Old Trees, New Realities

The social construction of nature and the remaking of reality in the struggle for old-growth forests in Tasmania

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Fig 1(top of front cover): Upper Florentine Valley

For my family

Fig 2 (bottom of front cover): Logged coupe following a regeneration burn

Abstract

This thesis presents and analyzes the highly contentious issue of old-growth forest logging in the Australian island state Tasmania. The thesis is based on material collected through a fieldwork conducted with an environmental organization in Tasmania between January and July 2008.

The main objectives of this thesis is to uncover why the forest practices in Tasmania are so fiercely contested, and to explore the strategies and the techniques employed by the environmental movement and the forest industry in their respective argumentations. The dispute is discovered to comprise a nexus of intertwined dimensions: political, economic, cultural, emotional and existential dimensions come together and interact in complex ways.

Through a discussion of the elaborate use of symbols, which I argue is pervasive in the Tasmanian environmental conflict; I find that nature is rhetorically constructed in ways that support certain forms of interactions between nature and society. Through metaphorical associations and processes of rescaling, connections are evoked between the Tasmanian forest dispute and highly moral narratives of both a religious and a cultural kind.

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1: Introduction

Contested landscapes

Tasmania is an Australian island state located south-east of the Australia‘s mainland, an hour’s flight across the Bass Strait from Melbourne. A significant portion of the Australian continent’s tracts of Eucalypt- and rainforest is situated on this 62,409 sq km island, a size similar to Ireland. Today, the population reaches approximately 500,000 people (Tasmania 2007). Historically, the state’s economy has been heavily dependent on the extraction of natural resources, amongst which minerals (mining), hydro-electric energy (construction of dams), and trees (timber and wood-chip production) have been the most important economic pillars. At present, the Tasmanian community is the site of intense and vigorous debates about how natural areas of land are to be managed, and the future of the old-growth forests is of pivotal concern. This contested issue divides the community: supporters of the historically important logging-industry are opposed to conservationists. Arguments are thrown back and forth in a heated battle concerning the future of the Tasmanian economy and nature, two aspects that are intimately connected. Marianne Lien cites the Tasmanian author Richard Flanagan who asserts that Tasmanian identity “has been, and still is, fought, claimed and negotiated through the prism of the environment”, and she adds that contested landscapes represent “condensed empirical sites for analyses of cultural imageries of past, present and future” (Lien 2007: 103).

Against this backdrop, it seemed like a good strategic choice to conduct my fieldwork with The Wilderness Society (TWS), one of the central conservation movements in Tasmania, to enable a study of contested landscapes. I adhere to a process-related understanding of the relations between nature and society. Following Paul Cloke and Owain Jones, I see these relations as “continually unfolding in the context of specific places, in which meanings will arise from particular interactions between different assemblages of social, cultural and natural elements” (Cloke and Jones 2002: 1).

Main objective of the thesis

This thesis asks *why Tasmanian landscapes are so fiercely contested*, and examines ways in which the old-growth debate is entrenched in the social, cultural, political and economic context. A relevant question is also *how nature is socially performed* in this conflict. This question is answered by exploring how conceptions of nature are produced and reproduced in everyday experience. To this end, the symbolic work of the environmental movement and the forest industry is analyzed in regard to Tasmania's cultural and economic history, as well as international discourses about nature and climate. The analytical process will be informed by an awareness of the dynamics between personal, regional, national and global scales.

Proponents of the logging industry in Tasmania claim that logging is necessary for a successful state economy, and that logging of old-growth forests should therefore continue. Opposing this view, conservationists assert that old-growth logging must cease and that the industry should, and could indeed very successfully, be turned more towards tourism and plantation logging. The debate is characterised by polarisation; both sides paint the other black, in a process akin to what Gregory Bateson calls "symmetrical schismogenesis" (Bateson 1958: 273), in which the two rival camps push each other into confrontational behaviour and into an antagonistic relationship, creating a system of bilateral symmetry. Forest industry workers describe conservationists as naïve and reactionary extremists, while the latter in turn accuse the industry of having corrupt and undemocratic relations with politicians and of caring about little else than profit-maximisation without any genuine concern for the environment. In this process nature is represented differently by the two sides of the debate, in ways that justify their respective viewpoints on a proper way to relate to nature.

Theoretical perspectives

Socio-natures

Aidan Davison describes an increasing scholarly critique of dualistic ideas of nature across the social sciences since the early 1990s which challenge the premise of modern intellectual traditions that view society and nature as non-overlapping domains of reality (Davison 2007). This critique is of growing relevance to public debate on topics such as climate change and sustainable development. Davison also describes a "new" ecology that since the late-

1980s stresses human participation in ecological dynamics defined by flux, novelty and opportunism. According to Adrian Franklin (2002), efforts in anthropology to bridge the nature-society distinction have been framed in terms of hybridity and a single social field based on different modes of interaction between humans and non-humans (Descola 1996); the dwelling perspective – the mutual constitution of people and landscape in an embodied and sensual process without beginning and ending (Ingold 2000); and a common social and moral field encompassing social groups and their natural surroundings (Bloch 1992, Rival 1996).

Donna Haraway claims that nature cannot pre-exist its construction: it is figure, construction, artefact and displacement. It is something made, materially and semiotically, in techno-scientific practises (Haraway 1992: 296). This insight should however be viewed with caution, because it might justify the removal of any moral impediments to unlimited human interventions in natural systems, if taken too far. This concern is countered by researchers that show that it is increasingly difficult to separate nature off into its own ontological space. Different accounts of recent years demonstrate that the making of nature is always about much more than just nature. This research has focused on such subjects as a growing interest in urban nature amongst many groups, including environmentalists, in Australia (Davison and Ridder 2006, Chapman and Davison 2006), the political production of nature in Norway (Asdal 2005), relations between human and non-human biomigration and their role in the constitution of place and identity in Tasmania (Lien 2005, 2007), and the moral character of the social imagination about trees (Fernandez 1998). In this context, Noel Castree and Bruce Braun assert that the making and remaking of nature(s) has wider implications and that it becomes “a focal point for a nexus of political-economic relations, social identities, cultural orderings, and political aspirations of all kinds” (Braun and Castree 1998: 5).

Braun and Castree dismiss the idea of a single, overarching logic according to which social natures are made, and thus reject the possibility of a master theory that can explain their fabrication. Instead, they argue for the assumption of different theoretical positions, each of which can yield different insights about how the social construction of nature is consequential for both humans and non-humans. Writers in the Marxist tradition highlight

nature's material transformation in capitalist production. Post-structuralist approaches draw attention to the materiality of representation, and science studies scholars like Haraway and Bruno Latour have demonstrated that nature's remaking occurs within networks that simultaneously include social, technical, discursive and organic elements, in which non-humans and hybrids are viewed as actants with their own political rationality that influence people's behaviour and ideas (Braun and Castree 1998). All these perspectives provide rich analytical resources, and I will therefore integrate them in my dissertation as I see fruitful.

In addition to the mentioned contributions of Davison and Lien, earlier research on nature construction in Tasmania has focused on the media-dimension (Lester 2007), and on human-animal relations (Franklin 1996, 2006). I will draw on the existing knowledge and hopefully contribute to the discourse, by giving an account of the interaction between Tasmanian forestry and the conservation movement.

An enlightened parallel

In his investigation into the failures of some of the twentieth century's social engineering programs, James Scott has provided some interesting insights into the relationship between the development of scientific forestry and the modern state. In the development of both scientific forestry and the modern state, the need for certain forms of knowledge and control required a narrowing of vision by the means of simplification in order to attain an overall, synoptic view of a selective reality which thereby could be manipulated (Scott 1998: 11). This analytical perspective will be central in chapter 4.

Symbolic work and meaning

Referring to C. S. Pierce, Roy Wagner defines symbols as "standing for, or denoting, something other than themselves" (Wagner 1975: 42). Clifford Geertz takes the term "symbol" to mean "…any object, act, event, quality, or relation which serves as a vehicle for a conception" (Geertz 1973a: 91). He further suggests that an interpretation of symbols in the public sphere has the potential to unveil the underlying cultural script (Geertz 1973b: 141). An interpretative approach to symbolic expression will constitute part of my focus on the Tasmanian forest contestation.

Unni Wikan proposes that the study of symbols and their use will be strengthened by drawing attention to the actors using the symbols, and exemplifies this by showing that there are fundamental differences between the inner experiences and public presentations (Strauss and Quinn 1997: 31). In regard to language (a particular form of symbolism), Wikan follows Donald Davidson in suggesting that anthropologists should think of words as ways of producing effects, rather than as entities that have or convey intrinsic meaning. To transcend the words (or any symbolic form) and gain an understanding of their meaning, Wikan postulates the need to attend the users' intention and the social position they emanate from (Wikan 1992: 464-5). In other words, one has to be aware that all actors are positioned and use symbols strategically as means to promote certain interests. Clearly, this is relevant to my empirical case, where Forestry Tasmania and TWS can be viewed as drawing on symbolic resources in pursue of their respective aims.

Victor Turner addresses the ambiguous quality of symbols and their ability to represent many things at the same time: they exhibit the properties of condensation, unification of disparate referents, and polarisation of meaning around opposite semantic poles. The referents are to social and moral facts at one pole, and to physiological facts at the other (Turner 1969: 52). In this way, he highlights a fundamental trait of human communication, namely a strong connection between rationality and sentiment. In a similar fashion, Geertz asserts that the central feature of the Balinese cockfight is its use of emotion for cognitive ends (Geertz 1973c: 449).

Roy Wagner also draws attention to the multi-vocal characteristic of symbols: "…a word or other element can be said to relate all of the contexts in which it appears, and to relate these, directly or indirectly, through any novel usage or "extension"" (Wagner 1975: 38). There is a need for an inter-contextual focus in the analysis of symbolic activities, which will be considered in this thesis.

These are highly pertinent aspects of symbols for my purposes, and I will connect these insights to the work of Kay Milton regarding the role of emotions in the work of environmentalists. Since feelings influence human behaviour, she claims, conservationists

use strategies to make people feel about nature the way conservationists do (Milton 2002: 111).

Turner additionally asserts that symbols can be instrumental or socially operative, in other words constitute certain effects in the social world, and act as a counter-force to the inherent tensions of societies (Turner 1964: 34-5). As will become evident in this thesis, symbols can also be used to challenge certain forms of social order, which is the case when TWS opposes Forestry Tasmania's forestry practices.

Edmund Leach claims that all types of human action convey information and can therefore be described as communication (Leach 1976: 15). Odd Are Berkaak and Ivar Frønes point out that the word "communicate" derives from *communicare*, which means "to make common". To communicate and transfer meaning we need symbols and conventional rules for how to interpret them (Berkaak and Frønes 2005: 15). Suggesting language as an apt model for all communication, Mark Johnson and George Lakoff state:

"Since communication is based on the same conceptual system that we use in thinking and acting, language is an important source of evidence for what that system is like (Johnson and Lakoff 1980: 3).

In my opinion, there is much to be gained from such an approach. Metonymies and metaphors are central elements in language, and also play a key role in the way TWS and Forestry Tasmania present their different views. Metonymies are characterised by an intrinsic relationship between the symbol and the symbolised, while the non-intrinsic relationship that is typical for metaphors entail an assertion of similarity. Whereas metonymy suggests continuity within one and the same cultural context, metaphor implies similarity between different contexts. Drawing on the linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure, Claude Levi Strauss makes a similar point with the distinction between syntagmatic and paradigmatic (Strauss 1962: 227). Syntagmatic chains of signs that are connected by metonymy can for instance be the letters that form a word or the words that form a sentence. Such a chain of signs, for example "old-growth logging is destruction", can then be

paradigmatically transformed into another form of expression, such as a picture of a recently logged coupe. This will be elaborated in chapter 5.

Methods

After an initial contact with TWS through emails, I arrived in the Tasmanian capital, Hobart, in January 2008. I decided to look for accommodation through the university, and found a room in a student share-house. It's likely that living in a student house accentuated my student status in the eyes of my informants, which probably limited my access to information and the degree to which I was included in activities. Although I was granted access to TWS' campaign centre right from the start of my stay, there were several arenas that employees deemed unfit for me, the most important ones being strategy meetings concerning immediate issues. My access did however improve with time, as I became more familiar with the staff. The fieldwork lasted until early July 2008. During these five and a half months I participated in daily activities and meetings at The Wilderness Society's campaign centre in Hobart, and in dialogue with the employees, I chose to do voluntary work at the office reception in the initial phase of the fieldwork. The staff was in need of receptionists and being able to help out represented an opportunity for me to establish myself as a useful resource in the group. Another advantage was that the reception was a strategic place to learn about upcoming activities. A third incentive was that the main task of the receptionist was to answer incoming calls and direct them to the employees who worked in different offices. This way, I could remind them of my presence every time I put a call through. Moreover, I learnt who was calling and, to a degree, what they wanted, so that I gained a preliminary impression of the shape and size of the organisation's network. After approximately two months, I was offered a work-desk and shared an office with 3-4 employees, while intermittently returning to the reception service.

Participant observation

Olaf Smedal expresses concern about what he calls a tendency, particularly amongst master (hovedfag) students, to frame their research questions in a way that entails a high dependence on interviews with individuals (Smedal 2001: 132). Katinka Frøystad accentuates that anthropologists must aspire to participation and focus on empirical descriptions and interaction-data in the study of complex societies (Frøystad 2003: 249). I

consider partaking to be a strong method to produce experience-near information, particularly because there often are discrepancies between what people do and what they say they do. For that reason, I was keen on doing voluntary work and tried to be involved in activities from different areas of responsibilities. I participated in trips to forest areas central to the organisation's work, both on daytrips and camping trips. On these occasions, I could observe how my informants presented their view of the current situation of the Tasmanian forests to members of the public, to a Japanese TV crew that was doing research to make a documentary feature, to employees at other branches of the organisation, and I could see and hear them talk among themselves as well as with members of other conservation groups. On these trips I gathered both verbal and non-verbal data, in addition to my own personal experiences of some of the contested forest areas.

Other arenas I have been to include the Parliament at the time of the budget presentation, a climate change forum with representatives from both the logging industry and the conservation movement, one of Forestry Tasmania's research stations, relevant talks at the university, a forest festival, other groups' offices, and a blockade-camp in a contested forest area.

Seeking a more comprehensive understanding of the political climate in Tasmania, I read newspapers and internet sites, listened to radio shows and watched TV programs. I tried to stay informed of the latest developments both through my own exposure to the media as well as through conversations with informants. Eduardo Archetti points out that the study of complex societies involves numerous written sources (Archetti 1994), and Tasmania is no exception. I have used written sources as background information, and since many sources were also offered by informants, I have considered them as a basis for additional insights into the shared knowledge of the actors in the field.

During the last month of fieldwork I conducted semi-structured interviews with employees and volunteers at TWS and with two other environmental movements, and supplemented these by interviewing a representative of the government enterprise Forestry Tasmania. Sidney Mintz postulates that interviews should be based on knowledge about the cultural and social context (Mintz 1979: 25-6). Accordingly, I waited with the interviews until the end

of my stay in order to enable myself to ask more fruitful questions. However, this benefit came at the expense of not being able to use interviews in the early phase of the fieldwork to facilitate the process of getting to know the central actors and strengthen my status as a researcher (Leseth 1995).

Anonymity

I have chosen to use the real name of TWS, because it is such a key actor in the Tasmanian environmental movement that it would be impossible to anonymise this organisation. I have also discussed this with employees at TWS. Names of individuals have been changed, though.

Finally, it should be noted that while numerous demarcation lines have been drawn between the terms "environmentalists", "activists", "campaigners" and "conservationists" in Australia, the terms tend to be used interchangeably by those within the movement. Because of the hostile character of the environmental dispute, I use those terms, as well as the term "the environmental movement" frequently to maintain a high level of anonymity and to impede any attempts to identify individuals. I use the terms to refer only loosely to actors within the network of different groups in Tasmania, without disclosing which individual's or group's actions I am describing. Neither do I imply that the different groups act as one coherent movement at any given time. The individuals and the single groups are encased by the wider movement, but they maintain their separate identities.

Outline of the thesis

Chapter 2 will give an account of Tasmanian history and describe key events in the development of the Tasmanian conservation movement. This is crucial information for understanding the situation of the fiercely contested landscapes today.

Chapter 3 presents TWS' structure, values and methods. Additionally, it explores the daily activities of employees and volunteers at the organisation's Tasmanian branch.

Chapter 4 provides a description of the Tasmanian forests and forestry practises. In this chapter I draw on James Scott's analytical perspective on similarities between the development of the modern state and modern forestry.

Chapter 5 draws attention to social constructions of nature and the symbolic dimensions of the Tasmanian forest dispute. Through an inquiry of several empirical cases, I analyse how nature is rhetorically represented and I look at the performativity of concepts.

Chapter 6 turns to emotional aspects and explores environmentalists' asserted sense of identification with the natural world. Answers are sought to the question of how these aspects influence and shape the forest debate in Tasmania.

2: Historical background

Tasmanian landscapes

The British claimed New South Wales on the Australian mainland in 1770 and occupied it in 1788. When they extended their occupation to Van Diemen's Land in 1803 (renamed Tasmania in 1853) they established a penal colony on this forested island. According to historians Robson and Roe, the prevailing attitude amongst the colonists was marked by hubris and a belief in the superiority of the British nation. The island's resources were to be exploited; the value of the natural environment was recognized purely on utilitarian grounds (Robson & Roe 1997: 34-5). The deportation of criminals from the British Isles fitted nicely into this imperialistic picture, while relieving Britain's overcrowded prisons and providing the young colony with cheap labour. This meant that the indigenous people of Tasmania were not considered to be of any use to the colonial project. Following a long and tragic resistance against the invaders, the Aboriginals were almost entirely wiped out of existence. The few remaining natives were banished to the nearby Flinders Island, where many of them died of diseases (Robson & Roe 1997: 35). European settlement extended gradually along the agricultural belt between the Central Highlands in the middle of the island and Bass Strait in the north. The forests were cleared and burned in order to be converted into grazing and cropping land, and also to improve the infrastructure so that surveyors, prospectors and miners would gain better access to remote areas. The cumulative impact of logging, land clearing and fires eventually alarmed a number of settlers who contributed to a growing appreciation of the natural environment. Minerals were found in what proved to be a long belt of highly mineralised mountains running down the western side of the state, and numerous towns were established in previously inhabited areas (Buckman 2008: 156).

An emerging movement

In this historical context characterised by the cultural model of human mastery over nature, the groups and individuals who took an oppositional stance to the imperialistic hegemony

can be regarded as the activists of those days. Creating an alternative to the established discourse about nature, they opened up the political spaces that later have been extended by the modern environmental movement. According to Tasmanian media sociologist Libby Lester, there is, however, a fundamental difference between the lines of argumentation of the early and of the modern conservationists. The former emphasized the human and national advantages of conservation, staying within the progressive paradigm of the time. They argued for the economic usefulness of protecting wildlife species as well as the recreational and scenic value of preserving areas as national parks. The latter still argue anthropocentrically along both economic and picturesque lines, but without the narrative of man's progressive development encompassing those arguments. Another defining feature of the modern movement is the more ecocentric idea that scenery on land and sea, as well as endemic flora and fauna are of intrinsic value, which justifies their protection. In addition to this, there is a religious dimension which is reflected in the language, e.g. in the comparison to ransacked temples and pilgrimages or in accounts describing spiritual experiences with nature (Lester 2007: 32).

Wilderness

Lester describes three key factors that contributed to evolve ideas of wilderness in Tasmania. The first was the influence of the international wilderness movement based on ideas of Emerson, Thoreau and Leopold. The second one was charismatic personalities within the Tasmanian movement. The third factor was the choice of the name "The Wilderness Society" and the movement's intense production of books, films and photographic ephemera that emphasized the emotive appeal of wilderness (Lester 2007: 77-8). Wilderness became what Turner calls a dominant symbol with a powerful evocative pole (Turner 1969: 52), connoting a sense of beautiful landscapes, authenticity and freedom from industrial society.

Wilderness clearly is a central concept in Tasmania, but it is not unequivocally demarcated. Davison describes an intra-environmentalist debate about whether the concept of wilderness is dualistic or not (Davison 2007: 2). He refers to William Cronon's claim that

“wilderness embodies a dualistic vision in which the human is entirely outside the natural” (Cronon1996: 80), and William Lines’ characterisation of such claims as a “muddling together of the natural and the manmade” (Lines 2006: 219).

The wilderness-inspired environmentalism was qualitatively different from an otherwise-sourced environmentalism. It required that some fundamental questions be asked, questions that challenged a hitherto unquestioned axiom of western history and the economic and technological systems embedded therein, namely “nature for man”. This cultural model postulating that the natural world is to be treated primarily as a human resource was now countered by an opposing model: wilderness as having its own justification for being, without the reference to its use-value for humans (Hay 2002: 17). These antagonistic models clashed together in the Lake Pedder-controversy.

Lake Pedder

In 1962, the Hydro-Electric Commission (HEC) disclosed plans to commence fieldwork in Tasmania’s south-west and announced its intentions to investigate the Gordon River for its hydro development potential. Concern arose within the conservation movement that Lake Pedder might be in danger (see figure 4, page 39). Lake Pedder was a unique nine square km body of water that had a spectacular three km-long quartzite sand beach, and was widely considered to be the jewel of Tasmania’s undeveloped south-west (Buckman 2008: 4). The South West Committee was however operating in a typical way for Australian environmental groups at the time, preferring to use bureaucratic channels and not to bring its message directly to the wider community. A tactical choice it made was to focus on securing a large national park for the area, assuming that the lake was a lost case anyway. That move and the reluctance to go public is something that later Tasmanian environmental groups considered as mistakes and used as a point of reference to develop other methods of operandi.

A radicalisation of the Tasmanian environmental movement has been characterised as one of the great legacies of the Lake Pedder controversy. From 1962 to 1976 as many as five

groups were created with a primary focus on south-west Tasmania. This phase is labelled by Timothy Doyle as the first of three periods of environmentalism in Australia (Lester 2007: 36). He describes the years from the 1960s to the mid-1980s as marked by outsider politics and strategies of dissent, mass mobilisation, and lobbying of and responding to government. The second period was marked by corporatism and working with government, and lasted until 1996. That year saw the election of a conservative federal government, heralding the third phase with the movement bypassing government and working directly with or against business and other sectors. The reason for this was the breakdown in negotiating networks of the second period (Lester, 35-6).

