This is a preview: the first nine completed entries from an as-yet untitled project. It pursues the broadest possible implementation of what John Moore characterized as "the abolition of the totality, of life structured by governance and coercion, of power itself in all its multiple forms."[1] Elsewhere, I have characterized this totality as the pacified social field, where both obedience and resistance to given power structures of any kind (repressive, productive, and otherwise) manifest as so many iterated gestures. That is, both the routine maintenance of everyday existence and the political deviations from such maintenance which are required to bring it back to equilibrium operate by forcing, cajoling, or convincing bodies to iterate gestures. This is why neither left radicalism (including anarchism) nor populism (including fascism) can bring real change: they too iterate and reiterate the gestures required for society to stagger onward.

Anarchy must constitute a total contestation of this pacified social field. And as the pacified social field manifests in each iterated gesture our bodies make, twenty-four hours a day, so the contestation must be implemented in each gesture of our bodies, twenty-four hours a day. This broadest possible attack must encompass everything: every movement of our bodies, every word we utter, every act we make. Every word of our language implements a set of gestures which are iterations of power and control in everyday life. Thus every word must be contested to uncover the gestures underneath it and how power manifests within them.

The project previewed here therefore takes on the same shape in destroying the current pacified social field as the field's earliest manifestation. At the inception of the long process of Medieval world-building which laid the foundations for what we now call Western civilization stood a dictionary. This dictionary is now called Abrogans, after its first entry, and was written in the eighth or ninth century in the Frankish kingdom. It consists of a series of glosses by which Latin terms used in scripture were translated into the emerging vernacular.[2] With this dictionary, the building of a new pacified social field, the current Western one, could begin. Far from merely appropriating Latin phrases, the Abrogans and its successors set early Medieval everyday life on a completely different footing, starting a development by which a new type of world emerged, the Medieval-Modern one which we still inhabit.

Just as building the pacified social field began everywhere – in every word of the new dictionary setting the stage for new thought and institutions – so demolishing the pacified social field needs to begin everywhere.

1   John Moore, Anarchist Speculations (Berkeley: Ardent Press, 2016), 5.

2   J. Knight Bostock, A Handbook on Old High German Literature (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 82-87.

While, therefore, the outward form of the project previewed here is that of a dictionary, the purpose of each entry is not to explain or exemplify each word, but to demolish them. Each of them, therefore, comes in three parts. The first part of each entry concerns the word itself in the way one would expect from a classical dictionary; however, the first part is designed to show that, and why, the word is meaningless. In what follows, the terms "algorithm", "love", "property", "tree", "nature", "compassion", "authority", "cloud", and "obligation" are firstly all shown to have no meaning – no denotative sense, no referent, no coherence. As each term operates differently, there is no unified method here, though one might characterize the demolitions as 'skeptical' – except that the demolition's purpose is not merely to show that knowledge is impossible.

 Far from it: once it is established that each term means nothing, the second part of each entry examines how and in what ways the words continue to be used anyway. Inhabiting the ruins of language in this way allows unearthing the gestures hidden underneath each word. These gestures are how the pacified social field manifests: unthinkingly using the words, we iterate their underlying gestures, and allow power to emerge within our lives. Where part one of each entry removes the lid, so to speak, part two exposes the terrain of contestation in each word, and how power manifests within it.

 Consequently, the third part of each entry performs the attack itself. Invoking the Anti-Alphabet as a pathway towards the abolition of the power relations implemented in language and its underlying gestures, each third part explores the ways in which the animal- and plant-letters pave the way towards the complete undoing of both the word and its implementation in everyday life. For each term, there are more than one pathways, and not all of them can be explored here. But each word does offer such pathways, and the Anti-Alphabet helps uncover them. The third part of each entry traces the movements by which the power relations hidden within each word can be dissolved in their entirety.

 Total contestation means contestation in every aspect of everyday life, and this means contestation in (and of) every word of everyday language. Moving from language to gestures, and from gestures to dissolution, this project points us to the continuous unfolding within which the future primitive can dwell.

Contents:

There's no such thing as an _algorithm_, as this is a meaningless term. For the meaning it purports to have is impossible, namely, a finite sequence of instructions to solve a problem such that "a computing agent, presented with a statement of the problem, obeys the instructions of the algorithm and eventually produces an answer."[3]

Firstly, there can be no such finite sequence. For any such sequence must also include the sequences unpacking its constituent terms. Thus if the problem to be solved is calculating two plus two, there must also be a sequence for implementing what "calculating" means, and what "adding" means. (This is regardless of whether an algorithm requires being implemented, on which we can remain agnostic here to strengthen the term as much as possible before we knock it down.[4]) And for each such unpacking, and also for each implementation if this is indeed required for an algorithm, a finite series of steps is needed in turn. But each of those steps must in turn be unpacked and possibly also implemented, and this requires a series of steps in turn. And each of those requires steps as well, and so on and so on. So even if we granted that there might, at first glance, be finite sequences of instructions to begin with, the steps of these sequences themselves proliferate endlessly, and the supposedly finite sequence never actually emerges.

But we need not grant this, as a supposed algorithm can also never actually get done, let alone solve a problem. That is, an algorithm requires a halting condition of some kind, and such a condition can only consist of a check as to whether the algorithm actually has reason to halt. This is true regardless of whether halting means solving the original problem. Solving a problem requires ascertaining that the problem was actually solved – even just by stating as much on a screen. Halting without solving, too, requires a condition (say, an error must occur), and this likewise must be checked for. Now, both of these scenarios require instructions of their own. But these instructions are in turn subject to the endless proliferation of steps, sub-steps, and sub-sub-steps discussed above. Even if a finite series of steps was possible, therefore, the halting check showing that the problem was solved likewise never gets performed. Nor does any check as to whether the algorithm halts for a different reason. No so-called algorithm ever reaches its desired end, nor any end, and even if it did, the algorithm showing that it solved the problem it set out to solve likewise never reaches its desired

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3   Peter Denning, Jack Dennis, and Joseph Qualitz, Machines, Languages, and Computation (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1978), 475, who also state that the formal proof of an algorithm is its implementation by a Turing machine; this re: the next footnote.

4   It seems that an algorithm requires implementation, at least if it ever to leave the realm of pure conceptual thinking; see Rapaport, "Implementation is semantic interpretation," Monist 82.1 (1999), 109. One might further ask if not even a merely conceived algorithm is, in some sense, already implemented.

end, nor any end. There is no finite series of steps, nor one solving a problem or otherwise halting; that is, there is no such thing as an algorithm.

Nonetheless, the term "algorithm" continues to be used fraudulently. As is well known, this goes significantly beyond those uses which might perhaps look harmless, in engineering and computational logic – although they, too, are anything but harmless. Widespread nonsense attaches to constructs such as "search engine algorithm" (spawning "search engine optimization," which is more akin to alchemical searches for the philosophers' stone than anything else), "social media algorithm" (the basis for social engineering on staggering scales, both for and against "the algorithm"), or "predictive algorithm" (from which so-called artificial intelligence emerged). All three of these share with their seemingly innocuous brethren a fixation on chopped-up views of the world, myopically separating it into 'problems' and 'tasks' that have 'solutions', without ever asking what those are, where they come from, and whom they serve. The concept of "algorithm", then, reinforces the rule of instrumental reason which posits that finite steps can solve anything, and whatever they cannot solve – whatever is neither finite nor capable of being 'solved' – is just noisy nonsense. Thus the world of the algorithm is a techno-fascist world where "each activity is merely a tool"[5] and where each such tool "lends itself as well to the uses of the adversaries as of the defenders of the traditional humanitarian values"[6] – or any values, including transvalued ones, for that matter.

Reading continuously, therefore, the discrete notion of "algorithm" must be destroyed further, and then becomes vulture, fathom, plant-moisture and snake, cormorant, and vapor and thorn. For "algorithm" is destroyed when it is dissolved into its constituent materiality, without which it is nothing and upon which it is merely imposed discreteness. Continuously, "algorithm" is implemented by material computing technology, so reducing it to this is the first step; once this is done, the underlying material technology can be dissolved towards the continuous unfolding.

Thus "algorithm" is, at first, really just the infinite Turing tape as logical (that is, organizational) principle, which is really just endlessly proliferating electric differentials across microprocessing units (including, as one of them, the supposedly readable op code), which are really just etchings into silicone, and vaporous distribution of patterns within these etchings, which, finally, are really all just

5 Max Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason (New York: Continuum, 2004), 25.
6 Ibid, 17.

alienations from the slow, nearly organic growth of silicone crystals. Bringing us there, and then beyond, 𓅰 cormorant governs the destruction of "algorithm" and implements it as a movement towards its final recession into the continuous unfolding by various stages, into the movement of crystalline growth that renders the ultimate presupposition of "algorithm" null and void – discreteness, manifesting here as the boundary between life and non-life.

