

### III. Biophilia Versus *Lebensneid*: Seeking Ecopsychological Balance

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## Abstract

The ideas presented here are a continuation, and Part Three, of a three-installment presentation connecting ecopsychology with semiotics and biosemiotics (Conesa-Sevilla, 2005a; and Conesa-Sevilla, 2005b). This third installment of the series (Conesa-Sevilla, 2005a; and Conesa-Sevilla, 2005b), suggests ways in which we can begin to deal with and even repair an obsolete text.

The solutions are presented around previously asked questions: *Why is most of humanity accepting living with less, rather than much more, wildness? and What impedes the embracing of seemingly healthy, productive, and sustainable deep interactions with wilderness and each other?*

In the answers to these questions several ecopsychological positions are taken, some new and others revised (Conesa, 1999). One, that most adults living in industrialized nations, ontologically speaking, cannot simply undo, overnight, a dysfunctional bonding with a consumer-driven material society; that the alienation from *wildness* might be permanent. Two, that various degrees of re-affiliation with wilderness, and with a more authentic biosemiosis, are possible given individual differences, health limitations, and various degrees of commitment. This partial re-affiliation is in itself important because it may impact *wellness* in positive and long-lasting ways. Three, even the partial and collective re-affiliation of great numbers of alienated adults can tip the balance favorably and contribute to a new hope and a reinterpreted semiosis that can benefit the next generations substantially. Four, that only future generations can make, if they wish, a total re-connection with wildness, albeit first taught by imperfect, even dysfunctional but well-intending ecologically non-affiliated adults and their societies. Five, that if this re-connection were to be complete, then a global, *ecopsychological* balance might be achieved once again.

**Contents:** 1.Introduction; 2.Wolf Religion vs. Chihuahua Religion; 3.Five Cynegetic Trait-Clusters; 4. First Question; 5.Second Question; 6.Third Question; 7. Fourth Question; 8.Conclusion; Appendix A; Appendix B; Appendix C; Bibliography and References

"Everything was green, so green it went into him."  
Gary Paulsen, *Hatchet*, (1987: 39)

"The smell of vegetation was extraordinarily strong. As for the greenness, it was so fresh and soothing that strength and comfort seemed to be physically pouring into my system through my eyes."  
Yann Martel, *Life of Pi*, (2003: 347)

## 1. Introduction

In her book *Self-analysis*, Karen Horney (1942/1994) borrows a term coined by Nietzsche, *Lebensneid*,<sup>1</sup> that she translates as “a resentment toward life, a deep resentment of being left out.” This selection and its consequences are found in the last chapter of the same book under the title, The Limitations of Self-analysis. I sought out and rejected several terms to encapsulate the intent of this paper before embracing Horney's own selection, namely, to answer the two questions other ecologists and ecopsychologists have asked and I summarize here: *Why is most of humanity accepting living with less, rather than much more, wildness?* and *What impedes the embracing of seemingly healthy, productive, and sustainable deep interactions with wilderness and each other?* Or a combination of the two into one important query: *That is, if LIFE can be said to be archetypically, ideally, naturally represented by wildness<sup>2</sup>, why then do we reject it?* All three are psychological questions when their investigation and consequences lead to issues of mental wellness or the lack of thereof. More precisely, they are questions within the domain of Ecopsychology. Of course, inherent in these questions are complex psychological, social, political, semiotic, and economical issues making an attempt to answer their full import a very challenging task. Thus, this presentation will fail to do justice to this entire horizon of ideas. However, a distillation of their consequences and of their semiotic contributions can be ascertained in order to seek the remedies needed to deal with the dying parts of our over-civilized text and self.

I have already offered some tentative answers to the above questions (Conesa, 1999; Conesa-Sevilla, 2005a; and Conesa-Sevilla, 2005b) and these, in part, have been influenced by deep ecologists (Naess, 1973; Naes, 1979; and Devall & Sessions, 1985), philosophers of ecopsychology (Sheppard, 1973; and Sheppard, 1982), and by ecopsychologists (Roszak, 1992; and Metzner, 1999). But my initial explorations did not completely address the answers that semiotics and biosemiotics may provide to such questions. Also, my partial attempt at a synthesis of biosemiosis and ecopsychology (Conesa-Sevilla, 2005b) left me without having proposed a path for recovery to the *wild* that was satisfactory to this ecopsychologist. For example, I initially left out the role of religion or of religious rituals in ecopsychological becoming because others have covered it so well (Devall & Sessions; 1985; Roszak, 1992; and Metzner, 1999).

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<sup>1</sup> One can read it as the antithesis to E. O. Wilson's *Biophilia*, 1984.

<sup>2</sup> By embracing the natural and wild I also mean acquiring the necessary statistical know-how to be able to assess, often-subtle changes, long term, or when data are copious and overwhelm commonsensical but false notions.