On May 25, 1967 the HEC official report on the scheme was tabled in parliament, removing all doubt about Lake Pedder's fate – drowning was its name. Three dams would cause the flooding of the entire Lake Pedder Valley, creating a new impoundment that was to adopt the name of the old lake. Two days each to pass through the lower and upper house made the bill the swiftest piece of legislation in Tasmania. The drought that plagued the state in the summer of 1966-7 was perhaps a significant contributor to this. The state's dams had drained to a dramatic 16 per cent capacity, resulting in a rationing of power for industry and homes (Robson & Roe 1997: 162). The passing of the legislation left the conservation movement shattered and disillusioned and many gave up the fight to save the lake. However, the completion of the main dam that coincided with a heightened political and environmental awareness that made people eager to get involved. The first United Nations environment summit was to take place in Stockholm in 1972, and in Australia there were anti-Vietnam-war marches and campaigns to protect the Great Barrier Reef and remnant bush-land in Sydney (Buckman 2008: 24). At Easter 1971, at least 1500 people converged on Lake Pedder as a part of the "Pedder Pilgrimage" to show opposition to its imminent flooding, and in 1972, the United Tasmania Group (UTG) was formed on a save-the-lake platform. They did not win any seats, but they effectively became the political wing of the Pedder campaign. The world's first green political party, and a precursor in environmental politics throughout the world, was born (Robson & Roe 1997: 162). Even though 1971 saw the first 'Stop Woodchip' campaign and the export wood-chipping industry commenced in 1972 (Gee 2001: 351), it was the anti-damming campaigns that constituted the crux of the

conservation movement's raison d'être at that time. Lake Pedder was nevertheless flooded by early 1974, and in 1979 the whole scheme was finally opened (Buckman 2008: 32).

Industrial decline

The conservation issue dominated the Tasmanian politics of those years, and job numbers in industrial manufacturing shrunk from a peak of around 36 000 in the late 1960s to 24 000 and less. To conservationists, the relative failure of industrialisation in Tasmania seemed to prove the grotesquery of the policies founded on it. All the more so, because conservationists felt that industry exploited the earth, forest and seas, while dams, that provided the electricity essential for industry, destroyed lakes and mountains (Robson and Roe 1997: 156).

Opposing such views was a perspective in which the very constriction of the economy demanded all the more striving for new development. The consequence of the conservationists' logic was portrayed as an ever-diminishing and impoverished Tasmania, and the opposition to hydroelectricity was portrayed as epitomizing the Greens' hypocritical absurdity. After all, it was a self-sustaining and clean energy source that amalgamated human skill and nature's bounty in a magnificent symbiosis (Robson & Roe 1997: 161).

Regrouping

In the mid-1970s, central concerns in Europe were directed towards the nuclear industry, pollution and other environmental threats, while North America and Australia also became occupied with wilderness and landscape preservation (Lester 2007: 31). Geographer Peter Hay asserts that nineteenth-century romanticism was evoked by people who were now ”seeking a theory for a scientifically inspired movement born largely in a social theory vacuum” (Hay 2002: 16). In Tasmania, the loss of Lake Pedder left deep wounds in the conservation movement and many activists retired from the fight against the HEC (Buckman 2008: 37). Amongst the ones that did not were individuals who established the small and informal South-West Action Committee in 1974 (Gee 2001: xi). This was the forerunner of

The Tasmanian Wilderness Society (TWS) which, after its establishment in 1976, focused on the World Heritage values of Tasmania's south-west. Great parts of that area were still available for resource development at that point in time.

The Lake Pedder campaign had illustrated the importance of a coherent organisational structure and the value of standing candidates in elections. The latter course of action lead to the emergence of the world's first green political party UTG, that was later to become the Greens (Lester 2007: 32). The middle of the 1970s were dominated by urban environmental campaigns across Australia, comprising building unions and community groups that combined forces to fight urban developments, in addition to the nationwide anti-uranium movement.

At the end of the decade came another defining moment in the history of the Australian environmental movement, in form of mainly non-violent direct action to prevent logging in the northern forests of New South Wales. A small group of locals were supported by groups of people that were bussed in from Sydney and Melbourne in a four week protest. This event set a precedent in terms of many of the organizational and blockading techniques employed in later campaigns in Australia generally and Tasmania particularly. Transport, accommodation, food and childcare were provided, and efforts to achieve an ideal goal of consensus were made in nightly meetings. In addition, the important technique of issuing regular media statements was developed here (Lester 2007: 32). In order to achieve media coverage, the blockaders also employed "environmental theatre" as one of their main tactics. A protagonist of this tactic explains:

"Theatre of the environment uses the vulture of the media (usually, a tool of the establishment) to preset the story; we dangle and perform, often in precarious circumstances, making ourselves and our act irresistible to the press. It is a play, an irreverent game, yet at the same time it provides a vital conduit for messages otherwise unable to be transmitted into a monopolistic realm. Lacking financial resources, we penetrate this

powerful field as if by magic and in doing so create alchemy for change" (cited in Lester 2007: 33).

Franklin River

TWS learned much from this blockade and further developed the techniques in what has been known as the Franklin River-campaign in Tasmania. When the HEC formally announced its intention to flood the Franklin River in 1979, they were up against an environmental movement which had become more skilled and experienced since the Lake Pedder controversy (Buckman 2008: 37). TWS was an organisation that was significantly more radical and more determined to involve the public than the conservationists involved in the Pedder campaign. The new organisation made deliberate attempts to appeal to the mainstream through innovative ideas. One of these was the commissioning of a poll that showed that a two-to-one majority of Tasmanians wanted the Franklin saved (Gee 2001: xii), another tactic was to dress in suits when addressing the media or politicians. According to one of its members, TWS was virtually looking under every stone to find and *adopt tools to raise awareness of the immanent flooding of the Franklin:* "We grabbed ideas from wherever we could. We looked at the way other people who sell cheese and paper tissues, how they do it, and thought if that sells an idea then how much more important that that be grafted by us into saving a wilderness "(Buckman 2008: 39).

TWS used a range of campaign tactics, including advertising, marketing, direct lobbying, economic analysis and urban protest (Lester 1997: 34). The conservationists were prepared to explore the possibilities of using visual material as much as possible. They made movie footage of the river to show to state parliamentarians and bought airtime on commercial television to broadcast their film clips (Buckman 2008: 39). The Franklin campaigners argued their case along two lines entwining visual with economic values: On the one hand, they built an aesthetic channel of communication by visually marketing the beauty of the Franklin River and by vigorously painting a picture of its destruction due to road building, machinery and ultimately drowning from the dam. On the other hand, they ran a parallel campaign of lobbying members of parliament. Here, the strategy was to attack the economic credibility

of the hydro project by challenging the HEC' future state-power projections and its project-cost estimates (Lester 1997: 34). Judging by its growing memberships, TWS' new high-profile, broad-based style seemed to resonate with the public. By the middle of 1980 it had inflated from an early number of 200 to the tenfold level of 2000 members (Buckman 2008: 39).

The prominence of the Franklin River was also enhanced by the discovery of a cave containing evidence of the southernmost existence of humans during the last ice age, in an area that was to be flooded by the HEC' planned project. In an attempt to put pressure on the federal government, it initially was named 'Fraser Cave', after then Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser. In October 1981, Tasmanian Premier Lowe lost his seat to a rival in his party who dropped the Olga scheme and immediately pursued the Franklin scheme (Robson & Roe 1997: 164). Just prior to the succession of office, however, Lowe did have enough time to sign a proposed World Heritage listing for the area that was dispatched to the federal government without the upper house's support. The Prime Minister sent it on to the World Heritage Bureau in Paris (Buckman 2008: 45). Thereby, the listing came through, bringing onto the scene not only state and national governments but the international World Heritage body as well. The fight was on the global stage, connecting state, national and international scales. It was precisely this World Heritage listing that subsequently made it possible for the federal government to intervene in the issue.

The World Heritage Convention is managed by the United Nations, and in 1974, Australia became one of the first countries to ratify it. Currently, over 830 sites from around the world are listed (Buckman 2008: 52). Following two major demonstrations, attracting 4,000 people in Sydney and 15,000 people in Melbourne, the blockade officially began on 14 December 1982, when the World Heritage listing for south-west Tasmania was being approved in Paris. UNESCO approved the listing on the basis that the area was a "wilderness of incomparable significance and value" (Lester 2008: 35). The blockade became a media event for TWS, and a means to draw national and international attention to the controversy. More than 250 newspaper-, magazine-, radio- and television-journalists registered for access into the area

(Lester 2008: 35). Altogether, 2613 people registered as participants at TWS' information centre in Strahan, the nearest city.

Ten weeks after the blockade had begun, on 5 March 1983, the Australian Labor Party won the federal elections, making Bob Hawke the new Prime Minister (Lester 2008: 35). The federal Labor government moved against damming the Franklin, but the Tasmanian government challenged the validity of the decision in the High Court. The seven judges considered the case for over a month, scrutinizing whether the federal government's signing of the international World Heritage Convention gave it the external affairs power to override the Tasmanian legislation. On July 1, the High Court bench agreed with four to three votes to uphold the Commonwealth sovereignty: the dam was eventually stopped (Lester 2008: 35).

Lester refers to several different authors to demonstrate that the legacy of the Franklin campaign for the conservation movement can not be overrated. It elevated the wilderness movement from an interest group to a social movement, linked it effectively to political power, and brought ecological politics into the mainstream. As we have seen, it also aligned local environmental concerns with global interests. Within a year after the Franklin success, the Tasmanian Wilderness Society was transformed. It became The Wilderness Society, a national organization with a steady infrastructure, a chain of retail shops and a strong political network. It is this organisation we now turn to in the next chapter.

3: The Wilderness Society – the organisation

A COMPLEX ORGANISATION IS A PHENOMENON IN ITSELF, A MAJOR FORM OF SOCIAL LIFE IN MODERN SOCIETIES (BOTH QUANTITATIVELY – IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED AND THE NUMBERS OF HOURS SPENT, AND QUALITATIVELY – IN TERMS OF THEIR IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL, SOCIAL, AND SOCIETAL LIFE) (CZARNIAWSKA 1992: 16).

Organisations – what are they and how to study them?

In 1972, Charles Perrow defined organisations to be ”tools for shaping the world as one wishes it to be shaped” (Perrow 1972/1986: 11). According to Barbara Czarniawska-Joerges, an organisation is a political system in as much as it constantly negotiates pluralistic meanings and forms coalitions (Czarniawska 1992: 30). This means that a comprehensive study of an organisation such as The Wilderness Society necessarily encompasses sensitivity for political processes. In this context, I find it useful to quote as a point of reference, Abner Cohen's assertion that a political anthropology should be "a systematic study of the dynamic interdependence between power relationships and symbolic action in complex society" (Cohen 1974: ix). However, as Czarniawska points out, Cohen's definition is only two-dimensional in its limited focus on social action as being political and symbolic. She discerns that what is needed in the study of organisations is an additional postulate stating that social action is also practical, material and physical. Bearing this in mind, a theory of organisations cannot neglect their practical side, which she claims is often the case in the work of political anthropologists though (Czarniawska 1992: 157). She proposes the following definition of organisations: "Organisations are nets of collective action, undertaken in an effort to shape the world and human lives. The contents of the action are meanings and things (artefacts). The contents of the action are distinguishable from another by the kind of meanings and products socially attributed to a given organisation" (Czarniawska 1992: 32).

An important characteristic of these nets is that they do not have definite boundaries, but are constantly being made. Furthermore, meanings and artefacts are not sharply distinct from one another; meanings can be reified and become artefacts, whereas artefacts may be or may become pure symbols. According to Czarniawska, collective action is possible in the face of many meanings that are only partially shared and that it is the experience of a collective

action that is shared, more than its meaning. Consequently, meanings are created (both in social interactions as well as in interactions with artefacts and nature), deconstructed, negotiated, and elaborated (Czarniawska 1992: 33).

I find it useful to look at Czarniawska's understanding of organisations and their blended boundaries in relation to Fredrik Barth's postulate that the boundaries between ethnic groups persist despite a flow of personnel across them (Barth 1981: 9). This appears to be the case with environmental groups and organisations in Tasmania: social actors move across the boundaries between one organisation and other organisations, as well as across the boundaries between organisations and their social environments. In this paradigm, it is organisational actors who create organisations through their actions, and therefore those actors are the main resource for understanding what organisations are and what they are like. Any given organisation is made up of a set of relatively stable statutes. To become significant, these statuses must be applied by social actors, social acting units as it were, who mediate the dynamic aspects of the statuses, i.e. the roles. In doing so, the actors perform the roles in their own idiosyncratic ways, both reproducing and negotiating rights and duties and their meaning in the process. As a consequence of this, Czarniawska maintains that the main question regarding the organisational actor is how meanings and artefacts are produced and reproduced in complex nets of collective action (Czarniawska 1992: 37). Before we empirically examine how these processes take place in the case of TWS Tasmania, let us take a closer look at the structure of the organisation as a whole.

The Wilderness Society – structure and values

The Wilderness Society (TWS) is an Australian non-governmental and not-for -profit organisation that was established in 1976, with the vast majority of its funding obtained from membership dues, donations, public fundraising and retail operations. Its finances and quantity of members are confidential and will as such not be disclosed here. Being a national, community-based, environmental advocacy organisation that depicts the Australian old-growth forests as irreplaceable wilderness and as being under immediate threat (TWS 2009a), it has a self-articulated purpose to "protect, promote and restore wilderness and natural processes across Australia for the survival and ongoing evolution of life on Earth" (TWS 2009b). Presenting this ideological framework on its official webpage, TWS also emphasizes that it values "passion for its purpose, the power of people to make change, organisational

independence and integrity, compassion in dealing with its staff and others, and a commitment to success in protecting the environment" (TWS 2009b).

There is also an explicit commitment to a strictly non-violent style of campaigning. TWS' choice of modus operandi is perhaps not best understood through the narrow lens of an intra-organisational scrutiny, but might rather be rendered more intelligible by directing attention to the contextual background in which it navigates. Maybe it would be more accurate to describe the context not as a fixed background, but as a dynamic milieu in which the organisation is immersed. When broadening the scope of our sight, we realise that the conservation movement in Tasmania is subject to an elaborate division of labour within a heterogeneous collection of groups. Of particular relevance to TWS' working methods is the existence of another group that carries out most of the direct action, often directed at logging operations conducted in contentious parts of Tasmania's forests. Direct actions of this kind involve people chaining themselves to machinery, dumping cars with activists chained to them in the way of logging machinery, and occupy trees scheduled for logging by erecting tree-sits high above the ground. These activities are illegal and the activists risk legal persecution by the state and the forest industry. The relations between the different conservationist groups are complex and multifaceted, but one practical consequence of their cooperation (which is far from clear-cut and not unanimously supported by all groups) is that while some do direct actions, others concentrate more on other aspects of what insider writers have given such labels as the forest wars (Ajani 2007) and the wilderness battles (Buckman 2008).
TWS works through the avenues of public education and empowerment, advocacy and negotiation, as well as desk and field research. The organisation is politically unaligned to any particular party, but seeks an implementation of responsible environmental politics by all the political parties. This was asserted to me by the employees at the Tasmanian campaign centre on several occasions, both in interviews and in more casual conversations during day-to-day activities.

The world's first environmentally based political party was formed in Tasmania in 1972. Initially named the United Tasmania Group (UTG), it grew larger during the following decades, changed its name to The Tasmanian Greens and later became a national party. Although the Greens and TWS are not officially aligned, they sympathise with each other and agree on many issues, especially on those concerning environmental matters. An example of this ideological closeness is the fact that a representative from TWS was invited into the

Green's chamber in the backstage corridors of the Parliament in Hobart for a debriefing, only minutes after the Labour Treasurer had presented the budget for Tasmania during my fieldwork. The close relations between the Greens and TWS can also be exemplified by the moves and career choices of the former leader of the Tasmanian Greens who, according to a media release issued by TWS, decided to return to her roots and took up a short term contract with The Wilderness Society's international climate change team (TWS 2009c). As a consequence of The Wilderness Society's commitment to party neutrality, the former politician had to relinquish her membership of the Greens. This illustrates Barth's assertion that there is a flow of personnel across group boundaries; actors change their status while boundaries remain. TWS and the Greens are also brothers-in-arms in terms of being in opposition to the political establishment. This role plays a significant part in TWS' identity-construction, which is reflected in their public self-presentation: "Do not be fooled into thinking that governments save the environment. Almost without exception, they will be dragged, kicking and screaming, to the right decision, by a concerned, determined community" (TWS 2009d).

While being in opposition to a formidable opponent that is often portrayed (both in the media and by conservationists themselves) as adopting undemocratic methods and not being above corruption and personal vested interests, TWS adhere to democratic processes as a means to attain their goal of maximising conservation decisions. This principle is also intimately connected with the commitment to work for a more democratic political system in Australia and Tasmania, which is exemplified by the organisation's call for an ICAC (Independent Commission Against Corruption) body during the time of my fieldwork. The ICAC-body will investigate corrupt behaviour that according to TWS "repeatedly surfaces as a normal part of political life in Tasmania" (TWS 2009e).

TWS runs campaign centres in most capital cities, and a number of regional centres. From these centres, employees and volunteers conduct research, policy development, community outreach and campaigning activities. The Executive Director of TWS Inc (Incorporated) is based in the Canberra office. There is also a national administration office, based in Hobart, which handles membership servicing, national fundraising projects, and the production of two magazines, *Wilderness News* and *Wild News*, in addition to wilderness calendars and diaries. Some campaign centres also operate a retail shop as a source of funds for their campaigns; the

Tasmanian branch is one of these. The shop is highly visible, located in an area called Salamanca Place, which is close to the Hobart waterfront and very popular with the tourists. It features an assortment of restaurants, cafes, bars, art galleries, music events, bakeries, and shops. Every Saturday the lively scene of Salamanca Place culminates in a bustling outdoor market with live music and theatrical performances, stalls with food, Tasmanian artefacts like wool and wood products, and many kinds of souvenirs. This market attracts a large crowd of people, both locals and visitors, and TWS has an information booth right in the middle of this spectacle. Here, eager volunteers tell visitors that some of Tasmania's beautiful ancient forests are threatened by the powerful forest industry and its high demand for export wood-chips for paper production. The booth is decorated with costly colour-prints of old-growth forests, and on the counter lie pledges to be signed by anyone who plans to boycott banks willing to fund the pulp mill project that TWS opposes so strongly.

The retail shops operate within an ethical buying policy that is based on minimal impact on the environment and encourages support for, and knowledge of, current environmental issues. While the offices and campaign centres are of varying size and function, all operate largely through the efforts of volunteers who offer their time and effort on many projects. These projects include running information stalls, painting banners, conducting field surveys, creating and managing forest tracks, arranging public meetings, raising funds, working on office tasks, serving in the retail shops, writing submissions to government inquiries, and recruiting others to volunteer.

The Wilderness Society – working methods

The Wilderness Society conducts a diverse range of activities and postulates that none of them are violent. However, the organisation is sometimes involved in direct action, but contrary to the category of direct action depicted above, these forms are categorised by the protagonists themselves as peaceful protesting. Non-violent direct action comprises all forms of public protest that do not involve violence or damage to property, including civil disobedience (TWS 2009f). TWS has however been accused by Gunns Limited – Tasmania's largest timber company – of applying methods that are not so peaceful. In December 2004 Gunns sued TWS, five of its staff and fourteen other groups and individuals for engaging in a conspiracy to injure the company by unlawful means. Gunns claimed that the defendants illegally interfered with their trade and business, thus causing economic loss for the company

(TWS 2009g). TWS responded by naming the lawsuit "the Gunns-20" and describing it as an attack on the right to free speech and democracy. In a media event (figure 3) the accused individuals and representatives from the accused organisations posed theatrically with their mouths taped (Gunns20).

Figure 3: Australian Senator Bob Brown – the inaugural Parliamentary Leader of the Australian Greens and one of the Gunns-20 defendants.

So far several charges have been dropped, and in late 2006 Gunns withdrew the claim of an overarching conspiracy and the claims relating to unlawful lobbying of the company's Japanese customers (TWS 2009h). During an interview with me, one informant calls the court case an example of a "SLAPP" (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation), launched by a company with large financial assets to tie up intellectual resources, generate fear, drain money from their opponents and suppress public debate. He explains that TWS worries about the court case and is constantly anxious that any of their actions or statements can be added to the existing charges. He underscores the strategic element of the litigation by pointing out that Gunns announced the controversial proposal to build a major pulp mill in the north of Tasmania just days after the writ. By forcing TWS and other conservationists to spend much of their resources on defending themselves in court, Gunns might have hoped to meet less resistance to their pulp mill project.

TWS declares that it wishes to function as a correcting force to such corporate interests by empowering and encouraging members of the Australian communities to participate and have a say in discourses about the future of the continent's natural environment (TWS 2009g). Much of the organisation's energy is therefore directed at raising community awareness through applying different techniques, one of which is talking directly to people on the streets, at stalls, markets and community events. TWS also arrange marches and rallies, media stunts, festivals, street theatre and art exhibitions. Additionally, since many of the issues are intricate

and involve large volumes of complicated documents, TWS prepares materials to explain the subjects in an understandable way.

Another frequently utilised approach by TWS in order to attain its goals is the lobbying of politicians and other decision makers, such as members of parliament and representatives of relevant companies. In 1996, the liaisons with the government suffered a collapse as a consequence of the change to a conservative federal government, with the effect that lobbying was increasingly directed at the business sector rather than at politicians. The election of a new federal government in 2007 and the dramatic resignation of the Tasmanian premier in 2008 raised hopes among environmentalists that new bridges of communication could be built. During my fieldwork, representatives from the Tasmanian branch of TWS attempted repeatedly to establish channels for interaction with the new Premier, but allegedly without succeeding in receiving any significant response.

Research is another methodological framework employed by TWS and entails working with scientists who study the environmental impact of human activities, the findings of which are documented in the form of reports, photos and videos. Important findings are made public in the media and at rallies. TWS briefs journalists on current issues and runs ads on television, on the radio and in newspapers. The organisation also makes use of democratic rights such as preparing submissions to the government, and it participate in legal proceedings by promoting new laws and engaging the courts when it perceives that companies or governments are not complying with the laws.

Before I will describe the grid of job statutes in the Tasmanian branch of the organisation, let us do a little excursion into the building where I did my fieldwork.

