THE PARADOX OF CLIMATE DOOMERISM

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# Using Nietzsche, Deleuze, and Guattari to Analyze and Provide an Alternative to Climate Inaction

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Defense Date: April 3, 2024

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**Abstract**

Despite increasingly dire warnings from environmental scientists, carbon emissions are still on the rise, and environmental activism has not seen a corresponding increase in popularity. The rising influence of "doomer" communities online, which amplify pessimistic environmental news and inspire climate anxiety, are emblematic of such climate inaction and environmental nihilism. Participation in these online communities can result in an intriguing paradox in which an individual may learn more information about climate change and environmental issues, but respond to this information with complacency. This thesis argues that the exercise of the Nietzschean concepts of ressentiment and bad conscience within eco-conscious communities, interpreted and reconceptualized by Gilles Deleuze in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, are root factors which contribute to complacency in climate action. Through a Deleuze-Nietzsche lens, and using concepts from Deleuze and Felix Guattari's project *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, I further analyze the ethical framework of ecomodernism, radical hope, and solarpunk, and use these lenses to explore the ways in which solarpunk's radical potential can be maximized to refute climate inaction.

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**1.0 Introduction**

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released their

Sixth Assessment Report in March 2023. The message was clear: carbon emissions stemming

from human activity have already resulted in a global surface temperature increase of 1.1°C

since 1900[1]. It is likely to increase to 1.5°C in the 21st Century in the most optimistic scenario

(net zero emissions by 2050), but the most pessimistic scenarios predict 2.8-5.7°C of warming by

2100.[2] Well over 3 billion people are considered to be "highly vulnerable" to climate change and

are 15 times more likely to die from its effects.[3] If carbon emissions continue on their current

path, Africa will lose 30% of its land used for maize cultivation and 50% of its land used for

bean cultivation.[4] Without drastic climate action, the image of the future is clear: widespread

food scarcity, catastrophic natural disasters, and mass displacement. This is not even to mention

the political upheaval and violence that would likely ensue.

It's no surprise that many people, particularly teenagers and young adults, have expressed

growing feelings of anxiety and dread. One international survey from 2021 found that 75% of

16-25 year olds find the future to be frightening, and 67% are not optimistic about climate

change. A further 67% said that climate change made them feel afraid[5]. Online "doomer"

communities have reflected these feelings. One example of these include Reddit's "/r/collapse"

subreddit, which has over 500,000 followers as of March 2024. While documenting

environmental destruction is not the only aim of the subreddit, a majority of the most popular

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[1] Calvin, Katherine, et al. *IPCC, 2023: Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, H. Lee and J. Romero (Eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland.*, 25 July 2023, doi.org/10.59327/ipcc/ar6-9789291691647.
[2] Calvin, Katherine, et al.
[3] Calvin, Katherine, et al.
[4] Calvin, Katherine, et al.
[5] Hickman, Caroline, et al. "Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: A global survey." *The Lancet Planetary Health*, vol. 5, no. 12, Dec. 2021, doi.org/10.1016/s2542-5196(21)00278-3.

posts are related to predicted societal collapse as a result of environmental devastation. Even more sobering, a disclaimer in the subreddit's description warns that "overindulging in this sub may be detrimental to your mental health. Anxiety and depression are common reactions when studying collapse… If you are considering suicide, please call a hotline, visit r/SuicideWatch, r/SWResources, r/depression, or seek professional help." [6] This subreddit amplifies pessimistic voices, leading to reactions of severe depression and anxiety. And these beliefs aren't just pervasive within online echo chambers: around 56% of 16-25 year olds internationally believe that "humanity is doomed." [7] While the most recent IPCC report has predicted widespread loss of life and ecosystem collapse as a result of climate change, it has never explicitly predicted the collapse of industrial society or human extinction. Rather, it's likely that many of these beliefs have their origin in perceptions about negative news regarding climate change, rather than scientific consensus.

And yet, this sense of overwhelming climate anxiety is not matched with an equivalent climate response. A 2021 Pew Research Study found that only 32% of 18-25 year Americans have taken action to address climate change in the past year through volunteering, donating money, contacting an elected official, or attending a climate protest.[8] Due in part to a disorganized and relatively complacent climate political action, it seems as if climate change takes a back seat to economic and foreign policy interests in the United States government. Why then, are young adults so complacent about an issue that affects them so deeply?

British philosopher Mark Fisher describes this phenomenon in his book *Capitalist Realism*. Fisher describes a common sentiment among British students in the 1990's, of political

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[6] "Disclaimer." */r/collapse*, Reddit, 2 May 2008, www.reddit.com/r/collapse/.
[7] Hickman, Caroline, et al.
[8] Tyson, Alec. "Gen Z, Millennials Stand out for Climate Change Activism, Social Media Engagement with Issue." *Pew Research Center Science & Society*, Pew Research Center, 26 May 2021.

disengagement stemming from the knowledge that climate change is bad, but similarly that they

cannot do anything about it. "That 'knowledge', that reflexivity, is not a passive observation of an

already existing state of affairs," and results in that conviction becoming a self-fulfilling

prophecy (Fisher 21). He calls this disengagement "reflexive impotence." Fisher considers this

self awareness and disengagement through a Nitzschean lens.

> "Some of Nietzsche's most prescient pages are those in which he describes the
>
> 'oversaturation of an age with history'. 'It leads an age into a dangerous mood of
>
> irony in regard to itself', he wrote in Untimely Meditations, 'and subsequently into
>
> the even more dangerous mood of cynicism', in which 'cosmopolitan fingering', a
>
> detached spectatorialism, replaces engagement and involvement. This is the
>
> condition of Nietzsche's Last Man, who has seen everything, but is decadently
>
> enfeebled precisely by this excess of (self) awareness." (Fisher 6-7)

To Fischer, Nietzsche's Last Man is the perfect model for young adults in the information age,

who have access to more information than an individual at any other point in the history of

humanity, but are unable to use this information as a catalyst for real change. Fischer has hit

upon an important insight regarding Nietzschean roots of reflexive impotence, and the

implications of this insight will be further explored and scrutinized.

**1.1 Thesis Statement**

    The concepts of ressentiment and bad conscience, which were elucidated by Friederich

Nietzsche and clarified by Gilles Deleuze in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, contribute to

complacency in climate action. Furthermore, the implementation of these concepts can be used

to explain why the solarpunk environmental movement has the potential to create substantial

change to fight climate change and environmental devastation. This claim will be examined in three parts. The first part will clarify how Gilles Deleuze's interpretation of Friederich Nietzsche relates to the conceptual framework of his later *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project with psychoanalyst Felix Guattari. The second part will diagnose roots of climate inaction in online communities using the Deleuze-Nietzschean concepts of ressentiment and bad conscience clarified in the first part. The third part will analyze contemporary environmental philosophies using this same Deleuze-Nietzschean lens, and use Deleuze and Felix Guattari's *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project as a method of maximizing the effectiveness of the solarpunk environmental movement.

**2.0 Background on Nietzsche, Deleuze, and Guattari**

Before 1962, Friederich Nietzsche was largely rejected by many French intellectuals as a pseudo-philosopher and a "forerunner of fascist thinking" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* ix). Contributing to this view, the most popular analysis of Nietzschean thought was undertaken by German philosopher, and former member of the Nazi party, Martin Heidegger. Gilles Deleuze, a philosopher intensely interested in philosophies untainted by structuralist thought, aimed to assemble a "minor philosophy" by reanalyzing ideas (primarily) from Baruch de Spinoza, Henri Bergson, and Friederich Nietzsche. Intending to develop a novel ontological system, Deleuze was interested in Nietzsche's concept of will-to-power and its ontological potential that did not necessitate transcendent concepts. Alongside radical psychoanalyst Felix Guattari, Gilles Deleuze developed Nietzsche's concepts in the project *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, which contained the two volumes *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*. It is in *Anti-Oedipus* that Deleuze first subsumed Nietzsche's concept of will-to-power into a micropolitics of desire that he calls "desiring-production."

**2.1 Why Deleuze's Nietzsche?**

It is worth addressing the historical role of Friederich Nietzsche philosophies in fascist and totalitarian regimes in the 20th century. The historical relation of Nietzsche to fascism is partially the fault of his sister, Elisabeth Forster-Nietzsche, who assumed control of his manuscripts when he was institutionalized in the 1890s. Elisabeth was sympathetic to scientific racism and the National Socialist movement in Europe, and compiled his unpublished works to support fascist causes. She was even in correspondence with Benito Mussolini, whom she declared "the inspired reawakener of aristocratic values in Nietzsche's sense," (Golomb and Wistrich 23). There's no doubt Nietzsche would have opposed such use of his work, as he vehemently opposed the anti-semitism propagated by National Socialist leaders. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche even argues that it may be "fair to banish the anti-Semitic bawlers out of the country" (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* 186). However, it's worth noting the terminology and concepts used by Nietzsche which may have appealed to fascists. The individualistic and anti-egalitarian *ubermensch*, and the right of rule from a "good and healthy aristocracy" underpin the deadly ideology of many fascists and totalitarian despots in the 20th century (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* 198). Gilles Deleuze understands the fascistic potential of Nietzsche's philosophy, but also sees its revolutionary potential. Through *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze doesn't so much reflect Nietzsche's philosophy in a historically accurate manner, but rather subsumes his oeuvre into a new framework.

The historical accuracy of Gilles Deleuze's Nietzsche still remains up for debate. Philosophers such as Michael Tanner, claim that Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* was "quite wild about Nietzsche, but interesting about Deleuze" (Tanner 108). That is to say that such his interpretation of Nietzsche is non-historical, but

noteworthy nonetheless. Other philosophers such as James Mollison argue that Deleuze's

Nietzsche-inspired concepts "are not merely Deleuzian creations but are also defensible

interpretations of Nietzsche" (Mollison 428). However, Deleuze himself would probably argue

that this is an irrelevant debate, as he takes a unique approach to the history of philosophy which

doesn't necessitate historical accuracy. Deleuze's approach to the history of philosophy (and the

rest of his philosophy in general) involves drawing upon the concepts of older philosophers and

experimenting with them. "A whole world of micro-perceptions… lead us to the imperceptible.

Experiment, never interpret. Make programmes, never make phantasms" (Deleuze and Parnet,

*Dialogues II* 48). For this reason, this analysis will work with concepts generated from Deleuze's

interpretation of Nietzsche, while still distinguishing them from Nietzsche's work.

Why Deleuze's Nietzsche and not just Nietzsche himself? As stated previously, there

exists a desire to separate Nietzsche from his patriarchal and proto-fascist roots; his "magnificent

blond beasts" and apparent reverence for "Roman, Arabian, Germanic, Japanese nobility,

Homeric heroes, Scandinavian Vikings," (Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals* 23). The

reverence for these groups, and the violence committed in their name, is the exact mythos which

many fascist groups used to rise to power in the early 20th century, and which should therefore

be avoided. Deleuze provides a reading that is well aware of the danger of fascistic thinking and

seeks to avoid it at all costs.

### 2.2 Nietzsche and Philosophy

In *Nietzsche and Philosophy,* Deleuze provides a reading of Nietzsche that emphasizes

the consequences of inaction from ressentiment and bad conscience. These two concepts,

according to Deleuze, explain how inferior forces can triumph over more powerful forces by

separating them from what they can do. First and foremost, Deleuze warns against reducing

Nietzsche's concepts of force to forces interacting on a transcendent metaphysical plane. He argues that "there is no 'medium', no field of forces or battle. There is no quantity of reality, all reality is already quantity of force" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 39-40). Everything is composed of force, and force is immanent to the bodies which Nietzsche observes. These bodies, therefore, are not defined by a single, static identity, but rather they are defined by the forces which constitute them. "Any two forces, being unequal, constitute a body as soon as they enter into a relationship" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 40). To Deleuze, a human body is not demarcated by a single identity or definition, but rather by the plurality of biochemical forces in relationship with one another. On another level, an ecosystem can be considered a body made up of the plurality of individual species which act as forces. This concept of a body as a plurality of irreducible forces is a precursor to the Deleuze-Guattarian concept of an **assemblage**. Deleuze hereby establishes a Nietzschean metaphysical framework with which to view the world, which is constituted by force alone.

To Deleuze, every force has a quality: *active* or *reactive*. These qualities are relative, and are born from the quantitative difference between any two interacting forces. The quantitatively superior force is considered *active*, and dominates over the quantitatively inferior *reactive* force. As an example, consider the body of the African savanna, which consists of a plurality of forces expressed through its many predators and prey in a complex food web. Consider a gazelle and a cheetah as a part of this food web. The quantitative aspects of each animal are determined by their evolutionary adaptations: The gazelle has a fast speed thanks to its powerful hind legs, narrow and herbivorous teeth which allow it to grind and digest acacia leaves and grass, and a tan hide which allows it to blend into the savannah's landscape. The cheetah, on the other hand, has an even faster speed due to its powerful legs, sharp teeth which allow it to cut through flesh,

and a similarly tan hide to conceal its approach to its prey. In a confrontation between the cheetah and a gazelle in which the cheetah overpowers and kills the gazelle, the cheetah's particular adaptations grant it a quantitatively greater force, while the gazelle acts as the quantitatively inferior force. In this interaction, the quantitatively greater adaptations result in the cheetah's qualitative identity as an *active force*, and the gazelle's qualitative identity as a *reactive force*. In other interactions, between the gazelle and an acacia tree for instance, these identities may be flipped. The gazelle, given its evolutionary adaptations to stand on its high legs to reach high branches of an acacia tree and grind the acacia leaves with its flat teeth, would act as the quantitatively greater *active* force, while the acacia tree would be the quantitatively inferior *reactive* force.