Nevertheless, here I focus on my own previously un-addressed questions about religion and add my own perspective and ecopsychological practices. In short, the assumption in all three questions, and in other writings, is that collusive madness and collective neurosis (Fromm, 1955; Sheppard, 1973; and Sheppard, 1982) are ontogenetically formed to create an alienated industrialized and urban human population: a *biophagocitic*<sup>3</sup> rather than *biophilic* (Wilson, 1984) self in its relation to nature.

If as Horney says, “Any severe neurosis is like a tight armor...,” then, additionally, the armor also uses a perverse linguistic semiosis and/or more systemic or evolutionary biosemiosis in order to forge its impregnability. It has been my claim that with an understanding of semiosis and biosemiosis the ecopsychologist might fully grasp the predicament of the overculturized psyche and its unstable structure. I would like to take up the challenge here of devising ways of denting this armature, at least, or of finally breaking through its thin metal by using something analogous to a crossbow: the potential energy that has accumulated in the armored-psyche from depriving itself of its telluric source (Conesa-Sevilla, 2005a; and Conesa-Sevilla, 2005b)--our individual and collective *Steppenwolf* (Hesse, 1929). This challenge is only possible insofar as we agree that words and their meanings can be used to rationalize and obscure one own’s *biophagocitic* tendencies and to explain away our present *Lebensneid* neurosis. This challenge is only possible if we agree further that ideology and its propaganda delivers a persuasive (and often conflicting or contradictory) text early on in human development and continuing throughout ontogeny, succeeding in the formation an alienated psyche (Chomsky, 1968; and Mannheim, 1936).

Anticipating later portions of this presentation, to the extent that using language leaves a psycholinguistic and therefore cognitive track, then these "sound-mind-tracks" may be edifying or self-deprecating, inclusive of natural process or exclusive of life-giving systems, and may be ideologically blinding or semiotically expansive. If so, then the study of text and its consequences to a developing mind is of utmost importance in understanding ecopsychological wellness or lack thereof. Clinically speaking, methods such as Neurolinguistic programming (deprogramming) NLP, in conjunction with other ecopsychological and hypnotic methods, may be useful in breaching the dysfunctional armor and text. On the academic and literary realms, deconstructive semiotics plays a similar role. But more generally, my assault of this armor will begin by trying to argue around and from the following thesis:

*I agree with Paul Sheppard (1973, 1982) that many generations, populations, and nations (mine included, myself included) will never be able to achieve a complete and authentically original telluric psychological ground. Ecopsychologically speaking, all that most of us can hope for is a greater degree of relatedness, intimacy and enjoyment, with varying degrees of success and constancy, while partaking of wild spaces, as well as some noticeable ecopsychological incremental change that ensures mental stability. That achievement alone would be a great gift. The magnitude of these changes, toward what Paul Sheppard describes as a hunter-forager, cynegetic way of life and mindset, will*

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<sup>3</sup> I am using this term metaphorically, to emphasize our consumer-driven and thoughtless relation with nature, excluding a grander biosemiosis of cooperation and interrelatedness.

*depend on each person's Umwelt situation, including psychological (innate or ontogenically derived) tools; the availability and accessibility of natural spaces and wild nature; the strength of the prevailing social propaganda and ideology which devalues such immersion as a priority for health or as a better measure of a "high standard of living;" and the availability of credible information (medical, psychological, environmental, ecological, ecopsychological) that leads to healing and guides and recreates a possible cynegetic transformation. However, collective or individual small changes in these areas can help turn the tide away from individual and collective madness (and collusion). Nevertheless, now, only the very young, with the tutelage of cynegetically-ecopsychologically "inferior" adults can ever achieve full-blown cynegetic mentality and health. Each committed generation after that, improving on the learning of the previous one, can build up an authentic cynegetic existential base.*

The above and important thesis and caveat must be made even more salient regarding other cynegetic arguments that relate to psychological wellness that follow. That is, in my own thinking, I do my best not to romanticize primal psychological existence, or any type of existence, while ignoring important shortfalls or difficulties, sometimes unknown by social scientists, that these primal psychologies encountered when surviving in wild and pristine conditions<sup>4</sup>. Nor can an ecopsychologist single handedly wash away present-day lifetimes of personal bad habits and cumbersome sociocultural complexity in order to instantly re-create these ancient ways and pristine clear minds. Additionally, and *to play the devil's advocate*, for example, *primal psychological existence might have given rise, consistently so, to thoroughly unhappy individuals who just happened to live in sustainable ways and lacked the imagination to develop superior technologies or invent the idea of a vacation.* I have also learned not to glamorize by singularizing (Conesa-Sevilla, 2005b) Yanomamos, Swiss people, Fijians, or Paleo-hunters. Specifically, primal peoples, even when I use them as psychological standard for wellness, lacked crucial types and quantities<sup>5</sup> of information, the lack of which made it possible for some of them to abuse and exterminate many species (see Barry Lopez's *Arctic Dreams*, 1986).