On the path there, 𓅰 cormorant marshals the other constituents of the continuous destruction of "algorithm" to dissolve its discreteness. Thus the "algorithm" is supposedly a finite section of the infinite Turing tape. But this tape is movement, not entity; trodding of a path, not the path itself, and is thus that which never ceases not to write itself. It never ceases, not because it is infinitely long, but because it's generative; and it doesn't write itself, but its "content", the values on its surface. But this means that it is not, as an organizational principle, a dead tape, but an alienated form of a living path which 𓅰 cormorant helps us uncover as 𓆑 fathom, unspooling and becoming ground, not like Ariadne's in the labyrinth, which becomes a map and alienated the labyrinth into a terrain, but like a path through high grass, parting just enough and then closing back up elastically. Thus 𓆑 fathom is the generative activity of hoof and shoe hardening the soil, and yet also that of root and overgrowth loosening it back up. "Algorithm", receding into Turing tape, furhter recedes into 𓆑 fathom, and from there disappears into closing path.

In necessary symbiosis, the read/write head corresponding to the Turing tape dissolves into living unfolding as well, and becomes 𓅐 vulture, devouring tape/fathom output and excreting tape/fathom input. As movement of hovering over tape and pecking, 𓅐 vulture is thus the generative dissolution of "content", like 𓆑 fathom is for tape; both part of this aspect of the recession of "algorithm" into continuous unfolding.

Nothing remains of "algorithm" in the future primitive, then, not even these faint traces of what once was Turing tape and read/write head, a Turing machine's infrastructure that once implemented "algorithm". Guided by 𓅰 cormorant, tape becomes 𓆑 fathom and head becomes 𓅐 vulture, and we can move from "algorithm" to tape and head, and then to 𓆑 fathom and 𓅐 vulture, and from them into the continuous unfolding beyond all language and all discrete being.

And ⟨cormorant⟩ cormorant also helps us destroy "algorithm" in other ways.

⟨plant-moisture⟩ plant-moisture and ⟨snake⟩ snake are the continuous counterparts of electric differentials on microprocessing units. For these do not manifest, as the concept of "algorithm" would require, in a discrete an orderly fashion as individual amplitudes, but are rather like the surface of an ocean, with endlessly rippling differentials in all directions, forming, at any point, a hypothetical surface with numerous different levels. Having moved from the orderly "algorithm" to the chaos of such proliferating differentials, we can destroy the former further by moving from the latter to the unfolding of the water – to literal surface with constantly changing levels in rivers, lakes, and oceans.

Through ⟨plant-moisture⟩ plant-moisture, therefore, we once again reach the continuous unfolding in a gradual destruction of "algorithm"; first its term, then its material implementation, then its underlying gestures.

Simultaneously, we dissolve the tape here, too, as its logical and thus organizational existence here becomes ⟨snake⟩ snake. Implementing the differential between ⟨plant-moisture⟩ plant-moisture and the earth of the silicone wafer on which "algorithm" supposedly plays out, tapes becomes generative slither, undoing its solidity as an entity and dissolving into movement.

The same, finally, happens to the paths on which microprocessing values are implemented. For ⟨cormorant⟩ cormorant guides us to dissolve these, too, first into their generative movements – that is, into ⟨thorn⟩ thorn to etch and ⟨vaporous distribution⟩ vaporous distribution to create paths – and from there into the continuous unfolding, where ⟨thorn⟩ thorn and ⟨vapor⟩ vapor both become part of the living undifferentiation of plant-being.

In the end, nothing remains of "algorithm", the complete destruction of this concept moving through the dissolution of its underlying material principles, and the dissolution of their underlying generative movements in turn, to the continuous unfolding of crystalline growth.

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There is no such thing as <u>love</u>, and no-one has ever felt any; the term is meaningless.

It is said to be possible to feel both love and affection for any given object, at any point for any length of time. Countless examples seem to corroborate this. This means that love is distinguished from affection neither by the length of time that it prevails, nor by the object of affection. What remains is a distinction solely by the depth of

affection, the intensity of the feeling. Thus you can love sports as much as you love your husband or wive or your car or concubine; what matters is only that the feeling is more intense than mere affection, that it goes deeper.

But this presupposes the very point at issue, namely, that "love" is a meaningful concept and that it is distinct from affection. How does love go deeper than affection; how is it more intense than affection? We may say that affection is a gentle feeling of warmth when you look at something or someone you're very fond of. Does love then come down to a somehow deeper depth or gentleness? Can gentleness be deep? Conversely, can it be shallow? Or is it perhaps the warmth that gets deeper? Deeper where? Is affection in your body, just like love is, but less deeply in there? In what sense, is it closer to your skin than love? How much closer, by an inch or two, by a half a meter? If love is in your stomach like so many butterflies, as they say it is, where does this put affection? Is it in your liver or your pancreas? In the veins beneath your skin, or the arteries?

Or is the gentleness maybe not deeper but more intense? So intense maybe that it becomes weakness? Are you, as they say, weak for someone you love? Perhaps literally so, not just metaphorically, for you are often obligated to love someone, obligated to show deep affection, whatever that may be, to family members, to bosses, to countries. How then do you distinguish this weakness from love's weakness? By intensity or by depth? How much more or less obligation is there in your lover's soft gaze than in your company's claims on your loyalty? Of course such degrees can't be measured. But that is not the problem with them; the problem is rather that there are degrees at all. For these entail that it's the same obligation, just more or less of it, not different in quality but only in quantity? If love's weakness, too, is a deeper or more intense weakness than that of obligation, isn't this again the same kind of weakness, just quantitatively more or less? Thus neither warmth nor gentleness can ascertain what "love" is; the former, because its depth is unclear and confused; the latter, because it becomes weakness and obligation, and thus indistinguishable from situations where "love" is, at best, deliberately fake.

You might counter that it's ultimately your feeling that makes love what it is, not how you show it. Since we have established that this feeling is neither warmth nor gentleness, perhaps it is attraction? Do you feel attracted to something you love? If so, how does this attraction differ from being distracted by what you love, or being addicted to what you love? Are you addicted to what or whom you love? Are you a junkie for your lover's touch and approval; is your lover your drug? Do you need them, do you physically crave their touch, their closeness, do you crave

to devour them? If so — and we are told numerous times in numerous ways that it is indeed so — is your answer to these questions a metaphorical or a literal one? If so, where does it stop being metaphorical, where does it become literal? When do you become a black widow or praying mantis? That is, how does loving a human being or a pet or a car differ from enjoying them, enjoying yourself with them, enjoying yourself through them, from devouring them for yourself, from selfishly devouring them? That is, the question of "love" as it is felt is the question of "love" as I feel it — as I alone feel it. From this perspective, the essence of love is that "I care for you because you, in and of yourself, add some panache to to my individual awesomeness."[7]

Ascertaining "love" based on how it feels, then, betrays the very concept. For it means that love is really all about me, not the loved one; about my feelings, about my enjoyment of my loved one, about my enjoying myself in and through my loved one, not about the person or thing I supposedly love. "Love" then becomes purely a type of self-enjoyment, based on a selfish feeling. Not only does this jettison any commonality that "love" might entail, it also leads into a conceptual dead end.

For, if it's the feeling that counts, then this feeling must once again be distinct from affection. That is, it must once again be based on the intensity of the passion. Is this how you get that deep warmth of more-than-affection, by figuratively or literally devouring your loved ones? By moving ever further away from mere affection, by chasing ever-deeper depths, ever-warmer warmth, ever-gentler gentleness, ever more intense intensity? How does that differ from chasing highs with junk food and drugs, watching TV and doomscrolling? Don't those also devour, don't junkies love those as well, doesn't their glow keep them warm? A fleeting warmth, to be sure, but isn't love all too frequently fleeting too? And junkie feelings may even be more intense than your love!

So is "love" selfishly devouring whom or what you love, like junk, like TV, like drugs; chasing the deep depths of intense warmth, come whatever may? Or is it mere affection, lukewarm fondness, fading glow; birthday cards from the gas station? And if neither of these is love, what remains? Nothing: there is no love, and there never has been; the word is meaningless.

Nonetheless, "love" is fraudulently implemented everywhere around us. Above all, this is in films and books an TikToks and books and videogames as a happily-ever-after, an impossible steady state that has to be attained, but that also can be attained. Such attainment is, of course, impossible; even if "love" had any meaning it would not be an item that could be possessed like a medal or a prize. The means to such attainment have thus

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7   Cresencia Desafio and Katherine DiFiore, "A Letter to Lovers," in Egoism (Berkeley: Ardent Press, 2013), 141.

spawned an industry of psychological drivel (magazines and blogs, books and TED talks, seminars for masculinity and feminimity of all stripes), preying on those who fall for the idea of "attaining" love and who therefore experience the inevitable disappointment that comes with the inevitability of such conquest. Conversely, the idea that "love" could be attained has given rise to the incel imagination of a right to such attainment, positing women as either exalted creatures to be wooed or tamed (those two usually overlapping), or as damnable obstacles to the steady state of attained "Love" – depending on the success in fooling oneself into thinking that one has "found love".

These are the main ways in which the term "love" continues to be fraudulently deployed. Compared to them, other implementations of "Love" have faded into obscurity, such as the old distinction between <u>agape</u> and <u>eros</u>, which has now become completely irrelevant in the face of universal sexualization of everything; in the eternally juvenile Western mind, "love" is above all "a healthy sex life", which is once again "to be attained," and which once again cannot.

