Inciting Degrowth Struggle
Knowledge Building with Ecoanarchist Zines

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Abstract

It remains a consistent problem within academia, particularly in the social sciences and humanities, that theory and practice are at odds. This also rings true regarding degrowth solutions to the environmental and social crises. Discourse within this interdisciplinary field is largely removed from the solutions and alternatives that many are creating for themselves. To bring degrowth down from abstraction, there is much to learn from previous and contemporary movements and struggles that are and have occurred in direct conflict with the industries and powers that degrowth so regularly criticizes. A method for this is to broaden citations beyond academia. To move beyond academic discussions of degrowth and to get a glimpse into the underworld of alternatives, ecoanarchist 'zines', or small-circulation self-published-information-spreading booklets, provide a window into countercultures' prefigurative politics for a more socially and ecologically just future. Building knowledge from these practices and experiences, the thesis wonders whether degrowth can struggle alongside them or, is it doomed to remain solely a conceptual theory for armchair academics to rub their chins over.

This thesis begins by framing the ecological crisis in terms of the modern dominant onto-epistemology of universalism. A literature review provides a conceptualization of degrowth pathways followed by a background chapter that provides a conceptualization of ecoanarchism. Drawing from tensions within degrowth literature, this text uses the theoretical framework of Wright's (2010) three logics of transformation – symbiotic, interstitial, and ruptural. Though degrowth proponents emphasize the importance of all three, the literature tends strongly toward symbiotic modes of transformation which emphasizes working alongside state institutions. From the background, ecoanarchism demonstrates the potential for significant contributions regarding theoretical and practical applications of ruptural and interstitial modes of transformation – opposing and working outside of state institutions. The analysis looks at contemporary ecoanarchist zines to contribute to the potential for interstitial and ruptural degrowth pathways.

Keywords: degrowth, ecoanarchism, transformation, pluriverse, interstitial, ruptural, zines, feminist methodology, direct action, voluntary cooperation, nonhuman relating

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Table of Contents

1. Addressing the Socio-Ecological Crisis

It remains a consistent problem within academia, particularly in the social sciences and humanities, that theory and practice are at odds. How disciplines are structured reinforce this disconnect as there is a tendency to prioritize theoretical frameworks and abstract concepts over real-world engagement and practical application. As a result, there are perceived gaps between academic theories and the realities faced by individuals, communities, and societal challenges. This is, for example, fiercely debated within disciplines like human geography (see Mullenite 2021; Springer 2014; Mott and Cockayne 2017; Harvey 2017), political science (see Loadenthal 2017), political ecology (see Springer et al. 2021), and environmental studies (see Hall 2011; Morris 2015). This also rings true regarding present environmental and social crises. Despite the urgency of present environmental and social crises, the interdisciplinary dialogues often remain detached from the practical solutions and alternative approaches that many individuals and communities are actively developing. Degrowth, what this thesis describes as a moral prescriptive theory aimed at addressing the climate and ecological crisis, is confronted with this same problem.

Simply put, degrowth is a response to the ongoing environmental and social crises that plague the world today. To illustrate some of these crises: currently 40% of the planet's soils are severely degraded; earthworm biomass has dropped 83%; at least 10% of insect species are at risk of extinction; 85% of global fish stocks are depleted or facing collapse; the number of birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians have dropped by more than half since 1970; 1 million species are at risk of extinction within the next decades; more than 90% of the heat from global warming is absorbed by the sea as industrial emissions are also causing oceans to be more acidic; extreme storms have doubled since the 1980s; heatwaves are breaking records and increasingly costing human life; there has been an increase in forest fires; sea levels are projected to go up another 30 to 90 cm by the end of the decade; people's food systems are at increased risk as glaciers are melting faster than they are being replaced; the list goes on and we are nowhere near on track to halt or slow down these dangers (Hickel 2020b, 6-16). Alarming statistics continue to pour in, but overall, every year brings new and increased biodiversity loss, deforestation, ocean acidification, climate change, and extreme storms (IPCC 2022). Social and political implications include displacement and migration, increased inequality, health risks, food insecurity and agriculture vulnerabilities, water scarcity, conflict

and social unrest, mental health impacts, and institutional breakdown and state failure (Carleton and Hsiang 2016). It is important to note that socio-ecological implications interact and compound each other, leading to complex and interconnected challenges.

Hence, degrowth aims to address concerns regarding human wellbeing and ecological disequilibrium through processes of political and social *transformation* aimed at the reduction of material and energy throughput while improving the quality of life of people (Kallis et al. 2018; Hickel 2020). The social, economic, political, and ecological implications of this proposed material and energy reduction are immense and arguably have yet to be explored in their entirety. Degrowth places a strong emphasis on challenging the dominant paradigm of perpetual economic growth and re-evaluating human relationship with the environment. While it offers valuable critiques of mainstream economic systems and promotes alternative visions of well-being and sustainability, some argue that degrowth can be considered more theoretical than practical. While it highlights the need for societal transformation, critics argue that degrowth could benefit from more concrete solutions and actionable steps to address complex socio-economic and environmental challenges (see, for example, Milanovic 2017; Pollin 2018).

To bring degrowth down from its theory in the clouds, there is much to learn from previous and contemporary movements and struggles that are and have occurred in direct conflict with the industries and powers that degrowth so regularly criticizes. A method for this is to broaden citations beyond academia. According to Mott and Cockayne (2017, 955), "careful and conscientious citation is important because the choices we make about whom to cite – and who is then left out of the conversation – directly impact the cultivation of rich and diverse disciplines." To move beyond academic discussions of degrowth and to get a glimpse into the underworld of alternatives, 'zines', or small-circulation self-published-information-spreading booklets, are examples of windows into countercultures' prefigurative politics for a more socially and ecologically just future. Building knowledge from these practices and experiences, this thesis wonders whether degrowth can struggle alongside them or, is it doomed to remain solely a conceptual theory for armchair academics to rub their chins over.

More specifically, this thesis aims to strengthen degrowth strategies of transformation by looking towards ecoanarchism. During the summer of 2021, I attended the 8th Degrowth and Environmental Justice Summer School in Barcelona and the 8th International Degrowth Conference in The Hague. Observations from these two degrowth based events saw ecoanarchism as a consistent central theme. As one of the four main themes within the 2021

Degrowth Conference in the Hague, ecoanarchism and its interconnections with degrowth was given a platform for anarchist scholars and activists to present how their ideas and practices align with degrowth values. Similarly, within the Degrowth Summer School, lectures by degrowth proponents did not give much weight to ecoanarchism, but the discussions within the group of students were charged with ecoanarchist thought and discourse. Though degrowth might be making efforts to give anarchism "space" within their academic bubble, overall, links to anarchist struggles of the past mostly remain unacknowledged or superficial despite the fact that anarchism and its core principles have heavily informed degrowth theory (Dunlap 2021a; Dunlap and Laratte 2022; Toro 2017). Ecoanarchism has a rich history both within and outside of academia (Parson 2018). Ecoanarchism seeks to dismantle oppressive power structures, promote ecological balance, and foster voluntary cooperation and mutual aid within a society that values both human and nonhuman life. Its position as a radical-idea-to-not-be-taken-too-seriously within academia has led to strong theory building, practice, and real-world experimentation outside of academia. With ecoanarchism's vast experiences and degrowth's growing popularity within academic circles and international institutions (2022 IPCC reports, for example), collaboration between the two promises to be quite fruitful.

With the aim of aligning theory and practice regarding transformational tactics, this thesis asks: *How can ecoanarchist ideas and practices deepen and diversify degrowth pathways towards socially and ecologically sustainable futures*? The next section will elaborate on the justification for this research. In dealing with social and environmental issues, there exists a multitude of ways to frame regionally specific impacts of the ecological crisis. To situate the research, this introduction will begin by answering three broad questions: What are the socio-ecological problems being faced today? Who/what are the causes? What would a better future look like and how do we get there? This section concludes with further justification for the choice in degrowth and ecoanarchism as promising avenues for further exploration and collaboration. Following an exploration of these questions objectives then a description of the thesis structure.

1.1 Framing the Ecological Crisis

The social and ecological crises faced today are complex and interrelated. On the ecological front, we are experiencing an ecological crisis that threatens the very foundations of our

existence and on the social front, we are witnessing rising inequality, political polarization, and social unrest. These crises are not separate issues; instead, they are interconnected and exacerbate one another. As a result, addressing these crises requires an intersectional approach that takes into account the interplay between social and ecological factors.

In short, this thesis rests on the assessment, made by many (see Springer et al. 2021; Moore 2017; Trainer 2021) that responsibility is ascribed to the hegemony and dominance of the modern onto-epistemology of universalism. Before outlining what constitutes these forces, it is first worth defining what is meant by the concept 'onto-epistemology.' The 'onto', from ontology, deals with the nature of being and wonders what exists in the human world that we can acquire knowledge about. According to Sullivan (2017, 222), "it is the invocation of differences in how the 'real' is understood to be, as well as the ethical shaping that this may effect, that makes 'ontology' relevant for political ecology understanding of the consolidations and impacts of particular environment and development policies." Epistemology, on the other hand, is the theory of knowledge about realities and asks questions about how we can create knowledge. Alternatively, onto-epistemology is a term used to show how there is no clear divide between the two terms, and instead, they mutually inform each other (Barad 2007). The concept 'dominant onto-epistemology', then, is used to communicate the hegemony of some knowledges and how these knowledges are shaped and reproduced. Put in another way, it is the idea of a "One-World World," of maintaining the status quo of overarching logics and institutions which continue to benefit some while leaving other people and ecologies, behind (Law 2015).

So, what has influenced this One-World World, this dominant onto-epistemology? What has created the context that has allowed for onto-epistemologies to become homogenized. In their own way, many dominant ideas have pushed for the maintenance of power through the spread of physical, financial, and psychological dominance. Developmentalism (Sachs 2017), modernity (Kothari et al. 2019a), patriarchy (Mies and Shiva 1993), capitalism (Moore 2017), statism (Springer 2014, Trainer 2021, Dunlap and Laratte 2022), and anthropocentrism (Dryzek and Pickering 2019, Robbins 2012 [2004], Springer et al. 2021) have also been ascribed as the culprits that inform this singular worldview. To elaborate on some of these critiques, Kothari and colleagues (2019, xxiv) put it this way: "we see the ghost of modernity reincarnated in infinite ways, as short-sighted crisis remedies of those in power keep the North-South status quo in place," through, "market mechanisms, geo-engineering, and climate smart agriculture, the population question, green

economics, reproductive engineering, and transhumanism." They continue by calling out the "mantra of sustainability" and how it has been "swallowed up by capitalism early on, and then emptied of ecological content" with the "military-industrial-media complex and greenwashing industry promotions at their seductive best" (Kothari et al 2019, xxv). Kothari and colleagues critique argues that despite the apparent diversity of approaches and solutions proposed to address the various crises, there is an underlying continuity with the modernist paradigm. The One-World World, or dominant onto-epistemology, is manifested through these short-sighted crisis remedies that ultimately perpetuate the existing power dynamics. Similarly, in declaring the end to development, Sachs (2019, xi) writes that, development "had prepared the path for Western imperial power over the world […] the consequences of which would hit us in the form of injustice, cultural turmoil, and ecological decline." These critiques are attributing these contemporary remedies as a problem because of their dominance, their hegemony and overall power to override alternatives. Their hegemonic weight pose a threat to the radical transformational change that is necessary to move towards a more socially and ecologically just future. Not challenging this dominance means maintaining the status quo and applying superficial solutions to social and ecological crises. The dominant modern onto-epistemology of universalism therefore communicates the dominance of a simplified idea of a one-size fits all remedy to the multitude of crises that continue to be informed by current systemic forces.

1.2 Questioning Power and the Dominant Onto-Epistemology

> *Whether the example is a slaughterhouse, a petrochemical facility, industrial agriculture, a hydroelectric dam, or a mining operation, each reveals the ways in which humans exploit and produce harm among other humans, nonhuman animals, and ecosystems. While these forms of hierarchy and violence are uniquely experienced across species and space, they are inseparable and interrelated. They necessarily begin and end with human actors imagining and giving meaning to these behaviors.*

> — David Pellow (2014, 9)

Ecological problems, Murray Bookchin (2007 [1982], 19) argues, "originate in deep-seated social problems" therefore, "ecological problems cannot be understood, let alone solved, without a careful understanding of our existing society and the irrationalities that dominate it." An anarchist political ecology (APE) critique offers a lens for studying the relationship between social and ecological conflicts, and the hierarchical orderings and power relations that shape these orderings (Springer et al. 2021). APE argues that the current ecological

condition (hence "ecology") is undeniably a political one (hence "political") that cannot be solved through the protocols of electoral politics or the procedure of the state (hence "anarchist") (Springer et al. 2021). In order to understand how this lens can be applied to an analysis of ecoanarchists zines, this section detects the ecological implications of what Bookchin called the '(ir)rationalities' that dominate society and proposes the need for alternative imaginations through the use of an APE that prioritizes abolishing dominance that appears in the form of hierarchies and power structures. Power structures refer to the societal, political, and economic systems and institutions that shape and distribute power within a society and can be formal, such as governmental bodies, corporations, and legal frameworks, as well as informal, such as cultural norms, social hierarchies, and ideological systems. Existing power structures play leading roles in the framing of environmental and other crises (Sullivan 2017). To challenge these power structures, it is important to understand the dominant forces that inform and maintain them.

In recent years, there has been a growing trend in the fields of political ecology and environmental anthropology to focus on onto-epistemological questions, as scholars delve deeper into the ways in which cultural perspectives/knowledges/worldviews/ worldings shape understandings of reality (Blaser 2013; Ingold 2022 [2000]; Sullivan 2017). This is reflected in the increased attention paid to divergences in how environmental issues are framed and perceived. Onto-epistemological approaches highlight the ways in which cultural beliefs shape knowledge of the natural world and according to Sullivan (2017, 225), "consolidated assumptions regarding the nature of categories of being in the world shape human action in the world, and thus have ethical, including 'ecoethical', effects." This is seen in the dominant onto-epistemology, or 'modern, universalized world', where green growth based economic and political models are prioritizing economic growth and the expansion of human industry through the techno-industrial complex, over ecological wellbeing (see Chapter 3 for further discussion). For example, this is why large-scale "renewable energy" – what Dunlap (2021c) appropriately calls "fossil fuel+ energy" – industries can be labelled 'green' even though they continue to destroy landscapes and displace peoples for the extraction of rare minerals required to produce a whole new industry.

As demonstrated, a core dimension of the field of anarchist political ecology is to critically analyze the making of the dominant environmental onto-epistemology, while understanding and intervening in its social and environmental justice implications. Another use for the understanding of alternative onto-epistemologies is that it reveals the political

relationships that are transposed onto ecologies and environments. For example, the current dominant onto-epistemology that informs environmental imaginations is anthropocentric, it understands human beings as the central and dominant force in the natural world and views the natural environment primarily as a resource to be exploited for human benefit (Dryzek and Pickering 2019). It is also materialistic in that it is preoccupied with material objects, comforts, and considerations, as opposed to spiritual or intellectual values. Conversely, there are many alternative onto-epistemologies that prioritize different values and beings in structuring understandings of reality. For example, an animist onto-epistemology assumes that all activity by nonhuman agents is "simultaneously imbued with a moral, if relative and frequently ambiguous, dimension" (Sullivan 2017, 221). Attributing a moral dimension to plants, animals, weather components, ancestors, and so on, greatly informs how one interacts with their environment. For example, it could mean deciding not to cut down an old growth tree because the value placed on it spiritually outweighs its value as a resource/commodity.

Degrowth and ecoanarchism are both very critical of this dominant onto-epistemology and propose alternative ways of understanding and addressing ecological and social crises. In considering degrowth and anarchist solutions to ongoing ecological crises, widening the onto-epistemological scope is necessary to explore and realize what a sustainable future might look like. This can include a renewed understanding of the interconnectedness and interdependence of all living and non-living systems within the natural world, seeing the world as living as opposed to inert material (Kohn 2013). For example, this will be seen through degrowth and ecoanarchism's common mention of biocentric and ecocentric ethics. An anarchist political ecology lens aims to understand the nature of power and governance in society and how current systems of power may be contributing to ecological degradation. It explores how the relationship between oppression, social degradation, and loss of local democracy shapes geographies and imaginations of ecological degradation and global warming (Springer et al. 2021). Using an APE lens involves challenging and dismantling centralized systems of power and advocating for more decentralized, community-based approaches (as will be discussed in Chapter 5). The next section addresses how an APE lens that prioritizes a diversity/plurality in onto-epistemological imaginaries, and is critical of relations of power, can help guide transformation towards a better future.

1.3 Transformation Towards a Pluriverse

The current dominant system of the One-World World has left many disenfranchised, even outraged and in search for alternative futures through prefigurative presents.[1] But, what futures are these fears and feelings projecting? A look into post-development studies provides insight. Wolfgang Sachs, the editor of *The Development Dictionary* (1992) and proponent of 'the end of development' examines various perspectives on the future and discerns three distinct narratives: 'the fortress,' 'globalism,' and 'solidarity'. The 'fortress' narrative, expressed through neo-nationalism, looks to a glorified past of a certain people, seeking to re-establish pride in the group while scapegoating others, for example, the United Nations or immigrants. According to Sachs (1992), this can lead to xenophobia and religious fundamentalism, which is particularly prevalent among the new middle class who seek to protect their material possessions from the poor. This mentality is often referred to as "affluence chauvinism" (Sachs 2017, 2584). In contrast, the 'globalism' narrative doubles down on the One-World World and views the planet as a universal symbol promoting a deregulated, free-trade world that benefits corporations and consumers worldwide. This vision rejects the mercantilism of nationalism and instead embraces a global perspective. While the globalized liberal elite may still have some concerns about the future, they believe that "green and inclusive growth" and innovative technologies can address any issues that arise (Sachs 2017, 2584).

Finally, there is the 'solidarity' narrative, which is fundamentally different from the 'fortress' or 'globalism' narratives. Fear of the future calls for resistance against those in power, who are perceived as responsible for a society in which individuals are left with limited access to resources and the pursuit of profit is the driving force. Instead, the 'solidarity' narrative emphasizes the importance of collective and individual human rights, as well as ecological wellbeing. Markets are viewed as means to an end rather than an end in themselves. The slogan 'think globally, act locally' embodies a cosmopolitan localism, which requires local politics to consider broader needs. This means that it is necessary to redefine the forms of frugal prosperity by ending the "imperial mode of living" that industrial civilization demands (Brand and Wissen 2021). According to Sachs (2017, 2584), "[t]he solidarity narrative advocates cultural change at both the local and the global level that is

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[1] According to Raekstad and Gradin (2019, 10), the practice of prefigurative politics, or prefigurativism, is defined as "the deliberative experimental implementation of desired future social relations and practices in the here and now".

based in cooperative economics and politics for the common good. For the sake of fairness, it is about under developing, about winding down the imperial lifestyles of the transnational middle classes." The *Environmental Justice Atlas* (EJAtlas 2023) has documented and catalogued almost 4000 environmental conflicts, proving that there is a global environmental justice movement, even if it is not a united one. This thesis situates itself in contributing to the solidarity of ecologically minded conflicts and movements.

To clarify between whom solidarity should be obtained, Escobar (1995) developed the concept of a "pluriverse". Where the One-World World has proliferated the homogenization of onto-epistemologies, a pluriverse emphasizes the need for a world of many worlds, which privileges "a collaboration among dissenting voices over the kinds of alternative worlds we want to create" (Kothari et al. 2019a, xxi). According to Kothari and colleagues (2019b, 106), "[w]hile many terms have a long history, they reappear in the narrative of movements for well-being, and again, co-exist comfortably with contemporary concepts such as degrowth and ecofeminism." A pluriverse, then, aims to make space for the multitude of concepts that are based on the similar imaginaries for human rights and rights of nature that are being implemented in different ways due to the different contexts in which they exist. A successful pluriverse is analogous to a healthy forest where each world is represented by an individual tree. Trees rely on mycelium networks of roots and fungi to transport excess water and nutrients to one another (Wohlleben 2015). When one tree is struggling for survival, surrounding trees allocate extra resources to help it recover. The health of an individual tree relies on the health of the overall forest. A tree is not a forest. The interrelations between trees allows for the wellbeing of diverse flora and fauna. Two such trees that exist within this forest are degrowth and ecoanarchism.

As mentioned above, degrowth is worth exploring because of its growing focus within academia that has allowed it to gain international recognition. For example, discussions of degrowth are seen in the 2022 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report. Furthermore, and more importantly, it aligns with values of social and environmental wellbeing seen in the pluriverse literature (Kothari et al. 2019a). At its roots, degrowth derives from a critique of the idea of infinite growth that is embedded in the dominant onto-epistemology. Its roots are economic, but its consequences are directed towards a more just and sustainable future for all of nature (humans included). With the core idea of limiting material and energy throughput, over the last two decades degrowth has expanded its values to include autonomy, care, conviviality, democracy, and equity (Barlow et al. 2022).

Degrowth's momentum over the last decade but, again, predominantly within academic circles, must expand beyond academia and into practice. This is where ecoanarchism can contribute with a long history of actions that provide a glimpse into what degrowth values look like in practice.

According to Davidson (2009, 1), "[a]narchist ideas have heavily influenced green political thought since the appearance of the modern environmental movement in the late 1960s and 1970s." Although defining anarchism continues to be a highly contested topic (see Jun 2018), a working definition can include its core concepts of anti-hierarchy, prefiguration, freedom, agency, direct action, and revolution (Franks, Jun, and Williams 2018). To have an ecological anarchism means to apply these same core principles to the entire living and nonliving community that sustains life. Because of its more practical experiences and its overlaps with the values of both degrowth and the pluriverse, ecoanarchism promises to provide some insights into how degrowth can struggle. More accurately, much of degrowth appears to latch onto many of the fundamental principles at the core of anarchism, particularly: grassroots organizing, mutual aid networks, anti-capitalist and anti-consumption cultures, and non-hierarchical decision-making structures. Therefore, to explore ecoanarchist values is to better understand much of the values in which degrowth is rooted (Toro 2017). Understanding how degrowth and ecoanarchism can nourish each other, to create better breeding grounds for prefigurative alternatives, is the point of departure of this thesis.

1.4 Research Question and Objectives

With the aim of contributing to a pluriverse premised on solidarity between radical alternatives, this thesis asks: *How can ecoanarchist ideas and practices deepen and diversify degrowth pathways towards socially and ecologically sustainable futures*? With this aim and research question in mind, there are multiple objectives that follow suit. This thesis conceptualizes degrowth pathways that can be informed by ecoanarchism, investigates the overlaps between degrowth and ecoanarchist pathways, and sheds light on often stigmatized ecoanarchist practices by exploring its historical background and preferred forms of communication. Moreover, the thesis seeks to understand the impacts of the dominant modern onto-epistemology of universalization to better appreciate the need for a pluriverse of alternatives and to enhance contemporary ideas and movements (degrowth) through more historically entrenched ideas and practices (ecoanarchism). Furthermore, the thesis

repoliticizes the ecological crises by exploring dissenting voices and building knowledge towards degrowth pathways by examining contemporary ecoanarchist ideas and practices. These objectives contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the potential for ecoanarchist ideas and practices to inform degrowth pathways towards a more just and sustainable future. Finally, rather than seeking to recruit degrowthers who exhibit anarchic tendencies into the fold of anarchism, or vis versa, my objective is to undertake a reconfigurative project. Specifically, I aim to explore what degrowth could look like in practice if it were to more concretely acknowledge its anarchist influences. To achieve this, I plan to engage in an examination of its more marginalized roots and contemporary practitioners.

1.5 Thesis Outline

The structure of this thesis is organized such that each of the objectives outlined above are met. The following chapter, Chapter 2, provides a literature review of the relevant discussions occurring within the degrowth milieu. First is the understanding that degrowth developed as a response to contest proposals of continued economic growth through "green" growth. Green growth is explored and then critiqued through a degrowth lens. Beyond a critique of growth, other degrowth theoretical perspectives are explored to understand degrowth beyond a growth-based critique. What follows are the gaps and tensions within degrowth. These are centered around degrowth's call for transformational change and how tensions exist between what they call for versus what the literature is actually contributing to. In summary, much of the degrowth literature calls for the use of all three of Wright's (2010) modes of transformation – symbiotic, interstitial, and ruptural - but the literature tends to prioritize symbiotic modes of transformation. Wright's (2010) three modes of transformation then becomes the theoretical framework that structures the analysis. The chapter ends with a short description on the overlaps made in academic literature between degrowth and ecoanarchism before concluding the chapter.

Chapter 3, provides a background on ecoanarchism to develop a working conceptualization of ecoanarchism that can be applied to degrowth. It begins by defining anarchism and developing an understanding of its long history of practices and academic debates. What follows is a brief history of ecoanarchism then an overview of the rise of green anarchism. Within this overview is an exploration of the use and significance of zines in underground anarchist cultures. Using these histories and definitions, a conceptualization of

ecoanarchism is developed. With the conceptualization of ecoanarchism, it is then hypothesized that ecoanarchism can contribute to more interstitial and ruptural modes of transformation towards degrowth pathways.

Chapter 4 also includes an explanation of the feminist methodology and ethic of research to be used as a way to address the modern dominant onto-epistemology of universalism. This methodology prioritizes knowledge building over knowledge extraction and provides justification for the use of zines as the medium for knowledge building. It also describes Wright's (2010) modes of transformation in more detail. It then follows with an explanation of methods used for the analysis portion of this thesis.

Chapters 5 and 6 provide the analysis portion of this text in which ecoanarchist zines are explored to build knowledge. Chapter 5 looks at what ecoanarchist zines say about relations between people through ways of organizing. In contributing to knowledge building regarding tactics for different modes of transformation, the chapter discusses direct action as a tactic for ruptural transformation, and voluntary cooperation as a tactic for interstitial transformation. Chapter 6 follows a similar structure but instead extends ecoanarchist principles of direct action and voluntary cooperation into discussions around transformation of human and nonhuman relations. Finally, the concluding chapter circles the conversation back to a reflection on the attempt at building solidarity between ecoanarchism and degrowth and what this exploration contributes to a wider conversation of the future of social and ecological wellbeing. It provides a summary of the thesis, a recap of the purpose of the discussion, its implication for existing theory and practice, and recommendations for future research.

2. Conceptualizing Degrowth Pathways

To situate current degrowth literature within the larger international effort to mitigate climate change, the 2022 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report was the first from the international panel to mention degrowth. Degrowth was mentioned roughly 50 times within its *Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability* and *Mitigation of Climate Change* (IPCC 2022) reports (Parrique 2022a, 2022b). Within the report are the more concrete discussions within the degrowth literature. These include: the feasibility of decoupling economic growth and resource consumption at a necessary scale and rate sufficient to meet the Paris Agreement goals; policy mechanisms such as a 'cap and share' framework for distributing emissions permits on an annually declining basis; minimizing the reliance of negative emissions technologies; and prioritizing distribution rather than GDP growth (IPCC 2022, 174). But, as this chapter discusses, degrowth extends beyond these conceptualizations.

From the introduction (Chapter 1), degrowth is: a proposed process of political, ecological, and social transformation aimed at the reduction of material and energy throughput to address socio-ecological concerns. However, according to Kerschner and colleagues (2018, 1622), "attempts to provide short definitions of Degrowth have remained controversial as they always tend to ignore some aspects of the multifaceted concept that is, effectively, 'in the making.'" Therefore, to be able to conceptualize degrowth for this thesis, as this chapter sets out to do, much must be taken into consideration in reviewing the literature. Thus, the first section of this chapter engages with the theoretical perspectives that degrowth is rooted in. Included within this section is the historical evolution of the term which is primarily grounded in critiques and debates around continued economic growth. Critiques of degrowth are then looked at followed by degrowth's theoretical perspectives that extend beyond discussions of economic growth. The second section draws out the tensions, gaps, and debates within degrowth. Since degrowth has an ever-evolving definition, the third section provides the conceptualization of degrowth that will be used within this thesis. Finally, from the degrowth literature, some links are drawn with ecoanarchism before ending with concluding remarks.

2.1 Theoretical Perspectives of Degrowth

To appreciate degrowth is to first comprehend the context in which it arose: mainly, as a challenge to continued economic growth in the face of environmental crises. Over the last

century, growth has dominated our practical, political, and personal spheres and is part and parcel of the dominant onto-epistemology. To begin in the 1930s, the great depression brought about devastating economic hardship and a desperate need to stimulate economic growth. Ideas like that of "planned obsolescence" – where products are designed to have an artificially limited useful life to ensure continued consumption – began to seep into the cultural and societal fabrics of our consumption habits and our relations to material products (Bulow 1986). The Second World War further exasperated these tendencies, as a robust economy was necessary to power states' military machines. Since the post-war era, economic growth has continued to dominate politics and policies in what has been deemed the 'golden age of capitalism' (Schneider, Kallis, and Martinez-Alier 2010; Schmelzer 2016). A few decades later came the universalization of environmental concerns, which established the reinvention of growth in terms of "sustainability" and "greening" through technological innovation. By the 1980s, the United Nation's "Our Common Future" – or Brundtland – report placed "sustainable development" at the core of international relations and was defined by efforts to "meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987; Ducoing 2019, 19). This same report listed "reviving growth" as its first strategic imperative towards sustainable development (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987).

Presently, 'green growth' – similarly derived from ideas around sustainable development – has emerged as the dominant policy response to climate change and ecological breakdown, with the OECD, World Bank, and United Nations developing strategies on green growth (Allan and Meckling 2021). Green growth allows for continued economic growth with the increase of GDP from resource use and the management of carbon emissions through techno-fixes and geoengineering (Asufu-Adjaye et al. 2015). Green growth sees renewable and "green" products as the solution to the climate crisis, with emphasis on neoliberal ideas of continued economic growth (Asufu-Adjaye et al. 2015). National and multinational institutions and agreements, such as the SDGs from the UN, the Paris Agreement, and the Green New Deal, have adopted this stance. Yet, and very importantly, there is no empirical evidence that supports that the green growth theory of decoupling economic growth from increased consumption is a viable option for a sustainable future (see Parrique, 2019; Hickel and Kallis 2020). But, before getting into contemporary debates around decoupling, it is

important to explore the historical evolution of the concept of degrowth and its concentration on disarming theories of green growth.

Degrowth emerged in the early 2000s as a defiant political slogan to the oxymoronic conceptualizations of sustainable development and green growth (Latouche 2018). Although not the first to challenge growth as the dominant strategy for social and ecological wellbeing, degrowth is currently at the forefront of a movement discrediting the theory of green growth and searching for alternatives to the growth-based capitalist and colonialist dominant systems of today. Literature confronting green growth stems from Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen's "The entropy law and economic problem" (1971), "The Limits to Growth" (Meadows et al., 19722023-05-26 2:13:00 PM), and Herman Daly's *Steady State Economics* (1977). Georgescu-Roegen's argument derives from ecological economics. His thermodynamic vision of the economy describes the economy as part of a subsystem of the biosphere that depends on the ecosystem for resources and waste disposal. Since the Earth functions as a fixed system with finite material stocks, the transformation of energy and material from low entropy resources to high entropy waste by way of the industrial metabolism questions *ad infinitum* models of growth (Georgescu-Roegen 1976 [1971]). In other words, with Earth's finite capacities, people (collectively speaking) cannot continue to turn resources into waste at the present rate without major repercussions. "Limits to Growth" furthered this claim and was one of the first modelling studies to forecast the environmental and social impacts of industrialization, warning that the endless pursuit of growth was incompatible with Earth's 'basics', or limits (Meadows et al. 1972).[2] By 1977, Daly's work on the steady state economy, which was based on the thermodynamic world view of Georgescu-Roegen (who was his mentor (Kerschner 2010)), developed the first macroeconomic concept for a zero-growth economy. Debates have weaved in and out of these texts and in many ways, the degrowth literature has moved beyond these classics. Worth noting is how long the growth paradigm has been questioned and characterised as an illogical way forward.

Latouche's book *Farewell to Growth* (2009) began to popularize degrowth (Nirmal and Rocheleau 2019). In this seminal work, Latouche describes the fetishization of growth and its continual reinforcement through advertising, credit, and planned obsolescence. Advertising tells us to want what we do not have and be unsatisfied with what we have; credit

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[2] An important note is that there remains a stark separation between the limits to growth and degrowth on the question of population control. Limits to growth has been more partial to solutions that involve population control than has degrowth.

allows us to consume and invest what we do not have; and planned obsolescence makes for the need to continually replenish goods (Latouche 2009). Drawing from his later book chapter called "The Path to Degrowth for a Sustainable Society" (2018), growth is described as an "imposture [of] an organic metaphor" in which the rightful appreciation of growth as a natural phenomenon represented through the "birth, development, maturation, decline, and death of life", has been taken to the extreme (2018, 279). Accordingly, this symbolic worship of growth turned literal and has thus become a "religion within modern western civilization" (279). He follows that, "[t]he economic organism, that is the organization of the survival of society, is no longer in symbiosis with nature but rather exploits it mercilessly and must indefinitely grow, just like its fetish, capital" (2018, 279). Mechanisms – such as advertisements, credit and planned obsolescence mentioned above – are in place to fortify this parasitical relationship.

As previously mentioned, more recent debates between green growth and degrowth have centered on the legitimacy of green growth's decoupling claim. This claim states that fossil fuel consumption will need to stay the same (relative decoupling) or fall steadily and dramatically (absolute decoupling), "even while people must still be able to consume energy resources to meet their various demands" through building a clean-energy economy (Pollin 2018, 9). Haberl and fifteen of his colleagues (2020, 1) provide a systematic review of 835 peer reviewed articles centered on evidence of decoupling of GDP and conclude that, "large rapid absolute reductions of resource use and GHG emissions cannot be achieved through observed decoupling rates." They then propose that "decoupling needs to be complemented by sufficiency-oriented strategies and strict enforcement of absolute reduction targets" (ibid.). Similarly, Hickel and Kallis (2020), two prominent degrowth proponents, question whether green growth is possible and conclude that: "(1) there is no empirical evidence that absolute decoupling from resource use can be achieved on a global scale against a background of continued economic growth, and (2) absolute decoupling from carbon emissions is highly unlikely to be achieved at a rate rapid enough to prevent global warming over 1.5℃ to 2℃, even under optimistic policy conditions" (469). Overall, debunking of the theory of decoupling comes from the logic that even with technological innovation making way for more environmentally sustainable consumption, there still exists limits (see debate between Pollin 2018 and Burton and Somerville 2019). As populations and economies continue to grow, it is probable that the same crises will arise. Furthermore, most goals have focused on modest *relative decoupling* in which economies grow while CO_2 emissions slowly decrease.

In these instances, the decrease in carbon emissions is not happening at a rate fast enough to align with the Paris Agreement's goal of a 1.5°C to 2°C global temperature increase (Burton and Somerville 2019).

Degrowth thus far has been made out to be an economic concept, which it is not. Following a look at its critiques, degrowth will be shown to have moved far beyond economics. Instead, it will be understood as a prescriptive moral theory that argues that by broadening our onto-epistemological knowings, looking to other worldings, and 'decolonizing our imaginary' (Latouche 2018) we can achieve socio-ecological wellbeing.