From an ecopsychological point of view, however, it is necessary to understand whether their embeddedness in natural settings (with respect to the lesser or different relatedness found in the average modern urbanite), increase the probability that they will experience moments of ecological clarity, psychological transcendence, and emotional quietude, all leading to overall wellness, and more importantly, to individuation. I define wellness not only as being physically healthy, but also "healthy" in a psychological sense, as an overall certainty of high quality organismic accomplishment of the quality of living, dealing with LIFE and dealing with DEATH. To borrow and then modify from a mathematician (Steen, 2003), *ecopsychological balance means to enjoy life while authentically interacting, with body and mind, with naturally wild spaces so that the meaning extracted from those exchanges is, semiotically speaking, a "mile deep and*

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<sup>4</sup> We can, however, study present-day hunter-forager-horticulturalists and judge afterwards whether they are prototypes of psychological wellness.

<sup>5</sup> Please refer to the last synnomic phase, Phase Three, which describes the ecological scientist-as-a-shaman in Conesa-Sevilla, 2005b.

*miles wide" as opposed to the mostly superficial and "tinsel relatedness" that our modern world forces us into which are only "an inch deep and a mile wide".*

But there is no question that, coupled and synergetic with present-day medical and psychological knowledge, these ancient ways of being-in-the-world may prove to be fundamentally indispensable if modern societies are to evolve into population and knowledge dynamics that are pro-nature, for ecological reality, and existing in sustainable environments.

## 2. ***Wolf Religion vs. Chihuahua Religion***

“It lasted only a few seconds, but it was so intense that it seemed to become part of him. Nothing.”

Gary Paulsen, *Hatchet*, (1987: 51)

A prelude, if not to cynegism, then toward increased ecopsychological wellness and natural spirituality, has been taught by diverse faiths throughout the ages. More often nowadays, I am physically impacted by the fact that the moral human world begins the second after rising from wordless, meditative contemplation in nature. I assume that this form of contemplation was then, long, long ago, and for many thousands of years, a nameless exercise unclaimed by any religious sect or ritual. That is, it was not an institutionalized practice, but was rather as natural and ubiquitous as drinking water or flies, respectively. *Before moralizing commences the body that sits in silence atop a rock in a high alpine meadow or on a sandy beach is holy, innocent, and immersed in timelessness.* Two minutes after, a list of random concerns begins. Am I trespassing on this pastureland? Isn't putting bells on cows a form of torture? What is the name of this tiny plant that I am now destroying with the weight of my body? What time is it? What is TIME? Shall I get into trouble if I remain? Am I late for supper? Who are those folks coming uphill? Should I acknowledge them? What are their intentions toward me? Will my nakedness offend? Should I hide? A paranoid swarm of humanly created Do's and Don'ts invade my awareness and pollute an otherwise crystal clear mind that minutes before merged seamlessly with cows, bells, grass, sky, and wind, all belonging together. The previous seamless realization is as tangible and near as my own body or my fears. That is the point: I have a choice--fear or innocence. As an analogy on a grander scale, religious cosmological stories of origin tell us of different gods existing in such timeless void before human history or even life history began. Out of loneliness, or for reasons that continue to mystify us mortals, these lonesome-in-perfect-voids gods create female and male principles. The dynamics of these two forces (in endless semiotic and triadic relations to the original, usually patriarchal, form) lead to oppositional, complementary, and harmonizing solutions that inevitably write a plethora of morality rules.

Furthermore, the same visceral and seamless sensation leads me to the rational thought that *moralizing IS separateness*. As an intellectual factoid this is not an earth shattering revelation. However, as a complete awareness that permeates the totality of "I," the second after contemplative practice in nature, this is a new wisdom for me. Many of you will immediately identify with this wisdom. My newly acquired wisdom, one that moves

from the necessity of ecopsychological wellness, itself derived from this natural connection, means that to be immersed in nature is to increase the probability that these feelings will continue and endure. Choice! To participate consciously in nature, with nature, while in contemplation or during "impractical wandering," increases the probability of *primal innocence*. It is not an accident that monasteries and abbeys from different religions have built their hallowed places and sought and continue to seek a spiritual connection in nature. *Time spent here, time in timelessness, is a key finding if we are to bring the combined moral weight of all religions to save this planet and ourselves.*

