothers witness the death of a moose as it is sucked down "[w]here water had once been" but where it "was now only a vast region of mudflats. For much distance, all we could see was mire" (Hogan *Solar Storms* 210). The dams have diverted the water from its normal course and have left mud mires in its wake. Although Angel and her grandmothers try to think of every way possible to save the moose, they are unable to do so, and as the moose finally disappears "with a woman-sounding cry [. . . .] 'I hate God,' [Angel says], wishing the mysteries of

creation, the fire of stars were a nature separate from that of death. 'It isn't God that did this,' said Dora-Rouge" (Hogan *Solar Storms* 210) implying that without the devastation wrought by the construction of the dams, the moose would not have come to where the river once was only to be drowned in the mud. Again, Western industrial civilization, in seeking to expand its economic markets and further develop and industrialize the world, brings destruction to those who belong to the wild.

The hydroelectric companies caused such destruction as Hogan describes above because they sold the idea that Canada and the United States had a demand for electricity that could not be met with current electrical production capacities. According to Gedicks, in the court case the Cree brought against Hydro-Quebec, the energy corporation responsible for the James Bay projects, Daniel Khazzoom, a former U.S. Federal Power Commission chief econometrist testified that "Hydro-Quebec's projections of energy needs were not based upon the energy needs of the province but upon the corporate growth needs of Hydro-Quebec [which] resulted in greatly exaggerated estimates of energy needs" (20). Further, Gedicks writes that "[w]hen James Bay, Phase I started to come on line in the late 1970s, there was an energy surplus in Quebec. Hydro-Quebec had to spill water over the dams because there was no market for all this power" (23).

Some of these "energy needs" were developed by Hydro-Quebec's courtship of several energy corporations and municipalities in the United States. New York was one such state, and since 1970, their purchase of electricity produced by dams like the ones depicted in Hogan's Solar Storms "accounted for about 9 percent of the state's electricity supply" (LaDuke Foreword 109). New York, though, according to First Nations activist

and artist ‘Wii Muk’willixw in his book Heartbeat of the Earth: A First Nations Artist Records Injustice and Resistance, did eventually cancel its contract with Hydro-Quebec due to dramatic Cree and Inuit activism in 1994 (64). However, according to the Wisconsin activist group, Save Our Unique Lands or S.O.U.L., composed of rural-dwellers, farmers and others opposing the construction of a major high-voltage powerline through northern Wisconsin, additional increased hydroelectrical production has been recently proposed in areas of northern Canada that would affect Cree land; these dams would again provide electricity to such U.S. energy corporations as Minnesota-based Northern States Power (Save Our Unique Lands).

Some see high-voltage powerlines as evidence of progress. There are others, however, who are old enough to remember what condition the land was in prior to such development and to notice the effects industrialization has had on their areas. “Ojibway elders today,” writes Vennum in his book Wild Rice and the Ojibway People, “are of the general impression that when they were younger, natural resources were in greater supply and of better quality. Although they may not attribute this to pollution per se, they are in agreement that white presence is responsible” (288).

As a fictional illustration of today’s reality, the Terran colonists in The Word for World is Forest are on Athshe specifically to destroy the planet’s forests. According to Captain Davidson, “no space should be wasted on trees and stuff” (Le Guin The Word 2). The Terran humans have already made much progress in this direction at the beginning of the novel. In a description incredibly reminiscent of Marlow’s perception of the Congo in Joseph Conrad’s Heart of Darkness, Davidson says:

> The two hundred men here had tamed a fair patch of wilderness in just three E-months [. . . .] when they came here there had been nothing. Trees. A dark huddle and jumble and tangle of trees, endless, meaningless. A sluggish river overhung and choked by trees, a few creechie-warrens hidden among the trees, some red deer, hairy monkeys, birds. And trees. Roots, boles, branches, twigs, leaves overhead and underfoot and in your face and in your eyes, endless leaves on endless trees. (Le Guin The Word 6-7)

This wilderness-destroying attitude may have brought about the decimation of life on the Terrans' home planet, Earth, for the earth is repeatedly referred to as a planet virtually depleted of life. Davidson himself refers to the planet as "worn-out Earth" (Le Guin The Word 3). In discussing the deforestation of Athshe, another Terran colonist asks Davidson, "You want to make this world into Earth's image, eh? A desert of cement?" (Le Guin The Word 5). A "desert of cement" can only refer to urbanization. Earth, then, has been civilized to death; it is "worn-out," the wild land destroyed.

Trees are scarce on earth in The Word for World is Forest. Wood is described as "a really necessary luxury on Earth" (Le Guin The Word 7). "[T]hey come from another place which is not the forest; the trees there are all cut down," the Athshean Selver says relating information to the Athsheans that Lyubov, the Terran anthropologist, has told him (Le Guin The Word 44). "Like most Terrans on Terra," Le Guin writes, "Lyubov had never walked among wild trees at all, never seen a wood larger than a city block" until he came to Athshe (The Word 88). Further, in a response to the Terran ecologist's assertion that Athshe will be okay as long as the Development Plan is followed, Lyubov says, "That's what the Bureau of Land Management said about Alaska during the First Famine [. . . .] How many Sitka spruce have you seen in your lifetime [. . .] Or snowy owl? or wolf? or Eskimo? The survival percentage of native Alaskan species in habitat,

after 15 years of the Development Program, was .3%. It's now zero" (Le Guin The Word 72). Development, or civilization, is destructive of wilderness and wildlife, and Lyubov believes they need to learn from this before they also destroy Athshe's ecosystems.

Given the Terrans' track record, Lyubov, the Terran anthropologist fears for Athshe:

> We've [the Terrans] been here four years, we've irrecoverably wrecked the native life-systems on one large island, have done great damage on this subcontinent Sornol, and if we go on logging at the present rate, may reduce the major habitable lands to desert within ten years. (Le Guin The Word 71)

The circumstances Lyubov describes are a continuation of long-standing Western policies. Ignatia Broker, in her narrative based on the life of one of her grandmothers, Night Flying Woman: An Ojibway Narrative, writes:

> In the early 1800s the strangers, those people who had robbed the white pine from the land of the Cherokee, began looking at the tall trees in the forests of the Ojibway. Soon their clamor reached the communities of the Ojibway. "We need lumber for building homes and ships and the shops in our towns." The industry that ate the forests became king [. . .] Six times groups of Ojibway were required to mark the treaties. Each time their lands passed into the hands of the alien peoples, and each group was required to move to a Native Area. (10-11)

The Anishinaabeg were removed from their lands and moved to "Native areas" or reservations so that the forests can be turned into fodder for the Industrial Machine,. Similarly in The Word for World is Forest, the Terrans come to Athshe, forcibly remove Athsheans from their homes (enslavement) and start to cut down the trees in an effort to fuel the survival and expansion of an industrial Earth.

As Angel journeys with her grandmothers to the north in Solar Storms to the land of the "Beautiful Ones," she sees similar destruction of the land for the same purposes

described in The Word for World is Forest and Night Flying Woman. "We'd already seen some of the flooding," Angel says, "mudflats where other rivers had failed to empty into their destinations" (Hogan Solar Storms 192). "With more than one dam being built," Hogan writes later, "much land was now submerged. An entire river to the north had been flooded and drowned" (Solar Storms 205).