2.1.1   Addressing Critiques of Degrowth's Critiques

Degrowth, as an alternative to the current paradigm of infinite economic growth, has been met with various critiques. Many of these critiques are addressed and challenged within the degrowth literature. Three main critiques of degrowth are outlined regarding its economic consequences, Eurocentric tendencies, and political feasibility. The first is that a reduction in economic growth will lead to an economic recession, unemployment, and poverty. Rather, degrowth proponents are not suggesting the need for negative economic growth (Hickel 2021), as some critiques imply (for example, Zimet 2022). Arguments against degrowth are primarily premised on a world average GDP, and since "proponents of degrowth are […] unaware of just how poor (yes, poor) the world is today," they must be similarly unaware of the mass poverty degrowth would further induce (Milanovic 2017). According to Milanovic (2017), the idea that GDP should be capped at present levels and distributed equally would stunt global income to 5,500 USD per person per year. Degrowth proponents respond by clarifying that it is not focused on reducing GDP but instead targets the reduction of energy and material throughput (Hickel 2021), specifically that which is wasteful. To do this, not every sector or industry is targeted to scale down, only ones deemed unnecessary and destructive (Hickel 2020). Furthermore, GDP is not an adequate measure of human wellbeing as it remains poorly distributed and poorly utilized. Instead, arguments are made that the current growth oriented economic system is already leading to inequality and job insecurity (Hickel 2020). Some green growth proponents argue "growth as a cure for poverty" (Van der Vossen and Brennan 2018). Hickel (2020, 5) counters with, "obviously, the best way to reduce poverty isn't more exploitation, but more economic justice." Hickel (2021, 5) continues with the distinction between the global "South" and "North" whereas "justice for the South (fair wages for labour and fair prices for resources) would entail degrowth in the

North." There is also the concern among degrowthers of "rebound effects" where lower energy costs lead to increased energy consumption (Dütschke, Peters, and Schleich 2013). Degrowth advocates for the creation of alternative economic models that prioritize human needs and ecological sustainability. This includes the promotion of small-scale enterprises and cooperatives, as well as the provision of basic income and public services.

The second critique overlaps with the first in that degrowth is not seen as attentive to the poor and marginalized communities. Instead, it is argued to be a privileged, elitist, and Eurocentric concept that ignores the needs of marginalized peoples (Muradian 2019). Alternatively, at the core of degrowth is the importance of social justice and the recognition of different cultural values and practices. It seeks to challenge the current neoliberal economic system, which perpetuates inequality and exploitation. Degrowth also highlights the role of colonialism and imperialism in the current global economic system and advocates for a decolonial approach to transformation (see Nirmal and Rocheleau 2019). However, calls for a decolonial degrowth are relatively new and much research is still needed to flesh out what this entails (Dunlap 2020a). As part of the analysis chapter, this thesis aims to contribute to gaps around achieving a decolonial degrowth. Additionally, critiques point out that degrowth's aim to reduce growth in rich societies, but not poor societies "overlooks the fact that different economies are intertwined, so that a reduction in growth in a rich country can often disproportionally harm poor countries" (Van der Vossen and Brennan 2018). However, in a globalized capitalist market, the distinction between "rich and poor countries" can be quite problematic as rich and poor people exist everywhere and state-based generalizations can be harmful and should be avoided. Degrowth's emphasis on more localized, small-scale, and grassroots organizing is partially a response to the negative impacts that a globalized economy has had on more vulnerable peoples.

The third critique is that degrowth is unrealistic, politically unfeasible, and cannot be implemented on a global scale. Milanovic (2017) argues that it is "not even vaguely likely to find any political support anywhere." Conversely, there already exists an entire, albeit mostly academic, movement around degrowth and prior to, there has been much mobilization around and against growth, capitalism, over-consumption, exploitation of natural ecologies, and globalization. In response to this critique, Hickel (2021) explains that people are not merely consumption bots, they consume because they are compelled to do so. What could it look like if our relationship to consumption and material goods changed? The degrowth literature acknowledges the challenges of transitioning to a new economic paradigm but argues that a

reduction in energy and material throughput is necessary for the long-term sustainability of our planet. Additionally, degrowth advocates for localism and decentralization, which allows for diverse approaches to degrowth at a community level instead of more top-down approaches. This emphasis on diverse bottom-up organizing allows for context specific implications of the broader ideas of degrowth.

What debates between proponents and opponents of degrowth offer is a polarization of solutions to the socio-ecological crises between what is and ought to be. The arguments being made are clearly polarized but the solution(s) cannot be. The solutions must exist within our radical imaginings of a future that is both plausible and preferable, instead of simply probable (Dunne and Roby 2013). Dunne and Raby (2013, 2) describe the forecasting of plausible and preferable future as a tool to "better understand the present and to discuss the kind of future people want, and, of course, one's people do not want." This is also known as prefigurative politics, which is defined as "the ways we organize in the present should reflect the sort of society we hope to create in the future" (Gordon 2018). A look at contemporary prefigurative politics can show us the array of alternatives while also demonstrating the seemingly limitless possibilities for completely new modes of knowing and being, or alternative onto-epistemologies. Overall, criticisms of degrowth are centered on its economic projections and probabilities. This thesis instead focuses on desired possibilities, or prefigurative politics. Given the vastness in which inspiration can be found, a path forward must involve strengthened alliances and solidarity between degrowth and similar camps that are looking for solutions to the environmental crisis in a way that does not jeopardize socio-ecological wellbeing. Therefore, it is important that we move beyond economic degrowth and instead understand degrowth as a prescriptive moral theory.

2.1.2   Theoretical Perspectives beyond Growth Critiques

Beyond championing an escape from the fetishization of growth, degrowth literature contains countless proposals and is considered a "matrix of alternatives that reopens the human adventure to a plurality of destinies and spaces of creativity by throwing off the blanket of economic totalitarianism" (Demaria and Latouche 2019, 149). In other words, degrowth does not function as an economic concept nor does it aim to be a one-size-fits-all solution to the social and ecological crises. Rather, degrowth prioritizes democratic, ecologically local, and context specific solutions to shift our dependence away from economic growth and consumerist abundance towards what Serge Latouche (2014) calls "frugal abundance." This

shift to frugality requires a reshaping of the imagination that no longer confines our happiness to material desires but instead redefines happiness as "frugal abundance in a society based on solidarity" (Latouche 2014, 1). Latouche proposes that people challenge the dominant order of consumer abundance through the "decolonization of the imaginary".

'Decolonization,' here, comes from 'anti-imperialist anthropology of mentalities' or anti-imperialist onto-epistemologies.[3] Serge Gruzinski published *The colonization of the imaginary* in 1988 which discusses the conversion of indigenous people by missionaries through deculturation of spirits and an acculturation to Christianity and Western civilization. To Latouche (2018), this refers to the "true oppression in the imaginary," implemented both symbolically and literally (281). Additionally, Cornelius Castoriadis' (1975) philosophy on 'imaginary social meanings' helps describe what is meant by imaginary. According to Castoriadis (1996),

> What is required is a new imaginary creation of previously unseen importance, a creation that would place at the center of human life meanings different from the expansion of production and consumption that would set new life objectives that can be perceived as worthwhile by human beings. […] This is not only necessary to avoid the final destruction of the terrestrial environment, but also and most importantly to escape the psychic and moral misery of contemporary humans. (96)

To combine Gruzinski's ideas of 'decolonization' and Castoriadis' ideas of the 'imaginary', the 'decolonization of the imaginary' endorses a paradigm shift away from the hegemonic colonial growth narrative. It is about escaping the imperial-based growth economy and changing our values. This is exactly what degrowth proponents are developing in their transformation efforts.

Based on Latouche's conceptualization of degrowth, what is required is an imagination of degrowth that expands beyond ideas imposed from the colony. Yet, much has been said about the use of decolonization as a metaphor. What is called for by Tuck and Yang (2017) is that decolonization must be literal, it must be physical. They emphasize that decolonization is a complex and ongoing process that necessitates a deep re-evaluation of power dynamics, knowledge production, and relationships. This entails land repatriation and indigenous sovereignty, disrupting settler colonial logics, centering indigenous knowledge and perspectives, unsettling settler identities and privileges, and reparative action and redistribution of resources (Tuck and Yang 2017). Nirmal and Rocheleau (2019, 466) agree and instead of critiquing degrowth's lack of engagement with decoloniality, they are "inspired

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[3] In anthropology, the term "mentalities" is used to describe the underlying assumptions and practical knowledge that are deeply ingrained and taken for granted within a specific society. Mentalities focus on the implicit and unspoken aspects of knowledge, rather than explicit belief systems or doctrines..

by the shared commitment to resists and move beyond the theories, policies, and practices of capitalist and socialist/state-capitalist growth economies." They therefore contribute to this effort by building on ways to decolonize degrowth through examples of ongoing struggles.

The realization of a degrowth society requires this decolonization of the imaginary and real decolonization. That is, to move beyond this growth obsession through alternative explorations of ways of being, and deep alliances and solidarity to expand the call for a diversity of solutions. It also requires the literal and physical decolonization of territories. Moving forward, this thesis situates itself not within the economic debates being had around degrowth, but within what some have called a 'decolonial degrowth'. The next section explores the tensions and research gaps within decolonial degrowth.

2.2 Tensions and Gaps within Degrowth

Transformation away from the dominant growth paradigm is central to degrowth thought but strategies for transformation differ, sometimes evoking contradictions. Much of the degrowth literature is familiar with and draws upon Erik Olin Wright's (2010) logics of transformation (see for example D'Alisa and Kallis 2019; Kallis 2020; and Chertkovskaya 2022). In his book, *Envisioning Real Utopia's*, Wright (2010) outlines a theory of transformative strategies that makes up one part of his theory of emancipatory social transformation. According to Wright (2010),

> in order to advance democratic egalitarian emancipatory ideals it is necessary to radically extend and deepen the weight of social empowerment within economic structures in capitalist societies, but significant movements towards real social empowerment is a threat to the interests of powerful actors who benefit most from capitalist structures and who can use their power to oppose such movements. (109)

This is especially relevant to degrowth whose policy proposals include zero interest rates, climate trusts, a shorter workweek, a universal basic income, or a maximum wage, all of which clash with the capitalist interests of those who hold more economic and political power (Kallis, Kerschner, and Martinez-Alier 2012). Therefore, Wright has come up with three potential strategies of transformation – ruptural, interstitial, and symbiotic – that could overcome the reinforcement of the current capitalist and neoliberalist hegemonic structure and move in the direction of ecological and social emancipation.[4]

Symbiotic transformation is aimed at "changing the existing institutional forms and deepen popular social empowerment existing within the current system, "interstitial

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[4] Wright did not speak in the terms of ecological emancipation, that has been added for the context of the degrowth conversation around transformational change.

transformation involves "building new forms of social empowerment on the margins of capitalist society," and ruptural transformations seek a "stark confrontation or break with existing institutions and social structures" (Chertkovskaya et al. 2022, 57).

Nirmal and Rocheleau (2019) outline where degrowth must position itself within these three logics:

> We recognize that disentangling and dismantling economic connections with capitalism must happen in conjunction with restoring the reinventing of lost or missing connections to support life as we wish to live it outside the growth paradigm (see Simpson 2016). This requires a broad time-space template to (a) design (Escobar 2018) and construct the relations needed to live beyond or outside of the current paradigm, and (b) spatially coexist with capitalism's trajectory, whether it be a slow and involuntary descent into history, increasingly erratic ups and downs, or an abrupt and violent end. (472)

Living "beyond or outside" the current system alludes to Wright's idea of interstitial transformation and aligns with alternative ways of organizing to be explored later. There can be many interpretations of what it looks like to 'coexist with capitalism's trajectory'. Tensions arise regarding the degree of struggle this 'coexistence' would require. Some encourage a symbiotic relationship with the state while others certainly argue for interstitial or even ruptural tactics to overthrow it. Within the context of their argument, Nirmal and Rocheleau (2019) see this 'coexistence' as a means to accomplish their "place-based vision of resurgence that can accommodate a situated decolonial degrowth" (472). Similarly, in *The case for degrowth*, Kallis (2020, 87-88) speaks to the need for "building interstitial alternatives," "symbiotic reform," and "ruptural conflict."

Unfortunately, within the degrowth literature there is an imbalance between ideas that tend towards all modes of transformation and the more practical proposals that emphasize symbiotic transformation. This brings us to degrowthers' proposed answers to questions of the state and its role in reinforcing capitalist structures and continues economic growth. D'Alisa and Kallis (2020) look at the degrowth literature from 2012 to 2018 that address questions of the state and found that there existed no literature during that time that directly tried to answer questions regarding degrowth's relation to the state. This is surprising given the vast critiques that degrowth directs at state institutions for their complicity in promoting and reinforcing the growth imperative, unsustainability, and social inequality. For example, Schulken and colleagues (2022, 9) clearly state that "institutional responses to this crisis from those in power are not enough to meet the scale of the social ecological transformation required". In their analysis, D'Alisa and Kallis categorized degrowthers' proposals according to Wright's logics of transformation. Of the portion of degrowth literature that alluded to

strategies of transformation, eighteen were symbiotic, five were interstitial, and only one proposed ruptural modes of transformation (D'Alisa and Kallis 2020).

Among the symbiotic proponents there are proposals for further democratization, more socialist systems, semantic strategies to attract municipal politicians, a practice approach to the institutional agency of degrowth, shrinking of the state, monetary reform, reconfiguration of the state, an infiltration of the body of the state with a principle of anarchy, using the state to support interstitial initiatives, and the use of the state to control violence inevitably brought on by ecological devastation (D'Alisa and Kallis 2020). In this same report, D'Alisa and Kallis themselves propose Gramsci's theory of the integral state (symbiotic) as a starting point.[5] Meanwhile, interstitial proponents suggest ignoring the state as a locus for change, organizing collectively to stop participating in the valorization of capital, and understanding that the biosphere has nothing to do with state territorial borders (D'Alisa and Kallis 2020). Finally, the single example that hints towards ruptural transformation comes from Rackman (2012) who argues for "the abolition globally of societal relations of domination (hierarchies and states) and an end to the wage relation that underlies the exploitation of labour" (D'Alisa and Kallis 2020, 5).

To heed the call for a diversity of approaches as the most effective way forward, all three models of transformation deserve coextensive academic attention (Wright 2010; Kallis 2020; Chertkovskaya 2022). Symbiotic transformation is important because it can work to expand the spaces for alternatives. According to the study by D'Alisa and Kallis (2020), it has been given the most attention – noting that from 2018 until now, the debates and conversations within degrowth have shifted rapidly. More work, then, is required to manage the gap in research for interstitial and ruptural modes of transformations. Interstitial transformation is crucial for degrowth and "might be seen as its basis" (Chertkovskaya 2022, 58). It is where degrowth connects to other movements, learns of alternative ways of living outside of the growth-based system, and builds democratic bottom-up communities (Asara et al. 2015). Further, ruptural transformation has barely been engaged with explicitly within the work on degrowth yet it offers an important direction for pursuing social-ecological transformation, especially when considered as "small-scale and temporary overhauls of capitalism" (Chertkovskaya 2022, 58). As we will see in the next chapter, ecoanarchism is

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[5] Gramsci's theory of the integral state posits, "an interconnection and dialectical unity of the state and civil society, where the latter is integrated under the leadership of the former" (Humphrys 2018, 29)

well positioned to offer insight into ways of organizing that exist outside and against state structures and institutions; that is, through interstitial and ruptural modes of transformation.

Moving beyond the state and strategies of organizing, there exist tensions within degrowth regarding relationships between humans and nonhumans. First, there lacks adequate dialogue around human and nonhuman relationships within degrowth literature. Many consider the current environmental crises to be a result of human failure to relate to 'nature' (Næss 1989; Foster 2000; Heikkurinen 2021). Accordingly, degrowth harbours, "the objective of reforming western nature-society relationships and encourage[s] 'bottom-up' initiatives that work towards this goal" (Koller 2021, 347). It follows that any question of 'nature' must inevitably be dealt with in a movement operating at the border between 'the social' and 'the environment' (Heikkurinen 2021, 368). Yet, the degrowth literature exhibits confusion and contradictions in conceptualizations of 'nature' that are generally sparse and lacking (Spash 2021). Inquiries into human-nature relating is new to the degrowth movement (Heikkurinen 2021, 368). According to Heikkurinen (2021, 368),

> On the one hand, the [degrowth] movement is influenced by deep ecology, which posits that humans are matter-energetically embedded in nature. On the other hand, the movement gains insights from social ecology, which tends to denaturalize the debate on the exospheric crisis.

Pasi Heikkurinen (2021) divides these two views into the 'naturalist critique' and the 'culturalist critique', respectively.

The naturalist critique is more closely linked to Arne Næss' deep ecology and inquires "how can humans become distant from nature if they are embedded in it? […] how troublesome are the implications of this critique? […and] if all human doings are 'of nature,' how can there be anything unnatural or less in line with nature?" (Heikkurinen 2021, 373). As part of the culturalist critique, "previous studies have questioned the relevance of using the term 'nature' due to its universalising character and suggested that perceived alienation or estrangement is cultural" (Heikkurinen 2021, 368; see also Bookchin 1989; Vogel 1999; Biro 2005). This is reminiscent of Jason Moore's (2017) critique of the Anthropocene collectively blaming all of humanity when different present and historical cultures, or even individuals, influenced the current ecospheric crises in varying degrees. In the same manner, different present and historical cultures/individuals experience different degrees of 'distance' from nature.

Heikkurinen (2021) continues by providing a bridge between these two opposing critiques. He proposes that nature has a core in which people can be either closer to or further away from – a quantitative distancing – the core of nature. To incorporate both the naturalist

and culturalist critique, his proposition becomes that, "certain human cultures are not only becoming distant to the core of nature but also are more distant and have been more distant than others" (375). After looking at this proposition through three temporal lenses – core of nature as past, future, and present – Heikkurinen concludes that, "while the degrowth movement should be inclusive to all temporal perspectives, the lens of the present should be emphasized to balance out the prevailing romanticism and futurism" (380). This implies the romantic appeals to the past and techno-optimist futures (Spash 2021). How to understand nature as present requires mindfulness that is rooted in geography and remains small in scale. Heikkurinen's proposal acts to redirect degrowth regarding its considerations of human and nonhuman relations.

A critique from degrowth that relates to relationships with biotic communities and people's distance from nature includes questions regarding science and technology. 'Science and technology' are broadly defined to include knowledge and tools used to explore and manipulate the natural world. Many of degrowth's dialogues regarding technology are drawn from Ivan Illich's (1973) seminal work about the proper use of technology. In *Tools of Conviviality,* Illich (1973) suggests that people need tools to work with instead of tools that work for them. Illich's ideas originated from intellectual critiques of development and are critical of technology used for industrial production, instead proposing the use of 'convivial tools.' In his words,

> [People] need technology to make the most of the energy and imagination each has, rather than more well-programmed energy slaves […] I believe that society must be reconstructed to enlarge the contribution of autonomous individuals and primary groups to the total effectiveness of a new system of production designed to satisfy the human needs which it also determines. In fact, the institutions of industrial society do just the opposite. As the power of machines increases, the role of persons more and more decreases to that of mere consumers. (Illich 1973, 23)

Convivial tools are intended to embolden "autonomous and creative intercourse among persons, and the intercourse of persons with their environment" thereby satisfying needs and eliminating dependence on the industries that are presently relied upon for survival (Illich 1973, 24). These ideas are influenced by Sahlin's (2017 [1972]) description of 'primitive' societies enjoying true affluence, and Ellul (1964) and Charbonneau's (1969) critiques of modern technology and its role in making people more dependent on the market and state (Kerschner et al. 2018; Heikkurinen 2021). Illich is emblematic of one of two streams of thought within the degrowth literature. His scepticism of technology is equally matched with technological enthusiasts within degrowth circles. Overall, the degrowth community has been critical of relying too heavily on technological solutions and emphasizes the need for

conscious minimization of technology use to avoid unintended side effects and harm on the whole of biotic communities. However, some authors are inspired by the promises of certain technologies that democratize and counteract hegemonic institutions (Kreschner et al 2018). These divergent views create tensions between technological enthusiasts and skeptics.

To summarize this section, questions about the role of the state have primarily been addressed through the ever-growing collection of policy proposals that contribute to a symbiotic transformation; more attention is required regarding interstitial and ruptural transformations. The literature on ways of mobilizing and organizing through building alternatives (interstitial) and oppositional activism (ruptural) exist but lack practical knowledges and experiences. Secondly, there exist many calls within degrowth to reimagine our relations with the nonhuman world but there lacks adequate exploration of what this has, and could, look like. To build on considerations of human and nonhumans relations, this thesis aligns more with the technological sceptics within degrowth. Before moving on to explore what ecoanarchism can contribute to these tensions, the next section will conceptualize degrowth, given the above explorations, as it will be employed throughout the rest of the thesis. What then follows is a review of the literature that connects degrowth and ecoanarchism.

2.3 Conceptualizing Degrowth

Degrowth arose out of a critique of development and dominant models of infinite growth. The roots of degrowth are explored to reveal its positionality and potential theoretical trajectory and an understanding of degrowth as a prescriptive moral theory. This has brought about an understanding of the gaps and tensions within degrowth which demonstrate what is lacking within the degrowth literature. A more critical lens would see how some degrowthers are influenced by more masculinist, enlightened rationality that reasserts human independence, refuses to be limited by nature, and prioritizes cooperation with the state (Nirmal and Rocheleau 2019; Kallis 2017).

Yet, the scale to which degrowth is discussed, within geographical and disciplinarily diverse fields, with many divergent ideas, allows for the wonderful opportunity for a plethora of tensions and debates. To create consensus among these debates contradicts the spirit of degrowth which is "more an exploratory avenue than a completed and sealed doctrine" (Flipo and Schneider 2015, xvii). Navigating these gaps through the context of exploring degrowth

pathways through ecoanarchist praxis requires a thorough conceptualization of degrowth that will be used specifically to address which 'degrowth pathways' are to be further explored and strengthened.

First, Wright's three logics of transformation will be used as the theoretical framework of the analysis (Chapters 5 and 6). Like many degrowth proponents, Wright (2010, 213) agrees that "[i]n different times and places, one or another of these modes of transformation may be the most effective, but often all of them are relevant." As will be demonstrated, ecoanarchism is not contributing to debates around reformist change. Instead, it can add to the call for interstitial alternatives and forms of transformation that disrupt the state and other top-down institutions. A conceptualization of degrowth that therefore prioritizes ruptural and interstitial tactics of transformation will be emphasized to build on this gap within the literature. Thus, this thesis situates itself within conversations in which:

- Degrowth conceptualizes an overall effort towards the reduction of material and energy throughput while improving human and ecological wellbeing.

- It strategically aims to utilize all modes of transformation – symbiotic, interstitial, and ruptural – by strengthening networks of solidarity and plurality. It recognizes the necessity and commitment to supporting and understanding the work carried out beyond the confines of state institutions. Furthermore, degrowth is dedicated to embracing a diversity of strategies in terms of ways of organizing and mobilizing, recognizing the importance of employing a range of strategies to achieve its goals.

- Degrowth aims to expand the understanding and practical applications of alternative ways of relating humans and nonhumans that are temporally and spatially rooted and small in scale.

- Degrowth is skeptical technological innovation as a panacea for environmental destruction and instead promotes the cultivation of knowledge around tools of conviviality, focusing on fostering sustainable and harmonious relationships between humans and their environments.

This breakdown of degrowth has allowed for the creation of two themes to be analyzed: on ways of organizing and mobilizing (Chapter 5) and on human and nonhuman relations (Chapter 6).

2.4 Overlaps with Ecoanarchism

Before concluding, it is worth mentioning the links to ecoanarchism that have already explicitly been made by degrowth scholars. Francisco Toro (2017)'s chapter "The thought of Élisée Reclus as a source of inspiration for degrowth ethos" uses the operationalization of

degrowth from Demaria et al.'s (2014) *What is Degrowth?* to compare the 'sources' of degrowth with the writings of Reclus (a founding figure of ecoanarchism). To restate Reclus' message, Clark and Martin (2013) explain the meaning and scope of Reclus' most significant quote, "Man is Nature becoming self-conscious." They say:

> This concept […] captures the essence of Reclus' message: that humanity must come to understand its identity as the self-consciousness in history. In effect, he proposes a theoretical project of understanding more fully our place in nature and of unmasking the ideologies that distort it, and a corresponding ethical project of assuming, through a transformed social practice, the far-reaching moral responsibilities implied by that crucial position. (Clark and Martin 2013, 17)

Reclus' writings, and his focus on resituating people *in* nature, relates to the six 'sources' that D'Alisa and colleagues (2014) have attributed as part and parcel of degrowth's ethos (Toro 2017). These are: ecology, critiques of development and praise for anti-utilitarianism, meaning of life and wellbeing, bioeconomics, democracy, and justice. While able to draw compelling links between Reclus and each of these sources, Toro (2017) calls for Reclus to be a "reference for contemporary thinkers of degrowth, as determinant as the various authors (and others) referred to in this chapter" (108).[6]

Learning from the other founding figures of ecoanarchism, Chertkovskaya (2019) is not the first to mention Kropotkin's concrete suggestions for non-hierarchical organizational forms, openness to onto-epistemological diversity, and need for mutual aid. It is common for degrowthers to draw these parallels and suggest further inspiration from Kropotkin and Reclus, but not much research has been done to deepen this alignment. Furthermore, there exist contemporary anarchist critiques of degrowth. For instance, Dunlap (2020a) calls for degrowth to be "less polite" and argues that "[t]he connection between degrowth and anti-capitalist, autonomist and (ecological) anarchist movements exist" but, "the degrowth community tends towards ignoring or selectively mentioning antagonistic struggles enacting lived practices of degrowth." Dunlap proceeds by discussing four European socio-ecological struggles to demonstrate how these "impolite" direct actions are enacting degrowth values. In many ways, the work of Dunlap is a jumping off point for the need for more research on the relations between degrowth and ecoanarchist struggles of which this thesis is premised. For

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[6] These authors and texts include (but are not limited to): Latouche's (2007) *Farewell to Growth*, Escobar's (2015) "Degrowth, Postdevelopment, and Transition: A Preliminary Conversation", Demaria et al.'s (2013) "What is Degrowth? From an Activist Slogan to a Social Movement", D'Alisa et al.'s (2014) *Degrowth,* García's (2012) "Degrowth", Deriu's (2012) "Democracies with a Future: Degrowth and the Democratic Transition", and Martínez-Alier's (2002) *Environmentalism of the Poor.* All these authors are considered 'big' names within academic degrowth literature.

the most part, degrowth has failed to adequately mention anarchism as it continues to rely heavily on its histories and practices.

2.5 Conclusion

Although green growth solutions have yet to be empirically proven, its dominance within policy and mainstream discourse indicates an alarming lag towards a plausible movement of transformational change necessary to address environmental catastrophe. So, why the continued effort to move forward growth-based solutions to climate concerns? The refusal to move beyond the theory of green growth puts into question the fetishization of growth and our limitedness of alternative imaginations. Why can we not move away from growth and who benefits from maintaining this growth-based status quo?

A strength of degrowth is how it functions as a diverse social movement and field of study with a plurality of proposals and initiatives, what Serge Latouche calls "a matrix of alternatives" (2018, 277). In this sense, degrowth is an open invitation to debate and action. In Sekulova and colleagues' (2013, 5) words, "to think and act outside the box." The task of rethinking and reimagining is immense and leads scholars, activists, and practitioners down many roads. The enormity of the scope of degrowth calls for a paradigm shift in our relation to economic growth, consumption, relation to each other and nonhumans, and opens the door for many different conversations, debates, and tensions. Both theoretically and practically, some of these roads converge while others diverge. Divergences can create a spectrum of very different ideas and practices, sometimes at odds with one another. Yet, there remain countless gaps in the research and a want for further explorations of ideas and imaginaries.

Among these tensions and gaps there are some in which ecoanarchism has much to say. This thesis breaks them into two thematic clusters, namely ways of organizing for transformational change and the reimagination of human and nonhuman relationships. These themes are important because they address both the dominant critiques within degrowth and the proposal for prefigurative actions that can be contributed to by ecoanarchism. As we shall later see, ecoanarchism has much to contribute to these two thematic clusters, which will be explored using Wright's (2010) modes of transformation as a theoretical framework. The next chapters will get into what degrowth can learn from ecoanarchist thought. For this to be done, ecoanarchism must first be explained, explored, and conceptualized. This is done in the following background chapter.

3. Exploring a Hub Tree's Roots: background on ecoanarchism

Anarchism deserves better than a mere curiosity, or a blank slate, or an overlapping consensus among newly minted radicals who have trouble agreeing on anything. Anarchism is overdue for recognition as a serious intellectual tradition and a real possibility.
- Noam Chomsky 2013

Often people say that there are as many anarchisms as there are anarchists. This makes understanding and describing anarchism a trying task. Michael Burawoy (2000) uses an analogy of a tree (as seen in previous chapters) to envision the development of a "tradition".[7] With anarchism seen as a tradition, and so the "anarchist tradition" functioning as the trunk of the tree, it has both roots, trunk, and branches that extend through convergences and divergences of practices and ideas. Temporal and spatial contexts make way for the development of new branches, fallen twigs, dropped seedlings, and foliage that comes and goes with the seasons. Furthermore, seedlings can make way for the birth of new trees and therefore familial thoughts and traditions. This chapter aims to understand the makeup of the trunk and then pay particular attention to the extension of the ecoanarchist branch, with its further extensions of branches and influences from anarchist roots. Just as different branches vary in size, so too do the different branches that extend from ecoanarchism. The same goes for the variation in roots that nourish and inform ecoanarchism through different xylems and signaling systems.[8] From Van der Walt (2017, 507), who uses the same analogy, the overall shape of the tree, "develops as the product of both an intrinsic internal logic as well as external pressures." Though there are countless anarchisms that extend in different directions and at different rates, it is possible to identify some core features.

Though epistemological origins and geographical contexts have been used to describe anarchism and ecoanarchism, what should remain clear is that none of these ideas have or should be fixed. In saying that, anarchism is a political philosophy that advocates for the abolition of centralized systems of power and the establishment of a society based on voluntary cooperation, mutual aid, and direct action. It is often associated with the idea of

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[7] Burawoy used this analogy to discuss the Marxist tradition, more specifically.
[8] Xylem is one of the two types of transport tissue in vascular plants. The basic function of xylem is to transport water from roots to stems and leaves. It can also transport nutrients. (Wohlleben 2015)

self-governance and the rejection of hierarchy and authority. There are many different interpretations and variations of anarchism, each with its own unique approach to the issues of power and authority. Some forms of anarchism focus on the rejection of and struggle against capitalism and the state – the state constituting centralized political governance most plainly – while others focus on the creation of mutual aid based, non-hierarchical communities. Ultimately, anarchism is a fluid and ever-evolving concept that is open to interpretation and adaptation based on the specific context and historical moment.

This chapter aims to draw out the deep roots of ecoanarchism as a branch of the anarchist hub tree from which degrowth can look to for support.[9] It begins with a conceptualization of anarchism before delving into the history of ecoanarchism based on the context through which the four key figures of ecoanarchism – Reclus, Kropotkin, Bookchin, and Perlman – were able to develop their ideas. Subsequently, a look at the more contemporary 'green anarchism' will exhibit ongoing debates and tensions regarding tactics, technology, the state, and civilization. In the next section, the history of zines within the anarchist milieu is explored to develop an understanding of the significance of looking at such modes of communication in the analysis chapters.

3.1 Conceptualizing Anarchism

What is included in the broader anarchist trunk that ecoanarchism stems from and the core roots that nourish it? In other words, how is anarchism conceptualized? In the case of anarchism, there are five common approaches used for its definition, as identified by Lucien Van der Walt (2017). One approach extends anarchism back to antiquity, attaching to deep roots of ideas from Daoism to nomadic societies particularly in Asia (Marshall 2008 [1992]), Europe (Van der Walt 2017), and the Americas (Graeber and Wengrow 2021). Van der Walt (2017) criticizes this 'mythologizing' as a "basically propagandistic function […] to drape an embattled current in the clothes of venerable lineage while simultaneously providing an important impetus for vague or loose definitions of anarchism" (512). John A. Rapp (2012), who wrote an entire book linking anarchism and Daoism, would likely disagree. Rapp (2012, 5) argues that "[a]narchist thought can and has occurred many times and in many places in

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[9] Hub trees are the oldest and tallest trees in the forest. They have greater access to sunlight and through the process of photosynthesis, end up producing more sugar than needed. Through a symbiotic fungal network between trees and mycelium, communication systems exist to exchange water and nutrients between trees, nurture their seedlings, and send warning signals when under threat. (Wohlleben 2015)

history," including among Daoist's in pre-imperial China, nearly 2,500 years ago. He argues this by attributing anarchism's critique of the state as that which "gave the anarchist movement its greatest power and coherence" (thereby demonstrating the next approach for defining anarchism). From a classical anarchist perspective, i.e. that of Van der Walt, older roots should be dismissed but, given their undeniable and continual influence to anarchisms the world over, they remain an important part of its foundations. This is due to anarchism's context specific nature (described as the fifth approach).

Anarchism defined as the negation of the state is the second approach. This approach draws from an etymological breakdown of the term. From the etymology of anarchy, *arche* means 'ruling' and the privative *a* signifies its negation. Opposing those who rule has primarily been directed towards 'the state'. Van der Walt criticizes this definition because he claims it would necessarily include Marxism. From the *Communist Manifesto* itself, Marx and Engel argue that the final communist society would be stateless (Van der Walt 2017, 512). Yet, there is an important distinction to be made in which Engels writes in *Anti-Dühring* that, "The state is not "abolished." *It dies out"* (1987 [1877], 268). Rather, to "negate the state", has moved anarchism towards more direct tactics of actively 'destroying' the State.[10] Furthermore, Springer and colleagues (2021) point to a second relevant sense of *arche* that is even more elemental than the political one. *Arche* initially had the connotation of 'origin' and, "evolved into the ontological and epistemological concept of the 'first principle'" (vii-ix).[11] Springer and colleagues (2021) conclude from this that *anarche,* in its underlying philosophical sense, means, "opposition to the imposition of abstract principles on a changing, developing, living reality" (viii). In other words, anarchism rejects that there is one universal truth that should be imposed on all. This is most fundamentally observed in the post-foundationalist work of Max Stirner (1806-1856) who radically critiques the abstractions of humanism, rationalism, and morality, as well as the (neo)liberal discourses and institutions that rest on them (Newman 2011).[12] In closely looking at the work of Stirner, Saul Newman

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[10] A key distinction between 'abolition' and 'destruction' is made in "Locked Up" by Bonanno (1997), who reflects on the rhetoric used by radical groups against the prison industrial complex. To Bonanno, abolition is, in practice, "impossible in a social context where prison is obviously an essential component. The destruction of prison, on the other hand, clearly linked to the revolutionary concept of destruction of the State, exists within a process of struggle" (Bonanno 1997, 20-21).

[11] 'First principle': a basic assumption that cannot be deduced any further. Used within the epistemological realm of philosophy.

[12] Post-foundationalism is used by Newman (2011) by is also referred to as anti-foundationalism or nonfoundationalism. An anti-foundationalism is a philosophy that rejects a foundationalist approach, or, in other words, that there is some fundamental belief or principle which is the basic ground or foundation of inquiry and knowledge.

(2011, 16) reads Stirner's critiques as a "response to our subjective attachments to, and idealization of, the power that dominates us." In a broad sense then, 'anarchism' refers to the opposition of all systematic forms of physical and psychological domination through the imposition of hierarchical powers and knowledges. Van der Walt is critical of anarchism being defined as that which "negates the state" but this definition should be broadened to include all forms of domination, either physical, social, or psychological.

A third approach defines anarchism as a "methodology of struggle that aims to build decentralized, prefigurative movements by means of direct action" (Van der Walt 2017, 511). 'Prefigurative movements' are those that generalize and systematize aspects of society based on an earlier form of society. In other words, "the figures of the new society […] were prefigured in those that came before" (Raekstad and Dahl 2020). The aim of prefigurative politics is "deliberate experimental implementation of desired future social relations and practices in the here-and-now" (Raekstad & Gradin 2019, 10). To be decentralized corresponds to the negation of domination in that hierarchical structures are irrelevant within the system of organization. Direct action refers to a diversity of tactics to create change outside the established mechanisms (Kauffman 2017). Voltairine de Cleyre (1866-1912) wrote a widely cited essay called "Direct Action" (2004 [1912]), which addresses the misinterpretations of direct action that are still common today. Instead, she offered a historical rendering of direct action and argued that: "Every person who ever thought he had a right to assert, and went boldly and asserted it, himself, or jointly with others that shared his convictions, was a direct actionist" (De Cleyre 2004 [1912], 47). Understanding "decentralized," "prefigurative," and "direct action" in the described ways gets at some of the central pillars of anarchism. Van der Walt (2017, 511) criticizes this approach for alluding to "an organizing style that is not unique to anarchism therefore it is unclear on what grounds they are seen as intrinsically anarchist". Van der Walt is correct in stating that this approach is not unique to anarchism, but it is still an essential aspect that defines the practical application of the ideas derived from anarchism.