Deep Ecology poets and writers such as Gary Snyder and William Devall, respectively, have emphasized the historical role that religion, in particular Zen Buddhism and Taoism, has played in sustaining an ecopsychological balance and health and the consequences of lacking their ecolophilosophical ethos. It is their thesis that Zen Buddhism and ecopsychological wellness overlap in immensely significant areas. In probing deeper the question of why many religions are either able to sustain a longer-term (in historical time and relative terms) cynegetic connection, and others rediscover this link in ebb and flow cycles, I thought that much of what I had read and understood in sociology of religion or anthropology of religion could be analogized along the line of the subtitle for this section, that is, a difference between what I refer to as "wolf" and "Chihuahua" religions.<sup>6</sup> My summary will not however, tiptoe along politically correct dotted lines, but aims at a fundamental understanding of the multiplicity and diversity of religious expression as a genetic tree of thought-meme where an ancient, which I term "wolf," hunter-forager attitude of relating to natural processes and to his/her own role in that web of life, has been preserved or not, in various forms, exaggerations, de-emphases, and distortions, as the religions we see today. As semiotic analogy within another analogy, I recommend the novel *Ella Minnow Pea*, by Mark Dunn, who, humorously and in actions that resemble historical fact, tracks the deterioration and manipulation of the written word-text (and its subsequent psychological and communal consequences) in the fictional place of *Nollopton*. Guided by opportunistic and nefarious city fathers and mothers, an original alphabet consisting of 26 letters is reduced incrementally, supernaturally they claim, and hence all the words that can be used, to only five (l, m, n, o, p). If this analogy works, then a once richer genetic soup of Wolf adaptations have been reduced to a few decontextualized and limited breeds. Or, original, personal, and GRAND spirituality too can be reduced to a simplistic "LMNOP" dogma.

The genetic analogy employs a real study of dog breeds all originating in an ancestral wolf-like animal. That is, for the purposes of utility, companionship, aesthetics, alimentation, or human fancy, the many dog appearances, from Chihuahuas, to Pit-bulls, or malamutes, are examples of a humanly chosen group of traits and characteristics from a larger set of phenotypical and behavioral characteristics that are, prototypically, all incorporated and tightly bound in a wolf ancestor.

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<sup>6</sup> In my hierarchy "Wolf" should be capitalized and "chihuahua" should not. But alas, my spelling program insists that chihuahua dogs reign grammatically supreme over Wolf and Wolves.

Furthermore, to make this analogy work, I am thinking under the assumption that an intimate and totally encompassing relationship with nature, including all the physical, mental and cognitive skills (a hunter-forager spirituality of stealth, frugality, gratitude, resourcefulness, strength, ritual, fidelity, courage, patience, perseverance) necessary to survive under pristine pre-historical conditions was more wolf-like than Chihuahuan or Pitbullish. These skills, mental predispositions, and attentionally-here-and-now attitudes are not in themselves necessarily religious, but as an ensemble and as part of a real ancestral context (the struggle for survival with minimum cultural baggage), their combined synergy could become the moral foundation for the birthing of all religions. *That is, a hunter-forager spirituality of stealth, frugality, gratitude, resourcefulness, strength, seasonally meaningful rituals, fidelity, courage, patience, perseverance, are alchemically transformed into genuine pride, other values and virtues and then into the concept of morality. If morality emerges from these basic attitudes, then the individual must be moral, naturally moral.*

It is important to pause and clarify here that I am making a distinction between a real human psychobiological capacity to have a spiritual moment of intimacy and awe, and a belief in the supernatural. I imagine that once the spiritual emotion is felt the latter could be made easier by the former. But this section is not about a belief in the supernatural. Rather, I am trying to figure out for myself why ecopsychological wellness is sometimes equated with *this* or *that* religion, or even with *this* or *that* particular religious ritual and practice. To illustrate with rhetorical questions, why is it necessary for humans to invent cathedrals with high ceilings, colorful glass work, polished rare metals, and decorate the space further with intricate and ornate displays, all this in the same space where a chanting (shamanic?) drone or a spiritual song is accompanying the act of sitting meditatively? Why numerous so-called religious practices seem to be an attempt to replicate an attentional moment of *thereness in nature, in a fabricated nature?* And if golf is akin to religion, why do these sensible adults spend their days in fabricated African Savannahs sharpening their aim and strength while "hunting" small balls that seem to move on their own accord on windy days or on rolling lawns?<sup>7</sup> Why not golf anywhere else?