Reading continuously, the discrete notion of "love" must therefore be dissolved further into /WWWW plant-moisture, 🦉 wisdom, 🖇 weighted openness, and 🐟 seabass. In this case, /WWWW plant-moisture is not, as it is for -> clouds, literal humidity, but is rather the element of nourishment. Dissolving "love", this continuous movement becomes the seemingly effortless streaming of a river moving downhill towards the sea, where millions of droplets (small gestures, minuscule rituals) unite to form one massive stream (the expansion of love in daily cohabitation). It also entails, however, the work required for carving the stream's path, and of renewing its course whenever and wherever obstacles arise; work needed all the more as not only drought, but also vapors above the river's surface, and not only explicit obstacles, but also myriad tiny frictions threaten the stream's integrity at all sides and at all times. Thus, small gestures and minuscule rituals do add up to a mighty stream only when a toleration of friction, of idiosyncrasies and minor annoyances, on the one hand, and a certain weight of inertia on the other come to their aid. Thus the river's duality of effortlessness and work is destroys the remains of discrete "love" to embrace continuous nourishment, the structural principle of this destruction. As spatialization and temporalization it is forward-plunging, widening, deepening; as ever-flowing renewal it is also precariousness. Most importantly, therefore, /WWWW plant-moisture is here the principle of continuous renewal and flow but also of drying up; it is

work and friction and threat as much as diminutive but ever-present liquidity.

 Within this opening of 〰 plant-moisture, a 🦉 continuous wisdom must be cultivated – but also: <u>can</u> be cultivated. This is not wisdom of "love" but a wisdom of restraint, of not pursuing, not seeing through; a timely partial withdrawal in gesture without accompanying withdrawal in spirit. It is not mainten<u>ance</u> of "love", attained and levelling, but ongoing and ever renewed, never static maintain<u>ing</u> of individuality within each interaction, but also against each interaction; a deliberate imbalance at times to maintain overall balance; deliberate inequality to maintain overall equality, etc. Thus 🦉 continuous wisdom modulates the balance needed internally to ensure that the coherence of 〰 plant-moisture's temporalization and spatialization doesn't go over the stream's boundaries. At the same time, it must guard that their spatialization and temporalization continues to destroy the remains of "love". On the one hand, therefore, droplets only combine to the floods of a river if their adhesion to one another is maintained against friction of the riverbed and at the sides – the daily material foundations – and especially against obstacles. On the other hand, the stream must never solidify into a mapped-out river, which can be tracked, dammed, reified; that is, which becomes "love" again. Hence maintaining is required, beyond mere maintenance, and 🦉 continuous wisdom of the compromises and adjustments needed for such.

 Within this medium, however, the continuous dissolution of "love" operates as the 🐟 seabass that doesn't know that it is wet and cannot know that it is wet. And this, too, in a double sense. The 🐟 seabass will know that it had been wet only when it no longer is wet, and when it dies in the cold air of love that once may have been. While it is within its medium and stream, however, it thrives not knowing (but perhaps intuitively feeling or experiencing) that the stream is all around it. Which means that a continuous modulation of 🦉 continuous wisdom is needed to ensure the stream never becomes explicit, as it then becomes "love" again. For it also means that the principle of flow and renewal contains, as one of its conditions of possibility, the ever-present threat of non-renewal and ending of the flow. It doesn't contain this as a known threat, and hence here again is the necessity of maintaining, but not as a known necessity. And while, for 〰 plant-moisture, as medium dissolving "love", this is only a structural possibility, for 🐟 seabass, as movement of this

dissolution itself, this is an existential threat. But this is positive, too, for it not only adds invisibly to the inertia carrying the temporality of the stream and its dissolution, the riverbed, but also spurs its continuous wisdom, helping it fly, keep watch, maintain against "love".

All three, therefore, come together in weighted openness. For "love" dissolved is water: nourishing, it can also drown; "love" dissolved is wisdom: maintaining, it can also rationalize and calculate; "love" dissolved is fish: quicksilvery unfolding, it can also become threatened and threatening ignorance. Openness to each side of each element is what allows love to dissolve and continuous embrace to thrive, but it must be weighted by certain discretenesses to prevent it from becoming furniture, cold and hardened, and ultimately merge with the bitter salt of the ocean.

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Property is a meaningless term. For it is either possession, i.e., that which one can defend against someone else's acquisition or attack, or it is something else. And if one possesses something, the notion of "property" in the thing is either a meaningless addition to it, or it's someone else's claim against the possession. Thus if you possess something – a piece of cake, a phone, a loved one, a pet – and you have property in it, the latter doesn't change anything. The property in it doesn't affect your having the thing at all, and has no effect whatsoever. And if you possess something and someone else (supposedly) has property in it, this also doesn't change your possession of the thing in the slightest. Is this not what capitalist ideology tells us we should accept, capitalist reality everywhere confirms we can and need to implement ourselves: that possession is not, as they say, nine tenths, but rather ten tenths of the law?

Thus, if you possess a thing, property in it doesn't change this possession at all, regardless of whose property this supposedly is. But what if "property is enforced" and the person whose stuff you stole from comes to get it? To be sure, this may well happen. But what they're after in this case is not their property in the thing – after all, this they already have! What they want is rather to possess the thing, to return it into their immediate possession. "Enforcing property" and "property rights" has no relation whatsoever to property but is in fact all about possession. Thus again, property in something is either possession of it, or else it's a meaningless term adding nothing to a situation.

One might reply, though, that there is property that isn't currently and directly possessed by its owner but that is nonetheless effective in that it prevents others – you, for example

– from possessing it. Aren't there empty houses everywhere, supposed property of absentee landlords, that these landlords don't possess (they are absent after all) but that they nonetheless keep empty? Doesn't this make the concept of "property" the key ingredient of absentee ownership?

It's not true, however, that these empty houses are not in possession of their landlords. The empty houses are in fact being defended, and thereby kept empty, by those absentee landlords, and thus are in fact in their possession. The landlords may not defend the houses personally – why would they – but they do have the state's goons or privately hired thugs to so for them. Therefore, these landlords do, in fact, possess those houses. Hiding behind meaningless babble about "property rights" to cover up the fact does not change that here, too, "property enforcement" remains all about possession, not about property. See what happens as you take possession of the empty buildings! The "property rights" others have in them will certainly not stop you. As long as you can stave off or outsmart the cops and thus remain in possession, the building is yours, and property changes nothing about this. And if you get chased out? The landlord retakes possession, to be sure. But don't worry; the cops can never afford to be watchful for very long...

Nonetheless, "property" is implemented, and typically quite transparently so, as just such a purely negative type of possession, as exclusion of others without directly possessing oneself. Thus the good itself is used by not being used, by preventing others from using it. Where "property" is identical with possession – which is the case for the vast majority of goods for which there is no distribution conflict – "property" is also used, but in these cases it is possession, not "property", which keeps others away. "Property" asserts its supposed meaning only when possession is not the case – though, as we have seen, incorrectly so.

This allows "property" to fulfil a precise function within bourgeois capitalism despite being a meaningless term. Remote possession, prevention of others from usage without using oneself, generates scarcity and thereby allows valuation to occur, and markets to consolidate.[8] It's deliberately wasteful and upholds wasteful practices ("property rights", i.e., absentee possession, enforced against wildcat housing or dumpster diving); it kills and is used to kill (patents preventing medicines from being used). Enclosing the continuous unfolding of the world, "property" generates artificial scarcity and allows, again and again, the resurgence of primitive accumulation, where "great masses of men and things are suddenly and forcibly torn from their continuous existence, and hurled as free and 'unattached' discrete

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8   Murray Bookchin, Post-Scarcity Anarchism
    (Oakland: AK Press, 2004), 5.

units onto newly established markets."[9]

Reading continuously, the discrete notion of "property" must therefore be dissolved further, primarily into ⌒ plant-atmosphere, △³ plant-space, and ▷ plant-time. Taken continuously, it still inhabits the notions of "taking" and "appropriating," but does so into care, as a giving that is also a leaving. Destroying "property" in this way means giving space to leave alone that which fills it, inhabits it; to ⬜ hedge, which is spatialization surrounding itself and centering itself within its surrounding. Dissolved "property" allows what used to be a brittle entity to simultaneously interlock itself with ⬜ hedge, to make this space its place <u>and</u> to break out of it, off from it, through from within it. With the same movement by which what used to be a thing is now anchored, it thus makes its place a space again, returning not only into itself but from itself also to its unfolding-beyond-itself. Thus, destroyed "property" indicates that I can not "own" a being but that the being always remains plant and spatializes itself both beyond my grasp and the grasp of its own place(ment). Roots take place, to be sure, but also reach into ground and

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9   Karl Marx, <u>Capital</u> Vol. 1, in Robert Tucker (ed), <u>The Marx-Engels Reader</u> (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978), 433 (with some changes).

groundwater, and thus form a continuous unity with the earth and wellspring from which they're nevertheless also always distinct. Likewise, stem and leaves are at once continuous with roots (and thus are here, are in place) and continuous with rain and air (and thus are not here, spatialize themselves out of this place). In bringing itself into this place and thus bringing itself forth out of it, △³ plant-space as dissolved "property" unfolds the clouds and seas and faraway mountain rivers from plant growing out of care. "Property" destroyed is thus the gathering of these faraway spaces in this place as offshoots brought forth out of it; movement-in which is also movement-out.