Fourthly, Van der Walt, for the sake of describing anarchism in its relation to Marxism, proposes that the "new phenomenon" of anarchism is seen to have emerged from the First International. That is, having risen from the "socialist and working-class milieu of the mid to late nineteenth century" and from its foremost figures Bakunin and Kropotkin (Van der Walt 2017, 512). The First International was founded in 1864 in part by Mikhail Bakunin. It was an international organization aimed at uniting trade unions. Though Karl Marx had no

part in organizing the meeting, he quickly assumed leadership of the General Council. At its Hague Congress in 1872, Bakunin was expelled from the First International over the clash between Marx's centralized/authoritarian socialism and Bakunin's decentralizing/anti-authoritarian socialism. Given that Van der Walt's text is a comparison between Marxism and anarchism, it makes sense that he would draw from a definition in which the "socialism schism" between Marx and Bakunin in the First International marks the emergence of the anarchist tradition. On the other hand, Van der Walt has been criticized for his fundamentalist impulse to prop up certain thinkers while completely excluding others (Ferguson 2011). Furthermore, if we look at the first recorded use of *anarchy*, from Richard Taverner in 1539, "This unleful lyberty or lycence of the multytude is called an Anarchie", then we can understand anarchism as more than what Van der Walt notes (Bey 2020, n/a). Instead of only addressing questions regarding the involvement of the State, of which the "socialism schism" was based, it addresses questions of freedom and liberty, those that extend beyond the law, and are taken up by the masses, or the multitude (Bey 2020). To confine the understanding of anarchism to a moment and place in time, however important that moment may have been, restricts a full understanding of a tradition that often changes with the times.

Lastly, anarchism is often considered "indefinable by its very nature, its core features and boundaries ever in flux" (Van der Walt 2017, 510). For example, Mike Finn (2021) describes the historiography of anarchism such that it can simultaneously be found 'everywhere and nowhere'. By this, Finn is commenting on anarchisms broad and ever-adapting definitions and uses in writings of history. Similarly, Peter Marshall (2008, 3) remarks that by its very nature, anarchism is "anti-dogmatic" and "is like a river with many currents and eddies, constantly changing and being refreshed by new surges but always moving towards the wide ocean of freedom." What Marshall's and Finn's definitions do is widen the scope by implying that different contexts allow for different uses of the term and that by definition, anarchism must not be contained within a single definition. Max Stirner (1995 [1844]), associated with individualist anarchism, takes it a step further by saying that anarchisms should be unique to the individual to annul any attempts to act in the best interest of others, thereby assuming that what is best for oneself is also best for others. Unfortunately, the problem with this approach is that it has emboldened oppositional arguments and misconceptions about anarchism. According to Van der Walt (2017), overall, partisans of this approach remain inconsistent, vague, arbitrary, and opaque and run into countless contradictions. Yet, to oversimplify a tradition which means so many things to so many

people for the purpose of an academic analysis, as Van der Walt tends to do (Ferguson 2011), can be appropriate for a given study but is overall reductive of a complex idea. Instead, it is more useful to understand the necessity of the adaptability of anarchism to specific contexts and individuals. Bonanno (1996, 3) posits the anarchist tradition as "a tension, not a realisation, not a concrete attempt to bring about anarchy tomorrow morning." Acknowledging anarchism's fluidity, adaptability, and tensions allow anarchists to remain critical and is at the core of the tradition.

Arguably, Van der Walt has oversimplified each approach for understanding anarchism to more easily refute them. These approaches vary in whether they are discussing anarchism as an idea, a practice, or outlining its conditions. To understand anarchism as a tradition would include all three aspects. Furthermore, to remove anarchism's complexity, its plurality, risks eliminating a key epistemological element of the anarchist tradition, in which it refuses simplistic and deductive explanations and solutions (see Bonanno 1996). To best understand a concept is to play by its rules. Instead of deeming these roots wholly anarchistic, they combine to make up and nurture the ever-fluctuating anarchist tradition. Therefore, this thesis proceeds with the following conceptualization of anarchism:

1. Opposition to all – physical, social, and psychological – modes of domination
2. In practice, struggle takes the form of decentralized prefigurative pathways by means of direct action
3. Spatially and temporally situated (i.e., context specific and therefore ever in flux)
4. Non-dogmatically inspired by historically anarchist figures, contexts, events, and ideas (most notably the contexts and figures of the First International)

In discussing ecoanarchism, these same principles apply with the following addition:

5. Ecological considerations are at the center and the domination of nature is opposed

Given the geographical contexts of this thesis, in which the material mostly represents marginalized groups within 'Western' nations, the conceptualization of anarchism, and then ecoanarchism, must best suit the anarchism represented in the sample of zines. This thesis looks outside of the academic literature and draws on the lived experiences of contemporary ecoanarchists. Therefore, an understanding of the history of ecoanarchism must be explored through the contexts in which it has taken shape.

3.2 A History of Ecoanarchism

According to Parson (2018), anarchism, much more than other radical ideologies, has long focused on ecological issues. Because of this, ecocentric anarchism, hereafter referred to as ecoanarchism, provides a unique lens for understanding the eco-social crises. Ecoanarchism maintains an opposition to domination and carries this further to heavily criticize the domination of nature for capitalist and industrial endeavors while also highlighting and exploring alternative ecological knowledges that are not based on exploitation. Élisée Reclus and Pyotr Kropotkin emerged as the founders of classical ecoanarchism in the late nineteenth century followed by the contemporary work of Murray Bookchin from the 1960s and Fredy Perlman in 1980s. To provide some context for the emergence of ecoanarchism, Sean Parson (2018, 220) outlines a geographical moment in which ecoanarchism first emerged:

> Prior to the capitalist revolution in production, ecological crises tended to be localized and related to local over-production, natural disaster, or war. Under feudalism, the production system was not nearly efficient enough, nor did it have the desire, to increase production to the level that we began to see with the industrial revolution. As the commons became enclosed, factories emerged as a means of channeling the labour of the newly landless classes into expanding economic production. The revolutionary changes that happened during the rise of capitalism altered nearly every aspect of life, and radical thinkers and activists began to notice and act.

Those "radical thinkers and activists" that began to act against these changes were primarily from Western Europe and Russia near the mid to end of the nineteenth century, at the time of the Industrial Revolution where technology was contributing to the proliferation of mass production. As previously mentioned, within the First International of the 1860s and 1870s there were debates and struggles between authoritarian versus anti-authoritarian socialism, with Marx and Bakunin as their respective figureheads. These struggles were primarily regarding tactics and organizational strategies to achieve their visions of socialism. In Kropotkin's (2014 [1910], 299) words, the anarchist group around Bakunin, "adopted a policy of direct economical struggle against capitalism, without interfering in the political parliamentary agitation." In other words, they did not vote, engage in parliamentary politics and were against the state apparatus whereas the Marxists were focused on parliamentary activity (McKay 2014). Furthermore, "[w]hile most Marxist thinkers […] focused on the workers – paying only partial attention to the ecological impacts of capitalism – most anarchists tended to be more aware of the broader damage that capitalism was causing" (Parson 2018, 220). As members of the First International, this was the same time that Pyotr Kropotkin and Élisée Reclus began to lay the foundations for ecoanarchism.

Reclus was a French anarchist geographer born in 1830. Despite his Calvinistic upbringing and education, Reclus rejected his childhood religion, allowing him to seek inspiration from William Godwin, who also rejected his Protestant upbringing, with whom he came to understand anarchy as the "highest expression of order" (Marshall 2008, 339). Later, his conception of 'anarchy' was based on observed regularities in nature. To Reclus, "the social order of anarchy reflects the organic unity to be found in the natural world" (Marshall 2008, 341). In 1870, Reclus actively participated in both the politics and the defense of Paris when a revolutionary government seized power during the Franco-Prussian war (Clark and Martin 2013, 13). It was his experience at the 1870 Paris Commune that turned Reclus into a militant anarchist – one who rejected parliamentary politics and fought against the State – and had him later conclude that cooperatives were not enough "since they benefit only a few and leave the existing order intact" (Marshall 2008, 341). His magnum opus, *The Earth and its Inhabitants* (1875-1905), was an attempt to

> trace the course of human history, showing the unity of development underlying the diversity of cultures and epochs, and then to situate the history of our species within the larger history of the planet. In doing so, he hope[d] to contribute significantly to the very process of the development of self-consciousness. (Clark and Martin 2013, 1)

Self-consciousness and self-realization were at the core of Reclus' writings. Reclus' emancipatory vision of history encompasses, "a social and ecological ethic that is based on a concern for the self-realization of all beings in their uniqueness and particularity, and the practice of love and care for those beings" (Clark and Martin 2013, 6). With this, he became one of the first to advocate "total liberation" in which human, ecological, and animal liberation from domination were equally considered (Colling et al. 2014). He understood that the exploitation of workers by capitalists is analogous to our own domination of animals and the natural world (Parson 2018). Reclus (2013 [1866]) strongly argued for animal rights, was concerned with the toxicity of city living, and saw old growth logging as moral and ethical violence. According to Parson (2018), "he focused almost entirely on educating people about vegetarianism and environmentalism". Reclus (1933 [1897]) was advanced in his opposition to the slaughter of animals for meat and felt that people could learn a great deal from other species: "the customs of the animals will help us penetrate deeper into the science of life, will enlarge both our knowledge of the world and our love" (Reclus 1933 [1897]). Though not as strictly concerned with the domination of nature but similarly concerned with dominant knowledges/imaginations, was Reclus' close friend, Pyotr Kropotkin.

Kropotkin is most famously known as one of the leading Russian revolutionaries and a geographer who developed the theory of mutual aid. He was born to a family of the highest rank of Russian aristocracy in 1842. By the 1860s, he had become the personal *page de chambre* of Tsar Alexander II. The growing brutality under the new Tsar eventually led Kropotkin to distrust court politics and governments in general (Marshall 2008). Following the Paris Commune, he spent time with the Jura Federation members – the libertarian wing of the First International initiated by Bakunin – after which he proclaimed, "my views on socialism were settled. I was an anarchist" (Kropotkin 1962 [1899], 277). Kropotkin most famously contributed to the ideas of ecoanarchism through his theory of mutual aid, which arose in opposition to Darwin's theory of evolution (Hall and Kirdina-Chandler 2017). Kropotkin's mutual aid theory, which he derived from observing nonhuman animals, argued that cooperation, not competition, was the driving mechanism behind evolution (Hall and Kirdina-Chandler 2017, Marshall 2008). In his most famous work *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1902, 230), Kropotkin provides ample data and evidence to support that, in the struggle for life, the most successful species organize through mutual aid networks:

> The animal species, in which individual struggle has been reduced to its narrowest limits, and the practice of mutual aid has attained the greatest development, are invariably the most numerous, the most prosperous, and the most open to further progress. The mutual protection which is obtained in this case, the possibility of attaining old age and of accumulating experience, the higher intellectual development and the further growth of sociable habits, secure the maintenance of the species, its extension, and its further progressive evolution.

Kropotkin was also "one of the first to link the changing production system to ecological changes" (Parson 2018, 220). According to Parson, Kropotkin "saw the deleterious effect that urbanization had on the soil and land – as well as on the soul and mind of the worker – and further called for the return to local systems of production, consumption, and distribution to reconnect people to the land and weaken the impact of industrial production on the natural environment" (Parson 2018, 220). Accordingly, Graham Purchase (1996) attributes Kropotkin as one of the founders of contemporary environmentalism.

Nearly a century later, Murray Bookchin became "one of the most influential thinkers to have renewed anarchist thought and action" (Marshall 2008, 602). He created the idea of 'social ecology' by combining traditional anarchist insights with modern ecological thinking (Bookchin 1971, 1991 [1982]; Parson 2018). Social ecology argues that "the very notion of the domination of nature by man stems from the very real domination of human by human" (Bookchin 1991). Born in 1921 to poor Russian immigrants in the United States, Bookchin spent his early years as a worker in industry. In his younger years, Bookchin latched onto

Marxism. He was first a Communist, then a Trotskyist. It was not until he began reading Herbert Read and George Woodcock that he was able to move away from Marxism and into anarchism; by the sixties he emerged as a powerful and controversial anarchist thinker (Marshall 2008, 208). In *Post Scarcity Anarchism* (1971), Bookchin advocates hierarchy over class, domination over exploitation, liberatory institutions over the abolition of the State, freedom over justice, and pleasure over happiness. From these changing emphases, he accepted Victor Ferkiss' suggestion that his work was that of an eco-anarchist (Bookchin 1991). In his most well-known work, *The Ecology of Freedom* (1991), Bookchin (1991) traces the landscape of domination from its inception. Accordingly, domination pre-dates the rise of economics class (Bookchin 1991). Instead, it emerged from the development of large-scale sedentary societies, and the religious and warrior cultures they need to thrive. He extends a critique of domination and hierarchy to both the repression of the human psyche and the capitalist exploitation of nature. In his own words, "[e]cological problems originate in deep seated social problems [and] cannot be understood, let alone solved without a careful understanding of our existing society and the irrationalities that dominate it" (Bookchin 2007, 19). Therefore, not only do the larger systems of domination destroy the environment they also oppress people. For anarchist and environmental activists to confront hierarchical domination, Bookchin advocates the focus on human-human relationships to work to combat capitalism and ecocide (Parson 2018, 221).

Fredy Perlman was an influential anarchist thinker and writer known for his contributions to ecoanarchism and critiques of industrial civilization. Perlman was actively involved in radical political movements during the 1960s and 1970s, including the student and anti-war movements (Perlman L. 1998). From this, anti-authoritarian and anarchism began to shape his thinking. His most notable contribution is the book *Against His-Story, Against Leviathan!* (1983), co-written with his partner Lorraine Perlman. In this work, Perlman explores the historical development of hierarchical societies, the rise of the state, and the destructive impact of civilization on both human communities and the natural world. Perlman (1983) argues that industrial capitalism and the state apparatus were inherently exploitative and ecologically destructive. He advocated for a return to decentralized, nonhierarchical forms of social organization based on direct action, mutual aid, and the reclamation of autonomy and self-determination. His work emphasized the importance of resisting and dismantling oppressive systems while reconnecting with the natural world. Overall, Perlman's contributions to ecoanarchism lies in his critical analysis of civilization, industrialism, and the

state, as well as his advocacy for alternative forms of social organization and a more harmonious relationship with the environment. His work was greatly influential to the more recent development of green anarchism.

So far, the basis for this conceptualization of ecoanarchism has been solely on its key figures and the contexts that shaped their ideas. Though the analysis chapters are meant to broaden this perspective through contemporary lived experiences of ecoanarchists in a plurality of contexts, what is first worth exploring are some of the deeper roots and inspirations of ecoanarchism, specifically from Daoism. The first clear expression of an anarchist sensibility is traceable to the Daoists in ancient China from about the sixth century BCE (Marshall 2008). Indeed, the principal Daoist work, the *Tao Te Ching,* is considered one of the greatest anarchist classics (Clark 1978). The *Tao Te Ching* is attributed to the philosopher Laozi, though what matters more than the author(s) is the context in which these ideas came to fruition and inspired ecoanarchist thought.[13] The *Tao Te Ching* arose in a feudal society where the law was becoming codified, and the government was becoming increasingly centralized and bureaucratic (Marshall 2008). Rooted in the peasant soil, it became embodied during the second century CE in the formidable peasant revolt that contributed to the fall of the empire of the Second Han (25-220 CE) (Văn 2004, 5). The core principles of Daoism derive from the concepts of *wu wei* (inaction)*, yin/yang* (opposite but complementary forces)*,* and, of course, the *Tao* (the way)*.* Accordingly,

> the Daoist ideal was a form of agrarian collectivism, which sought to recapture the instinctive unity with nature that human beings had lost in developing an artificial and hierarchical culture. Peasants are naturally wise in many ways. By hard experience, they refrain from activity contrary to nature and realize that in order to grow plants they must understand and co-operate with the natural processes. Just as plants grow best when allowed to follow their natures, so do human beings thrive when least interfered with (Needham, 70). It was this insight that led the Daoists to reject all forms of imposed authority, government and the State. It also arguably made them into precursors of modern anarchism and social ecology. (Marshall 2008, 56)

The 'instinctive unity with nature' refers to the cosmogony of *yin/yang*, which provides an opportunity for a shifting onto-epistemological narrative about how we think about our relationships with our biotic communities not based on domination and exploitation but by symbiosis and reciprocity. To 'thrive best when least interfered with' reflects the concept of *wu wei*. Furthermore, to 'refrain from activity contrary to nature' reflects the Tao. There are

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[13] Laozi is said to have rejected his hereditary position as a noble, took a path of silence, and became the curator of the royal library under the Zhou Dynasty. The legend of how he came to write the *Tao Te Ching* follows that, "when he was riding off into the desert to die, he was persuaded by a gatekeeper in northwestern China to write down his teaching for posterity" (Marshall 1991, 54). However, there is little evidence of his actual existence. Rather, the *Tao Te Ching* is considered by some to be a gathering of earlier sayings from various authors.

striking philological similarities between 'anarchism' and *wu wei*. Just as *anarche* in Greek means absence of a ruler, *wu wei* means lack of *wei*, where *wei* refers to 'artificial, contrived activity that interferes with natural and spontaneous development' (Ames 1983, 34). From a political point of view, *wei* refers to the imposition of authority. To do something following *wu wei* is therefore considered natural, or in line with the *Tao* or, the natural and spontaneous order (Marshall 2008, 55). Anticipating the findings of modern ecology, the Daoists believed that the more individuality and diversity there is, the greater the overall harmony. The spontaneous order of society does not exclude conflict but involves a dynamic interplay of opposite forces (*yin/yang*). As A. C. Graham (1989, 299) says, "Western anarchists have claimed Laozi as one of themselves ever since his book became known in the West in the 19th century." All these concepts, *wu wei, ying/yang,* and the *Tao,* have clear connections to anarchist principles and demand a closer look to understand the spiritual aspect and onto-epistemological plurality of ecoanarchism.

Criticisms have been made against classical anarchism that can be similarly applied to classical ecoanarchism for, as has been demonstrated above, some of their paths of "origin" prominently intersect. These criticisms chiefly concern the eurocentrism of the anarchist tradition and the rigidity to which some have codified many of these ideas which then leads to the exclusion of dissenting voices. Most of these criticisms are not directed towards the writers and texts mentioned above. Instead, they are regarding those who dogmatically attached the whole of ecoanarchism to these founding thinkers and contexts. Firstly, in exploring an anarchist decolonization, Alexander Dunlap (2020b) draws attention to Eurocentric criticisms directed towards classical anarchism. These criticisms address how classical anarchism problematically privilege, "Enlightenment rationalism and materialist atheism, reducing issues solely to class (class-centric), and transposing Western conceptions of state, sovereignty, and law onto Indigenous cultures" (ibid., 127). Rather, as we will see in the analysis chapters, more and more anarchisms are recognizing the intersectionality of all oppressions and calling for "total liberation" (see Reclus; Springer et al. 2021) and "total decolonization" (see Ramnath 2012). Secondly, in criticizing orthodox anarchists and their "emphasis on the State," Bookchin (1991, 2) is not referring to the radical theorists of the nineteenth century discussed above, but to their followers who turned their ideas into "rigid sectarian doctrines". Similarly, in her analysis of Michael Schmidt and Lucien van der Walt's (2009) book *Black Flame,* Kathy Ferguson (2011) offers a critique that highlights the fundamentalist tendency observed in classical anarchist scholarship. Ferguson argues that

there is a purifying impulse among radicals to elevate and idolize fixed ideas, anchoring their sense of identity to them. To maintain its relevance today, Ferguson (2011) suggests that anarchism should instead challenge and question its conceptual and theoretical boundaries, rather than rigidify them. Ferguson goes on to expose how Schmidt and Van der Walt's fundamentalist approach has led to the exclusion of prominent voices, specifically of Max Stirner. Josep Gardenyes (2011) is also concerned with the projection of classical anarchists' texts into today's contexts: "We have lost and forgotten these links [to the earth] to such an extent that in classical anarchist texts we find the same rationalist proposal to replace the capitalist war of all-against-all with the socialist war of "all against nature"" (translated in Return Fire 2020, 6). The analysis chapters, in part, aim to address these concerns of rigidity and eurocentrism.

From this background on ecoanarchism, the critiques around domination and hegemonic knowledges converge and diverge into multiple foundational concepts applied within ecoanarchism – total liberation, self-realization, mutual aid, social ecology, direct action, and local-decentralized organizing. Parson (2018, 222) sums up ecoanarchism well by stating that, "overall, ecoanarchism can be seen as a coherent political [tradition] in which different strategic and philosophical perspectives coexist within a broader political project that centralizes the link between human and ecological violence and that seeks to undermine and replace industrial capitalism." Broadly understood, ecoanarchism intersects ecological oppression and human oppressions. In sum, the founders of classical ecoanarchism, Reclus and Kropotkin, laid the foundations for ecoanarchism in the late nineteenth century, with their insights into the unity of development in nature and the need for mutual aid. Bookchin and Perlman further expanded on ecoanarchist thought in the twentieth century, incorporating social ecology and critiques of industrial civilization. These thinkers highlighted the interconnections between hierarchical system of domination, oppression of both humans and the natural world, and the importance of decentralized, nonhierarchical social organization. Additionally, the Daoist roots of ecoanarchism provide ancient wisdom that resonates with the contemporary ecological and anarchist though, emphasizing the harmony with nature and rejection of imposed authority. Overall, ecoanarchism offers a comprehensive framework that challenges dominant systems and explores alternative ecological knowledges for a more harmonious and just relationship with the environment. Next is a descriptive look at green anarchism which developed in the 1960s and 1970s.

3.3 The Rise of Green Anarchism

George Woodcock (1975) recognized a new surge of anarchism that took place in the 1960s and 1970s. It associated with the New Left, the counterculture, the communes' movement, feminism, and the peace and green movements (Marshall 1991). In *Demanding the Impossible* (1991, 671-672), Peter Marshall describes the second wave of anarchism,

> Contemporary anarchists further explore imaginatively the tactics of protest and resistance, issues of identity and sexuality, mental and physical well-being, the degradation of the environment, the effects of technology and the possibility of living in a sustainable world. They find the affinity group, based on friendship, mutual aid and respect, a basis for a new commonwealth. They create new forms of self-organization, which run parallel to existing ones. They create zones of freedom and joy in the shell of the old society of deference and despair; they confront the forces of the State in mass demonstrations; they defend woodlands and fight new road schemes; they form communes and co-operatives; they reject technology and wish to return to a simpler life close to nature. In addition, as States become more global in reach and corporations more transnational, they celebrate the small, the local, the regional, the wild and the free.

Influenced by the second wave of anarchism, ecoanarchism developed under the label of green anarchism, which thus functions as a branch stemming from ecoanarchism. Some, but not all, anarchist academics make the distinction between ecoanarchism and green anarchism (see, for example, Parson 2018). For the sake of this thesis, understanding green anarchism as an extension of ecoanarchism provides a useful look at how ecoanarchism has evolved from the classic texts mentioned above, to its contemporary responses to ongoing socio-ecological crises.

From *Uncivilized: The Best of Green Anarchy* (2012, 24), The Green Anarchy Collective note the continuity of the green anarchist perspective, which remains diverse and open, and influenced by:

> anarchists, primitivists, Luddites, insurrectionalists, Situationists, surrealists, nihilists, deep ecologists, bioregionalists, eco-feminists, various indigenous cultures, anti-colonial struggles, the feral, the wild, and the earth.

Green anarchism has many overlaps with anarcho-primitivism, anti-civilization anarchism, and insurrectionary anarchism among others. Briefly, green anarchism contends that "civilization, along with domestication, is responsible for environmental destruction and human subjugation" (Parson 2018, 223). According to Parson (2018), green anarchism is not only part of the common branch of ecoanarchism, but it is also a nuanced position further expanding through critiques of civilization, domestication, technology, and for some, collapse.

Regarding civilization, social scientists of the 1960s and 1970s transformed the idea of civilization by exposing hunter-gatherer societies as both egalitarian and libertarian (Sahlins, 2017[1972]). With this came thorough critiques of civilization, especially given the colonial

legacy that occurred in the name of "civilizing the savages" (Trocino 1994). Green anarchism's critique on civilization goes a step further then critiques of the state, capitalism, and even industrialism that are common within anarchist thought. To be opposed to civilization also includes being critical of "divisions of labour, capital accumulation, institutional and social hierarchies, as well as agricultural and animal husbandry" (Parson 2018, 225). What remains a central debate is what counts as civilization (see Zerzan 2012; Sepúlveda 2005). Broadly, what all anti-civilization anarchists do oppose is civilization as a large social system premised on the transportation of resources from many areas to sustain cities (Gelderloos 2018; Sahlins 2017).

To green anarchists, "the process through which animals (human and nonhuman) and plants are controlled for societal benefit" is the basis for their critique of domestication (Parson 2018, 226). This process is seen to remove life's spontaneity, passion, freedom, and liberty. To Zerzan (2012), an influential anarchist and philosopher, domestication is a fundamental process that has shaped human societies and led to various forms of oppression and alienation as it marks a significant shift from a state of primal freedom to one of control and hierarchy. Furthermore, Zerzan (2012) argues that domestication has led to the destruction of ecosystems, the commodification of nature, the exploitation of labor, and the formation of oppressive institutions. Using Zerzan's critiques as justification, green anarchists support undermining social institutions that domesticate humans and nonhumans and turn people docile.

Regarding technology, both Reclus and Kropotkin tried to give a scientific basis for their anarchist beliefs (Marshall 2008, 339). Furthermore, Reclus looked to advanced technology to increase production and to provide the means of life for all while also being repelled by the havoc that a 'pack of engineers' could wreak on natural landscapes (Marshall 2008, 342). Bookchin also maintained that "the prospect of material abundance created by modern technology made possible a free society for all" (Marshall 2008, 602). Green anarchists would see this as a red flag, an inexcusable contradiction. Regarding technology, green anarchists have latched onto the critiques of Jacques Ellul (1964) and Illich (1973). Science and technology are understood as techniques and tools that require the reinforcement of divisions of labour (Mumford 1971). Ellul (1964) posits that modern technology and techniques undermine human freedom, liberty, and autonomy as it promotes: technological determinism; a relentless drive for efficiency, optimization, and rationalization; massification and standardization, reducing individuals to passive consumers and homogenizing cultures;

44

and alienation and powerlessness as technology becomes increasingly complex and autonomous. For green anarchism, technology is argued to reinforce the social hierarchies that anarchists regularly oppose (see Zerzan 1999; Perlman 1983). Accordingly,

> This Luddite critique is essential for any contemporary radical thinker trying to think through solutions to climate change. Instead of just looking to engineering solutions, it is worth asking what social arrangements are needed and supported by this technological system. (Parson 2018, 226)

Hence, the role of technology likewise falls into ecoanarchism's critique of domination and its subsequent influence on ecological issues.

The final core tenant of green anarchism is its belief in the imminent collapse of industrial civilization because of civilization's unsustainable quest for resources and the resulting environmental damage. Zerzan (2012) argues that if we do not abolish civilization soon, collapse will only be made worse. It is then seen as in our best interest to end civilization as a more sympathetic and compassionate approach than any technological or humanist venture (Zerzan 2012). Over the last few decades, the belief in the need for collapse has been marginalized within ecoanarchist thought. For example, two zines that will be looked at in the analysis chapters, *Black Seed* and *Return Fire,* have been influenced by primitivism but altogether reject the notion of collapse and both have been inspired by indigenous anarchism. Green anarchists have found common interests and struggles with various indigenous groups and certain zine publications have "allowed common conversation in defense of the Earth and solidarity with various Indigenous groups across the world, but – more importantly – *with everyone* taking up this struggle against the 'capitalist mega machine' and 'civilization'" (Dunlap 2022, 6). The sample of zines to be analyzed in Chapters 5 and 6 continue the debates and praxis around civilization, domestication, technology, and indigenous solidarity. The next section provides a background on zines to demonstrate their significance within ecoanarchism and green anarchism and their relevance for theory and practice building.

3.4 The Significance of Zines

A zine is a self-published, non-commercial, small circulation magazine, pamphlet, or booklet. Created by individuals or small groups, they cover a wide range of topics including art, politics, culture, and personal experiences. Zines are typically produced in small quantities, using techniques such as photocopying or printing at home, and distributed through independent channels, such as bookstores or online platforms. Zines have a long history in counterculture and underground communities and have been used to share ideas and

information outside of mainstream channels since they are direct and unmediated publications. In *Notes from Underground,* Duncombe (2008 [1992], 8) describes this counterculture of zinesters (those part of a zine community) in the first and most comprehensive study of late 20th century zines:

> Zines are speaking to and for an underground culture. And while other groups of individuals come together around the shared creation of their own culture, what distinguishes zinesters from garden-variety hobbyists is their political self-consciousness. Many zinesters consider what they do an alternative to and strike against commercial culture and consumer capitalism. They write about this openly in their zines. What was amazing to me, coming from years of sterile academic and political debates on the Left, in which culture was often in the past dismissed as irrelevant to the "real struggle," was that zines seemed to form a true culture of resistance. Their way of seeing and doing was not borrowed from a book, nor was it carefully cross references and cited, rather it was, if you'll forgive the word, organic. It was a vernacular radicalism, an indigenous strain of utopian thought.

Sandra Jeppesen (2011, 151-152) similarly mentions the use of zines to develop theory outside of academia, particularly within anarchism,

> Among anarchists there are many "organic intellectuals" who produce theory and action in written and dialogical texts that are not primarily academics, including zines [...] Thus, in considering post-anarchist theory, we need to extend that space that we investigate as post-anarchist or we risk seeing only a partial picture that looks neither beyond the male European classical anarchists to contemporary anarchist thinkers [and] current social movements in which anarchists are playing agenda-setting roles.

Zines are for those wanting to challenge the status quo, to resist the powers that be. Significantly is how and why they operate outside of academia. More importantly is their deep history within anarchisms.

Within anarchist circles, the use of zines and similar forms of communication – broadsides (single page zines) then pamphlets – has a long history that dates to the early days of the anarchist movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Liming 2010). Anarchist zines were often used as a way for anarchists to communicate with one another, share ideas, and mobilize for direct action (Liming 2010). During the 1960s and 1970s, the use of zines became widespread, as the countercultural movements of the era embraced self-publishing as a means of expressing dissent and challenging mainstream culture (Duncombe 1997). Anarchists continued to use zines as a way of sharing information and ideas, often distributing them through social networks and at radical events such as squatting actions (Jeppesen 2011). In the 1980s and 1990s, the use of zines within anarchist circles continued to evolve, with a greater emphasis on intersectionality and the incorporation of other radical movements such as feminism, anti-racism, and anti-globalization (Hays 2020). Today, zines remain an important part of anarchist culture, with many new zines being produced each year and a thriving zine distribution network that spans the globe. They continue to serve as a means of sharing information, building community, and promoting resistance and solidarity within

anarchist circles and beyond. The format and aesthetic of zines also often contributes quite a bit to how the content is communicated and understood. However, the aesthetics of the zines are not explored in this thesis.

Using zines to understand contemporary ecoanarchist theory and practice holds significant value for several reasons. It allows marginalized voices and perspectives to be heard outside of mainstream channels. Within the realm of ecoanarchism, zines provide a space for individuals and communities to anonymously, or not, express their ideas, experiences, and critiques of dominant systems, including civilization, technology, and environmental destruction. Zines also embody the principles of autonomy and self-organization that are central to ecoanarchism, therefore learning from ecoanarchist thinkers that are practicing what they preach allows for a level of nuance and authenticity that might not be seen in academic accounts of ecoanarchism. Additionally, studying zines within the context of ecoanarchism allows for a deeper understanding of the diverse voices and perspectives within the movement. Different zines may emphasize different aspects of ecoanarchism, such as primitivism, anti-civilization, indigenous struggles, or critiques of technology. By examining a range of zines, researchers can gain insights into the complexities and debates within ecoanarchist thought. Lastly, zines provide a valuable record of grassroots activism and resistance. They capture lived experiences and perspectives of ecoanarchists at specific moments in time, documenting challenges, successes, and ongoing struggles faced by communities engaged in ecological and anti-authoritarian movements.

3.5 Conclusion

That anarchism is interpreted in a multiplicity of ways leads to conflict and tensions and the inclusion of dissenting and contradictory voices. This is an important aspect of anarchism, one that this thesis will, at times, draw on as a strength. For historians of anarchism, the problem of definition is one that has caused great and continual contention (Finn 2021, 13). This challenge can be taken as a wonderfully cheeky wink from anarchism. However, for the purpose of this chapter, anarchism's mischievous nature creates a conceptual problem in trying to provide an overarching definition of a broad idea. The literature speaks to the many different forms of ecoanarchism, but this thesis is grounded in understanding ecoanarchism as an ecocentric branch of the anarchist tradition conceptualized around its: critique of domination, historical roots, plurality of contexts, prefigurative struggle, tactics for direct

action, reciprocal relations with nonhuman communities and ecosystems, and its more recent focus on civilization, domestication, technology, and indigenous solidarity.

Bringing the conversation back into the framework of Wright's (2010) modes of transformation, there is promise within ecoanarchism to contribute to both interstitial and ruptural modes of transformation. But it is clearly critical of symbiotic or reformist modes of transformation as ecoanarchism 'negates the state' and other forms of domination. To restate, interstitial modes refer to transformational processes that occur within the spaces and gaps between dominant institutions and structures. These processes involve the development of alternative practices, values, and social relations that challenge and subvert the existing order. With ecoanarchism's critique of domination and civilization, prefigurative efforts, reimagnings of relations with nonhumans, and turn toward some indigenous knowledges, there is promise for it to contribute to degrowth interstitial modes of transformation. Ecoanarchism also promises much regarding degrowth's ruptural modes or of transformation. Ruptural modes are more radical and transformative approaches to social change that aim to fundamentally overthrow or replace existing institutions and structures. The many tactics that have been used by ecoanarchists with the aim of overthrowing any form of domination brings the potential for a robust set of knowledges on ruptural modes.

To circle back to the conceptualization of degrowth from the previous chapter (Chapter 2), degrowth aims are (in shortened form):

- an overall effort towards the reduction of material and energy throughput while improving human and ecological wellbeing
- strategic use of all modes of transformation
    - support and understand the work done outside of state institutions
    - diversity of strategies to be used with regards to ways of organizing and mobilizing
- dedicated to temporally, spatially, and small-scale understandings of nature
- critical of green growth's focus on technological innovation

To these points, ecoanarchist theory and practice has much to say. Ecoanarchism has much to contribute on questions regarding the most effective ways to mobilize against growth-based development and different ways of organizing based on prefigurative experimentation, supporting already existing alternatives, and resisting growth-based industries and projects. Creating tensions within these different transformational modes of mobilization and organization also rely on questions regarding the state institutions of which ecoanarchism has

much to say. Furthermore, a lot of the ecoanarchist praxis is dedicated to emphasizing non-exploitative and non-hierarchical relationships between the human worlds and the nonhuman worlds. It can thus provide a useful and unique source to bridge the gap in degrowth between what is called for, how this would look, and how to achieve a more mutualistic and balanced relationship with the nonhuman communities that surround us. In other words, how to presently create less distance to the core of nature. Ecoanarchism is also anticipated to contribute theoretical critiques of technology and potential case studies on the use of convivial tools and creative techniques to overcome the dependence on state and market-controlled technologies. This is used to build the emphasis on degrowth calls for more symbiotic relations between humans and nonhumans.