In the interaction between the cheetah and the gazelle, it is quite clear that if the cheetah is able to capture the gazelle, it will overpower and consume it. However, the quantitative difference between two forces by themselves do not account for how an active force comes to dominate the reactive force. Just because the cheetah is able to run quickly and has sharp teeth that have the *potential* to overpower gazelle, it does not necessarily follow that the cheetah will *actualize* this potential. Therefore, an entirely new element must be used to describe how this interaction is actualized. To Deleuze, this element is Nietzsche's **will to power**: "Thus it is always through the will to power that one force prevails over others and dominates or commands them… it is also the will to power which makes a force obey within a relation" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 51). With this definition, Deleuze establishes the dual nature of the will to power: it is both internal to force and it is the principle which underlies the interaction of forces. In the body of the African savanna, the will to power is internal to both the individual predator and prey. For instance, the evolutionary adaptations which the cheetah developed and

the evolutionary adaptations which the gazelle developed are aspects of the will to power which are internal. The interaction between predator and prey in which the cheetah overpowers and consumes the gazelle is the aspect of will to power which underlies the interaction of the active and reactive forces (predator and prey). This interaction shifts on a different trophic level of the ecosystem: If the gazelle starts consuming acacia leaves, the gazelle now functions as an active force to the acacia tree's reactive force. It is once again the internal adaptations of the grass and the gazelle that makes up the internal aspect of the will to power, and the principle underlying their interaction that makes up the differential aspect of the will to power. It is important to realize that it is neither the gazelle nor the cheetah which wills, but rather the will to power itself. "The will to power alone is the one that wills, it does not let itself be delegated or alienated to another subject, even to force" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 49). Why, then, is this considered a will at all?  Deleuze would argue that the culmination of these genetic factors is considered a will because it can be channeled towards a different end. Consider an alternate scenario in which the cheetah has complex moral faculties, and as a result refuses to eat meat. Then, despite the Cheetah's quantitatively greater force and identity as an active force, it would not actualize its greater quantitative potential into trapping and consuming the Gazelle. Deleuze, through Nietzsche, shifts this will from the subject itself (the Cheetah), to a convergence and interaction of internal factors.

Nietzsche's analysis of morals in *The Genealogy of Morals* requires that reactive forces have the potential to triumph over active forces without becoming quantitatively superior. This is accomplished, Deleuze argues, when reactive forces "separate active force from what it can do" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 57). To understand this phenomenon, it should be clarified that the will to power itself has distinct qualities related to the internal element of the forces. To

Nietzsche, these qualities are *affirmative* and *negative*. The affirmative will to power is often associated with active force and the negating will to power is often associated with reactive force, but these active and reactive forces are more accurately represented as tools of the will to power, which can both affirm and negate. In Deleuze's words, "Affirmation is not action but the power of becoming active, *becoming active* personified. Negation is not simple reaction but a *becoming reactive*" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 54). Affirmation and negation is further present in the differential aspect of will to power. For instance, the affirmative will to power *affirms* the quantitative superiority of active force. In the traditional interaction between the cheetah and the gazelle, the demonstrated will to power is affirmative, because it affirms the quantitatively superior adaptations of the cheetah, resulting in the cheetah consuming its prey. However, the negative will to power is named as such because it *negates* the quantitative superiority of active force, allowing the reactive force to triumph. As the will to power unfolds, affirmative or not, reactive forces negate their own difference and "impose limitations and partial restrictions" on active forces, even in a minor capacity (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 56). The gazelle cries out to the cheetah, protesting that it is not so different from the cheetah; that it can feel pain just as the cheetah would if it were in the gazelle's spot. It hopes to constrain the cheetah to its own empathy, even as the active force of the cheetah overwhelms it. There are (obviously) few instances in which a negative will to power is expressed between a cheetah and its prey. In the natural world, the moral faculties of the cheetah are primitive and unlikely to submit to the gazelle's protests. But if we consider the previously discussed vegetarian cheetah with its complex moral faculties, we can see how morality is used to express the negative will to power. The vegetarian cheetah doesn't lose its sharp fangs or powerful hind legs, and thus never ceases to be an quantitatively superior active force, but it does not affirm its quantitative

difference. Through its own moral faculties, the vegetarian cheetah is constantly *becoming reactive*, but it's crucial that the cheetah never becomes a reactive force in the context of the gazelle. Thus, the negative will to power results in a triumphant reactive force which separates active forces from what they can do.

To understand the mechanisms through which the negative will to power is expressed, Deleuze explores how active and reactive forces behave within the subject's conscious and unconscious. To understand this behavior, it is necessary to explore the difference between **traces** and **excitations**. To Deleuze, traces are the connection between our memory and our behavior. For example, consider the hypothetical subject Peter, who nearly drowned in a pool when he was a child. As an adult, his behavior may be altered such that he experiences nervousness around pools or avoids them altogether. This is the result of such traces. It's not necessary that Peter is able to recall the particular memory of drowning, just that the reactive behavior remains. Excitations, on the other hand, are the connections between our consciousness and our behavior. Peter's friend, Sally, consciously desires to cool down on a sunny day, and so her excitations result in active behavior, which is swimming in a pool. To maintain this active behavior, active forces maintain an important separation between traces and excitation through the vital faculty of forgetfulness. While the recording and retaining of traces is important, forgetfulness is just as important as a regulatory process to prevent the subject from descending into reactive behavior. Peter engages in reactive behavior because his tracings of childhood trauma invade his consciousness and block his excitations which would otherwise encourage him to swim with his friend Sally. As such, his tracings separate him from what he can do, and he falls prey to reactive behavior. If, using the faculty of forgetfulness, Peter were able to prevent his tracings from invading his consciousness, he would embrace more active behavior. However,

it is the influence of reactive force in the form of ressentiment and bad conscience which suppresses this activity of forgetfulness.

The Nietzschean concept of **ressentiment**, generally, is the projection of hostility and resentment towards a perceived cause. Typically, ressentiment is born out of feelings of weakness and jealousy. Psychologically, using Deleuze's concepts of tracings and excitations, a subject's feelings and behavior of ressentiment is influenced by their traces, which is confused for their excitations. The subject motivated by ressentiment acts reactively, in accordance with their memories, as opposed to actively, in accordance with their consciousness. The result, as Deleuze puts it, is "the triumph of the weak *as* weak, the revolt of the slaves and their victory *as* slaves" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 117). Consider the cheetah and gazelle with complex moral faculties. If the gazelle is conscious enough as to be aware of its quantitative inferiority to the cheetah, and motivated by ressentiment, this reminder may be internalized as a trace. Rather than act on its excitation, which may result in the gazelle changing its tactics (better camouflaging itself against the savanna environment or staying in packs, for example), the gazelle may develop jealousy and envy because of its own quantitative inferiority. This reactive force further refuses to implement the faculty of forgetfulness. The product is the gazelle who cannot "have done" with anything (Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals* 58). It ruminates in its traces, constantly frustrated and hyper focused on the unfairness of the situation. The gazelle further becomes a perpetual accuser, who reactively projects the morality of this reversed valuation upon the cheetah. The cheetah is valued as 'evil', and as the helpless victim of the cheetah, the gazelle declares itself 'good'.

The Nietzschean concept of **bad conscience**, on the other hand, "refers to a form of pain, of mental anguish, which results from the internalization of [projected force]" (Katsafanas 19).

Ressentiment projected by a reactive force and leveled against an active force. Should the active force internalize this ressentiment in an instance of bad conscience, it will be converted into guilt and pain. Deleuze argues that the conversion of projected ressentiment into guilt in the case of bad conscience rests upon a fiction of the projection of debt. "Debt becomes the relation of a debtor who will never finish paying to creditor who will never finish up the interest on the debt," (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 142). Perhaps the gazelle implies to the cheetah that it owes the gazelle for its quantitative superiority. If the gazelle is religious, this debt may come in the form of sin. The cheetah has sinned by acting on its quantitative advantage and killing countless gazelles. It can never repay the severe debt of its crimes, but at the very least it can refrain from using its sharp fangs and powerful hind legs to overpower and consume other reactive forces. This is what Nietzsche calls **responsibility-debt**. This debt projected by the reactive force is internalized, and the active force experiences a feeling of pain "made the consequence of a sin, a fault" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 129). In this way, responsibility-debt is transformed into **responsibility-guilt**, and the debt is transformed into pain from self-flagellation. The cheetah revels in debilitating anguish, agonizing over the guilt of having killed and consumed so many gazelles. This pain leaves a trace on the cheetah's consciousness, and active behavior (killing and eating more gazelles) is blocked. Thus, the previously affirmative will to power is replaced with a negative will to power, and the reactive force triumphs without quantitatively overpowering the active force. It should be noted that neither Deleuze nor Nietzsche are indicating that ressentiment and bad conscience are always bad in themselves. They are merely arguing that these are the tools through which reactive forces triumph. Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche and his collaboration with Felix Guattari will be used to further analyze the nature of these reactive forces, alongside providing an ideological framework to shift this movement away

from reactive forces through a careful consideration of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of desiring-production.

**2.3 Capitalism and Schizophrenia**

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's project of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* began largely as a reaction to the events of May 1968 in France. In May 1968, in response to unfair labor practices and largely inspired by the teachings of leftist French leaders, students and factory workers demonstrated in massive general strikes. These groups were largely organized spontaneously, and had little connection with organized labor groups, such as the French Communist Party and most French labor unions. To the dismay of the striking masses, revolution and large-scale systemic change was largely avoided due to the intervention of the French Communist Party. Many leftist demonstrators, including Felix Guattari, viewed the eventual de-escalation deal reached by the French Government and the organized labor groups to be a betrayal. Inspired by the emphasis of creativity and difference in Deleuze's philosophy, Felix Guattari met with Gilles Deleuze and struck up a partnership to analyze the forces which lead to the events of May 1968, and why revolution ultimately failed to take place.[9] Thus, the project of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* was born. *Anti-Oedipus,* the first volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* published in 1972, critiqued contemporary uses of Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx within psychoanalysis and political philosophy while providing an alternative practice they dubbed "schizoanalysis." *A Thousand Plateaus,* the second volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* published in 1980, analyzes many concepts within critical theory, such as semiotics and linguistics, using the practice of schizoanalysis. The concept of "schizophrenia" that Deleuze and Guattari grapple with is separate from the clinical diagnosis of schizophrenia.

[9] Thornton, Edward. "A creative multiplicity: the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari." *Aeon,* edited by Sally Davies, Aeon Media Group Ltd., Mar. 2018.

Out of respect to individuals who suffer from clinical schizophrenia, and to distinguish between these concepts, "schizoanalysis" will be referred to by Deleuze and Guattari's alternate name for the practice, *nomadology*. One of the (many) aims of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* examines political behavior tangential to the problem of reflexive impotence.

> "[T]he fundamental problem of political philosophy is still precisely the one that Spinoza saw so clearly, and that Wilhelm Reich rediscovered: 'Why do men fight for their servitude as stubbornly as though it were their salvation?' How can people possibly reach the point of shouting: 'More taxes! Less bread!'? As Reich remarks, the astonishing thing is not that some people steal or that others occasionally go out on strike, but rather that all those who are starving do not steal as a regular practice, and all those who are exploited are not continually out on strike: after centuries of exploitation, why do people still tolerate being humiliated and enslaved, to such a point, indeed, that they actually want humiliation and slavery not only for others but for themselves?" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* 38)

Deleuze and Guattari's answer to this question, elaborated in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, is simple: through social force, a subjects' own desire is manipulated into desiring their own repression. They call this force desiring-production.

Deleuze and Guattari oppose traditional views of desire, which they posited have been associated mostly with negation and lack. "Desire is the set of passive synthesis that engineer partial objects, flows, and bodies, and that function as units of production," (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* 26). The set of syntheses by which desire functions as a productive force is what Deleuze and Guattari called **desiring-production**. Part of why Deleuze's Nietzsche is so

important for the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project is because it offers a framework through which willing can occur without the need of an individual subject. Like the monistic forces in the Nietzschean metaphysics that Deleuze develops, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* is also a monistic system based around forces of desire. To Deleuze and Guattari, "there is only desire" on a social plane, and nothing else (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* 183).  The active and reactive forces elaborated in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* can be viewed as similar to Deleuze and Guattari's flows of desire, the will to power is analogous to Deleuze and Guattari's desiring-production, and his bodies are analogous to Deleuze and Guattari's machines (discussed later in this section). Through the lens of desiring-production, desire is not merely an activity of the conscious mind, but a metaphysical force which produces the subject and its objects.