The Tasmanian campaign centre

The campaign centre is situated on the fringe of the central business district of Hobart, the Tasmanian capital inhabited by about 200,000 people. The building is an old Victorian-styled house that in many ways has seen more peaceful days. The fading paint on the outside walls, the grimy windows, the worn hall-carpet, and the paper stacks on the floor, in the shelves, and on the window-sills all testify that those days have passed. These markers signal that this is a place for work where all energy is directed to campaigning and that indulgence is to be sought

elsewhere. They also bear witness of tight budgeting and the fact that little human and economic resources are spent on aesthetic niceties.

On entrance, the first thing that catches your eye is that there *is* not really anything that catches your eye – in terms of signalling where to direct your person. Any first-time visitors will find themselves in a hallway stretching approximately ten meters inwards, all the way through to a backdoor at the other end of the building. This door leads out to a court-yard with two sheds containing documents and paraphernalia for demonstrations, and a garden with vegetables. The garden is sometimes nursed and sometimes not, depending on whether anyone has time to spare for such domestic activities.

On the immediate left inside of the front door there is a spacious bookshelf containing magazines, pamphlets and brochures ranging from ten year old campaign material up to present day editions, some are black and whites but most are costly looking colour prints on glossy paper. While buying some time and keeping up appearances by picking up and looking through one of those magazines, the slightly bewildered visitor might do a visual scanning of the surroundings, and in so doing become aware of three office-doors on the left side of the corridor and two on the right. The latter two are separated by a grandiose stairway leading up to the first floor and more offices, and by the foot of this stairway there is an industrial-sized roll of paper apparently used for "big ideas". Some of the doors are closed and some are open, and people are frequently moving in and out of them. There are people rushing by in a hurry on their way from one office to another, two or three might be discussing urgent matters by the back-door, and there's constantly the sound of phones ringing and people talking on phones. On the walls there are notice-boards abound with paper clips, written messages, photo copies, and caricature drawings of ideological opponents. There are old banners and numerous pictures of wilderness areas and threatened animal species, such as the iconic Wedge-tailed Eagle.

After a few moments of reconnaissance from behind the magazine, the observant guest might decide, if not offered help already, to try the first and nearest door on the right. By doing so, the visitor quite accidentally ends up in the reception room to be greeted by not just one, but two friendly receptionists who are more than helpful with providing information about the organisation's work or, if deemed necessary and possible at the time, engaging one of the campaigners to accommodate the visitor's needs and requests. The reception is furnished with

two work desks with an old computer standing on each (the type where the screens are of such an extensive size that they occupy half the desk place), a table for incoming and outgoing post on the right side of the entrance door and a shelf running all along the left wall with stacks of pledges on top. There are stickers saying things like “Whose Island: Yours or Gunns’?” and” No Pulp Mill!” that can be bought for a couple of dollars. On the light green wall above the shelf, there are t-shirts with printings such as “Save Tassie’s Forests” and “Pulp Mill Fiction”, and a note that says 25 dollars. These slogans reflect that the private logging company called Gunns and their plans to build a new pulp mill is of pivotal concern to this organisation’s work at this moment in time. On the back wall between the two desks there is an old, beautiful fireplace made of bricks and ornamented wood which nowadays has the function of storing heaps of paper and some cardboard boxes with stickers and t-shirts in them. On top of the fireplace there is a photograph of three employees laughing and standing in front of a trailer with a sign on it saying “Pulp Mill Trailer”, and in the bottom edge of the picture it reads “Rain, Hail or Shine”.

There are fourteen employees with their own office desk working from this campaign centre, but only ten of them are primarily engaged in local matters. The others have their full or partial office space in the building while working on call for the central office or other parts of the organisation. In addition to this, there are at any given time a number of volunteers in and around the office building, their number fluctuating according to the amount of work that needs to be done for the ongoing campaigns.

The atmosphere and energy of the place resembles that of a modern think-tank where all effort is put into generating an environment of teamwork and playfulness, and where creative solutions and good ideas can thrive. At the same time, the core staff also has a high degree of individual responsibilities and autonomy. This dynamic workplace seems less like a well-oiled machine than a responsive organism that reacts to relevant and unpredictable occurrences in its surroundings. The organism-metaphor is more appropriate than the machine-metaphor to describe TWS because, following Czarniawska’s general description of organisations, the former stresses the unplanned and uncontrollable character of many organisational processes while the latter has a tendency to give too mechanical an account of the phenomenon (Czarniawska 1992: 28-9).

Directly outside the campaign centre runs one of the major roads that logging trucks use daily to go back and forth between the forests and different mills. The many windows facing the street provide a first class view of those trucks and constant incentives for the campaigners to continue their work. But who are these campaigners? Let us meet two of them.

John

John considers himself a very accidental activist and environmental campaigner. He explains that he never had a calling as a child and that he has not studied anything which would especially qualify him for his job such as environmental science or biology. "I just happened to be helping out at the right time, noticed and employed, I suppose". He is 36 years old and grew up on what he calls a conservative sheep farm in the south-east of Tasmania, in a family that was still conquering the landscape, still eradicating native wildlife and clearing native vegetation for pasture. Having attended a private school in Hobart for his primary education, he feels that he has had a privileged upbringing on the expense of the environment, and now he wants to give something back through working with TWS. Although he explains his motivation in a language of atonement, he reflects on the actions of the previous generations without condemnation: "I am not saying that it was wrong at the time. You know, it was just the mentality of the time, but I think we have tipped the balance and I want my contribution to be a positive one".

John has experience from different avenues of work, and I have heard other conservationists describe him as a man with several earlier lives. He first studied a business degree in real-estate evaluation and then photography, after which he travelled extensively around the world for about for years. On his journey he spent a lot of time on his own. He hitch-hiked to get around and spent long stretches of time hiking alone in the wilderness where he had some extreme experiences with nature. He does not go into detail on this, but he concludes that "there was no epiphany at any particular moment, but I definitely came back a different man although I did not recognise it at the time".

Once back in Tasmania, he returned to the old lifestyle that he grew up with, but felt that he could not live that life anymore. That is when – after participating in a few rallies and different events – he got more and more involved with TWS. During winter, slide nights were arranged on which slide presentations were given on environmental issues such as Antarctica,

the endangered Wedge Tailed Eagle or an update on the forest situation. John's first volunteer position was to take on the responsibility of arranging those sessions and later he started doing fundraising too. At that time, he did a teaching degree and subsequently worked as a teacher for a year or so before he was offered a job at TWS in 2003. That happened at a time when TWS was campaigning very intensively to raise public awareness about the Styx forest by organising a number of different events. John was involved in liaising with the tourism industry, doing logistics and arranging events.

Cathy

We are sitting on two short logs that we have put upright to sit a little higher. In the garden behind the campaign centre we can take a break from the fast tempo inside the building while making the interview. The clouds are gracing the treetops on the mountain on the other side of Hobart when a lazy breeze rattles the vegetable plants in the hutch beside us, just cold enough to make me appreciate my cup of tea a little more. Cathy takes a deep sip of hers and tells me that she was born in Melbourne 27 years ago. She did however grow up in Queensland in Australia's north-east, in a small town which she describes as a "bushy, down to earth kind of place". She holds a four year university-degree in zoology where she specialised in herpetology and the study of reptiles and amphibians. This is hardly surprising, she says, ". . . because I used to love running around in the tropics and jumping on all sorts of things that could kill me or bite me or just had wicked scales".

At university she created opportunities for herself to do fieldwork in different environments by helping her friends with their research projects, something that allowed her to spend many nights under the stars in deserts and mountains, as well as in tropical and mangrove landscapes. After finishing her university degree she lived in a little rainforest house without windows and doors for a while, something which she describes as a nice and relaxing experience. For three to four years she worked in different wildlife parks and moved house a few times.

Eventually, she felt a desire to see what was going on elsewhere in Australia and this motivated her to explore new areas and, so she travelled down the east coast of the continent. Down south in Victoria she participated in a ten-day bushwalk through old, temperate

rainforest where she was exposed to the giant Eucalypt trees, the same kind that grows in Tasmania.

One day in 2003 she took a plane to Hobart and since she already was a member of TWS in Queensland, she had heard about the fight for the Tasmanian forests. She visited the campaign centre to find out more about what was going on. She tells me that the moment she walked in the door, the office manager recruited her to answer the phone because they did not have a receptionist at the time. The next day the employees wanted to lock up the campaign centre due to a strategy meeting elsewhere, but Cathy offered to hold the fort in case they needed someone to answer incoming calls. "So on my second day I was in the building by myself, answering the phone and talking to people!" she laughs while raising her eyebrows in a surprised manner. "The next day I applied for a job as a Wilderness Defender (fundraiser for TWS), and the day after that I had an interview. So by that evening I pretty much had a job working as a wilderness defender for TWS, and yeah, I guess that is where it all suddenly went..." She makes a cracking sound with her mouth and a hand-gesture mimicking someone who is swinging a whip, perhaps at an imaginary horse as to suggest acceleration in the unfolding of events.

Now that she had a job, she was offered a place to stay by one of the employees, and only two days later she went on a trip out to the Styx Valley to see the "giants of Tassie" (the large Eucalypts of Tasmania) for the first time. Ever since those formative days, her life has taken a detour, she says. "And that is how I got to this back yard, sitting at this veggie-hutch with you", she indicates an imminent end to her chronicle and adds that she slept in a tent under the tree right next to us for a couple of days before getting indoor accommodation. "This was a very exciting time; it was the lead up to the big, massive rally that took place in March 2004, where we had fifteen thousand people marching through the streets of Hobart. The campaign centre was buzzing and there were heaps of things going on. I was down on the streets talking to people about the rally and how they needed to turn out, because this was the time when we were going to get the federal government to basically step in and stop the destruction of these big, beautiful forests that I just had been visiting. Basically, after you see the beautiful forests and see that they have been just completely destroyed and trashed and burnt, it is quite breathtaking and it kind of changes the way you see life in numerous ways".

The example of these two campaigners illustrates that personal experiences with nature plays an important role in the motivation to become an environmental activist. Cathy further exemplifies that there are not only local people working at the campaign centre. There are people born on the mainland, in New Zealand and in the United Kingdom working for TWS. The duration of their involvement in the organisation spans from a few months up to the length of the organisation's existence. Actors move in and out across the borders of the organisation, or move around within it. It is now time to present the job statutes in the campaign centre.

TWS Tasmania job descriptions

The **Campaign Coordinator** has the overarching responsibility for the Tasmanian campaign centre and is therefore also the senior media contact. This person organises and oversees events, works with public relations and makes speeches on public meetings, at rallies and on press conferences. Lobbying and work to maintain and develop TWS' network of contacts is also part of the job. This network consists of local, national and international NGOs and interest groups, as well as politicians and industrial actors.

Public relations and speeches, as well as the maintenance of media-relations are also part of the job description for the **Senior Campaigner**, as is the organisation of events. The employees who occupy these two positions have a dynamic relationship to each other, so that when one is away from the campaign centre, the other will take charge of making any necessary media statements or the preparations for an event.

Then, there is the **Community Campaigner** whose task it is to stay in contact with the public and build liaisons between TWS and the Tasmanian community. This assignment entails some work at the campaign centre in Launceston. This centre was established in a response to the timber company Gunns' proposal in late 2004 to build a pulp mill in the vicinity of Launceston. Today, there is a **Campaign Centre Coordinator** working at the Launceston campaign centre responsible for the daily activities.

The disclosure of Gunns' intentions to construct a new pulp mill also led to the creation of the **Pulp Mill Campaigner** position in Hobart. This campaigner spends much time lobbying banks and other financial institutions to influence them not to fund the pulp mill, in addition to liaising with other groups that oppose the pulp mill-project.

The **Tasmanian Communications Editor** is the one who designs and edits the organisation's brochures, posters, leaflets, self-drive guides to forest areas and other publications. Part of this job is also the management of an image library since the use of images and films is an essential aspect in the spread of TWS' version of forest operations. Another area of responsibility is the composing of maps for the purpose of lobbying and distribution of information to other NGOs and the broader public. This work requires powerful computer equipment and is an example of how TWS is continuously adapting its methods to changing circumstances.

The **Forest Campaigner** is the archivist in charge of systemising and managing the vast amount of papers, documents, reports and accounts of TWS' work from more than thirty years since its formation in 1976. This information is stored in many different places, which makes it difficult for someone who is not intimately familiar with the material to find the required piece. On many occasions, I saw employees making requests for one document or the other whereupon the archivist surprisingly produced the document from a cupboard, behind the drapes in a bookshelf, or by whipping open a shoebox from underneath a desk. This campaigner also designs products like t-shirts, stickers, buttons and scarves for the retail shop, an activity which entails a continuous production of slogans to highlight different campaign focuses. The forest campaigner also participates in solving organisational challenges in conjunction with events.

Even though many aspects of TWS' work involve the training and allocating of volunteers to various tasks, the **Volunteer Coordinator** primarily focuses on this task. Volunteer work includes banner painting, computer filing, reception service, taking care of the kitchen-garden, cooking for the Wednesday lunch, letterboxing and letter writing, as well as numerous petty jobs. The volunteer coordinator also organises fundraising, special events and groups. Another task is the training of volunteers in the method of peaceful community

protesting, an activity which was intensified in anticipation of a direct action which might take place if the construction of the proposed pulp mill begins.

The **Administration Manager** is in charge of accounts, the budget, payrolls, insurance and the organisation's property. This regards both to the campaign centre in Hobart and the one in Launceston, as well as the retail shop.

There is also an **Office Manager** in charge of office operations and security, of supplies for merchandise and for the kitchen. This position was however only part-time during my fieldwork and there were discussions about a possible restructuring of the position.

It is imperative to underscore that this list of job descriptions does not represent a corresponding reality in a static and strict manner. It should rather be understood as a rudimental inventory of the kind of activities involved in the staff's work, displaying the tentative division of labour. Objectives such as stopping the pulp mill from becoming a reality, liaising with the community and influencing decision makers through lobbying are tightly interwoven with each other, and they all evolve around the main objective: the conservation of Tasmania's native forests. Even though some responsibilities are more tied to certain positions than others, the interfaces between different people's areas of activity are rather fluent and flexible. On top of this comes the aspect that the organisation's work is intimately interwoven with everyday politics and recent developments in the Tasmanian community at large. Events such as the pulp mill-proposal or the Gunns-20 court-case have a direct impact on the form and direction of TWS' efforts. Likewise, the amount of funds that TWS is able to raise is also of defining character in terms of outlining the economical framework for its operations. These characteristics add up to make the Tasmanian section of TWS a dynamic workplace marked by continuous change. During the six months of my stay, the employment relationship of three people came to an end, either due to restructuring or because their employment contract ran out, and three people was newly employed.

The most elusive and perhaps the most important of the statutes in the organisation's net of collective action is the **Volunteer**. This status can be viewed as based on reciprocity in a way that Jeppe Linnet describes as "dialectical reinforcement between participants' altruism and

self-interest” (Linnet 2003: 198). Volunteers invest personal time doing voluntary work and TWS offers them a platform for accumulating social capital, which Pierre Bourdieu defines as:

> . . .the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a “credential” which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word (Bourdieu 1986: 248-9).

Volunteers gain privileged access to trips into attractive forest areas and can borrow computers and books in the campaign centre. Sometimes, they make the experience that they themselves can make a difference and can, in fact, stop the logging of trees. This facilitates a connection between their private identities and the identity and the symbolic capital of the organisation. This symbolic capital can then facilitate access to economic capital, for instance a job with another organisation or finding accommodation. Conservationists often help each other with housing, finding jobs and making useful connections through their networks. Volunteers also express that a sense of belonging to a group and a feeling of doing something meaningful and good for the environment and future generations arise from doing voluntary work for TWS.

Daily life at the campaign centre

We are in the middle of April and it is a warm autumn in Tasmania. Just before nine on a Wednesday morning I am waiting outside the backdoor of the campaign centre for one of the employees to arrive and let me in. I can hardly hear the noise from the traffic in front of the building because the garden is sheltered by the campaign centre and the neighbouring buildings. The sun is shining from a clear blue sky, and as I search the trees and the rooftops for the bird whose songs are filling the air, my attention is suddenly captured by a car coming in through the narrow driveway connecting the backyard with the main street

outside. James has arrived. His face turns into one big smile when he sees me, and he raises his hand in a salute as he brings the car to a stop next to the van that belongs to the organisation.

James gets out and fumbles with his keychain trying to find the door key as he closes the ten metres distance between us in a swift and energetic walk refined by countless hours of bushwalking, while swinging his briefcase to the rhythm of his steps. “What a beautiful day, it is really lovely outside”, I say in a typical Norwegian way, small-talking about the weather, and expect nothing more than a benevolent yet un-reflected confirmation to my statement. What I get is a concerned reply: “Yeah, until they start the burning. They’ll be at it today, the conditions are good”.

The weather conditions carry particular meaning for Tasmanian conservationists. On a day like this, the wooden residue in the forest areas which have been logged and cleared will be burnt in what Forestry Tasmania calls regeneration burns. Debris on the forest floor is scooped together and scorched so that nutrition and seeds are transferred into the ground. In this process, large amounts of carbon dioxide are released, which is an important argument used by TWS to promote the end of old-growth forest in Tasmania. The organisation constantly reminds the public of the fact that carbon dioxide contributes to global warming and that particulate matter emissions constitute a significant health hazard.

Not just a job

The office manager tells me that James and a few of the other full-time employees have so much to do these days that they spend most of their time in the office and in meetings, therefore the rest of the people in and around the campaign centre see much less of them than they used to. This was not the case a few years back, she explains, but the change came with the pulp mill proposal and the Gunns-20 litigation. Before that, the employees had more time to talk to volunteers and answer questions, but nowadays they are so busy that it is hard for them to spare some time.

One day at an office meeting I hear James lamenting about how the workload and especially the Gunns-20 court case has "kept him out of the bush for the last couple of years", and when I ask him to elaborate, he explains how he and the rest of TWS has been forced to spend a lot of time and resources on finding and preparing documentation in order to construct a defence against the legal charges. This has meant that he has not been able to go bushwalking which he enjoys so much. He has even heard stories about environmentalists in fear of being persecuted by the forest industry. "In that way they have been successful, because suppressing critical voices was exactly the purpose of the court action", he admits. But then he adds that this was true mostly for the first six to twelve months after the litigation was served and that the situation has improved now. A volunteer who is spending the day helping with banner-painting in the garden has just entered the room to seek assistance from one of the employees. He offers his thoughts on the matter: "You know, those planet-rapers don't care about the forest or people at all. They don't care about anything else than making money and they will use all means necessary to get what they want".

Statements similar to these, attributing an ominous and greedy attitude to the influential actors of the forest industry, are abundant in my field notes. Considering that examples of this kind accumulated over a relatively long stretch of time and from a variety of contexts, I think it is fair to say that they point in the direction of a general notion among conservationists in and around Hobart. These sporadic utterances are an important part of the conservationists' construction of their "low-other" (Stallybrass and White 1986: 286) and constitute a fundamental element in their self-identity construction as combatants for a higher moral, fighting for a good cause to save the planet.

One day while I am working at the reception, Elisabeth comes in looking for a box of new stickers that have just been made. As she finds them, she tells me how she can not work normal office hours like most people, but that she is really effective as long as she can do things her own way and follow her own rhythm. "I am just not made that way", she declares. "Is that a big problem when you are working here?" "No, here it is okay. It doesn't matter when you do the work as long as you do it on time, and that is the way that it should be everywhere, you know. To get the job done is what really matters; you can't count hours and

expect to be home for dinner and TV every day. This job is more a way of life than just a job".

Later, I deliver a message to Cathy in the large office that she shares with three others, while two volunteers are in the room. The message is written on the back of old one-sided printouts to save paper. Elisabeth is involved in a discussion with the new shop employee and says that she feels there are too little Australian made and too many China made products in the shop. The shop lady declares that Chinese goods are cheaper and that the customers mostly consist of parents that are looking for economical gifts for their kids. Elisabeth disagrees and says there are a lot of young people who want more quality, too, so they need to offer products for two target groups. She goes on to say that she gets upset when things do not get done and she recalls an example from the past when she walked by the shop and the windows were very dirty. This was before the current shop employee had started working for TWS, so the comment is apparently not meant as a direct critique of her work. But when the shop lady replies that she can understand that sometimes it can be hard to find the time to clean the shop windows when there is a lot of work to do in the shop, Elisabeth claps her hands together and shakes her head in disbelief. Her voice reaches a higher pitch, when she explains how the windows absolutely must be clean, and if there is no time during opening hours, you just have to do it before or after work. That is very important for a shop, because customers will not feel attracted by dirty windows, she explains, and laments that people put years and years of their life into this (TWS) and then someone comes along who thinks it is just a job.

The conversation between Elisabeth and the new shop employee can be regarded as an informal socialisation of the newcomer into the organisation's code of honour, the ideal of hard work and commitment to the cause of saving the planet. This example shows how an individual who verbally breaks a convention is reprimanded by a senior employee. The incident happened in the presence of several spectators with the effect that the message about the sacrificial ideal of the organisation was recharged. Another forum where TWS' ideals and ideas are transmitted and recharged is the update lunch. Let us take a look.

Figure 4: Lake Pedder

Figure 5: Poster of Eucalypts

The update lunch

Every Wednesday the meeting room adjacent to the kitchen in the back of the campaign centre fills up with people who want to get an update on TWS' campaigns. From here, a door opens to the garden in the back of the building, from which most of the people arrive for the lunch meeting. From the high Victorian ceiling hangs a lamp in the shape of a globe and the walls are decorated with two photos: one of the famous Lake Pedder with its snow-white quartzite sand beach that got flooded in 1972 (figure 4), and one of a group of activists on a demonstration. There is also a poster of the size of an adult person portraying a woman standing by the foot of two enormous Eucalyptus trees (figure 5).

In the middle of the room there is a large wooden table which is full of vegetarian food made with vegetables from the garden. Sometimes the room gets so crowded that there is not enough space for everyone, even when people are sitting on the floor. At the best attended meeting I counted forty-seven participants, whereas at the calmest séance there were only seventeen people.

As people gradually gather around the table, the food is served, usually vegetable soup and bread rolls donated from a bakery. This is a time when volunteers socialise while eating, introduce themselves to each other and exchange polite phrases. Approximately half an hour later, one of the employees opens the talk by welcoming everybody and thanking the cooks of the day for the wonderful meal. This gesture is always followed by applause. The next step in the routine is to look for two volunteers to do the dishes and there is always someone who agrees to do so by raising the hand. After this, a donation box is sent around and a "gold coin", i.e. one or two dollars, is suggested as the appropriate donation, but the speaker always points out that the donation is voluntary and reassures the visitors that it is no problem if someone should lack the means to contribute.