This chapter has provided a brief introduction to the context of zines within ecoanarchist circles. The next chapter will discuss the feminist methodology and ethic of research as it provides a clear explanation for why zines are valuable sources of knowledge and how they can be used to further develop theory and practice in a way that does not objectify the subjects of the texts but instead collaborates with them. It then goes into detail about the methods used for the selection of the sample of zines and the ways in which they were analyzed.

4. Methodology and Methods

Layla Staats was arrested in 2021 for taking part in a blockade of a culturally significant archeological site from destruction on unceded Cas Yikh (Grizzly House) territory belonging to the Gitdimt'en clan of the Wet'suwet'en people on Turtle Island – in what is commonly referred to as British Columbia, Canada.[14] The planned, and eventually executed, destruction of this land was part of the production of the Coastal GasLink pipeline (Press Pool 2021). In an interview in which Staats (2021, 10:43-11:02) describes the need for resistance to the construction of the Coastal GasLink pipeline, she explains that,

> This connection that we have to the land around us, the land that we've lived on, our territories – it is real. And we know what that feels like as Haudenosaunee [a Confederacy of the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas nations of Turtle Island]. We feel that connection. Because it's not just 'nature.' *We are in a relationship with that land. It knows us and we know it.* (Emphasis added)

The relationship to the land that Staats describes differs from the dominant "modernist" narrative that entails the extraction and destruction of natural ecosystems for development and economic growth on a global scale. Mario Blaser (2013, 14) explains how it is common that for many indigenous peoples, they are defending "not simply access to and control over resources, they are defending complex webs of relations between humans and nonhumans, relations that, for them, are better expressed in the language of kinship than in the language of property." This example illustrates one of many 'alternative' knowledges and cultural practices regarding socioecological 'sustainable' relationships with the land. Though the intention of the blockade was the protection of sacred land, the consequence for Staats and other land defenders was physical violence, arrest, and dehumanization in the hands of the Canadian RCMP and court system (Submedia 2021). This begins to demonstrate the power dynamics at play regarding which knowledges, worldviews, and cultural practices are privileged over others. The methods chosen and methodological approach taken for the study of contemporary ecoanarchism aims to maintain a sensitivity and understanding of the complex interplay of power and socio-ecological conflicts within ecoanarchist struggles, like that of Layla Staats.

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[14] The name 'Turtle Island' is based on a common North American Indigenous creation story and is henceforth synonymous with "North America". This text uses Turtle Island instead of North America, in many instances, to show solidarity with true decolonial efforts by indigenous rights activists to "bring about the repatriation of Indigenous land and life" (Tuck and Yang 2012, 1). A "true" decolonial effort is meant to articulate Tuck and Yang's (2012, 1) argument regarding the metaphorization of decolonization which "problematically attempts to reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and rescue settler futurity." Instead, as will be demonstrated in the analysis chapters, efforts towards land back and literal decolonization are recurrent priorities with the authors and groups represented within the zines.

To recap part of the introduction, the theoretical lens of this thesis adheres to an anarchist political ecology (APE) perspective in understanding the ways that "power structures the ontologies that become both privileged and occluded in neoliberal strategies for green economy governance" (Sullivan 2017, 217). APE) was chosen for its critique of power and how this critique can help to understand the diversity of knowledges, worldviews, and cultural practices represented in the analysis chapters. It focuses on various aspects of alternative cultural ontologies, which can also be referred to as worldings or knowledges. Cultural ontologies open space for diverse world views and, consequently, practices that promote sustainability. To understand 'alternatives ontologies', an APE first explains is the role of the 'dominant onto-epistemology' regarding solutions to the climate crisis. To use an anarchist lens to discuss anarchist literature is attributed to a methodology that aims to build knowledge, to meet the subjects of the analysis where they are theoretically from the inside instead of from a bird's eye view.

The following, therefore, explains the feminist methodology and ethic of research (FMER). A feminist ethic is very much embedded within an anarchist political ecology. FMER is used to ensure 'knowledge building' instead of 'knowledge extraction' and addresses issues of power within the research process itself. It seeks to generate a reciprocally positive impact for the subjects hence aligning with the aim of this thesis to build strong solidarity networks (Oakley 1981). FMER is then used, with the APE lens, to inform the methods chosen for this thesis, which are discussed in the third section of this chapter. This section lays out the specifics of how this thesis went about 'building knowledge' in later chapters that analyzed ecoanarchist zines (as described in Chapter 3 on the background of ecoanarchism). The conclusion clarifies the interrelatedness of the lens, methodology, and methods to answer the research question given the parameters of its aims and objectives.

4.1 Feminist Methodology and Ethic of Research

This thesis borrows from the feminist methodology and ethic of research, hereafter shortened to FMER, an approach that has long existed as a tool for emancipatory projects that address issues of power within the realm of research, thereby aligning with anarchist and degrowth ethics (Letherby 2003). The main goal in using FMER is that the research creates a mutually beneficial outcome for the individuals and groups involved, resulting in a positive impact for the subjects (Oakley 1981). This is primarily done through subverting traditional power

relations and ethical pitfalls common within established, positivist research (Sprague 2005). Four common issues in traditional research methods involve: the role of race, ethnicity, gender, and class in research relationships; the objectification of research subjects; the influence of power on who is studied; and the problematic assumptions in traditional analytical approaches (Sprague 2005). Above all, FMER's most significant insight revolves around the interplay between knowledge and power as it highlights the profound connections and influences that exist between these two concepts (Lennon and Whitford 1994). Since this approach address many of the same issues as APE – both focus on power structures and assumptions that trickle down from the dominant onto-epistemology – it becomes a useful tool to understand *how* to remain critical of these power dynamics throughout the analysis process. The tools are namely to understand the power that the researcher has as someone knowing and representing others and similarly understanding one's reflexivity or, the examination of the influence of one's own beliefs, judgments, and practices on the research.

To balance power dynamics between the researcher and the researched, FMER emphasizes the perspectives of research subjects and allows them to have a say in the research process and analysis. This research does this by drawing on texts written by eco-anarchists themselves to understand ecoanarchism through their chosen mode of communication and understanding. It also encourages continually questioning the purpose and construction of knowledge throughout the research process, recognizing that information fathered with a specific intention can easily be utilized for different purposes or objectives (Sprague 2005). For this text then, FMER acts as a reminder to treat the texts, which exist outside of academia, as legitimate forms of knowledge and experience sharing in order to build theory.

Furthermore, reflexivity is commonly practiced throughout, "openly reflecting on, acknowledging, and documenting the social location and the roles [the researcher plays] in co-creating data and in constructing knowledges" (Doucet and Mauthner 2008, 12). One's social location can be impacted by physical characteristics like gender identity, ethnicity, and ability – or values and worldviews – like religion or politics. As a brief statement of positionality, I am a white, cisgendered, middle class Canadian citizen that has had a very privileged position in society in many ways. However, as a queer woman, I also have experiences marginalization. Furthermore, I graduated in the social sciences as an undergraduate. Intrigued by the exploration of alternative forms of organization and social dynamics, I held the belief that expanding our understanding of society would contribute to

creating a better world. I now study environmental issues through an interdisciplinary lens and hope that what I have to offer will be useful to others trying to tackle the same issues.

To apply an APE framework through FMER given the methods employed, this thesis modifies the methodological guidelines for a feminist research ethic. Mies' (1983) guidelines were created specifically for the field of Women's Studies and reflect the second wave of feminism.[15] Listed below is an update to the guidelines, which better suit the present research. Overall, these guidelines maintain the same goal of FMER of overcoming the "contradiction between the prevalent theories of social science and the methodology and political aims of [this research]" (Mies 1983, 120). [16] First, instead of assuming that I am neutral and impartial to the content of the zines, FMER calls for 'conscious partiality', whereas I recognize my own connection to and identification with ecoanarchists as part of a larger social whole. This also means shifting the relationship between researchers and subjects from a "view from above" to a "view from below" that acknowledges the power dynamics at play (Mies 1983). Since I do not have direct contact with ecoanarchists within this thesis, power dynamics are less prevalent but still play a role in how I read and relay the information. Based on my positionality and political identification, I remained open and empathetic to the experiences communicated through the zines. But, as someone who has had little involvement in the type of actions reported, my lack of insight made it so that I was entirely dependent on how these experiences were communicated. I share many of the subject's sense of disempowerment and frustration that comes with the lack of action towards the ongoing environmental, social, and ecological crises. I also am encouraged by the strides being made both by degrowth and ecoanarchism and aim to push these projects forward while refraining from a dogmatic view of either degrowth or ecoanarchist theories or practices.

Furthermore, FMER emphasizes active participation in the research process and social actions, rather than the detached "spectator knowledge" of traditional research (Mies 1983). This participation in struggles and movements also shifts the focus of research towards a focus of changing the status quo (Mies 1983). I believe that challenging the status quo is essential for progress, fostering innovative solutions to ongoing crises, addressing injustices, and promoting positive societal change. As the researcher, I also choose to understand

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[15] The second wave of feminism refers to a period of feminist activism and thought that emerged in the 1960s and lasted through the 1980s. It focused on issues such as gender equality, reproductive rights, and sexual liberation. Critiques of the second wave of feminism include its lack of intersectionality, essentialism, exclusion of other issues, and lack of solidarity.

[16] Original quote specifies "the women's movement"

ecoanarchist 'violent actors' as similarly rational actors choosing to pursue a less popular form of protest against a violent system (see Gelderloos 2013). According to Cole (1990 [1977]) and Letherby (2003), this type of insights means that I am positioning myself within the research as not only an observer but also a participant. In other words, I am not directly participating through contributions to physical actions but instead I am participating to the same knowledge building that is occurring within the sample of zines. I do, however, see the contradiction in my lack of participation in physical struggles. Furthermore, the research process is seen as a process of "conscientization" for both the researcher and the research subjects, which also includes studying the individual and social history of the research subjects. To do this, much research was done outside of the zines to contextualize what was being communicated. Lastly, FMER encourages overcoming individualism, competitiveness, and careerism within the field of research (Mies 1983). This is in line with my intention to find solutions that challenge the dominant onto-epistemology and gives voice to dissenting voices instead of studying an area that might be best suited for a career beyond this thesis.

Michael Loadenthal provides a relevant example of the use of FMER through his analysis of anarchist communiqués to build theory.[17] In *The Politics of Attack*, Loadenthal's (2017) use of communiqués encounters insurrectionary theorists where they are coming from by reading, analyzing, and communicating accounts, as told by participants, of on the ground direct actions. By building on communiques, Loadenthal enacts FMER's idea of "redefining the venue of research as inherently political, seeking social change by operating at the margins of subjected knowledge" (Loadenthal 2017, 21). That is, the 'objectivity' of traditional research methods is replaced by a reflexive position in which the Loadenthal acknowledges the political intent of himself, and the subjects being researched.

Following Loadenthal's (2017) use of FMER to study anarchist communiqués, the aim of this examination is not to impose the researcher's perspective on the subject, evaluate its effectiveness, or propose an alternative. Instead, the objective of this thesis is to understand eco-anarchist theory and practice in its own terms and therefore through their modes of communication, zines. Further aims are to examine its unique formulation of ways to adapt

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[17] Anarchist communiqués are written statements or declarations that communicate the views and actions of anarchist groups or individuals. These communiqués typically address political or social issues, and may announce acts of resistance, protest, or direct action carried out by the anarchists. The goal of these communiqués is to spread their message and ideas to a wider audience, and to demonstrate their commitment to anarchist principles. They are often distributed through various means, including online platforms, zines, and pamphlets.

and mitigate social and ecological crises and generate reciprocally positive contributions for both degrowth and ecoanarchism. In the discussion of eco-anarchism more specifically, this involves the construction of knowledge for social action and not further criminalization. To remain accountable to the subjects, zines and communiqués are explored as communicating political theory, in and of themselves, that is associated with the given action that certain groups or individuals are claiming, and the thoughts and ideas they are sharing. The ecoanarchist communities to be studied are not seen as vessels containing knowledge to be taken, but "as partner[s] in a collaborative endeavor to engage in knowledge building, rather than knowledge production", with degrowth (Loadenthal 2017, 4). In sum, as analytical features, it is the responsibility of the researcher to adopt a critical approach that emphasizes the construction of knowledge, engagement with the community, and participatory research that recognizes marginalized knowledge and subjects. FMER is therefore used to ensure that this research aligns with the principles of an emancipatory political project that has reciprocally positive impact. To contribute to both ecoanarchism and degrowth is to acknowledge the often-dismissed histories and present struggles of ecoanarchists for further solidarity and help inform degrowth in a more practical sense.

4.2 Reflexive Thematic Analysis of Anarchist Zines as Method

To answer how ecoanarchist ideas and practices deepen and diversify degrowth pathways given the lens, methodology, and ethic of research outlined above, this thesis makes use of a reflexive thematic analysis of anarchist publications, primarily in the form of zines. A reflexive thematic analysis is a qualitative research method used to identify and analyze patterns and themes within data. This approach allows for the researcher to shape the analysis and interpretation of the data and encourages the researcher to reflect on their own biases and assumptions throughout the process. Thematic clusters were first identified using a deductive approach based on theoretical constructs and categories derived from the literature review of degrowth and the background on ecoanarchism in Chapters 2 and 3. To restate, these thematic cluster were strategic ways of organizing and mobilizing and relationships between humans and nonhumans. A deductive approach also informed the selection of Wright's three logics of transformation as the theoretical framework used in the analysis. To recap, degrowth encourages the exploration of all three logics of transformation but prioritizes symbiotic

transformation within the literature. Ecoanarchism, on the other hand, offers a promising glimpse into how interstitial and ruptural pathways can be further developed.

Based on the major tensions and debates that are ongoing within degrowth and merging these with the conceptualization ecoanarchism, the two thematic clusters were explored to answer the research question: : *How can ecoanarchist ideas and practices deepen, embolden, and diversify degrowth pathways towards socially and ecologically sustainable futures*? In the first analysis chapter (Chapter 5), questions regarding the state, strategies of mobilizing, and ways of organizing are explored through their interstitial and ruptural means. Similarly, in the second analysis chapter (Chapter 6), the same core anarchist tenants used within Chapter 5 are then applied to relations between human and nonhuman relations and are also explored through their interstitial and ruptural forms.

The two thematic clusters and the theoretical framework serve as a starting point for coding the zines and later facilitating comparisons between degrowth and ecoanarchism in the discussion sections and conclusions. However, during the analysis process, an inductive approach was also used, which "involves the search for pattern from observation and the development of explanations – theories – for those patterns" (Bernard 2011, 7). With an inductive approach, subthemes arose from and were grounded in information emerging from the zines. This method involved noticing patterns, defining emergent themes, constantly comparing the content against codes and categories, and using mind map displays to reveal overarching patterns. NVivo 12, a qualitative data computer software used for the analysis of texts and other media, helped with coding the zines. Instead of using the software to automatically search key words and phrases, I read each zine and coded sections of them based on where they fit within the two thematic clusters of ways of organizing and human and nonhuman relations. This allowed for the emergence of subcategories. Each subcategory made up a "code." Many sections of texts fit into multiple codes. This deductive and inductive thematic analysis allowed for a more complex and nuanced exploration of the sample set of zines, without the risk of rigidity or premature closure associated with a purely deductive approach. In other words, it allowed me to adapt and build knowledge from the information and narratives provided.

As a reflexive thematic analysis, the method puts the researcher's subjectivity at the core of the approach or acknowledges the researcher's role in knowledge generation (Joy et al., 2023). Throughout the analysis process, my own positionality influenced my interpretation of the data. As a collaborator in this project to build knowledge towards

ecoanarchist and degrowth pathways, that is my contribution with this thesis. This reflexive approach is designed to ensure that the analysis was grounded in the data and can also remain open to alternative interpretations.

The digitalization of zines is what has made this research economically feasible. Instead of travelling to visit a physical anarchist zine archive in places like Amsterdam or Victoria, Canada, or rather to be able to visit on the ground actions, I was able to choose from a plethora of online zine archives. Among the popular ones are theanarchistlibrary.org, azinelibrary.org, archive.org, crimethinc.com, sproutdistro.com, anchorarchive.org, and warzonedistro.noblogs.com. With thousands of zines to choose from on these sites, I had to develop a criterion to narrow down the scope. The original selection of the zine sample for this research was based on the criteria that they came from Sprout Distro database between February 2017 and August 2022 and that they had to be in English. Five and a half years was the time in which Sprout Distro published blogs detailing their zine collection. It also seemed an appropriate scope given the scale of this thesis project and to be able to encapsulate the contemporary ecoanarchist moment. Later it would be shortened due to the size of the sample. The language was a limitation of the researcher. Sprout Distro was the chosen database because it provided a comprehensive and diverse sample of anarchist zines based on geography, anarchist tendencies, topics, format, and publishers. It was not the only archive to satisfy these requirements. As examples, the Anarchist Library had the most comprehensive collection of zines and Warzone Distro had the most relevant collection of zines. It was the way in which Sprout Distro had organized their zine collection that allowed me to browse the large collection, both topically and chronologically, with relative ease. Starting in February of 2017, Sprout Distro began releasing monthly blog posts with a collection of newly published zines along with abstracts of their content. The posts would consist of roughly ten to twenty zines and the abstracts allowed for an easy glance into the contents of the zines to determine their relevance. Most other archives post all zines in alphabetical order with only the title being given.

With this criteria, 341 anarchist zines were collected. I read through each abstract provided by Sprout Distro to determine whether the entire zine or separate texts within the zine were related to the broader topics of environmental issues and ecological relations. With this information, I then categorized the zines as green (directly discusses environmental issues and ecological relations), yellow (relevant to specific tensions within degrowth), or red (not relevant enough) to narrow down the quantity of the selection. The breakdown of this coding

was as follows: 60 green zines, 63 yellow zines, and 218 red zines. I then went through the green zines and checked for diversity of place and topic. The collection is mainly concentrated from within Turtle Island and some European states. Some zines were removed after further inspection (why zines were removed is discussed below). Finally, I went through the yellow zines to add to missing regions or topics that I believed could strengthen the analysis. Unfortunately, no new states or territories were added and the collection remains focused within Turtle Island and Europe. After this process, I had gathered a collection of 43 zines roughly 1500 pages. Appendixes A gives details – including title, year, and region – of the original sample of 43 zines.

During the process of narrowing down the sample of 341 zines, some texts that were potentially related were removed from the sample. With regards to the topic, most discussed different eco-defense actions. Zines that covered the same actions were removed from the analysis but later used as support material. There were many texts on prisoner solidarity. People imprisoned for eco-related resistance were often listed within ecologically themed zines. Therefore, zines that spoke only about prisoner solidarity and the prison-industrial complex were not used for the analysis but were used as supporting material. If some zines did not have all their relevant information mentioned in their abstract on Sprout Distro, then relevant zines could have also been excluded from selection. Conversely, within the monthly blog posts, some zines were reprints of material previously published. As there was a decision to reprint based on the relevance of the material given present circumstances, these were not excluded. Therefore, there contains some material that predates 2017. Some zines were removed from the sample of 43 zines if they were not contributing new ideas or practices. I gave priority to ongoing actions or otherwise more recent actions. Furthermore, supplementary texts and zines were added to fill gaps in knowledge or understanding as most zines were not known to provide much background. As I became more familiar with the contemporary ecoanarchist scenes around the world, I became better equipped to make judgement calls on what information, context, and background were additionally needed. Zines make up a large part of the supporting material.

In the analysis of the sample of zines from Sprout Distro, there are several limitations to consider. Firstly, the website did not post any material during 2020 – during the pandemic – and there were also other months throughout the six-year period where there was a lack of content. This may have an impact on the overall representation of the zine scene during those times or may speak to a lack of publications due to the pandemic. Additionally, the collection

of zines featured on the website is reliant on unpaid labor, which may result in inconsistencies in the frequency of the posts and the work put into them. Furthermore, the selection of zines on the website is not exhaustive, and there seems to be a greater representation of zines from Turtle Island. Some zines were also no longer available because of the shutdown of 325.nostate.net server in the Netherlands.[18] Also, some periodicals may appear on some of the monthly blogs but not consistently, demonstrating the randomness for which zines were either included or not. It is worth mentioning that the website states that they may not agree with everything contained in the zines they feature, and they would try to cast a wide net with their selection. Lastly, language is an obvious limitation. Only dealing with zines written or translated into English had a huge impact on the regional focus that this sample ended up taking. Appendix B provides a statistical breakdown of the spatial, temporal, and thematic features of the sample of 43 zines.

4.3 Conclusion

The research borrows from many disciplines within the social sciences and humanities: (environmental) anthropology, (anarchist) political ecology (human and anarchist) geography, philosophy, and history (of degrowth, ecoanarchism and capitalism). The theme therefore identifies as interdisciplinary, perhaps even transdisciplinary, as it jumps between the humanities and social sciences. According to Michael Loadenthal (2017, 2), "[e]pistemological presumptions, methodological tendencies, and canonical truths" differ between fields of study. Therefore, it became important that I made clear the use of the APE lens to address the presumptions, tendencies, and truths that this thesis does and does not rest on. To do this, this thesis considers a diversity of worldings to resist the hegemony of the dominant onto-epistemology mentioned in Chapter 1. This is further explained through the employment of APE as a lens to ensure the continued consideration of the role of power. The first section explains why the feminist methodology and ethic of research is a useful emancipatory tactic of study aimed at critically addressing these issues of power throughout the research process. Zines were therefore the chosen medium to be analyzed to build

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[18] 325.nostate.net was an online platform that hosted anarchist and radical literature, news, and resources. A statement from the collective reads, "On 29.03.21 the Dutch police raided the data center that holds the nostate.net server, seizing the server itself as the part of a criminal investigation into 'terrorism'. Nostate.net is a collective that provided a platform for international movement websites from prisoner solidarity groups, multiple campaign collectives, anti-summit pages and international counter-information."

knowledge alongside ecoanarchism and degrowth communities. The following excerpt from a zine published in 1946 explains the motivation for many to make zines:

> Such a man is stimulated by some form of discontent whether with the constraints of his world or the negligence of publishers, at any rate something he considers unjust, boring or ridiculous. He views the world of publishers and popularizers with disdain, sometimes with despair… [and] he generally insists that publication should not depend upon the whimsy of conventional tastes and choices. (Hoffman, Allan, and Ulrich 1946, 3-4)

Representing the "underground," zines have long been a medium for a plurality of countercultures. Zine creators are those that are "discontent", or not dependent on the "whimsy of conventional tastes and choices". They do not do it for recognition (often anonymous) or the financial gain (generally expect to lose money). In general, they are trying to push against dominant culture because they do not find space within these realms for themselves. Ecoanarchists fit into this group described as discontent and struggling against power. Expression through zines does not come into conflict with the values of ecoanarchists and therefore are the ideal medium to meet ecoanarchists where they are to begin knowledge building.

The APE lens draws on elements of (eco)anarchism and degrowth, primarily that the dominant onto-epistemology needs to be challenged through a plurality of alternatives that are situated and constantly in flux. The approach used in understanding environmental concerns and solutions is partially shaped by an anarchist lens, recognizing that traditional environmental approaches have been limited in their effectiveness and impact. This work aims to lay the groundwork for a more nuanced and critical examination of environmental issues and the potential for alternative solutions. In what follows are the analysis chapters of ecoanarchist zines according to themes of human-human relating and human-nonhuman relating.

5. On Ways of Resisting and Organizing

There exists limited discussion within degrowth on questions regarding the state, as discussed in Chapter 3. According to D'Alisa and Kallis (2020, 1), degrowth has "no theory of what the state is, or when and why it changes." More recently, the introduction to *Degrowth and Strategy,* states that, "in order to be effective, social movement have to confront the agendas driven by corporate and state actors, who have the power to ignore, water down, co-opt and criminalize transformative efforts" (Schulken et al. 2022, 10). Degrowth proposals require radical change of the political, social, and economic system if they are to be implemented. As a core force in modes of transformation, change cannot but deal with the state (Wright 2010). Therefore, there have been strategic consequences to this gap in scholarship regarding what role the state would and should play and how it informs degrowth pathways.

To help illustrate, Demaria and colleagues (2013, 191) categorize different strategies involved in degrowth to improve degrowth's basic definition and "avoid reductionist criticisms and misconceptions." These different strategies are oppositional activism, building alternatives, reformism, and research. The first three clearly match with ruptural, interstitial, and symbiotic modes of transformation, respectively. Oppositional activism includes those acts of opposition such as campaigning to stop infrastructural projects through "demonstrations, boycotts, civil disobedience, direct action and protest" (Demaria et al. 2013, 201). Building alternatives is where practitioners promote "local, decentralized, small scale, and participatory alternatives" and some argue "the change of individual values and behavior" (ibid. 202). For examples, Demaria and colleagues (2019, 431) introduce a special issue in which they explore "rooted experiences of people and collectives rebelling against and experimenting with alternative to growth." Through a geographical lens, they introduce examples of both oppositional activism and alternative building through nowtopian territories, resurgent territories, and liminal territories. Reformism includes preserving and acting within existing (state) institutions. Examples of this include policy proposals within governmental institutions. Research emphasizes the opportunity to "open up new imaginaries and create links between levels and approaches" (Demaria et al. 2013, 207). Unfortunately, this tidy classification of strategies has not resulted in much clarity for the degrowth community. Having attended and surveyed participants at the Degrowth Conference in 2014, Burkhart and colleagues (2020, 14) stated that there were "deep misunderstanding and misconceptions regarding […] approaches, proposals, and strategies" within degrowth.

What is clear is that much of the degrowth literature promotes the simultaneous emphasis on all three modes/approaches/strategies of transformation. As an example, after exploring each of these approaches Demaria and colleagues (2013, 207) state how "debate and controversies over strategies employed within each source of the degrowth movement have been most intense" and propose that all these strategies are compatible and combined in the right way can "enable the right process of transformation." Again, Wright (2010, 213) made this same proposal stating that, "[i]n different times and places, one or another of these modes of transformation may be the most effective, but often all of them are relevant." Yet, as demonstrated in Chapter 2, an overwhelming portion of degrowth literature has focused on symbiotic transformation, or reformism. This has mainly been demonstrated through the countless policy proposals put forth throughout the degrowth literature. What is lacking is practical applications of degrowth's inclusion of ruptural and interstitial transformational strategies and the state's role in the ecological crisis. Focusing too heavily on symbiotic transformation reinforces its contradictory character in which strategies that extend and deepen institutional forms of social empowerment simultaneously reinforce the existing system and the dominant classes and elites that benefit from it. Wright (2010, 213) discusses this through the example of the democratization of the capitalist state: "democracy was the result of concentrated pressures and struggles from below which were initially seen as a serious threat to the stability of capitalist dominance, but in the end liberal democracy helped solve a wide range of problems which contributed to the stability of capitalism." Demaria and colleagues (2019, 442) corroborate this point: "growth is a keyword for creating the illusion of a collective interest, in the name of which 'the state' is legitimated." As demonstrated critiques of the state and reformist solutions exist within the literature that advocates socio-ecological transformation, which gives extra weight to the importance of not relying too heavily on symbiotic modes of transformation.

For degrowth to gain practical knowledge outside of symbiotic modes of transformation would entail more attention, focus, and implementation of "oppositional activism" and "building alternatives." To resolve this gap between degrowth literature and its proposals, Burkhart and colleagues (2020) call for degrowth to be in dialogue with other socio-ecological movements. That includes ecoanarchism. Ecoanarchism, rooted in anarchism's long history commenting on the role of the state, and on domination more broadly, provides ample dialogue on this issue and with it, potential for further reflection for degrowth. To start, the next section provides a brief description of ecoanarchist critique of the

limitations of reform-based solutions (or symbiotic tactics of transformation) to the environmental and climate crisis. The next two sections explore zines to delve into ecoanarchist logics of organizing, providing degrowth with practical and theoretical insights into ruptural and interstitial modes of transformation that go beyond proposals of symbiosis. The following section looks towards ecoanarchist ruptural tactics including direct action from below and knowledge sharing on state methods of repression. The next section focuses on ecoanarchism interstitial alternative building through the anarchist principle of voluntary cooperation as a means that challenge the status quo. This chapter ends with a conclusion that brings ecoanarchist experiences back to degrowth to understand how they can inform degrowth's ruptural and interstitial pathways to transformation regarding ways of organizing and mobilizing.

5.1 Direct Action from Below: on ecoanarchist ruptural tactics

In *Debating Anarchism,* Mike Finn (2021, 6) notes how "a tacit belief in the rightness and naturalness of states is an almost indelible element in much history writing." Furthermore, ecoanarchist critiques say that the role of the state is "fundamentally at odds with genuine desire for ecosystem protection" (Mullenite 2016, 382). Similarly, in discussing an anarchist political ecology, Springer and colleagues (2021, 2) maintain, "ecological conditions cannot be solved through the protocols of electoral politics or the procedure of the state." These ideas extend back into the writings of Reclus who wrote of an ecologically balanced world achieved through "the absence of government, it is anarchy, the highest expression of order" (quote from Clark and Martin 2013, 10). In ecoanarchist theory, questions regarding the state have clear answers: either work against or outside of state institutions and procedures, never with. In practice, this has taken on many forms. Working against and outside of the state aligns with Wright's ruptural and interstitial modes of transformation and therefore makes ecoanarchist practices a source for degrowth to further explore these pathways.

To begin with ecoanarchist experiences with ruptural modes of transformation, or ruptural tactics, is to first understand the anarchist history of the division between mass and insurrectionary anarchisms. Mass anarchisms, commonly understood through anarcho-syndicalism, anarcho-communism, and anarcho-socialism, "stresses the piecemeal building up of mass movements, typically through struggles around immediate issues and reforms, with anarchists participating in such movements to radicalize them and transform them into

levers of revolutionary change" (Van der Walt 2017, 515). Insurrectionary anarchism, on the other hand, "views reforms as illusory, considers movements like unions as reformist and authoritarian, and emphasizes propaganda by the deed as means of provoking a spontaneous revolutionary upsurge" (ibid.). Much of anarchist history is rooted in tactics of mass anarchism but its newer ecoanarchist branches are influenced much more by the winds of insurrectionary anarchism through militant attack, illegalism, and propaganda of the deed.

As a theoretical and practical approach that emphasizes direct action, revolt, and insurrection as means of achieving social transformation, insurrection is importantly distinctive from revolution (Dunlap 2020c). It rejects hierarchical structures and advocates for the destruction of oppressive systems through spontaneous and decentralized acts of resistance. Accordingly, Max Stirner (2017 [1844], 301) wrote that, "the revolution aimed at new arrangements; the insurrection leads us to no longer let ourselves be arranged by rather to arrange ourselves, and set no radiant hopes for 'institutions.'" Militant attack refers to the use of aggressive and forceful actions, often violent or destructive, as a method of resistance (Bonanno 1998 [1977]). Militant attacks can target symbols of authority, capitalist infrastructure, or other institutions perceived as oppressive. Illegalists were a group of individualist anarchists who emerged in the late 19th century and early 20th centuries. They rejected forms of social organization and ethics, advocating for individual autonomy and the pursuit of personal desires without regard for legality or moral constraints (Weir 1990 [1979]). Illegalists often engaged in illegal activities, such as theft or robbery, as a means of survival and resistance against a capitalist system they viewed as exploitative, what they called 'propaganda of the deed.'[19]

More recently, there have been many prominent zines and journals from the early 2000s that demonstrate a revival of these tactics and speak directly to the need for each. This collection of zines and journal continues to influence more recent ruptural tactics. The Invisible Committee's *The Coming Insurrection*, the *Killing King Abacus* anthology, *A Murder of Crows*, and *Green Anarchy* journal have been very influential in today's ecoanarchist actions and discussions.[20] These zines argue that the current system is in a

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[19] It's important to note that while these concepts are part of anarchistic history, they represent different ideological approaches and historical periods. Anarchism encompasses a wide range of perspectives and practices, and not all anarchists necessarily endorse or engage in militant attacks, illegal activities, or propaganda of the deed.

[20] There have been some debates and disagreements within anarchist circles regarding the effectiveness and practicality of the ideas presented by the Invisible Committee. Some anarchists have critiqued the Committee's

permanent state of crisis, that it is based on a logic of domination and exploitation that is irredeemable. Traditional forms of activism are seen as ineffective in bringing about real change. Instead, the texts advocate for a strategy of insurrection and the creation of autonomous zones that challenge and disrupt the authority of the state and create alternative forms of organizing and social relations. These zones are often self-managed and run according to principles of mutual aid, cooperation, and solidarity. To "challenge" and "disrupt" pushes insurrectionary anarchism into ruptural modes of transformation in which a complete break from existing power structures is needed. The ideas around insurrectionary anarchism from these zines continue to inform discussions and practices of today's ecoanarchist actions. From the sample of zines, much has been drawn from insurrectionary tactics of direct action.

The primary tactical way of organizing that aligns with the ruptural mode of transformation centers around the anarchist principle of direct action and that these actions come from below. In *Black Seed* (2020, 16), Aragorn!'s definition of the anarchist first principles, he describes how direct action,

> Is primarily differentiated from the tradition of labor struggles, where it was used as a tactic, in that it posits that living 'directly' (or in an unmediated fashion) is an anarchist imperative. Put another way, the principle of direct action would be an anarchist statement of self-determination in practical aspects of life. Direct action must be understood through the lens of the events of May '68 where a rejection of alienated life led large sections of French society into the streets and towards a radically self-organized practice.

Direct action, then, is a way to live in permanent resistance by not relying on the institutions in place to manage the outcomes of a struggle. It counters any reformist actions that rely on the state or other top-down institutions to enact change. It has a rich history of disruptive forms of protest and alternative ways of living. In an interview in *The Creeker Companion* (2022, 13)*,* yew seed speaks to their relationship with direct action and provides examples of what is looks like,

> To me, direct action is all about taking responsibility for ourselves, and in my own mind is practically synonymous with the concept of anarchy […] Direct action is everywhere from learning about foraging and subsistence, to supporting a suffering comrade, to actively resisting industrial expansion. I formerly saw these activities as paths that occasionally intertwined; now I see them as continuous and inseparable from each other.

Direct action, thus, is not only resistance to the destruction of ecologically harmful industrial development projects, but vitally includes participating in building up community and

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writing for being overly theoretical, disconnected from practical organizing, not anarchist by communist, or for advocating for forms of action that may not be universally accepted within anarchist thought. (Landstreicher et al. 2019)

personal lifeways of resistance in small day to day acts. yew seed's explanation provides a useful analytical dichotomy between antagonistic and prefigurative action in which to break up the conversation on ruptural and interstitial tactics. Before that, the next section presents discussions from the zines on the use of "violent" means. Then, tactical recommendations for direct action are explored followed by examples of repressive mechanisms used by the state with insights on how to defend against these tactics. This is lastly followed by a discussion that relates back to degrowth.

5.1.1   On the Use of Violence

There is obvious contention – not necessarily within ecoanarchism – about the use of 'violent' and 'destructive' means within direct action. In *The Creeker Companion* (2022, 17), an author with personal discomforts with militancy attempts to make an appeal for the use of violence to "friends who believe that direct action tactics […] overshadow the message of our movement." They go on to articulate how the police, the state, and the corporate media can create division within a movement by distinguishing between 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate' protest. Instead, it is important for each side to understand the other. They author writes how, "the people who have been breaking things are not harming anything alive – they are attacking symbols rather than life – while the corporate status quo is daily harming/killing/destroying not only individuals' lives but who ecosystems as a daily matter of course" (ibid. 23). This echoes Peter Gelderloos' *The Failure of Nonviolence* (2013, n/a) in which he redefines violence as not a thing but rather a category:

> a human construct in which we choose to place a wide array of actions, phenomena, situation, and so forth. "Violence" is whatever the person speaking at the moment decides to describe as violent. Usually this means things they do not like. As a result, the use of the category "violence" tends towards hypocrisy.