Buddhism, Taoism, Shintoism<sup>8</sup>, in my comparison are more like malamute or husky dogs and closer to an ancestral wolf cognitive-spiritual relatedness than other religions that pit nature against humanity, the cultivated against the wild, or the baroque and ornate art against the complex interlacing of green vines and purple flowers. *Other religions may be referred to as Chihuahuan if the complexity of an ancestral mind and ecopsychological wellness, their original purpose, has become a set of dead rituals exaggerating the ingestion of diminutive amounts of wildness. Other interpretations of religion may be Pitbullish, if their objectives make use of the bellicose, the paranoid, and revenge as a means to achieve a certain morality and morbid ecstasy. Self-flagellation too makes sense as a masochistic act, but also, if the hunter has long ago stopped feeling*

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<sup>7</sup> For more about the re-enactment of the African Savannah in urban spaces please refer to the Kaplan, Orians, and Ulrich citations.

<sup>8</sup> Enter your own sect, order, or religion here, as long as there is an historical precedence and continuity of this natural relatedness.



the bushes brushing his skin as he readies for an arrow shot and this loss looms large in the believer's unconscious. *Institutionalizing guilt and/or punishment in the face of the real learning necessity and probability of committing countless errors or misdemeanors in a world plagued with relativistic or dogmatic rules may be a neurotic de-evolution of a total mindfulness that understood that mistakes lead to death, not deals, and that the list of potential errors was no longer than your bow.*

To close this section, *Full-fledged human intelligence, the intelligence that triumphs under the demands of an interesting and full-fledged natural world, becomes morbid or desperate to find the religious sentiment anywhere, however bizarre, once removed from its original paradise. This sentiment is then corrupted and replaced by anything that transfixes the senses and perception into a wasted hypnotic or emotionally over-charged "doing".* What I define later in Section 4g (and in Appendix A) as "bad religion" can be seen as a de-evolution of natural mentality who, wolf-like, embraced ALL, and saw ALL. Only a Chihuahuan-type religion sacrifices human life for no naturally good reason to gods who appeal to human vanity or folly. The hunter saves everything, uses everything, SILENCE above all.

### **3. Five Cynegetic Trait-Clusters**

In addition to formulating and practicing a spirituality of naturalness, and before returning to answering my opening three fundamental questions, we might continue the preliminary task of understanding what obstacles block the path of even a mediocre improvement, individually or collectively, toward ecopsychological stability. Although it may not always be fair to diagnose each trait-clusters that follows as a form of natural-wild-environmental alienation (as a *Lebensneid* existential situation, as "a resentment toward life, a deep resentment of being left out"), this exercise, nevertheless, may be useful as a simplification of a large range of human mal-adaptations and alienation. But with caricatures and by other means, clinicians must try first to unveil the protective layers laid down by the person himself/herself and/or by societal indoctrination in order to seek a cure. These could indeed be "tight armors." *On the other hand, if people come in for therapy, and the clinician knows they live in small apartments; in a big noisy city; they lack exercise; they are smokers, they heat up and consume easy pre-prepared foods; they don't remember the last time they dug their hands into fertile soil; they can only identify a few of the local wild plants or animals; then the therapy will have to include, irrespective of other syndromes and treatments, the exact opposite of this overall pattern of pseudo-existing.*

The five typologies below are provided for illustrative purposes only. It might be technically incorrect to describe the following behaviors as personality "traits." I have qualified them by naming them *trait-clusters* to insinuate that these can be interpreted as social, rather than psychological traits, itself an oddity. *That is, and consistent with Paul Sheppard's ontological thesis, cynegism, a way of life and resulting psychological profile emerging from close-knit relations with wilderness, is environmentally, not genetically derived.* To the extent that cynegetic regression, while interacting with psychological traits proper, can match these illustrations, then they are somewhat valid.

Equally important, nor can the reader infer that these are in any order, in degrees of dysfunction, *away from First Order* cynegism. In other words, the numerical progression does not imply increased ecopsychological degeneration.

Moreover, the mixing of and continuum between these convenient caricatures of ecopsychological cluster-traits (II through V), more or less alienated from and improperly bonded with wildness, might compose other kinds of ecological affiliations in your own minds. Mixing can also occur, I imagine, in the upper realms of cynegenism, from the unattainable, for most of us, true hunter-forager-horticulturalist, to the comparably speaking, easier existence of individuals who now live in harmonious and sustainable relations in, if not true wild spaces, at least natural spaces that demand genuine ecopsychological changes leading to wellness and physical vitality.

For example, in Scott O'Dell's *Island of The Blue Dolphins*, based on a true story, an already cynegetic girl, Karana, must break tribal taboos against women making weapons, in order to survive alone on an island.