It is interesting to note Hogan's description of the river here, a description that implies a river is not a mere thing but a living being that can be "drowned." Expanding on this idea, "Dora-Rouge said the mouths of rivers had stopped spilling their stories to the bays and seas beyond them" (Hogan Solar Storms 205). By using this sort of language, Hogan forces us to look at the river as a living being, as something more than water funneled along dirt banks. It has a life of its own, a life that comes from the way it interacts with the land it passes through, with the dirt it carries, with the aquatic lifeforms that depend on it for survival. These rivers, living entities, are either being "drowned" or diverted, leaving their riverbeds dangerous plains of muck. Western industrial civilization would find the idea of a river-as-person, that is, the idea of a river deserving respect and consideration, laughable.[21] This Western industrial ideology results in much destruction of life.

The people with "their heads on wrong" in Always Coming Home did evil knowingly, according to the Kesh. In our future, when the effects of the current industrial society have created hell on earth, the people of Western industrial civilization

[21] Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, however, in his dissenting opinion on Sierra Club vs. Morton proposes that since corporations are considered persons in the eyes of United States law, landforms, such as "valleys, alpine meadows, rivers, lakes [. . .] or even air," should be considered persons in legal terms as well (qtd. in Deloria 294).

will not escape being held responsible for the environmental devastation they have caused and the subsequent effects this devastation has laid upon the bodies and the world of their descendants.

This is a sobering prediction considering that industrial civilization has much to answer for right now. LaDuke tell us that "[e]ach year, according to Environmental Protection Agency statistics, the world's paper industry discharges from 600 to 3,200 grams of dioxin equivalents in water, sludge, and paper products. This quantity is equal to the amount that would cause 58,000 to 292,000 cases of cancer every year" ("Mothers of Our Nations" 215). LaDuke also describes more detailed aspects of this dioxin pollution, citing facts eerily reminiscent of the industrial effluent the Kesh are forced to cope with:

> Nearly everyone in the country is already carrying what is called a 'body burden of dioxin' 500 times greater than the 'acceptable risk' level for carcinogens. Dioxin can be considered a sort of environment hormone that ravages the endocrine system, distorting cell growth. In men, dioxin elevates testosterone levels, reduces sperm count, and leads to increased rates of diabetes. In the last 50 years, sperm counts have declined by more than 50 percent, while testicular cancer has tripled.
>
> In women, dioxin seems to prompt endometriosis, a painful uterine disorder that now afflicts five million women a year. Dioxin exposure has also been linked to breast cancer, a disease that has more than doubled since 1960 [. . .] If you live in the Great Lakes region, your body burden of dioxin may be two to three times greater than that of someone living on the West coast. Both weather patterns and clustering of Chemical plants produce this additional exposure. ("A Seventh Generation Amendment" 274-275)

Dioxin is only one of many pollutants used and approved of today by Western industrial civilization. The other examples are numerous and include the use of depleted uranium in warfare (such as with the United States in our wars with Iraq as discussed by Gail Griffith, Ph.D., in the presentation "Depleted Uranium: America's Secret Weapon"),

the emissions of mercury from coal-fired power plants, and the extensive use of pesticides requiring increasing dosages as insects develop resistance to the chemicals.

Aldo Leopold, in A Sand County Almanac, writes,

> [D]o we not [. . .] sing out love for and obligation to the land of the free and the home of the brave? Yes, but just what and whom do we love? Certainly not the soil, which we are sending helter-skelter downriver. Certainly not the waters which we assume have no function except to turn turbines, float barges, and carry off sewage. Certainly not the plants, of which we exterminate whole communities without batting an eye. Certainly not the animals, of which we have already extirpated many of the largest and most beautiful species. (239-240)

On what we are doing to ourselves, Rachel Carson, in Silent Spring, writes,

> For the first time in the history of the world, every human being is now subjected to contact with dangerous chemicals, from the moment of conception until death [. . . .] they occur virtually everywhere [. . . .] They have immense power not merely to poison but to enter into the most vital processes of the body and change them in sinister and deadly ways. Thus [. . .] they destroy the very enzymes whose function is to protect the body from harm, they block the oxidation processes from which the body receives its energy, they prevent the normal functioning of various organs, and they may initiate in certain cells the slow and irreversible change that leads to malignancy. (24-25)

According to Isaac Asimov and Frederick Pohl in their book Our Angry Earth, "In the former East Germany open uranium waste dumps pollute groundwater in the south, and industrial wastes damage water all over the area" (143). Asimov and Pohl also express concern over our destruction of the ozone layer explaining that "[i]t will always keep coming back [. . . . b]ut it takes time [. . .] to make new ozone, and if we allow the ozone layer to be seriously damaged, by the time it is regenerated we may all be dead" (113).

As another illustration of how destructive Western civilization is, Julia Butterfly Hill describes her experiences in attempting to defend Luna, a redwood tree threatened

with unsustainable logging practices. In her book, The Legacy of Luna: The Story of a Tree, a Woman, and the Struggle to Save the Redwoods, Hill writes of a particularly chilling scene she was witness to near the end of her two-year tree-sit in Luna:

> After carefully leaving a few trees standing in the middle of the logged area, so it wouldn't be considered a clear-cut, [the Pacific Lumber Company] burned the whole thing with the help of a helicopter [. . . .] Shooting liquid fire—*also known as napalm*—[. . .] the helicopter sprayed various spots until the whole area billowed with smoke and flame. When it was all done the few trees they had left standing were completely fried, along with everything else.
>
> Just over the ridge and in every direction—west of me, south of me, and east of me—for miles and miles, fires burned. At night, I could see the hills alight with glowing embers. There were so many of them it almost looked like a lava flow.
>
> The fires lasted six days. The smoke, nasty and filled with the smell of diesel fuel, lasted long after. I'd never been subjected to that kind of torture before [. . . .] My eyes swelled almost completely shut. My nose dried out and started bleeding uncontrollably. My strangled sinuses whirled. Every breath I took into my body, hour after hour, day after day, was choked with smoke. My throat burned. So did my lungs. I cried and prayed and cried some more. (Hill 216-217, emphasis added)

Hill was not the only inhabitant of that napalmed forest. The plethora of animals and plants that make up a forest community also would have had to endure this onslaught. During her tree-sit, in response to reporters' queries as to why she continued to remain in Luna, Hill responded, "the unsustainable practices of the Pacific Lumber Company must be changed [. . .] I remain in Luna to let the world know that *the forests here are still under attack*" (218, emphasis added).

Frederick Pohl, in the afterword to Our Angry Earth, a book he wrote with Isaac Asimov in the early 1990s, describes additional impacts industrial society has had on the earth:

> We're still burying some of our best agricultural land under road-building (by 1992 nearly forty thousand square miles of American soil had been

> paved over [. . .]—an area the size of an average state). We still continue to drive species and subspecies into extinction (1992 was the last year for the Japanese crested ibis, and at the Idaho end of the Snake River, where *thousands* of sockeye salmon used to swim 900 miles upstream to spawn, *only four fish* made it alive to the spawning grounds in 1991). (417, emphases added)

Much of the rest of their book is devoted to exposing the great threats facing the earth as we know it. We cannot forget that as inhabitants of this planet, what threatens the earth, threatens us, perhaps even more so, as well. These threats include the destruction of soils, deforestation, urban sprawl, radioactive wastes as well as vast species extinction, water pollution, the trashing of space, global warming, air pollution and the ozone hole, just to name a few (Asimov and Pohl 45-202). As literary scholar Lillian Heldreth said, if these two "*popular* [. . .] *elders*" of the science fiction genre "are frightened, *everyone* should be" (21 Mar. 2004).

Chapter Seven

AS BACKWARD AS LIES:
Fear and Reverse Thinking in Western Industrial Civilization

While Le Guin discusses "Little Man's" fear of the world in Always Coming Home, Hogan, too, portrays Western society's fear of the wild in Solar Storms. Of the European immigrants to America, Hogan writes, "The immigrants had believed wilderness was full of demons [. . .] They feared the voices of animals singing at night" (Solar Storms 86). In addition, their houses were designed by "people who did not want to look out windows at the threatening miles of frozen lake [. . .] at the dark, dense forest with wolves" (Hogan Solar Storms 27). Further, "[t]he Europeans called this world dangerous" (Hogan Solar Storms 180).