Likewise, "property" is destroyed within the gathering of ▷ plant-time. This is not vulgar time, gathering of presences and absences, governed by concepts which appropriate and alienate unfolding. ▷ plant-time is rather the movement of un-differentiation of ebb and flow, darkness and light, rainy and dry spells, life and death in eternal recurrence, all gathered together and unfolding back out of care; double movement destroying the temporality of "property". In its destruction, "property" is here the giving of openness to such un-differentiation, exposure to indeterminate unfolding, unceasing changing non-change. But it is this not as pure gathering, as mere

clingy contraction inward, solidification into an entity, but again as ⊐ hedge, as gathering together to shoot forth from. Just as leaves die but the tree remains, shoots are mowed but the roots remain, I shed parts of my so-called personality but it is and remains me who sheds them, unchanged through change, undifferentiating within myself and as myself.

Destroyed "property" is not a thing to be kept and appropriated, but it is nonetheless a gathering into care. It is a ⏝ plant-atmosphere, familiarity both emotionally and physically, and thus also work and loss. As an "investment" more by letting-grow and allowing-to-unfold than by cultivation, ⏝ plant-atmosphere is an aneconomic hospitality, an exuberance like shade under a tree or indeed sunlight itself, guidance through rock-membrane and sound of waves on the beach, reinforced by economic hospitality within care, like hitting a rock just enough times to make an expedient tool, and no more.

Out of the ⊐ hedge of giving space and giving time, out of dissolved "property" as ⏝ plant-atmosphere, arise offshoots which are at once gathered in placement and offshoots in spatialization, at once exposed to indistinction and gathered together in returning to un-differentiation. The continuous destruction of "property" is thus structured like ᛣ onion. As gathering placement, bulbs form from the labor of compressing, shortening stems and surrounding them by fleshy leaves. That is, place is here immediately manifest as hedging, anchoring plant to the earth and its groundwater. But this also simultaneously happens as spatialization, where the bulb is at once firmly rooted and expanding into loose soil, but the latter is a folding too, returning to its indistinction; and yet this spatialization remains gathering as becoming-undifferentiated from ⏝ plant-atmosphere. Likewise, the bulbous spatialization of ᛣ onion is just as much a temporalization – a continuous unfolding with and through the sky – since it takes place based on the aneconomic embrace of sunlight (the length of days, in terms of vulgar time). Thus destroyed "property" is here in earth and sky simultaneously, and is the becoming-indifferent of the two.

As sky becomes part of place through ᚦ plant-time, unfolding as ⊐ hedge within earth, so earth unfolds as part of spatialization, and is gathering, but as loss of place and unfolding beyond place. This is where the dissolution of "property" becomes ᚩ orchid. For, as they live placed in dry ground, where the earth is irrelevant to them, they tower towards

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the sky, reproducing the thick hedging structure of onion's bulbous growth but now stretched towards plant-atmosphere. Aspiring, therefore, towards unfolding in space and time as dissolution of gathering, as futility of having and thus equally as wisdom of letting go, letting unfold, orchid completes the dissolution of "property", constituting its continuous counterpart as reinforcement of, and return to, gathering together to shoot off from.

<div align="center">*</div>

There has never been, nor will there ever be, a single <u>tree</u> in the world. For how would we be able to tell that something we point at, see, hear, or touch, really is a tree, if we can't say what a tree is? But this we cannot.

How much larger than a shrub does a tree have to be to classify as a tree? And if size alone determines the difference between the two: are saplings trees? What about bonsais? If we see two shrub-looking plants of exactly the same height, how will we know the one is a tree and the other is not? There must be additional characteristics, and it seems that indeed there are. What about the main trunk of a tree, characterized by a more or less straight growth without branches for some distance above the ground before the branches begin with their foliage, making the crown? Here we surely have a distinguishing characteristic that separates trees from bushes, shrubs, and weeds! – But this begs the question. If a shrub has more than one larger branch from which others shoot off, and if this larger branch is rooted directly into the ground and doesn't have branches for a distance moving upward, does this make the shrub a tree?

Trees, we might say, will have unbranched trunks without foliage. How many is irrelevant, but this is how we can tell there are trees. – Yet this doesn't hold up either. Numerous trees, in fact the majority of them, branch very early on (some even just above the ground), with branches sometimes just as thick as the main trunk, and plenty foliage too. Indeed, sometimes foliage grows right out of the trunk, and again it does this sometimes just above the soil! How many branches, then, and where situated, do there have to be before a tree becomes a bush? Moreover, does a tree cease being a tree if it has more than one trunk? How many trunks does it take to become a bush? Two, three, five? Where does "one tree" end, where do "two trees"?

Granting all this, however, one might nonetheless say that we can tell what is a tree, as trees will still only have one crown. But this is not true, as several examples do not, and the older a tree is, the more its branches and leaves come in growths and regrowths, forming multiple distinct crowns. Conversely, too, a number of trees don't have crowns at all, nor

even any branches. Coconut or pole trees typically have none.

So how can we be sure that what we're looking at is a tree, if none of its defining characteristics actually defines it? If no-one had told us that "they're all trees", would we have put yews, palm trees, redwoods, and baobabs all in the same category? And moreover, aren't there other things too that are called "trees", such as "banana trees", "tree graphs", and "decision trees"? We might say that these latter uses are metaphorical, as these have only some, or perhaps none, of the characteristics of tree plants. But the same applies, as we have seen, to the very plants that we called trees! Is the usage of the term for those "trees" which don't fit under the definitions of "tree" metaphorical, too? And if it is not, how are the plants distinct from the metaphors? The word "tree" has no clear referent even among plants, let alone other kinds of so-called trees. It has, in fact, no referent whatsoever.

Nonetheless, "tree" is fraudulently used to posit the existence of a discrete and supposedly well-defined specimen of plant subject to 'forest management' that, even if it doesn't consciously produce cheap monocultures like Ireland does all over the island, is ultimately an exercise in producing and maintaining lumber only. Under the regime of the notion of "tree", barbed wire poisoning an elm becomes a nuisance threatening lumber quality, rather than a living unfolding being attacked.[10]

Secondarily to this, but still economically relevant and lucrative, "tree" serves to maintain 'landscapes', that is, pathways through supposedly pristine "forests" made up for man to walk in, or populated with just enough mammals to engage in "hunting", or other types of slaughter or poisoning, from dirt bike rides to poison dumps. Here too, the barbed wire cutting into the elm is an issue, but merely an aesthetic one, threatening simulated 'wilderness'.[11]

Either way, "trees" are merely their wood, not foliage, roots, mycelian societies, birds, fruit, grasses, bushes, worms,... nor indeed oxygen or water or shade; mere lonely decoration by the road; backdrop and resource.

Reading continuously, therefore, the discrete concept "tree" must be destroyed further, and in such destruction is becomes 🔲 hedge, ↓↓ ryegrass, and 🐑 fawn. Only through these, it becomes possible to liberate continuous being from this discrete term, and to uncover the "lives as intricate as those of Hamlet or Cleopatra, albeit without such conspicuous drama",[12] and the history-shaping oxygenizing pathbreakers of new biological horizons as which we could see them if the word wasn't in the way.[13]

10 prunella vulgaris, "Elm Thoughts," *Oak* 3 (2021), 7.
11 See the entry on "Nature", below.
12 Colin Tudge, The Secret Life of Trees (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 266.
13 Peter Ward and Joe Kirschvink, A New History of Life (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2016), 193-194.

As [⧈] hedge, the destruction of "tree" becomes the principle of bio-dispersal rather than being a single entity. It is water-mineral-soil-root-stem-leaves-sunlight, as well as worm-mycelia-root-bark, and seedling-fruit-wind-soil-root, myriad chains of unfolding gestures. But it is especially bush-undergrowth-roots-rain, as principle of sprawling life beyond the confines of what's commonly understood to be "a tree"; water flowing in from the roots moving through adhesion to leaf cells, by osmosis, before evaporating into the air to form vapor and clouds raining down again. And within these cycles of gestures, "tree" dissolved encompasses numerous other continuous lives, bacteria and flies and worms and birds liberated from their dissolving concepts, other trees and bushes and shrubs and grasses and mushrooms freed from theirs, and animals feeding on grass and leaves and living in dewdrops and spiderwebs, freed from theirs. Such continuousness is contained even in vulgar concepts like "photosynthesis": properly read, it becomes a gestural chain, sunlight-leaf-sugar-mycelium-bacteria. Or continuous speech dissolving the boundary of "tree": hormones and pigments bridging distances through communication; root systems intertwined; entire forests just single individuals or clones of one another; 'crown shyness' patterns. Within the continuous destruction of "tree", [⧈] hedge implements it first

and foremost as an integrated, ever-shifting assembly space or focal point of overlapping gestural chains, as above; and even the mechanistic simplicity of "biological science" has now realized this, however dimly, even if governments still haven't.[14]

With [↓↓] ryegrass, too, we have growth in multiples, never alone, just as in [⧈] hedge. Here, however, we add perennialism: a longevity never towering, never assertive, but humbly surviving eon after eon, impervious to time both by putting up too much and too little resistance to it. Likewise, we have soil and root conservation through root system dispersal, adding strength to it without hardening it to life, resisting cool and heat alike, springing back up after scorching sun when the rain-animal hears its pleas... Thus here we have as temporalization what [⧈] hedge is as spatialization: tree-before-tree, tree-beyond-tree, tree-after-tree, never "a tree" but continuous unfolding after continuous unfolding, so incompletely mechanized by the concept of "ecosystem", a living beyond itself in eternal entanglement, gestural assembly as gestural dispersal and gestural dispersal as gestural assembly.