On days that are not particularly stressful, the employees take turns presenting an update on the different areas of TWS' work as well as providing interpretations of any relevant news reports and recent developments in the political arena. There is an update on the different forest areas that play a central part in the organisation's campaigning and sometimes there

are visitors from local interest groups informing about their recent activities and asking for help from volunteers. One day, a guest speaker from the USA is invited to talk about his experiences with a pulp mill being built in his home town. He describes how the community was divided on the issue and that social relationships were put under severe tension. The pulp mill was like a poison that penetrated every pore of the society, he declares, and even drove a wedge between family members who disagreed on whether the mill was good or bad. He continues to say that the terrible situation lasted for thirty years, and that the societal wounds only started to heal when the mill was finally shut down. His final mark is that no economic reason is more important than the wellbeing of the people and that he hopes that the Tasmanian community will succeed in stopping the proposed pulp mill. The crowd react with enthusiastic applause and approving cheers.

What follows is a report on the Tasmanian pulp mill issue informing the volunteers about what has happened in the crucial federal approval process since last week. An update is also given on the ongoing campaign to pressure the ANZ bank not to fund the pulp mill project and the related mass rally that is to be held in Melbourne. Sometimes, the speaker is interrupted by a phone call and finds it necessary to momentary absent him- or herself from the meeting, whereby another employee takes over.

Oncoming events are highlighted: workshops to teach volunteers the rules of protesting, open days in the forest including organised transport, and a rally outside the ANZ branch in Hobart are just some of the many examples. A book for new volunteers to write down their contact-information is passed around and a list of jobs that volunteers can help with is presented. At the end of the meeting, the floor is opened to questions that remained open and then the group disperses little by little. Some people move out into the garden to have a chat and socialise, a few stay to help with data entering, and others seize the opportunity to ask the employees more questions before they leave.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter we have seen that TWS is an organisation that is highly responsive to and intrinsically embedded in the social environment in which it exists. We learnt that this milieu is characterised by dynamic and ever-changing relationships between a heterogeneous body

of organisations, both non-governmental and political, and an elaborate division of labour. We have been introduced to some of the organisational actors and become aware that they come from different backgrounds and execute their roles within the organisation in varied ways. Even so, we could observe the outline of a common moral ideal emphasising personal sacrifice for the cause, hard work, redemption from and forgiveness towards the mistakes of previous generations, and a lifestyle that requires modest amounts of natural resources. The moral code is expressed in narratives (in magazines, in books, and on the update lunch), in verbal discussions between campaigners, in personal reflections within interview situations, and in statements on the organisation's website. Additionally, personal encounters with nature were emphasized by conservationists themselves as being important for their conviction.

In accordance to the definition of organisations given at the beginning of the chapter, social actors were found to move across the organisation's exterior boundaries as well as around within the organisation itself. TWS has both allies and adversaries. Its relations to the latter were found to be a considerable source of stress and anxiety, while also causing a need for secrecy. Not withstanding the policy of confidentiality surrounding its economy, it could be observed that some of the organisation's material resources flow into two campaign centres, computers and other office paraphernalia, campaigning and camping equipment, a van, and into the salaries of a number of campaigners. However, tight budgeting, economic resource-scarcity and a high dependence on volunteers appear to be defining features of the organisation's situation.

4: Forests and forestry

Figure 6: Distribution of state forest across Tasmania

Nature and politics

After giving an account of the development and the present day situation of the Tasmanian forest, I will in this chapter use Scott's analytical approach to shed some light on the Tasmanian case in a broader perspective. Since forestry has to do with politics, it might however be beneficial to first introduce my approach to politics. Politics are closely related to power, of which Eric Wolf depicts four modes. The first two modes operate in the vein of a Weberian perspective and have to do with social actors and the ability of an ego to impose its will on an alter, while the latter two modes of power concern organisational and structural power, i.e. the nature of the arena and the ability to control the settings in which interaction occurs. These latter perspectives draw on ideas developed and elaborated by Marx and Focault (Wolf 1994: 218-9). All these forms of power are in play when social actors and cooperatives interact, and they are all connected to politics. Following Axel Sommerfelt, I apply an understanding of political acts as all those *"*acts which aim to protect personnel and rights – in other words integrity – against encroachment and to promote interests towards other persons or groups" (Sommerfelt 1958: 22). In chapter three we observed that there is a close relationship between TWS and the Greens, even though the former must avoid being classified as a political organisation by the state to keep its privilege of tax deductible donations. Hence, I find it appropriate to regard the environmental movement, with TWS as a protagonist, as a political cooperative which channels much of the Tasmanian civil society's resistance to the state's utilitarian paradigm.

At this point I should make it clear that I regard both the Australian state and the Tasmanian state more as ongoing processes than fixed entities. Such a process-oriented standpoint becomes timely in the face of the "diversity and fluidity of form, functions and malfunctions of state-making processes", as well as the "extent to which all states are internally divided and subject to penetration by conflicting and usually contradictory forces" (Bright & Harding 1984: 4). In Australia, there is additionally an intergovernmental tension between the federal and the state governments. In Tasmania, a significant extent of the struggle for power to express one's opinions and make them matter in terms of affecting the allocation of recourses is performed through the medium of the island's forests. In this struggle, TWS embodies a significant part of the civil society and the state is incarnated by Forestry Tasmania.

Tasmanian state forestry

Forestry Tasmania is a State Government Business Enterprise that operates under the auspices of The Government Business Enterprises Act 1995 and employs 546 personnel and 1343 contractors. It manages 1, 5 million hectares of publicly owned State forest for multiple uses which comprise 39 per cent of the island's forests (FT 2008: 4). The number of people working in the forest industry as a whole is however not a clear-cut matter because different sources quote different numbers. This is symptomatic for the situation in Tasmania where much of the research on the forest issue is commissioned by stakeholders from either one side of the debate or the other and independent research is scarce. This came to be expressed at a public meeting regarding forests and their role in the global climate system where a representative from the University of Tasmania repeatedly underscored the lack of knowledge and addressed the need for more independent funding in order to facilitate research into the management of the state's forests. The former Tasmanian Premier routinely stated in public that without old-growth logging the timber industry would lose 10,000 jobs, and Forestry Tasmania itself claims that 10,700 Tasmanians are directly employed by the forest industry (Stewards of the forest 2007: 18). The Tasmanian author Richard Flanagan calls these claims unsubstantial and maintains that they stand in stark opposition to research commissioned by a group called Timber Workers for Forest. Their 2004 report estimated that 580 people are employed in old-growth logging (Flanagan 2007: 29).

In Tasmania, forestry operations on both public and private land are regulated through the *Forest Practices System*, and an independent statutory body named the *Forest Practices Authority*. The forest practices system operates primarily through the *Forest Practices Act 1985* and the associated *Forest Practices Code* that provides a set of guidelines and standards concerning protection of natural and cultural values of the forest, such as soil and water, geomorphology, visual landscape, flora, fauna and cultural heritage (State of the forests 2007: 19). The system also takes account of other legislation and policies, notably the *Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement 1997* (TRFA). The Forest Practices Authority educates and delegates forest practice officers who prepare and certify forest practices plans. These plans based on the Forest Practices Code are required for actions on both public and private

land. The officers also supervise and monitor the implementation of these plans. In 2006 there were 198 such officers in Tasmania (State of the forest 2007: 20).
In its public information material, Forestry Tasmania highlights that global climate change and its relation to carbon dioxide emissions have become one of the most critical issues for today's international community to deal with. It also points out that forests play a beneficial role in the global carbon cycle because they store carbon and release oxygen, and that sustainable managed forests thus become vast carbon sinks. On this background, Forestry Tasmania recruits science as an ally and advocates its employees' important role as "stewards" of the forest (Stewards of the Forest 2007: 9).

Tasmania's forests

The total forested area in Tasmania consists of 46 per cent dry eucalypt forest, 24 per cent wet eucalypt forest, 20 per cent rainforest and other forest types, 7 per cent plantation, and 2 per cent sub-alpine eucalypt forest (State of the forest 2007: 4). The plantation estate is a result of the desire to bring a higher degree of order and productivity to Australia's forested land and materialised through two nationwide plantation programs. The first comprised an escalation in softwood planting in the 1960s and 1970s accompanied by a heavy land clearing. This was followed by the establishment of large areas of private hardwood plantations in the 1990s (Ajani 1997: 304-6). In 2007, Forestry Tasmania announced an immediate end to the practice of converting native forests to plantation, instead all logged areas will be regenerated to native forests using seed sources from the sites (State of the Forest 2007: 25). Economically, plantations are more efficient than regenerated areas because they grow four to five times as fast, but Forestry Tasmania maintains that it has chosen to change its practise for environmental reasons (Stewards of the Forest 2007: 11). Activists, on the other hand, claim that the community pressure generated by their campaigning was the real reason. The most prominent issue for the environmental movement is the logging of old growth native forest, a practice that in the financial year of 2005-2006 amounted to the logging of 195.5 square kilometres of old-growth in total (FT 2007: 12). The Sustainability Indicators for Tasmanian Forests 2001-2006 report uses the agreed national definition of old-growth as "ecologically mature forest where the effects of disturbance are now negligible". This report states that the total amount of old-growth in Tasmania was 1 229 000 hectares in 2006, of which 91 per cent was on public land and nine

per cent on private land. 973 000 hectares, or 79 per cent, of this was protected in some kind of reserve. The old-growth area in reserves has increased significantly since 1996 when only 55 per cent was protected (FPA 2007: 12). However, activists warned me not to get "seduced" by Forestry Tasmania's "pretty" statistics, and emphasized to me that this percentage will only "look better" and increase proportional to the amount of unprotected old-growth forest that is logged.

In an attempt to obtain a greater understanding of what it is that these activists are trying to protect, I think it is time that we undertake an excursion into one of the old-growth forest of Tasmania.

Journey into the Styx Valley – Valley of the Giants

The suspension on the old white Toyota is still surprisingly potent although the van itself looks and sounds like it is about to fall apart. It has probably been heavily used while in possession of its previous owner, the Greenpeace, before it was "sold" to The Wilderness Society for the symbolic sum of one dollar. The tough driving conditions still have not changed. Passengers and interior are shaking ferociously as John manoeuvres the vehicle along the windy forest gravel road bashing into rocks and smashing into holes, some of which so big that the sound of impact makes me believe that the car is falling apart. But the car stubbornly makes it through the ordeals. The roadside is so dense with trees and bushes that in most places it is hard to see anything further away than ten metres. The road itself is dry and dusty and it is a warm day. Conversation is scarce because of the noise but every now and then John enlightens us by shouting out facts about the scenery flying by outside the windows.

> This is the Styx River that we are passing now. Look at the brown colour of the water (See picture 4, page 108). That's a result of all the tannin leaking into the river from the surrounding vegetation. Forestry Tasmania is planning to build a new bridge here soon, ostensibly to enhance tourist availability into the area but that's not the whole story. An important reason is of-course to allow bigger log trucks to access logging coupes further ahead and to get other big machinery in there.

This information is addressed to Yuki – a Japanese girl volunteering for TWS – a Japanese couple working for a Japanese environmental movement, and me. The other people in the car know the area very well. The other two passengers, Anne and Brian, are both actively engaged in work to preserve this amongst other areas of forest in Tasmania. They are central characters in the direct-action group that amongst other things is orchestrating the blockade in the Upper Florentine valley, another heavily disputed area not far from the Styx valley where we are today. Anne tells us that Forestry Tasmania is applying a strategy of pushing new roads into regions with high potential to later harvest the forest resources. Sometimes they argue that their motive is to improve tourists' and other peoples' possibilities to get out and experience the bush, as with the "Road to Nowhere" in the Tarkine that was pushed into pristine rainforest[1]. Once the road is there, it is much easier to move heavy machinery in at a later stage, she maintains.

The Japanese connection

A sedan with a Japanese TV crew and an interpreter is following us. They are making a documentary about the Japanese paper industry and its connection to Tasmania's export woodchip industry. Japan is the biggest buyer of Tasmanian woodchip (Ajani 2007: 8). In 2006, there was a scandal involving Japanese paper companies that were exposed as having a significantly lower percentage of recycled paper in their product than they claimed. This led to outraged consumers demanding more transparency and better control of what paper is made of and where the resources come from. TWS has connections with environmental cooperatives in Japan and through its network it facilitated the visit from the TV crew. Today, John is bringing them out to take a first-hand look at some of the forests that might be logged and sent to Japan either as woodchips or pulp for paper production. As I look through the rear window of the van I can see that the sedan is losing ground as John pushes the throttle to the floor. Moments later, Brian yells that the Japanese are gone. John slows down a little and before long the sedan appears behind us again. This is obviously a case of getting there quickly and not of enjoying the view by looking at the trees on the way. It is a

[1] The Tarkine is a large area in Tasmania's north-west and the road in question was the reason for a bushfire that broke out three months after its construction. A tourist's car broke down on the road. The tourist then accidently caused the burning, maybe by lighting a campfire.

wonder that neither of the two cars are breaking down, considering the stress they are subjected to.

At the gate

After approximately twenty-five minutes of intense shaking on gravel roads we arrive at our first destination, a side road with a yellow gate that is locked. The cars are parked by the side of the road and we all get out. The Japanese cameraman is gesticulating with his hands and making engine noises to make the point that the speed of John's driving has made an impression on him, everything with a big smile on his face. Laughter erupts in the whole group and it seems like everyone is amused, maybe also relieved to have arrived safely. On the gate there are derogatory phrases about both conservationists and forestry workers written in different colours and handwritings. The Japanese point at the gate and talk amongst themselves in Japanese while the cameraman starts filming. The gate is like a canvas reading: "green scum", "fuck off green cunts", "have a wash", "I wash in the clean streams that my mother provides me with. The ones you wanna fuck" and "Gunns go home" (see picture 8, page 110). Clearly, the dispute over Tasmania's forests has many faces and finds expression in a range of levels, including offensive and coarse articulations like these ones. While the interpreter translates, John explains that Forestry Tasmania often erects gates to keep the public out of areas that are subject to logging, and that there are such active areas further up the road. He informs us that we are out of range for mobile phones, but that he has brought a satellite telephone for security. Some of us check the signals on our phones and we can confirm that he is right. Yuki, the Japanese student, tells me that it feels a little strange to be out of mobile range because she is used to always having the possibility to make a call if she needs to. I agree and tell her that it is good to have the satellite phone for security then, in case something happens and we would require assistance. After this séance we all take what we need out of the cars and get ready to go. Behind the gate, the gravel road ascends steeply, and the whole group follows John around the gate and starts walking uphill.

As we move along, Anne lets us know that the gates are allegedly there for security reasons, but that this is not the whole story. Another important motive for the forest-hungry industry to lock the gates, she maintains, is to obstruct the public's possibility to witness all the

devastating destruction it causes to this pristine and endangered wilderness. When shaping her arguments in this metaphoric manner, she applies a well-established method of argumentation within the environmental movement. On one of the pages of TWS' website it reads: "No Surrender on Climate Change", a war-metaphor consistent with Anne's account of a violent forest industry which destroys the forest. When portraying the forest industry as hungry, Anne uses words for bodily functions that are usually reserved for humans and animals, and she is not the only one: Brian tells us that the gates are often locked even if there is no activity in an area after it has been logged. This, he declares, unveils that part of the motivation for closing the gates is to hide the large-scale obliteration of these incredibly important forests from the public. Not only are they beautiful, he says, but they are also the world's lungs because through photosynthesis they release oxygen and store enormous amounts of carbon which are released into the atmosphere when they are logged and burnt. John specifies and connects this information to the Japanese paper industry by saying that carbon is stored in paper only momentarily, and is transformed to carbon dioxide when the paper products decay. When this happens they contribute to climate change and global warming, and this fact, he concludes, is a strong reason for protecting these ancient forests.

The Tolkien Track

Some three hundred metres up the road there is a tiny track leading into the bush on the right and a small sign saying 'Tolkien Track'. Despite the track being marked with a sign it could easily be passed unnoticed because it is really hard to see. Once we get through the first ten metres of dense vegetation the track opens up and discloses a diverse landscape of different trees, bushes, flowers, mushrooms and other flora. The thing that strikes me most is how green the plants are and how fresh the air feels. As we penetrate further in, John informs the Japanese about the different trees surrounding us. We can see rainforest species like myrtle, sassafras, celery top pine and wattles. John explains that these trees grow relatively slowly and are classified as hardwood species. Many of the eucalypt species, on the other hand, that we soon will see some specimens of, grow much faster and develop softer wood as a result. They are nevertheless also classified as hardwood trees. When John sees our surprised faces, he explains that this is because the category includes all flowering plants and that some hardwood trees are physically soft. Brian elaborates that flowering plants also are called angiosperms. The interpreter translates into Japanese. The Japanese

cameraman says something in Japanese to the translator who then asks John what the definition of softwood trees is. John replies that the defining criterion is that they carry exposed seeds, and that the category includes pines, cypresses and other conifers. Brian jumps in with additional information once again and says that even though the wood is usually softer than hardwoods there are many exceptions. After he says this, there is a short pause when the eyes of the people around him rest on his face with anticipation. “Gymnosperms”, he releases the tension, and goes on to enlighten us on the biological nomenclature for the species around us as we continue inwards.

A giant experience

Suddenly, the people at the front start shouting Japanese words and exclaiming English superlatives. I am a few metres behind them because I stopped momentarily fascinated by a huge and peculiarly shaped myrtle tree, but then I hurry to see what all the fuss is about. When I pass the trunk of the myrtle, a truly gigantic tree raises its body majestically above all the others in an awe-inspiring posture and I have to lean back to capture the whole thing within my gaze. John informs us that this is a Eucalyptus Regnans, the tallest kind of all Eucalypt trees. This one is approximately seventy metres tall but they can get close to a hundred metres in height. He estimates the tree to be around three to four hundred years old. Here we have an old giant in the Valley of the Giants. Two of the Japanese run over to the tree in a childlike and energetic manner to stroke the trunk with their hands, and they look up towards the top of the tree while shaking their heads in disbelief.

It is a surreal experience. No more than twenty metres back, the tree was not visible at all due to the thick vegetation. Then, all of a sudden, it is there. It just stands there like it has done for so long. This tree has lived here on this very spot for up to four hundred years. What does that mean? I recognise in myself the same awe-struck feeling and contemplative state of mind I sometimes experience when I look up at the stars at night. Thoughts rush through my mind about life and death, time and eternity, and the relationship between me, other people and the rest of the world. Is it only me who reacts in this way? Maybe it is because I am particularly prone to reflect on such matters? I do not know, but the Japanese team leader says something to John about the many human wars that have taken place during the tree’s lifetime. The thought baffles me and makes me aware that I am standing in

front of a life form that must have a very different relation to time than I do. Nevertheless, there is something recognisable about the tree and something comforting about the thought of its longevity. It is like an antidote to the high-speed modernity that can be very stressful at times. I find myself attracted to the simplicity of the tree; it grows and stands there. Stands there and grows. That is all. I can feel my senses stretching out towards the tree and I give in to an urge to physically connect with it.

Although aware of the presence of the people around me and a little self-conscious as a result, possibly because of my typical low-key upbringing as a young man in the south-eastern part of Norway, I allow myself to be extraordinary swift on my feet and even let go of a little childish laughter as I amusingly approach the tree. The trunk is enormous. When I lean my chest against it and stretch my arms out to each side in an embracing posture, I have the impression that my arms are forming a straight line instead of a curve. The bark is almost completely shed off and the stem has a pattern of stripes in different colours, varying from dark brown, over yellow and green, to deep red, rather like a snake. The naked stem is smooth and cool. I can see the transparent canopy far above the ground when I tilt my head all the way back on my shoulders. There are clusters of leaves scattered around on the few branches that make up the top of the tree.

John says that this is just one of many giants in this area and suggests that we keep walking (for an example; see picture 1, page 107). As we continue, he keeps bringing up information about the trees we are passing and the broader surroundings. Brian is supplementing with the Latin names and complementing facts, both botanical and political. We learn that the Styx and the adjacent Upper Florentine valleys were promised to be protected against logging by the former Prime Minister of Australia, but that this promise was broken after he was re-elected in 2004. The Tolkien Track that we are walking on now is however one of the exceptions that were allocated a protected status, most likely due to the Global Rescue Station project jointly arranged by TWS and Greenpeace. The name of the track was chosen to draw parallels to the fairytale world in Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings" where natural surroundings, and trees in particular, bear great significance and play an important role in the life of humans. Some trees on the track are named after characters from the tale, amongst which the most prominent is a tree named after Gandalv, a shepherd-like wizard.

The tree is called Gandalv's Staff and is the highest one here, with its 84 metres. Through the naming of the track, connectedness between humans and non-humans is communicated and accentuated in a parable in which (especially old) entities of the latter are the keepers of a genuine way of living that many people in the modern societies have forgotten and become strangers to.

Connection to the past

Not far from here, in the Florentine Valley, there was another giant tree that according to the media academic Libby Lester accidentally was "killed" by Forestry Tasmania in a regeneration burn that got out of control in 2003 (Lester 2007: 95). The fact that a Tasmanian scholar uses such an expression as "killed" for a tree is a vivid illustration of the metaphoric character of the human interaction with the natural world. The Hobart newspaper *The Mercury* provided another example reporting that the giant tree was "cooked to death" (Paine 2003: 3). The tree had been named El Grande by Forestry Tasmania and it was crowned Australia's largest tree. It was thus also Australia's largest living thing, and the world's largest flowering plant. Forestry Tasmania is obliged to protect and keep record of trees over a certain size, and has therefore produced a list of big trees that carry such names as the Geeveston Giant, the Styx Big Tree, the Styx Bigger Tree, and Gothmog (another character from the Lord of the Rings).

Today, El Grande still resides on the top of the big tree list, albeit with an accompanying footnote informing that the tree is "dead". Although reluctant at first, Forestry Tasmania eventually admitted that the tree was really "dead" and not just scorched, and the story hit the media in a nationwide publicity wave. In the middle of winter of the same year, 3000 people marched through the Styx Valley protesting against forestry practices in rain and light snow. The following cover stories in the national newspapers *The Australian* and *The Bulletin* referred to El Grande and the 'dense Tolkienesque world' (Lester 2007: 96). The great commotion demonstrated that the mythic, solemn language used in context with the big trees had become a mainstream phenomenon and that the conservation movement's message was circulating on a broad scale. Lester asserts: "The terms, often with historically forged cultural resonance, served to mythologize and symbolise the places under threat" (Lester 2007: 93-96).