"Everywhere it is machines—real ones, not figurative ones: machines driving other machines, machines being driven by other machines, with all the necessary couplings and connections" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* 1). Deleuze and Guattari introduce a radical new approach to political philosophy: the reframing of the *subject* as an **assemblage** of forces, rather than a unitary identity. Like the Nietzschean body, an assemblage is a collection of forces "that is irreducible to any sort of unity" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* 42). Deleuze himself further elucidated this concept throughout his career, later considering an assemblage to be "a multiplicity which is made up of many heterogenous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them, across ages, sexes and reigns" (Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II* 67). The individual subject, therefore, is not a single unity, nor the sum of a complex tapestry of its desires and motivations, but rather an irreducible plurality of desire. There is no "purpose" to a subject, nor a single definition which can encapsulate it, and any attempt to reduce it to one limits its potential. For instance, consider how the interaction between a person (the subject) and

a bicycle (the object) result in how each are defined. It may be tempting to limit the bicycle to a teleological definition: the bicycle is a vehicle with two wheels which is designed to translate the rotational motion of its pedals into translational movement of the bike. According to Deleuze and Guattari, this definition necessarily constrains what the bike can do to a single function: transport the pedaling subject from one place to another. It doesn't account for applications in which the bicycle can be transformed into a creative sculpture, disassembled and sold for parts, or even eaten by a subject who desires to break a new world record. No single definition of "bicycle" could encapsulate the nearly infinite potential that it contains. Rather than a single bicycle identity, Deleuze and Guattari argue that we should consider demarcating this interaction as a person-bicycle assemblage. This assemblage is a plurality of desires which originated in the birth of the person and the creation of the bicycle, the present desires in which the person interacts with the bicycle, and the future potential of this assemblage that desire can actualize. This is the productive potential of desire that Deleuze and Guattari are referring to. The person and the bicycle are the **machines** that Deleuze and Guattari are referencing, which are the atomic elements that together form a machinic assemblage. As a machine rather than a subject, it becomes easier to understand how desire moves within an assemblage, rather than merely originating from a subject and terminating at an object. The actualization of the many potentials of this assemblage is the process of desiring-production.

Deleuze and Guattari's desiring-production can be considered an evolution of Deleuze's interpretation of the will to power. Like the will to power, desiring-production is not an anthropomorphic impulse, but rather a non-subjective force related to the genetic factors of the parts of the assemblage. The physical machinery of the bicycle, the subject's consciousness, and the limitations of movement affect how the assemblage's desire can be actualized. But like with

quantitative features and the will to power, the existence of these features within an assemblage do not themselves actualize desire. Desiring-production itself is what actualizes desire and produces such outcomes. It is important to remember that desiring-production is a function of the internal factors of its constituent machines, but it is not reducible to these factors.

Consider one of the potential actualizations of the human-bicycle assemblage: the subject disassembles and eats the bicycle to break a world record. The origin of this initial desire is lack, perhaps in the form of a lack of prestige or validation that the subject desires to possess. According to Deleuze and Guattari, it is the desiring-production of assemblages which produces this lack in the first place. Perhaps part of the origin of this production of lack is the production of lack from the Guinness corporation to sell more world record books. Whatever the circumstances of its source, this lack originates from desiring-production, and is ultimately what motivates the subject to actualize their own potential (and the potential of the bicycle) to be consumed. This Guinness-human-bicycle assemblage could not actualize this feat without the internal factors of each machine in the assemblage, but it is also not complete to argue that it is the will of the subject alone that resulted in the feat being completed. Rather, it is a non-subjective will expressed through desiring-production of the entire assemblage.

In *Capitalism and Schizophrenia,* Deleuze and Guattari argue that it is this desiring-production which also produces repression of desire. In effect, "men fight for their servitude as stubbornly as though it were their salvation" because they desire their own repression. Through a Deleuze-Guattarian lens, this means that assemblages (which can be viewed as individuals, groups, or institutions) produce their own repression as an object of desiring-production. "In the subject who desires, desire can be made to desire its own repression" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* 105). Consider the Guiness-human-bicycle assemblage that

was previously outlined. Despite the existence of the Guinness-human-bicycle assemblage, the desire to consume this bicycle is repressed in most subjects. Perhaps many subjects are worried about the health effects, in which case the repression of desire is produced by a medical assemblage. Perhaps the fear of social ostracization is what results in this repression of desire, in which case it is social assemblages which produce the repression of desire. In either case, it is through the production of the repression of desire through desiring-production that this feat is ultimately prevented from being actualized.

Through a Deleuze-Nietzschean lens, it could be argued that ressentiment is created through desiring-production as a particular type of object which represses desire. In this way, the production of the repression of desire through desiring-production is analogous to Nietzsche's negative will to power. Therefore, it is this negative desiring-production which separates active forces from what they can do. Unlike the Nietzschean concept of will to power, Deleuze and Guattari's concept of desiring-production is more versatile and not limited by the hierarchical concept of "quantitative superiority." However, unlike the concept of desiring-production, the concept of will to power is more informative when it comes to examining the causes and effects of ressentiment on bad conscience. Neither of these lenses are more complete or more useful than the other, but rather two separate lenses with which to interpret the same processes. To demonstrate how ressentiment is leveled within environmental movements and communities, this Deleuze-Nietzschean lens will be implemented in an analytical role. To explore how communities can move beyond ressentiment, this Deleuze-Guattarian lens will be implemented in a creative role.

**3.0 Bad Conscience and Ressentiment in Eco–Conscious Communities**

To distinguish between two major types of eco-conscious communities, it would be beneficial to mention Deleuze and Guattari's concept of **striated space** and **smooth space**. Space, in this context, is the plane upon which desire, active forces, and reactive forces interact.

> "The space of nomad thought is qualitatively different from State space. Air against earth. State space is "striated," or gridded. Movement in it is confined as by gravity to a horizontal plane, and limited by the order of that plane to preset paths between fixed and identifiable points. Nomad space is "smooth," or open-ended. One can rise up at any point and move to any other" (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* xiii).

Deleuze and Guattari's "nomadology" is the practice of disrupting hierarchies present in striated spaces, and occupying smooth space. Education in a public school is an example of a striated space. Students' time is strictly quantified into periods, knowledge is divided into discrete subjects, and curriculums are arranged hierarchically. This striated space can be deconstructed or **deterritorialized** by concerned parents who disagree with this method of teaching, and **reterritorialized** in the form of homeschooling. In certain cases, homeschooling is an example of a smooth space: Students' time may not be cordoned off into discrete units, knowledge from different disciplines can be demonstrated flowing into one another, and the type of information is no longer constrained by the state. In this instance, students embody the intellectual nomads that Deleuze and Guattari idealize, who can "rise up at any point and move to any other" (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* xiii). Just as easily, however, homeschooling can be striated by parents who intend to use homeschooling as a tool to consolidate control over their kid, or reinforce a particular narrative. In this instance, homeschooling would no longer function as a

smooth space. Smooth space, although freeing, always risks being reincorporated into striated space.

Mainstream thought, in the context of "state space," is typically striated. Subversive thinkers who escape this paradigm operate in smooth space. Environmental discourse which encourages individual action, and which is typically taught in public schools, takes place in a striated space. Radical environmentalists, climate doomers, and even climate skeptics tend to operate in a smooth space. The following sections consider the behavior of ressentiment within such eco-conscious communities in striated space and smooth space.

### 3.1 Bad Conscience and Ressentiment in Striated Spaces

Environmentalist groups within striated spaces are often the first groups that are encountered when a subject becomes eco-conscious. Consider the hypothetical subject Sierra, who is a student in a public high school. She hasn't given too much thought to climate change in the past, but she knows her friends and family members take the subject seriously. One day, one of Sierra's friends sends her an article on the IPCC report, and she quickly becomes aware that climate change is much more dangerous and widespread than she previously considered. She decides to change her habits to reduce her carbon footprint by taking the bus to school instead of driving, making a point out of turning off light switches whenever she leaves a room, and not adjusting her parents' thermostat in the winter and choosing to don a sweater instead. She changes her consumer habits too. Sierra consciously prioritizes buying from carbon neutral corporations, and, although a separate environmental concern from climate change, tries to avoid single use plastics like plastic straws while she can. These behaviors, beneficial or not, take place in a striated space.

However, it is not purely affirmative desiring-production which motivates Sierra to take this particular climate action. Rather, it is her own negative desiring-production, produced as bad conscience, which both represses and redirects her existing flows of desire. One way in which bad conscience is formed in such communities is through debt in the form of a carbon footprint. An individual's carbon footprint, for context, is the amount of greenhouse gasses that are directly or indirectly generated by them. From the moment of her birth to the moment of becoming eco-conscious, Sierra has already amassed an enormous carbon footprint. Sierra has spent decades commuting in her parents' cars, heating her family's house, and consuming a diet with an enormous ecological impact. Sierra has therefore incurred a carbon debt which is effectively unpayable. As mentioned before, "debt becomes the relation of a debtor who will never finish paying to a creditor who will never finish up the interest on the debt," (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 142). Sierra's sudden awareness of the implications of climate change reveals the extent of her responsibility-debt. However, to fully motivate her actions, there are forces at play which transition from internalization of responsibility-debt to the internalization of pain to facilitate Sierra's movement into bad conscience through ressentiment.

The transition from the internalization of force to the internalization of pain requires the intervention of a "priest." While Nietzsche was largely concerned with priests in a traditional Christian sense, Deleuze's priest is more generally a vocal member of a group through which the values of the group's culture are maintained. Deleuze, through Nietzsche, examines how the priest converts internalized ressentiment into guilt and pain.

> "The priest appears in an initial form here: he presides over the accusation, he
>
> organises it. "Look at these men who call themselves good, I tell you: these are
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> the evil ones." The power of ressentiment is therefore completely directed

towards the other, against others. But ressentiment is an explosive substance: it makes active forces become reactive. Ressentiment must then adapt itself to these new conditions; it must change direction. The reactive man must now find the cause of his suffering in himself" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 131).

Nietzsche himself argues that through the guidance of a priest, the subject of ressentiment comes to "understand his suffering as a punishment" (Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals* 140). Thus, the subject takes their raw understanding of responsibility-debt and converts it into pain. In the context of environmentalist movements, there are some surprising candidates for so-called priests. The first is a type which I would like to call the **dogmatic-priest**. This is an environmentalist within a movement who projects their own pain, in the form of ressentiment, onto other members of the group. Such priests include social media accounts, leaders in non-profit environmental groups, or even just vocal environmental activists who are embedded in the culture. No matter their official capacity within the movement, dogmatic-priests encourage their colleagues to convert their responsibility-debt to responsibility-guilt. These are both creditors and debtors of responsibility-debt.

Consider one method in which the dogmatic-priest manipulates ressentiment to convert responsibility-debt into responsibility-guilt. So-called environmental gatekeeping is an instance of targeted environmental ressentiment within bad conscience. One common example of gatekeeping at the intersection of veganism and environmentalism is the argument that being an environmentalist and not being vegan are contradictory. Figure 1 demonstrates one such instance on the subreddit /r/Vegan. This meme with over 1,300 upvotes claims that environmentalists who aren't vegan are acting hypocritically.

**Figure 1: A Meme Criticizing the Environmental Hypocrisy of Non-Vegans on /r/Vegan[10]**

This is supported by the fact that the livestock industry is responsible for anywhere from 11.1%

to 19.6% of global annual greenhouse gas emissions according to the UN Food and Agriculture

Organization.[11] This could also be interpreted as an instance of ressentiment leveled by vegan

dogmatic-priests against non-vegan environmentalists. The dogmatic-priest, frustrated by the

unfair standards that other environmentalists are held to, reactively projects their resentment,

frustrated that their environmental colleagues hold themselves to a lower standard. The product,

as Nietzsche would put it, is the dogmatic-priest who cannot "have done" with anything

(Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals* 58). The dogmatic-priest, through social media, projects

their ressentiment onto other environmentalists. This environmental ressentiment relies on the

existence of the responsibility-debt of a carbon footprint, which it quickly converts to

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[10] "Right?" */r/vegan*, Reddit, 2021, www.reddit.com/r/vegan/comments/p2scko/right/.
[11] Blaustein-Rejto, Dan. "Livestock Don't Contribute 14.5% of Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions." *The Breakthrough Institute*, The Breakthrough Institute, 20 Mar. 2023.

responsibility-guilt. Deleuze reinforces how "[responsibility-guilt's] origin is ressentiment's accusation, it grafts itself onto culture and diverts it from its initial direction, it entails a necessary change of direction of ressentiment which no longer looks outside for someone to blame" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 142). The non-vegan environmentalist turns this ressentiment, which was previously aimed at factory farming corporations, lawmakers, and meat packing marketing campaigns, against their own movement, and slowly diminishes the potential of the group as a whole.  The vegetarian environmentalist, even, becomes subject to responsibility-guilt, as their hands are not entirely clean either. This responsibility-guilt can result in unrelenting self-flagellation, which is not conducive to the necessary change that environmentalists desire. The active potential of the environmental subject is thus further diminished, and the active force of the environmental organization is continually separated from what it can do.