Finally, [🐑] fawn indicates that there is no such thing as a sedentary

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14 These two are intertwined, however, as the realization by biological science remains trapped in the same notions of "nature" and "process" as that by politics; see the entry on "nature" below.

"tree". Rather, "tree" dissolves as it is mobile beyond itself. Seen continuously, what looks like immobility from a discrete perspective is actually what allows the destruction of "tree" in this respect as well: its unfolding in and through the mobility of animals, who thereby become its carriers (seeds in fur, ants in burrows), or its inhabitants (birds in nests, spiders in webs, moths in leaves), or its devourers and thus rebirthers, hiding or playing or dying in them and their undergrowth, giving birth to young of their own, smaller, shorter life cycles alongside the longevity and stillness of ryegrass. Thus fawn is the combination of the previous dissolutions, and if a bird is born in the nest of "a tree" in Europe and flies to the equator, then its flight is the completion of the destruction of "tree", for its birth-nest is with it there, and mixes with new beings in savannah and desert, and new waters over the ocean, and new hedges and ryegrasses, and fawns.

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There is no such thing as <u>nature</u>; the concept has no meaning and never had any meaning. For nature is either opposed to culture, such that the two are mutually exclusive, or it is not. And in the latter case, the relation is either such that nature is a part of culture, or that culture is a part of nature. Instinctively one might say that the first of these three is true, that nature and culture are mutually exclusive; it may appear that this is often how these terms are used. Starting there, we can ask further in what the separation between nature and culture consists. Now this would have to be either a separation manifest in individual things (man-made stuff is part of culture, what man has not made, is part of nature), or a separation between realms. Remaining as agnostic as possible as to what these "realms" consist in – so as to strengthen the argument for a meaningful term "nature" as much as possible – this separation could either be conceived in time (anything before a certain point in time is nature, anything after that is culture), or in space (anything around here is part of nature, anything over there is culture).[15]

Properly analyzed, though, the latter two separations in space and in time really come down to the first. If we say, anything in this region that existed before 1800 AD is nature, anything after is culture, as we do for example for old growth forests as opposed to well-manicured lawns, we really say that the forest emerged without human intervention, but the lawn didn't. And of course this entails a geographical notion, whereby the lawn is culture because it's man-

15 See Bruno Latour, <u>We Have Never Been Modern</u> (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 30-31, where all three distinctions are described as part of the "ontological constitution" of Modernity.

made, and the forest is nature because it isn't. Ultimately, the labor of ascertaining nature and culture is a labor of rendering each thing unto the one or the other.

Yet this individual mode of demarcation doesn't hold up either. If the lawn is part of culture as opposed to nature, how does its grass emerge, how the dewdrops and flowers, how the birds and earthworms, how the soil itself? No human put them there (apart from isolated exceptions that prove the rule). So by definition, they are put there by nature, and are part of nature. Pesticides, lawnmowers, water hoses may not be natural, but the plants themselves, and the animals, surely are. One might counter that, while this may well be true, their arrangement nonetheless isn't natural; how they form the lawn, how they grow, where they are allowed to live, is the work of culture. And there is reason to grant that by the definition of culture as the realm of all things man-made. But asserting this also entails that the other, supposedly "natural" area, the forest, is also cultural. For the trees there, the shrubs and wolves and voles, are likewise allowed to live there but not here, and are therefore arranged in the forest and allocated to the forest by the same human hand that arranges and allocates the flowers on the lawn. Nature is parcelled out as culture is parcelled out, at the same time and by the same gesture. Which means that any demarcation between the two doesn't work whichever way one looke at it.

Culture remains always based on nature and is merely an arrangement of nature. Nature likewise always emerges together with culture, as an arrangement defined and delineated by culture.

Does it follow that nature "just culture"? Some have argued that it is, and coined the term "second nature" for this argument. With the last supposedly untouched parts of the planet disappearing under piles of plastic trash, it may almost seem this way. After all, what are national parks, wilderness zones, and areas "managed for wildlife" other than zones of nature, demarcated by culture? But this argument doesn't hold sway, as the very forces that create this culture on a planetary scale are everywhere forces of nature – human beings themselves, all silliness about "augmentation" notwithstanding; solar, wind, coal energy; the air we breathe and the soil we raid; the lithium for our batteries and the microbes for our yeast are all not man-made, and are thus all nature, not culture. The lawn is not created by humans but arranged by them, and is thus the same nature as the forest is, which is likewise not created but arranged by humans.

Does it follow that everything is nature, and there really is no culture at all? This too does not hold up. Designating all of the above as "nature" requires that we abstract from the cultural processes that they're a part of. The microbes may be natural, but the oven is not. Lithium

is natural, but extraction and refinery are anything but. Human beings are natural, but the societies, cities, lawns that they spend their lives in are not. So all that we've done by pointing out nature within culture is pointing out culture within nature. "Nature" is a cultural designation, and isolating natural parts of cultural processes is a cultural activity. – But surely it's a cultural activity that you can only perform if your natural being is taken care of: you can't classify when you're dead? – True, but your natural life, as it stands, requires cultural support systems, and thus all that this argument shows is that culture remains always rooted in nature, not that it is all nature. The lawn is created by nature but also wouldn't be a lawn without cultural demarcation.

Nature is not-culture, created as such by culture (through demarcation and domestication), and culture is not-nature, created as such by nature (again, through demarcation and domestication). Thus nature is neither separate from culture, such that they are mutually exclusive, nor is nature cultural (as culture remains based on nature) or culture natural (as nature is created as such by cultural processes). Circularities beset all three of these options. And as there is no other but these three options which we set out at the beginning to make sense of the term, "nature" is meaningless.

Nonetheless, "nature" is fraudulently implemented in three interlocking ways, even though the term is meaningless. First, it functions as a simulation in much the same way as Jean Baudrillard's Disneyland, which is "presented as imaginary in order to make us believe that the rest is real, when in fact all of Los Angeles and the America surrounding it are no longer real," and which is "neither true nor false" but is rather a "deterrence machine."[16] In the same way, "nature" is implemented as 'wilderness' to dissimulate that there is no more wildness. Presenting camping adventures as part of that leisure which is merely the determined negation of 'work' (the 'weekend', the 'vacation'), "nature" persists to dissimulate that there is no escape from domestication. As part of this, "nature" also implements other simulations that are neither true nor false but that are deterrence machines, such as new age havens of false spirituality in books like Braiding Sweetgrass, exalting meliorist liberalism to dissimulate that so-called politics are no longer real.

Secondly, "nature" persists in archaic residuals, as a resource whose abundance is to be plundered and whose cunning is to be tamed. This implementation is slowly receding in its open and vulgar form now that the global climate catastrophe proceeds, except in right-wing enclaves. But it still implicitly governs the "technology is the solution" mindset

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16 Jean Baudrillard, Simulations (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 1983), 25.

of 'city tree' algae tanks, or so-called scientists looking to pump particles into the atmosphere to dim sunlight.

Finally "nature" remains a convenient short-hand for so-called ecology, this amalgamation of mathematical models and 'complexity' that implements "nature" as a set of discrete processes. With this, "nature" makes ecocide simultaneously "manageable" (thus reinforcing the notion of "nature" as a resource for the taking) and "ethical" (thus reinforcing that of "nature" as positive wilderness). In the form of ecological consciousness, this reinforces especially the liberalism that comes with either of these positions – the idea that one could vote oneself out of the climate emergency.

Reading continuous, the discrete concept of "nature" must therefore be dissolved further, into ⚡ plant-skin, ⎮ leek, and ⇃⇃ ryegrass. ⚡ plant-skin dissolves the notion of a "natural process" which is not only insufficient to describe the continuous unfolding properly, but which actively betrays it by positing "nature" as a discrete realm, or as a discrete characteristic of discrete things. Against this, ⚡ plant-skin posits the unfolding of continuousness through gestural assembly and unraveling; assembly as unraveling, unraveling as assembly. That is, dissolving "nature" becomes the movement of a tree absorbing stone not just in the form of minerals in the soil, but also as wedged into its bark,[17] just as much as the movement of plants growing into and out of, and through each other. Whether grafted, symbiotic, parasitic, or simply by sharing the same place and time, ⚡ plant-skin is the assembly of water and soil and sky and light. It destroys the notion of "nature" by asserting the unceasing undifferentiation of plant-beings with one another, the interconnections of all living beings as so many permeable membranes, bridges for fluids, sites for tension and relaxation, materials for lignification, both as a movement of reinforcement and as the unfolding of death, and life through it. ⚡ Plant-skin is therefore here the destruction of the principle of discrete plant-being, effected by continuous gestures; as permeable or semi-permeable membrane, as wood with water columns adhering to it, as microbes in droplets diffusing into leaves, as ash and dust bringing forth life after fire, as cacti yielding to and yet withstanding storms in the desert, as mosses and lichens huddling despite their effortless monumentality, as touch of skin or fur, as rip of claw and blade, and blood seeping into the ground, providing new nourishment for those underneath while salt dries and withers away.