The five cynegetic descriptions that follow are literary excerpts themselves of their more complete coverage in Appendix A. The reader may want to look up these descriptions first before settling for the more cryptic entries below. But in short, the following excerpts, except the ***Trait-Cluster I: First Order*** cynegism, or authentic hunter-forager-horticulturalist mentality, reflect various degrees of semiotic relation and different degrees of human-nature estrangement. ***Trait-Cluster II*** cynegism, for example, refers to modern-day seasonal, *part-time* hunters and/or individuals who by unfortunate circumstances, find themselves lost in the wild but have every intention of returning to civilization. With respect to the part-time hunters, many of the comforts of civilization are always nearby or can be easily obtained. ***Trait-Cluster III*** cynegism is *wild behavior* that is simply pointless, rude, disrespectful, and pretends to pass for a real and noble wildness within. ***Trait-Cluster IV*** cynegism is represented mostly by the easy and predictable middle class or bourgeois life and includes an additional neurotic and anxious component that further isolates itself from wildness. Finally, ***Trait-Cluster V, or Improbable/rare*** cynegism, is a description of thoroughly fictional characters, who although representing true cynegism, are not real. This last trait-cluster does have, however, the power to influence the thinking of any of the psychological dimensions described and to act as a desired model, albeit romanticized and improbable, of cynegetic life.

#### ***Trait-Cluster I: First Order Cynegism***

“But perhaps, more than his body was the change in his mind, or in the way he was-was becoming. I am not the same, he thought. I see, I hear differently. He did not know when the change started but it was there; when a sound came to him now he didn't just hear it but would know the sound. He would swing and look at it—a breaking twig, a movement of air—and know the sound as if he somehow could move his mind back down the wave of sound to the source.” Gary Paulsen, *Hatchet*, (1987)

### ***Trait-Cluster II***

“My life is monotonous [the fox talking to The Little Prince]. I hunt chickens and men hunt me. All chickens are alike and all men are alike. Men have no more time to understand anything. They buy ready-made things in the shops. But since there are no shops where you can buy friends, men no longer have any friends.”

Antoine De Saint- Exupéry, *The Little Prince*, (1995)

“As I took leave of the island I carried on board some special souvenirs of my long stay, including a goatskin cap I had made, my umbrella, Poll my parrot, and the money I had taken from the wrecked ships.”

Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, (1995)

### ***Trait-Cluster III***

“But the habits and practices of, say, scholars and critics are not deemed fandom, and are not considered to be potentially deviant or dangerous. Why? My conclusion claims that the characterization of fandom as pathology is based in, supports, and justifies elitist and disrespectful beliefs about our common life.”

Joli Jenson, *Fandom as Pathology: The Consequences of Characterization*, (1992)

### ***Trait-Cluster IV***

“A man cannot live intensely except at the cost of the self. Now the bourgeois treasures nothing more highly than the self (rudimentary as it may be). And so at the cost of intensity he achieves his own preservation and security. His harvest is a quiet mind which he prefers to being possessed by God, as he does comfort to pleasure, convenience to liberty, and the pleasant temperature to that deathly inner consuming fire. The bourgeois is consequently by nature a creature of weak impulses, anxious, fearful of giving himself away and easy to rule. Therefore, he has substituted majority for power, law for force, and the polling booth for responsibility.”

Hermann Hesse, *Steppenwolf*, (1929/1969)

### ***Trait-Cluster V. Improbable/rare cynegism***

“ He could drop twenty feet at a stretch from limb to limb in rapid descent to the ground, or he could gain the utmost pinnacle of the loftiest tropical giant with the ease and swiftness of a squirrel. Though but ten years old he was fully as strong as the average man of thirty...”

Edgar Rice Burroughs, *Tarzan of The Apes*, (1914)

Admittedly, the above literary excerpts are scanty, even mysteriously frustrating. Many more trait-clusters of cynegism may come to the reader’s mind than I am able to include here. And there is no question that the causes for the origin of above psychological dimensions are complex and demand an extensive reading across many social scientific disciplines. These causes, however complex, might be environmentally linked to the

earlier trilogy of inquires: *Why is most of humanity accepting living with less, rather than much more, wildness; What impedes the embracing of seemingly healthy, meaningful, and sustainably deep interactions with wilderness and each other;? And If LIFE can be said to be archetypically, ideally, naturally represented by wildness, why then do we reject it?*

Having begun this work with the promise that the ecopsychologically null condition I termed *Lebensneid* might be corrected by a renewed sense of spirituality, itself rooted in a respect for nature, then continuing this task by characterizing the groups and trait-clusters of individuals in need (or not) of these therapies, I now devote the rest of this text to trying to answer the initial trilogy of questions.