Even from a minor instance of ressentiment, dogmatic-priests rapaciously multiply the internalisation of pain within an active force. Deleuze observed "a multiplication, a self-impregnation, a hyper-production of pain" when force is introjected (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 129). This is in part due to the catharsis felt by individuals through the proliferation of pain. "We will never understand the cruel equation "injury caused = pain undergone" if a third term is not introduced - the pleasure which is felt in inflicting pain or in contemplating it" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 135). This is the infective aspect of ressentiment which leads to the proliferation of bad conscience within a movement. Consider the catharsis with which some environmentalists gleefully lay out the most pessimistic scenario of climate change up to and including global extinction. Such behavior is met either with dismissal, which is further used to justify the doomerist anxieties of the environmentalist, or shock, which further

justifies the environmentalist's feelings of fear. This catharsis is further reflected in the consumption of negative content. The macabre joy of consuming negative content has resulted in a new term: "doomscrolling." Doomscrolling is defined as "a habit of scrolling through social media and news feeds where users obsessively seek for (sic) depressing and negative information."[12] This further gives rise to the exaggerated impression that the earth is doomed. Through the dogmatic-priests, responsibility-guilt becomes infectious, and through doom-scrolling, it becomes intensified.

The other species of priest is the **covert-priest**, which are components of anti-environmental machines. Deviously, these priests explicitly aim to undermine the environmental movement by separating it from what it can do. To do this, they assume the role of responsibility-debt creditors, but are not themselves subject to responsibility-debt. In 2004, the BP marketing team hired out the public relations firm Ogilvy & Mather to "greenwash" its image. The firm helped BP reflect the responsibility of greenhouse gas emissions onto individual consumers by popularizing the concept of the carbon footprint. It began an ad campaign which asked individuals on the street to consider their carbon footprint, and published a carbon footprint calculator on its website.[13] Furthermore, ExxonMobil has implemented rhetoric in their campaign to "individualize responsibility" of carbon emissions onto its consumers since 1972.[14] The marketing divisions of oil and gas companies are the covert-priests of environmental ressentiment. There do not have to be many covert-priests, as long as their message effectively

[12] Satici, Seydi Ahmet, et al. "Doomscrolling Scale: Its association with personality traits, psychological distress, social media use, and Wellbeing." *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, vol. 18, no. 2, 19 Oct. 2022, pp. 833–847, doi.org/10.1007/s11482-022-10110-7.

[13] Schendler, Auden. "Worrying about Your Carbon Footprint Is Exactly What Big Oil Wants You to Do." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 31 Aug. 2021.

[14] Supran, Geoffrey, and Naomi Oreskes. "Rhetoric and frame analysis of ExxonMobil's Climate Change Communications." *One Earth*, vol. 4, no. 5, 13 May 2021, pp. 696–719, doi.org/10.1016/j.oneear.2021.04.014.

reaches and convinces dogmatic-priests. Through dogmatic-priests, responsibility-guilt originating from covert-priests is intensified and proliferated.

Environmental customs, guided by covert-priests and proliferated by dogmatic-priests, are cemented as the static codes which are emblematic of striated space. The customs laid down by the priests are "obeyed, [which is] a principle which goes beyond peoples, races and classes. To obey the law because it is the law: the form of the law means that a certain activity, a certain active force, is exercised on man and is given the task of training him." (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 133). In effect, the ressentiment spread and intensified by dogmatic-priests effectively trains subjects to act on their reactive impulses and the law itself. Every member involved in this iteration of the environmental movement is aligned with the narrative that supports the culture: that man-made carbon emissions are resulting in devastating global effects, and that something needs to be done. However, it becomes more important to follow the law, which in this case is merely a system of cultural objects. The central narrative is reduced to a labyrinth of traces in the subject's subconscious. These are tracings of the anxiety felt when the subject reacts to the central narrative, and they are what keep dogmatic-priests and eco-conscious subjects shackled to the law ordained by the culture. Rather than staying committed to the unifying narrative, the subjects act upon their tracings. The culture thereby remains a reactive and ineffective striated space.

The reactive nature of this static rule-following frequently reduces environmental change to meaningless virtue-signaling. Deleuze notes a feature of culture that results from its training and self-selection: "that which is obeyed, in a people, race or class, is always historical, arbitrary, grotesque, stupid and limited; this usually represents the worst reactive forces." (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 133). The particular aspect often varies depending on the community

in which the subject is embedded. Consider the idiosyncrasies with which reusable and paper

straws have become a cultural object, for example. Following cultural backlash against plastic

straws, Starbucks eliminated all of their free plastic straws and replaced them with straw-free

"sippy cup lids."[15] It didn't matter that the sippy lids contained more plastic by weight, or that the

thicker plastic would result in the lid taking much longer to biodegrade in nature than previous

designs. The cultural status from not using straws is the reactive force that Starbucks leaned into.

Also consider carbon credits sold by the company Verra. Carbon credits, for context, are

purchasable credits which represent a reduction in carbon emissions, typically through the

preservation of forests (which act as carbon sinks). Companies that want to appear eco-friendly,

such as Netflix, Ben & Jerry, and even petroleum corporations such as Shell and Chevron,

purchase large quantities of carbon credits for environmentally conscious marketing campaigns.

Verra lends this credibility to the carbon credits purchased by these particular corporations.

However, it was found that of the carbon credits sold by Verra, 94% did not represent any

reduction in carbon emissions.[16] There is still debate as to the overall effectiveness of carbon

credits for combating climate change, but Verra's practices has reduced these particular credits to

a law which is obeyed, rather than an effective method of reducing carbon emissions. While the

examples of Starbucks and Verra are "grotesque, stupid and limited," they are anything but

arbitrary. These are examples of greenwashing, which allow businesses to assume the appearance

of being environmentally friendly without sacrificing profitability.

      Even when the codes of striated spaces are revealed to be ineffective, bad conscience and

ressentiment can continue to infect eco-conscious subjects. For instance, although it is often

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[15] Puckett, Jason. "Verify: Is Starbucks Actually Using More Plastic to Get Rid of Straws?" *King 5 News Seattle*, King TV, 18 July 2018.
[16] Dugast, César. "Is It True That 90% of Carbon Credits Are Worthless?" *Carbone 4 - Précision et Ambition Climatique*, Carbone 4, 26 Jan. 2023, www.carbone4.com/en/analysis-carbon-credits-verra.

acknowledged that Starbucks' sippy lids are worse for the environment than using plastic straws, subjects can still impart judgment on those who fail to use the new cups. The dogmatic-priest can always accuse (and be accused of) hypocrisy: you claim to care about the environment, but you will not even go as far as to get rid of your plastic straws. The same effect can proliferate from any other replacement of plastic straws or its corresponding backlash. The cycle of ressentiment and bad conscience continues.

The way to escape this reactive cycle, according to Nietzsche, is by becoming a sovereign individual.

> '[The sovereign individual is] the autonomous and supramoral man, that is to say the one who actually acts his reactive forces and in whom all reactive forces are acted. He alone "is able to" promise, precisely because he is no longer responsible to any tribunal. The product of culture is not the man who obeys the law, but the sovereign and legislative individual who defines himself by power over himself, over destiny, over the law: the free, the light, the irresponsible" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 137).

In theory, the sovereign individual is the logical goal of culture: freeing the subject from the shackles of imposed reactive force. It is tragic, then, that this process remains largely an ideal. "Selection becomes the opposite of what it was from the standpoint of activity, it is now only a means of preserving, organising and propagating the reactive life" (Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals* 13-20 and *Beyond Good and Evil* 62). Thus, eco-conscious communities which propagate ressentiment prevent the formation of sovereign individuals and keep the reactive nature alive. This may not always be the implicit intention of covert-priests, but it does benefit oil and gas companies immensely. Rather than channeling the active force of environmentally

conscious subjects, environmental groups in striated spaces can actually further separate individuals from what they can do.

**3.2 Bad Conscience and Ressentiment in Smooth Spaces**

In recent years especially, this process of training and self-selection has come under more scrutiny. Covert-priests, in particular, have been exposed as acting on behalf of oil and gas corporations. The irrationality of following the law and acting on tracings rather than critically pursuing the most effective tactics to curb climate change has similarly served as a catalyst for an exodus away from this type of environmental thinking. Many eco-conscious individuals who are critical of the bad conscience stemming from the individualization of environmental responsibility have left these cultures behind. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari describe the allure and uniqueness of thinkers who abandon this majoritarian train of thought. While striated, hierarchical, and state-sponsored concepts operate in striated spaces, "local mechanisms of bands, margins, minorities, which continue to affirm the rights of segmentary societies in opposition to the organs of state power" occupy smooth space as **nomads** (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* 360). Such nomads are merely defined by their rejection, their deterritorialization of striated concepts within culture. They are still ultimately vulnerable to either recapture from striated spaces, or self-annihilation. They still form communities, or constellations, but in the smooth space of thought. In Deleuze and Guattari's view, "it is this [assemblage] that defines the nomad," and not the other way around (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* 423). However, Deleuze and Guattari caution that nomadic thought is precarious. "Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us" (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* 500). Despite being the first step towards revolutionary concepts, philosophies of smooth spaces are constantly at risk of being blocked or recaptured by striated

forces or dissolving into oblivion. Consider the previous example of homeschooling as a smooth space contrasted with public schooling as a striated space. Homeschooling is not often considered revolutionary in this way because of its susceptibility to these two forces. Its revolutionary activity is blocked by striated forces if the parent uses homeschooling as a way to assert greater control over their child. Furthermore, it may dissolve into oblivion if the parent lets the child do whatever they want without guidance or agenda. The child may lose interest in learning and focus on playing video games all day, for instance. Such a dissolution of order would still take place on a "smooth space," but it would be completely devoid of active potential. The desired activity of a nomad, therefore, is one which still has this active potential.

Eco-conscious nomads are characterized by their rejection of striated environmental thought but continued support for environmental change. Perhaps these nomads recognized that burdening the individual with climate action effectively supports the efforts of oil and gas corporations. Maybe they felt frustration that such striated spaces emphasized rule-following (perhaps in the form of virtue signaling) over effective eco-conscious action. Maybe they became overwhelmed by the pressures of environmental bad conscience, and needed to escape oppressive forces of ressentiment present within such communities. For whatever reason, eco-conscious nomads are eager to escape the striated space of thought with its oppressive ressentiment. Unfortunately, even with this motivation, many of these eco-conscious nomads are blocked by the striating forces of ressentiment in "doomer" communities.

Many such eco-conscious nomads may develop thanks to the efforts of online doomer communities. On Reddit, two of these communities include /r/collapse, which discusses "the potential collapse of global civilization,"[17] and /r/LateStageCapitalism, which claims to expose

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[17] "About Community." *r/collapse*, Reddit, 2008, www.reddit.com/r/collapse/.

"evidence of our social, moral and ideological rot."[18] Such communities do a thorough job of pointing out the idiosyncrasies of environmental bad conscience, and encourage the deterritorialization of this striated space. Figure 2, a meme on /r/collapse with over 5,300 upvotes, demonstrates one such example in which cultural laws (recycling, avoiding single use plastics, and adopting paper straws) propagated by striated environmental communities are proven to be ineffectual against large corporations such as Blue Origin and SpaceX, who are enormous carbon emitters.



**Figure 2: A Meme Critiquing Climate Hypocrisy on /r/collapse[19]**

More than merely posting memes, these communities also post provocative articles which point out climate hypocrisy across the class divide. Figure 3 shows another post from /r/collapse, which links to an article pointing out that globally, the richest 1% account for more carbon emissions than the poorest 66%.

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[18] "About Community." */r/LateStageCapitalism*, Reddit, 2015, www.reddit.com/r/LateStageCapitalism/.
[19] "Let's use paper straws!" */r/collapse*, Reddit, 2021, www.reddit.com/r/collapse/comments/p7wi4c/lets_use_paper_straws/.
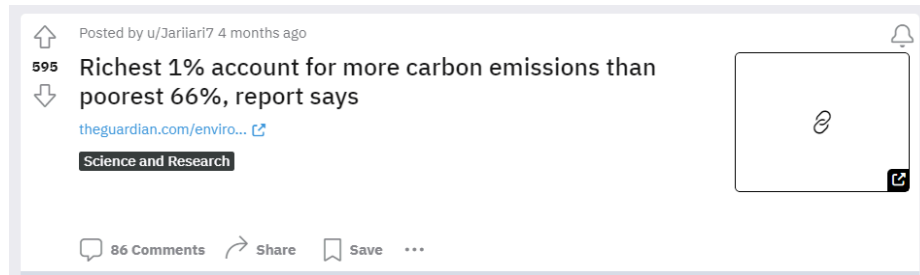
**Figure 3: An Article on Carbon Emissions and Economic Inequality on /r/LateStageCapitalism[20]**

Mixed in with these provocative articles is, of course, misinformation. Figure 4 shows one post from /r/LateStageCapitalism whose title cites an oft-quoted statistic, that 100 companies are responsible for 71% of greenhouse gas emissions.



**Figure 4: Misinformation About Corporate Carbon Emissions on /r/collapse[21]**

[20] "Richest 1% account for more carbon emissions than poorest 66%, report says." *r/collapse*, Reddit, Dec. 2023, www.reddit.com/r/collapse/comments/17zekkf/richest_1_account_for_more_carbon_emissions_than/.