Dissolving "nature", the

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17 Lucius Columella, De Arboribus XXV.1.

interconnectedness of all that is seemingly discrete within this concept re-emerges as dispersal. While ⤢ plant-skin does this with regards to the boundaries of seemingly discrete beings, ⎁ Leek introduces the same movement in the principle of bundling, constituting folding, embracing, and choking as gestures destroying "nature", as modes of dissolving discreteness continuously. Hardy and resourceful, bundling subsequently becomes trenching, as leaf sheaths dig into the soil, reconnecting with the earth without fully negating the sun. In doing so, plant-being nonetheless embraces folding and folds into embrace – but now generalizes this, as it's soil's (earth's) embrace, not any more that of the other stalks. Thus, as ⎁ leek's cylinder becomes individual sheaths, they each in their turn dig into the generality of Earth.

⎁ Leek thus destroys "nature" through the movement of generalizing embrace, from immediate species-embrace (family, cradling, nest, bundle) to embrace by the generality of life and death. This is not, to be sure, peaceful embrace. As much as Kropotkin's and others' emphasis on mutual aid is applicable to the continuous unfolding and the future primitive unfolding within it, there remains still also the movement whereby "each species, even where it most abounds... constantly suffers enormous destruction, at some period of its life, from enemies or from competitors for the same place and food"[18]. But just this, too, is generalized embrace, for one's death is another's life!

↓↓ Ryegrass, finally, is here the same as it is within the dissolution of "tree" above; growth in multiples, perennialism, and thus "nature" dissolving into plant-after-plant, animal-before-animal, and ultimately and most generally, life-outside-itself, endlessly proliferating.

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The term <u>compassion</u> is meaningless. For compassion, that is, concern or even pity for others' suffering either arises from my picturing myself in their situation, or from some other consideration. But if it arises from picturing myself in their situation, my concern or pity is not for them but for myself; not compassion is at work here but self-pity. There might be helpful actions on my part, even gestures by which I become a hero or savior, but there is no concern or pity for others' situation, only for my own.

Nor is there compassion if I'm led to concern or pity by some other consideration which is not my picturing myself in others' distress. For this other consideration must necessarily either be emotional or reasoned in nature. But if the consideration is emotional, my concern

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18 Charles Darwin, <u>The Origin of Species</u> (Edison, NJ: Castle Books, 2004), 85.

is aroused either because I know the suffering party, or it is aroused by imagining some communality with the suffering party (such as: we are all human, we all feel pain, etc). But in the first case the concern or pity is selfish again, as what I do to rescue them is done for my sake. After all, knowing the aggrieved party is what prompts my concern here – that is, proximity and relation to me.

If any other consideration comes into play, it must fall under some commonality. For nobody feels compassion for someone or something which they neither know nor feel commonality with, as we have already excluded the case where I see myself in their shoes. The yelp of an animal in distress concerns us because of our fellow-feeling; we know it feels pain and does so the same way we do – because where we don't, we show no compassion. (Just consider what happens to lobsters.) However, this last case again comes down to imagining myself in the situation, making their suffering my suffering. Thus again my so-called compassion here is really self-pity, and my help is selfish.

Neither transference nor emotion, then, elicit compassion. We thus might allow that someone could be led to compassion by abstract reasoning (although it seems that this is rare). But such reasoning can in turn only be based on accepting some commonality with those who suffer (except putatively rationally, rather than emotionally, whatever that may mean

here). But this means that, once again, I really consider rescuing myself when I feel compassion for them. There is no case where so-called "compassion" fulfils its own conceptual requirements; the term is meaningless.

Nonetheless, the concept of "compassion" is used, though not as a description of behavior or motive. Rather, it is invoked as a condemnation of attitude. The question, did you have a "compassionate" mindset when you did this?, makes or breaks the standing of an action, or indeed of a person. Thus "compassion" becomes a weapon used by Stirner's religious people to turn everyone else into sinners.[19] Moreover, "compassion" also, and by no means accidentally, stabilizes the order of property and morally judges us for our role within it. Being asked to show compassion entails that one must either have, or work towards having, the means to do so (for how can one be compassionate without the means), and only if those are present does one get to be a "good person".

Reading continuously, the discrete concept of "compassion" thus needs to be destroyed further. In its dissolution, 𓅢 cormorant and 𓅽 guinea fowl guide us towards 𓂧 black tupelo and 𓆰 offshoot. That is, "compassion" becomes, at first, a 𓏠

19 Max Stirner, The Unique and Its Property (tr. Landstreicher, Berkeley: Ardent Press), 343.

bird's eye view, seemingly like a grid, a recognition of bleedthrough between lines and lives conventionally closed off from one another, but now rooted in openness to one another. Not "compassion" between discrete entities, therefore, but outgrowth of one another, gathering within one another; connective tissue, permeable membrane. As a result cormorant guides us towards the indistinction of what once was bird's eye view, and towards a faint remainder of what was "compassion" receding, as offshoot, into the undifferentiation of continuous unfolding.

Conversely, guinea fowl's line of flight dissolves not the separation that underlies "compassion", but its temporality, the ebb and flow of its discrete implementation. For this, too, is destroyed by the dissolution of its discreteness, and instead becomes black tupelo. Nourishing to the very birds that guided us here, "compassion" thus ultimately recedes entirely into the continuous unfolding. Its destruction is the birth of offshoot and black tupelo; circular self-reinforcement of outgrowth and expansion, and thus the unfolding of continuous undifferentiation as such.

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There is no such thing as authority, and nobody has ever had any, regardless of the basis they supposedly have for it. Someone who "has authority" is either recognized by others to have the right to steer their conduct, or has the power to do so, or both; someone who has neither wouldn't be said to have authority. The first point, then, would be to check if someone can meaningfully be recognized as having the right to steer others' conduct. For such recognition is the core of this concept, as the Romans asserted when they first coined the term auctoritas in distinction to potestas. If power is used, such power would not stem from something one might properly call "authority," but rather from brute force, or from institutional power, such as an office or certification. But does someone who has to resort to brute force or institutional power really be said to "have authority"? (Characteristically, Engels defines "authority" simply as "the imposition of the will of another upon our own,"[20] without distinction between this and brute force. Equally characteristically, Stirner reminds us that there is authority without force in the irresistible gaze of a lover. And Bakunin, of course, trusts the expertise of the bootmaker, but not the power of the congressman.) Thus it seems that authority is the recognition of someone's right to

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20 Friedrich Engels, "On Authority," in Marx-Engels-Reader, 730.

steer others' conduct without resorting to brute force or institutional power.

Such authority is either unquestioned, or it is questioned. But ultimately, every kind of authority is subject to questioning, Bakunin's bootmaker just as much as Engels' organizer and Stirner's lover. In fact, this is one of its central tenets if the distinction from brute force or institutional power is to be maintained: that it is open to questioning. Yet this means that authority, when challenged, must assert itself on the basis of some credentials, whether these be expertise, or charisma, or something else. When we accept the statement of an 'expert', such as Bakunin's bootmaker, we are not accepting it by recognizing them but by recognizing their credentials. Likewise, we accept Stirner's lover by virtue of their fidelity and trust; different kinds of credentials, but credentials nonetheless.

But someone who asserts their credentials has already lost their authority. For the force of credentials is based on the credentials of force. Those with credentials have the "authority" to axiomatically assert themselves, forcing others into silence and/or acquiescence. This is regardless of the epistemic status of their field – whether it be bootmaking or science, or shows of fidelity and trust. No expert knows all about their field or discipline, which means that their

expertise is based on others' expertise, and these others' expertise is based on yet others' expertise, and so forth into infinite regression. Any expert's assertion to be an expert is thus either subject to this infinite regress, or it is axiomatic – that is, based on assertion which can command obedience only by brute force.[21] (The same applies to the lover: their trust and fidelity are credible because of a history of trust and fidelity, which is credible because of earlier trust and fidelity, and so forth. Thus they, too, assert themselves as a lover in the same way the expert does, or are subject to an infinite regression.) Moreover, to return to the bootmaker, no field or discipline of expertise is based on itself – biology is based on chemistry, chemistry on physics, physics on mathematics, mathematics on linguistics, linguistics on ethnography, ethnography on geography, geography on biology, and round and round it goes. Thus any assertion of credentials is really an assertion of axiomatic power, a club to beat others into silent acquiescence, or else it's nothing but an appeal to a doubly circular and infinite regress.

And so we find that those who have the right to steer others but not the power to do so cannot, after all and contrary to appearances, meaningfully be said to have authority. For they have to find a way to enforce this right (by force, or by credentials, i.e., by axiomatic force). And this

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21 The entry "axiom" will show that all axiomatic statements are ultimately based on this kind of brute force assertion.

means that they have the power, and nothing but the power, to do so after all. Conversely, if those who supposedly "have authority" do not find a way to enforce their right, they end up not having authority after all. Thus "right" and "power" are identical here, and authority, if indeed there is such a thing, can only stem from the latter.

But nobody has the power to steer others' conduct either. For this power is either enforced, or it is not. And if it is not, they don't have the power, but merely resort to empty threats. Assertion of right without power (brute force or credentials) is nothing.