According to Hogan, Western civilization fears the wild or that which is not civilized. It fears that which, according to the definition of "savage," is "not under human control" (Gove 2019). It is a fear Joseph Conrad, an author highly respected in the Western world, exemplifies well in his book Heart of Darkness. Much of Conrad's racism has been commented on and argued with in the field of post-colonial studies, but not much has been said about his views of the wilderness. In the book, Marlow exhibits the same fear Hogan speaks of in Solar Storms.

While traveling up the Congo in Heart of Darkness, Marlow makes many references to the dark, thick jungle surrounding him. In one such instance, he says,

> Going up that river was like traveling back to the earliest beginnings of the world, when vegetation *rioted* on the earth and the big trees were kings. An *empty* stream, a great silence, an *impenetrable* forest [. . . .] *There was*

> *no joy* in the brilliance of sunshine. The long stretches of waterway ran on, *deserted,* into the *gloom* of overshadowed distances [. . . .] The broadening waters flowed through a *mob* of wooded islands. (Conrad 35, emphases added)

In the Congo, Marlow says, "[t]he earth seemed unearthly. We are accustomed to look upon the *shackled* form of a *conquered monster,* but there—there you look at a thing *monstrous* and free. It was unearthly" (Conrad 37). Marlow is most comfortable when earth, in all its wildness, is subdued by man. Further, Marlow says, the "stillness of life [along the banks of the Congo] did not in the least resemble a peace. It was the stillness of an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention. It looked at you with a *vengeful* aspect [. . . .] I felt often its mysterious stillness watching me" (Conrad 36, emphasis added). The jungle, Marlow feels, is watching him, waiting with resentment to exact revenge.

The Westerner's fear of the wilderness as exemplified by Marlow could be a legitimate fear, or at least a fear rooted in guilty consciences. "[C]ities were built from our woods," says Angel in Solar Storms, "they cut the rest of the trees to raise cattle" (Hogan 40). "They had forgotten the wild," Hogan writes, "they destroyed all that could save them, the plants, the water" (Solar Storms 86). Angel later tells us that Europeans "wanted to conquer the land, the water, the rivers that kept running away from them" (Hogan Solar Storms 268).

We certainly see this desire to conquer echoed in Conrad's "shackled form of a conquered monster." Maybe the Congo truly was watching Marlow "with a vengeful aspect"; perhaps the wilderness is wary of the Western world. "Our lives, the old people say, are witnessed by the birds, by the dragonflies, by trees and spiders," writes Hogan,

"We are seen, *our measure taken*, not only by the animals and spiders but even by the alive galaxy in deep space and the windblown ice of the north that would soon descend on us" (Solar Storms 80, emphasis added). Later, Angel, on her trip with her grandmothers up the waterways heading north, says, "Sometimes I felt there were eyes around us, peering through trees and fog" (Hogan Solar Storms 177).

This last statement is a remarkable echo of Marlow. Both are on voyages into the heart of the wilderness along wild waterways, and both Angel and Marlow feel as if the surrounding wilderness is watching them. Angel goes on to say, "Maybe it was the eyes of the land and creatures regarding us, taking our measure" (Hogan Solar Storms 177). If this is so, what would the wilderness think of the European? Given the destruction caused by the Westerners worldwide, perhaps Marlow truly had reason to sense vengefulness in the wilderness as it watched him, "taking [his] measure."

Civilization's tendency to divorce civilized people from the land may result not only in a fear of untamed land but also in a disconnection from the real world. Civilized people are accustomed to "reality" being defined within the human context, thus success indicators like the GNP, growth rates, expansion of manufacturing industries and so on are, for the civilized person, signs of growth and thus of progress. However, these very same success indicators, as they are now interpreted, depend on destruction of the environment. Thus while industrial civilizations congratulate themselves on expanding growth and increasing GNP, the world on which they depend falls apart, but they are unaware of it. They are unaware of such disintegration because environmental health is not considered in the calculations of such factors as the GNP.

Industrial civilization, then, is essentially divorced from the real world. As such, it lacks a base upon which to build a sane view of the world. "By the very fact that they are locked away from the Earth in an artificial environment," writes Roszak, "urbanites lose sight of the planet as a living entity with whom they must maintain an organic reciprocity" (251). This urban worldview is a distorted perception of reality.

Reality distortion is often a symptom of mental illness, and in Le Guin's The Word for World is Forest, the Athsheans have come to the conclusion that the Terran humans are insane. "They're like the people in the Elm Dream who come at you rump-first, with their heads put on front to back," says one Athshean, Ebor Dendep, continuing with, "They make the forest into a dry beach [. . . .] They are backwards [. . .] They are insane [. . . .] How can people be any madder? Maybe when they kill a tree they think it will come alive again" (Le Guin The Word 43). Here the apparent Terran insanity is linked to the Terrans' (rampant) destruction of trees on Athshe.

The Athsheans' diagnosis of Terran insanity can be further explained by understanding the significance of dreams to the Athsheans. According to the Athsheans, dreams keep a person balanced and centered, and they help individuals and cultures find their direction in life. "The yumens [Terrans] poison themselves to dream," an Athshean says referring to Terran drug habits, "But they couldn't call the dreams, nor control them, nor weave nor shape nor cease to dream; they were driven, overpowered. They did not know what was within them at all. So it is with a man who hasn't dreamed for many days [. . . .] He will not understand himself" (Le Guin The Word 127). The Terrans are disconnected from reality, for they do not understand themselves. " 'They are all insane,' said old Tubab, looking deeply distressed" (Le Guin The Word 136).

In Solar Storms, Bush calls the European immigrants "the reverse people. Backward. Even now they destroyed all that could save them, the plants, the water" (Hogan 86). Bush refers to the Europeans as "reverse people" because she feels they do everything they should not: they destroy the very things that will keep them alive and whole. Further, "[t]hose with the money," Angel says, "the investments, *the city power*, had no understanding of the destruction their decisions and wants and desires brought to the world. If they'd known what their decisions meant to our people, and if they continued with this building in spite of that knowing, then they were evil" (Hogan Solar Storms 343, emphasis added). Here Angel directly connects the concept of "civilization" ("the city power") with the destruction of the earth and, although she's willing to give them the benefit of the doubt, with evil. "They were men," Hogan writes, "who would *reverse the world*, change the direction of rivers, *stop the cycle of life* until everything was as *backward as lies*" (Solar Storms 288-289, emphasis added).

As Hogan, Le Guin, LaDuke and others show, it is not difficult to find evidence of this backwardness or insanity in industrial civilization. The question, though, is why does the insanity continue? According to Canadian author Farley Mowat, civilized people must go through "frantic, frenzied efforts" to believe in civilization. "The City, citta, civitas, civilization," he says, "all one and *all* wrong for Man! What frantic, frenzied efforts we make to believe in what is in fact our damnation—civilized man and all his works" (qtd. in King 287). Such a description implies that even the civilized people are aware of the futility of civilization; they simply do not want to believe it.

Chapter Eight

RECLAIMING THE SAVAGE:
Alternatives to Western Industrial Civilization in Hogan and Le Guin

Although the novels of Hogan and Le Guin discussed here are ecosophical critiques of Western industrial civilization, they also offer an empowering alternative to such a society—that of reclaiming the savage. In order to understand the reclamation of the savage, however, it is necessary to reject the Western image of savagery.