Gelderloos (2013) further argues that nonviolent strategies are ultimately ineffective in achieving meaningful social change. These tactics often rely on the cooperation of the ruling class or the state, and therefore do not challenge the underlying power structures that perpetuate oppression and inequality. He marks a process in which struggle has overwhelmingly gone from nonviolence to a diversity of tactics around the globe. The sample of zine corroborates Gelderloos' argument that by only using 'nonviolent' means, movements will remain ineffectual and will not challenge underlying power structures.

An example of this can been seen in *Break Away from Break Free* (2016) written by Jordan Parker. In the zine, Parker writes,

I think we should all acknowledge that some people don't get to choose whether to be non-violent or otherwise […] Nonviolence lacks effectiveness when people are being directly oppressed by the state. When you present an actual threat to state systems, the state will respond with policies and regimes whose effects are tangibly felt by the people it controls. You can either be silent, or fight back using the same weapons. There are many historical examples of this - anti-colonial emancipation wars, for example.

To say that the only legitimate way of responding to intergenerational/systemic violence is with peaceful protest is showcasing a particularly ignorant side of race and class privilege. Shaming and distancing oneself from those who respond to violence with what has only been inflicted upon them first is not climate solidarity, it is elitism.

The statement raises an important point about the limitations of nonviolence in the dace of direct state oppression. It highlights how the state often responds forcefully when confronted with a threat to its system, and how peaceful means may not be effective in bringing about structural change. Overall, the comment encourages a more nuanced understanding of the complexities surrounding responses to oppression and the importance of solidarity with so-called violent struggles.

5.1.2 Tactical Advantages: decentralized and from below

Many ecoanarchists maintain the need for direct actions and for them to occur from below. For struggle to be from below, it must be rooted in local contexts, outside of hierarchies, and decentralized. Nonhierarchical and decentralized organizing are discussed in section 5.2. On localized struggle, in *Return Fire 6.1* (2020, 3), the editors write that, "organizations are best when they arise directly in the course of a struggle and strictly to self-organize for that struggle's requirements, though we try not to think too dogmatically about this." In this sense, the focus of direct actions is towards more specific contexts that directly impact those struggling against it to be able to adapt to the constantly changing conditions, circumstances, and contexts. Though there are broader concerns that these actions are addressing, like climate change or animal liberation, attacking these issues "at the roots by cutting its veins" – as one author puts it in *Face to Face with the Enemy* (2021, n/a) – implies the need for more concrete, smaller, locally based, and decentralized struggles. This contributes to the idea that the best strategy to take on the 'Power Complex' is through small(ish) and persistent disruptions that will (ideally) spread to infect entire project(s) and industries. From *Return Fire 6.1* (2020, 3), the aim is to "destroy what destroys us" and the accompanying risk to one's livelihood is justified "because we know only by doing so we make [our life] our own."

There are many examples throughout the sample of zines of ongoing and recent 'direct actions from below' against ecologically destructive industries, where groups are acting directly by occupying spaces and living in direct action camps. *Nuclear or Ignite* (2022)

speaks of a squat which was established in Manheim, Germany against an opencast lignite mine that is destroying the Hambach Forest and had displaced people and families of the village. *Creeker* (2022) and *The Creeker Companion* (2022) discuss recent sabotages and blockades against the construction of the Coastal GasLink pipeline in British Columbia on Turtle Island. In the same region, the Fairy Creek Blockade had been able to halt the deforestation of an old growth forest until the mass arrest of over a thousand protesters. Similarly, from *History and Context of the struggle in Bure* (2021), over the past few years, countless attacks have been slowing down the advance of the nuclear landfill project in France with the help of sabotage against the repair of an old railway destined to serve Cigéo (an industrial center for geological disposal) and the transportation of the radioactive waste. Furthermore, there are hundreds of updates on acts of sabotage that are regularly catalogued in the sample of zines.

For a deeper glance into what it looks like to be in direct struggle from below, a look at *The History and Context of the struggle in Bure* (2021) and *Nuclear or Ignite* (2022) provides many tactical insights and examples to the specificity of tactics required given localized contexts. In 1987, prior to the selection of Bure for the nuclear waste dump site, four other regions were selected as potential areas to establish a geological repository for nuclear waste. This selection was met with fierce resistance from the local communities. By 1990, there was a moratorium and construction was halted. In 1998, after some rebranding from Andra (the French national radioactive waste management agency responsible for the clean-up), the French municipalities of Haute-Marne and Meuse (where Bure is located) were selected for the site of construction for the "underground geological research laboratory." The start and continuation of construction was not purely through local residences of Bure but also from French and German anti-nuclear activists. In 2005, these activists created the Bure Zone Libre in which they bought an old farmhouse to become the location of resistance where they shared counter-information on Cigéo and organized the struggle. By 2015, they had bought a former train station that was located along the route of the railway line that Andra planned to renovate to transport the nuclear waste. Many events were organized at the station including the antiauthoritarian and anti-capitalist (VMC) camp, many music festivals, anti-prison meetings, queer events, participative workcamps, screenings, and a permanent art exhibit. Starting in 2016, the first occupation took place in which The Lejuc Wood (a nearby forest) was squatted to prevent deforestation meant for the construction of the well that would ventilate the underground galleries to be filled with radioactive waste. These are but a few of

the actions that took place to counter the Andra project. New events and demonstrations in and around Bure continue to swarm companies and organizations involved in the project. Currently, the Cigéo project is continuing to make small steps forward and preparing the ground through several works. Though the struggle attracted support form a broader anti-nuclear activist network, it remains grounded in the context of this project and the participants continually adapt and look for new ways to resist. The vast array of diversity in tactics has contributed to over two decades of delaying the nuclear waste dump project.

With a growing need to intervene in ecologically destructive industrial expansion, there is a change in which a growing number of people will be willing to participate in the front lines of struggles (EJAtlas 2023). Only time will tell what this might look like. On reflections of the Standing Rock protest camp – a gathering of indigenous peoples and environmental activists who opposed the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) near the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota, United States – one author from *Black Seed 8* (2020, 25) writes,

> To be more effective, we need to be honest with ourselves and understand how Standing Rock was a strategic failure in that it didn't stop the pipeline, of course it was a social and cultural success, but we need to be critical in real-time about these struggles so we can be more effective. If we don't talk about our failures how can we learn?

A continued effort to learn from past struggles remains at the forefront of conversations and organizing of direct actions from below. Learning how to apply creativity and a diversity of tactics improves the chance for the success of future struggles.

5.1.3 Experiences and Knowledge Sharing on Mechanisms of State Repression

To oppose corporate-capitalist-state institutions, especially through 'violent' means, invites obvious pushback. Repression has remained a preferred approach to 'manage' anarchist adversarial forces. Since the beginning of anarchist struggles, the state has been using and improving repression mechanisms to quell opposition. Within the sample of zines, these mechanisms include quieting dissenting voices, 'badjacketing,' reinforcing the colonial legacy, promising democratic dialogue, vilifying rhetoric, pacification through violent means, and co-optation. The sample of zines provides ample examples and discussion of repressive mechanisms but only a select few are explored to provide some insight into each type of repressive mechanism used by the capitalist state system.

Quieting Dissenting Voices

In April of 2022, German State Security (K43) in Munich coordinated raids against anarchists accused of forming a criminal organization. According to *Nuclear or Ignite* (2022, 9), "cops are initiating §129 proceedings against anarchists or even anti-fascists, but only rarely do they actually result in any charges. Rather, these proceedings are a common pretext to extensively snoop around in specific scenes and surroundings." According to section 129 under the German Criminal Code, or §129StGB, citizens are liable for imprisonment if they form or are part of an organization with "aims or activities directed at the commission of offences" (Bohlander 2008). Furthermore, the court may mitigate the sentence or order a discharge if the offender "makes efforts to prevent the continued existence of the organisation" or "voluntarily discloses his knowledge to a government authority […] so that offences, the planning of which he is aware of, may be prevented" (Bohlander 2008, §129StGB). This last part has been a highly useful tactic to weaken movements through infiltration and further badjacketing.

Badjacketing

Badjacketing is described in *The Creeker Companion* (2022, 31) as, "creating suspicion, by spreading rumours or unsubstantiated accusations, that people are undercovers, infiltrators, snitches, or cooperators […] those who 'lay jackets' on others want to consolidate their control over a movement and feel threatened in their authority." The author is reflecting on recent badjacketing within the Fairy Creek Blockade. They do not speak much of the recent incident of badjacketing but instead reflect on two well-known examples of the state assassination of Illinois Black Panther Party Chairman Fred Hampton and Mark Clark (1969), and the murder of American Indian Movement militant Anna Mae Aquash (Mi'kmaq) (1975). In the case of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, and infiltrator sewed doubt in the movement by accusing others of being snitches, informants, or state cooperators which allowed him to consolidate power within the Black Panthers Party giving him access to drug Fred Hampton's food in preparation for his assassination by the FBI. Similarly, Anna Mae Aquash was murdered by someone within her group because she was thought to be an infiltrator. Instead, the infiltrator and FBI informant, who had gained trust of the American Indian Movement leaders, had accused Aquash of working for the FBI. Understanding badjacketing tactics is crucial for those seeking ruptural modes of transformation, as badjacketing is a tactic used by police and the state to destroy movements of liberation. Those who understand these tactics

can better protect themselves and their movements from infiltration and destruction if these tactics are used on them. In *The Creeker Companion* (2022, 30), the author uses these examples to "provoke reflection, and conversation, amongst all of us, as to how to deal with the suspicions we may have of people we don't know in our growing movement, without creating the sorts of divisions among ourselves that does the work of the State and the police for them."

Reinforcing the Colonial Legacy

Many of the zines cover the topic of indigenism and state tactics to uphold the colonial legacy. In *Return Fire 6.1* (2020), an author under the pseudonym David Watson explores the idea of indigenism, which is a term used to describe the ideology and movements of indigenous peoples who seek to assert their rights, sovereignty, and control over their traditional territories. The article argues that indigenism poses a threat to the dominant social and economic order, which relies on the exploitation of natural resources and the suppression of indigenous peoples. Watson highlights the ways in which indigenous peoples have been subjected to violence, forced assimilation, and land theft through colonization and capitalism. The article also discusses the resistance movements of indigenous people, such as the Zapatistas in Mexico and the Unist'ot'en in Canada, who are fighting to protect their lands and cultures from destruction. Watson concludes by calling for solidarity with indigenous struggles and the need for a radical transformation of society that recognizes the sovereignty of indigenous people and the importance of ecological sustainability.

Similarly, in *Standing on the Land* (2020), a zine dedicated to the Standing Rock protest camp against DAPL, an author questions whether the best way to stop environmental destruction is through the colonial system or by aligning with those who were wronged by it. They link colonialism to the DAPL project:

> Decades of insidious assimilation policies served to reinforce colonial land-theft, including the establishment of the Moricetown reserve and the horrific residential school program that took many children from their homes and subjected them to physical abuse, sexual abuse, and Christian indoctrination. With the settlers came the logging and mining industries. Today, the forests have been decimated, a mono-cropped shadow of their former diversity. (*Standing on the Land* 2020, 4)

They continue by praising the Wet'suwet'en for having "never surrendered" and urge that they continue to "rise to defend their lands now" as the impact will be devastating for generations to come. The Canadian and U.S. states both provided permits issued under state law for the construction of the pipeline. Upon learning about the collaborative efforts between industry and government to construct a large-scale pipeline corridor across their land, the

71

Unist'ot'ten clan convened to deliberate on the matter. After careful consideration, they unanimously chose to oppose and reject all pipeline proposals presented to them. Even through this rejection and subsequent action camps, blockades, and then a permanent occupation, the pipeline was constructed in 2017. Throughout the indigenous led actions, state surveillance and police enforcement continued to work to quell the opposition. The zine concludes that the,

> Unist'ot'ten Camp is direct resistance to colonization through the assertion of responsibility to protect traditional territory that was never ceded to the Canadian State. The direct nature of the camp strips down the problems being face to their essential elements. If the problem of colonization is the theft of indigenous land through displacement, then the solution is to reclaim it. If the problem with industrial civilization is that its projects are destroying the planet, then the solution is to stop them. If the problem is that a pipeline company wants to come through your traditional territory, the solution is to occupy it. Indigenous people such as the Unit'ot'en are in a unique position to do all these things at the same time. (*Standing on the Land* 2020, 19)

To the indigenous leaders of these actions and the anarchists that showed up in solidarity, the answer to stop the destruction of the environment is clearly not through the colonial system that "created the mess in the first place" (ibid., 20). Instead, it is in the attack of this very system.

Promising democratic dialogue

According to the sample of zines, the state also blunts resistance by promising political dialogue. In an example from *Tackling Energy* (2017), the politicians' idea of dialogue was used to avoid turning the suspicion of local populations towards hostility regarding the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) project expected to run through Greece, Albania, and Italy. The promise of democratic dialogue was used to conceal the implementation of this project. One author (2017, 14) describes the intention behind this tactic: "it is necessary that the opposition is kept under control, that it remains [in] the democratic cage of petitions and legal methods, pretending to participate." According to another author (ibid., 19), "the beginning of the works for the TAP […] has teared [off] the veil […] of the last illusions for those who believed that the democratic, institutional and judicial way would really stop the works." Even as 'dialogues' were taking place, the project continued as planned, circumventing the democratic process in the interests of the multinationals and national economies that would benefit.

Similarly, in *Standing on the Land* (2020), the author speaks of The Band Council set up by the Canadian state through the Indian Act. The Band Council is a governance structure with limited authority and extends only to managing the affairs of the reserve. For the author,

the authority of the Band Council in no way extends to traditional territory of the Unist'ot'ten and Wet'suwet'en and any deal reached by a pipeline company and the Band council is not legitimate. They assert traditional governance over state led initiatives to 'democratically' involve First Nations in decision-making processes. This relates to Glen Coulthard's (2014, 25) politics of recognition in which he echoes Frantz Fanon (1967):

> [I]n situations where colonial rule does not depend solely on the exercise of state violence, its reproduction instead rests on the ability to entice Indigenous people to *identify,* either implicitly or explicitly, with the profoundly *asymmetrical* and *nonreciprocal* forms of recognition either imposed on or granted to them by the settler state and society.

To Coulthard (2014), recognition alone is insufficient for addressing the injustices faced by Indigenous groups in the Americas. Politics of recognition often serves as a strategy to co-opt Indigenous communities and undermine their struggle for self-determination (Coulthard 2014). In *Standing on the Land*, the Unist'ot'ten and Wet'suwet'en involved in the pipeline resistance appear aware of the superficial ways in which the Band council promises but does not deliver on democratic involvement for the communities. Furthermore, they recognize the importance of maintaining traditional modes of governance over state imposed ones.

Using vilifying rhetoric

Well known to ecoanarchist communities is the use of "anti-terrorist" rhetoric to suppress the rise of ecoanarchism. Most famously was the labelling of EarthFirst!ers, ecoanarchists from the United States, as "ecoterrorists". In *Anathema 4.06* (2018), an author reflects on the Green Scare, a government campaign against environmental and animal rights activists, particularly those belonging to EarthFirst!, in the early 2000s. The article discusses the tactics used by the government, such as surveillance, intimidation, and imprisonment, and the impact these tactics had on the movement. The article also considers the legacy of the Green Scare, which includes the creation of a culture of fear within the movement, the criminalization of dissent, and the normalization of government repression. The article calls on activists to resist this legacy by continuing to organize and engage in direct action, and by refusing to be intimidated or silenced by government repression.

Pacification through violent means / counterinsurgency

From the sample of zines, there are many instances in which different authors discuss the use of pacification as a strategy to repress ecoanarchist actions. Pacification refers to the process by which the state uses a combination of tactics to forcibly suppress a population deemed

73

hostile. It is used to maintain or enforce power structures and it can involve a range of tactics, some of which are violent. It is linked to state counterinsurgency efforts. As an example, Kristian Williams (2011) speaks of counterinsurgency through its domestic application in the United States. From the U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24 called *Counterinsurgency* (2006, 1-2) the definition of counterinsurgency follows as "military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency." It follows that with defining insurgency as "an organized protracted, politico-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control" (ibid.). From this understanding, it is deemed a legitimate use of violence by the state but 'insurgency' has been used liberally to define many ecoanarchist groups working to defend their ecosystems and rights.

As an example of what this looks like in practice, in *Stormwarnings 43-44* (2021) an author described the violent tactics employed by the state to pacify opposition in Mapuche lands in Chile in 2019. According to the author, the government deployed a squadron of *carabineros*, militarizing them to the extreme and conducting a covert war against Mapuche civilians. This squadron, known as "commando Jungla," received training in counter-guerilla tactics in Columbia, representing an escalation in the militarization of Mapuche areas. The use of violent tactics against the Mapuche people resulted in numerous protests and riots, including incendiary attacks against state and capitalist institutions. The murder of *comunero* Camilo Catrillanca by the commando Jungla further escalated the situation, leading to demonstrations and road blockades. The Mapuche have long struggled for self-determination and have rejected institutions capable of establishing an internal order in the Mapuche communities. Attacking development projects taking place on their land has long been part of their struggle. With the escalation of state led attacks and the murder of Catrillanca, the Mapuche struggle joined the battle by multiplying attacks against infrastructure, including high-voltage pylons. The state's violent pacification tactics not only failed to quell opposition but also led to a persistent continuity of sabotages and attacks, resulting in an uncontrollable revolt that lasted for months throughout Chile.

Co-optation

As an element of counterinsurgency strategy, states are also known to use non-governmental or non-profit agencies to channel and control political opposition (Williams 2011). To organize in small, decentralized cells or communities, as ecoanarchists often do, also leaves

these groups vulnerable to co-optation. Instead of efforts being made directly by the state, it is larger movements or organizations that are using state apparatuses (for example the legal system or negotiating with municipal or federal government bodies) to attempt to absorb these locally centered actions to further their ends. Efforts at co-optation are well-known to these struggles but the efforts that received the most attention from the sample of zines were those done by Environmental Nongovernmental Organizations (ENGOs). From *Black Seed 8* (2020, 25), participants from the Indigenous Anarchist Convergence,

> railed against "non-profit liberal power wielding mechanisms," and asserted that, "we're not here to ask for reform. The law is killing our people."

In *Return Fire 6.1*, an author writes how "land defenders are well aware of corporate cooptation of environmental struggles," and how, "[t]he "NGOization" of struggle has emerged as a body of literature." Furthermore, in a transcribed interview in *The Creeker Companion* (2022, 13), yew seed states that, "NGOs have taken up so much space and resources – that could otherwise be used for grassroots direct action – entrenching dogmatic white liberal reformist politics, thereby helping to neutralize and recuperate resistance." It is clear that ecoanarchists have become reluctant towards ENGOs and it is important to understand what experiences have led to what would otherwise seem like an opportunity for solidarity.

Creeker (2022) and *The Creeker Companion* (2022) go into greater detail of past struggles in which ENGOs slide in and act against the will of the people who had begun the struggle. They offer this history in the context of the Fairy Creek Blockade to share how movements have become co-opted and how uncommon decentralized struggles have consequently become in that region as a result. From *Creeker* (2022, 14) one author writes how,

> One of the biggest reasons why the Fairy Creek blockade has become such a high-water mark of decentralized struggle is that it was organized on a grassroots level without ENGO (Environmental Non-Government Organization) involvement.

The three examples that these two zines discuss were situated in British Columbia on Turtle Island. In 1995 and 1997, the Nuxalk First Nation set up a blockade against Interfor, a Canadian logging company. Early in the struggle, Greenpeace, ForestEthics, Sierra Club and smaller ENGOs signed a protocol agreement with Nuxalk. The protocols gave the negotiators a mandate to negotiate forty to sixty percent conservation of the forest. By 2000, Greenpeace, ForestEthics, and Sierra Club unilaterally banded together and declared an end to direct action. They then began negotiations without informing the Nuxalk of the ongoing

development of the agreements. They agreed to a mere twenty percent conservation of the forest, going against the protocol agreement. They also agree that they were no longer able to "badmouth the logging company, logging practices, of the marketing of the wood products that were produced" (ibid., 15). The land which was being protected by the Nuxalk through blockades was soon after clear cut.

The Great Bear Rainforest deal was another example of co-optation by ENGOs. In 2010, the Canadian Boreal Forest agreement between Greenpeace, ForestEthics, CPAWS, and the David Suzuki Foundation negotiated the fate of seventy-two million hectares of land in secret, without participation from any First Nations groups and without any public planning process. In deciphering the reason for co-optation by ENGOs, who are seemingly in the same struggle, the author writes in *Creeker* (2022, 17), how ENGOs always aim for low hanging fruit in any campaign:

> [P]hilanthropic donors often have socially conservative values and have no interest in rocking the boat, the top-down hierarchy of ENGO structures reproduced disempowerment and cynicism at every turn, there is a fear of civil suits and of losing a non-profit/charitable status if they support activity that they cannot entirely control; and there is tendency for institutions to become an end upon themselves.

The author (2022, 16) further critiques Greenpeace by quoting Paul Watson, a co-founder of Greenpeace,

> I think that Greenpeace has become the world's biggest Feel-Good organization now. People join it to feel good, to feel "I'm part of the solution, I'm not part of the problem." Greenpeace brings in close to $300 million a year and what do they do with that money? Generate more money … And the people who are at the top of the totem pole now are not environmentalists, they're fundraisers, they're accountants, they're lawyers, they're business people. It's not strange to me when people tell me that well you know that former president of Greenpeace now works for the logging industry in Canada, of the former Greenpeace Australia now works for the mining industry. The former president of Greenpeace Norway works for the whaling industry.

Greenpeace and other ENGOs are part of the neoliberalized solution to the climate crisis, which people within ecoanarchism defy. Their warnings against co-optation by these organizations has become well-known and deep distrust in these organizations have further isolated these direct-action struggles. In *Standing on the Land* (2020, 6), the DAPL land defenders appear equally as weary about the involvement of ENGOs,

> The initial presence of environmental non-governmental organizations (engos) at the first action camp was controversial. Some indigenous allies were wary based on the history of engos aligning with grassroots efforts then sidelining them to sign deals with industry, such as what happened during the Great Bear Rainforest campaign; but the engos had a lot of resources to help generate publicity for the Unist'ot'en resistance to the pipeline.

The decision to continue to work with the ENGOs was a strategic and context specific one that was strengthened by the knowledge of past co-optation efforts.

The third example from *The Creeker Companion* (2022) demonstrates a more sinister attempt to co-opt direct action struggles in Canada. An author (2022) discloses a study done by the Cattlemen's Society to answer: "how do we contain and stop direct action movements?" The strategy laid out is to isolate and discredit radicals, prevent idealists from becoming radicals by giving them occasional victories so that they become pragmatists, and then turn the pragmatists into opportunists by attracting them with "the money, the glamour, the status, and the power" (ibid., 16) The author notes how there was an entire workshop on how to follow these steps. They leave the article by asking how to break this cycle of co-optation. Through the spread of information and co-optation efforts, there is much room for adaptation for these struggles. Retelling these stories adds valuable intel on how direct action from below can become more effective in avoiding co-optation efforts.

5.1.4 Discussion: can degrowth struggle?

Degrowth and ecoanarchism share a critique of the growth-oriented capitalist system and seek to create oppositional strategies of organizing society that prioritize ecological sustainability, social justice, and human well-being. Ecoanarchism has experience with tactics for direct action from below, as well as struggles against mechanisms of state repression, and experience with co-optation efforts by the state and other non-governmental organizations. All of these inform a ruptural mode of transformation. Degrowth can learn from these experiences by recognizing that efforts to transform the current system will inevitably face resistance from powerful institutions that benefit from the status quo. Therefore, as some degrowth advocates are aware of the need to struggle against, they must then become familiar with the roadblocks that these strategies will face. By taking ecoanarchists experiences into account, they can develop strategies to resist or avoid these roadblocks.

Ecoanarchists emphasize the importance of direct actions from below, rooted in local contexts, and carried out in a nonhierarchical and decentralized manner. These actions allow for adaptability to changing conditions and cumulatively been effective in challenging ecologically destructive industries and projects. The specific examples of direct actions discussed in the zines, such as squatting, sabotages, blockades, and occupations, demonstrate the tangible impact of such strategies in resisting state-backed oppression and environmental destruction. The ongoing struggles against nuclear waste dumps, pipeline constructions, and deforestation illustrate the persistent resistance efforts and the diverse tactics employed by ecoanarchists. These actions serve as a means to disrupt and challenge the existing power

structures, aiming to dismantle the systems that perpetuate environmental destruction. By learning from past, aligning with present struggles, and understanding the repressive mechanisms employed by the state, degrowth can continue to refine their tactics and strategies, contributing to the ongoing fight for ecological justice and transformative change.

It is worth noting that for degrowth, the issue of co-optation is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, degrowth grassroots initiatives can be co-opted by powerful institutions that seek to maintain the status quo. It could even be said that degrowth policy orientation nearly encourages it. In the zine *Diagnostic of the Future* (2018), Gelderloos provides an example of how degrowth runs the risk of at best, reinforcing the capitalist corporate-state status quo and at worst, emboldening the rise of ecofascism. Gelderloos discusses this regarding one of degrowth's commonly discussed policy proposals, a universal basic income (UBI), which "represents an income that is just enough to fulfill basic needs, such as food, shelter, and medication" (Kalaniemi et al 2020, 378). According to Gelderloos (2018, 60),

> [V]ersions of UBI are perfectly compatible with both progressive, regenerative politics, and a right-wing, xenophobic politics that would attach such benefits to citizenship. UBI instead of welfare can be justified with both the rhetoric of social justice and the rhetoric of curtailing government bureaucracy. Such bipartisanship increases the possibilities for a new consensus politics. Corporate proponents of UBI – and these are on the rise – can make use of anti-capitalist critiques of poverty and engineering that will ease the problems caused by those same corporations and maintain a viable consumer base that will continue to buy their products.

As Gelderloos demonstrates, UBI is vulnerable to co-optation on multiple fronts by the corporate-state structure. Though it has its benefits of lessening work time hours, consideration of 'care' work, and providing more freedom to deny 'negative jobs,' UBI can still very much be used as a tool to maintain the status quo around high consumption rates for increased economic prosperity for the ruling class (Gelderloos 2018). On the other hand, there is also a risk that degrowth itself may inadvertently co-opt other groups or movements that it seeks to support. This can be done through unintentionally overshadowing or diluting specific concerns and goals of a group they aim to support or reinforcing existing power structures if they do not listen to diverse perspectives to address inequality or if they do not recognize the interconnectedness of different struggles. Therefore, it is important for degrowth advocates to be aware of the potential risks and develop strategies to resist co-optation while building solidarity, alliances, and support with other groups. This may require careful consideration of who they align themselves with and how they communicate their ideas to ensure that they are not inadvertently co-opting others.

In sum, ecoanarchism's tactics of direct action from below and struggles against the corporate-state's repressive mechanisms can provide valuable lessons and insights for

degrowth. By organizing and mobilizing communities to resist state repression, degrowth advocates can develop effective strategies to achieve their goals while avoiding co-optation by powerful institutions. The colonial legacy that ecoanarchism struggles against it is also relevant for degrowth. Decolonial degrowth advocates (see Nirmal and Rocheleau 2019, Mehta and Harcourt 2021, and Dunlap 2018) recognize the global inequalities and injustices that are inherent in the current system and work to address them in their vision of a more sustainable and just society. This includes ensuring that their efforts to promote degrowth are inclusive and do not inadvertently co-opt or marginalize other groups and do not replicate the inequalities caused by the colonial history of the current system.

5.2   Voluntary Cooperation: on ecoanarchist interstitial alternatives

Some degrowth proponents, seek to challenge the dominant economic paradigm of infinite growth through interstitial modes of transformation towards a sustainable and equitable future (see D'Alisa and Kallis 2019; Kunze and Becker 2015; Trainer 2012; Homs 2012; Luquet and Luquet 2012; Besson-Girard 2012). Interstitial transformation, which emphasizes the creation of alternative social and economic practices within the existing system, is the second mode of transformation that degrowth proponents have limited exploration of. This approach recognizes that the dominant system is deeply entrenched and powerful, and that transformative change may require long-term, incremental processes of building alternative structures and practices (Wright 2010). Ecoanarchism, with its long history of building alternatives outside of the system of state-led capitalism, can provide valuable insights for the degrowth movement. Ecoanarchists have long recognized the limitations of electoral politics and the state as a means of achieving transformational change (see Araujo et al. 2017). Instead, they have focused on building alternative, autonomous communities and experimenting with new forms of social and economic organizing. Degrowth can benefit from the experiences and ideas of ecoanarchism by learning from the successes and failure of these alternative experiments. By building on the foundations of these existing alternatives, degrowth can accelerate the process of interstitial transformation and help to create a more sustainable and just society. In addition, ecoanarchist ideas around voluntary cooperation can provide practical models for degrowth communities to emulate.

In a zine article entitled, "Locating an Indigenous Anarchism" (2020 [2005], 16), Aragorn! defines voluntary cooperation as "the principle that we, individually, should

determine what we do with our time, with whom we work, and how we work." He continues, "Today this principle is usually stated most clearly as the principle to freely associate (and disassociate) with one another" (2020, 16). Voluntary cooperation is a form of social organization and way of living that is based on mutual aid, cooperation, and respect for individual autonomy through free (dis)association and self-determination (*Black Seed* 2020). It is a way of living and working together in a society without the use of coercion or centralized authority. There is much to unpack with the principle of voluntary cooperation. In exploring the sample of zines, many concepts and practices arise that are based in the ecoanarchist principle of voluntary cooperation. Some concentrate more on the "voluntary" – like individual autonomy, self-determination, and free (dis)association – and others concentrate more on "cooperation" – like mutual aid and creating solidarity and support networks. The confluence between "voluntary" and "cooperation" is what has developed nonhierarchical, decentralized, and intersectional tendencies within ecoanarchist organizing. All these concepts, and the ways in which they are talked about and practiced are explored in the sample of zines.

5.2.1 "Cooperation"

Beginning with the "cooperation" component of voluntary cooperation, ecoanarchists view cooperation as a key aspect of building sustainable and just alternatives. Ways in which they seek to cultivate cooperation is through mutual aid and solidarity networks. These ways of organizing are based on the principle that people should support and care for each other, rather than relying on the state or other centralized institutions to meet their needs. By building communities based on mutual aid and solidarity, ecoanarchists aim to create a more horizontal, decentralized model of social organization that prioritizes the needs and wellbeing of all members of a community. In this way, ecoanarchist ideas about cooperation through mutual aid and solidarity offer compelling alternatives to the status quo, and provides a roadmap for building more sustainable, just, and democratic societies.

Through mutual aid

Much of what informs ecoanarchist cooperation is the concept of mutual aid. In his seminal book *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1902), Pyotr Kropotkin presented a scientific analysis of animal survival and developed a theory of cooperation that he felt better suited most species. To recap, Kropotkin (1902) argued that mutual aid, rather than competition, is a

natural and instinctive behavior that has been observed in many species, including humans, and is essential for the survival and wellbeing of individuals and communities. As one of the founding fathers of anarchism, Kropotkin's concept of mutual aid has been embraced by most anarchists. According to Aragorn! (2020, 16), "as a principle, [mutual aid] is generally limited to a level of tacit anarchist support for anarchist projects." From the sample of zines, there is evidence of the many shapes in which mutual aid takes in practice, especially regarding forms of support and the consequences of experiencing a community premised on mutual aid.

In being "mutual," it includes acting in support of a community in a way that acknowledges how the aid goes both ways and typically requires struggle. From *Nuclear or Ignite* (2022), those opposing the open cast coal mine in Germany squatted in Manheim with the intention of preserving rural areas from further destructive development projects. Their plan for these areas was to create and maintain space for mutual aid communities. They write how,

> Living in rural areas is becoming more and more attractive for many people. Far from the anonymous life of small, expensive apartments in urban jungles around the world, people can help each other, live together and build sustainable living projects for different generations. We want to make this possible, together, in unity. With people who have lived together in Manheim for decades. With people who used to live here and have already left with their families. With people who came here to fight the systematic destruction of nature. And with people who have been forced to flee their homes in other parts of the world, only to be chased again here. (2022, 21)

Like the squats in Manheim, countless anarchist communities struggle and are engaged in direct action for the purpose of mutual aid. Other examples of mutual aid include: rounding up resources and distributing them when there are some with abundance and other with scarce supplies (*Creeker* 2022); collecting bail money and fighting the legal system for fellow comrades in prison for sabotage against a project that would displace a community (*EarthFirst! News 32* 2021); protecting one's access to filtered air that a forest provides by fighting for its preservation (*Avalanche 12* 2017; *Creeker* 2022); and real solidarity with marginalized groups who also know what it is to struggle against the state (*Black Seed 8*).

Organizing through systems of mutual aid can create strong senses of community and personal relief to those accustomed to the competitiveness that dominates most societies today. As an example, in *Creeker* (2022), some participants speak to their experience at the Fairy Creek Blockade. The Fairy Creek Blockade is a protest and direct-action campaign led by Indigenous land defenders and environmental activists in British Columbia, Canada. The Blockade began in the summer of 2020 in response to plans by logging companies to clearcut old-growth forests in the Fairy Creek Watershed and surrounding areas on Vancouver Island. Upon reflection of their time spent at the Fairy Creek Blockade, participants wrote,

> "I was too braindead to know what to eat so I was just fumbling around with my headlamp. Someone happened into the trailer and I still wasn't entirely sure how food was being distributed so I started to justify my existence, "Oh I was just –," but the person but me off with, "You don't have to explain anything" and I almost cried." (*Creeker* 2022, 29)

> "you simply don't have people experiencing this level of community and having such powerful experiences in campaigns run by the non-profit industrial complex." (*Creeker* 2022, 14)

> "There was something about using all my skills, fitness, and experience in the outdoors what I had accumulated for more personal reasons now being of such use in such a communal endeavour, and with complete strangers." (*Creeker* 2022, 30)

However, a participant was able to reflect on difficult aspects of this mutual aid community in that there were "too many unsettled vibes and people complaining about being stuck doing jobs they didn't want to do (29)" Adjusting to a way of organizing that requires more personal agency to speak up and address tensions can be uncomfortable for some. As they continue to explain, their sense of agency to choose their task for the day allowed them to consider their own mental and physical needs in a way that was still generative to the "communal endeavor" (*Creeker* 2022, 29). In other words, prioritizing one's personal wellbeing was acknowledged as essential for the wellbeing of the community. If participants or community members did not have the capacity to contribute as much as they would like to in a given day, this was not seen as a weakness or a quality that should be shamed.

In *No More City 1* (2021), an author calls for this same sense of mutual aid to exist within city contexts. What they call for in the need for more interdependence between people within city 'scenes':

> Some folks need community because they can't meet their own needs. They need support from friends and community for mental and physical health needs, help with acquiring food, making meals, finding housing, finding better housing than just living in an isolated box an hour away from friends […] Relying solely on oneself is a very capitalist idea, as well as a very patriarchal one when it comes to emotional needs […] Community creates connections, ability to sustain ourselves and be more autonomous from depending on capitalist infrastructure. (5-6)

These reflections come from a personal experience of the author in which they were able to spend a weekend in a communal camp environment. They wrote on how they were able to connect with people through "cooking meals, washing dishes, in morning circle before breakfast, wandering in the forest" (ibid. 7). Getting to know people through these shared activities, instead of the "purpose" and "consumption" based city socializing, was said to have created an "enthralling" new way to get to know people (ibid. 7-8). Upon further reflection, the author adds that,

> I had all day for myself and got to choose where to put my energy, what projects to work on, or to just spend the day resting. Being in this shared environment with communal aspects, with autonomous aspects, but particularly where you shared a purpose with the people around you, was an incredibly new way of being for me. (ibid. 7)

They echo the same sense of individual autonomy that occurred in the Fairy Creek blockade when one exists in a mutual aid-based community.