But even if their power is enforced, and even conceding that such enforcement really constitutes "authority" – as opposed to a failure of authority when it has to resort to brute force – enforcement is impossible. For what is done by the recipient of an attempt to steer their conduct either matches what they want to do anyway, or it does not. In the former case, power might be enforceable, but the deed is done on the own volition on the subjugated party rather than by authority. But this means that the subjugated party's conduct is not steered by someone else, and thus they are not subjugated after all. And in the latter case the subjugated party will necessarily search for, and usually find a way to disobey, either through outright challenge or through evasion. For if they don't choose either of those

routes of resistance, they do consent to the attempt to steer their conduct after all. We are then back to the case where what they are told to do matches what they want to do, and their conduct is not steered by others.

So authority can only ever emerge where disobedience takes place. Yet even if the supposed authority finds out about the disobedience and punishes its disobedient counterpart, the recipient's conduct necessarily remains unchanged during punishment, and will afterwards either change according to the wishes of the authority, or again it will not. But if it changes, it's because then the recipient wants to act this way, if only to avoid further punishment. Any change, then, is not due to authority, but due to a change of heart on the part of the subjugated; or else there is no change. There is either outright consent, or brute force, and in the final analysis, conduct only ever changes due to the former. Either way, the subjugated party of the attempt to change their conduct, when they do change it, do not do so on the basis of authority, and when they don't do so, their conduct was not influenced, and authority has achieved nothing. The concept is and remains meaningless.

Nonetheless, "authority" continues to be used as a fig leaf behind which either brute force or the axiomatic force of credentials lie – the fraudulent assertion of "right" and enforcement of such "right". Thus the

continued usage of "authority" is part and parcel of the implementation of the rule of 'experts' over both mainstream and subversive discourses. Conventional 'experts' in non-subversive public discourse (whose statements may nonetheless very much be correct!) latch on to positions of power, wherever those may be, and perpetuate themselves by persistently strengthening the independence of their positions from any kind of challenge, insurrectionary or electoral or otherwise (allowing, for the sake of this argument, that there is such a thing as an electoral challenge). As a result, expert rule manifests in the replacement of contestation with administration, of (nominally) open decisions with foregone conclusions.[22] The same applies to their quack counterparts on social media, whose "disinformation" is likewise just unacknowledged rule by experts of a different stripe. (An appeal to a Youtube video is just as much based on the video's credentials as an appeal to a certified doctor is, independent of which one is right about things.) Both types of experts derive their "authority" from credentials and positioning, reinforcing themselves and the power they latch on to.

However, appeals to "democracy" against expert rule fall short, as "authority" is far more pernicious than mere battles between 'experts' on so-called social media. In a deeper sense, "authority" is always and inherently implemented as brute force. For the origin of the "authority of the bootmaker", to whom Bakunin refers (or rather: defers) in the matter of boots, is the result of Bakunin's infantilization stemming from the division of labor, now grown to monstrous extent and depth. Thus "authority" relies on, and can only arise from, functional differentiation, and that means: the structural inability of people to be self-sufficient. Dependence on others, then, is the true core of "authority" and its true implementation.[23]

Reading continuously, the discrete notion of "authority" must therefore be destroyed further. Dissolving it, continuous unfolding manifests, firstly, as complementarity: like 𓅐 vulture, such continuous interrelation is neither fully symbiotic (though it does empower and benefit those under it, be they humans, animals, or plants, to some extent) nor fully parasitic (through it does draw attention and drain resources). In other words, it exacerbates both strengths and weaknesses alike of those unfolding interrelation (and this includes those supposedly in the position that once was "authority"). Thus it both requires and is ultimately based on 𓃥 continuous wisdom. The latter, however, in dissolving "authority" manifests in

22 Jean Meynaud, Technocracy (London: Faber & Faber, 1968), 31 and 75; an analysis that has lost nothing of its strength today, except for the appeals to "democracy" as a panacea.

23 Engels admits this, quite in spite of himself, in "On Authority," 731.

three ways that are neither immediately nor inherently compatible with one another, and whose balancing is thus an inward activity (confronting the one who once could say they "had authority") that allows outward continuous interrelation to be projected to begin with.

First, the [glyph] continuous wisdom of dissolved authority entails [glyph] orthogonality. Unlike in "authority", this is not simply "creativity" with all of its supposedly positive connotations (especially under a capitalism that exalts "disruption" for its own sake). Rather, it entails straying from paths in all directions, whether creative or otherwise. Just as authority today leads and misleads, and does both in ways that are compatible with the circumstances in which it is implemented (and with the beings subjected to it, which is not the same), so continuous dissolved authority is [glyph] continuous wisdom to destroy and to create, and to maintain the movement of the one when engaging the other. However, [glyph] continuous wisdom is here far more comprehensive than the term "leadership" would allow, or for that matter its counterpart "misleading." It means "conducting experiments," alone and together, "freely chosen in line with desire, imagination, and interest, in all areas of everyday life."[24]

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24 Moore, <u>Anarchist Speculations</u>, 14.

Secondly, [glyph] continuous wisdom dissolving authority entails [glyph] distribution, both of ideas and of energies (and perhaps more the latter than the former). This is, however, not the same as [glyph] orthogonality: there are plenty folks who have [glyph] orthogonal flights of fancy in abundance but lack the ways of transmitting them in such a way that these can – to use the old phrasing – be "leading" others. Nor again is [glyph] distribution inherently either progressive or regressive, if indeed these terms mean anything. Nor again is it creative in the way that phrase is usually understood under capitalism. [glyph] distribution rather dissolves "authority" by implementing the true commonality of lives devoted to passion and play – commonality with and against and beside each other – with the ultimate aim to engage in non-totalizing world-building and world-destroying.

Thirdly, there is [glyph] vapor, which is here the dissolution of needles to poke and prod those subject to authority, and which instead disseminates [glyph] orthogonality into them and their circumstances. The ability to be enough of a nuisance to motivate and strengthen, and the danger of being too much of a nuisance, leading to disillusion,

detachment, disconnection, are all characteristics of this last part of 𓄿 continuous wisdom destroying authority. But again, they are this not in the current way of mundane managerial brute force, but as incitements and motivation to keep experimenting, to keep taking freedom to its limits and beyond.

Thus playing out between 𓅐 vulture and 𓄿 continuous wisdom in its three modulations, the dissolution of authority is 𓉼 continuous plant-entanglement. Above ground, this is a spatialization of continuous interrelations. It manifests as expansion, adjustment, growth – not in the capitalist sense of these terms, but in the sense of intertwined life projects (with, beside, against each other), bridged and bridging between lives without regard for their ontological status as supposed humans, animals, plants (if indeed these terms mean anything), in shared radical questioning of all that surrounds them. Below ground, however, such 𓉼 plant-entanglement can be deadly, as the roots get entangled, choking off each other's access to groundwater, and thus the plants' to sky. But if all goes well, destroyed authority becomes 𓎛 holly, evergreen climber in many different circumstances, manifesting in myriad forms as tree, shrub, climber; slow to grow but fruitful and resilient; slightly toxic but ripening in leaner times, too; widespread and successful enough to be called "invasive" by those who don't understand it.

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The concept of a <u>cloud</u> is meaningless, as there is nothing that can be meaningfully said to be a cloud. Suppose that there is an area X which is defined by a water vapor dense enough to constitute a cloud; perhaps we can spot it because it looks different from the supposed rest of the sky when viewed from a distance. But how do we know this area is a cloud, and is distinct as such from what would then be the surrounding sky? What about area Y just outside of area X, which also has water vapor in it? By what criteria do we establish that water molecule m1 is within the cloud, while molecule m2 is outside of it? Where does area X end exactly, and where does area Y begin? Perhaps we could try to establish this by the density of the water vapors we observe, which is higher in area X than in area Y. But cloud density is not uniform throughout, so does area X have to broken out into many smaller clouds? If so, what about the regions between them, are they clouds of their own? And if not, what about the border region between area X and area Y, where density gradually lowers, is this region part of the cloud? Moreover, if the water vapors move, as inevitably they must when even the

slightest wind comes up, does molecule m2 move from area Y to area X and thus become part of the cloud, or else move from area X to area Y, thus no longer being part of the cloud? Or do both areas just change their density in this case? If so, how does their delineation hold up? Does the cloud now consist of area X and area Y, or just area Y, or neither?

Distinguishing area X from area Y by density of vapors, therefore, renders both undefined, and no real distinction between areas X and Y can be made. Thus area Y is either part of the cloud after all, and m1 and m2 are both parts of it, or area X is not a cloud after all as it's indistinct from area Y, which is not a cloud, and thus neither m1 nor m2 are parts of the cloud.

But there is a cloud. Therefore, area X is a cloud, and thus area Y is part of that cloud, too. But if we thus include area Y in the cloud, what about area Z? This new area is just a bit further out and currently appears to be a bit less dense in water vapor. But the same issue arises here again: shifting densities, border areas, and movement render areas X, Y, and Z indistinct. Is area Z therefore now part of the cloud, and how so? Since we had to include Y in the cloud – or jettison the cloud altogether – on the basis of the same gradient which now separates areas Y and Z, by what criteria can we separate area Z from areas Y and X? And so area Z becomes part of our cloud, and molecule m3 in area Z is now joining forces with

molecules m2 and m1, or else there isn't a cloud after all.

But there is a cloud. So what about the border regions of area Z, what about its shifting density and molecule movements? What, that is, of areas AA, BB, and CC, nearby and more or less densely filled with water vapors of their own? And then what about their border regions, density shifts, and molecule movements? Eventually we will find that there are varying degrees of water vapors in the air everywhere, and there is no air which is completely devoid of them; wind constantly mixes them everywhere, too.