Most English speakers accept the Western cultural conception that a life "of the woods, wild" is a life deprived in most ways. Although for many it remains appealing in a romanticized sense in the short term (i.e. vacations, retreats, the pastoral ideal of poetry), very few English-speakers actually see the value of a life lived in full interaction with the land. That is, civilized English-speakers today, at the heart of it all, tend to view the savage lifestyle as defined by Webster's Third New International Dictionary as "boorish [and] rude" (Gove 2019) and as something that may be enjoyable for a two-week vacation but not as a permanent way of life. In order to reclaim the savage, such conceptions need to change.

After the meanings and connotations the term "savage" has accumulated through usage in the Western world have been dusted off, we find that "savage" is essentially about living within the context of the earth. For some reason, Western civilization chose to equate the savage philosophy, the art of living with the land, with all that is evil and uncouth. It chose also to elevate the concept of civilization, the practice of attempting to live apart from the land within an urban/human-based context, with all that is honorable

and good. It is, perhaps, not so strange, given these cultural biases of Western civilization, that it is Western industrial worldviews that are destroying the earth and various forms of life in the vain quest to live apart from the land. For Hogan, civilization separated us from the "earth, water, and trees," from all other forms of life; civilization forced us to forget how to communicate with the life that surrounds us, the life on which we depend. Reclaiming the savage, understanding what savagery really means, is the primary radical paradigmatic transformation needed today.

In Solar Storms, Angel herself undergoes this transformation as she journeys north with her grandmothers. "Somewhere in my past," she says,

> I had lost the knowing of this opening light of life, the taking up of minerals from the dark ground, the magnitude of thickets and brush. Now I found it again [. . . .] I remembered things I'd forgotten, how a hundred years ago leaves reached toward sunlight, plants bent into currents of water. Something persistent nudged me and it had morning rain on its leaves. (Hogan Solar Storms 171)

Angel reclaims the savage. She remembers "the knowing" she "had lost," the knowledge of the plant world, of the woods, of savagery. Her remembering, however, is much more than a mere memory recall. As part of her recollection, she becomes intimately and beautifully connected to the savage. "[T]he plants and I joined each other," she says, "They entangled me in their stems and vines and it was a beautiful entanglement" (Hogan Solar Storms 171). The savage state described here is not one of terror, ignorance and aggressiveness as it is thought of in the Western world. Instead, it is a beautiful interconnection and interrelation, and it is state of mind recovered, not newly discovered.

Angel refers to this reclamation of the savage later when she speaks of dreams and how they aid those in the waking world: "How could it be, I wondered, that all

people who came from their own earth, who lived there for tens of thousands of years, could talk with spirits, could hear land speak, and animals? [. . . .] Could they all have been wrong? I didn't think so" (Hogan Solar Storms 189). In coming to this realization, she says, "The old world dawning new in me was something like the way a human eye righted what was upside down, turned over an image and saw true" (Hogan Solar Storms 189).

This is not a regression into what Davidson referred to as ignorance and "primeval murk" (Le Guin The Word 2). Rather, according to Angel, the savage state represents an accurate or "true" view of the world, and it contrasts with the other world Angel lived in prior to her return to Adam's Rib and her subsequent journey north, the Western world. For Angel, then, the Western civilized mind sees the same world the savage mind sees; the civilized mind, though, has an inverted, backwards image of that world.

This savage paradigm is discussed in Mean Spirit as well. "Up in the Hills they were drumming," Hogan writes of the traditional Hill Indians, adding, "It made [Stace] feel good, feel almost whole again. The smoky scent of cedar hung in the air. He felt the spirit world. It was thick there, strong as the smell of smoke" (Mean Spirit 360). This nearness of the spirits is not a cause for fear as is often the case in the Western perception of the spirit world (see traditional Western ghost stories and admired authors like Stephen King and Edgar Allan Poe for an example of this). Rather, it is a "good," "whole" feeling, providing Stace with a sense of completeness.

Deloria suggests that this is to be expected when land and people are so interconnected as to provide a conduit between the various worlds, or dimensions, of existence. According to Deloria:

> [Tribal religions] see the fundamental conception of life as a continuing unity involving land and people. One might be tempted to suggest that as land is held by the community, the psychic unity of all the worlds is made real. We are not faced with formless and homeless spirits in this idea but with an ordered and purposeful creation in which death merely marks a passage from one form of experience to another. Rather than fearing death, tribal religions see it as an affirmation of life's reality. (174)

Stace had "been instructed by the elders to always remember the earth and the spirit people" (Hogan Mean Spirit 50). When he is in Washington D.C., however, amidst the commotion of city life and civilization, "it was easy to fall away from the old ways. They hardly seemed real in the midst of noise and hurry" (Hogan Mean Spirit 50). Civilization makes those ways of connection discussed by Deloria seem unreal.

While cities may contain a variety of human cultures and rightfully pride themselves on that diversity, their exposure to other ways of life is severely limited, for the only exposure they receive is to other modes of *human* life. People of the savage, however, are exposed to a multitude of species and thus to a multitude of lifestyles. For the city, the world that is not human becomes distant and miniscule in comparison with the almost wholly human interactions that fill a city-dweller's day. The elders tell Stace it is important to remember the earth, the spirits, but in the midst of civilization it is difficult to do this**.**

Imagine, then, how difficult it would be to connect to the land and the spirit world for someone who does not have the strong cultural ties to the traditional elders or the land that Stace has. Imagine a culture so completely civilized it is blind to "remember[ing] the

earth and the spirit people." Such a culture could become dangerously disconnected from the reality of nature and come to believe more in itself than in the earth. "In the City," says Stone Telling speaking of her Dayao friend in Always Coming Home, "there had been nobody but human people, and her education had been grossly incomplete" (Le Guin 393). Lacking exposure to a diversity of life, city dwellers, with few exceptions, are likely to lack full knowledge of the world. This leads to a disconnection from the natural world.

Civilization, in Kesh terms, while physically connected to the world, has set itself apart as much as possible from interacting with all non-human life on earth; it has divorced itself from the "community" of life as much as it could. According to the fictional anthropologist of Always Coming Home, an anthropologist who is of our time but is studying the future society of the Kesh living in the Valley of Na:

> [T]his period in which we live, our civilisation, Civilisation as we know it, appeared in Valley thought as a remote region set apart from the community and continuity of human/animal/earthly existence—a sort of peninsula sticking out from the mainland, very thickly built upon, very heavily populated, very obscure, and very far away. (Le Guin 160)

Importantly, however, no matter how far civilization attempts to remove itself from that community, it is still physically and temporally connected to the community of life whether it likes it or not.

As part of rejecting civilization, Hogan's Solar Storms and Mean Spirit and Le Guin's Always Coming Home and The Word for World is Forest, call for direct action. In Always Coming Home, the Kesh stop the Dayao soldiers building a bridge linking link their town to the City of Man (or civilization). The Dayao civilization is separated from the rural-tribal Kesh culture, and the Kesh wish to keep it that way although the Dayao

are intent on colonizing and civilizing the Kesh and their neighbors. The Kesh, however, wish to keep the path to civilization as difficult to traverse as possible. North Owl's father, Terter Abhao, a Dayao military man, has returned with his Dayao soldiers who are preparing to build a bridge across the Blue River that flows through the Valley there.