#### ***4. Why is most of humanity accepting living with less, rather than much more, wildness?***

To answer the first question simply: we are psychologically deprived (some of us see, in hindsight), institutionally condemned, and forced or conditioned to think along dysfunctional psycholinguistic paths. These reasons, and more, are reflected in an incredibly large body of sensible, robust, and/or confirmed social scientific and human environmental data amassed from the 1930's until this year<sup>9</sup>. To ease the task of summarizing these findings and of reading them here, I have, again, taken the complete text of the subtitles in this section and "posted them" under Appendix B. Unlike my previous recommendation, this time I would encourage the reader to begin with the italicized bare-bones descriptions first, and then move to Appendix B for clarification. But some of answers to the above question are as follows:

##### ***4a. Practical, self-esteem, and existential necessity***

*Many of the principal social/urban easy-to-access and convenient services and our interactions with more official social/urban infrastructures (e.g., mostly their human bureaucracies) are themselves the origins of our self-worth and self-esteem, and to the extent that their values are distorted and their services conditional on our servitude and automatic deference, so are the interpretations of our self-image. You are what you eat.*

##### ***4b. Natural resources are depleted, abused, and ecological systems are misunderstood***

*The desire, hunger, and cost of maintaining a relative "high standard of living," civilization, "progress," and the affluence that allows increased comforts and temporary psychological patches, are fed by natural "things," systems, and systems and "things" in precarious biological balances. Either dominant cultures (capitalist or communist) have abused and ransacked other "lesser developed" societies and plundered their territories in pursuit of these natural resources with impunity, or many overpopulated territories*

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<sup>9</sup> In Theodore Roszak's recent re-release of The Voice of The Earth (2001), he explains how when asked for an interview the reporter wanted to confirm that Dr. Roszak had "objective evidence" about ecopsychological illnesses or objective proof that nature-estrangement could affect human psychology. I believe he got tired of amassing a great heap of social scientific interdisciplinary data pointing to the obvious: we are natural beings.

*and a bursting-with-people planet have used up their "free" natural-resources ride, never free to begin with. There aren't enough "things" and "goods," resources, for all people on Earth to maintain the above levels of gluttonous and capricious prosperity, and/or to survive. For the most part, ecological science depends on statistical and laborious know-how that the average person does not possess or mistrusts.*

**4c. *Ideological propaganda that utilizes empty meanings or oversimplifies complex issues***

*"Citizens of many nations accept, unquestioned, without proper educational training, intangible labels and poorly understood concepts sold by the dominant ideology, influential politicians, family members, and even misguided scientists. Bad text is accepted at face value. These intangible labels seem to acquire a certain meaning in the lips of and behind the charisma of leaders who are equally in the dark or simply nefarious and greedy." We are what we read. We are judged by the company we keep. All things being equal, one random hour of public broadcasting has more truth than a week's worth of selected "extreme" or "vindictive" news.*

**4d. *Dysfunctional ontological bonding with all the wrong things***

*"The transformation from juvenile patterns of consumption and materialistic and empty-hedonistic fixations can be long and arduous enough, even without a well-defined ecopsychological wellness goal, judging by mainstream clinical standards. The transformation will have to include recognition of complex behavioral and cognitive patterns, a dysfunctional semiosis and biosemiosis, that will interfere with and impede a trajectory toward wellness." Only children play with toys. Adults, on the other hand, change the world with GOOD ideas and deeds, and always, always, make the world a better place for children to play with toys and then, as adults, with ideas. Adults leave clean air, water, and food sources for their children.*

**4e. *Individual and/or collective limitations.***

*"In cases of extreme and incurable psychological dysfunction, the total depletion of ecosystems to unsustainable conditions, or even physiological and genetic impediments, it may be impossible for an individual to achieve prosperity of spirit of any kind, capitalistic or otherwise. For all the other reasons stated up to this point, individually or collectively, we may find more opposition than support, more discouragement than solutions, more ignorance than credible and practical information to begin the transformation." We might all be, individually, blind men and women. Collectively, however, we can build a Gaussian noetic structure that is rooted in natural wisdom that can protect us all.*

**4f. *The inability to relate to wildness (mistrusting or fearing "Mother Earth")***

*"This has always been the dilemma and the continuing challenge of the cynegetically immersed individual: how to interpret the role and function, real or projected-animistic, of the mother "out there" in the daily, yearly, and generational actions and functions of survival. The solution to this challenge is rather simple in my understanding. Life should be as challenging as learning how to walk; thus exciting, liberating, and fraught with the RIGHT type of danger toward a desired outcome: freedom on two feet or racing*

*with the wind at full gallop. That is because only such a life provides our complex cognitive and physical systems with the necessary alimentation for normal development that can eventually be cashed-in as courage and wholeness. This self-initiated and courageous excitement and sense of liberation, with the additional and mature understanding that all natural things have their hallowed place and are indispensable to an ideal developmental process, is the only assurance that the child or we, on our way to transforming our sickly psyches into cynegetically nimble constitutions, can ever hope for.” WALK, then RUN.*

4g. ***Religious traditional dogmatic stances about human nature being a special case—anthropocentrism- and separate from telos***