[21] "100 fossil fuel companies: *responsible for 71% of global carbon emissions* ; the media: 'you selfish asthmatics'." *r/LateStageCapitalism*, Reddit, 2023, www.reddit.com/r/LateStageCapitalism/comments/11kgobc/100_fossil_fuel_companies_responsible_for_71_of/.

The original source of this number, a report from the Climate Accountability Institute, never makes such a claim and is grossly misleading.[22] Ultimately, the posts within such doomer communities are either unflinchingly true or give the appearance of unflinching truth, and act to deterritorialize previously held beliefs.

One of the benefits of these online communities is that they are decentralized, aside from a small group of volunteer moderators. These posts often point out and critique hierarchical structures of racism, sexism, and capitalism in striated spaces, making participation or consumption of content feel truly radical. Unfortunately, many of the posts in these communities, including many of the posts which critique the hypocrisy of striated environmental concepts, are still exercises of ressentiment. These posts project subjects' resentment of striated spaces, who expect them to sacrifice their own comforts to save the Earth, while the real culprits are let off the hook. Sharing these acts of hypocrisy complement exaggerations or pessimistic attitudes of the effect of climate, which further project resentment and hostility towards the culprits who are responsible for the destruction of the environment. Within doomer communities there are many posts and threads which document and amplify coverage of environmental disasters, such as Figure 5, which shows a thread in /r/collapse on the East Palestine train derailment with over 2,600 upvotes.

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[22] Griffin, Paul. *CDP Carbon Majors Report 2017*. CDP Worldwide, June 2017.
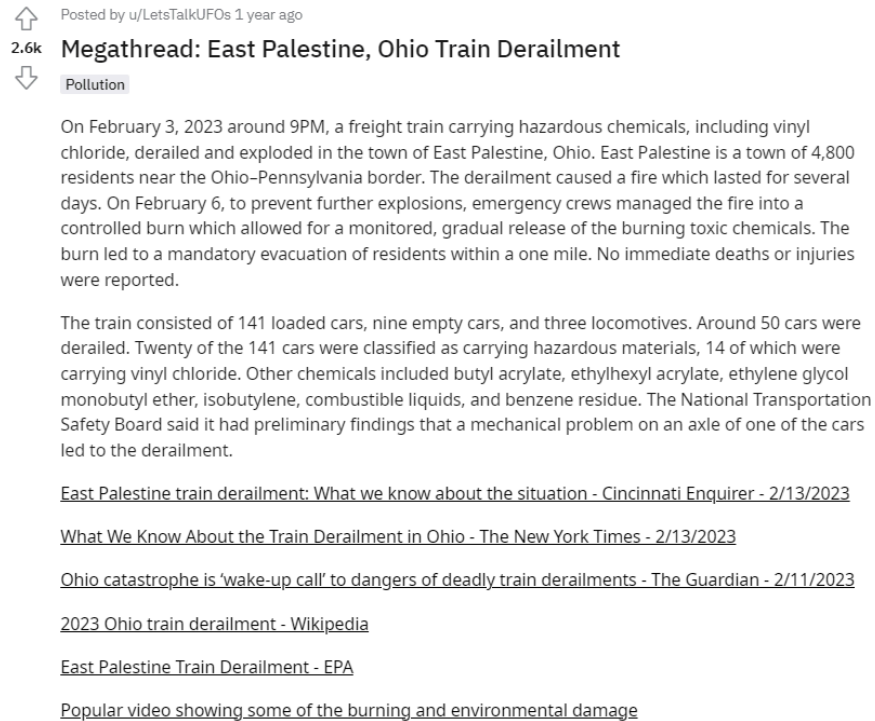
**Figure 5: A Thread on the East Palestine Train Derailment on /r/collapse[23]**

By focusing on systemic hypocrisy and amplifying the coverage of environmental disasters, these communities demonstrate "the pleasure which is felt in inflicting pain or in contemplating it" detailed in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. This is the same dark catharsis which motivated the proliferation of ressentiment within striated spaces,and the strangely addictive doomscrolling which intensifies these forces. These communities, which could be energized by their sadness and liberation from striated spaces are blocked, again, by bad conscience. Frustratingly, these eco-conscious nomads are still separated from what they can do. What is needed, therefore, is an assemblage of eco-conscious nomads who are not shackled to external forces of ressentiment.

The Nietzschean ideal of the sovereign individual is a step in the right direction, but it cannot entirely help with this reflexive impotence. While becoming the master of one's reactive

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[23] "Megathread: East Palestine, Ohio Train Derailment." */r/collapse*, Reddit, Feb. 2023, www.reddit.com/r/collapse/comments/111kd7b/megathread_east_palestine_ohio_train_derailment/

forces is enormously beneficial, it does not bring the individual much closer to solving the climate crisis. An individual's will to power is quantitatively insufficient to overpower the active force of the state and capitalist forces which perpetuate the climate crisis. What is necessary is an assemblage of sovereign individuals, which has the ability to recruit other eco-conscious individuals and enact lasting change without relying on reactive impulses. The result of this could be an environmental active force which embodies its full potential, and which can quantitatively overpower anti-environmental forces. The next section will examine the concepts being developed in this manner.

**4.0 Analyzing Contemporary Environmental Assemblages**

Realizing the ineffectiveness of environmental policies originating from striated spaces, and the debilitating forces of ressentiment in online communities, many nomadic thinkers have attempted to transcend this environmental dichotomy by forming new concepts and environmental assemblages. These concepts aim to push through structural inaction and individual reflexive impotence to provide a new path which can fight climate change and environmental destruction. Ecomodernism, radical hope, and Solarpunk are three such environmental assemblages that will be scrutinized through a Deleuze-Nietzschean lens. These assemblages were chosen not because of their popularity (although all of these philosophies are generally popular even outside of environmental communities), but because of their demonstration of how nomadic concepts can tend towards recapture or annihilation. It will be demonstrated that ecomodernism is a philosophy that is vulnerable to recapture to striated spaces and radical hope is a philosophy which tends toward annihilation and nihilism due to its vulnerability to forces of ressentiment. Solarpunk, while vulnerable to both poles, has the most potential to become a truly active and nomadic assemblage of thought.

**4.1 Ecomodernism**

Ecomodernism is a popular environmental philosophy which aims to use technology to combat and reduce environmental devastation while still maintaining economic growth and high living standards. According to *The Ecomodernist Manifesto*, "Decoupling human well-being from the destruction of nature requires the conscious acceleration of emergent decoupling processes" (Asafue-Adjaye et al. 18). In this case, "decoupling can be driven by both technological and demographic trends and usually results from a combination of the two" (Asafue-Adjaye et al. 11). In other words, separating economic growth from environmental destruction can be done through technological advancement and foreign policy.

Ecomodernism crucially acknowledges that capitalism and laissez-faire economic policies are effectively accelerating climate change. However, they intend to develop a regulated version of capitalism which will not exacerbate these forces, and further use capitalism's strengths to combat climate change itself. Ecomodernism, in their words, refers to "the long-term evolution of social, economic, political, and technological arrangements in human societies toward vastly improved material well-being, public health, resource productivity, economic integration, shared infrastructure, and personal freedom" (Asafue-Adjaye et al. 28). This is a perspective that aims to fundamentally reform forces of consumerism.

Furthermore, ecomodernism recognizes that technological advancement is a powerful tool in combating climate change. The manifesto points out that "most forms of renewable energy are, unfortunately, incapable" of matching predicted energy demand in the future. They "doubt they provide a sound pathway to a zero-carbon low-footprint future" (Asafue-Adjaye et al. 23). Problems in the implementation of renewable energy for national power grids are one such example of a technological roadblock to a zero-carbon future. While renewable energy such

as wind and solar is becoming cheaper and more efficient, it is inherently variable to fluctuations in weather and mismatched energy demand. This means that the implementation of a 100% renewable power grid worldwide would rely on efficient methods of energy storage - which is technology that does not exist yet on a satisfactory scale. Many countries who use 100% renewable energy for their power grid are only able to do so because of their advantageous geography. Iceland, for instance, is able to power their country using only renewable energy thanks to the region's unusually high geothermal activity.[24] Greater investment in technologies related to more efficient energy storage would be supported by proponents of ecomodernism, and would provide proper solutions to problems which stand in the way of a carbon neutral electric grid.

Ecomodernism also recognizes the potential of demographic change in combating climate change and environmental destruction. The consequences of overpopulation have been a perceived concern of certain environmentalists for decades. The logic goes that the more people on Earth there are, the more consumers there will be, and more carbon emissions will result from more consumers. However, a feature of "demographic transition [is that it] that reduces human birth rates as poverty declines" (Asafue-Adjaye et al. 13) According to the ecomodernist, if technology is developed and foreign policy from developed countries which reduces poverty on a global scale is enforced, population growth will be limited, and fewer carbon emissions will follow. Urbanization is another demographic transition that ecomodernists support. After all, "cities occupy just one to three percent of the Earth's surface and yet are home to nearly four billion people" (Asafue-Adjaye et al. 12). If more people move to cities, there will be more space for carbon sinks in the form of reforestation. Furthermore, fewer humans in rural areas will result

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[24] Ragnarsson, Árni, Steingrímsson, Benedikt, and Thorhallsson, Sverrir. "Geothermal Development in Iceland 2015-2019." *Proceedings World Geothermal Congress 202+1, Reykjavik, Iceland, April - October 2021*, International Geothermal Association, 2021.

in less habitat loss and therefore less overall environmental destruction. By manipulating demographic forces through urbanization and reducing global poverty, ecomodernists argue that we can indirectly combat climate change on a massive scale.

At first, ecomodernism may seem like an approach that Deleuze and Guattari would condone. From a Deleuze-Guattarian perspective, there is a fundamental problem with environmental policy and capitalism: the flows of desire which have been let loose by capitalism need to be constrained in some way in order to combat overconsumption and environmental destruction. Desire is the force that must be understood and manipulated through desiring-production to either redirect or repress the desiring-production of mindless consumption. Many of the previously discussed environmental communities aimed to repress such desires by leaning into ressentiment and bad conscience. Environmentalists are discouraged from buying large, fuel inefficient vehicles through ressentiment, rather than through a more desirable alternative. Rather than repressing desire, ecomodernism aims to redirect desire through more appealing alternatives. A chic hybrid or electric truck with a greater range and more horsepower than a conventional gas consuming truck, for instance, would be such a redirection of desire. Tesla is one example of a corporation aiming to redirect desire towards more environmentally friendly options without reducing consumption. Furthermore, shifting pressure off individuals and applying systemic pressure to governments to fund green technological advancements and demographic changes takes the pressure off individuals to save the world themselves. Ressentiment can be avoided altogether.

However, as Deleuze and Guattari would no doubt recognize, the complete adoption of ecomodernism would still be vulnerable to striated forces within and outside of capitalism. This is to say that governments and marketing campaigns cannot redirect all desire to support

environmental initiatives. In the past there have been many meaningful innovations in intensive agriculture, renewable energy, and electric transportation that fall short of implementation. Hybrid and electric cars and private solar panel technology have been available for decades, and their limitation has been cost and consumer adoption, not the availability of such products. Rather than "meaningful climate mitigation… [merely being] fundamentally… a technological challenge" as the manifesto presumes, technological advances are constrained by being both sustainable and fundamentally cheaper and more desirable than existing lifestyles (Asafue-Adjaye et al. 21).

Furthermore, many environmentalists point out that mere technological advancement is not enough to avoid climate catastrophe. One study finds that roughly 5.1 Earths would be needed to match the consumption of the average American.[25] Further, global carbon emissions continue to rise, despite enormous investment into technological advancements by corporations and the US government.[26] Many environmentalists warn that even if investing in technology could effectively combat climate change, it could not do so on a timescale necessary to avert the worst impacts of climate change. The IPCC itself warns against the type of "techno-optimism" that ecomodernism supports.[27] Effectively, the concept of ecomodernism is easily recaptured by the striated space of capitalism. Part of ecomodernism's appeal may be that it is easy to implement by merely reforming and accelerating existing capitalistic systems, which already prioritize technological development and advancement. Ecomodernism is not radical enough to be the nomadic assemblage that Deleuze and Guattari would support.

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[25] Griffin, Paul. *National Footprint and Biocapacity Accounts Report 2022*. Global Footprint Network, 2022.
[26] Ritchie, Hannah, and Roser, Max. "$CO_2$ Emissions." *Our World in Data*, 2020.
[27] Calvin, Katherine, et al.

**4.2 Radical Hope**

Perhaps a different way to counter climate inaction is the ethics of "Radical Hope."

Developed by philosopher Jonathan Lear in his book *Radical Hope, Ethics in the Face of*

*Cultural Devastation*, this concept draws inspiration from Chief Plenty Coups of the Crow Tribe.

Plenty Coups was responsible for leading the Crow during the late 19th Century, when the

United States government was forcing indigenous tribes onto reservations and waging war

against the Sioux. As Lear notes, Plenty Coups had a vision that the traditional way of the Crow

was coming to an end, and that their conception of values, which was tied up in their way of life,

was about to be thrown into chaos. Lear imagines that Plenty Coups argued for a manner of

"open[ing] our imaginations up to a radically different set of future possibilities" (Lear 93).