> [M]ost of the Valley people who had given thought to the matter had decided that it was a mistake to put a bridge across the River without [the Dayao soldiers] consulting either the River or the people who lived alongside it. [North Owl's] father said he needed the bridge to get their supplies across the River [. . . .] "A bridge here will open up a way clear to—" He paused. Sun Weaver nodded. (Le Guin Always Coming Home 35-37)

Terter Abhao wishes to lay down a path so that not only he, his soldiers, and their supplies will have easy access across the river, but so the Dayao civilization itself will have easy access into the Valley and beyond. He wishes to build a bridge over the river, itself an untamed obstacle, so that civilization may move easily into and through the Valley of the Na. Sun Weaver, a Kesh person, knows this, and speaking for the other Kesh who have discussed the situation, indicates that the bridge cannot be built.

The Kesh do not want the Dayao in their valley because they do not want to catch the disease of civilization. For the Kesh, to become Dayao (or Condor) is to become civilized is to become sick is to die; civilization is seen as a fatal illness. In describing the Dayao, the Kesh say they are "entirely civilised, aggressive, and destructive. They have done much harm and will do more" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 402). Ayatyu (the name Stone Telling takes while living with the Dayao) says, "[H]owever wilfully I tried, it was difficult for me to become entirely a Condor person. I became as sick as I could, but I was not willing to die" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 204).

Hogan's Hill Indians represent the most complete rejection of civilization and reclamation of the savage. They "were a peaceful group who had gone away from the changing world some sixty years earlier, in the 1860s. Their survival depended on returning to a simpler way of life" (Hogan Mean Spirit 5). This rejection of civilization with the Hill Indians was not a one-time physical departure, however, for it persists as a mental rejection as well: "To those at the [Hill] settlement the path lead[ing] down *to town* [. . .] is called the terrible road. *From town* it is called the good, red road" (Hogan Mean Spirit 304, emphases added). Additionally, "the Hill People [. . .] were taught to be wary of those who came from the town" (Hogan Mean Spirit 272). Having rejected civilization, the Hill Indians are described as connected with the earth, "still remember[ing] the older ways of animals" and, as in the description of one Hill Indian, standing in such a way as to look "rooted to the earth" (Hogan Mean Spirit 38, 30).

Living in the hills apart from towns or civilization, they attract Euro-Americans such as Martha Billy and Father Dunne who seek to reclaim the savage. Most importantly, though, the Hill Indians offer a beacon of hope to those First Nations people threatened by civilization: Michael Horse, Stace RedHawk and the Grayclouds.

Lionel Tall is another person in Mean Spirit who rejects civilization. Tall, a former ghost-dancer, once returned home from a long journey to find his family had been slaughtered by the U.S. military in the 1800s. He now

> no longer placed stock in any belief except for the laws of nature and wilderness [. . .] He thought that even a prophet, even a warrior, could not survive the ways of the Americans, especially the government with rules and words that kept human life at a distance and made it live by their regulations and books. (Hogan Mean Spirit 221)

For Tall, civilization, represented by the American government, is an institution that attempts to denigrate human life. Significantly, "the laws of nature and wilderness" are the only laws he puts faith in now. This implies that these laws do not do what civilization does; that is, wilderness and nature allow a human being to live as a human being while civilization does not. Tall, calling "Uncle Sam a cold uncle with a *mean soul* and a *cruel spirit*," rejects civilization in the form of the United States in favor of the wildness of creation (Hogan Mean Spirit 221, emphases added).

One of the most misinterpreted rejections of civilization is found in the last paragraph of Mean Spirit. The Washington Post Book World review, placed prominently on the front cover of Mean Spirit, declares that the novel "is about the disintegration of the Osage Indian tribe as the white world intrudes" (qtd. on Hogan Mean Spirit). The final passage of the book, though, belies this statement. In this passage, the Grayclouds reject civilization, and Hogan implies they return to the Hills and the traditional Osage there and subsequently reclaim the savage. As the Grayclouds and Stace Red Hawk leave the Grayclouds' burning house (a fire caused by a Euro-American's arson),

> They looked back once and saw it all rising up in the reddened sky, the house, the barn, the broken string of lights, the life they had lived, nothing more than a distant burning. No one spoke. But they were alive. They carried generations along with them, into the prairie and through it, *to places where no road had been cut before them* [. . . .] The night was on fire with their pasts and they were alive. (Hogan Mean Spirit 375, emphasis added)

Red Hawk and the Grayclouds leave their civilized lives, "their pasts," behind them. It is probable, given the general cycle of leaving and returning to the Hills that is prevalent throughout the novel, that they are returning to the Hills to live where the traditional Osage culture remains strong. Their destination is described as being "where

no road has been cut before them." That is, their destination lies where civilization has not made its mark on the earth. Life, then, for them, lies just beyond the vise-like grasp of Western civilization. Red Hawk and the Grayclouds reject civilization and instead determine to live apart from it, reclaiming the savage, immersed in a tribal culture where, as discussed, the people are intimately aware of its relation to the land and where the life and spirit of all things is recognized and respected for the sacredness that dwells within.

We also see forcible language rejecting Western civilization in Hogan's Solar Storms. For the elders who live on the Hundred-Year-Old Road, "[t]he secrets of their longevity were to shun the ways of the white world and remember to live each day with reverence for all that was around them" (Hogan Solar Storms 141). In another instance, "[o]ne smart village of Crees to the east of us rejected electricity. They wanted to keep bodies and souls whole, they said" (Hogan Solar Storms 268). People in historical reality have similarly rejected Western civilization. According to Vennum, "In 1947 John Nett Lake, then about ninety and living in a wigwam, was particular about sticking to his 'wild diet' and held in contempt all non-Indian foods that came in cartons or bags, considering them poisonous to his people" (297-298).

Further, in Solar Storms Bush rejects the body of Western law, the legal arm of Western civilization, in favor of the law of the earth. "Why are only white laws followed?" asks Bush referring to the construction of massive hydro-electric projects in the land of the Beautiful Ones; she adds, "This will kill the world. What is the law if not the earth's?" (Hogan Solar Storms 283).

As the Cree in Solar Storms reject electricity, and the elders refuse to have anything to do with the Euro-American world, other forms of direct action discussed in

Solar Storms involve helping those who suffer from the incursions of civilization. When a road is built "across the spawning grounds of the whitefish," while the native people meet with the construction manager inside the town hall about this road, there are "young men outside [. . .] taking apart the road, shovelful by shovelful" (Hogan Solar Storms 281). The young men physically remove civilization's intrusion into the wild. When Adam's Rib is affected by the flooding of the dams, many animals drown or are threatened by drowning. The people of Adam's Rib, however, attempt to defend their relations from the effects of these dams; "[s]ome of the animals that couldn't swim he [Tommy, Angel's boyfriend] trapped or snared, carried off to Adam's Rib, and let go [. . .] he and LaRue roped a deer that couldn't swim and, with the rope around its neck, took it across water to the mainland" (Hogan Solar Storms 338).