Through solidarity

As previously discussed through the examples of and mutual purpose for direct actions, mutual aid extends beyond the immediate ecoanarchist community. As a result, solidarity networks have become a prominent feature of ecoanarchism. The global scale of the ecological crises creates the need for mutual aid to extend from and beyond the immediate ecoanarchist cells. There are countless examples from the sample of zines in which mutual aid was used to allocate (often) limited resources in acts of support. "A Report Back of the Indigenous Anarchist Convergence" from *Black Seed 8* (2020) provides an example of local support networks. The conference attendants "relied heavily on mutual aid from many of our relatives in Kinlani who cooked, donated food, opened up their homes, and volunteered to support" (21). This allowed the convergence to take place with a budget of only US$800. Furthermore, prisoner solidarity is an important aspect of mutual aid efforts. According to *Nuclear or Ignite*, "the best way of staying united and in solidarity with each other is to continue to inform about the legal follow-up against comrades and companions" (5). This was in response to the continued imprisonment of those who took part in offensive acts against the nuclear waste dump in Bure, France. *Earth First! News* has a section dedicated to those "From the Cages" who have taken part in efforts to halt destructive projects. Along with their names and charges are their email and mailing addresses for readers to reach out and support these political prisoners.

The global ecoanarchist solidarity networks saw many examples from the zines and took on a very different shape than the local support networks. *Face to Face with the Enemy* (2021) provides two examples:

> 22/1, Paris. A van of the building company Vinci is set on fire. From the claim "Solidarity with those who resist, inside. Solidarity with those who struggle, outside. A thought for the three anarchists on trial in Hamburg and for the comrade Lisa, in prison for a robbery".

> 15/1, Somewhere in France. The feet of a pylon of a high-tension line are cut and the sabotage is claimed in solidarity with the struggle against the building of an electrical substation in the department of Aveyron. "Energy is the core of their war. The towers of Defence depend on the nuclear. The pylons transport their authoritarian power. Let's make them fall."

In *Night Owls* (2022, n/a), the editors express the aspiration to "increase international solidarity efforts in the U.S." and share these recent acts of solidarity,

> In April, anarchists in Olympia sabotaged a Bank of America ATM in solidarity with Wet'suwet'en land defenders. A similar action occurred in Pittsburgh in May. These are the only recent attacks we

know of in solidarity with an international struggle, although we were also happy to see the arson against a Pratt & Whitney engine facility in Orange County, CA last year in solidarity with Palestine, at a time when international sympathy with Palestinian resistance was at a high point.

From the sample of zines, global solidarity typically takes the form of solidarity actions that both show support for another groups actions or contributes to their cause. According to the author of *Settlers on the Red Road* (2021, 23), "solidarity isn't about going along with someone else's project, it's about seeing a mutual and parallel cause between you and another community/crew and acting together towards a common goal." These actions speak to the cooperative struggle preformed through individual means.

In his book *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1955 [1902]) Kropotkin argued that mutual aid is a fundamental aspect of social organization. From the experiences expressed in the zines, mutual aid was not discussed as a form of human evolution. Rather, reflections took on a more personal narrative of how it felt for certain participants and community members. It was described as "enthralling," a "powerful experience," "autonomous," and an "incredibly new way of being." Individual acts and gestures were also made to demonstrate support and solidarity with certain causes. This leads into the "voluntary" aspect of voluntary cooperation.

5.2.2 "Voluntary"

The more personal and individual aspect of ecoanarchist ways of organizing speak to the "voluntary" aspects of voluntary cooperation. For mutual aid to comply within the principle of voluntary cooperation, it must be paired with individual autonomy through self-determination, and free (dis)association. Max Stirner (1844) is a well-known anarchist German philosopher who prioritized individualism. Stirner believed that the individual should be free to pursue their own interests without being restricted by society or the state. He believed that all social and political structures, including cooperative organizations, are attempts to limit the freedom of the individual. So, while Kropotkin saw cooperation as a means for mutual benefit and a cornerstone of society, Stirner might have questioned it as a constraint on individual freedom. Individual autonomy, free (dis)association, and self-determination are all closely related principles in anarchist theory and practice, as they are all based on the idea that individuals should be free to make their own choices and shape their own lives without interference from external authorities or hierarchies. The sample of zines provides reflections on how these principles look and feel in practice.

Individual autonomy and self-determination

First, individual autonomy refers to the ability of individuals to have control over their own lives and make decisions without external coercion or domination. This includes the ability to think and act as one chooses, to express oneself freely, and to pursue one's own goals and interests. Individual autonomy is expressed through self-determination and free association/disassociation. Self-determination refers to the ability of individuals and communities to control their own destinies and make decisions about their own political, economic, and social systems (*Return Fire 5* 2017, 62). This principle prioritizes the right of individuals and communities to live according to their own values and aspirations. Within the sample of zines exists examples of acts by 'lone wolves' which speaks to the ability to work outside of a community and for one's own egoist purposes in a way that is still beneficial to environmental struggles more broadly. In speaking about Animal Liberation Front's (ALF) acts to free animals, an author in *Anarchy and Animal Liberation* (2022) writes how having the self-determination to work individually had tactical advantages since they did not have to wait for organized mass revolt and were more difficult for law enforcement to prepare for and prevent. Alternatively, personal reflections on what it felt like participating in a community where one could prioritize their own desires demonstrates a separate significance of individual autonomy through self-determination. In *Creeker* (2022, 32), an author expresses an experience at the Fairy Creek Blockade where, "[f]inding out what it is you want to do at the blockade is such a personal decision" and how, "[m]ost are trying their best to respect everyone's personal decision." This links back to the benefits of organizing through mutual aid in that people become collectively responsible through individual contributions.

Free (dis)association

Free (dis)association, meanwhile, refers to the voluntary and non-coercive formation of groups or associations based on shared interests, values, and goals (*Black Seed 8* 2020). Anarchists believe that individuals should be free to either associate or not with whomever they choose. Free association allows for the creation of autonomous communities and the pursuit of self-determined goals. The acts of 'lone wolves' demonstrate individuals' decisions to act solely but often they attribute their actions in solidarity with other groups. *Return Fire 6.2* (2020) provides a historical example of what it can look like to freely (dis)associate. The author(s) recount the individualist actions of women during the revolution in Barcelona in 1936:

> [F]emale individualism reflected alienation from organization which claimed to represent the working class. This indifference to parties and unions demonstrated the immediate priority which many women gave to the personal. Working for a distant socialist or libertarian society was a secondary goal. Furthermore, women had less reason to sacrifice. Males continued to dominate the revolutionary organizations, and while opportunities for women expanded during the Revolution, it was clear that men would continue to rule even if the Left emerged victorious. (ibid., 144)

From this historic example, it is shown how collectivism that ignores the individual risks isolating some from the struggle. Therefore, one's individual autonomy and ability to freely (dis)associate provides an opportunity to continue to struggle on one's own terms. Some ways in which these women could struggle included taking unauthorized holidays at their factory jobs, looting fish markets and stealing for food, and fraud on electricity bills they would not otherwise afford to pay (ibid.). Alluding to historical example of individualistic practices demonstrates the author's view that this is relevant and useful information that can still be learned from in today's struggles.

Alternatively, as an example of how free association can lead individuals to seek mutual aid and support networks, a writer details the desire for more association and interdependence. From the perspective of someone living in a city, they yearn for the type of community that they had previously experienced in a rural resistance cooperative. In *No More City,* the author writes how in their city 'scene' they,

> don't depend on one another. The fact that we don't depend on one another is both caused by transiency and causes transiency. In my dreams, a strong and resilient community where we depend on one another for our needs lessens the amount of alienation we feel on a day-to-day basis, makes one feel that they have more space to live than just survive, creates spaces to grow and thrive instead of remain stagnant and unhappy, and maybe even makes this city a place where people want to stay […] I think that the way to build community is to build interdependence. (5)

They continue by saying how transiency creates relationships that lack the need to address conflict, therefore people do not require, as much, to be accountable for their actions. To build relationships based on interdependence within cities would thus provide individuals with community support systems while also aligning with the previous call to lean towards 'strife' over 'submission and domination' within personal relationships. To be able to voluntarily cooperate with others does not just imply consistently enjoyable relations but an ability to exists with the tensions that inevitably occur within any group dynamic and be forced to mature to face and resolve such conflicts. To be able to individually decide whether a specific relationship is personally beneficial and then to either decide to continue or part with such a relationship demonstrate the ability to freely associate or disassociate.

In summary, individual autonomy, self-determination and free (dis)association are all based on the idea that individuals and communities should be able to exercise freedom and

control over their own lives. They are essential to creating a society that values mutual aid, non-hierarchy, and decentralized forms of organization. These three principles primarily inform the "voluntary" of voluntary cooperation. What is worth looking at next is what appears when mutual aid, solidarity, and individual autonomy simultaneously coexist through "voluntary cooperation".

5.2.3   Merging "Voluntary" and "Cooperation"

The concepts of "voluntary" and "cooperation" were explored separately for clarity's sake but what is most fundamental for ecoanarchist ways of organizing and mobilizing is what is created when these two ideas are merged. Merging "voluntary" and "cooperation" often creates tension to do with a false dichotomy between collectivist anarchism and individualist anarchism. Kropotkin and Stirner had different views on the role of cooperation in society and the importance of individual freedom. A second point addressed within Aragorn!'s (2020, 16) definition of voluntary cooperation addressed the tension between the two anarchists: "The spectrum of anarchist thought on the nuance of voluntary cooperation ranges from Max Stirner who refuses anything but total autonomy to Kropotkin whose theory of a world without scarcity would give us greater choices about what we would do with our time." Stirner's work is often associated with individualist anarchism while Kropotkin, famous for his conceptualization of mutual aid, represents an approach centered on the collective and often associated with anarcho-communism. The debates between collectivism and individualism have been ongoing for at least a century within anarchist circles.

Zines from the earlier 2000s, specifically discussing insurrectionary anarchism, explore this false dichotomy. For example, *Killing King Abacus* (2016 [2000-2001], xii) "grew out of dissatisfaction with the anarchist debates of the 1990s" conducted largely between primitivists and syndicalists who "focused on positive and specific images of post-revolutionary society." In providing some notes of insurrectionary anarchism, sasha k (2016 [2000], 95) describes how:

> Insurrection begins with the desire of individuals to break out of constrained and controlled circumstances, the desire to reappropriate the capacity to create one's own life as one sees fit. This requires that they overcome the separation between them and their conditions of existence. Where the few, the privileged, control the conditions of existence, it is not possible for most individuals to truly determine their existence on their terms. Individuality can only flourish where equality of access to the conditions of existence is the social reality. This equality of access is communism; what individuals do with that access is up to them and those around them. […] There is no contradiction between individuality and communism.

Addressing articles written throughout 2000 and 2001, saska k (2016, xiii) reflects on their project how, "tensions between individualist and communist ideas remained real." This tension still exists in today's ecoanarchist cells, but certain tools have been developed to address them. Nonhierarchical, decentralized, and intersectional ways of organizing discussed in the zines help to bridge the gap in understanding regarding the tension between individualist and collective anarchy.

Nonhierarchical and decentralized

Organizing nonhierarchically and through decentralized networks are two examples that have long been a part of anarchist organizing. What can prevent cooperation from being truly "voluntary" is often the imposition or delegation of orders or norms that are either top-down or socially imposed. In other words, resisting nonhierarchical structures and dominant cultures is at the core of the anarchist idea of individual autonomy, free association, and self-determination. This therefore requires a nonhierarchical form of organizing. To organize nonhierarchically also pushes back against incentives to centralize struggles. As we will see, the sample of zines depicts a diversity of imaginations on how to cooperate through nonhierarchically and decentralized means without jeopardizing individual autonomy and explores the further tensions that this causes.

Organizing nonhierarchically is explicitly spoken of as a fundamental principle for the ecoanarchist groups represented in the sample of zines. For example, in an article from *Return Fire 6.1* (2020, 46), EarthFirst! is described as "an alternative mass organizational model, discarding leaders." In *Return Fire 6.1* (2020, 4), The North East Anarchist Group (NEAG), a new anarchist group out of London, articulated their aims to "figur[e] out how to work together to meet our individual needs, working with each other rather than "for" or against each other; and when this is impossible, it means preferring strife to submission and domination." NEAG then extends this same nonhierarchical ordering to animals and ecosystems.

Comments regarding decentralization focus on both how it is a social imperative to resist domination and how it is a tactical advantage to defeating domination. Speaking generally in an introduction to *Face to Face with the Enemy* (2021)*,* the author(s) quote Lewis Mumford, a critic of industrialism, who wrote in 1970 that,

> We need not be surprised, then, that in more than one area the Power Complex has been undergoing severe strain. Though immune to any frontal assault except by another power system of equal size, these giants are particularly vulnerable to localized guerilla assaults and raids, against which their mass

> formations are as helpless as was heavily armored Goliath against a nimble David who did not choose to use the same weapons or attack the same parts of the anatomy.

This provides a common purpose for why ecoanarchist groups organize in small and anonymous groups, or cells, without any centralization. Often acting with less power, their tactical advantage is through persistent acts that eventually weaken the target. This speaks to the insurrectionary tactic of reproducibility:

> The desire that one's own actions could inspire other people and that conflictuality can spread is more than understandable. The problem lies in the statement that reproducibility is only possible at some conditions, namely that only anonymous, unclaimed and simple actions can belong to anybody and consequently being more likely reproduced. According to this belief, it is preferable that an action is not attributable to a certain "identitarian" area, like the anarchist one (element which becomes evident in case of a claim), so that any people who recognize themselves in that attack can give it their own meaning and, in their turn, replicate that method against what oppresses them. (*Fenrir magazine #8*, n/a)

The author of *Face to Face with the Enemy* continues by encouraging the need to "[hit] the enemy relentlessly with all the means and creativity we have as out disposal" and, "[support] and [aid] each other in all possible ways to shape good conditions for continuing the hostilities" (ibid.). In *Creeker's* (2022) "Talk and Log: Sometimes the Carrot, Sometimes the Stick", the author corroborates these advantages of decentralization in the case of the Fair Creek Blockade. According to experience from the author(s),

> The government, Teal Jones [timber company], and the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] have no idea how to control it. They want to meet adversaries on certain battlefield, preferably in courts, or at least in urban space, and certainly with designated leader. And if no one steps forward as leader, they will strong-arm someone into that role so they can co-opt them and trot them out at press conferences. (2022, 19)

The use of small groups, or cells, and creativity to adapt to different and changing contexts remains a strategic imperative to the idea of a decentralized form of organizing in ecoanarchist circles. In the audio zine *France in Flames* (2023, 5:42-5:51), the success of decentralization as a tactic is demonstrated in the quote by a Los Angeles police officer regarding the George Floyd uprising in 2020: "we can handle one 10,000 person protest but ten 1,000 person protests, throughout the city, will overwhelm us." Decentralization is also in line with the call to refrain from any form of hierarchy or domination.

Given this uncontested claim to decentralization, there still exists groups whose practices have been tempted by a centralized order. As an example, from reports back from two EarthFirst! (EF!) conferences in the United States (discussed in *EarthFirst! News 32* (2021)), much of the conversations were concerned with answering questions on the relevance of EF!: whether it should host national gatherings, on expanding the reach of the journal, and figuring out its role in the broader environmental movement. Many of these concerns seemed directed towards the creation, or emboldening, of a centralized force for

American EF!ers. They do briefly and fleetingly correct themselves by stating that, "we feel that local organizing should take priority," but overall maintain their desire to be more widespread, collaborative at a national level, and influential on groups outside of themselves. This has historically brought about much critique from anarchist circles but also demonstrates the different interpretations of the significance of a decentralized way of organizing.

Intersectionality

Furthermore, the ideas of solidarity and support, and organizing with individual autonomy and free (dis)association has often led to contention within communities. In defining 'green anarchy', the book *Uncivilized: The Best of Green Anarchy* (2012, 22) speaks to the tension between liberation and organization: "informal, affinity-based associations tend to minimize alienation from decisions and processes, and reduce mediation between our desires and our actions. Relationships between groups of affinity are best left organic and are temporal, rather than fixed and rigid." Intersectionality has become a focus in discussions on how to mediate different desires and actions through fluid and cooperative organizing. From Angela Davis (1983), intersectionality is a framework that recognizes the interconnectedness of various forms of oppression, such as racism, sexism, classism, and other systems of power and domination. It acknowledges that these systems of oppression are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Intersectionality highlights the importance of understanding and addressing these intersecting forms of oppression in order to create a more inclusive and equitable society.

Interpersonal relationships and lived anarchy that embraces intersectionality are more recent tools that have developed to address the tension between individualism and collectivism. *The Creeker Companion* (2022, 30) considers how:

> (1) None of us represent the mandate of all people, (2) that we may have instead genuine and important differences between ourselves about the best way to accomplish that world, (3) that we will not win by pretending these differences do not exist, or dictating against differences, but instead by engaging on these differences in the most democratic and least hierarchical ways possible.

Tensions, however, remain. In *Black Seed 8* (2020), the author writes about the Anpoa Duta Collective – an anarchist animal rights group – and how they clashed on whether to support a prisoner who was part of the group but was also a hunter. As the prisoner was not completely in line with the group's very dogmatic values, many did not want to provide support to this comrade behind bars. This begs the question of how to incorporate different views and values within a (self-declared or aspirational) non-dogmatic and non-ideological community that is

ecoanarchism broadly. Within ecoanarchism, there exists many clashing opinions and perspectives about how voluntary cooperation – or mutual aid and solidarity paired with self-determination and individual autonomy – would allow individuals and groups to navigate through these differences. The sample of zines provides many examples of efforts within different ecoanarchism communities to address intersectionality. This is mostly done through queering spaces and engaging in difficult conversation with other marginalized groups.

Ecoanarchist communities typically come together for the purpose of a specific struggle related to the ongoing ecologically devastating capitalist projects. Yet, with the opportunity to create alternative living spaces, these experimental communities are often concerned with social issues that are products of the times. Today that means that many participants heeded the call for more inclusive and conscientious spaces that exist outside of the white-cis-heteropatriarchal societies. An author in *Wildpunk* (2022, 31) writes that, "frustrated by the male Anarchists whose conviction was that the liberation of women could wait until "after the Revolution," women expanded the anarchist critique of authority to include patriarchy. Some decades later, queers widened the feminist analysis yet again." Within the sample of zines, much discussion has assumed a feminist lens and have been engaging more particularly on how to queer spaces.

An author for *No More City 3* (2021, 6) says how, "community is needed for femme and QTGNC [queer, transgender, and gender non-conforming] folks to create our own spaces." The Indigenous Anarchist Convergence, written about in *Black Seed 8* (2021, 22-23), resonates with similar concerns and adds the need to address anti-blackness tendencies within their community,

> Queerness is not a result of colonization, that idea is fucked up […] One of the things we can do, while the settlers get their shit together, is work on homophobia in our communities […] an assertion of the lack of centering of trans & afro-Indigenous voices […] calls were also made to confront anti-blackness in Indigenous organizing […] to ensure inclusivity in the movement to stop Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (#mmiw) by adding #mmiwgts to include trans and two spirit relatives"

In both cases, there is critique of the lack of inclusivity in many anarchist spaces, which have long been criticized for embodying patriarchal standards of conduct. Unlike (m)anarchist spaces, in *No More City* (2021, 19), one author wrote how in a femme/enby anarchist book club,[21]

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[21] "(M)anarchist" is a play on words that combines "man" and "anarchist" to convey the dominance of men within anarchist circles. This has been an ongoing critique within the broad range of anarchisms. Patriarchal and misogynistic tendencies are unfortunately not lost in anarchist practice, yet much of the theory is deeply opposed to these forms of domination (along with all forms of domination). "Enby "is short form for nonbinary or, those existing and identifying as being beyond the gender binary.

> I never felt like I was fighting for time to speak, like I was waiting for my opinion to be argued with, like I was in some competition of intellect, like others were not listening to me but already crafting rebuttals as I spoke, like I was being persecuted rather than having a conversation, fearing or experiencing aggression, never felt that destruction and sabotage where glorified and fetishized while community building, mutual aid, and relationship/interpersonal skills were put on the back burner, and never felt that academic knowledge, objectivity, rationality or intellectual arguments were valued and centered more than emotional knowledge, emotional skills, and emotional experiences.

They break down how they also embody these characteristics while in spaces that prioritize (m)anarchist tendencies and incite the need for more intentionality in how we relate to one another. Queering and creating intersectionality within ecoanarchist spaces of struggle remains enthusiastically insisted upon in many contemporary ecoanarchist resistance camps but the process towards intersectionality is ongoing.

Important to the need for intersectionality within these community spaces is the acknowledgment and understanding that many environmental devastations disproportionally affect marginalized communities (see Frey et al.'s (2019) Ecologically Unequal Exchange and Wallerstein's (1974) world-systems perspective). For that reason, these communities have long been at the forefront of the struggle against destructive industries. Specifically, within this sample of zines, is the context of Turtle Island's settler colonialism in which Indigenous groups have been struggling against the theft of their land since the start of imperialism and colonization. To demonstrate this point, an author from *Black Seed 8* (2020, 25) spoke about,

> Fighting nuclear colonialism which has left thousands of abandoned uranium mines and spread cancer through Indigenous Lands […] what they're saying here is that nuclear power is a 'clean' solution to global warming while we are the ones getting cancer, we're the ones that have our water, plants, and food sources contaminated.

Anarchists and different indigenous groups have long shared relations in the struggle against the capitalist and colonial state. *The Creeker Companion* (2022) provides a historical account in which anarchists and indigenous people worked together to fight against a logging company. At an event marking twenty-five years since the last major battle to defend a sacred place, one writes how "anarchists were instrumental in kicking off resistance in 1991 and that indigenous people and settlers working together have the power to defeat Teal Jones [logging company]" (ibid. 5).

Black Seed 8 (2020) has classified itself as "a journal of indigenous anarchy," and therefore provides ample discussion on what an indigenous anarchism looks like. An author reports back from a conference and shares parallels between anarchist first principles and indigenous knowledge systems,

> Observations were shared regarding how the concepts of mutual aid, non-hierarchical social relations, and direct action were already embedded in many, though not all, of our distinct indigenous knowledge

systems, and that state-based revolutionary strategies, like socialism and communism, are inherently anti-Indigenous.

In "Locating an Indigenous Anarchism" (*Black Seed 8* 2020), Aragorn! asks why more Indigenous people are not interested in anarchism. Accordingly, he points out its long European tradition that makes it sometimes inaccessible to non-westerners, the problem of some anarchists who hold that race does not matter, and anarchism's distinct language, cadence, and set of priorities that further make it inaccessible (the last of which Aragorn! himself is guilty). As an Indigenous person and anarchist, Aragorn! (2020 [2005], 17) continues by establishing the first principles of an indigenous anarchism to improve accessibility:

> An indigenous anarchism is an anarchism of place. This would seem impossible in a world that has taken upon itself the task of placing us nowhere. A world that places us nowhere universally. Even where we are born, live, and die is not our home. An anarchism of place could look like living in one area for all of your life. It could look like living only in areas that are heavily wooded, that are near life sustaining bodies of water, or in dry places. It could look like travelling through these areas. It could look like traveling every year as conditions, or desire, dictated. It could look like many things from the outside, but it would be choice dictated by the subjective experience of those living in place and not the exigency of economic or political priorities. Location is the differentiation that is crushed by the mortar of urbanization and the pestle of mass culture into the paste of modern alienation.

By prioritizing a place-based anarchism, an indigenous anarchism does not clash with ecoanarchist first principles. Instead, it shifts the focus to understanding the geographical, historical, and ecological context of a given space and place. By discussing anarchist ideas through an indigenous lens (one rooted in place), indigenous anarchism opens up the opportunity for more and better dialogue between differently identifying groups with overlapping struggles.

However, the relationship between indigenous and eco-anarchists working together is far more complicated and has sparked debate over recent years. Within the zines from Turtle Island, there is a significant focus on settler-colonial legacies and how they continue to inform indigenous-settler relations. In *Unknowable: Against an Indigenous Anarchist Theory*, Klee Benally (2021) points out the classical anarchists' disdain for indigenous people in the later 19th and early 20th centuries. Benally (2021, 8) mentions Voltaire de Cleyre who, "celebrates colonial violence against Indigenous Peoples in her 1912 essay "Direct Action."" Reclus himself was clearly against some colonial methods but showed ambiguity regarding his view on colonization more broadly,

> [Reclus] accepts without question colonial domination of Algeria. Among men "of the left" he was not alone. What he did criticize, were certain particularly shocking colonial methods used for this end, because for him it represented one of the procedures for man's mastery of the Earth. (Giblin 1981, 66)

Benally (2021, 11-12) also critiques the academic roots of anarchist ideas that "reduced [Indigenous peoples] down to political artifacts" and whose "reference point is European thought that slaughtered their own Indigenous understandings long ago." With this critique, Benally rejects indigenous anarchist theory as its history is devoid of meaningful anti-colonial analysis which continues to be seen today.

Extending this critique in more practical ways, the author of *Another Word for Settle* (2021) joins the discussion of intersecting indigenous and anarchist values and principles. They respond to the proposals from The Invisible Committee (TIC), a collective of anonymous writers who emerged in France in the mid-2000s. From its 2007 manifesto titled "The Coming Insurrection," TIC has been very influential in the spread of ideas to fill the European continent with communes based on direct democracy and mutual aid. In reflecting on recent trends within Turtle Island to take up the same ideas, the author from *Another Word for Settle* (2021) writes how these ideas and practices are ignoring the fact that much of the land that would be used to set up these communes are already inhabited, largely by many different indigenous groups. The call to "return to the land" and to be an "ecology of presence" is argued to be directed to a settler audience and further risks being "colonial, not revolutionary" (ibid., 5).

A more recently rooted debate regarding indigenous-anarchist relations is discussed in *Settlers on the Red Road* (2021) where the author discusses indigeneity, belonging, and responsibility in the anarchist community. Recently, settlers have been claiming indigeneity within anarchist circles due to the popularization of tests that determine one's racial and ethnic makeup. From this, some are newly discover that a fraction of their genetic code comes from a specific indigenous group. The author of *Settlers on the Red Road* addresses the great harms that anarchists who claim indigeneity can have in undermining solidarity with Indigenous communities. What they call "race-shifting" or, claiming a race that you were not raised within, is seen as "ripe for manipulation and an incredible opportunity to erode the legitimacy of Indigenous claims to land and liberation" (ibid. 6). To address this vulnerability, the author insists that settlers, generally, and anarchists more specifically, need to be more comfortable talking about these things amongst themselves and "develop our own critique against Native homeopathy bullshit or risk losing the very real bonds of solidarity forged between anarchists and Indigenous resistors across Turtle Island over the last decades" (ibid. 7). Deep analysis of settler-indigenous relations and what is means to act towards

decolonization are ongoing conversations and debates within ecoanarchist circles that are worth additional exploration.

Challenging the Status Quo

Much of what informs contemporary ecoanarchist discussions on ideas and practices of voluntary cooperation involves challenging the status quo and acting in solidarity with other groups that have overlapping aims. This opens up space to address new ways of organizing that counter the dominant modern onto-epistemology. This has included prioritizing mutual aid, individual autonomy, self-determination, free (dis)association, nonhierarchical and decentralized organizing, and intersectional relating. Contemporary ecoanarchist communities typically come together for the purpose of a specific struggle related to ongoing ecologically destructive and devastating capitalist projects. With the opportunity to create alternative, or interstitial, living spaces, many participants prioritize more inclusive and conscientious spaces. This has been done through queering spaces and engaging in difficult conversations around settler-indigenous relations and the colonial legacy.

Along with creating a strong sense of community, voluntary cooperation further provides the opportunity for an alternative sense of community that challenges the status quo. From *Creeker* (2022, 32), an author revels their partiality to "a space that has been caved out to challenge normalcy itself." They continue,

> Living in contested space, relating to people in such different ways than the status quo allows. Exploring a sense of agency and empowerment absolutely absent from daily life. The Choose Your Own Adventure aspect of a decentralized movement is a lot of fun […] The sense of immersion living without distractions and with such unwavering focus. The joy of waking up each day, checking in with my desires, and then following them to their natural conclusion. (ibid.)

These experiences with voluntary cooperation-based communities also led to profound shifts in the worldview of its participants,

> Seeing them after they'd been there a few days was always inspiring and hearing how their worldview had been blown wide open was always worth the time it took. Turns out getting the cops to retreat once in a while really does wonders for how we view the horizons of possibility. (ibid., 33).

Discovering what one can do with a sense of empowerment and agency alters the perception that change can occur outside of state and institutional apparatuses, contrary to "reform" based initiatives that rely on the state or other institutions to provide top-down policy to create change.

5.2.4 Discussion: an interstitial degrowth

For a brief exploration of degrowth literature on interstitial ways of organizing, within the last few years scholarship has begun to focus on the study of pre-existing or newly created alternative communities as a further way of organizing and experimenting with degrowth futures, with particular focus on ways to 'decolonize the imagination'. The first approach speaks to how a degrowth society would be organized through pre-figuring post-growth futures, at the grassroots level. Building interstitial alternatives is crucial to reduce dependence on the growth-based industries and creating new decolonial imaginaries (Kallis 2020). Some of these alternative ways of organizing are featured in a special issue from *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* titled "Geographies of degrowth: Nowtopias, resurgences and the decolonization of imaginaries and places". These are examples of nowtopian territories, resurgent territories, and liminal territories. Nowtopias involve regeneration, non-wage labour, and the desire to produce an alternative future, now (Gearey and Ravenscroft 2019). Resurgent territories are built on "relational territories and the relationality of territory" as local communities collectively respond to "the extractive politics of capitalist colonialism" through "recovery, renewal, and resistance" (Nirmal and Rocheleau 2019, page). Liminal territories are described as a 'suspension' stage, opened up by crisis, in which "the rise of new social practices can facilitate the emergence of new social imaginary specifications and institutions" (Demaria et al 2019, 441). This recent exploration of alternatives demonstrates the start of degrowth efforts to expand into interstitial strategies towards transformation.

Degrowth can learn from ecoanarchism's experiences of building alternatives based on its informing principle of voluntary cooperation, which includes mutual aid, solidarity and support, individual autonomy through self-determination and free (dis)association, nonhierarchical and decentralized organizing, and intersectionality. First, degrowth advocates can learn from ecoanarchism's emphasis on mutual aid, solidarity, and support as a means of building alternative communities and networks. By promoting these values, degrowth advocates can create a sense of shared purpose and common goals among diverse groups, which can help to build solidarity and resilience in the face of challenges posed by the current system. Secondly, ecoanarchism's focus on individual autonomy through self-determination can also be relevant for degrowth. By empowering individuals and communities to take control of their own lives and resources, degrowth can help to build more sustainable and just societies that prioritize human wellbeing over economic growth. Thirdly, ecoanarchism's

emphasis on free (dis)association and non-hierarchical organizing also provides valuable insights for degrowth. By promoting decentralized and non-hierarchical forms of organization, degrowth advocates can avoid replicating the power dynamics and inequalities of the current system and can help to build more participatory and democratic alternatives. Strengthened affinity with ecoanarchism can also help degrowth to further challenge and dismantle current power structures, rather than merely working to reform and improve them. Finally, ecoanarchism's intersectional approach to building alternatives is relevant. By recognizing the interconnectedness of different forms of oppression and the need to address them in a holistic way, degrowth can promote more inclusive and equitable forms of social and economic organization. With this comes the need to understand and analyze the complex colonial legacies that inform relations and solidarity.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, exploring ecoanarchist experiences with ruptural and interstitial modes of transformation can provide valuable insights for the degrowth movement. Ruptural approaches can create radical shifts in power dynamics and challenge dominant systems, while interstitial approaches can offer alternative models of living that is both more ecologically and socially just and demonstrate the feasibility of alternative imaginings of ways of organizing society. Exploring ecoanarchism's deep critique of the state can broaden the degrowth movement's understanding of where the risks lie when working with, outside of, and/or against the state. In this sense, there is much to learn from recent ecoanarchist literature as presented in the sample of zines, including successes and setbacks. What emerged from the exploration of this sample of zines were the various mechanisms that movements run up against when challenging the state and the status quo. These include quieting dissenting voices, badjacketing tactics, reinforcing the colonial legacy, pacification through violent means, promises of democratic dialogue, using vilifying rhetoric and through methods of cooptation. Furthermore, anarchist principles of direct action from below and voluntary cooperation have helped inform ways of organizing outside and against the state. Direct action from below offers tools for context specific adaptability and creativity when coming up against ecologically destructive social mechanisms of state control and industrial expansion. Voluntary cooperation prioritizes individual autonomy and mutual aid through decentralized and nonhierarchical ways of organizing that promise to be both ecologically more sustainable

and socially more inclusive. By combining these approaches, degrowth advocates can create a more comprehensive and effective strategy for creating a more sustainable and just world. Ultimately, degrowth must not only aim for the transformation of the economy but also the transformation of social relations, values, and worldviews. By learning from ecoanarchist experiences, degrowth can move towards a more holistic and comprehensive vision of social and ecological transformation.

The next chapter takes the anarchist first principles of voluntary cooperation and direct action and applies them to relations between humans and the nonhuman world. It follows the same theoretical framework, which uses Wright's logics of transformation, and wonders how these logics have informed ecoanarchist theory and practice regarding how humans can coexist with nonhumans.

6. Extending Anarchist First Principles to Relations with Nonhuman Nature

Degrowth remains hugely anthropocentric in its consideration of sustainable solutions to the climate crisis. Anthropocentrism refers to the perspective that human beings are central, with a focus on human interests and values above those of other beings and the environment (Dryzek and Pickering 2019). For example, of the fifty-one chapters in *Degrowth: A Vocabulary for a New Era* (2014), which is meant to outline the core principles within degrowth, none are centered on conversations around the wellbeing of the nonhuman or of the relationships between the human and the nonhuman. Yet, Demaria and colleagues (2013) identification of the 'streams of degrowth' clearly distinguish ecology as 'a source' for degrowth (also see Nirmal and Rocheleau 2019). As a 'source' of degrowth, ecology brings "methodologies and values together and constitute tracks for interpreting degrowth" (Demaria et al. 2013, 196). A common idea within a more 'biocentric' ecology, as opposed to much of the anthropocentric tendencies of "shallow" ecology (Næss 1989), is the intrinsic value of nature, which goes beyond its value to people and economies. Attributing intrinsic value to nonhumans within ecology was what Arne Næss (1973) outlines in his conceptualization of 'deep ecology.' More recently, degrowthers have been taking up the concept of deep ecology. For example, Bayon and colleagues (2010) suggest that environmental resources be commonly cared for in order not to be exploited by individuals. Strategically, this implies the reimagination of human and nonhuman relations in a way that reintegrates humans into nature.