This is very similar to the strategy that TWS applied during the Franklin campaign in employing such a term as protecting "the last wild river" to promote their blockade (Flanagan and Pybus 1990: 157). Following the controversy surrounding the El Grande scorching, Forestry Tasmania removed the names from the big tree list and reverted to use only scientific names, such as Eucalyptus Regnans or Eucalyptus Obliqua. However, after TWS publicly accused Forestry Tasmania of having removed the names in order to stifle the community's attachment to the trees, the names were reinstated and retained (Lester 2007: 97-8).

Trespassing?

A bit further up the Tolkien Track we come upon a cave tree (see picture 9, page 111). It is named that way because the lower part of its trunk has rotted on the inside leaving only its outer parts. This happens to old trees, John explains. That way they become suitable as nesting sites for a range of animal species and this is the reason why they play a crucial part in the ecosystem. There is a species of bats in Tasmania that only lives in old trees like this and they would clearly go extinct if there were no such trees left. Meanwhile, the interpreter has gone ahead while most of us linger by and in the cave tree. As we eventually move along we encounter him walking hastily towards us. He is worried. There were some men further up the track. He thinks they were from Gunns Ltd., the main company in the Tasmanian forest industry. They told him that we had no right to be here, that we were trespassing and had to leave right away. They even wrote down his name and employee number from the identification tag that he wears on his jacket and said that they would make sure that he would lose his job if he did not make us leave immediately. He waves to the cameraman asking him to put down his camera and to stop recording, but the cameraman keeps filming anyway. John replies that we are not trespassing because this is public reserve land and we are not doing anything wrong. The interpreter is not reassured. He thinks we should leave anyway and, please, can the cameraman put the camera away? Yes, no problem, says John, and we start walking to the end of the track and before long we arrive back at the road, a few hundred meters from the cars. John turns to the Japanese and proclaims that this is a perfect example of the intimidation and coercion employed by the forest industry in an attempt to keep the public away and uninformed about what is really going on in the forests.

A strategic forestry?

As we walk down the gravel road towards the gate and the cars, a white pickup truck pulls up about fifty metres behind us. That's them, says the interpreter. Brian immediately recognises the uniforms of the three men in the car as not belonging to Gunns, but to one of their contractors' firm. He explains that they have no authority to force us away, but no problem, we were just about done here anyway. John tells us that he has been on the phone with Forestry Tasmania earlier today to inform them that we were coming and they had no objections. Nevertheless, the interpreter looks relieved when we pass the canvas-like gate again and enter the cars.

On the way back, we stop by some areas that have been logged and burnt, and everyone agrees that it looks dreadful with the large, black fields of torched debris in the middle of the green forest. John pulls out a series of maps from the van and shows them to the Japanese. On the maps, we can see the eastern boarder of the Tasmanian World Heritage Area (TWHA) and the adjacent Styx and Florentine Valleys. While the Japanese cameraman is filming and the interpreter is translating, John points at a number of painted circles indicating logged coupes and circles of a different colour indicating coupes that are scheduled for logging. Together, the circles make up a line that runs between the TWHA and the two valleys. John explains that Forestry Tasmania's logging strategy is to physically separate the valleys from the TWHA with the aim to impede a potential inclusion of the valleys into the TWHA. Anne informs us that international experts have called for these forested valleys to be included in the TWHA, and that representatives from the World Heritage Commission are coming to Tasmania in a few weeks. She further explains that it is much easier to argue a case for conservation of these areas when they are connected to the TWHA, because then they are physically part of the same ecosystem, and that is why Forestry Tasmania is trying to cut them off.

On our way, we also stop by the Styx River where the Japanese do an interview with John who accentuates that this area is under imminent threat. He repeats the main arguments for protecting it and names a range of animal species that are gravely threatened by the forest industry that the Japanese paper producers has become an integral part of.

A diminishing trend

In 1750, Tasmania had an estimated 4 822 200 hectares of native forest, 66.5% of which had remained until 1996, at the time of the assessment for the *Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement*. Ten years later, statistics from the Forest Practices Authority showed that this number had dropped to 64.5 per cent, an additional reduction of 2.8 per cent compared to the 1996 state of affairs (State of the forests 2007: 4). These numbers reveal a diminishing trend in the Tasmanian native forest estate, something which is in compliance with the Permanent Forest Estate Policy target of maintaining 95% of the 1996 native forests (State of the forests 2007: 8). But how did it happen that so much of the native forest volume from pre-colonial times was gone by 1996?

The rise of industrial forestry

Throughout the nineteenth century, settlers could cut down forest without restraints due to a lack of governmental control. Large areas were thus cleared for agricultural and other purposes. The increase in economic activities following the Victorian gold rush in the 1850s added to the pressure on Tasmania's forests, as did a demand for timber exports to other parts of the British Empire. A growing concern about the velocity of the timber extractions prompted the state government to amend the *Waste Lands Act* in 1881 with the effect that areas could be set aside for preservation and growth of timber. Two additional consequences were that now licenses were required and that royalties could be charged for the felling of trees (Buckman 2008: 68). In 1885 the number of sawmills was as high as 62, and a Conservator of Forests was appointed to be in charge of evaluating the state of the forests. Despite later parliamentary reluctance to accommodate the conservator's recommendations that a management regime should be implemented, this was, nevertheless, the first official attempt by the Tasmanian government to get an overview of its forest situation and an industry that was largely unregulated (Buckman 2008: 69). It was, however, not before 1951 that the Forestry Commission made its first estimates of the state's total volume of commercial forest trying to calculate the appropriate amount of wood harvesting.

Industrial scale forestry arrived in 1937 with the commencement of a pulp and paper mill at Burnie in the north of the state, and within 25 years three more mills were operating on the island. Throughout most of the twentieth century, the Tasmanian government wanted to attract manufacturing industries that depended on the exploitation of natural resources for energy, and the new papermaking industry was one such trade. Tasmania's considerable tracts of forest were re-evaluated as unrealised economic potential capable of securing the state's economy. Consequently, the forest sector was given generous terms to facilitate the growing paper industry. Forestry companies were granted licences, or concessions, that bestowed them with exclusive access and private landholder rights over public forests, a practice which left the companies with few incentives to work towards a sustainable use of the areas (Buckman 2008: 70-1). The practise of closing off public access to the forest by erecting gates like the one we encountered in the Styx Valley is an expression of this politics. With a surge in construction activity following the Second World War and the building of three woodchip mills by the early 1970s exporting woodchips to Japanese paper companies, the connection between forest and state economy grew increasingly stronger. The pressure on the forest estate became rapidly intensified. The Forestry Commission reported that the new export woodchip industry would transform stagnating forests, making them into continuously productive stands, not only of pulpwood but also of saw logs (Buckman 2008: 78). Thus, the Commission implied that the forests first and foremost are to be regarded as financial resources and that they, through the transformation from idle trees to production timber, obtain a higher value. In the endorsement of the woodchip industry there was embedded an implicit normative assertion that it would enhance the value of the forests by making them into resources and realising their economic potential.

With the advent of the woodchip industry, Tasmanian forestry grew powerfully connected to the global market and the amount of trees cut for pulpwood increased dramatically from the late 1960s to the mid 1970s (Buckman 2008: 79). This also meant a proportional increase in clear-felling – the practice of clearing all trees in an area that commenced with the pulp and paper industry in the late 1930s. Following the growth of the woodchip industry, people could see more and more flattened slopes from lookouts and from roads, to the detriment of the industry's public relations, and in the end wood-chipping became public enemy number one to the conservationists (Buckman 2008: 79-80). The intensified forestry

enhanced the state’s need for control and oversight of its resources, something which was underscored in an inquiry into private forestry in 1976 (Buckman 2008: 80). Like we saw in the beginning of this chapter, Scott explains that industrial forestry entails the need for a higher degree of knowledge and control of the state’s resources so that they can be manipulated and exploited more effectively to the benefit of the state. By narrowing its vision to comprise only a few parameters, the state can then produce simplified models by which a synoptic view of its resources can be obtained. This is precisely the kind of technical gaze that was called for in the Tasmanian forest inquiry in 1976.

Federal interventions

Today, it is the Tasmanian Parliament that determines which areas of forest on public land should be managed primarily for conservation in national parks and nature reserves, and which areas should be managed for multiple uses, including wood products. The primary responsibility for the management and use of all natural resources in Australia has rested with the state governments for more than a century, but the federal government was submitted to an increasing public pressure through the 1980s to intervene in state decisions regarding key environmental issues, such as the proposed damming of the Franklin River in Tasmania. This pressure resulted in a number of federal interventions into contentious environmental decisions made by particular state governments, which entailed a condition of sustained intergovernmental conflict. By the end of the decade, it had become apparent to the federal government that its use of interventions would not provide any solution to the forest debate. On the contrary, it posed the danger of undermining intergovernmental relations and destabilizing the broader political context (Majewski 2007: 15).

This insight instigated a process which led to the signing of the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement (TRFA) in 1997 which was part of an Australian program aiming at facilitating the management of the nation’s forests. In an attempt to alleviate the strenuous state forest conflict, a series of regional agreements were negotiated between federal and state governments, effectively relieving the federal government of its responsibilities in state matters and enhancing the states’ autonomy. This meant that the primary responsibility for the natural resources returned to the state governments.

In Tasmania, the agreement assumed the form of a twenty year plan resulting from a long and tedious process involving scientific research and documentation, as well as consultation with various stakeholders from the Tasmanian community. The environmental movement has, however, like we have seen, little trust in the integrity of its government. The TRFA is accordingly a highly contested document. The Tasmanian and Australian governments present the TRFA as a scientific endeavour in accordance with the principles of solid, democratic governance. The environmental movement, on the other hand, criticises the key decision process regarding the TRFA for a lack of transparency and claims that scientific findings have been altered by politicians in favour of the forest industry. According to a master's thesis conducted by a Tasmanian activist who interviewed key stakeholders in the TRFA process, this allegedly happened through bureaucratic amendments to data, reports and recommendations, combined with the exclusion of some key data and the erosion of thorough, scientifically grounded mapping and classification (Majewski 2007: 41, 64).

The TRFA was drawn up as a joint endeavour of the Tasmanian and Australian governments to deliver a number of conservation and sustainable management goals within the state's forests. In this regard, the process of classifying and mapping vegetation communities was especially important as it became the basis for determining which areas needed preservation. As a symptom of the mistrust that saturates every aspect of the Tasmanian forest issue, also this process is criticised for a lack of scientific integrity by the master's thesis mentioned above. The reasons are that some of the interviewees described the process as flawed with inadequate timeframes and people who were over-committed with assignments (Majewski 2007: 40).

This example shows that scientific and political processes are highly contested aspects of Tasmanian environmental politics, and that the dispute unfolds on several different levels simultaneously.

Reserves

A significant portion of the Tasmanian forest is protected, but there are different categories of reserves with varying degrees of firmness. The 1997 Regional Forest Agreement established what is called a comprehensive, adequate and representative (CAR) reserve

system, which includes formal, informal and private reserves. Protected forest covers 1 465 000 hectares, 76 per cent of which is in formal reserves on public land and 24 per cent of which is in informal reserves and private CAR systems. Formal reserves are publicly managed land tenures that can only be revoked with parliamentary approval, and informal reserves consist of land protected through administrative instruments by public authorities. In contrast, the category of informal reserves is considered by the environmental movement as a very unstable and hardly secure status which can be revoked with a "stroke of a pen". Additionally, the status of an informal reserve does not automatically exclude mining and building of dams in that area. Private reserves, on the other hand, are private land managed under a range of arrangements, including contractual agreements such as management agreements and covenants, and reserves set aside under independently certified forest management systems. In 2006, forested land in Tasmania consisted almost in equal parts of formal conservation reserves, other publicly managed land (including State forest and informal reserves) and private freehold land (State of the forest 2007: 9).

Public reserved forests include those in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, which covers approximately 20 per cent of Tasmania, and those in national parks, managed by the *Parks and Wildlife Service* in the Department of Tourism, Arts and the Environment (State of the forest 2007: 17). Public forests comprise formal and informal reserves, as well as the State forest, i.e. land managed by Forestry Tasmania (FT 2008: 101-2). Timber production is the main focus of forest management and approximately one half of the State forest is potentially available for this purpose. The other half is classified as both formal and informal reserves, with uses that include conservation, recreation, tourism and beekeeping (State of the forest 2007: 18). It is these State forest areas that are in the midst of the enduring and vigorous debate concerning Tasmanian natural resource management.

The present day dynamic and elaborate system of policies, techniques, reserves and research has become manifested in the interface between the state and its revenue needs, international organisations, and the Tasmanian, the Australian, and the international civil society. Below, I will, by taking a closer look at Scott's ideas, broaden the scope to make a more general investigation into how some of the essential attributes of the modern state can be an illuminating metaphor for the development of scientific forestry.

The modern state: divide and conquer, simplify and control

Scott explains that the classic state functions of taxation, recruitment, and keeping order rest on the state's ability to make its society "legible" and that the premodern state, in many respects, was partially blind. It knew little about its subjects in terms of their wealth, their landholdings and yields, their location, and even their identity – in other words it lacked a detailed map of its terrain and its people (Scott 1998: 2). Therefore, the ability to manipulate them was limited. The modern state aspired to a higher degree of control to be able to effectively exploit its physical and human resources and tackled the task by setting up an inventory of them and dividing them into categories (Scott 1998: 51). State officials created a standard grid by simplifying complex and local social processes, thereby rendering the people decipherable objects for centralised recording and monitoring (Scott 1998: 2).

Focusing on identity processes, Kertzer and Ariel make the point that governmental statistic-gathering and census-taking has not objectively registered primordial identities, but actively constructed and manipulated them for political reasons (Kertzer & Ariel 2002: 18). This corresponds to the anthropological understanding of identities as social constructions and intimately interwoven with social incentives and political projects (Harrison 1999; Jenkins 2002; MacClancy 1993). Accordingly, Ernest Gellner describes how premodern collective identities of populations were rather fluid and that the state was largely indifferent to recording them (Gellner 1983). With the development of the modern state, however, the procedure of dividing enormously complex and heterogeneous populations into simplified racial, ethnic, linguistic, and religious categories rose to prominence. In this process, the cultural identities were sharply reified (Kertzer & Ariel 2002: 2). Pierre Bourdieu examines in a general manner, how the act of naming constitutes an act of creation: "By structuring the perception which social agents have of the world, the act of naming helps to establish the structure of the world, and does so all the more significantly the more widely it is recognised" (Bourdieu 1991: 105). These dynamics of construction are however not limited to social identities alone. In a similar fashion, the modern state imposed all its categories on the social society by dividing it into categories: "The builders of the modern nation-state do not merely describe, observe, and map; they strive to shape a people and landscape that will fill these techniques of observation" (Scott 1998: 81).

This leads us to the development of scientific forestry, and to why understanding the schematic social order of the modern state might prove to be a fertile soil in which to grow an appreciation of the organisation of the natural world. The developments in agriculture, plantations, and, more recently, commercial forestry all involve a radical reorganisation and simplification of flora and fauna to suit man's aspirations, just as it was the case with the social society in the rise of the modern state.

Modern forestry

Scientific forestry was developed in Prussia and Saxony in the last half of the eighteenth century as a response to a shortage of wood detected by fiscal officials, and was later adopted by a vast number of countries, also Australia (Scott 1998: 14, 19). Scott explains how its revenue needs motivated the modern state to develop an increasingly more sophisticated apparatus to survey and manipulate its forests, and how this endeavour gradually changed people's understanding of the forests as well as the forests themselves. There has always been a utilitarian aspect in humans' relationship to their natural environment, but the gaze of the modern state reduced this relationship to fewer aspects, which then became the primary focus at the expense of other possible environmental values, such as recreation, spirituality, and refuge (Scott 1998: 13).

Scott maintains that even though all centralised states recognised the value of developing comprehensive and uniform cadastral maps, the relative effectiveness with which the mapping could be accomplished depended on the relationship between the state and its civil society. The weaker the civil society was in relation to the state, the fewer obstacles there were to mapping and moulding its natural territory (Scott 1998: 49). Scott finds that such radically simplified designs are pregnant with disaster because the natural as well as the social world are too complex to submit themselves to human mastery. Thus, essential features that are rendered outside of the utilitarian, technical gaze will come back to haunt its proprietors (Scott 1998: 20-1). For a full-fledged disaster to occur, he depicts four criteria that all have to be present and coincide. These are: 1) an administrative ordering of nature and society, 2) a high modernist ideology, 3) an authoritarian state willing to use coercive power to realise its plans, and, 4) a prostrate civil society that lacks the capacity to resist the state's plans (Scott 1998: 4-5). In scarcely populated settler-colonies such as Australia, the

indigenous population's interests was ignored, and a system utilising a pre-surveyed grid representing land allotments was developed and used to allocate land (Scott 1998: 51). In Australia, the colonial government's promotion of agriculture and individual farming resulted in a large-scale land clearing by removal of forests. It was not until the end of the 1920s that Australia's major institutions for forest research and education of professional foresters were established (Ajani 2007: 20). In regard to Tasmania today, I find Scott's first two criteria to be fulfilled, while the third and fourth features are embedded in an inherently strained relationship. The island's politics is tightly interwoven with issues concerning the natural environment (Hay 1991-2: 64), and the axiom that the potential of Tasmania's natural resources should be realised to develop a comprehensive energy-intensive industry has been described as unchallenged ideology prior to the rise of the environmental movement (Wescombe 1990: 170). This ideology is however strongly challenged by the environmental movement today.

In regard to its forests, the modern state typically ignored such social uses as hunting, gathering, fishing and trapping when it reduced its attention to the potential revenue yield through timber extraction. Missing from its fiscal lens were also those species of trees and plants which had little revenue potential, as well as parts of trees unfit for commercial purposes, such as fruits, nuts, twigs and branches, bark and roots, and sap (Scott 1998: 12). Accordingly, the actual tree with its numerous possible uses, in this narrowing of vision, was substituted by an abstract tree signifying a quantity of lumber or firewood. Furthermore, the vast majority of flora and fauna and, in fact, the forest as a habitat disappeared and were replaced by an abstract forest reduced to merely an economic resource. This was reflected in the utilitarian discourse which focused on those attributes that could be appropriated for human use exchanging the phrase "nature" with "natural resources". In this paradigm, flora and fauna with economic value became cherished and promoted, while species of minor commercial value were stigmatised and classified derogatory. In this way, valued plants became "crops" and "timber", the species that competed with them became "weeds" and "underbrush", and animals that fed on them or harmed them in their growth became "pests" or "predators" (Scott 1998: 13).

Up to this point, forestry had been using very approximate calculations of assumed yield and growth cycles, but now, a more careful exploitation was required. To facilitate a more precise synoptic view of the forest, the foresters developed elaborate tables involving an abstract standardised tree for each type and age-class which was used to calculate the inventory, growth, and yield of a given forest. The result was an abstract forest which could be conceptualised and controlled centrally. Then, the physical forest was changed according to the abstract model. The underbrush was cleared and plantings were carried out in neat rows: the result was the materialisation of the standardised tree in an even-aged monoculture (Scott 1998: 15). In order to facilitate a higher degree of concordance between the physical forest and the state's narrow vision of it, the foresters made systematic interventions on nature adjusting it to the models. In other words: practical goals generated utilitarian and systematic ideas in peoples' minds and these ideas, in turn, motivated people to perform the forest differently.

In Tasmania today, the governmental business enterprise Forestry Tasmania is effectuating a transition from bio diverse old-growth forest to monoculture plantations (up until 2007) and even-aged re-growth forests. The consequences of this process can be observed in most parts of the state's public forests, and are visible from many of the public roads (see picture 10, page 111). On numerous occasions, activists pointed out orderly looking patches of forest to me while driving, underlining how "unnatural" they look and how "unnatural" they also are.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, we have seen how nature is performed through a nexus of cultural, political, technical, economical, social and discursive elements. Modernity's cultural model of man's mastery of nature, coupled with the development of the modern state and capitalism, made up a line of force that constructed and re-constructed whole landscapes in simplified, abstract models focusing on economic resources under the profit imperative. We have also seen how these models came to affect interventions in the physical landscape, and that these processes of semiotic and material constructions are still going on. The proactive nature of representation was thus rendered visible, allowing us to understand that ideas are forces of creation. These findings are however not a basis for saying that people think the

world into being and for arguing a case for a conflation of epistemology and ontology. Rather, what we have found illustrates that social representations of nature are strongly affected by people's interests, and that representations beget interventions.

Following Castree and Braun, we might assert that "nature is something imagined and real, external yet made, outside history but fiercely contested at every turn" (Braun and Castree 1998: 3). By analysing empirical examples, I have demonstrated how this contestation in Tasmania is situated in the interface between the environmental movement and the Tasmanian state forestry, and how it is mediated through the old-growth forests. Klaus Eder affirms that "ecological politics is the central mechanism by which modern society learns to overcome the limits of the cultural model of early modernity and to develop more adequate cultural grounds for a democratic polity beyond the confines of the modern nation state", and that "the spirit of environmentalism...reintroduce(s) civil society into the modern state" (Eder 1996: 6). Considering the position of the Tasmanian environmental movement as a central actor on the island's political arena, it may be regarded as *the* principal force to challenge the pro-development narrative which was near hegemonic in the settler-colony's early history.

A closer inspection of this tension between the state and its civil society has found that discursive interaction takes place on different levels and takes on a range of forms. Eloquent and rhetoric argumentation on both sides notwithstanding, the writing on the gate in the forest also revealed a primal and vulgar side to this interaction. Other features of this interaction include deep mistrust, the attribution of alternative motives to the opponent and simplistic representations of the latter. A common denominator of these features is their tendency to produce and reproduce dichotomies. The forest industry and its unions are subject to accusations of being narrow-minded, greedy and of having incestuous relations with politicians. The environmental movement, on the other hand, is described as a group of naive romantics ignorant of forest workers' jobs, overly confrontational and constantly up in arms, since the movement was founded on conflict and also because its existence depends on a situation of continuous conflict. Protagonists accuse each other of having immoral motives, even when they agree on a particular action taken, like when activists claim that Forestry Tasmania stopped converting native forest to plantations because of community

pressure and not due to environmental reasons. This example is perhaps a symptom of how deep the schism runs and may indicate a great divide on a fundamental level, the level of cultural models as referred to by Eder. At the same time, the conflict is also embedded in a web of fiscal structures and economic relations on state, intra- and international levels.