There are similar actions in Mean Spirit. When Belle sees the eagle hunters come in with their dead eagles, she becomes enraged and acts on her horror at the desecration of such a sacred bird:

> Bell hardly remembered what happened next, except that she dropped her eggs on the road, threw down her bags, and ran toward the truck, yelling at the men [. . . .] She screamed, "You naholies! What have you gone and done this time?" She began removing the dead eagles from the truck [. . . .] She was crying and talking in a language they didn't understand [. . . .] "They're just birds," one of them said, trying to reason with the hysterical old woman [. . . .] She charged at them like a goat and she kicked at their legs. She broke a window out of the truck [. . .] Again the men tried to pull her away but again she charged them, screaming and attacking until they were forced to hold her down on the hard ground. She wailed and cursed while they held her. She spit in their faces and hissed. (Hogan Mean Spirit 110)

In another instance, the town's sheriff has helped organize a raid on a bat cave where a group of men prepare to kill all the bats in the cave. Belle, however, will have

none of civilization's murder of the wild, and she takes over the cave, protecting its entrance with her body and a gun:

> The sheriff greeted Belle, but she didn't speak. She walked to the entrance of the cave, took out her pistol [. . .] "Stand back," she said calmly [. . . .] Belle looked inside [the cave] for just a moment. In the shadowy cave, she saw some of the dead and bleeding animals. And some of them were trying to escape through the hole in the back. The place was alive with their fear.
>
> She looked down at the men. "No one enters this cave." She pointed a pistol at the men and fixed her face to show that she meant business. Behind her she still heard the crying of the bats.
>
> A couple of young men snickered and scuffed their feet. "Ah hell, she's just an old woman" [. . . .]
>
> "You can't go losing your head over every bird and snake." He [the sheriff] sounded tired. "C'mon, get out of the way, Belle."
>
> She lifted the gun. "Don't come up here."
>
> He cleared his throat. "We have a rabies problem here, Belle."
>
> She aimed at him. "It probably comes from your biting people." She didn't move. "I'm staying. And I want all you men to leave. (Hogan Mean Spirit 278-279)

The sheriff cites a health risk as his excuse for the intended massacre, but he knows full well he and the others will be paid a bounty for each bat they kill. Belle's action is successful, however, for several others come to the bats' aid, and together they are able to help the bats escape.

Belle's fight for the wild is met with only mild resistance in these particular scenes (although some young men foolishly suggest that they shoot her simply so they can continue their slaughter of the bats). Her very life, however, is a battle against the invasions of Western industrial civilization. People she loves are murdered for their oil rights; the land and animals she considers sacred are destroyed by industrial society.

Surrounded and invaded by Western industrial civilization, the people fight back as best they can. In Solar Storms, when the young men take apart the road built over

whitefish spawning grounds, they are described as "opening the way for the fish to journey toward the future" (Hogan Solar Storms 281). This fight for the savage, for the wild, then, is not a mere symbolic gesture or simple antagonistic rebellion. It is a fight to protect something dear and invaluable. It is a fight to protect both the earth and the future.

"Native peoples," writes Winona LaDuke,

> have courageously resisted the destruction of the natural world at the hands of colonial, and later, industrial society, since this destruction attacks their very identity. This resistance has continued from generation to generation [. . .] This is why [. . .] one-half of our lands are still forested, much in old growth, and why we continue the work of generations past by opposing [. . .] threats to our lives and land. ("Like Tributaries to a River" 58)

These threats can often be physical threats, some not so obvious and some difficult to ignore.

In Solar Storms, the "Beautiful Ones" organize a blockade to hinder construction of the dams. Hogan is clear about describing violence as an unwanted element in the resistance to Western industrial civilization. She mentions Arlie, a Native activist and hero, "who had been a political prisoner several times," whose arrests "[a]lways [. . .] were for political action, never for violence" (Hogan Solar Storms 309). However, although "violence was always a seed the women did not want planted," Hogan writes, "[s]oon, in order to protect our blockade, we were forced to arm ourselves and stand guard [. . . .] Our hearts fell as we realized the men were willing to shoot us for these dams" (Solar Storms 306, 304). Still later, when the blockade refused to break apart, the Canadian government "brought in assault rifles, tanks, machine guns, and even APCs

[Armored Personnel Carriers]" to end the blockade and allow the dam construction to continue (Hogan Solar Storms 327).

Although the women do not want violence, the invasion by the Canadian military sparks the violence that had been kept in check until then:

> A railroad bridge was burned, transmission towers damaged [. . . .] It was as if the old warrior spirit, the Wolf Society, was resurrected. The people vowed to fight to the death before allowing the food, water, medicines, and burial grounds to be flooded, before allowing the wildlife to be killed, the fish poisoned. (Hogan Solar Storms 329-330)

This violence could have been averted, but the Canadian government chose to escalate the situation in an attempt to bring an end to the blockade. The people reacted to the blatant physical threats to themselves and the land, and violence ensued.

In The Word for World is Forest, Selver also brings violence to his resistance of Western industrial civilization. He, too, does not want it, and again it is something he feels he has little choice over, as the Terrans have "killed, raped, dispersed, and enslaved" the Athsheans as well as "destroyed their communities, and cut down their forests" (Le Guin The Word 62). Lyubov, the Terran anthropologist, says "we have not responded as members of their species should respond. We have ignored the responses, the rights and obligations of non-violence" (Le Guin The Word 62). This is precisely what the Canadian government did with the "Beautiful Ones"; it ignored the non-violence of the blockade and instead chose a military invasion as the way to react to the blockade.

Selver's fight in The Word for World is Forest, though a violent revolt, is a fight for the survival of the forests and thus of the Athsheans and the planet Athshe. The Athsheans are a savage culture, a culture of the woods and so immersed in the woods that even "[t]he Athshean word for *world* is also the word for *forest*," according to the Terran

anthropologist (Le Guin The Word 72). "[L]isten, Selver," Coro Mena, a well-respected Athshean dreamer says,

> this is why I have loved you: I dreamed of you before we met here. You were walking on a path, and behind you the young trees grew up, oak and birch, willow and holly, fir and pine, alder, elm, white-flowering ash, all the roof and walls of the world, forever renewed. (Le Guin The Word 48)

In a world being destroyed by Western civilization, this dream is a powerful one, for it gives hope, providing inspiration for those working to reclaim the savage.

Although Selver leads the Athsheans in a revolt against the humans from Earth, he does so at a cost, the cost of introducing violence into the pacifistic Athshean culture, a culture that has "like the forest they live in [. . .] attained a climax state" (Le Guin The Word 62). At the end of the novella, though, Western civilization is removed from the planet. "I wanted to be sure that you understand that this is a permanent arrangement [. . .]," says the Commander of the League spaceship, "Your world has been placed under the League Ban. What that means in your terms is this: I can promise you that no one will come here to cut the trees or take your lands, so long as the League lasts" (Le Guin The Word 164). After a long, hard struggle, the Athsheans have reclaimed the planet and the forest; they have reclaimed the savage. Given little choice and despite strong cultural inhibitions to the contrary, Selver instigates a revolution against the Terrans in order to defend his people and their planet. It is action, however, that he, coming from a pacifist culture, is uncomfortable with. "We bring each other such gifts as gods bring," Selver tells Captain Davidson, "You gave me a gift, the killing of one's kind, murder. Now, as well as I can, I give you my people's gift, which is not killing. I think we each find each other's gift heavy to carry" (Le Guin The Word 160).

According to Hogan and Le Guin, although violence as defense is often the hard choice forced on those fighting Western industrial invaders, there are also non-violent means of resisting Western industrial civilization. As an example of this, in Mean Spirit Horse takes on the West's religious establishment and writes a book that is to be added to the Christian Bible. He calls it the Book of Horse. "Honor father sky and mother earth," he writes,

> Look after everything. Life resides in all things, even the motionless stones. Take care of the insects for they have their place, and the plants and trees for they feed the people. Everything on earth, every creature and plant wants to live without pain, so do them no harm. Treat all people in creation with respect; all is sacred. (Hogan Mean Spirit 361)

He goes on to write, "We are one with the land. We are part of everything in our world, part of the roundness and cycles of life [. . .] The people [. . .] like the land, are wounded and hurt" (Hogan Mean Spirit 361-362).

Here again we see the idea as in Solar Storms that the destruction of the land harms people. Horse offers hope, however, saying, "But a time will come when all the people [. . .] revere the earth and sing its praises" (Hogan Mean Spirit 362). Angel echoes this idea in Solar Storms when describing the fight against the dams, against the intrusion of Western civilization into the savage way of life. "[W]e'd thrown an anchor into the future," she says, "and followed the rope to the end of it, to where we would [. . .] one day, once again, remember the sacredness of every living thing" (Hogan Solar Storms 344).