While ensuring the biological survival of his tribe was his number one priority, the integrity of

some Crow-ness was still necessary, as there is "more to hope for than mere biological survival"

(Lear 93). This involved abandoning virtue tied up in the traditional Crow way of life. Lear

argues that Plenty Coups used hope to guide his tribe through the dissolution of traditional

values. What made Plenty Coup's hope radical was that it transcended his own insight and ability

to understand or imagine what the Crow Tribe would turn into.

In his essay "Climate Change and Radical Hope," Philosopher Byron Williston argues

that this philosophy of radical hope can guide our view of climate change. He points out that

many of our cultural and social behaviors will have to change in the wake of coping with and

curbing climate change. Williston argues that radical hope has the potential to guide the process

of concept creation by informing which cultural staples to keep, and which to put behind.

"Although such hope is warranted, it must take the form of what Jonathan Lear

calls 'radical hope.' That is, given that the cultural and social changes in store for

humanity in the wake of climate catastrophes will likely be very dramatic, we

may not be able to retain many of the thick cultural materials we cherish and take

for granted." (Williston 165).

According to Williston, we may not be certain of what this future culture may look like, but

that's okay. What makes this version of climate optimism radical is that, like Plenty Coup's hope,

it exists regardless of whether or not we can conceive what our socioeconomic future looks like.

This is a philosophy, therefore, that has the potential to generate concepts free from striated

spaces such as neoliberalism, globalism, or consumerism. Williston further distinguishes radical

hope from mere wishful thinking. To Williston, "unlike wishful thinking, rational hope is

evidence-sensitive. To hope for an outcome is therefore to be open to the possibility that events

might render that hope groundless" (Williston 171). Radical hope, in this instance, is a version of

rational hope. With climate change, radical hope may involve using evidence to alter

expectations for what a future with severe climate change would look like, but not giving up all

hope for a better future (or considering the Earth to be completely doomed), as the future itself is

inconceivable.

From a Deleuze-Nietzschean perspective, this guiding philosophy initially seems

laudable. After all, it encourages transcending historical forces and motivating new cultural

forces on a smooth space, which makes it truly nomadic. Furthermore, it expressly aims to

counteract ressentiment within environmental groups. The fear that the Earth is entirely doomed

is rejected, and replaced with the knowledge that the future is unfathomable in many ways, and

that action can be taken to ensure as optimistic a future as possible, just as Plenty Coups did with

the Crow tribe.

However, it could also be argued that Lear's example of Plenty Coups is an obvious example of ressentiment. A Deleuze-Nietzschean perspective might argue that Plenty Coup's approach to radical hope did not go far enough and his tribe was ultimately recaptured by the forces of American assimilation. While the identity of the Crow tribe avoided complete annihilation, Plenty Coups encouraged his tribe to become farmers and lawyers, learn English, and negotiate with the US government on their terms. What resulted doesn't seem so much like a new identity, but the subjugation of a reactive force (the Crow) to an active force (the United States). Contrast this with the reaction of the Crow's rival tribe, the Sioux. The Sioux, led by Chief Sitting Bull, attempted to overpower the active force of the American military through quantitative superiority in the American Indian Wars. While the Sioux initially saw victory at the Battle of Little Bighorn, they eventually saw defeat and ultimate subjugation to the United States. Sitting Bull later visited the Crow reservation and met with Plenty Coups. At the monument to the Battle of Little Bighorn, Sitting Bull challenged Plenty Coups' judgment with the following declaration.

> "Look at that monument. That marks the work of our people: See how the white men treat us and how they treat you. We get one and one half pounds of beef per ration, while you receive but one half pound. You are kept at home and made to work like slaves, while we do not labor and are permitted to ride from agency to agency and enjoy ourselves" (Lear 106).

Lear, surprisingly, considers this a vindication of radical hope. He argues that Plenty Coups grasped a form of courage that Sitting Bull did not, as Sitting Bull's courage relied on the old structural concept of courage. This is an ethical framework that died out when American settlers colonized the Great Plains, and Plenty Coups found a new route to courage that was

unfathomable through this old framework. However, using a Deleuze-Guattarian lens, we could argue that Plenty Coups is producing the repression of desire through their negative desiring-production. Rather than act upon their frustration against the United States government through rebellion, Plenty Coup's path forward involved remaining reactive and repressing this desire. In effect, Plenty Coup's frustration with the United States government was repressed and justified through radical hope. What little the Crow could do as a reactive force was actively undercut and separated by Plenty Coups' repression of desire. Hope wasn't radical in this instance, but rather the vehicle through which Plenty Coups came to desire his own repression.

When separated from the primary example of Plenty Coups, radical hope is simply not prescriptive enough to overcome vulnerability to negative desiring-production. Radical hope can be used in the courageous manner that Williston suggested, "reaching into and re-organizing the minutiae of our lives: where we live, what we eat, what we throw away, how our savings for retirement are invested, how many children we have, and much more" (Williston 181). This application is one which can be truly radical. At the same time, it can be used to justify the 'courage' of denying our own desires in an act of will-to-nothingness. In the context of environmentalism, this could manifest as living an ascetic lifestyle, one that rejects traveling, having children, or using energy from the main grid, for instance, to minimize the responsibility-debt from a carbon footprint. This is a route of repression of desire which is similar to Plenty Coup's story. One way to discriminate between these two applications could be an element of sadness. Deleuze himself argues that sadness plays an integral role for philosophy in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*.

> "When someone asks "what's the use of philosophy?" the reply must be aggressive, since the question tries to be ironic and caustic. Philosophy does not

serve the State or the Church, who have other concerns. It serves no established

power. The use of philosophy is to sadden. A philosophy that saddens no one, that

annoys no one, is not a philosophy. It is useful for harming stupidity, for turning

stupidity into something shameful." (Nietzsche and Philosophy 106)

One enormous difficulty of creating new concepts, particularly in the case of climate change, is

ensuring that this sadness doesn't tend towards nihilism. Otherwise, sadness has the potential to

be enormously productive. This sadness is what motivated Sitting Bull to act and lean into active

resistance. Sadness and radical hope, could result in an active force becoming empowered and

embodying more of what it can do. If this sadness is rejected, it has the potential to be

internalized and manifested as bad conscience. Even worse, radical hope without any motivating

sadness at all could lead to mere wishful thinking and, as a result, stagnation.

Radical hope, according to Nietzsche, Deleuze, and Guattari, is necessary, but not

sufficient, to escape the poles of recapture or self-annihilation. In the case of Plenty Coups, the

concept of radical hope forced the Crow tribe into capture from the striated space of the United

States government. Even when separated from the Crow tribe, radical hope is insufficiently

prescriptivist and particularly vulnerable to self annihilation. That is to say, merely holding on to

hope and rejecting false binaries of thinking within structural systems of thought is not nearly

enough of a framework to generate truly radical ways of thinking. When it comes to the climate

crisis, we are looking for an approach that goes beyond this: not a movement that can be

recaptured by the forces of commodification, but one that can achieve a new identity of its own.

**4.3 Solarpunk**

Solarpunk is a fledgling movement best characterized by a utopian aesthetic of environmentally-infused architecture and technology, and an unconventional socio-political vision centered around justice and degrowth empowered by radical hope. Solarpunk contrasts with a similar aesthetic, cyberpunk, which critiques capitalism through the depiction of inequality in a technologically advanced society. In the words of Isaijah Johnson, "solarpunk points toward a world where problems are solved in the most carbon-efficient and environmentally harmonious way possible" (Johnson 2). The difficulty of defining solarpunk points to one of its strengths: its fundamentally decentralized utopian vision. As solarpunk is a decentralized plurality of artistic and philosophical visions coming together as opposed to a system of thought developed by a single individual, it appears to be much closer to Deleuze and Guattari's concept of an assemblage than any one identity. As such, it is best explored through desirable and undesirable examples, rather than a given definition.

One desirable demonstration of the aesthetic of solarpunk is through the Studio Ghibli movie "Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind." This animated movie takes place on Earth one thousand years following an apocalyptic event which created an enormous and infective toxic jungle spreading across the earth. Nausicaä is a princess of the Valley of the Wind, a rural and utopian community, and faces off against the industrialized kingdom of Tolmekia, who is attempting to eradicate the jungle and its inhabitants, mutant insects called Ohms. Part of what makes "Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind" so compelling is that although it takes place in a world ravaged by environmental destruction, it is a world that is desirable to live in. The Valley of the Wind in which Nausicaä lives is an idyllic village with windmills, countryside, and a harmonious relationship with nature. This is complemented by their many technological

advancements including personal glidera, towering airships, and scientific laboratories infused

with the surrounding flora and fauna (Figure 6).



**Figure 6: Nausicaä's Laboratory in the Valley of the Wind (Miyazaki,** *Nausicaä of the*

*Valley of the Wind***)**

A similar futuristic and eco conscious aesthetic is depicted in the Ghibli Studio movie "Castle in

the Sky." In this movie, two children, Sheeta and Pazu, race against government agents to find a

mythical castle in the sky. This castle is overgrown with a thriving ecosystem of plants and

animals. This ecosystem is maintained by a race of technologically advanced robots who tend to

the environment and protect its inhabitants. The castle, Laputa, is imposing and brutalist, but

with abundant leaves and vines spilling over the crumbling architecture. The infusion of natural

elements with a futuristic and utopian landscape in the Valley of the Wind and Laputa catalyzed

and inspired the more contemporary examples of solarpunk.
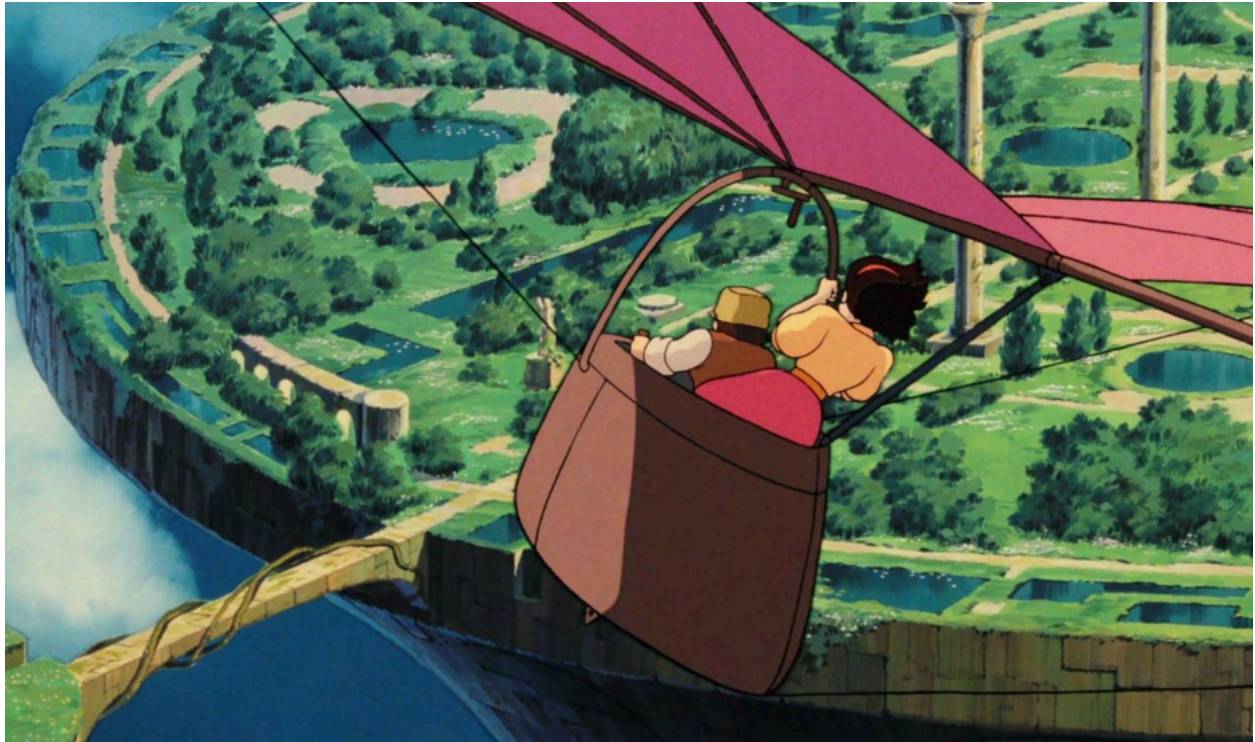
**Figure 7: Sheeta and Pazu fly in their glider over the technologically advanced Laputa (Miyazaki, *Castle in the Sky*)**

Besides its aesthetics, solarpunk's ethics of radical justice is what separates it from other environmental communities. One of the defining example of solarpunk literature is *The Fifth Sacred Thing* by Starhawk. This novel depicts a post-apocalyptic San Francisco, split between a sustainable, solarpunk society to the north, and a theocratic, totalitarian society to the south. The solarpunk society, called "The City of the Refuge," depicts a sustainable, environmentally harmonious community aesthetically reminiscent of Nausicaä's Valley of the Wind. Windmills power the community and small, local farms provide the community with their food. The streets have been dug up and replaced with gardens and streams which run through the city, walkability is encouraged, and all resources are shared between the community members. The community further embraces racial equality, supports LQBTQ rights, and is run by a feminist matriarchy of

nine elderly women. They are contrasted with the dystopic city of "The Stewards," who reinforce conservative Christian norms, operate a surveillance state, and ruthlessly oppress religious and racial minorities. *The Fifth Sacred Thing* finally demonstrates the importance of radical resistance and agency in a final confrontation between the two communities. Another, more recent example of solarpunk literature is the Hugo Award-winning *A Psalm for the Wild-Built* by Becky Chambers, published in 2022. This novella follows Dex, a non-binary monk through a post-industrial society, after robot workers abandoned human society for the wilderness. In the absence of their robot workers, the humans adopt a rural and sustainable lifestyle. Dex travels between these sustainable communities, serving tea to other inhabitants as they travel, and encourages them to be open and emotionally vulnerable with them. *A Psalm for the Wild-Built* touches on themes of rewilding, gender positivity, and community building, in addition to portraying a sustainable solarpunk community. Solarpunk literature has taken the fledgling aesthetic and infused themes of social justice, community building, and economic equality to create a rich system of ethics.