We have learnt that numbers and statistics are used to swing the pendulum in the direction of the respective viewpoints, only to be contested by opposing figures from the antagonists in order to swing the pendulum back again. In this manner, we have witnessed what can be understood as a struggle for the power to define and represent reality. An interesting finding was how both sides recruit science as an ally in this competition of realities. In the light of our examination of the development of scientific forestry, it is hardly surprising that Forestry Tasmania views the forest through a fiscal lens using economic and scientific terms for its argumentation. More surprising appears the discovery that TWS argues along the same technical lines and arrives at different conclusions analyzing more or less the same information. A case in point is the exciting discovery that the argument of carbon dioxide-induced global warming is quoted by both parts of the debate and interpreted to their advantage.

Other aspects of the representational battle have also come to light in this chapter. We have seen that the act of naming is a powerful instrument, exemplified by the changing fate of the names on Forestry Tasmania's big tree list and TWS' naming of the Tolkien Track and Gandalv's Staff. Noteworthy are also the conflict's symbolic aspects on the level of narratives, war and bodily metaphors. The conservationists arguably employ these techniques in an attempt to generate a sense of identification with the natural world; while both sides seek to facilitate simplified understandings that support their respective views on the complex phenomena that cultural models certainly are. Such processes will be elaborated in the next chapter through a closer examination of the symbolic aspects of the contestation for Tasmania's forests.

5: Symbolic work and working symbols

In this chapter I will consider the symbolic dimensions of the interaction between the Tasmanian state and its civil society in regard to the island's forests, as expressed primarily through the symbolic work of Forestry Tasmania and TWS. As we saw in the previous chapter, the power to define reality and the ability to influence the flow of resources are palpably interconnected elements in Tasmanian environmental politics. People's use of symbols is clearly a central aspect in the struggle to represent reality and to influence other people's behaviour, in Tasmania and elsewhere (see also: Kalland 2002). Much can therefore be gained from a study of how people use this transformative potential of symbols. I will use an interpretative approach and draw largely on Turner and Geertz. Since symbols are polyvalent and context sensitive (Turner 1964: 34), my analytical vision includes an awareness of how, by whom, and in which contexts symbols are used. Such an endeavour may also benefit other studies of how social productions of nature are performed.

Symbols, metaphors and metonyms

According to Johnson and Lakoff, metonymies accentuate one particular aspect of several possible aspects of a phenomenon, and therefore have a referring function in addition to the explanatory function that metaphors have (Johnson and Lakoff 1980: 36-7). This metonymic aspect was exemplified by a Tasmanian campaigner who articulated that "a few good heads" were needed to be assembled for a project workgroup. In addition to referring to the heads of the persons to represent the whole of the persons, this statement also specified that it is the persons' intellectual capacities which are of principal interest and not their ability to, say, endure a strenuous bushwalk.

Metaphors and metonymies share the potential of concealing some aspects of a phenomenon while highlighting others (Johnson and Lakoff 1980: 10). When TWS declares "no surrender on climate change" on its webpage it employs the conceptual metaphor "argument is war", and by doing so, it accentuates that the disagreement concerning the

fate of Tasmania's old-growth forests is characterised by hostility. The metaphor emphasizes the battling aspects of arguing, such as attacking the opponent's perspective and defending one's own. In this perspective there is no mutual gain; gain on one side is directly proportional with loss on the other. At the same time, the metaphor under-communicates the cooperative aspects of arguing such as the time and effort invested by both sides in an effort to reach a mutual understanding. As a contrasting example, Johnson and Lakoff uphold that in a culture in which an argument is perceived in terms of dancing, the participants are seen as performing together instead of competing against each other, and the whole discourse will be structured in a different way (Johnson and Lakoff 1980: 4-5). Similarly, we can imagine that the interaction between TWS and Forestry Tasmania, as well as their representations of each other, would assume a radically different form, if their disagreements were mediated within a more cooperative paradigm.

Tapping into the familiar

When a non-verbal symbol is unfamiliar to both the sender and the receiver it must be explained by other means before it can be used conventionally (Leach 1976: 11). TWS' choice to name the above mentioned area in the Styx Valley "Tolkien Track" and to baptise some of the trees with names from the book "The Lord of the Rings" therefore rests on the assumption that the fairy-tale universe portrayed in the book is known to an adequate number of people. If the characters in the book had not been familiar to the public, then the symbols would have to be explained to people before they could be understood. The fact that three movies were based on the book script, with the first movie being released in 2001, greatly enhanced the Tasmanian and indeed the international community's familiarity with the Tolkienesque world. The "Global Rescue Station", a tree sit action orchestrated by TWS and Greenpeace, consisted of a platform erected 65 metres up in the momentous Eucalypt tree "Gandalv Staff" situated within the "Tolkien Track". Besides the obvious statement that the area was under threat and needed protection, the campaign also communicated an asserted similarity between Tolkien's world and that of the Tasmanian forest controversy. Clearly, when this project was publicly launched in the end of 2003, it attracted worldwide attention to a symbolic statement that was widely recognisable and full of intelligible connotations. An additional point is that the "Lord of the Rings" movies were recorded in nearby New Zealand which has similar climate to Tasmania, something which

only adds to the resemblance between the fantasy and the real world. Lester reminds us that such tactical naming of parts of the natural world is a component of a larger strategic framework utilised by the Tasmanian conservationists:

"In the decades following the Franklin blockade, naming and renaming to capitalise on pre-existing cultural resonances or to mould developing symbols and meanings have remained important for the Tasmanian environmental movement" (Lester 2007: 90).

As noticed in chapter three, TWS constantly works in an effort to build liaisons with and to stay informed about the Tasmanian public, and to build a network of national and international contacts. One of the benefits of this work is that it enables the organisation to strategically connect its campaigns to currents within the popular culture. The renaming of a part of the Styx Valley using names from Tolkien's universe just at a time of heightened popularity and awareness of the story is a vivid illustration of this technique. By channelling its message through a cluster of symbols that is widely appreciated and saturated with meaning, the environmental movement effectively charges its message with the emotional and explanatory power of the symbols and enhances the extent to which it resonates in the hearts and minds of the receivers.

A parallel universe

The book and the movies paint a picture of the battle between good and evil forces in an enchanted world that humans share with elves, wizards, trolls, hobbits and other fantasy creatures. In this alternative cosmos, the reader (or viewer) is introduced to a moral perspective, arguably that of the author, in which all living things are treated with respect and to some extent belong to the same moral field. This is not to say that people who are portrayed as being good in the story abstain from eating meat or using trees to build houses and make tools, it only means that they do so with reverence and avoid superfluous exploitation of their natural environment. The evil forces in this fable are embodied by powerful characters intending to gain control of all resources and creatures in the world. Enormous powers are magically inserted into a very special ring and everyone who comes into contact with this ring is immediately overwhelmed by an uncontrollable rush of greed and becomes corrupted by a hunger for power to the extent that nothing else matters, not even friends or family. In the perspective of the evil protagonists who want to gain

possession of the ring, creatures of all kinds and all objects of the natural world are valuable only in terms of the degree to which they can be used in the production of instruments of power to serve the evil force. Accordingly, anyone who does not wish to join the dark side is viewed as an obstacle that must be eradicated or forced to become a slave. In their view, trees and other plants are stripped of all but commercial values and are reduced to building materials and fuel which are fed into the production of weapons.

Metaphorical connotations

It is possible to interpret the environmental movement's use of Tolkien's narrative as a means to suggest certain analogies to the Tasmanian forest issue. In this analogy, the industry is represented as a greedy, ruthless and selfish ogre without concern for anything else than profit maximisation. Furthermore, as became clear in the previous chapter, the forest industry stands in a metonymic relationship to the cultural model of early modernity with its master narrative of human domination. Thus, the Tasmanian forest industry stands metonymically to the cultural model of modernity like the heads stand for the persons in the example above, one part standing for the whole. In this paradigm, a particular trait of modernity is highlighted, namely the system of industrial capitalism with its profit imperative and its accompanying narrow vision focused on commercial value.

The good forces in Tolkien's world are personified by a range of different characters who do not allow themselves to be corrupted by greed and selfishness. Neither are they intimidated by threats and violence nor do they surrender to the evil forces. On the contrary, the protagonists of the good side engage in the fight against evil and commit themselves to protect the good values in life, such as friendship, honesty, courage, personal sacrifice for the greater good, connectedness to the natural environment, and respect for others, including non-humans. This fantastic battle against the evil forces is not fought without hazard to the individual well-being. In fact, the risk of suffering substantial injury or even losing one's life is an omnipresent danger.

The epic battle of good and bad

Tolkien's book is about heroes and heroic deeds, and that is precisely how environmentalists in Tasmania portray the situation and their own role in the controversy surrounding the island's forests. The forests, and with them the world, are presented as being threatened by modernity's forces of greed and must be saved by environment-heroes who make great sacrifices and endure high risks in the battle against the merciless industrial forces. The Gunns 20 court case is often upheld as an example of the peril that conservationists are subject to. As noted in chapter three, conservationists point out that this litigation was initiated in conjunction with the company's publication of its plan to build a new pulp mill. This pulp mill is metaphorically described as being "forest hungry" by the conservation movement, which conforms to the way the forest industry is portrayed in general. The Gunns 20 litigation is interpreted by employing the war metaphor and is depicted as a strategic attack performed by Gunns in an attempt to tie up its opponents' resources while securing an important win in another area, i.e. achieving governmental approval for the project. I the mill will be approved and built, environmentalists maintain, vast areas of native forest would be "fed" into its production and the forest industry would "sink its teeth into" more areas of old-growth forest as a consequence of an intensified production. This is reminiscent of how the dark forces in Tolkien's universe mobilize their war machinery and "digest" vast amounts of trees in the production of weapons and soldiers.

The wizard Gandalv is an enigmatic and important Tolkien character who fights on the good side, and the naming of "Gandalv's staff" might be interpreted as implying that both conservationists and trees are part of the workforce of the good side in the battle. The tree which was the base for the Global Rescue Station-campaign becomes a condensed symbol. The activists involved in the campaign can be understood as employees of the good force, and as such they metonymically stand for all those who commit themselves to the task of protecting the world's forests. The tree itself becomes a metonymic expression for all trees and the "work" they are doing by storing carbon, producing oxygen and contributing to biodiversity. In addition, Milton postulates, old-growth forests constitute a corrective force to the high speed and shallowness of modernity by embodying a high degree of naturalness, in the sense of relative freedom from human influence (Milton 2002: 113).

Metaphors go both ways

At this point it might be timely with a reminder that even though this kind of symbolic work is most elaborate amongst environmentalists, the forest industry also makes metaphoric statements about trees. On a pamphlet propagated by Forestry Tasmania to promote its practice of replanting harvested areas there is a picture of a seedling on the front page. Underneath is written in bold letters: "This little guy eats carbon for breakfast". The inside of the brochure informs us that young trees store more carbon per year by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere compared to mature trees because of the difference in growth speed. Thus, young trees are associated with energetic, fast-growing and hungry adolescents and portrayed as devouring carbon dioxide at great speed and thereby cleansing the air effectively. Mature and especially old trees, on the other hand, are related to elderly people who have a slow metabolism and therefore consume proportionally less.

It should be noted that conservationists do not dispute the difference in carbon storage speed between trees of different ages, but they maintain that old-growth trees have accumulated considerable amounts of carbon during their lifetime which are released into the atmosphere if the trees are felled. A campaigner commenting on the pamphlet called it a "typical expression of the forest industry's twisting of facts in order to mislead the public about the destruction it inflicts on the native forests of Tasmania". In other words, the pamphlet over-communicates some aspects of carbon storage processes while it under-communicates others (Goffman 1971): the storage capacity per year of young trees is accentuated, while the stored amounts of carbon in old trees are concealed.

This is an example of how metaphorical concepts provide only a partial understanding of phenomena and that they hide other aspects in this process (Johnson and Lakoff 1980: 12). These concepts can merely be understood metaphorically: trees are not really people, and carbon storage is not the same as eating. Additionally, this case illuminates that metaphors are not randomly chosen. On the contrary, they are grounded in our shared experience (Johnson and Lakoff 1980: 37, 39), and they are often employed to highlight particular traits of phenomena and to have an impact in terms of presenting a certain version of reality. This brings us back to the conservationists' employment of Tolkien's universe as a means to represent the Tasmanian forest issue in a certain way. Through this symbolic work, a picture

emerges in which environmentally concerned people and trees are part of the same team as helpers for the good side in the world, opposing the evil side.

A contextually informed interpretation

Aware that symbols are ambiguous and polyvalent, and in accordance with the post-structural assertion that all observations and representations of cultural phenomena necessarily must be partial, positioned and incomplete (Moore 1999: 5), I make no claim that my understanding of this phenomenon is exhaustive. It might also be argued that I read too much meaning into the naming of the Tolkien Track and that many people will make other and perhaps less elaborate interpretations, something which would be a legitimate claim. However, my reply would be that the meaning of a symbol is not given once and for all, and that people are prone to attribute meaning and intentionality to symbols. Brad Shore calls this tendency a psychogenic motivation: "...it is clear that even in the absence of much empirical correlation between sign and referent, humans tend to perceive even abstract signs – like words, personal names, or inkblots – as if they were motivated and bore an internal correspondence to their referents" (Shore 1996: 200).

Symbols are dynamic and carry meaning from every context they have been used in, and they are understood differently by different people. Even an individual's perception of a symbol is dynamic and changes according to contexts and the person's horizon of meaningful associations. Furthermore, symbols are suggestive, and my focus here is to give a plausible analysis of what this symbolic act of naming a forest area has the potential to suggest. I am using this example as a vehicle to mediate understandings that I have induced from various observations made during my fieldwork. As will become evident in the next section, my understanding has developed by seeing this example in relation to other empirical examples, and it reflects my attempts to discern an underlying cultural model expressed in the environmental movement's symbolic work. In this way, the example becomes a condensed symbol, partly as a result of my own creation.

Hastrup maintains that anthropology is a creative process by which something new is created and anthropologists transform the observed phenomena closer to their own culture by means of scientific discourse (Hastrup 1995: 22-3). Wagner makes a similar point when he

asserts that anthropologists use their own culture to study others, as well as to study culture in general, and that the classical rationalist's pretence of absolute objectivity must be given up in favour of a relative objectivity based on the characteristics of one's own culture (Wagner 1975: 2). He maintains: "The study or representation of another culture is no more a mere 'description' of the subject matter than a painting 'describes' the thing it depicts" (Wagner 1975: 11). Hastrup continues: "Before we can distinguish a literal from a metaphoric statement, we must share the relevant knowledge about the world with the speaker" (Hastrup 1995: 36). The interpretation given here is accordingly informed by how it resonates with the contextual background in which the phenomenon itself appears. After introducing Sherry Ortner's concept of "key symbols", I will see the naming of the Tolkien Track in relation to two other examples from Tasmanian environmentalism to strengthen my analysis.

Light versus darkness as a key symbol

According to Ortner important characteristics of "key symbols" are: 1) they are extensively elaborated upon by insiders, 2) they generate emotional arousal, and 3) they appear in different contexts (Ortner 1973: 1339). She asserts that her term is equivalent to Turner's term "dominant symbols" and David Schneider's term "core symbols", and she holds that almost anything can be "key". In Tasmania, I find the narrative of the battle "good versus bad" and alternatively "light versus darkness" to be a key symbol. Firstly, it is greatly elaborated upon when environmentalists discuss the methods and motivations of the forest industry. Secondly, an arousal of desires and feelings is apparent, especially when the subject of old-growth logging is considered. These two aspects of the narrative can be seen as residing at the ideological pole and the sensory pole of the symbol respectively (Turner 1964: 30). Finally, this normative dichotomy surfaces in a range of different contexts and in a variety of guises. As a supplement to the examples we have already seen, two more related observations might render this master narrative more luminous.

The Weld Angel

The first example is that of a direct action in the Weld Valley, south-west of Hobart, which is one of the areas that the environmental movement has focused on. In March 2007, a female

activist dressed up as a white angel and positioned herself, wings and all, on top of a five metre tall tripod blocking the entrance to Forestry Tasmania's "Tahune Forest Airwalk" tourism venture. Her protest drew attention to the logging of old-growth forests in the Weld Valley. (Figure 7). In the end, the police had to remove the woman and she was subject to legal charges. Actors within the environmental movement, as well as the media, focused intense attention on the issue with the effect that the "Weld Angel" became a widely recognised symbol within the Tasmanian community. The image of the tripod angel was reproduced on t-shirts, buttons, photographs and even made into necklaces. The implicated message was that conservationists are somewhat similar to angels. In western cultural tradition, angels are predominantly represented as creatures of high morality performing good deeds to the benefit of the world. They are also popularly depicted as residing somewhere between human beings and God, and belonging to the good side of the world which is opposed to the evil side. Using such imagery, the conservationists connect their role to existing cultural symbols across the western world and, if successful, they charge their own message with the positive connotations therein.

Figure 7: The Weld Angel

The forces of darkness

A football match that was arranged by a group of conservationists on Hobart's parliament lawn during my fieldwork may serve as the second case in point. In this environmental theatre play, the team that represented the good side was made up by activists and was opposed by the "forces of darkness"-team with players dressed to look like powerful industrial actors and politicians who are considered allies of the industry.

As these examples show, dichotomies like good versus evil, light versus darkness, and high versus low moral are abundant, as are different versions of the war metaphor to describe the controversy surrounding Tasmania's forests. I find it reasonable to interpret the characters in Tolkien's universe as a chain of signs connected by metonymic relations which by paradigmatic association come to represent the actors in the Tasmanian forest debate. Considering the dichotomised Christian grand narrative that preaches embracement of good and avoidance of evil, one might expect that the Tolkien-symbol will find deep resonance based on archetypical recognition throughout the western world. As such, the symbol has international appeal and the potential to mobilise people in many countries. The Tasmanian environmental movement can thus be seen as what Anna Tsing calls a "project of scale making" (Tsing 2002: 472-3), scaling up a regional conflict to a global level by means of connecting it to Tolkien's universe, which in turn is connected to a Christian cultural heritage.

Totemic resemblance

The Tolkien Track example is somewhat similar to how some anthropologists have interpreted totemic practices. The difference is that while the latter makes use of the observable characteristics of constituents from the natural world such as animals, plants and weather phenomena to say something about the social world, the Tasmanian environmental movement makes use of characters from the cultural world to do the same. In this regard, two features of totemic practice are of particular interest in this perspective, and for the sake of argument I will in the following focus on the use of animals in totemic practices.

The first feature is to explain relations between social groups by referring to relations between different animal species and to claim a metaphoric similarity between the sets of relations. This corresponds to the version of the Tolkien Track that asserts analogical qualities between the fictional and the real world. The insight into such symbolic work is a legacy from Levi-Strauss (Levi-Strauss 1991: 94).

The second feature has to do with the assertion of direct similarity between a group of animals and a social group, in other words that somehow they are intrinsically related beyond the level of pure symbolism, in a literal and metonymic sense. Shore claims that Levi-Strauss' intellectual version of totemic thought has been at the expense of its sacred dimension, and shows that the Kwakiutl chiefdom in North America shifted seasonally between metaphorical comparison and metonymic conjunction as the dominant symbolic modality of its relations with animals (Shore 1996: 191). Tasmanian environmentalists know the difference between reality and the Tolkienesque fantasy very well, and would hardly claim to be essentially connected to those characters. Nevertheless, it is possible to see the protagonists of the two worlds as factually connected in the sense that they both participate in the fight between good and bad. Environmental campaigners perform symbolic and physical acts in the material world and thereby cause things to happen, but also a symbolic world can have consequences in the real world. Symbolic expressions have the potential to act as operators in social processes, and have effect by producing social changes (Ortner 1984: 130-1). Turner maintains that ritual symbols are essentially involved in social processes because they become associated with human interests, purposes, ends, and means (Turner 1964: 21). Although Turner focuses primarily on symbols used in rituals, it is clear that the power to influence sociality is a property that resides in symbols on a more general basis. The Tolkien Track symbol can therefore be seen as doing actual work by influencing people's ideas, emotions and actions.

Anonymous or personal

A further source of insight into these mechanisms can be found in Christopher Tilley's distinction between space and place. He notes how the areas which are to be ruled by the forces of the market first have to be stripped off their qualitative aspects, e.g. the sentiments that humans have attached to them, anonymous and homogenous space which

can be exploited and controlled without emotional restrains. The areas are cleansed from their local and personal history, identity and meaning, and become reintroduced as neutral and superficial spaces (Tilley 1994: 21). These processes can be seen in relation to Scott's analysis as described in chapter four. Clearly, the modern state's practice of producing cadastral maps and other centralising processes comprise such transitions from place to space, and the Tasmanian forests are no exception. Forestry Tasmania is obliged by law to produce and publish maps of all the areas of commercial forest that are supposed to be logged within the next three yeas. These grid maps are produced by using the Geocentric Datum of Australia mapping system (GDA 94), and they divide the Tasmanian landmass into regional districts. The forested areas are then systematically subdivided into logging coupes and given names like BD062A and RP034A. This stands in stark contrast to how TWS and other environmental groups refer to the same areas. As we have seen, they do what they can to singularise trees and localities as much as possible and charge them with personality, human characteristics and connect them to meaningful universes with positive connotations.

Like in the example about the difference between conceiving arguments either as warfare or as dancing, these examples provide convincing accounts of how language, concepts and actions are tightly interwoven. This entails that people's actions in regard to certain aspects of the world can be affected by successfully influencing the way they perceive those aspects. Even though TWS and Forestry Tasmania use many of the same concepts to describe the Tasmanian forests, they apply them in different contexts and fill them with different meanings. Terms such as "carbon storage", "global warming", "sustainable management", "biodiversity", "protection" and "threat" can carry a variety of connotations depending on how they are used. Above, we have seen how carbon storage and global warming have been used as arguments for both conservation and continued harvesting of the forests. Below, I will explore the ways in which forests are portrayed as being more or less resilient to human intervention.

Myths of nature

Referring to Michael Thompson, Mary Douglas asserts that debates about nature's characteristics ultimately rest on assumptions, because there is no way of demonstrating unequivocally the essence of nature (Douglas 1996: 90). These "myths of nature" are:

> . . . the simplest models of ecosystem stability that when matched to the different ways in which managing institutions behave, render those institution rational. However, unlike the explicit models that scientists usually deal with, these models are seen by those who hold them as being built from largely unquestioned assumptions (Thompson et al. 1990: 26).