So now, either we jettison the cloud that we started out with – but it's so clearly there in the sky! Or we accept that every bit of air everywhere around the world is part of that same gigantic cloud, floating around the earth, or rather not floating, but omnipresently persisting everywhere. Either way, there is only the air, full of water vapors. Thus the term "cloud" has no meaning, and none of us have ever seen one in the sky.

Nonetheless, the term "cloud" continues to be used fraudulently, as a sign and nothing but. A "cloud" is a harbinger of "rain" to be avoided for family picknicks just as much as a harbinger for "pressure zones" to be tracked by satellite and to be accounted for in the "forecast". In other words, a "cloud" is a disturbance of technocratic "normality", of programmatic implementations. (Not: of activities,

as these can, and often do, take place in the rain, but of "planning" and control over the picknick or the satellite network). A cloud "ruins the lighting on my wedding photographs." It means that "I have to buy new umbrellas, shoes, coats..." A cloud "makes you stay inside as it's cloudy out and could rain any minute." It's a nuisance on the path to total programmatic domination of the continuous unfolding.

 Reading continuously, therefore, the discrete concept "cloud" must be destroyed further. Dissolving it renders it, above all, 〰〰 plant-moisture and △³ plant-space. For "cloud," continuously, is really the rain-animal connecting water and expanse in a number of ways. Its unfolding is not not simply that of the sky, but it is movement of distribution; through ocean and river and sky, to be sure, but far beyond them too, in earth's groundwater and plants' roots, in streams and cascades and thus also in fishes and flies. 〰〰 plant-moisture and △³ plant-space thus become the movement of flowing down any height differential, crevice, passage, any least resistance. However, they thereby feed and nourish what consumes their movement, plant and root and soil. Combined, they dissolve "cloud" by giving space and giving space to the obstacles of their own future path.

 Manifesting as surface condensation, the differential between moss and wind, 〰〰 plant-moisture becomes bound moisture and △³ plant-space becomes vapor moisture. Thus "cloud" dissolves further into the differential unfolding of droplet versus drop, distribution over sky versus distribution over land. The vast expanse of rolling fog in the heavens and the minuscule chemistry of dust particle precipitation become undifferentiated in this one differential, of which there are myriad forms endlessly combined everywhere. All of them unfold in the movements back and forth between 〰〰 plant-moisture and △³ plant-space; giving humidity as giving space and giving space as giving humidity; becoming-vast as expansion rather than vastness as expanse.

 Manifesting within the earth as the differential between dry and marshy land, the two aspects of destroying "cloud" and moving towards the continuous unfolding become intertwined in yet other ways. Here, they are the adjustment of plants to these conditions, such that the "same plant" is anything but the same depending on where it grows. Here, therefore, giving space is giving growth and giving difference, individuality beyond classification through presence or absence of what had been "cloud".

 Finally, giving space is also giving death: as water evaporates between sky

and ground, or as moss seals off trees, or as the rain-animal gets angry, dryness and moisture in excess both give space by clearing it, giving it as barren land, as withdrawal. Here, ⟁ plant-space becomes dominant over ⋀⋀⋀ plant-moisture, and what once was "cloud" now comes to be implemented as dust and wind. But this is a more general movement, too: facing the sun, ⟁ plant-space is warmth as both life and rot; and ⋀⋀⋀ plant-moisture, too, manifests as both in turn. Nonetheless, here too the dissolution of "cloud" remains always as unfolding chains of differentials in which space and moisture become indistinct and unstable; that is, as sky-earth-groundwater-root-space, as vapor-drop-leaf-butterfly-space, as moss-wind-graft-space, etc.

With the fish ⊂≈ mormyrus, the movement of gliding or glissando comes to modulate the giving of space as moisture and the giving of moisture as space. For these destroy "cloud" further in their movements, like the fish glides through water and the ⊂≈ mormyrus' weak electricity glides ahead of it, too. There is the gliding of fog over the ground as cloud touches earth, gliding of drop through the air as vapor connects sky and ground, gliding of groundwater into roots and out of leaves back to sky. There is the glissando of myriad watery messengers touching grassy antennae, glissando of rain onto my head, and that of all the animals, too. Thus the movements of giving space and giving moisture are modulated and specified here to manifest in a gliding, watery, distributed movement.

Out of this destruction of "cloud", ✕ myrrh implements the dry end of its dissolution's spectrum, its giving of not-rain, not-shade, its modulation of light, but also its giving death, its negating itself in a differential withdrawal to reinforce its giving of life.

Finally, ◝ sweet flag, a wetland plant, manifests the opposite end, the seeping of water into the ground, and (as a psychoactive plant) as also gateway to what had once been direct communication with the rain-animal, and what might once again be such.[25] It is the final dissolution of "cloud" into the continuousness of rain as medium of dance and stagger; the unfolding chain of shaman-rock-animal-rain-plant removing the last vestiges of "cloud" in its widest possible dispersal.

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There is no such thing as <u>obligation</u>. For obligation comes either from yourself, as when you tie yourself to observing social, moral, or legal norms, or the obligation comes from others. But if it comes from yourself,

25 David Lewis-Williams, <u>Discovering Southern African Rock Art</u> (Cape Town: David Philip, 2016), 53.

it's not an obligation, as you can't ever oblige yourself to do anything – there is no rut that you cannot break out of. There may be costs involved with breaking out of them, but this does not mean that you can't renege on a so-called obligation. Ultimately you can never force yourself to stick to what you said yesterday. Even if you act today in accordance with what you said yesterday, this is not because of what you said yesterday, but because of what you want to do today – including, potentially, claiming fidelity to what you said yesterday.

What if the supposed obligation comes from someone else? In this case it can arise either by persuasion or by force (including fraud). But if it arises by persuasion, then you ultimately agree with the "obligation" – and then it no longer is an obligation, it's simply how you want to act anyway. Thus a supposed obligation can really only ever arise if someone makes you observe it against your will, by force or fraudulently. But neither of these two can oblige you to do anything either. Force or fraud may make you do things, to be sure. But throughout, you can and will always be on the lookout for ways to evade, shirk, avoid, slack off, escape, and ultimately to rise up and smash your oppressor – and rightfully so, for you can never owe someone doing something that they force you to do. (Debt-bondage and debt-slavery are relations of force; as obligations they are null and void.) As there can, therefore, never be an obligation arising from

yourself, nor from others, by whatever means, the term is meaningless and there is no such thing as an obligation.

Nonetheless, the concept keeps being used. For it adds a layer of self-righteousness to the punishment of those who are said to be 'evading their obligations', and that is, it adds legitimacy. The point of punishment is after all, as Nietzsche pointed out, to provide "an equivalence... in the form of a kind of pleasure – the pleasure of being allowed to vent one's power freely upon one who is powerless."[26] What good is it for a creditor to have a debtor punished when no repayment can be made? The punishment is repayment: "the injured party" (that is, the creditor) "exchanged for the loss he had sustained... and extraordinary counterbalancing pleasure: that of making suffer."[27] And of course this pleasure is immeasurably heightened when the debtor 'had it coming'; and providing this is the purpose that the term "obligation" serves, and the reason it continues to be used despite not actually being capable of fulfilling its function.

Reading continuously, therefore, the discrete term "obligation" must be destroyed further. In its dissolution, we are guided by bird's flight. Thus

🐦 hoopoe dissolves the territoriality – claims upon lives of others – of "obligation" towards the

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26 Friedrich Nietzsche, Genealogy of Morals, II.5 (tr. Kaufmann and Hollingdale).
27 Ibid, II.6.

continuousness of wings spread to receive solar exuberance. At the same time, ⟨vulture glyph⟩ vulture dissolves the parasitism of "obligation" towards a reciprocity that goes beyond symbiosis; a generative reciprocity, that is, where each equivalent becomes aneconomic exhaustion until none remain.

 With these guides, the hasty temporality of "obligation" dissolves into ⟨glyph⟩ plant-speed, a temporalization of favor and return rather than repayment and suffering, and from there, recedes into the simultaneity of continuous unfolding altogether outside of vulgar time, where aneconomy renders all exchange impossible. That is, the bird guides help along the dissolution of debt and guilt into ⟨glyph⟩ plant-entanglement, and undergrowth relationship where no-one begins and no-one ends, where brittle personality and property are eliminated towards the continuousness of intertwining threads, beyond even the impossible arrival of the gift.

Thus material and psychological interdependence are realized here beyond all boundaries of "matter" and "psychology", as ⟨glyph⟩ plant-entanglement is a continuous dissolution and reconstitution of each center of the universe as and through every other center of the universe. With this, the sting of "obligation" dissolves into ⟨glyph⟩ plant-carve, into roots growing in and through me and you and all living beings, towards ⟨glyph⟩ offshoots nourished by the ⟨glyph⟩ plant-moisture of each of us and all of us, being radically independent in and through our continuous abolition and reconstitution.

 Thus "obligation" is abolished at first towards entanglement, and then ultimately towards completely receding into the undifferentiated, unstable and indeterminable interdependence of continuous unfolding, from which each of our individualities is and remains an ⟨glyph⟩ offshoot.