The aesthetic and philosophy of solarpunk has similarly influenced environmental design in the real world. Consider Bosco Verticale, a Milanese skyscraper designed by the Italian architecture firm Boeri Studio.[28] This is a visually striking skyscraper with over 90 species of plants and trees which spill over the building's façade. Not only does this skyscraper emulate the aesthetic of solarpunk through a combination of greenery and harsher features of brutalism, but it encourages urban forestation, increased biodiversity, and the reduction of urban sprawl through dense housing (Figure 8).

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[28] Sanchez, Daniel. "Bosco Verticale / Boeri Studio." *ArchDaily*, ArchDaily, 23 Nov. 2015, www.archdaily.com/777498/bosco-verticale-stefano-boeri-architetti.

**Figure 8: Bosco Verticale**[29]

Furthermore, Bosco Verticale acts as a carbon sink, absorbing roughly 44,000 pounds of

carbon.[30] It also maximizes energy efficiency through passive heating and cooling from the sun

using novel thermal insulation techniques for the skyscraper's exterior cladding. However, there

are several ways in which Bosco Verticale falls short of the solarpunk ideal. For one, the housing

in this skyscraper is incredibly expensive, clocking in at a €5,200 monthly rent for a 3 room flat

as of March 2024.[31] The penthouse itself was sold for over a million euros.[32] This may oppose

aspects of solarpunk which support financial justice and equality. Effectively replicating the

success of Bosco Verticale in accordance with ethics corroborated by other demonstrations of

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[29] "Vertical Forest: Milan." *Stefano Boeri Architetti*, Boeri Studio, 30 May 2023,
www.stefanoboeriarchitetti.net/en/project/vertical-forest/.

[30] Xie, Jenny. "High-Rise Forests in Italy Are Fighting Air Pollution." *The Verge*, Vox Media, LLC, 9 Aug. 2017,
www.theverge.com/2017/8/9/16112758/milan-vertical-forest-stefano-boeri-video.

[31] "3 Room Flat for Rent in via Gaetano de Castillia, 11." *Idealista*, idealista, 4 Mar. 2024,
www.idealista.it/en/immobile/29369553/.

[32] Matteis, Gabriella de. "Bari, per Il Bosco Verticale Fino a 4.200 Euro a Metro Quadro. L'attico Costa Un Milione:
Tre Imprenditori Già Prenotati." *La Repubblica*, la Repubblica, 29 Mar. 2023,
bari.repubblica.it/cronaca/2023/03/29/news/bari_bosco_verticale-394039462/.

solarpunk would involve enormously reducing cost of construction and integration of affordable housing.

Perhaps the town of Arcosanti, designed by Italian architect Paolo Soleri and built in 1970, is a better example of the aesthetic and ethical aims of solarpunk. Like other aesthetic demonstrations of solarpunk, the architecture blends into the surrounding ecosystem in what Soleri dubbed "arcology" (the combination of architecture and ecology).[33] The architecture is dynamic and experimental, with many semi-domes, barrel vaults, and tilt up concrete panels which blend in with the surrounding desert soil (Figure 9).



**Figure 9: Arcosanti's Amphitheater[34]**

The architecture feels reminiscent of futurist aesthetics in the 1960's and 1970's, and was even used as the setting for the science fiction film "Nightfall."[35] Arcosanti is situated in a desert landscape north of the Sonoran desert in Arizona and incorporates water efficient flora through

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[33] "What Is Arcology?: Ideology of Paolo Soleri." *Arcosanti*, The Cosanti Foundation, 6 Dec. 2021, www.arcosanti.org/arcology/.

[34] Sauer, Devan. "Form Festival in Arcosanti Ranked among Best Trips of 2019." *KTAR News*, Bonneville International, 13 Mar. 2019, ktar.com/story/2478360/form-festival-in-arcosanti-ranked-among-best-trips-of-2019/.

[35] Counts, Kyle. "Watching the Nightfall." *Starlog,* 134 ed., Sep. 1988.

drought-resistant xeriscaping. Furthermore, Arcosanti aims to reduce urban sprawl by eliminating roads, maximizing energy efficiency through passive heating and cooling, and providing numerous communal spaces which encourage community building without economic barriers. For now, residency is granted to volunteers and interns who are a part of the Arcosanti project, although the successful proliferation of Arcosanti-like communities has yet to be demonstrated. Despite being created prior to the main thrust of the solarpunk movement, Arcosanti has the potential to serve as a model for future demonstrations of solarpunk's aesthetic and social aims.

There are, of course, implementations of the solarpunk aesthetic which fail to live up to its radical namesake. One such instance is that of Marvel's blockbuster hit *Black Panther*. The aesthetic of this movie lies at the intersection of solarpunk and afrofuturism. Afrofuturism is itself an aesthetic and genre of speculative fiction which aims to "explore futurist themes in black cultural production and the ways in which technological innovation is changing the face of black art and culture" (Yaszek 42). The exploration of social justice within Afrofuturism overlaps with solarpunk's ethical aim of radical justice, and these aesthetics complement one another. In this way, the speculative fiction of Black Panther does not fail in an aesthetic sense. The urban landscape and architecture of Wakanda is beautiful, sustainable, and attractive (Figure 10). Wakanda is rich in the fictional element of vibranium, which provides a carbon-free energy source for all of its citizens. Furthermore, the success of Wakanda is a result of its protectionist policies, which strictly limits the export of vibranium. The city is both integrated with the surrounding savannah landscape, and incorporates traditional African architecture, motifs, and cultural rituals.

**Figure 10: Wakanda's Solarpunk Skyline (Coogler, *Black Panther*)**

Rather, it is the context surrounding the aesthetic that fails to live up to the radical vision of

solarpunk. The antagonist of *Black Panther*, Killmonger (played by actor Michael B. Jordan),

embodies many values of racial justice, but the movie portrays the means with which he attempts

to assert black identity to be too radical. In the movie, it is revealed that Killmonger's mother

was a victim of wrongful incarceration and died in prison, while his father was killed by a

mercenary at a young age. Killmonger's experience with racial injustice motivates his plan to

steal Wakanda artifacts from the British Museum in order to return to Wakanda. After taking

control of the Wakanda royal throne, Killmonger announces his plan to initiate a black global

revolution using Wakanda's influence. Upon taking the throne, Killmonger delivers a monologue

laying out his "evil" plan.

> "You know, where I'm from, when black folks started revolutions, they never had
>
> the firepower or the resources to fight their oppressors. Where was Wakanda?

Yeah, all that ends today. We got spies embedded in every nation on Earth"

(Jordan, *Black Panther*).

While Killmonger's motivations are certainly sympathetic, his extremist plans and murder of innocent people throughout the film are aimed at turning the audience against Killmonger, and supporting the status quo as a result. What's also troubling is that Michael B. Jordan admitted that his portrayal of the character of Killmonger drew influence from real-life black revolutionaries like Malcolm X and Fred Hampton.[36] T'Challa, the protagonist, contrasts with Killmonger, valuing compassion and non-violence above all else, and only using force when absolutely necessary. Unlike Killmonger, however, T'Challa has no radical means of combating black inequality and oppression. T'Challa's policies involve further collaboration with the United States through the Avengers and the CIA. To Killmonger, T'Challa is merely defending the status quo, a world rife with systemic racism and economic inequality. His view of violent justice stands opposed to T'Challa's valiant defense of the status quo. However, it is systemic change that fuels Killmonger's actions, and insistence towards non-violence and a philosophy of ressentiment which empower T'Challa. T'Challa's non-violence and commitment eventually pay off, and T'Challa is hailed as the King of Wakanda by the end of the movie. The actions of Killmonger, on the other hand, eventually result in his demise. The framing of the characters of Killmonger and T'Challa appears to be friendly to western influences in Africa. In fact, in the film, a white CIA agent named Everett Ross is initially caught trying to smuggle vibranium out of Wakanda, but is eventually redeemed by T'Challa towards the end of the film. This symbolism is troubling, especially given the fact that the CIA has influenced several coups in Africa, in part to secure natural resources for the United States. One such example is the uranium

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[36] Eells, Josh. "The 'Black Panther' Revolution." *Rolling Stone*, Penske Media Corporation, 25 June 2018, www.rollingstone.com/tv-movies/tv-movie-features/the-black-panther-revolution-199536/.

mines of Shinkolobwe in the Congo during the cold war. The United States had previously used the uranium from these mines for the two atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and had a vested interest in ensuring that the uranium from these mines did not end up in Soviet hands. As a result, the CIA launched a covert political program which assassinated the democratically elected prime minister Patrice Lumumba and eventually replaced his government with a pro-western totalitarian regime.[37] This symbolism certainly doesn't seem to match solarpunk's vision of sociopolitical justice.

The vision of Wakanda has inspired the construction of Akon City, an eco-friendly city in Senegal bankrolled by Senegalese singer Akon. He raised over $6 billion to construct this city and revealed that the city would rely on a new cryptocurrency (Akoin) for its central currency. Using cryptocurrency to fund and run Akon City would increase reliance on financial systems which have previously and systemically exploited Senegal, and which have worsened the climate crisis. Furthermore, the city requires the confiscation of the property of citizens of the town of Mbodiène. Many Senegalese citizens whose land was confiscated for Akon City have yet to be compensated, and one of Akon's former business partners says that the city itself is likely a scam.[38] The legacy of Akon City demonstrates the vulnerability of the solarpunk aesthetic to be captured and separated from its ethics of social and economic justice.

When solarpunk succeeds, it is largely due to its ability to evade capture from striated spaces. What makes *Castle in the Sky* and Arcosanti unique and exciting as an aesthetic, for example, is its presentation as an alternative to the status quo. These are visions which both create intense feelings of desire, and can escape the apparatus of capital which is a driving force

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[37] Scipes, Kim. "'White Malice: The CIA and the Covert Recolonization of Africa' by Susan Williams, (Public Affairs Press, 2021). A Review Essay." *Class Race and Corporate Power*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2023.
[38] Khan, Aiana J. "Akon City: Tumbleweed Rolls through Site of Rapper's Wakanda-Inspired Dream." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 4 Dec. 2023, www.theguardian.com/music/2023/dec/04/akon-city-tumbleweed-rolls-through-site-of-rappers-wakanda-inspired-dream.

behind environmental destruction. *Black Panther* and Akon City, on the other hand, threaten to maintain the status quo while merely providing an illusion of change. As a fledgling movement and aesthetic, solarpunk has the potential to maintain the status quo or subvert it. To understand how solarpunk can be cultivated to subvert the status quo and become a vehicle for real change, it should be reimagined as what Deleuze and Guattari called a philosophy of becoming.

**4.4 Solar Punk as a Philosophy of Becoming**

To explore the potential of what solarpunk can become without constraining it to a limiting identity, it will be framed in the context of the Deleuze-Guattarian concept of a *haecceity.* While definitions and identities are characterized by a static philosophy of "being," haecceities are characterized by a nomadic philosophy of "becoming." *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, and particularly *A Thousand Plateaus*, explores these philosophies of "becoming." Philosopher Baruch de Spinoza, whose metaphysics inspired much of Deleuze's work, provides one way of understanding the importance of "becoming."

In *Ethics*, Spinoza argued that virtue (and power) lies in the ability to affect others and remain unaffected. Thus, he expounds the importance of what he dubs as **affects**. According to Spinoza, affects are "modifications of the body, whereby the active power of the said body is increased or diminished, aided or constrained, and also the ideas of such modifications" (Spinoza 74). Essentially, affects are properties which allow a given body to increase their influence on their surrounding environment. To Deleuze and Guattari, these "affects are becomings" (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* 256). The value of developing philosophies of becoming, at least on their terms, is because philosophies of becoming directly "increase or diminish [a body's] power to act" (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* 256). Deleuze and Guattari centralize the importance of affects by defining a type of assemblage that is individuated as a

result of its affects. This is an "assemblage that is called a **haecceity**. A haecceity is "defined by… speeds and affects, independently of forms and subjects, which belong to another plane" (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* 262). In other words, rather than defining a body based on definitional forms, haecceities are defined by relational movement and their effect on other bodies. Further, haecceities are events: that is to say that haecceities have their own unique time frame which is directly related to its relational movement and effect on other bodies. A hurricane is one haecceity that can demonstrate this relativity of time: a hurricane is formed and defined by its relational motion (quantified by newscasters as categories) and its affects. Even once the devastating winds of the hurricane die down, the affects of the hurricane are still present. Homes are destroyed, families experience financial and emotional hardship, and the haecceity continues.