Each of these myths is a representation of the world that justifies certain policies and ways of relating to nature. According to Douglas, there are four fundamental myths of nature: *Nature is robust, Nature is fragile, Nature is robust but only within limits*, and *Nature is unpredictable* (Douglas 1996: 87). The Nature is robust-myth asserts a global equilibrium and tells us that the world is wonderfully forgiving. Whatever interventions humans choose to perform, are absorbed without resulting in damage or problems of any kind and the managing institution adhering to this myth can therefore assume a laissez-faire attitude. A nature that is robust but only within limits is forgiving of most events but is vulnerable to some kinds of practises. This myth justifies instituting controls and planned projects that are able to regulate against harmful actions. The myth of a fragile nature tells us that the world is an extremely unforgiving place and that any disturbance may trigger the whole delicate system to collapse. Managing institutions must therefore treat the ecosystem with great care and consideration and set up effective sanctions to prevent irresponsible and damaging behaviour. A world in which nature is unpredictable is completely random and there is no telling how events will turn out. While the first three myths allow for some degree of experimenting and learning, although to a very limited extent within the worldview of a fragile nature, the institutions in this latter perspective do not really manage or learn, but just cope with erratic events and consider every outcome as a matter of good or bad luck (Thompson et al. 1990: 26-7, Douglas 1996: 87).

Dynamic constructions

When this model is applied to the Tasmanian case, I find that the conservation movement predominantly shapes its arguments in accordance with the myth of a fragile nature. Nature and forests are portrayed as being “devastated”, “destroyed”, “under threat”, “penetrated”, “assaulted”, and in need of “protection” and “people’s help”. These terms rhetorically underscore competition and conflict. This tendency can also be found in invasion biology, and is similar to what Lien has observed in her study about the native-invasive discourse and the connection between human and non-human migration in Tasmania (Lien 2009: 4).

The forest industry, on the other hand, seems to move more freely between paradigms, depending on the context of discourse, even though an underlying view of nature as robust within limits can be identified when nature is seen on a sufficiently comprehensive temporal and spatial scale. The continued existence of the industry institutions is therefore justified. However, the myth of a completely unpredictable nature never revealed itself during the course of my fieldwork. Rather, assumptions about nature’s degree of predictability are necessarily embedded in the various statements more directly concerned with nature’s robustness. Consequently, although I find the myth-terminology illuminating, I propose in the context of these findings that it might be appropriate to consider the myths of nature, not as static categories to which institutional actors commit themselves on a permanent basis, but rather as constituting two dimensions of the social construction of nature. These dimensions can be expressed graphically as two axes: the first axis makes up a continuum from an extremely fragile and vulnerable nature on one end, to nature as entirely solid and robust on the other. The second axis represents nature’s relative predictability, so that the two axes together comprise a two-dimensional graphic system in which statements about “nature’s nature” can be expressed (figure 8).

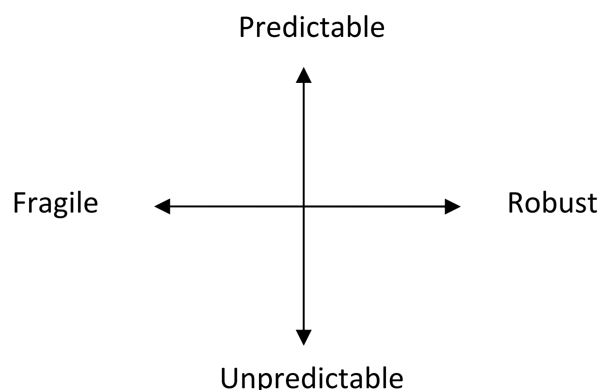

Figure 8: Two dimension of the myths of nature

At times, Forestry Tasmania also portrays forests as fragile and threatened, as it becomes evident on one of its web pages where the challenges of “pests” in re-growth forests and plantations are discussed. As we saw in chapter four, species that somehow work against the prosperity of the species classified as resources, are labelled with derogatory terms and are represented as legitimate targets of extermination. The forests, notably on a rather restricted time and space-scale, are in this context described as being threatened by vermin and in need of people’s management in order to stay out of harm’s way and avoid damage.

Wildfires constitute another “peril” against which Forestry Tasmania is protecting the forests, as we gather from the company’s website and brochures. Starting and managing regular small fires that remove bushes and shrubbery on the forest floor in a controlled manner, Forestry Tasmania aims to minimise the risk of large, high-intensity wildfires. In some contexts, these wildfires are described as threats to the forests themselves, but in other contexts it is the danger to human settlements that is highlighted. The potential social threat that forests pose became apparent in Tasmania’s bushfires of 1967 when more than a hundred people lost their lives, and again in early 2009 when Victoria and New South Wales on mainland Australia experienced a similar social tragedy. Interestingly, wildfires such as these have been used by the forest industry as an argument for stronger regulations and institutional controls of the forests. In the case of wildfires then, the forests are portrayed both as being threatened (and thus fragile) and as being a threat. In the latter case, nature is perceived as an active agent, in terms of trees that are prone to burn and even need to burn in order to regenerate. Cloke and Jones express a similar view when they assert that “nature cannot be seen as a passive, blank sheet on which cultural formations are simply inscribed. Nature clearly ‘pushes back’ and injects its own materiality and dynamism into . . . socio-ecological processes” (Cloke and Owain 2002: 30).

Yet, utterances that place nature high up on the robust scale and also high up in terms of predictability are by far most common in material produced by the forest industry. Criticising the environmental movement’s technique of showing before-and-after pictures of logging areas, a conservation biologist working for Forestry Tasmania expresses it this way in an interview:

> We shouldn't be focusing just on the small scale and on the immediate. It's difficult because as humans that's what motivates us and that's the space we work in; we work in the here and now, but forests don't work that way. Trees take decades or hundreds of years to mature, and trees are only one species – there are thousands of other species out there. And they have all evolved in a system that does change over space and time. That means that they have evolved to be able to recover from disturbance, sometimes even to benefit from disturbance, and to move around the landscape, as long as the landscape is permeable. So I think a lot of the environment type conservation argument is very simplistic.

Fragile or robust: a tug of war

This view is crystallised in another form when Forestry Tasmania re-uses a photo-motif that has been heavily propagated by the conservation movement in its anti-logging campaign. The depicted scene is vertically divided by a gravel road in the middle of the image, which shows a lush and green forest on one side, and a logged and burnt area with smoke still rising from the black forest floor on the other side. The photo was taken in 1986 (Gee 2001: front). In 1989, Forestry Tasmania took a nearly identical photograph of the area, even from the same angle (figure 9), and added another picture taken in 2006 (figure 10). Here, the road is overgrown to such an extent that it is no longer visible and the right side of the picture is abundant with trees and green plants. The first picture, when used in isolation by the conservation movement, freezes time at one particular moment right after the regeneration burn, arguably when the area is looking its worst. In this manner, the environmentalists hint at the way the area looked prior to logging, which can be seen on the other side of the road, and compares that to the recently desolated landscape with nothing but a few pieces of charcoal left. The viewer is invited to mourn the loss of a fertile and beautiful part of a fragile nature, and to focus on the individual specimens that inhabited that forest area and to feel sympathy for them.

Figure 9: Coupe Picton 39a in 1989

Figure 10: Coupe Picton 39a in 2006

When Forestry Tasmania presents the picture showing the re-grown area, it offers a diachronic perspective and widens the viewer's attention to encompass a more comprehensive temporal dimension. Accordingly, the "destruction" from the first picture is transformed into a temporary phase and assessed a minor intervention in a robust forest which successfully recovers in the course of a few years. This new perspective urges the public to perceive forests and forestry in a dynamic way, and to abandon the focus on individual specimens in favour of a biodiversity-perspective in which the emphasis lies on species survival and sustainable management. While the conservation movement appeals to people's emotions trying to give people stronger incentives to support the environmental cause, Forestry Tasmania attempts to undermine the basis for such empathetic reactions. This endeavour is made by directing the attention away from the aesthetically provoking appearance of the post-logging site and towards the flourishing prosperity of the re-grown site. The former existence of the individuals that used to inhabit the area and their removal are under-communicated in this perspective where nature is portrayed as tough and resilient. The Forestry Tasmania scientist comments on the developments within forestry in Tasmania:

"I think nature is pretty robust and it will recover from our mistakes, as we recover from our mistakes, as long as we learn from them. That is one of the measures of sustainable forest management – working to a framework of adaptive management. It is not necessarily about the destination, it is also a journey."

When nature is depicted in such a way, continuous improvement of regulating controls is rendered rational, like Thompson asserts. There is no need to be overly anxious about the wellbeing and sustainability of nature as a whole because it will withstand most of humanity's mistakes. In the context of a fragile nature, on the contrary, a practice of trial and error must be characterised as irresponsible and highly hazardous. In such a perspective, caution is imperative in the interaction with the non-human world, because every intervention entails an increased risk of irrevocable damage and represents one step closer to total system failure in terms of an environment that ceases to be capable of sustaining the human population of the Earth. This dark scenario, as TWS propagates on its website, could become reality if climate change is not countered effectively.

Concluding remarks

It has not been my intention, in this chapter, to give an exhaustive account of the symbolic dimensions of the interaction surrounding Tasmanian environmental matters. Rather, I have been concerned with the relations between communication, thinking, and acting, and enquired into the possibility of a shared logic underlying such phenomena that can illuminate the mechanisms of symbolic work. I found that symbols, metaphors, and metonymies are fundamental parts of the conceptual system of humans. What's more, economic and communicative transactions, thoughts and actions were all found to influence each other. A focus on the similarities between verbal and non-verbal expressions was found to be pregnant with large explanatory power, as long as one bears in mind that both language and society are ongoing processes. Wagner asserts: "The conventions of language are always to some extent relative, for as an element in the ongoing invention of the world, language itself is always in the process of being invented" (Wagner 1975: 109). And: "Languages literally 'talk themselves' into other languages, and societies live themselves into new social forms" (Wagner 1975: 105).

The social constructions of nature and their relation to society in Tasmania can accordingly be viewed as particular expressions of more general processes involved in the inherent dynamics of all societies.

By means of an examination of a series of empirical examples I have demonstrated how symbolic activity can be understood as a struggle for the power to define reality in ways that work to the advantage of the respective actors. In light of the findings from both this and the previous chapter, which demonstrate that representations beget intervention, symbolic activity may be regarded as an aspect of the political struggle to influence the flow of resources, the mode of production and society's relation to non-humans. I found that dichotomies are produced and reproduced through these interactions and that a variety of techniques are employed.

Forestry Tasmania highlights the fragile and the robust character of nature, depending on context, and propagates a vision of anonymous and neutral forest areas. TWS, on the other hand, paints a picture of a highly personal and fragile nature by naming forest areas and

individual trees. Additionally, activists tap into familiar and emotional aspects of the cultural context. In an effort to win support for its cause, the environmental movement was found to construct highly suggestive allegories and images in order to saturate its own norms and values with favourable emotions. In the next chapter, I will explore the emotional aspects of people's green sympathies and activists' assertion of a sense of identity with the natural world.

6: The nature of emotions and emotional relations to nature

Identification with nature

As we have seen, the Tasmanian conservation movement shapes many of its arguments in accordance with the international scientific discourse on environmental matters and frequently employs terms such as “biodiversity”, “carbon dioxide”, “sustainable management”, and “climate change”. These aspects, however, make up only parts of the motivational grounds that conservationists emphasize when they explain the raison d'être for their commitment to the environmental cause. Other fundamental incentives for involvement in the forest issue are upheld by activists themselves to be a sense of identification with the natural world and emotional reactions to “the incredible destruction” inflicted by industrial forestry. As we have seen in previous chapters, environmentalists invest considerable effort in producing and reproducing similar sentiments in people. We have witnessed that the evocation of identification and emotional attachment is sought through means of naming individual trees and areas, producing photographs, constructing allegories, using metaphors, and last but not least, bringing people in direct contact with the forest. The emotional dimensions are apparently significant and are worth a closer examination, especially because they keep surfacing in a range of different contexts.

How can we approach the aspects of the environmentalist’s self-ascribed incentives discussed above to achieve a greater understanding of how emotions can influence people’s motivations? Fruitful contributions to such an endeavour have explored emotional commitment and a growing politics of belonging amongst members of Australian coastcare groups (Chapman and Davison 2006), the highly moral character of non-human terrain, the performativity of concepts and the importance of landscape in the constitution of identity in Tasmania (Davison and Lien: In prep., Lien 2009). An effort to contribute to this body of knowledge will perhaps be facilitated with the aid of the emotion-provoking source itself. It is time that we take to the woods once again, this time to the Upper Florentine Valley and the blockade camp described as the conservationist’s “stronghold” and “battlefield”.

Camp Florentine – on the outside

I park my car by the side of the road after driving an hour and a half on roads amidst a landscape of rugged mountains and dense forests. In the corner of the parking lot, which can take approximately fifteen cars, there is a small tent. A hand-painted sign in the shape of an arrow pointing into the forest informs me that this is the entrance to Timb's Track.

I park next to a wreck of a Holden, an Australian car. One of the rear side windows is broken and black plastic is taped over the gap. The car is white. Or rather, it has a white foundation with colourful flowers and words painted all over. "Save Tassie's forests", "forest not woodchips" and "pulp mill fiction" are all familiar slogans to me after a few months on the island. The standard writing on the Tasmanian number plates has also been altered. "Tasmania – your natural state" has been transformed to "Tasmania – the clear fell state", and obviously refers to the current forest practices of clearing areas as opposed to an earlier practice of selective logging. But here are also writings that can probably be traced back to authors of a different mindset. "Fucking ferrals[2]", "save a job shoot a greenie" and "take a bath" has been repeatedly scribbled on each side of the car. The car is a mobile symbol of the battle going on for and in the Tasmanian forests. Being both representations of the battle and actual parts of it, the writings on the car, as well as the writings on the forest gate I described in chapter four, are metonymic expressions of the tension in the Tasmanian community. Never totally absent, this tension erupts periodically in a way that is hard to predict and to control. Sometimes physical violence occurs, e.g. when activists lock themselves onto the machinery of forest workers. Members of the conservation movement have told me stories concerning both forest contractors and police officers who have been violent towards activists. The broken window of the car is another example of such a violent eruption. As I later learned in the camp, the window was smashed in conjunction with some of the hostile writing on the car.

In the tent there is information material laid out about the area and the camp. The tent also contains a donation box and maps. Looking through some of the material I learn that the

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[2] The name has connotations to the nomenclature of plant and animal species. The term ferral is sometimes attributed to a plant or an animal that is regarded as not really belonging to the local flora or fauna, especially if it is perceived as a threat to the other species in the area. Many European species were introduced to Australia in a project to "Britainise" the colony, an endeavour Adrian Franklin traces back to the stretch of time between 1788 until the last quarter of the nineteenth century (Franklin 1996: 48). See also (Lien 2005).

camp was established in October 2006 to hold off roading operations that were instigated by the logging industry in the aftermath of the 2004 federal election. In what has been called "Howard's broken promise" by conservationists, the prime minister John Howard's pre-election promise to protect 18.700 hectares of old-growth Eucalypt forest in the Styx and Florentine Valleys, translated to only 4730 hectares of actual protection after the election. February 21, 2007 the camp was raided by forestry workers and 40 police officers in an operation which resulted in sixteen arrests over the following three days. However, new blockade structures were built and Camp Florentine continued to exist. In May 2007, activists negotiated a six months moratorium on logging and roading in the valley until the federal election that same year. The moratorium is now over and logging operations might commence at any time. Courageous and hard working individuals need my help, a pamphlet informs me, "please visit our webpage to learn how to contribute".

Two hundred metres down the road I can see the entrance to the camp on the right side. As I approach it, I read posters put up along the side of the road. One says "Welcome to the Florentine pristine ecosystem. Please respect this wilderness", another informs about an open day that was arranged some weeks back, and yet another encourages passing car drivers to "toot for old growth". There are a few tourists passing on their way to see the Gordon Dam, the only modern artefact that lies beyond this point and the reason why the road was built in the first place. That dam was part of the hydro scheme that flooded the legendary Lake Pedder in the early seventies, an incident that the environmental movement upholds as a symbol of the destructive powers of industrialization. As I reach a gravel road adjacent to the asphalt and turning 90 degrees into the forest on the right, I encounter a large banner saying "Old forests store more carbon" and a poster informing me that "Forest rescue is in progress". Another banner displays a warning that any further step along this path will be considered as trespassing by the government. I realize that I have entered the contested forestry road and that the public is not allowed here. I "trespass on".

On the inside

In the camp I come upon a group of 25 people sitting on logs positioned around a campfire. It is afternoon, but a meeting is still going on. A few days earlier, I was invited to come and stay for a while by one of the activists that I met while working at the reception of TWS'

campaign centre. The activist told me that today would be a good day to meet interesting people in the camp since it would become a big gathering. Normally, the number of residents here would be lower this close to winter, but the occasion has brought more people out to the camp for a short while. I was told to come after the meeting which was suppose to be over by twelve, but that apparently was an overly optimistic estimation. I asked to be a part of the meeting, but was politely yet resolutely turned down. I was disappointed but not surprised. This is the way it is here. Graded access to information and secrecy is abundant. And maybe that is not so strange, considering that these people are planning future actions and discussing campaign infrastructures. Should information of this character end up in the hands of authority, much would be lost. After all, the police did raid the camp last year.

I am nevertheless invited to join the group for a cup of coffee while they are wrapping up their discussion. “Hey everybody, this is Howard”, Anne explains to the group. “He is a Norwegian anthropologist and he is going to write about the Tassie forests issue. Sit down mate, we will be done shortly and then someone can show you around the place. A few of us are going for a walk on Timb’s track later; it will take us through a logged coupe. You might be interested in tagging along on that”. “Yeah sure, thanks Anne”. Anne is one of the driving forces of the direct action activists and enjoys authority in this milieu. An unofficial approval from her side grants me access to the group.

I find a vacant spot and sit down while coffee in a tin cup is sent my way. As I drink and listen to the last part of the meeting concerning how many people are willing to stay at the camp through winter, I let my eyes wander over the surroundings. The circle of people sits next to a large structure with a shape that resembles a homemade party tent. A skeleton of sturdy wooden logs, held together by ropes, is covered with a thick plastic awning. This is the heart of the camp where most of the food is stored and where the activists socialise after dark. Some also sleep here, but most people spend the nights in tents or other shelter arrangements scattered in the surrounding forest. Directly in front of me is the kitchen which is solely made from wooden material. It looks like a little bar with walls on three sides and a counter. Pots and kettles are hanging on the walls and plates and kitchen utensils are loosely arranged here and there. About 50 metres to my left along the gravel road, I can see

a stage and on the road itself red carpets are laid out, remnants from a festival that took place two months ago, I am later told. I can also see a safety net stretched out between some trees. Behind the stage the road abruptly stops, ending up in nothing but forest with giant Eucalypt trees and rainforest species. The forest is all around. There is nothing else here, except forest and a short gravel road. I look up. In eight of the trees there are small platforms erected high up in the canopies. Some of them are occupied by people, but they are so far up that I can barely make them out. One of the trees must be more than 60 meters tall. Emanating from the platform there is a web of ropes stretching to other trees and down to the ground. The other tree-sits have similar webs. One platform hangs in midair between trees, supported only by ropes from all sides (see picture 5, page 109). Due to the intricate system of ropes, it is almost impossible for outsiders to understand how the ropes are holding up the platforms and how to disassemble the structures safely without risking that the persons who are sitting up in the canopies fall down. This is thoroughly communicated through banners and posters, so that if police officers or any other potential camp raiders were to engage in a random cutting of the ropes, they would knowingly risk the life of the activist (see picture 3, page 108). Behind me there are some smaller tents and I can see a car wreck parked behind two trees. On the hood is painted "will you not stop until there is no old growth left?", perceptibly a rhetorical question directed at the forest industry.

Timb's Track – a Janus' face of the forest

After the meeting I go with five others on a walk along Timb's Track which takes us through the forest in a loop that takes about two hours to walk. It turns out that two of the participants are here for the first time. Freddie, a man in his late twenties, leads the group up to a very big Eucalypt tree which looks as if it had been twisted as one would twist a cloth to wring out the water. On the naked stem we see the characteristic stripes in brown, yellow, and red shades which usually run up the trunk vertically, but here they are more coiled than straight emphasising the peculiar direction of growth of this tree (for a smaller version; see picture 2, page 108). In front of the tree there is a hand-crafted sign reading: "Twisted Sister". Freddie tells us that, because of its uneven texture and shape, this Eucalypt would not be used for timber by the forest industry but would be sent straight to a woodchip mill. The tree is fascinating to behold and a reminder of the irregularities of the

natural world. As we continue, Freddie explains that Eucalypts compete with each other for growing space: when the roots of one tree come into the vicinity of the roots of another, the roots emit some kind of poison to kill the opponent. “The weakest of the trees loses and dies, and the winner gets all the space it needs”, he concludes. “Pretty rough guys under the surface, those Eucalypts”, he adds with a smile. We walk through a forest which is bursting with green, it is everywhere: on the ground, on rocks, on fallen logs, on the stem of standing trees, and on leaves. Flowers and mushrooms are abundant, and as we cross a creek, conversations evolve around how full of life everything is and how serene it feels to be here. The atmosphere in the group is friendly and light-hearted. Everyone marvels at the beauty of the forest.

Half way through the track, the conversation all of a sudden stops as the forest opens up and we enter a void: we have come upon the logged coupe. My first associations are pictures I have seen in books and on TV from areas after an atomic explosion. Nothing is left standing and here are no colours, only grey. An area that must be the size of three or four football fields is levelled with the ground and nothing is left except large volumes of abandoned wooden debris scattered around on the ground, ready to be burnt (for a similar coupe in the same area: see picture 6, page 109). One of the first-timers of our group says that he feels sick and that it is unbelievable that people are capable of causing such devastation. I realise that the path we have followed is chosen by the activists to evoke an emotional response in the people who are taken out here moving from the fertile forest into the barren coupe. In this way, the activists give visitors an orchestrated experience of the forest and construct a certain version of the logging practices, the same dichotomised and time-frozen perspective that we saw propagated through the vertically divided picture described in the previous chapter. The focus is on destruction; a fragile and threatened nature is communicated. Although I am aware of the theatrical components of this tour, the experience of encountering the logged coupe is saddening and shocking. On the way back to the camp, the topic of conversation has turned to unfavourable accounts about the forest industry and its practices, as well as to elaborations on how bad it feels to see logged areas like the one we have just been to.