To understand how we can reimagine earthly relations, it is first important to uncover the dominant onto-epistemology that informs human and nonhuman relations today. To borrow from an author of the zine *Towards an Anarchist Ecology* (2014), this dominant onto-epistemology will be called dominator ecology: "the ecology of management from a distance, and of remote expertise, that sees itself as fundamentally separate from the land, inhabiting a present without a past or future." Worth exploring is how we, as humans, got here? Current Western structures of nonhuman domination are modeled on Judeo-Christian values and by such patriarchs as Aristotle, Aquinas, Descartes, and Francis Bacon (Tokarczuk 2022; Mueller 2017; Merchant 1989). At the beginning of *The Book of Genesis* we find the definitive statement that man has been placed at the center of creation and therefore God gives

man mastery over all the creatures on Earth. Verse 1:28 is telling: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the Earth." Aristotle doubled down by providing justification in that man is the only creature gifted with intellect, which is the most significant of characteristic (Tokarczuk 2022). This argument has reinforced the same ideas of hierarchical orderings where *man* dominates. Thomas Aquinas maintained that nonhuman beings are mindless and lack an immortal soul and therefore their death is meaningless (Tokarczuk 2022). Descartes' Cartesian split between body and mind led to a vision of nonhuman as machine and exploration as ethically neutral (Mueller 2017). Descartes' narrative of separation and duality further removed humans from nature. Furthermore, during the scientific revolution, the view that nature was a benevolent force created for the benefit of humans was challenged by the emerging mechanistic worldview. This new worldview emerged in the 16th and 17th century in Europe and saw nature as a machine that could be understood and controlled through scientific inquiry (Merchant 1989). In *The Death of Nature,* Carolyn Merchant (1989), an ecofeminist philosopher and historian of science, focuses on the role of Francis Bacon in the development of the mechanistic worldview. Bacon believed that knowledge should be acquired through empirical observation and experimentation, rather than through the reliance on ancient texts and traditions. The Royal Society in England further promoted the new scientific worldview and paved the way for the exploitation of the natural world for human benefit (Merchant 1989). Following Merchant's critique of the scientific revolution and how it led to "the death of nature," Teubner (2006, 499) goes as far as declaring that "the scientific revolution, Enlightenment, methodological individualism dominating the social sciences, and psychological and sociological analysis of purposive action, have further cemented that the only remaining plausible actor is the human individuals […] the rest is superstition." Luckily, there are efforts to move beyond these dominant understandings.

Both degrowth and ecoanarchist critiques of science and technology function along the same lines of thought as Merchant and Teubner and inform how to reshape human and nonhuman relations. To restate and summarize parts of Chapter 2, within the degrowth literature there are gaps in the literature regarding the need to address human and nonhuman relationships and tensions regarding views of science and technology. Degrowth aims to reform nature-society relationships and encourages bottom-up initiatives to do so (Koller 2021). However, there is a lack of clarity and contradictions on conceptualizations of "nature"

(Spash 2021). The chapter also discusses the tension between the naturalist and culturalist critiques of human-nature relationships (Heikkurinen 2021). Regarding technology, degrowth acknowledges that technology plays a significant role in shaping our societies and can contribute to both positive and negative outcomes. However, degrowth critiques the dominant paradigm that view technological progress as inherently beneficial and unlimited, emphasizing the need for a critical evaluation of technology's impacts on ecological sustainability, social justice, and human wellbeing (Kerschner et al. 2018). There are differing views within the degrowth community on technology, including skeptics and enthusiasts. Overall, degrowth is critical of excessive reliance on technology and advocates for conscious minimization to avoid further harm to biotic communities (Kerschner et al. 2018; Illich 1973). Degrowth advocates for the appropriate and context-specific use of technology yet encourages the democratization of technological decision-making processes and the exploration of alternative, low impact technologies that prioritize sufficiency, conviviality, and the reconnection between humans and the environment. Nirmal and Rocheleau (2019, 469) argue that degrowth, functioning as a "transitional discourse (Escobar 2018), has to "submit itself to the actual working of the living world, rather than trying to control it." Again, we are left wondering how.

From Chapter 3, ecoanarchists argue that science and technology are often used to justify and perpetuate the domination and exploitation of nature as well as the subjugation of human societies (Reclus 1905, Kropotkin 2014, Bookchin 1991, Perlman 1983). They argue that the current scientific and technological systems are driven by profit and power, rather than concern for the environment and social justice. Fredy Perlman was an anarchist writer and activist who wrote extensively on the relationship between technology, society, and ecology. In his book *Against His-story, Against Leviathan,* Perlman (1983) argues that the rise of civilization and dominator culture is closely tied to the development of science and technology. Perlman argued that the development of technology has allowed humans to extract more resources from the earth and exploit nature on a larger scale than ever before. This has led to the creation of a dominator ecology. According to Perlman (1983), the development of science and technology has also led to the rise of centralized and hierarchical social structure, which have further entrenched the dominator culture. He argued that technology has allowed for the concentration of power in the hands of the few, leading to the creation of oppressive political and economic systems.

Looking towards an ecoanarchist ecology that involves ruptural and interstitial tactics of transformation regarding human and nonhuman relations provides the substance of the rest of the chapter. The aim of this chapter is to explore if and what contemporary conversations within ecoanarchism can contribute to the question of how we can relate to the nonhuman in a way that appreciates the intrinsic value of our ecological communities and leads to the reintegration of humans into nature. The next section builds theory from the sample of zines that addresses the intense dominance of anthropocentrism and instead pushes towards 'biocentric anarchy', 'egoist ecology', and queer relating. It explores ecoanarchism's approach in navigating diverse onto-epistemologies regarding how we relate. Within the second section come many calls to action, or ruptural tactics, to recreate the foundations for different ways of relating. It looks at forms of struggles to see what is being fought against and why. The third section considers interstitial imagined futures for how we relate to nonhumans and different techniques to reintegrate humans back *in*to nature.

6.1 Reimagining Earthly Relations: building theory through zines

This section explores three alternative onto-epistemologies in the context of human and nonhuman relations: biocentric anarchy, egoist ecology, and queer relating. The first alternative onto-epistemology to be explored is a biocentric anarchism. According to an author in *EarthFirst! News 32* (2021, 6), "biocentrism is an innate and even spiritual draw for many of us, motivating us to fight." Biocentrism challenges anthropocentrism in that it extends inherent value to all living beings, not just human animals. Its aim is to separate the dichotomy between human and nature and instead put humans back into the concept of nature. For this to occur within a biocentric anarchy means that all forms of domination and hierarchy between human and nonhumans must cease to exist. In *Biocentric Anarchy* (2017), the author(s) connect all forms of oppression and hierarchical relations with the plight of nonhuman creatures living on a planet dominated by people. Accordingly, all systems of domination "tend to reinforce one another" (ibid., n/a). Therefore, the author makes the argument that anarchists who work to dismantle anthropocentric infrastructures and norms must also work to undermine systems of domination and work toward the liberation of all.

Though not getting into much detail regarding the experiences of some nonhumans – except in the case of using female bodies as machines for reproduction – *Biocentric Anarchy* (2017) does offer suggestions for how a person might be able to adjust their onto-

epistemology to better suit a biocentric anarchy. These involve: deepening connections with other species by observing, listening, looking, and reflecting; recognizing and valuing the diverse range of forms of life, character, perception, and desire; enabling previously domesticated environments to return to a more natural state; relinquishing our inclination to dominate and manipulate the wilderness; and shifting the focus away from human-centered perspectives. All these ideas are regularly discussed in both ecoanarchist and degrowth literature, for they are broad ideas that are often not brought down to more tangible actions. They also center on living beings, which excludes conversations that extend beyond the living, to mountains and rivers, landscapes, and ecosystems.

A biocentric anarchy also includes acknowledging the intrinsic value of nonhuman life, what the author of *Biocentric Anarchy* (2017) discusses by suggesting 'demassifying' human and nonhuman life. To the author the process of demassification means "valuing individuals and their autonomy and desires, as much as the ecosystems they are a part of" (ibid., n/a). This was beautifully echoes in *We endlings* (2017) which communicated on behalf of Toughie, the last known rabbs fringe-limbed treefrog. In *We endlings,* the author (2017, 5-6) encourages the reader not only to mourn the loss of biodiversity that came with the death of Toughie, but to mourn the loss of all individuals, the loss of Toughie himself:

> In a sense, we are all endlings, each the last of our kind. Centralizing the question of whether we can reproduce – or whether we choose to reproduce – reflects a patriarchal focus on lineage and reproduction. There are many ways to understand what gives life meaning. When we suspend the abstract category of species, we see that each of us is unique, each of us is the bearer of a singular and unrepeatable world. […] We are all going extinct, one by one. […] what matters is not the preservation of our genetic material like information in a database, but that we live fully in the present moment.

The example challenges the idea that the value of an individual's life is tied to their ability to reproduce and pass on their genetic material. It highlights that every individual is unique and irreplaceable, and that the preservation of genetic material should not be the focus. In other words, living in the present moment and finding meaning in one's own experiences and existence, as well as the importance of other individuals (human and nonhuman), rather than perpetuating patriarchal notions of lineage and reproduction. The quote also suggests that the current mass extinction crisis underscores the fragility and preciousness of life, and that each individual has a responsibility to live fully and responsibly. The emphasis that the individual is prioritized strays from the dominant Western utilitarian ethic and leads into another perspective of relating called egoist ecology.

Bellamy Fitzpatrick (2017) picks up the work of Max Stirner, the forerunner of individualist or egoist anarchism and applies it to ecology to describe an egoist ecology, the

second alternative onto-epistemology explored regarding human and nonhuman relations. In Fitzpatrick's (2017, 18) article from *Return Fire 5*, he begins with Stirner's notion of the expansive self which "regards the inner world, our thoughts and emotions, and the outer world, our phenomenality or sensory experiences, as inseparable, as each reciprocally informs and defines the other." This conceptualization is meant to annihilate the alienation that derives from the Cartesian dichotomy of object and subject, of mind and body. Instead, Fitzpatrick (2017, 19) posits, "subjectivity and objectivity are simply synthetic conceptual frameworks, sometimes useful instrumental construction that have no existence beyond the moment-to-moment imagination of them." In other words, how anything is perceived in any given moment in time in dependent on everything in time and space that led up to that moment and influenced the perceiver.

The inseparability of mind and body, or object and subject, has parallels to the notion of symbiogenesis. To Fitzpatrick (2017, 19), "the phenomenon in which two or more ostensibly distinct organisms become so closely intertwined in their lifeways that they more or less merge into one creature." Drawing from this way of relating, Fitzpatrick carries this idea more broadly into an egoist ecology whereas the,

> recognition that each of us is constituted by every other being we encounter entails a perspective of intimacy, a desire to live as deeply and vivaciously as possible, human and nonhumans, as potential symbiotes, cocreatures with whom we can have various relationships. […] One might therefore strive toward unions of egoists among the organisms in one's habitat, maximizing mutualistic interactions and minimizing antagonistic ones through Stirner's understanding of infinitely revisable collaborations among being who combine their powers toward the pursuit of cooperatively achieved, but individually recognized, values. (19)

This highlights the significance of recognizing that every being is interconnected and constitutes one another, leading to a perspective of intimacy and a desire to live deeply with both human and nonhuman entities. This recognition can lead to a striving for unions of egoists, where beings collaborate and combines their powers toward the pursuit of mutual wellbeing. 'Unions of egoists' also reflects the first principle of voluntary cooperation. The idea is that individuals should come together based on their shared goals and interests, and form alliances based on mutual benefit, rather than being forced into social arrangements based on power dynamics or coercion. Furthermore, from the idea that we share a symbiogenetic relationship with our ecosystem, Fitzpatrick (2017, 18) states that symbiogenetic desire then "unites a love of oneself with the love of one's ecosystem" and prompts us to resist the domination of nature "because it is an absolute assault on ourselves." This is saying that if we hurt our ecosystems, we hurt ourselves and can further be applied to oppressive and destructive systems that hurt us through hurting our ecosystems.

This idea of oneness with our ecosystem, in a way that also prioritizes the individual, appears throughout the sample of zines. In *Return Fire* 5, Paul Shepard (2017) extends the notion of an egoist ecology through the analogy of a pond. Shepard (2017, 21) likens the epidermis of skin to the surface of a pond, "not a shell so much as a delicate interpenetration." This image intends to aid people in envisioning the ecosystem as an extension of themselves and vice versa, that we are equally part of nature and should not continue to be threatened by the idea of people versus nature. Also in *Return Fire 5,* Emma Kathryn (2017, 126) tells her reader to "rediscover your own wildness and you will rediscover yourself" concluding her text on finding connection in the small bit of wilderness that is part of her urban environment. It follows from,

> I am of this land, I am of these woods, I am of the rivers and the oceans and the sky and the stars. We all are. Never forget it. It is our strength, this knowledge, this truth. (ibid.)

Relating ecosystems to ourselves is at the core of much of the sample of zines on ecoanarchism as is the interconnection between different forms of oppression and the need to combat the institutions that uphold them to find a balance between a liberated and sustainable future.

The third and final alternative onto-epistemology concerns queering our understanding of ourselves through our understanding of the nonhuman. This connects to another form of oppression that links the patriarchal anthropocentrism that has created a binary thinking of sex and sexuality. Two zines propose that people queer their understanding of plant life just as they have begun to queer their understanding of our own bodies and desires. In *Queering Protest Sites*, an author (2018, 2) speaks of how queer activists "fight the degradation of [their] complex, diverse bodies, identities, passions with the same rage that [they] fight the degradation of complex, diverse, living ecosystems, ecologies, geologies." Furthermore, in *Gay Plants*, the author(s) (2017) provide an intellectual history of the colonial impact of plant classifications and then call for a relational view to dismantle the dominant patriarchal scientific perspective. As an example, the author(s) cite Linnaeus, the 'father or modern botany,' whose original system for identifying plants used the plants' sexual organs as key to their categorization. Linnaeus then framed plant orderings through a patriarchal system where male parts (stamen) were prioritized over female parts (pistils). The author(s) (ibid. 2017, 12) follow that, "emerging at the peak of classical European imperialism, the new scientific categories held together by gendered hierarchy differed starkly from the Early Modern classifications of plants, which tended to place importance on their medicinal uses and

mystical associations." From this, European naturalists were reported to impose Western knowledges onto the understanding of plants and did not learn from them the potential for different worldviews, cosmologies, epistemologies, or ontologies. At the same time, traditional knowledges relating to plants were being actively dismembered.

Though much of the texts in *Gay Plants* (2017) focus on a commodified relationship by informing its readers of the uses of certain plant life for medicinal purposes related to queer, mostly transgendered, bodies, there is another part of the zine that questions our epistemological perspective that imposes human linguistics to our ideas of what plants are and how they function. The author(s) suggest a queering of perspectives to better comprehend nonhuman worlds or learning from plant queerness to better realise ourselves. Instead of imposing our onto-epistemologies onto nonhumans, we should learn to diversify and expand our own knowledges through better understanding nonhumans.

This section explored three alternative onto-epistemologies to dominator ecology regarding human and non-human relations: biocentric anarchy, egoist ecology, and queer relating. Biocentric anarchy extends inherent value to all living beings, aiming to separate the dichotomy between human and nature and put humans back into the concept of nature. It suggests that all forms of domination and hierarchy between human and non-human must cease to exist. An egoist ecology describes an expansive self that regards the inner and outer worlds as inseparable, annihilating the alienation between the Cartesian dichotomy of object and subject, mind and body. It carries symbiogenesis into an egoist ecology that centers on individualism and egoism. Both concepts value individual autonomy and desire and challenge patriarchal and Western utilitarian ethics. Queer relating asks that we relearn our understanding of plants. Instead of imposing the human constructed patriarchal and anthropocentric understanding of living beings, it asks that we learn from plant and other nonhuman life to develop a more nuanced understanding of ourselves and our relations to our ecosystems. The next two sections borrow from these theories and develop tactical applications to ruptural and interstitial modes of transformation.

6.2 Ecodefense: on ruptural tactics for transformation

Ecoanarchist ruptural tactics regarding relations between humans and nonhumans involves the same concept of direct action from below and further carries this out through actions of 'ecodefense'. Ecodefense was the most prominent theme within the sample of zines. The

justifications for these actions use the theories outlined above along with known consequences that the current ecological crises have on the living and nonliving world. In *Wildpunk* (2002,4), Elany points to industry as the source of these consequences, with some examples,

> Forests are turned to lumber, after which greater and more intense heatwaves lead to a rise in forest fires, droughts, and desertification. Soil is eroded and farmland is turned into desert. Fertilizer, herbicides, fungicides and pesticides contaminate the food supply. Landfills overflow with synthetic waste. Power plants fill air, land, and sea with cancerous particles. A chemical smog fills the streets in the cities and poisons human and other beings at every turn. Plastic waste breaks apart into billions of tiny microscopic pieces, infecting every living organism. Chemicals are dumped into oceans, seas, and rivers. Toxic waste oozes into the ground water. The rise and warming of the seas lead to stronger rainfalls, more powerful floods, more frequent megastorms, and the inundation of coastal regions.

Using the logic of biocentric anarchy and egoist ecology, the response from ecoanarchists has been, in part, to struggle against these industries and the waste dumping, land clearing, animal exploiting, resource extracting, and new infrastructure building that they entail. This section thus looks at what kind of projects are being resisted, for what reasons, and with what strategies. Instead of discussing all industries, focus remains on three areas of exploitation – highly modern infrastructural projects, energy, and animal husbandry – to understand the ecoanarchist call for the end of Industry.

6.2.1   Against Highly Modernized Infrastructure Projects

First, the sample of zines speaks to many struggles against highly modernized infrastructural projects. In *No More City 3* (2021), the author(s) reflect on the resistance of highway expansion that occurred on Turtle Island in 2011. Hundreds of people marched down 'River Road' and established the South Fraser Protection Camp to disrupt a freeway construction site that was destroying the banks of the Fraser River. The occupation lasted two weeks but eventually the South Fraser Perimeter Road (SFPR) was completed in 2013. Speaking to the reasons for the establishment of the camp, the author(s) (2021, 11) wrote that,

> there is so very much to be said about the myriad of sacred indigenous sites, rare and sensitive ecosystems, urban forests and wildlife corridors, salmon stream, the very banks and bed of the so called Fraser River, endangered species, houseless, poor, and working class neighborhoods, guerilla gardens, farms, homes, and histories that were destroyed and paved over

Their reasons to resist demonstrate the interconnection of a riverbank with that of a range of issues faced by people and nonhuman species.

The City in the Forest (2022) and *Night Owl* (2022) describe the fight to prevent the destruction of a precious stretch of forest in Atlanta where the government aims to build a police training compound and facilitate the construction of a giant soundstage for the film

107

industry. Collaborations between environmentalists and police abolitionists link the defense of the land with the struggle against police brutality. The ecological consequences of this development project are said to be, "worse floods, higher temperatures, and smog-filled afternoons" since the entire metropolitan area is currently insulated by the forest (*The City in the Forest* 2022, n/a). This echoes an egoist ecology in that the destruction of an ecosystem is also "an assault on ourselves" (Fitzpatrick 2017, 18). The defense of the Atlanta Forest has been met with many acts of solidarity across the United States. According to *Night Owl* (2022, n/a)*, the "uptick in solidarity attacks around the U.S. is a testament to the campaign's successful avoidance of some of the strategic pitfalls endemic to radical ecodefense campaigns." They insist that "the forest is everywhere" and that associated targets can be found locally, and that this fight is against a system rather than a particular project (ibid.). This echoes the intention behind direct actions from below more broadly in that small acts of decentralized attacks are meant to weaken a much larger and more systemic issue. Matching an occupation with acts of solidarity remains a common thread in ecoanarchist actions.

As a third example, *Creeker* (2022) and *The Creeker Companion* (2022) document the Indigenous led blockade against logging in Fairy Creek on Vancouver Island. In a plea to rejoin nature, an author from *Creeker* (2022, 13) makes clear the objective of the blockade,

> It is more than time to demand justice and liberation for Nature and her children.
> May flowers bloom in oil fields.
> May birds sing lullabies to clear cut so the sun can soak their bleeding bodies.
> May we see the river run clear and free.
> May we find our way back to our Mother.

The author makes a clear connection with the need to protect forests and the desire to reintegrate people in nature. These three examples of resisting highly modernized infrastructure projects demonstrate the multitude of interconnected reasons why it is important to preserve landscapes from the impacts they have on people to the impacts they have on nonhumans and to the intrinsic value of these lands. These include preserving sacred sites and sensitive ecosystems, protecting ecosystems that regulate floods, temperatures, and air quality, and defending the ability to reintegrate people into nature.

6.2.2 Against the Energy Sector

Moving on to the energy sector, there are many ongoing struggles against new energy infrastructure, whether they are the old energies of oil and coal or the new energies as part of the 'transition' to renewables. Examples of communiqués on such actions include:

> 02.02.21 Portland, Oregon: "**Chase Banks Attacked in Solidarity with Line 3 Protests** Chase Bank branches all across the city of Portland, on occupied Chinook land, were attacked in solidarity with the movement to stop the Line 3 pipeline. Chase Bank was chosen because it is a major funder of Enbridge's Line 3 pipeline." ((*Earth First! News 32,* 5)

> 20.01.21 North America: "**Keystone XL Pipeline Cancelled** after over a decade of indigenous led opposition, the federal permit for the 1200 mile, eight billion dollar tar sands oil pipeline from western Canada to the gulf coast refineries was rescinded" (*Earth First! News 32,* 4)

> 16.01.2021 Nevada: "**Blockade as Proposed Lithium Mine** […] two activists camped out to protest the proposed lithium mine at Peehee-mm-huh, or Thacker Pass. This open pit mine on Paiute and Shoshone territory […] will impact nearly 5,700 acres of the Great Basin." (*Earth First! News 32,* 4)

> 15.01.21 Spain: "**Electric companies vandalized** Windows were painted and smashed at various offices of major electric companies, and two Iberdrola vehicles were set on fire in response to higher energy prices, increased power cuts by Iberdrola and Narugy companies in Madrid, and in solidarity with those standing up to capitalist exploitation worldwide" (*Earth First! News 32,* 3)

> 31.05.18 Marsanne, France: "[T]wo industrial wind turbines are attacked by fire, the outer nacelle of one of them is entirely consumed by the flames." (*Return Fire 6.1,* 47)

> 11.07.17 San Dionision del Mar, Mexico: "Heavy machinery being used to dredge Copalito beach in preparation for wind-farm, burned by locals in defense of the species of the lagoon and against the impact on their pre- and post-colonial fishing lifeway. The local General Assembly states they will not permit the installation of one more extractivist project" (*Return Fire 6.1,* 48)

> 15.11.15 Southern Chile: "Mapuche saboteurs deploy incendiary devices against the installations of a hydro-electric centre, leaving graffiti against the presence of various energy corporations on their territories." (*Return Fire 6.1,* 48)

Each struggle has their own reason to fight including the preservation of sacred lands, protection of the land, and access to basic resources within one's ecosystem. Some of the reasons can clash or contradict each other but importantly, they are grounded in geographical and cultural context. Universally, the fight is generally against the highly destructive energy sector for its contamination of lands, water, and air, and for the mass amount of extraction required to build up this industry. All this destruction led *Tackling Energy* (2017, 23) – a dossier documenting the resistance to the Trans Adriatic Pipeline through Albania, Italy, and Greece – to explore the question, "what is the purpose of energy in" the current society? The author(s) answer implies very sinister purposes for energy that are echoed throughout the zine sample.

The author(s) provide four critiques of proposed reasons for the continued growth of the energy sector. First is the critique of the energy 'transition.' Instead, the author(s) argue that it should be recognized as further energy accumulation. Coal consumption worldwide continues to increase. After a dip in consumption from covid, crude oil is also back on the

rise. Relating this back to degrowth, Jason Hickel (2020) has estimated that reaching 2050 renewable energy targets will require mining 34 million metric tons of copper, 40 million tons of aluminum, and no less than 4.8 billion tons of iron. Second is the weight energy has as a political tool. With control over energy comes the power to blackmail people and populations. This can be seen through a communiqué from Madrid where people are aware of the power that Iberdrola and Naturgy, two Spanish multinational energy companies, have to decide to increase energy prices and induce power cuts (*EarthFirst! News 32* 2021, 3). Third, the irrelevance of individual consumption compared to industrial consumption of energy, including the mass amounts used in the military and civil sectors. As an example, "one single company is capable of consuming each year an amount of energy equal to the amount used by the inhabitants of a whole city in their houses" (*Tackling Energy* 2017, 27). Though they do not share the particulars of what type of company or city, the Carbon Disclosure Project's *Carbon Majors Database* (2017) found that a mere 100 companies are responsible for almost two-thirds of global emissions. Fourth, and final, is the illusion of necessity. The more energy that is extracted from the biosphere, the more uses are created for it, and thus the more dependent we become. Ecological economists have deemed this the Jevons' paradox where "the more efficiently an economy uses resources, the more it grows, and the more resources it ends up consuming" (Hickel and Kallis 2020, 482). The author(s) of *Tackling* Energy conclude that the purpose for energy is to make *this* world function. Therefore, imagining another possible world is important for the struggle against energy accumulation.

The resistance in Bure, France against a nuclear waste burial centre provides the context for forty years of struggle against the overconsumption of energy. Like many other commodities, nuclear energy, once used up, needs a dumpsite. This is a problem everywhere. The resistance to the Andra's project is a mere glimpse into one such ecodefense against a contamination project, in which ecoanarchist tactics and logics were employed. Two zines, *The History and Context of the Struggle in Bure* (2021) and *Nuclear or Ignite* (2022) go into detail about the offensive acts against the installations and infrastructures of this nuclear burial center to spread them to other similar struggles. Conversations regarding the need to protect ecosystems follow an egoist ecology and align with the need to stop further destruction as it continues to contaminate human used resources and displace residence in the area. Overall, the examples of ecodefense regarding the energy sector are most useful in providing examples of sabotage as a tactic to inflict economic damage and work to dismantle harmful practices, as seen in the list of actions above.

6.2.3 Against Animal Husbandry

Finally, are examples within the industry of animal husbandry which introduces further discussion on animal agency. Within the sample of ecoanarchist zines, animal liberation efforts are partially a response to address issues of alienation, domination, and speciesism with regards to the human treatment of animals and partially a response to the contentions regarding the usefulness of consumer agency to resist larger systems of capitalism, statism, and anthropocentrism. Communiqués further speak to the sentiments of ecoanarchist groups towards their nonhuman kin and demonstrate how theory translates into practice. *EarthFirst! News 32* (2021) reported the following actions for animal liberation:

> 26.01.21 Turkey: two pitbulls liberated from kill "shelter"
>
> 12.02.21 UK: eight chicken liberated
>
> 22.01.21 Sweden: mass mink liberation
>
> 04.01.21 UK: another butcher shop vandalized
>
> 04.01.21 Sweden: four hunting towers destroyed
>
> 12.20 France: seventeen hunting towers sabotaged
>
> 30.12.20 France: butcher shop vandalized
>
> 26.12.20 Czech Republic: three pigs liberated
>
> 23.12.20 Italy: ALF frees two hunting dogs from cages
>
> 21.12.20 Italy: ALF destroys animal trap
>
> 18.12.20 Germany: three hunting towers destroyed
>
> 15.12.20 Germany: two hunting towers destroyed
>
> 08.12.20 Sweden: ALF vandalize ostrich farm
>
> 08.12.20 Canada: lamb freed and given name
>
> 04.12.20 Italy: ALF hacks Italian hunting website
>
> 03.12.20 UK: two turkeys liberated and rat traps destroyed

These acts align with a biocentric anarchy in which the life of nonhuman animals have intrinsic value in and of themselves and humans can fight for their liberty and against industries that seek to exploit them.

Not only do communiqués share actions performed *by people* for animal liberation, but also the acts of animal themselves who resist their oppression through escape or attack. In *Plain Words 4* (2017), the author(s) speak of a dear breaking through the door of a computer store, destroying some equipment and injuring a police officer. In *No More City 3* (2021), the author(s) report an attack by coyotes on people in so-called Stanley Park in Vancouver, Canada. In *Anathema 4.06* (2018, 2), the author(s) discuss the escape of peacocks from the

Philadelphia Zoo after which they, "strut down I-76, shutting down traffic for hours and evading capture by the police." Communicating these acts of resistance by nonhuman animals illustrate acts of solidarity with these acts and a continued effort to prioritize the wellbeing of individual nonhuman animals just as they prioritize the wellbeing of individual human animals.

There is the impression that people working towards the liberation of animals see themselves in the alienation and oppression that these nonhuman animals face and the lack of liberty to live free from confinement and exploitation. According to *Biocentric Anarchy* (2017, n/a), the author(s) speak of how the paths to alienation occurred simultaneously for human and nonhuman animals,

> Anthropocentrism and capitalism historically forced the mass dispossession of people from British land, through a process of enclosure aimed primarily at increasing the expanse of pastures for animals bred to meet the demands of the the 17th & 18th century meat and wool industries. The process involved the devastation of the country's woodland and the draining of many of its marshes, resulting in a massive loss of habitat and biodiversity for non-domesticated beings. Landless migrant humans headed towards a life of factory slavery in the sprawling cities, the only viable alternative beyond a life of banditry, while their ungulate cousins were to remain prisoners of the pastures. This laid the basis for today's unsustainably large urban populations and total dependency on the bosses for survival, initially in the form of closely-supervised factory labour. The factory model was refined and exported across the globe. This process of enclosure had been going on for centuries, but rapidly took up pace during this period, resulting in whole swathes of the country being depeopled, deforested, and replaced by specially-bred grazing animals. In time, changes in agricultural methods would mean that these creatures too would be moved into factories, and lives spent in cages would become the norm for animals bred to be eaten by humans.

Again, we see the interrelatedness of different forms of oppression, the lack of liberty, and ways in which our experiences are interconnected with that of nonhuman animals. In speaks in the context of capitalism and anthropocentrism. The enclosure movement in Britain, which aimed to increase pastures for animal breeding led to the dispossession of people from their land and the deconstruction of habitat and biodiversity for non-domesticated beings. The quote shows the process of enclosure affected both human and nonhuman animals, as landless humans were forced into factory labor while grazing animals were confined to pastures and later to factories. This thread of interconnected experiences is significant in discussions of animal liberation and environmental justice as it highlights the need for a more holistic approach to addressing these issues.

Some of the zines go further and critique reformist antispeciesist organizations. In *Animals Thirsting for Freedom* (2018), the author(s) present the French case for animal liberation through critiques of reformist antispeciesist organizations, slaughterhouses, and the domestication of animals. The author(s) begin by pointing out that the marches to close all slaughterhouses that have existed for the past six years, have produced little to no results.

They continue with a critique that reformist organizing and actions lead to authoritarian measures such as "laws, decrees, [and] norms" and that their initiatives to expose the unacceptable practices of some slaughterhouses disassociates people from the animal liberationists claim that, "the very existence of slaughterhouses is inevitably nonsensical" (ibid., 2-4). By this, they mean that by deeming some slaughterhouse practices unacceptable, they are inferring that they are acceptable ways of killing and exploiting animals *en masse*. Ecoanarchist animal liberationists deeply dispute their interpretation by antispeciesists. This continues with a lack of solidarity from these antispeciesist organizations to direct actions done by anarchist animal liberation groups. Reformist organizations of the past, like PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) in the United States, have been reported to refuse to "condemn means of action that are not the same as those they use." But, more recently, reformist organizations like L214 (French animal rights organization) have been "hastening to crawl before journalists' microphones dissociating and condemning these means of actions" (ibid., 2-3).

The author(s) in *Animals Thirsting for Freedom* (2018) continue to deepen the contradiction made by reformist antispeciesist organizations for their encouragement of the domestication of animals. Sociétés Protectrices des Animaux (SPA) are criticized for dealing with issues of overpopulation of domesticated nonhuman animals by way of sterilization and euthanasia. This is deemed, by the author(s), to be an "authoritarian act practiced on others" since there is no choice made by nonhuman animals to be sterilized. Besides comments on the treatment of domesticated nonhuman animals within SPA are comments regarding the problem of domestication itself that is adorned with the 'best intentions.' These intentions are to provide love and care for a nonhuman animal. This begs the question of whether it is in a nonhuman animal's interest to live safely in captivity or an independent life of uncertainty.

We endlings (2017) provides an example through the resistance of Toughie. While moved from its home in the Panamanian rainforest to a cell in Atlanta's botanical garden, Toughie refused to make or sing while in captivity, eventually leading to the extinction of his species. The author(s) of *We endlings* (2017, n/a) take this as a lesson to learn from, "Toughies's refusal to breed is a message for us. He and his companion choose not to raise tadpoles. Offered the option of survival in captivity […] they preferred not to." What is worth mentioning about the critiques made in *Animals Thirsting for Freedom* (2018) is the broad base of antispeciesist organizations from animal rights advocacy groups to animal rescue agencies. Given the range of objectives of these reformist organizations, it is easy to cherry

pick certain actions that apply to some but not all groups. Even so, the bottom line remains the same: to claim to be for the welfare of animals should include the rejection of killing and exploitation of animals in its entirety and the rejection of the systems of domination that reinforce the pacification of cruelty towards nonhuman animals with the notion of 'good intentions.'

Biocentric Anarchism (2017) links animal liberation to larger systems of capitalism, statism, racism, patriarchy, and especially anthropocentrism. The author(s) link anthropocentric oppression to other systems of oppression through the example of using female nonhuman animals' bodies as machines for reproduction. Some examples include:

> Farmed female prawns around the world have their eyestalks severed as a matter of routine in order to speed up the maturation of their ovaries (which, due to their stressful and unnatural conditions, do not otherwise mature in domestic environments). […] Pregnant sows (female pigs) are confined to farrowing crates – cages the size of their bodies which render them immobile. They remain there for weeks while they feed their piglets through the metal bars, beyond which they are denied any contact with them. […] Modern hens are intensively bred so that their bodies can lay an average of 314 eggs per year, in contrast with their wild hens who only lay around 20. […] Finally, sexist and speciesist language ("bitch", "dog", "cow", "bird") is often invoked to keep women down, degrading both these animals and female humans in the process. [*sic*] (ibid., n/a)

These acts of alienation, domination, and exploitation linked to oppressive systems coincides with the call for ecoanarchist animal liberationists to match theory with action when it comes to fighting for nonhuman animal agency.

The conversation regarding animal liberation continues with discussion of veganism. Ecoanarchist debates around veganism speak first to the autonomy of individual consumers (an interstitial tactic) but overall, they critique this for not being enough. The author of *Biocentric Anarchy* (2017, n/a) describes veganism as a "philosophical refusal to participate in animal exploitation by, among other things, not commodifying and consuming them." Though veganism is usual within ecoanarchist circles, there is a common thread regarding discussions of veganism that critique its superficial and ideological tendencies. Instead of aligning oneself with the vegan movement, there are calls amongst ecoanarchists for more acts of attack against the system of domination that itself allows for the enslavement and mistreatment of animals. In the same zine, the author (2017, n/a) states that, "while veganism is a vital element in the fight against speciesism, it is not enough in itself." The author in *Anarchy and Animal Liberation* (2022) illustrates this point through an example of the Bonnet Gang, a French anarchist group of 1911 and 1912 which rejected the traditional anarchist idea of creating a new society through political action and instead focused on individual acts of rebellion and crime as a means of challenging the existing social order. Though vegan, as a

concept, was not conceived until 1954[4], the Bonnet Gang knew a strict vegetarianism from the early 1900s. According to the author, "these rebels, either in small, leaderless groups, or as lone wolf, individuals, seized every moment available to them and waged a social war against the manifestations of social control and domination" (ibid, 2). The intention of the zine was to illustrate the relationship between veganism (or vegetarianism), individualist anarchy, and insurrectionary attack.

The link between insurrection and veganism continues in *Veganism from a Nihilist and Anti-Civilization Perspective* (2018). In it, Archegonos (2018, n/a) surmises that,

> This text is aiming for the destabilization of the term veganism through moral and social, even political chains and illustrates that if it doesn't align with a totally hostile consciousness towards the existent, then it doesn't cease to be another hoax or delusion.
>
> This is to say if the persons using this tool have made that another morality or don't take some risks with acts of attack (this can take many forms not only physical) or chaotic disruption then it remains mud inside the swamp where it came from.

Both *Anarchy and Animal Liberation* and *Veganism from a Nihilist* and *Anti-Civilzation Perspective* point to the need for more acts of attack, for ruptural tactics, against the industries that are regularly boycotted with insignificant impact. This can be seen in the act reported in *EarthFirst! News 25* (2017):

> Nov 1 – Chile: Noise Bomb for World Vegan Day
>
> The ALF claimed responsibility for a noise bomb placed in a butcher shop in Santiago. They said in their communiqué that World Vegan Day should be a day for "propaganda against domination in all its forms, not a day of festivity for veganism." (4)

These conversations on veganism provide a clear link between the need for both interstitial and ruptural modes of transformation.