What distinguishes a haecceity from our previous definition of an assemblage? Professor Dave Harris argues that a haecceity "is one type of assemblage or event… that produces a particularly well-individuated distinctive outcome. Something that seems to be distinctive, even unique" (Harris). Contrast the haecceity of a hurricane with the previously discussed assemblage of the savanna ecosystem. The outcome of the hurricane is distinct from the status quo, and results in human suffering, widespread ecosystem disruption, and economic devastation. There is no clearly individuated outcome of the savannah ecosystem besides its perpetual existence and evolution.  We can even see a correlation between many active and reactive forces of Deleuze's Nietzsche and the concept of haecceity illustrated in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Many political assemblages, including the environmental movement, intend to develop such individuated outcomes, and can therefore be analyzed as haecceities. Solarpunk itself could be reconsidered as an assemblage which intends to produce the well-individuated outcome of preventing climate

change through its affects. As mentioned prior, Deleuze and Guattari would likely argue that a bicycle's potential is limited by an identity based around "being," and has its potential amplified when considered as an assemblage characterized by its many "becomings." Likewise, to maximize its affects and sustain its power as an active force, it's important to characterize and shape solarpunk as a haecceity.

As climate change appears increasingly complex and unavoidable, it's inevitable that the discourse around climate change will morph and evolve. A single ethical and aesthetic framework will not suffice: rather, a metaphilosophy on the formation of environmental concepts is needed. In their book "What Is Philosophy?" Deleuze and Guattari argue that philosophy is not merely an act of pursuing knowledge, but that it is a creative endeavor involving the creation of concepts. "Philosophy is not a simple art of forming, inventing, or fabricating concepts, because concepts are not necessarily forms, discoveries, or products. More rigorously, philosophy is the discipline that involves *creating* concepts" (Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy*? 5). Solarpunk, when maintained as a haecceity, is less constrained to the types of ethical and aesthetic concepts which it can encapsulate, and therefore has the potential to create and experiment with a wide variety of concepts. This would maximize both solarpunk's influence and its ability to adapt to a constantly shifting cultural environment.

While the ethics of solarpunk are important to maintain and expand upon, it is similarly important to maintain and expand upon the aesthetic of solarpunk to maintain its active potential and maximize its affects. Nietzsche himself held artists in high regard, and considered artistic creation a practice of the affirmative will to power. Deleuze acknowledges Nietzsche's realization of the artist's active potential.

"According to Nietzsche, we have not yet understood what the life of an artist means: the activity of this life serves as a stimulant to the affirmation contained in the work of art itself, to the will to power of the artist as artist… In Nietzsche, 'we the artists' = 'we the seekers after knowledge of truth' = 'we the inventors of new possibilities of life'" (Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 102-3).

The existing aesthetics of solarpunk lay out new, exciting possibilities of life, and often precede the ethics of solarpunk. As a seeker of the knowledge of truth, the artist seeks awareness of what they can do as an active force in order to prevent themselves from being separated from these affects. If solarpunk were defined in a traditional manner, through a constraining definition, these possibilities would be limited, and the subject might be limited in their knowledge as to what they can do as an active force. As a haecceity, however, solarpunk can use optimistic artistic interpretations of the future to maximize its affects. Thus, from this exploration of the knowledge of truth, each new artistic creation of solarpunk becomes an invention of another possible way of being, which intensifies or extends new possibilities of life as an affirmative will to power.

To keep the solarpunk haecceity united with its affects, ressentiment should be prevented from taking hold. While solarpunk is not nearly as vulnerable to ressentiment as most other environmental assemblages, ressentiment and bad conscience still threaten to grip individuals within the movement. One way to prevent this is through the ideal of Nietzsche's sovereign individual. The sovereign individual, as mentioned previously, is an individual who only reacts on their own reactive forces. This individual only arises at the endpoint of culture. Once culture has sufficiently "trained" the individual, the individual acts on their own judgment, their own impulses, rather than the rules imposed by the culture. In the context of solarpunk, a community could first encourage its individuals to value several important principles including sustainability,

justice, and radical change. Rather than impose a prescriptive dogma enforced by dogmatic-priests, the group could cultivate and encourage different opinions that revolve around these central principles. The commitment to these principles is not demonstrated by following such a dogma, but through creation itself. Thus, difference proliferates, and bad conscience is limited. Thus begins a positive feedback loop: a liberating haecceity creates sovereign individuals, and sovereign individuals create a liberating haecceity.

What makes solarpunk appealing from a Deleuze-Nietzschean perspective is that it provides a pathway to radical change without appealing to forces of ressentiment and bad conscience. The creativity and utopian optimism of solarpunk make it a productive and active force which stands out against the comparatively reactive ethics of ecomodernism and radical hope. However, as demonstrated by poor implementations of solarpunk in *Black Panther* and Akon City, it still risks exhibiting reactive behavior. What risks separating the movement of solarpunk from what it can do (and thereby turning it into a reactive force) is the separation of its aesthetic from its radical ethics. This is similar to a commonly used tactic known as "greenwashing," which is exemplified when "presenting a misleading green message" that is incompatible with an organization's environmental practices (Seele and Gatti 239). This is a separation that is harder to capture with the previously developed Deleuze-Nietzschean framework of ressentiment, but easier to conceptualize through Deleuze and Guattari's micropolitics of desire in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Deleuze and Guattari note that "the introduction of innovations always tends to be delayed beyond the time scientifically necessary, until the moment when the market forecasts justify their exploitation on a large scale" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* 234). This is all too familiar a sentiment when it comes to capitalism's response to climate change. Even worse, the sluggish response of innovation drives

home the thought that the only solution to climate change is a market solution. After all, we're too late to reverse the effects of climate change. Only the forces of capitalism can adapt quickly enough to fix the problem.

Deleuze and Guattari would argue that capitalism alone cannot provide lasting and substantial environmental change due to its inherent behavior. They point out that "capitalism [is] the relative limit of every society inasmuch as it… reterritorializes the deterritorialized flows" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* 266). This is to say that capitalism deterritorializes cultural norms and reterritorializes flows of desire into profitable assemblages. One example of this is the capitalization of rock and roll in the 1950's and 1960's, which subverted conservative norms in dance and music, and reterritorialized the industry to profit off the desires of the younger generation. Thus, new flows of desire produce profitability for those who are willing to take advantage of it. However, capitalism still relies on State and religious apparatuses to produce the cultural norms that it aims to subvert. What is produced is an inverse flow that Deleuze and Guattari call **anti-production**.

> "On the one hand, [anti-production] alone is capable of realizing capitalism's supreme goal, which is to produce lack in the large aggregates, to introduce lack where there is always too much, by effecting the absorption of overabundant resources. On the other hand, it alone doubles the capital and the flow of knowledge with a capital and an equivalent flow of stupidity that also effects an absorption and a realization, and that ensures the integration of groups and individuals into the system. Not only lack amid overabundance, but stupidity in the midst of knowledge and science" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* 235-6).

Deleuze and Guattari aren't merely being subversive and targeting when they use the word 'stupidity.' According to philosopher Ian Buchanan, what is meant by stupidity is "the manufacture of consent, the constant flow of 'reasons to believe in this world' (to adapt a phrase from Deleuze's books on cinema)" (Buchanan 114). Anti-production thereby produces both lack and reasons to believe in capitalism. Anti-production is what is created by capitalism that results from its environmental destruction. The consent this anti-production manufactures is the belief that capitalism can fix the problem it created in the first place. Radical change outside of capitalism is too disruptive, too frightening. Instead, capitalist enterprises can use carbon capture and carbon credits, for example, to solve the problem it created. The 'lack' that is created by anti-production is the lack of eco-conscious products (hybrid and electric vehicles, paper straws, etc.) that the forces of capitalism can provide and profit from. In the eyes of many people, capitalism begins to replace politics when creating lasting change.

From a Deleuze-Guattarian point of view, capitalism recaptures the frustration caused by the destruction it produced in the first place. Furthermore, it relies (to some degree) on the continued creation of anti-production, and therefore environmental devastation, to continue extracting profit. Solarpunk's system of ethics aims to destroy the continued production of anti-production which capitalism relies upon. Therefore, it is desirable for corporations to profit off of solarpunk's flows of desire without disrupting the production of anti-production. This is the mechanism by which greenwashing functions, and in doing so separates solarpunk from what it can do. A greenwashed solarpunk continues to be an active force, but only succeeds in bringing minimum environmental change, while generating maximum profits to the capitalistic apparatus. Nonetheless, it may feel to subjects who consume this greenwashed solarpunk that

they are contributing to radical change. To provide a permanent solution to climate change, solarpunk (and other radical assemblages) must operate outside of the apparatus of capitalism.

**5.0 Conclusion**

Through the lens of *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, it is evident that ressentiment and bad conscience are major culprits of climate inaction. Even further, through the lens of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, there exists a strong claim that solarpunk has the potential to become an environmental movement which can resist being internally limited by such ressentiment and bad conscience. By focusing on its "becomings," there are many methods through which solarpunk can maintain its radical potential. Unfortunately, it's still not entirely clear where this leaves the individual subject. In other words, how can these conclusions reveal what actions the *individual* can take to actualize their potential in the face of environmental devastation?

Using this framework, the individual has three novel ways to affirm this environmental potential: Identification of ressentiment, cultivation of community, and creativity. The identification of ressentiment acts as a sort of immunologic defense of doomerism. If the subject is able to detect, for instance, another subject attempting to inflict pain through environmental pessimism, they will be able to avoid internalizing this ressentiment as bad conscience. As bad conscience is avoided, the subject is slowly reconnected with what they can do, and their active potential increases. The cultivation of community, preferably offline, is another way the individual can maximize their potential for radical change. Community, particularly organized as an assemblage, adds to the potential of an active force. The more individuals that join an assemblage, so long as it is not separated from what it can do, increases its quantitative value and means it is more likely to exhibit active behavior. An individual can cultivate community by engaging with community spaces and existing groups or through creating their own. Creativity

can be harnessed through an existing assemblage, such as solarpunk, but it can manifest in nearly any form. Creation can involve a traditional artistic medium such as painting, music, or dance, or it can involve the creation of new concepts through philosophy. Whatever the medium or the method, the individual should aim for creative expression in any way. It is through creative expression that the many "becomings" of a haecceity can be explored, scrutinized, critiqued, and proliferated. This creativity breaks the constraints of static definitions, keeping environmental movements adaptable, effective, and continually in touch with their active potential. These prescriptions, without relying on striated forces or anxiety-inducing feelings of ressentiment, forge a way for the individual to effectively pursue lasting environmental change.

**6.0 Glossary[39]**

<u>Affects:</u> The Spinozan concept of a feature of a body which increases that body's ability to influence other bodies.

<u>Anti-production:</u> The process by which capitalism produces lack, and manufactures the consent to solve the problems that capitalism caused

<u>Assemblage:</u> A plurality of entities that is not reducible to a single identity or definition

<u>Bad Conscience:</u> The Nietzschean concept wherein ressentiment is internalized by the subject through a fiction of debt such that they are separated from their capabilities.

<u>Covert-Priest:</u> A subject of an anti-environmental assemblage, such as an oil and gas corporation, that uses the fiction of debt and bad conscience to undermine the effectiveness of environmental movements from within.

<u>Dogmatic-Priest:</u> A subject within an environmental community who projects pain, in the form of ressentiment, onto other subjects. They may also ensure obedience to cultural laws within the community (avoiding plastic straws, avoiding meat, etc.)

<u>Desiring-Production:</u> A model of desire as a force that produces the subject and its objects, rather than merely a trait of a subject

<u>Deterritorialize:</u> The process through which relationships between given entities are dissolved

<u>Excitations:</u> The typological concept of what unites our consciousness with our behavior

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[39] While Deleuze and Guattari discourage static definitions of their concepts, this glossary is aimed at giving the reader a starting point with which to understand their use

Haecceity: A type of assemblage (an event) which is defined by its affects and its relative movement

Machine: Deleuze-Guattarian concept of the atomic elements of assemblages

Nomads: Subjects which occupy smooth spaces and create non-hierarchical assemblages of thought

Responsibility-Debt: Debt projected by a reactive force, which relies on a fiction established by culture

Responsibility-Guilt: The internalized object of responsibility-debt in the form of pain

Ressentiment: The Nietzschean concept of resentment or frustration which a subject aims at its perceived cause

Reterritorialize: The process through which relationship between deterritorialized entities are reformed.

Smooth Space: A conceptual plane defined by its dynamic, non-hierarchical assemblages of thought

Striated Space: A conceptual plane defined by its static, hierarchical assemblages of thought

Traces: The typological concept of what unites our memory with our behavior

Will to Power: The Nietzschean concept of the individual will, or drive, that motivates the actions of subjects

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