An illuminating conversation in the campfire light

It gets dark shortly after five, and we gather around the campfire again. Here are people from Tasmania, mainland Australia, New Zealand, Germany, France, Iran, USA, UK, and even another man from Norway. Vegetable soup enriched with fresh wallaby road-kill is on the menu. Obviously, not every greenie is a vegetarian, even though that is a common stereotype. I ask Nash why he eats meat tonight when he told me earlier that he would never buy it. “For me, it is not about the meat itself”, he replies, “It is about how the animals are treated in the industrial production system. As long as I know that this wallaby lived a free life I have no problem eating it, but I will not support the meat industry because it is too focused on making profit. It is much like the forest industry in that way”.

On that note, the conversation turns from the ethics of meat consumption to the destruction of the wilderness by the forest industry. Someone says that it is “daylight lunacy” to be cutting down old-growth forests in the present situation of global climate change when they are the most carbon dense forests on the face of the earth. Someone else responds that even though there are scientific reasons for conserving the forests and that they are valuable in their own right, the most important reason for putting lives on the line in the fight to defend them like activists do, lies in something more fundamental: “It is something spiritual. You connect to the trees and you just know it in your heart that it is wrong to destroy these amazing places”. A girl who brings more soup in a sooty iron kettle elaborates: “Yeah, once you’ve experienced these awe-inspiring surroundings first hand, you will never be the same. I came out here to stay for two weeks but that’s three months ago”. I ask why the environmental movement uses so many scientific and so few emotional arguments in the public arena, when the latter seems to be such a fundamental reason for why people connect so strongly to places like this. “Well, if I would go to Canberra and tell them to protect the Florentine valley on spiritual grounds they would laugh in my face”, replies Anne. “You have to talk to politicians in a language they can relate to in their line of work, and that happens to be words that fall into the scientific discourse. That’s why we have to talk about carbon storage, water catchments, biodiversity, threatened species, and habitat loss and so on”.

Nash brings up another point: “Besides, there are limits to what words can describe, language is just not capable of capturing the immense beauty of these old forests. When you use words to express that beauty they just fall flat, and you end up with a bunch of clichés that do more harm than good”. “The best way to make people understand is to bring them out here”, Anne continues. “And then I usually just shut up for a lot of the time and let the forest speak for itself. When you’re out there you don’t need those arguments. You can see it in peoples’ eyes when you show them an old growth coupe which is scheduled to be logged next year, and then travel to a part of the forest which is very similar and that already has been logged. Generally, if people are not warped and twisted, you can see their eyes change and open”. “What happens”, Rogers explains,

> . . . is that you realize that something has been killed, something that is of the same kind as yourself. It’s not just some trees. They are living things with stories just like us. Imagine what a 400-year-old Eucalypt has seen, or a 2000-year-old Huon pine! And think about all the animals that lose their habitat! When you stand in the middle of an old-growth forest, you really feel connected to it, you recognize that it’s something very important here; for you, for me, and for everybody. And for everything; forests are the basis for so much of the life on this planet.

The ecological impulse – identification with the natural world

Tasmanian author and scientist Pete Hay maintains that there is a ‘pre-rational impulse’ that for most people establishes identification with the green movement:

> I submit that it is a deep-felt consternation at the scale of the destruction wrought, in the second half of the twentieth century, and in the name of a transcendent human progression, upon the increasingly battled life forms with which we share the planet. It is an instinctual and deep-felt horror at what Holmes Rolston has called ‘the maelstrom of killing and insensitivity to forms of life’ that characterizes our times (Hay 2002: 3).

The claim he makes is that the origins of an environmental commitment are, in the first instance, neither theoretical nor intellectual – and this he asserts for both the activist and

the more passive levels of identification with the natural world. The origin takes place prior to or below the calculating level of consciousness, before the frontal lap of the brain has had a chance to reflect on the matter. This is not the whole truth, something which Hay is the first to admit, but he nevertheless upholds that it is true for most people. He continues that although a green commitment may be subsequently justified via recourse to an intellectually generated system of ideas and some people come to the green movement with ideological baggage via a front-of-brain process, his generalization holds up in most cases.

Cloke and Jones cite Angelika Krebs who lists a number of possible ways of arranging what belongs to people's moral universe. The arrangements range from a pure egoism to the inclusion of all of nature, and Krebs argues for a more relational form than the current ethics (Cloke and Jones 2002: 103). She describes the current norm as a "universalism of the present" which includes living human beings only, and asks whether we should move to take account of the needs of future generations. I argue, however, that, given the principal of sustainable development in environmental politics, it might be argued that future generations are already included in the current paradigm. If animals and plants are to be included in the moral universe, as the activists in the camp seem to think, Krebs argues that a move from an anthropocentric ethical terrain to a more physiocentric position is required. She continues that such an extension of the human moral perspective is likely to be shaped by anthropocentric values and will involve some kind of intermediate terrain in which human attitudes and feelings toward nature can be justified and made sense of. Cloke and Jones put trees in the midst of such intermediate ideas, as do activists in Tasmania when they assert a lack of concern for trees' wellbeing and bemoan the exclusion of forests from moral communities, at the same time as they accentuate similarities between trees and humans in the conversation around the campfire. In this way, the activists argue for a perspective in which humans and non-humans belong to a common social and moral field, although people do not identify themselves with every entity within this field to the same degree.

Identification with animals

Milton claims that the ways in which nature and natural things are valued, depend on their emotional impacts, on the way they make people feel. In the case of animals, it is assumed that we humans identify more easily with species that are closely related to us and that seem familiar, then we do with more distant ones. Further, it is assumed that people identify

more easily with animals with faces, particularly with those that seem to express emotions. From this, Milton concludes that because people experience and express emotions, we assume that animals, which appear to express feelings, can also experience them, so we are more prone to identify ourselves with such animals (Milton 2002: 118). In the Tasmanian forests there are numerous animals that have faces and give the impression of being capable of experiencing emotions, and as such fulfil Milton's criteria for being good candidates for human identification. A few examples of marsupials will illustrate this: the Tasmanian Devil looks somewhat like a small black and white dog that, despite the ominous-sounding name, appears rather benevolent when visually encountered. The furry wombat, which can be described as a mix between a bear cub and a piglet, is a popular attraction in wildlife parks where a charmed audience can witness how it loves to be scratched on its belly by the park employees. And then there is the omnipresent mixture between a cat and a squirrel which is likely to be encountered in urban areas as well as in the forests – the possum. The wallaby, a small kangaroo with an expressive face and a human-like posture when standing upright, serves as the last and prototypical example on this far from exhaustive list of likable creatures inhabiting the Tasmanian forests. The congenial character of the wallaby can be illustrated by the following example:

One of the regular volunteers at TWS, who has taken it upon himself to take care of orphaned wallabies, at one occasion brought one of them with him to the Wednesday lunch at TWS. He carried it in a "pouch" made of cloth that he kept under his jacket on his belly, imitating the pouch of a real wallaby mother, and he fed it with milk from a tiny bottle. When people saw the little wallaby, including myself I have to admit, the human tendency to identify with animals and to attribute feelings to them became evident in people's reactions. In scenes very reminiscent of how people react when they see a human baby, members of the staff and volunteers expressed amusement and sympathy for the animal. "Oooh, how sweet it is!", "It looks just like a little baby", "Poor little one, you look so sad. Do you miss your mommy?", and "Look at your charming little paws, they are just like little hands, aren't they? Yes they are!" were some of the affective statements made to and about the animal.

Identification with trees

When discussing trees in light of the continuous and interconnected unfolding of natural and social processes, Cloke and Jones point to a similarity between humans and trees when they assert that the latter can be understood as having agency:

> . . . We believe that trees should be understood not only as active, but also as active in ways that are purposive (as a fulfilment of their embedded tendencies to grow in certain ways and to reproduce), transformative and even creative. These qualities are constituent parts of agency, and once we release ourselves from trying to squeeze all notions of agency through the very human grid of language and thought, the capacity for agency can be redistributed throughout a heterogeneous set of actors, including non-human actors (Cloke and Jones 2002: 7).

This way of understanding trees is precisely what the activist in the camp demonstrated on Timb's Track, when he described the Eucalypt trees as leading a subterranean war against each other. The words "killing", "losing" and "winning" that he used to illustrate the process, are all terms that are attributed to active agents of some kind, sometimes animals but more often humans. A similar viewpoint was also expressed in other occasions when environmentalists explained that forests must be seen as dynamic. At a forest festival I attended, the person in charge of a workshop on forests told the participants that different types of forests compete with each other, but that, for humans, this happens over stretches of time that are so extensive that the movements are hard to perceive. The agency of trees was pointed out to us by the leader, who described the different forest types as "pushing forward", "getting the upper hand" and "falling back". It is interesting to note that it is the battling aspects and not the symbiosis that are emphasized in these metaphorisations of nature. Again, terms used to describe human behaviour are employed to express the activity of forests and trees.

Maurice Bloch asserts that "the symbolic power of trees comes from the fact that they are good substitutes for humans" (Bloch 1998: 40). He refers to discoveries within psychology which point in the direction that we humans have an innate domain in the brain that predisposes us to distinguish phenomena that we attribute intentionality to from those that

we do not. This is called the "theory of mind domain", and is evident in such activities as "childhood animism"– a term coined by Piaget. As we grow older, this mechanism becomes more nuanced and finally develops into a "living-kind domain" and the adult idea of life (Bloch 1998: 49-50). Bloch's perception of people's notion of life as tentative and graded is of particular interest to an anthropological investigation into the relationship between environmentalists and their subject matter. In Bloch's ontological framework, trees and other plants are allocated a peripheral position in relation to humans, but they can nevertheless be cognitively perceived as parts of the same living domain, near or distant, imaginary or not.

Through the description of this kind of conceptual analogies, in an inter-species sense, Bloch portrays humans' disposition to construct various degrees of connections between themselves and all living entities. As we have seen, activists in the camp perform such connections by moving and taking people through different areas of the bush, by living in the forest, and through narratives. Milton states that those who advocate the moral rights of non-humans do so by identifying what human beings, as archetypal persons, hold in common with these other objects of concern (Milton 2002: 28). People and trees have certain compelling characteristics in common, such as the need for water, nutrients and sunshine. We are born, we grow, reproduce and die. Some of the activists around the campfire explain how they feel a connection to the trees, others describe them as living beings and many react emotionally to their demise. The activists themselves portray their sentiments as being of fundamental importance to their devotion to protect the old growth forests of Tasmania, and such reactions are exactly what environmentalists hope will be evoked in people who are exposed to the forests either directly or through their representations.

Emotions and discourse

Milton maintains that a common western assumption about emotions is that they motivate behaviour and that people, at least to some degree, are expected to act on their emotions (Milton 2002: 111). Based on this assumption, it follows that if one can influence what people feel, one can also influence what they do. We can now understand more thoroughly why conservationists indulge in producing so many pictures and the reason why they put so

much effort into bringing people in physical contact with the forests: they want to shape people's emotional attachments and make them feel about nature the way activists do, in order to influence people's actions and win them over to the environmental cause. The goal is to create what Wikan describes as resonance between people which can be sourced back to shared experience (Wikan 1992: 465). Wikan asserts that the experience of being human in the world and the psychic unity of mankind render people imaginable to each other. This, I argue, is what campaigners rely on when they bring people directly or indirectly in contact with the forests. Given the sense of identification with the natural world that activists describe, I also argue that it is possible to expand Wikan's notion of resonance from a strictly pan-human sense to encompass inter-species relations, in the sense that humans recognise some common compelling concerns between themselves and non-humans.

Milton emphasises that in much of the western public discourse emotion is opposed to reason, with emotions being stigmatised and rationality, with science as its foremost representative, being favoured (Milton 2002: 150). The explanation of one of the activists around the campfire that they have to approach politicians in a scientific mode of language articulates this schism, and Milton claims that this is why conservation arguments tend to crystallise around four qualities of nature – biodiversity, beauty, wildness, and personhood. In other words, there is a discrepancy between emotions and expressions, and these four qualities are what emerge when feelings about nature are moulded through the constraints and possibilities of western culture and given a voice in public discourse:

> . . . it is important to acknowledge, as well as recognising the emotional basis of all action, that there may be a gap between people's emotional experience and the forms in which that experience is expressed, between what they feel and what they are constrained to say and do in particular contexts (Milton 2002: 112).

So here we have a window of opportunity to understand the discrepancy between the relatively scarce representation of emotional and spiritual arguments in public discourse, and the campaigners' emphasis on such dimensions in more backstage settings. Even though emotions have been partially disqualified as legitimate reasons for action in western public discourse, environmentalists have found ways around this obstacle and channel parts of

their message through production of symbols and pictures, as well as through the medium of direct phenomenological experiences of the forest. In the words of a campaigner who commented on TWS' campaign methods in an interview: "It is a matter of horses for causes".

One such "horse", which is used to pull the experienced beauty of forests and the emotional aspects of the conservationist perspective within the reach of a wide audience, is embodied by celebrities and artists who promote the cause. In one of the magazines issued by TWS we find examples of this practice. An Australian rock star who performed in Melbourne to the backdrop of a "Save Tassie's Forests"-sign is quoted in the magazine:

> I feel that it is criminal to see such beauty not to be respected in this country. (…) I just feel we are not forward thinking as a country if we do not protect such an amazing natural wonder; especially to lose hundreds of years-old trees to something as disposable as paper (Wilderness News, summer 2004: 8).

Parts of an artist's opening speech at an exhibition that opened in November 2003 in support of the Global Rescue Station and the Styx Forest campaign is also cited in the TWS magazine. Here, the reader indirectly experiences the artist's reactions to a visit to the Styx Forest. Clearly, the artist took part in the same kind of "before-and-after-logging" tour that we have seen earlier in this chapter and during the trip to the Styx forest in chapter four. She describes her experience with these words:

> Travelling to the Styx Valley and being among the myrtle, the giant trees, the ferns, the fragility of nature and its exquisite beauty, I thought I was in a dream, an unexplored reality, where past, present and future existed. Then abruptly we were awakened into this apocalyptic landscape, this wasteland of desolation and ignorance (Wilderness News, summer 2004: 20).

By propagating the sentiments of these artists in its magazines, TWS effectively taps into the corpus of people who like their music and their art. Not only do the evocative elements of the conservation message get distributed through the artists, some of their influence is

transferred to TWS' campaigns for the Tasmanian forest. The technique of borrowing authority from artists is not unique to the environmental movement in Tasmania or even to NGOs. The former British Prime Minister Tony Blair did the same with the popular music band Oasis, and the musician Bruce Springsteen has performed in support for both John Kerry and Barack Obama in the USA. TWS has also been supported by singers Olivia Newton-John, John Butler and Jimmy Barnes who visited the Styx Valley during the Global Rescue Campaign. A spokesperson for TWS articulates the desired outcome of the tactic in this way:

> The Wilderness Society says one thing. The loggers say the other. Where does the truth really lie? If you've got someone they [people] respect in another field that expresses an opinion, then that can help sway the person one way or the other (Lester 2007: 134).

What TWS is doing here, is to draw upon some of the emotional resources residing in the status of celebrities, and to steer them in direction of its forest campaigns; similar to the way celebrities are employed by the advertising industry to promote cars, shoes, cosmetics and other products.

Concluding remarks

The focus of this chapter has been on the evocative aspects that humans experience in their relation to the natural environment. It was found that activists describe their commitment to the conservationist cause as motivated to a significant degree by emotional and spiritual experiences with the forest, and a sense of identification with non-human agents that are perceived as having agency. In this perspective, animals and trees are depicted as being similar to humans in several ways. Animals that seem capable of emotional experiences are subject to a particularly strong identification, and trees are described as being active and even purposeful agents. It was demonstrated that trees and forests are portrayed as having agency, something which is illustrated by the use of metaphors from the field of human behaviour. This is akin to the way we have seen them being described as doing "work" in terms of storing carbon and contributing to biodiversity in previous chapters.

It was also discussed that emotional elements have been placed in opposition to rational thinking, which stigmatised them in western public discourse, and how environmentalists have developed techniques to communicate these aspects despite this challenge. An on-the-ground exploration of the practice to bring people in contact with certain areas of the forest in an orchestrated way, disclosed that activists perform nature in tactical ways. Displaying the difference between old-growth forest and the immediate result of logging, they construct a picture of a vulnerable nature in danger of being destroyed. The concern of this chapter has not been to conclude whose construction of nature is more right: the activists' or the forestry's. Rather, the aim has been to examine the role of emotional aspects and the way they are communicated by the environmental movement. It has been found that the logged coupes metonymically symbolise the imminent danger of destruction that the forests are faced with, and that activists, in their work with the public, accentuate what Turner calls the connotative pole of symbols.

Retrospective reflections

In this thesis I set forth to find the reason why Tasmanian forestry practices are so fiercely contested, as well as to explore the ways nature is represented in the process. It was found that the conflict is entangled in constantly shifting relations pervading many levels of political, social and personal life, and that numerous meaningful connections that stretch beyond the confines of spatiality and temporality are made between humans, objects and events. The conservationists' opposition to the Tasmanian forest practises was discovered to be significantly motivated by the notion that the latter epitomises the dark and destructive sides of modernity and industrialism, on the level of cultural models. The conflict was also found to be a fight for the power to define reality in order to influence the flow of resources and the mode of production in Tasmania.

Reflecting on this in hindsight, the metaphorical tale of Frankenstein comes to my mind. In Mary Shelley's book, which I argue can very well be read as a warning of industrialism's inherent dangers, Frankenstein is murdered by the monster he created after having broken the laws of nature and acting as God by creating life (Shelley: 2008). Similarly, Tasmanian forestry, and particularly the woodchip industry, is depicted as capable of indirectly slaying its creators, the human race, by contributing to deforestation and the destruction of the global climate. No wonder then, that Tolkien's narrative is such an apt vehicle to convey this message: above and beyond the book's vivid moral landscape forged on western Christianity, The Lord of the Ring can clearly be read as containing a critique of the rising industrialism and the concomitant deforestation.

We have seen how connections are made through processes of re-scaling and how people construct moral communities and configure different realities and truth-claims. The success of these imagined realities depends on the degree to which they generate emotions and resonate with moralities and cultural ethos, as well as on how effectively they capture the imagination. Furthermore, the social and physical consequences of name-giving and the use

of symbols have been exemplified in this thesis, as have strategies to saturate one's perspective with emotions.

Epistemologically speaking, the different uses and interpretations of scientifically and otherwise produced knowledge and concepts, embedded in the Tasmanian environmental conflict, demonstrate the necessity of empirical on-the-ground investigations to determine how information is appropriated and employed. The fact that the "nature of nature" is still a highly contested quality is expressed through the promotion of dramatically different myths of nature. Despite the large body of scientific knowledge produced on the matter, the contradicting representations exemplify that ignorance is a necessary dimension of all human knowledge (Lien and Melhuus 2007: xviii). We have also seen that symbols and words have a performative dimension and that they "carry out work" by influencing human thought and action in ways that are not entirely predictable. These discoveries thus point to the insufficiency of a priori assumptions and strengthen the position of the anthropological method. A less experience-near analysis of the Tasmanian forest conflict would risk concluding that, given the unfavourable position of emotions in western public discourse, the emotional dimension would be scarcely represented in the environmental movement's argumentation.

I argue, on the contrary, that the intimate form of the anthropological fieldwork has contributed to demonstrate that emotional and, indeed, existential elements are crucial in the environmental movement's way of campaigning. My material illustrates how these aspects are moved to the centre stage and mediated by means of symbolism and by exposing people, directly and indirectly, to old-growth forests. This is done in order to generate physiological responses, which are connected to the ideological paradigm of conservationism by metaphorical association.

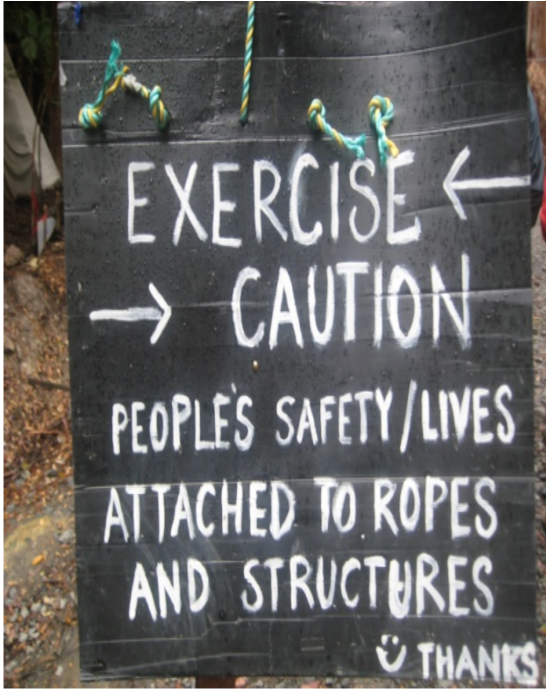
Finally, it is important to underline that even though the making of nature is not *only* about nature, it is certainly *also* about nature, and the Tasmanian forest conflict is also about trees. Trees as economic resources are juxtaposed with trees as symbolic archetypes and sources for ontological perception and the moral imagination. James Fernandez addresses the powerful position of trees in human imagination and maintains that: ". . . men and women,

in the presence of trees, find their imaginations shaken into new understandings of their selves and the universe and of the relation between the two" (Fernandez 1998: 83). To realise the truth in his claim, we only need to remind ourselves that Turner shook the *mudyi* tree and gained fruitful insights into the properties of symbols, that Adam and Eve were thrown out of paradise for eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and that we have seen representations in this thesis of trees as having agency and belonging to the same moral field as humans. Trees, it seems, go to the very roots of our imagination.

Appendix 1: Pictures

Picture 1: A Tassie Giant

Picture 2: Eucalypt stripes



Picture 3: Camp Florentine

Picture 4: Brown water in a shallow part of the Styx River

Picture 5: Tree sits in camp Florentine

Picture 6: Logged coupe in the Florentine Valley

Picture 7: TWS illustration of the carbon cycle

Picture 8: Forestry gate in the Styx Forest

Picture 9: Inside of a cave tree

Picture 10: Plantation trees in the foreground. A clear-felled hill in the back.

Appendix 2: Abbreviations

HEC Hydro Electric Commission

TRFA Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement

TWHA Tasmanian World Heritage Area

TWS The Wilderness Society

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9. (Page 84). Source:Forestry Tasmania – sustainable forest management brochure 2007

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