Although necessary to the health of the earth and the life of this planet, such returning to the land (or reclamation of the savage) takes deep commitment and hard work. In Solar Storms Hogan writes, "[T]he group of young men, finished with their

work [of taking apart the road over the spawning grounds], came into the meeting [. . . .] They smelled of earth. What they were thinking could be read on their faces: they would die to save this land. There were many with that look" (281).

The land itself fights back in Solar Storms. Hogan describes it as becoming an "angry land [. . .] try[ing] to put an end to the plans for dams and drowned rivers" (Solar Storms 224). A river named Riel "would break loose and rage over the ground" (Hogan Solar Storms 224). The river actively "put[s] an end to the plans for dams and drowned rivers," and "Indian people" seeing this "would be happy with the damage" (Hogan Solar Storms 224). However, they go further than mere approval; "[w]hat water didn't accomplish, they would." The people "of the woods" in this novel assist the river in its destruction of the attempted industrialization of the territory. Neither the people nor the land welcome Western industrial civilization.

The significance of the river's name cannot be ignored. Louis Riel, leader, visionary, and hero[22] of the Metís[23] lives again as the river breaks loose to "rage over the ground, tearing out dams and bridges," symbols of the Western industrial empire. The Riel River is described as a "roaring [. . .] no one was able to control" (Hogan Solar

[22] Riel was a thorn in the side of the Canadian government. He was intelligent, passionate and charismatic and led two revolutions against the Canadian government in an effort to establish a homeland for the Metís Nation. The government institutionalized him in an insane asylum for "megalomania" and later hanged him after he led the second Metís revolution for independence. Riel was a force the government desperately wanted to control.

[23] In North America, the French word "metís" applies to people who are of mixed Native and European ancestry and who are often specifically of Cree and French heritage. Frequently, neither the Native American nor the European American communities fully accepted the metís. In Canada, the metís demanded recognition as a separate nation and fought for a country of their own under Louis Riel in the 1800s. Many of the metís are now recognized in Canada as the Metís Nation and retain limited indigenous rights.

Storms 224). This description of an angry, uncontrollable force of nature destroying industrial development is a passionate call to revolt against the Western empire, reclaim the savage and release wildness from the confines of Western industrial civilization.

Although a river named Riel freeing the wilderness is a powerful symbol, it becomes even more so when coupled with a later passage in Solar Storms. "Sometimes I think the ghost dancers were right," says Angel, "that we would return, that we are still returning. Even now" (Hogan Solar Storms 325). In one way, in this quote Angel may be referring to the revitalization of Indian people and cultures today in a material sense as some have interpreted the Ghost Dance. In a more spiritual sense, however, her reference to "returning" can also be read as a spiritual return, as a return of the spirit. In this sense, then, the Riel River, with its raging against the empire of Western civilization, may be the spirit of Riel himself come back to help in the fight.

Some discussion of reincarnation is present in the text, but the ultimate ideas on that theme are ambivalent as Tulik accepts the idea of reincarnation as a reality, and there is some allusion that this stems from a cultural belief as well, but Angel tells us the idea of reincarnation makes her uncomfortable. However, Angel does make reference to feeling "as if a shining old person inside my body was happy that once again the people were coming together, insisting on justice, happy that anybody could still sing and dance" (Hogan Solar Storms 271-272).

Although Angel, a young woman only recently arrived from an experience with Western civilization, is conflicted about reincarnation, the possibilities of the ghost dance passage are too tempting to ignore. Perhaps unintentionally, Hogan's message is that the savage is returning, that the spirits are also returning, and that they assist in the fight to

reclaim the savage, and that, given the results of the raging Riel River, these spirits are manifested in many ways including the land. After all, as already discussed, Deloria says the land acts as a conduit between the spirit world and the physical one.

Mean Spirit also shows the land fighting back, leading the way in the reclamation of the savage and the wild. Tornado Nola essentially brings the Catholic Church to the woods. "[T]he saints and icons had landed unbroken in the forest [. . .] Saint Francis came to rest perfectly upright in the crotch of an oak tree. A crucifix, unnailed from the church wall, stuck to the trunk of a nearby tree. Pale Mary stood in the shallow end of a pond with no scratches or damages besides a broken finger" (Hogan Mean Spirit 161-162).

"[R]eligion must relate to land," writes Deloria, "and it must dominate and structure culture. It must not be separated from a particular piece of land and a particular community" (202). Tornado Nola appears to be saying little if not that Christianity, exemplified by the Catholic icons, should "relate to the land" and "not be separated from a particular piece of land." Following this directive, the Catholic priest, Father Dunne, moves to the same place the icons have been placed. Here he "fed the birds and slept outside on the earth, even when it was snowing" (Hogan Mean Spirit 171).

Western civilization is accustomed to defining its superiority with a belief in its separation from nature. In Always Coming Home, Le Guin ridicules this notion, calling a belief in one's separation from nature "primitive" and "unrealistic." "To call an olive tree grandmother or a sheep sister," the anthropologist of Always Coming Home tells us,

> to address a half-acre field of dirt plowed for corn as 'my brother,' is behavior easily dismissed as *primitive*, or as *symbolic*. To the Kesh, it was the person who could not understand or admit such relationship whose

> intelligence was in a primitive condition and whose thinking was unrealistic. (Le Guin 451)

While Western civilization may believe itself to be the pinnacle of human progress so far, its cultural conceptions represent a dangerous regression from reality. The Kesh realized this, and as a future society that has managed to successfully reclaim the savage, they offer us hope for the future.

The modern anthropologist-narrator in Always Coming Home tells us that "'people' in this [Kesh] language includes animals, plants, dreams, rocks, etc." (Le Guin 181). The Kesh do not deny personhood to other forms of life. "According to the theory of the four souls," the fictional anthropologist says, "animals possessed all four kinds, but the system got very vague when extended to plants. All wild birds were considered, essentially, to *be* souls" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 97). This spiritual essence is recognized in what Western civilization would consider inanimate objects as well such as rocks and water (Le Guin Always Coming Home 189). Sacredness is recognized in everything, and, according to North Owl (or Stone Telling when she is older), it is "[e]asy enough to turn from it and say, 'The sacredness has gone out of it.' But it was you that had changed [. . .]; you had broken the relation" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 189).

The Kesh feel complete unity with the land, so much so that "[f]or the Kesh who leave the Valley [. . . t]he Kesh sense of community, of continuity with the dirt, water, air, and living creatures of the Valley determines them to overcome any ordeals in order to get home to die; the idea of dying and being buried in foreign lands is [. . .] despair" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 94). Not only do the Kesh feel connected to the earth, they feel intimately connected to the specific land territory on which they have lived their

life. They cannot countenance the idea of being forever physically separated from this community of relations.

The Kesh also have many cultural customs that connect them with the land. "The World Dance celebrated human participation in the making and unmaking, the renewal and continuity, of the world" (Le Guin Always Coming Home 484). While human beings are not the sole participants in this "renewal and continuity," the Kesh celebrate *the part* human beings play in these cycles of earth. The ceremony involves various clans singing to domestic animals, game animals, wild plants used by human beings, and the orchard trees and garden crops. Significantly, this ceremony takes place around the spring equinox, a time ushering in the growth of life for a new year. The World Dance is a recognition of humanity's interconnectedness with the earth and all life.