Much has been drawn from the exploration of ecoanarchist attacks against these three industries. Actions against highly modernized infrastructural projects provide examples of how the struggle to preserve one's surrounding ecosystem is connected to a diverse range of context specific issues that are all part of a larger more systemic problem. In other words, the need to preserve nature is interconnected with other systems of oppression. Furthermore, they align with an egoist ecology that realizes that hurting nature hurts us therefore people need to act in the interest of their ecosystems to further or maintain their wellbeing. Ecoanarchist actions against energy infrastructure demonstrate a deep questioning of our (unnecessary) reliance and learned dependence on Industry, specifically within the energy sector. Lastly, actions for animal liberation, particularly in the agricultural industry but also within all domesticated relations, offers insights on the industry's embodiment of alienation and domination as a reflection of our own lived experiences which are inextricably linked to that

of our nonhuman kin. These struggles reflect an anarchist idea that, to sit idly by is to be complicity in the domination and exploitation of ourselves and 'nature.' Much of the need to struggle against destructive, polluting, and further exploiting projects concerns the wellbeing of ecosystems because of the direct impact that they have on people such as: contaminating drinking water, displacing communities, and deforestation of sacred lands. Though many actions are enacted for human purposes, they also sometimes reflect a reciprocal form of relating in which people must struggle for ecosystems so that the ecosystems are able to give back. Some accomplices are deeply aware of the need for reciprocity, some act purely out of self-interest. Even self-interested actions echo the egoist ecology's call for 'unions of egoists.'

6.2.4   Discussion: degrowth's ruptural relations to nonhumans

The information and examples provided in the analysis about the ecoanarchist ruptural tactics of transformation and their focus on reimagining human and nonhuman relations can inform and relate to degrowth ruptural tactics in many ways. Ecoanarchist concepts of 'ecodefense' aligns with the degrowth movement's critique of the current ecological crises and their consequences on the living and nonliving world, highlighting the need to resist destructive practices such as waste dumping, land clearing, animal exploitation, and new infrastructure building (Nirmal and Rocheleau 2019; Koller 2021). The examples provided through the zines demonstrate how ecoanarchists resist highly modernized infrastructural projects, energy sector developments, and animal husbandry practices, which are also areas of exploitation that degrowth advocates seek to address and transform. The shared goal of both approaches is to challenge the prevailing systems and relationships that prioritize economic growth over ecological sustainability and to reimagine more just and sustainable human and nonhuman relations based on principles of ecological balance, solidarity, and liberation (Hickel 2021; Latouche 2009). This aligns with a more naturalistic degrowth perception of nature that inquires how we are distant to nature (Heikkurinen 2021).

Degrowth proponents do not contest the negative consequences of capitalist and unrestrained industrial systems but, there lacks consensus on whether this should lead to direct disruption of harmful industries (Barlow et al. 2022). However, degrowth's obvious rejection to capitalist models of green industry as a sustainable solution to climate change and their further critique of the techno-managerial approach to climate change should be matched with more tangible practices. What ecoanarchists offer is the view that prefigurative human and nonhuman community building must be matched with a dedication to the dismantling of

unrestrained industrial systems that harm biotic communities and that the most effective way to do this is using a diversity of tactics, particularly ecodefense. Ecoanarchist ecodefense actions do not, however, align with the community of degrowthers who are 'techno-enthusiasts' since they often target the very institutions that are pushing for the 'transition to renewable energies.' Therefore, ecodefense can align with a more techno-skeptic and naturalist degrowth.

6.3 Living *With* the Land: on interstitial tactics for transformation

Ecoanarchist interstitial tactics regarding relations between humans and nonhumans involves applying the principle of voluntary cooperation to nonhuman and nonliving nature. Most of these tactics and practices align more prominently with biocentric anarchy and queer relating and include distinguishing between the relationship of living *on* the land to living *with* land, finding new ways to learn from nonhumans, conversations regarding rewilding and herbalism, further conversations regarding veganism, and learning broadly from indigenous practices that give intrinsic value to nonhumans. Using the sample of zines, each of these discussions/practices are explored to both further build theory and to demonstrate practical ways to reshape human and nonhuman relationships through ecoanarchist interstitial tactics of transformation.

As previously mentioned, Fitzpatrick spoke of 'maximizing mutualist interactions' and creating 'unions of egoists.' These ideas are key to understanding how people can live *with* the land through the anarchist first principle of voluntary cooperation. In *Sever* (2018), an author challenges the notion of living through one's own abilities and instead offers the reader an alternative in which nothing can be taken without something being given. In other words, they are 'against self-sufficiency', which promotes that each provides for oneself without outside aid. This contradicts the fact that everything we consume comes from something else; that we are always reliant on others, whether human or nonhuman. To leave this unacknowledged, according to the author, is to not appreciate 'the gifts' bestowed upon us from our ecological communities. Furthermore, an author from *Return Fire 5* (2017, 55) puts it this way,

> The earth gives us what we need. Long before we got the idea that we could run the show, Earth generously provided for our every need. We must reciprocate if we want to live in the gift. Nothing can demonstrate this more clearly than looking at the current state of this planet. Since attempting to take over the reins, we're run vital life support systems into the ground. Not reciprocating the gift ceases the flow. To rejoin the circle we must use the gifts given to us and give back to the Earth.

117

This highlights the need for reciprocity. Accordingly, the Earth has always provided us with everything we need, but since we have taken control, we have failed to reciprocate and care for the planet, leading to its current state of degradation. Though this runs into the problem of creating a dichotomy and generalization of what the "Earth" is and who "we" are, the point remains that a large-scale reimaging of reciprocal interactions between individual and communities of humans and nonhumans is needed. The author suggests that we need to re-establish the flow of giving and receiving with the Earth by using its resources wisely and giving back to it. This idea resonates with the Daoist principle of *wu wei*, which advocates for living in harmony with nature and taking only what is needed without exploiting the environment (Rapp 2012). *Wu wei* is commonly translated as 'non-action' which does not mean physical inertia or defeatist submission, rather it condemns activity that is contrary to 'nature' and encourages giving way as the best way to overcome (Rapp 2012). That we are no long part of the flow reinforces the idea that humans have been separated from nature and must find their way back.

In *Gay Plants* (2017), one author corroborates the Daoist concept of *wu wei*. This is understood through the exploration of "plant horror" and how it "can shine a light on the mutilation of self and others at the dead centre of what we have been taught to understand as normal, healthy existence" (ibid., 16). Rather than seeing horror as a moralizing reaction the author views it as a tool to uncover the "surface of something deeper, a dark pool in which to immerse ourselves and then emerge" (ibid., 16). Plants are depicted as monsters because they exist "on and beyond the outer reaches of our knowledge and silently deconstruct our very own constructs" (ibid., 16). This aligns with another author from *Gay Plants* (2017) who discusses the refusal of plants to fit within the categorizations that humans try to impose on them. The example they use is of the gender binary, as discussed above. Hence, these plants challenge our fundamental assumptions about life and traverse boundaries, unsettling established boundaries. In the words of the author, "these monstrous plants lurk perilously close to the very definition of the monstrous, which centers precisely on its refusal of known categories" (ibid.,16). The author looks to "monstrous plants" to transcend the limitations of the dominant onto-epistemology. Disrupting conceptual frameworks like the food chain that humans have imposed. Where this intersects with ideas of *wu wei* is through the author's reading of *Desert* (2011), an anarchist book that plays heavily on The Invisible Committee's (TIC) concept of desert and desertion. Another horror to immerse ourselves in is of the possibility of a future where climate change renders the world increasingly unmanageable

with the retreat of dominant regimes and the expansion of 'deserts.' According to the author in *Gay Plants* (2017, 17), "the desert is abandoned but not totally uninhabitable terrain […] where unorganized life has the potential to flourish in spite of the ruination." This offers a view of a world without us, a world indifferent to the struggles of human individuals and groups. They conclude that "resistance manifests in unknowable ways, obeying no conscious plan" (ibid, 18). Just as the nonhuman resist the dominant onto-epistemology's attempts at domination, so too should humans come to terms with how to join this resistance.

6.3.1 Rewilding and Herbalism

Moving beyond a cosmic pessimism, ecoanarchists encourage optimistic practices by promoting different relationships between humans and nonhumans through rewilding and herbalism. These practices also function to boycott destructive industries as a tool of subversion and challenge human dependence on industrial and pharmaceutical companies to develop convivial medicine. According to an author in *Biocentric Anarchy* (2017, n/a), rewilding involves "reclaiming skills and developing methods for a sustainable coexistence, including how to feed, shelter, and heal ourselves with the plants, animals, and materials occurring naturally in our bioregion." Rewilding relies on our immediate geographical surroundings and avoids the large scale of industrialization and globalization. It is rooted in the local. Though there is little depth regarding conversations on rewilding, there is consensus within the sample of zines regarding its ability to honor the wilderness and individuals that inhabit it. Herbalism, on the other hand, provides a deeper look at what actions can be practiced that encourage a move towards rewilded relations.

In *An anarchist free herbal* (2017, 9), the author speaks of herbalism as an example of a rewilding practice in which an herbalist "knows and uses the healing properties of plants." The author frequently expresses their use of herbalism as a response to their hatred of the medical industrial complex and the hierarchical social structures that it perpetuates. They continue by criticizing the commodification of herbalism and provide a free reference guide to those starting their journey with herbalism as a form of subversion. Contrary to the critique that consumer agency is not a useful tool to counteract exploitative industries, the author writes that,

> [D]aily practices of autonomy, whether it's refusing to pay for something or drinking a cup of tea instead of taking an aspirin (or suffering through), nourish us. Medicine from a friend is a reminder of love and a message of solidarity. (ibid, 77)

The idea that herbalism, as a community practice that demonstrates love and solidarity, is echoed in *Gay Plants* (2017) where information is shared for a trans-positive herbalism. It targets information regarding plant-based hormones and herbs that can support changing bodies. The author(s) (ibid, 6) also endorse herbalism for "a politics of resistance towards industrialism and hierarchical arrangements of power and knowledge."

6.3.2   Regarding Veganism

Drawing on the above conversation on veganism, there continues to be contention regarding the use of individual autonomy as a subversion tactic to industries that are both exploitative and destructive towards humans and nonhumans. Though many argue that it is a useful tactic alongside more ruptural tactics of attack some warn of the potential for co-optation consequences of such actions. In *Return Fire 5* (2017), an author argues that veganism has been tool for co-optation used by green capitalists and tends towards ideological and religious followings. The author further attacks the ethical framework of veganism that they find to be, "immature and overly civilized" (ibid, 71). The author points out how by not eating or wearing animal products, vegans are not avoiding the exploitation of animals. For example, they point out that the bees that are commercially farmed to be used to pollinate most fruits and vegetables are often not taken into consideration. Furthermore, they hypothesize an industrial farm in which no bees, manure, or giant destructive tractors are used. The cost of these products would only be available to the rich and would enter a cash flow that would be invested into other (destructive) industries. The author then concludes the section with, "the nature of industrial society is completely missed when we see agency in consumer choices" (ibid, 69).

The author from *Biocentric Anarchy* (2017, n/a) addressed the retort that veganism will not overthrow capitalism by asking when the last time anarchists acted in a way that, "truly counted towards overthrowing capitalism". Though the degree to which destruction has been done to the system varies, capitalism is still alive and thriving. Instead, they state how "capitalism is a culture, an assemblage of social relationships, attitudes, behaviours and relationships sustained by an uncountable number of individual actions and choices" (ibid, n/a). Choosing to be vegan, or to refrain from consuming animal products, becomes an act of "honour and respect for those creatures, and to have as little as possible to do with their domestication, slavery, and torture" (ibid, n/a). Both authors, from *Return Fire* and *Biocentric Anarchy*, continue with the need to be in constant conflict with these industries and systems

but differ in the effect that veganism can play in subverting the animal husbandry industrial complex.

6.3.3   On Indigenous Practices of Being of the Land

Ecoanarchism further learns from some indigenous worldviews. The author in *Biocentric Anarchy* (2017) points out the contrast in ways of relating that was galvanized through colonization. Indigenous relations with the land were severed and animistic belief systems were destroyed. Acknowledging that these relations with the land existed and still exist within indigenous practices is at the center of the discussions being had within the sample of zines. An indigenous anarchism emphasizes the importance of working with and through nature to create a sustainable and harmonious world. *Return Fire 5* and *Black Seed* discuss an indigenous anarchism (based on Turtle Island). In *Black Seed* (2020, 17), Aragorn! outlines the principles of an indigenous anarchism that emphasizes the idea that everything is imbued with spirit, or the Great Spirit, and therefore "everything is alive". This idea is the foundation of an interrelated worldview that challenges the 'anti-life disciplines' of sociology, politics, and statistics. An indigenous anarchism places humans as part of an extended family and prioritizes the connection between living beings in how we understand ourselves in the world. Similarly, in *Black Seed* (2020), another author describes how anarchism values non-human entities beyond their monetary worth or usefulness to human beings. This sentiment is echoed in the call to "reclaim our wild interiors" in *Return Fire 5* (2017, 4), where the author(s) encourage us to start with the reclamation of the wild within ourselves, which involves acknowledging our "sadness, anger, irritability, depression and disease." Ultimately, this approach in understanding challenges the dominant and political systems that exploit and destroy the natural world. The sample of zines said little regarding practical knowledge sharing. The focus is around acknowledging the relations that some indigenous people have with the land and the histories that have harmed this connection.

6.3.4   Discussion: degrowth's interstitial relations to nonhumans

Through the sample of zines, ecoanarchism encompasses a call for interstitial practices that challenge the prevailing systems of human and nonhuman relations. At its core, ecoanarchism seeks to transform our current modes of existing with nature and emphasize reintegration into nature. This perspective challenges the dominant narrative of endless economic growth as the

foundation of modern industrialized societies, recognizing its inherent unsustainability and its detrimental impact on the environment.

In the realm of human and nonhuman relations, ecoanarchist interstitial practices provide practical tactics and principles that guide interactions. The concept of living with the land, encourages us to recognize and appreciate the ecological communities that sustain us. By acknowledging our dependence on both human and nonhuman sources for our needs, ecoanarchists emphasize the importance of reciprocity, gratitude, and a deep sense of responsibility towards the natural world. This shift in mindset can foster a more balanced and harmonious coexistence that degrowth can latch onto.

Ecoanarchism also critically examines the role of science in our society. This entails reevaluating our understanding of nature and nonhuman beings and ensuring that scientific advancements are guided by respect for the environment and a commitment to minimizing harm. Ecoanarchists encourage an understanding of how science shapes how people interact with the nonhuman world. Moreover, ecoanarchism highlight the agency and resistance exhibited by nonhuman entities, particularly plants, challenging our established categories and preconceived notion. The concept of "plant horror" invites us to reexamine our understanding of living beings and learn from the resilience and defiance displayed by plants that defy conventional categorizations and harsh living standards.

Within the context of degrowth, ecoanarchism informs and guides practical interstitial practices such as rewilding, herbalism, veganism, and different ways in which we can live with the land. Much of the ideas around how to live with the land are derived from indigenous worldviews and knowledge systems (particularly from Turtle Island). Ecologically centered perspectives provide holistic understandings of interconnectedness and ecological balance and overall encourage that people go out and find connection with nature. In conclusions, the emphasis is on expanding personal relations with nonhumans and nature. However, by challenging existing relations, as well as prevailing paradigms in science ecoanarchism offers a framework for transformative change. It emphasizes voluntary cooperation, reciprocity, and a deep respect for the interconnectedness of all beings. By incorporating diverse perspectives such as indigenous knowledges and the resistance exhibited by nonhuman beings, ecoanarchism guides degrowth towards a more sustainable and equitable society that prioritizes the wellbeing of all life. However, the sample of zines provide some practical information that shape degrowth interstitial pathways regarding human and nonhuman relations but do not go too deep into how this can be done.

6.4 Conclusion: reciprocity meets liberation for all

*"Mainstream ecology is deeply colonial and frequently acts at the service of
political institutions and corporations. We want to dismiss the practice of
dominator ecology, how and why it does what it does, without dismissing many of
the insights and findings. We also want to speak honestly about the role dominator
ecology plays in the destruction of the wild and ongoing colonization"*
- Towards an Anarchist Ecology

It is difficult to imagine how people can be inspired to protect and defend their ecosystems when many people are so detached from their sources of sustenance. The availability of water bottles in corner stores displaces our appreciation for the need for clean water systems, seemingly unharmed by contamination and mass waste dumps. The psychological distance between the mass slaughter of animals to the slab of meat on dinner plates makes it much too easy to consume unburdened. Water and meat are but two of many examples. Though globalized markets continue to keep us alienated from nature as well as vulnerable to ecological devastation through large-scale development projects, more and more people are starting to feel the very direct consequences of the environmental and climate crises. According to the sample of ecoanarchist literature, the understanding that there is the need for a healthy ecosystem to maintain a healthy community requires that we be more attuned to our ecosystems. To follow from biocentric anarchy and an egoist ecology, this means focusing our efforts on reciprocal ways of living with (instead of off) the land.

Including the idea of voluntary cooperation and limiting the experience of domination for all people, animals, and ecosystems is reminiscent of biocentric thinking. Organizing based on biocentrism is clearly demonstrated through actions that are grounded in animal liberation and ecosystem protection but there exists limited conversation on how these groups are organizing *with* their fellow nonhumans. It is more as if there is a focus on acting "for" instead of "with" their biotic communities. Similarly, in an egoist ecology, an "assault on our ecosystems is an assault on ourselves" therefore, because of the interrelatedness of human and nonhumans worlds, to "act for one's own love of self is to also act for one's ecosystem" Fitzpatrick (2017, 18). Degrowth can further expand its transformational capacity regarding how people relate to nonhumans through a deeper look into ecoanarchist thought and action but within interstitial practices of relating, there remains a simple emphasis: find connections with the nonhuman and natural worlds.

7. Conclusion

To conclude the study is to re-evaluate the research question and how the research conducted has contributed to it. To restate the question: *How can ecoanarchist ideas and practices deepen and diversify degrowth pathways towards socially and ecologically sustainable futures*? By exploring the literature on degrowth, Chapter 2 outlined the critiques that degrowth makes to the current economic paradigm that informs much of the mainstream discussions regarding solutions to the ongoing and growing socio-ecological issues brought on by environmental and climate crises (see Allan and Meckling 2021; Asufu-Adjaye et al. 2015; Burton and Sommerville 2019; Daly 1977; Georgescu-Roegen 1976; Herbal et al. 2020; Hickel and Kallis 2020; Latouche 2018; Meadows et al. 1972; Parrique 2019; Burton and Somerville 2019; Schmelzer 2016; Schneider et al. 2010). As part of their solution, degrowth first advocates for a deliberate contraction of production and consumption to achieve socio-ecological sustainability and wellbeing (Hickel 2021). Degrowth proponents emphasize the need for socio-political transformation and many degrowth proponents have encouraged the need to incorporate all three of Wright's (2010) logics of transformation – symbiotic, interstitial, and ruptural (see Barlow et al. 2022). Furthermore, there are calls to enrich relations between humans and nonhumans but there lacks adequate exploration of what this looks like.

These logics of transformation became the theoretical framework in which to 'deepen and diversify' degrowth pathways. Much of the degrowth literature has thus far emphasized symbiotic modes of transformation (D'Alisa and Kallis 2020). There were gaps in both interstitial and ruptural modes of transformation. Through the background chapter (Chapter 3), ecoanarchism proved a useful avenue to further explore these modes of transformation. To build off ecoanarchism's long history, and multiple contemporary struggles towards interstitial and ruptural transformation, this thesis borrowed from a feminist methodology and ethic of research to refrain from 'knowledge extraction' and instead work towards 'knowledge building' (Lennon and Whitford 1994; Letherby 2003; Loadenthal 2017; Mies 1983; Oakley 1981; Sprague 2005). This was done with the aim of 'meeting the subjects where they are' and maintaining reflexivity of the researcher's own positionality (Cole 1990; Doucet and Mauthner 2008). This thesis aimed to use material created by and for ecoanarchists to share and inform each other on ongoing struggles and theory regarding projects to subvert ecologically destructive industries and an oppressive system of domination. Thus, the

materials used were ecoanarchist zines. To paraphrase, zines are self-published, non-commercial publications typically created by independent individuals or small collectives. They serve as alternative platforms for marginalized voices, fostering community engagement, and disseminating alternative perspectives, often challenging mainstream narratives and promoting alternative cultures and activism (Duncombe 2008; Hays 2020; Jeppesen 2011; Liming 2010). In total, 43 zines were chosen as a sample. The two analysis chapters were divided into two thematic clusters, on ways of organizing and on human and nonhuman relations. These themes were established through a deductive approach using the literature review and background chapters and analyzed through the theoretical framework of Wright's modes of transformation. The material was further explored using an inductive approach, which allowed subthemes to emerge according to the material. Subthemes include: direct action from below, voluntary cooperation, reimagining earthly relations, ecodefense, and ways of living *with* the land.

From the analysis (Chapters 5 and 6), the sample of ecoanarchist zines demonstrated many contributions to both interstitial and ruptural logics of transformation that are in line with the degrowth literature. Regarding ruptural transformation, ecoanarchism recognizes that significant change often requires challenging and disrupting existing power structure and institutions. Thus, it advocates for direct action and continued resistance against oppressive systems (see De Cleyre 2004). Through acts of ecological sabotage and grassroots mobilization to set up blockades, camps, and disruptive acts of solidarity, ecoanarchists aim to expose the inherent flaws and contradictions of the dominant system and create ruptures that can lead to transformative moments. Decentralization acts as a tactical advantage to get "at the roots by cutting its veins" with the aim of slowly weakening the larger system. These actions aim to provoke dialogues, inspire collective action, and force systemic change. Important within these examples are those that specifically act in solidarity with nonliving communities. This is done to counter dominant exploitative industries and instead reimagine human and nonhuman relations based on reciprocity and liberation. Given ecoanarchism's long history in practice, knowledge sharing of the obstacles faced are a further important aspect of the zines. The analysis does not only look at ecoanarchist struggles because they are highly effective and successful. There is also much to learn from why they are not successful in many of their efforts to overturn ecologically destructive industries and systems. Specifically explored were state mechanisms of repression. By communicating past

experiences with state repression, ecoanarchists and degrowthers can learn from each other and be weary of the potential of states to continue to contain struggles using these tactics.

Regarding interstitial transformation, ecoanarchism also focuses on building alternative practices and communities outside of the existing system. It emphasizes creating autonomous, sustainable, and self-governing spaces that operate outside and in opposition to dominant structures (Raekstad and Gradin 2019). From the sample of zines, ecoanarchists do this through the consideration of the core anarchist principle of voluntary cooperation. Cooperation is seen through application of principles of mutual aid and solidarity while voluntary emphasizes the need for individual autonomy, self-determination, and free (dis)association. For ecoanarchists of today, to merge voluntary and cooperation includes created nonhierarchical and intersectional communities that continually challenged and subverted the status quo of how to relate to one another. This reared its head in many ways including through queering spaces and finding ways to more deeply and critically align with different indigenous groups that were being impacted by common political and ecological issues. Furthermore, applying the same principle of voluntary cooperation to relations between humans and nonhumans established discussions and practices that emphasized more reciprocal relations and ideas of living *with* the land. Included within these reimaginings were practices of rewilding and herbalism, debates around veganism, and further proliferation of indigenous knowings. These interstitial practices serve as living examples of alternative ways of organizing society and interacting with nonhuman communities. They challenge the prevailing norms and inspire people to envision and experiment with new possibilities.

Chertkovskaya (2022, 56) is one of multiple degrowth proponents who argues that "degrowth actors should put a special emphasis on strategies that build power outside of the capitalist system and be very cautious of those which merely seek to tame capitalism. At the same time, the degrowth movement should also integrate the strategic logic of overthrowing capitalism altogether." She continues in dialogue with the work of Erik Olin Wright's logics of transformation. Overall, ecoanarchism's contributions to interstitial and ruptural logics of transformation provide both practical and visionary approaches as part of degrowth's strategies for socio-ecological transformation. By building alternative practices within the system and engaging in direct action against oppressive structures, ecoanarchism challenges the status quo and encourages the exploration of new ways of living, organizing, and relating to the environment. It serves as a source of inspiration and a catalyst for broader socio-ecological transformation.

126

7.1 Implications for Existing Theory and Practice

This study on how ecoanarchist theory and practice can inform degrowth's strategies towards transformation both challenges and supports existing theory discussed as part of the degrowth literature. It challenges a degrowth that prioritizes reformist or incremental approaches to addressing socio-ecological issues (as seen in D'Alisa and Kallis 2020). Instead, the sample provides criticisms of symbiotic (reformist) modes of transformation. From the sample of zines, ecoanarchists discuss how reformist-based solutions often: focus on symptoms of larger systemic problems rather than addressing the root causes; are co-opted by the existing power structure leading to compromises that water down the original goals and demands; distract from or undermine more radical transformative efforts; reproduce inequalities and power imbalances; and do not address the deep interconnectedness of issues that are rooted in systemic problems. However, degrowth proponents note how symbiotic transformation can "expand spaces for alternatives, limit ecologically and socially harmful activities, and change the very systems that shape social institutions" (Chertkovskaya 2022, 59). To degrowthers, symbiotic transformation can and should complement interstitial transformation (see D'Alisa 2019). Becoming familiar with ecoanarchist critiques of this approach can therefore better inform degrowth pathways to include a more critical lens of symbiotic modes of transformation.

Ecoanarchism supports theories within degrowth by providing practical examples and insights from ecoanarchist practices that align with the consistent degrowth argument for transformation, systemic change and the need for a diversity of strategies and approaches specifically through ruptural and interstitial strategies of transformation (For example, Chertkovskaya 2022). This helps to deepen and diversify degrowth theory by demonstrating its applicability in real-world contexts. Furthermore, it contributes to the call from degrowth for more affinity and solidarity with other movements, including a critical look at relations with indigenous struggles and nonhuman beings (For example, Dunlap 2020a; Martinez-Alier 2012). By incorporating ecoanarchist perspectives, which emphasize direct action, localized struggle, and resistance from below, it expands the range of strategies available for challenging dominant economic and social systems. Additionally, by exploring ecoanarchist perspectives – which also advocates for voluntary cooperation, decentralization, and nonhierarchical organizing – the need to challenge the status quo and dominant modes of thought were frequently supported. Overall, a study on how ecoanarchist theory and practice

informs degrowth's interstitial and ruptural pathways contributes to the evolution and refinement of theory by introducing alternative perspectives and challenging established norms. More importantly, it offers practical insights and examples for creating a more sustainable and just future.

Like most solutions to the environmental issues faced today, there is a grave tension within both ecoanarchism and degrowth regarding a focus of pre-emptive mitigation and post-crisis adaptation. Understanding which of these conversations a given text is referring to is significant in avoiding misinterpretations and wrongful assumptions. As ecoanarchism originally developed in the context of the late 19th century, in its early days it was more focused on preventative measures. Present discussions are more centered on the present but also include prefigurative perspectives. Degrowth, on the other hand, treads the line between pre- and post- crisis as it is existing within the present of the crisis. Furthermore, recognizing the limitations of the sample of zines, the zines are regionally concentrated first within Turtle Island and second within Europe. This overview therefore leans towards a Westernized ecoanarchist perspective that can and has looked very different in areas with different colonial, cultural, and state histories.

7.2 Concluding Remarks: a pluriverse forest

To restate the dominant modern onto-epistemology of universalism, it refers to a philosophical framework that emphasizes universal principles, truths, or values that are applicable to all individuals and contexts. It is rooted in the idea that there are objective and universal ways of understanding and organizing the world. Universalism often seeks to establish a single overarching perspective that can be applied universally, disregarding the diversity of experiences, cultures, and contexts. It has played a significant role in shaping modern institutions, systems of governance, global perspectives, and finally, globalized solutions to the socio-ecological crises of our time. Universalism can lead to the imposition of dominant perspectives, cultural imperialism, and the marginalization or erasure of diverse worldviews, knowledge systems, and ways of life. This thesis therefore used an anarchist political ecology (APE) critique of the dominant onto-epistemology with the aim of exploring more accommodating ways of living reciprocally with diverse peoples and non-human beings. It highlights the potential value of alternative onto-epistemologies in terms of generating and conceptualizing sustainability. This means living in ways that encourage equitability and

'moral considerability' between all beings as well as with the different kinds of agencies that constitute nonhuman-beings (Sullivan 2017). It also means imagining and exploring different ways of organizing that are not dependent on hierarchical power structures (Sullivan 2017). Searching alternatives takes the position that accepts that "difference makes a difference" (Kohn 2013, 8).

Continuing with the tree analogy regarding ecoanarchist and degrowth interrelations: In a forest, new growth emerges or is planted primarily as a consequence of the destruction of old growth through both natural cycles and human imposed logging and burning. Here we can think of degrowth as new growth. As the reforestation industrial complex encourages large-scale tree planting, the speed to which they plant means new trees are often placed in dry soil without their mother trees, – what are referred to as hub trees – under the shade of larger trees, or without much needed connections through the mycelial mats. Well known within the arborist community is that new growth trees struggle to survive. When they do survive, it is because of the support from the forest and old growth in which they exist. Here we can think of ecoanarchism as old growth. The processes in which forests are created are beautifully complex and intricate. Planted trees are not forests. Forests rely on a balanced and diverse ecosystem working together to maintain its overall health. They also require time. (Wohlleben 2015)

Degrowth is a relatively new concept – decolonial degrowth even more so – thus is thought of as new growth. Seen as such, degrowth is vulnerable to the unsavory conditions of not being more deeply rooted in the space in which it is meant to thrive. Attaching to deeper roots and finding the mycelial networks in which it can borrow nutrients from its neighbours, as the analogy goes, is detrimental to its survival and flourishing. One such network of support can be seen within ecoanarchism, in which this thesis demonstrates the beginning of the anarchism-degrowth entanglement. This entanglement is not *the* answer to the environmental and climate crises, it is one of many as part of a pluriverse of ideas, knowings, alternatives, and imaginaries.

The pluriverse, also known as the "pluriverse of worlds" or "many worlds," is a concept that emphasizes the existence of multiple ontological and epistemological realities, perspectives, and ways of being (Escobar 2018). It stands in contrast to the modern dominant onto-epistemology of universalism. The concept of the pluriverse recognizes and values the diversity of human experiences, cultures, knowledge system, and ontologies, and emphasizes the coexistence of multiple worldviews and ways of understanding the world. The pluriverse

acknowledges that these diverse realities are not merely subjective or arbitrary, but rather reflect different ways of engaging with and making sense of the world. It also acknowledges that indigenous knowledge systems, local ecological knowledge, traditional practices, and marginalized epistemologies have been historically marginalized or suppressed by dominant systems of knowledge production. The pluriverse also highlights the interconnectedness and interdependence of these multiple realities. It recognizes that the world is made up of a complex web of relationships, where diverse ontologies and ways of being interact and influence one another. The pluriverse encourages dialogue, mutual learning, and the exchange of knowledge between different worldviews, promoting a more inclusive and respectful engagement with diverse cultures and perspectives (Kothari et al. 2019).

On a smaller scale within the pluriverse exist degrowth and ecoanarchism. Given the call from degrowthers to participate in all three modes of transformation (Wright 2010), the gap within degrowth in interstitial and ruptural explorations and ecoanarchism's long history of interstitial and ruptural tactics the entanglement between the two has offered many insights. The intermingling of roots and branches of degrowth and ecoanarchism and subsequent exploration of the signaling systems that connect the two separate trees creates a bond between degrowth and ecoanarchism that is further connected to a larger network of trees. Understanding degrowth and anarchism as two trees in a forest that is the pluriverse, this thesis worked to entangle degrowth and ecoanarchism. Through a look into ecoanarchist zines, this study allowed ecoanarchism to nourish degrowth to create better breeding grounds for prefigurative alternatives to the modern dominant onto-epistemology of universalism.

The two analysis chapters introduce how ecoanarchist experiences and ideas can inform degrowth ruptural and interstitial pathways. Each of the subthemes explored deserve further research in the context of furthering degrowth pathways. These include ecoanarchist theories and practices of: decentralized direct action from below, ecodefense, the use of violence, state mechanisms of repression, co-optation efforts by environmental nongovernmental organizations (ENGOs), mutual aid, solidarity, individual autonomy, free (dis)associate, nonhierarchical organizing, intersectionality, biocentric anarchy, egoist ecology, wilding and herbalism, debates regarding veganism, and further collaboration with different indigenous groups on struggles to protect biotic communities. Even still, much work is needed to transition degrowth thinking towards a pluriverse of thought and action which is not only centered within 'Western' academia, or even within academia more generally. Lastly, exploration of how degrowth can support/inform ecoanarchism should be examined.

Appendix A: Sample of Zines

Zine/Journal	Year	Territory
Killing King Abacus	2016	Turtle Island
Towards an Anarchist Ecology	2016	General
Avalanche 12	2017	Europe
Biocentric Anarchy	2017	Europe
Earth First! News 25	2017	International
Fenrir magazine #8	2017	Europe
Gay Plants 1	2017	General
Plain Words 4	2017	Turtle Island
Return Fire 5	2017	International
Tackling Energy	2017	Europe
We Endlings	2017	Turtle Island
An Invitation to Desertion	2018	General
Anarchist Tactics at Standing Rock	2018	Turtle Island
Anarchy in a Small Pond	2018	Turtle Island
Anathema 4.06	2018	Turtle Island
Animals Thirsting for Freedom	2018	Europe
Break Away from Break Free	2018	Australia
Diagnostic of the Future	2018	General
Queering Protest Sites	2018	Europe
Sever - Black Seed	2018	Turtle Island
Veganism From A Nihilist and AntiCiv Perspective	2018	General
Standing on the Land to Stand Up Against Pipelines	2019	Turtle Island
Black Seed 8	2020	Turtle Island
Return Fire 6.1	2020	International
Return Fire 6.2	2020	International
An Anarchist Free Herbal	2021	General
Another Word for Settle	2021	Turtle Island
Earth First! News 32	2021	Turtle Island

Face to Face with the Enemy	2021	Europe
History and context of the struggle in Bure	2021	Europe
No More City 3	2021	Turtle Island
Settlers on the Red Road	2021	Turtle Island
Storm Warning 43-44	2021	International
Unknowable: Against an Indigenous Anarchist Theory	2021	Turtle Island
Anarchy and Animal Liberation	2022	General
Creeker 1	2022	Turtle Island
Night Owls 1	2022	Turtle Island
Nuclear or Ignite	2022	Europe
Return Fire 6.3	2022	International
The City in the Forest	2022	Turtle Island
The Creeker Companion	2022	Turtle Island
Wildpunk	2022	Europe
France in Flames	2023	Europe

Appendix B: Breakdown of Sample of Zines

State	Quantity
Turtle Island	18
Europe	11
General	7
International	6
Australia	1

Figure 1: Breakdown of the regional makeup of the zines. Many were later discovered to communicate actions and ideas that went beyond the state in which they were written.

Theme	Quantity
state	9
organizing	7
tactics	6
exploitation	7
relations	9
technology	2
multiple	17

Figure 2: Breakdown of the first glance themes of the zines. Many of the zines featured more than two of the themes and were therefore categorized under "multiple".

Year	Quantity
2016	2
2017	9
2018	10
2019	1
2020	3
2021	9
2022	8
2023	1

Figure 3: Breakdown of how many zines were used from each year. There is a lack of zines from 2019 and 2020. Though the reasons aren't known for this, the coronavirus pandemic likely affected zine distribution in 2020. The website also depended upon a small group of unpaid individuals, which could reflect on the inconsistency of the blog postings.

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