While the World Dance is a celebration of the dependence of human beings on other forms of life for physical existence, the Sun Dance celebrates the interaction of the spiritual with the physical. It is celebrated on the Winter solstice and focuses not

> on the material and individual manifestations of being [. . .] but on the generic and the spiritual: the aspect under which even living creatures still/already inhabit the Houses of Death, Dream, Wilderness, Eternity. The dead and the unborn were to be invited to the dancing. The people of the rainbow, the images of dream and vision, all wild creatures, the waves of the sea, the sun, and all the other stars, were to be part of the dancing. (Le Guin Always Coming Home 494-495)

Ceremonies such as these are essential to a cultural reclamation of the savage.

For Hogan, however, the primary means of reclaiming the savage is through a personal return to the savage. In Mean Spirit, Father Dunne, on seeing "firelight behind the trees [. . .] remember[s] the story of the burning bush and the words that came out of it. He was sure that he heard words behind the bush. It was the sound of earth speaking"

(Hogan Mean Spirit 188). While the biblical story of the burning bush identifies the voice coming out of the bush as God's, Father Dunne here believes it to be "the sound of earth speaking." "It was as if he had wakened for the first time," Hogan goes on to say, "as if his eyes were at last opened" (Mean Spirit 188). Having come to a spiritual realization, Father Dunne "put aside the Bible and the rosary [. . .] The real words of God were in the bush. He should have known it [. . .] he decided to pack up his things and [. . .] find Michael Horse. He was sure the old man would know the meaning of this sacred event" (Hogan Mean Spirit 188-189). Father Dunne puts the dogma of Christianity aside in favor of "[t]he real words of God" which are described as "in the bush." This can be taken literally, as in Father Dunne heard God in "the sound of earth speaking," a sound that came from a leafy shrub, or it can be taken in a broader sense to mean "[t]he real words of God" are to be found in the wilderness, away from civilization as "bush" does not only refer to a plant but also to "forest, woods [. . .] wilderness" (Gove 301).

Another Euro-American undergoes a similar transformation in Mean Spirit. Martha Billy, the Euro-American wife of Joe Billy, an Osage minister, "took fast to the Indian ways [up in the Hills]. She was like a convert to another faith, and she dropped so fully in this world, that she gave not even a single glance backward at her past" (Hogan Mean Spirit 256).

The state of being savage is essentially a matter of cultural, spiritual and personal rootedness in the land. Hogan celebrates this in Solar Storms when she writes, "What a fine savagery we had then [. . .] long before the notion of civilization. We knew the languages of earth, water, and trees. We knew the rich darkness of creation. For tens of thousands of years we spoke with the animals and they spoke with us" (334).

As an elaboration on this, "[i]f you listen at the walls of one human being," Hogan writes in Solar Storms, "you will hear the drumming. Older creatures are remembered in the blood" (351). Angel, thinking on this, tells Bush, "Something wonderful lives inside me," to which Bush replies, "Yes [. . . t]he early people knew this" (Hogan Solar Storms 351). Here, Hogan directly links our inner selves with other forms of life on this planet and throughout time. Inside we are "[o]lder creatures," she tells us, "We are tree. We are frog in amber" (Hogan Solar Storms 351). This direct relation to other life, *this essence*, of who we are as human beings and inhabitants of this planet, is not scary or frightening, nor is it, most importantly and in direct contrast to the Western cultural worldview, degrading.

"Something beautiful lives inside us," Hogan writes in her novel's concluding lines, "You will see. Just believe it. You will see" (Solar Storms 351). Ultimately, reclamation of the savage is a personal quest, a spiritual realization. The true transformation, the most important stage of reclamation, takes place inside each of us.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It is evident, given the roots and meanings of the words "civilization," "savage" and "rustic," that in Western civilization the city or urban world is considered superior to rural and wild lifestyles. It is also apparent that this denigration of the rural and the wild functions as a convenient cultural justification for the colonization of the rural and the wild in the interests of the city. With the advent of industrialism, a development supported ideologically by both capitalism and Marxism, this colonization intensified and increased at such a rapid pace as to fling itself across the face of the earth within a couple centuries. As a result of this industrialization of the planet, we now face multiple ecological crises that could well jeopardize the existence of the future of our species and the many other species who inhabit the earth with us.

Ecosophical authors Linda Hogan and Ursula K. Le Guin identify several Western cultural values that have led to this critical juncture in the history of our species and of the world as we know it. A belief in the superiority of the Western way is paramount among these values. Such a superiority complex is based on greed, self-interest and the ideas of racial superiority, and helped develop the concept of the Great Chain of Being, Manifest Destiny and various "sacred" missions of civilization and industrial development. These values have brought about the commodification of the spiritual; the destruction of numerous tribal societies; the murder of millions of people who disagreed with the Western paradigm as part of a genocidal campaign that has yet to be recognized as the holocaust it was and continues to be; the decimation of innumerable plant, insect

and animal species; and such drastic alterations of various ecologies as to threaten all life on earth.

Industrial civilization and the savage modes of human existence are usually represented as two ends of a linear spectrum of societal adaptations. Industrial civilization represents the authoritarian, hierarchical society engaged in pursuits of resource extraction that harm the earth and those who live on the earth. The savage society represents a culture integrated into the wilderness with philosophies, practices and customs that respect and maintain the balance of the cyclical relatedness of all things, including the cycles of life and death, birth and rebirth. On this linear spectrum, the rural represents the middle ground. Sometimes its inhabitants are more civilized than they are savage, and sometimes it is the other way around. The rural can exist on the edge of wilderness or on the edge of the city. The linearity of this spectrum is usually used in a temporal sense to "prove" that both industrialism and civilization are more advanced than savagery or the state of wildness. However, even temporally speaking, savage societies exist today and thus are modern human societies.

The existence of the city, however, especially the industrial city, ensures that the rural and the wild will be colonized in order to support the city. This colonization can take the form of agribusiness, high-voltage electrical transmission lines, mining industries, logging, freeways and hydroelectric development. Even environmentalists have proposed colonizing the countryside with mega-wind energy farms in order to produce more "earth-friendly" electrical power.

Industrial society as exemplified by Western civilization is not sustainable. Some have called it a regression, but it is perhaps more beneficial to look at it as a digression,

that is, as a wrong path taken. In the film Thunderheart, traditional activist James LooksTwice, played by Native American activist, John Trudell, says, "There's a way to live with Earth, and a way not to live with Earth." If there is one good path, one right way to live with the earth, Western industrial civilization has strayed from that path.

Western industrial society feels threatened by those individuals and cultures who have chosen the "way to live with Earth." Industrial civilization, as part of its superiority complex, demands that other non-industrial cultures must change in order to accommodate industrial society. This usually involves the destruction of cultures and people who are learned in the sophisticated knowledge of how to live in ecological balance with their particular bioregion. Some of these people are tribal societies, as seen in Hogan's depictions of the "Beautiful Ones" of Canada, and others live in small rural settlements on the edge of the wilderness, as with the Kesh of Le Guin's Always Coming Home.

Ultimately for both Hogan and Le Guin, the solution to such problems lies in the rejection of Western industrial civilization. For Le Guin, the Kesh, as a low-tech, materially simple, rural-tribal culture, represent one alternative to Western industrial society, and the Athsheans, as an alien savage society, represent another. Both cultures live in small settlements either on the edge of or within the wilderness. In describing various cultural ceremonies and stories in Always Coming Home, Le Guin offers tangible cultural avenues as a means to revitalize the rural-savage worldview.

Hogan proposes a return to the savage as well in both Mean Spirit and Solar Storms. This savage lifestyle involves living more materially simple lifestyles, re-learning the ways of the land and re-connecting with the earth and each other. For

Hogan, the true reclamation of the savage lies within each of us; it is ultimately a personal remembering, a personal awakening to the beauty of the earth and all one's relations.

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