*“Religion has played and can play a valuable role in bonding the individual and societies to telluric origins. This is good religion<sup>10</sup>. Indeed, many first-nation peoples have/had such religions and their doctrines, mores and taboos act/acted as a self-correcting (Conesa-Sevilla, 2005b), thoroughly tested, and built-in ecopsychological set of principles that almost guarantees normal cynegetic development and thus an authentic affiliation with telos. A bad religion, on the other hand, is anti-nature; anti-wildness; propaganda and ideology supplanting respect for and worship of the organic origins of the human mind and spirit with illusions of grandeur and impossible transcendence. If the spirit emerges from a balanced communion with telos, if ecoethics emerge as a natural consequence of acting "justly," "mindfully" with regard to the entire complexity of life, then this spirit must be GOOD.” “Father” Coyote does not eat the red berries destined for the children of the future, nor does he condone humans who do.*

In short, if we are not up to the challenges of the wild, the challenge of regaining our humanity and well being, because we are not prepared to stand its rigors, we will not partake of its deeper lessons either. If we accept the "easy way out" and a life of ignorance, if we accept it because no viable alternative exists, then we will be unhappy and unfulfilled, and maybe even sick. If we prefer the "easy way out" and the easy life, it is because we have missed many important developmental phases and opportunities for learning how to relate with wilderness and have not bonded properly with a complex planet. And yet, despite of all the challenges, it is our duty to face up to these realities.

But still, there are no promises. Old Oogruk (in Gary Paulsen's *Dogsong*, 1995) himself, the last member of an authentic cynegetic dynasty, makes no promises to initiate Russel. "You are here to learn. And I will try. I will try. But I do not know it all and there will be things I miss. Still, we will do what we can." The consciousness divide that we must all traverse toward cynegism, to be healthy again, is gigantic and even incomprehensible. It is a divide of completely extant *Bewusstsein* that no new age toothpick structures can bridge. Oogruk, as a consummate ecopsychologist, understands very well this challenge when he says:

We lived so differently, so far back and different that it almost cannot be understood now. Now they use guns and make noise, back then we were quiet

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<sup>10</sup> See above Section 2: *Wolf Religion Versus Chihuahua Religion*

and the animals felt differently about dying. But that's just one thing, one little thing, that was different.

5. ***What impedes the embracing of seemingly healthy, meaningful, and sustainably deep interactions with wilderness and each other?***

Ontogenetically speaking, growing in a milieu of the cultural artificiality of plastic plants and pink rubber flamingoes, mindless consumption, banal entertainment, limited physical activity, and always surrounded by masses of infantilized adults, logically produces arrested development, and perpetuates the above fixations and infantile patterns (4d). All of the above points (4a-4g) combine and conspire and culminate in collusive madness to create tinsel realities that are accepted as the real thing. These are some of the impediments to cynegism. Adding insult to injury "health providers" and psychologists contribute to these infantilized patterns to the extent that they themselves are the products of an infantilized reality. As I wrote in the prequel to this paper:

The I-Pod holding, Volvo driving, mild-tempered, sweet talking psychologist is as much to blame for the propping up of *falsches Bewusstsein* [false consciousness] as any nefarious industrialist tycoon. They are equally part of the unconsciously driven consuming herd.

*All this leads to the very scary situation that we don't know what primal-healthy is anymore, partly because mainstream psychologists and psychiatrists are playing with the same toys and playing the same unnatural game. Nor are we allowed to discover for ourselves, by stumbling or luck, what this primal-healthy is, to the extent that the influence of the present tinsel society is so powerfully felt that it makes our actions seem, if not impertinent and deviant, at least out of step with "sane society". We have lost the Nature dictionary and cannot understand what we are supposed to do in NATURE. Specifically, hunter-forager-horticultural knowledge has been lost, degraded into pseudo new age religion, or is being lost at a rapid pace leaving no school-of-nature left, no authentic guides to help us go back. Furthermore, and semiotically speaking, the popular media and techno-materialistic languages (mostly the "G-8" culture) overwhelm the quiet and simpler syntax and semantics of ancient languages. These languages are themselves being lost, their ecological metaphors are but dreams of rapidly disappearing and aging populations who are themselves discarded as an obstacle to obtaining more western toy products by upcoming and forgetful generations of first-nation peoples.*

The modern folk who still have a chance rightly perceive their uncynegetic existence in neurotic and pathological terms, as feeling isolated, alienated, confused, barraged by contradictory texts, and in such a situation, existential paralysis can set in. In the absence of real answers, and in order to feel alive again, we purchase more toys and partake of all sorts of escapism entertainment on credit. Religion for some (at least some forms of it) may be a valid vehicle to regenerate a spiritual sentiment and salvage an ailing psychology. But then again, if you go with that medicine, without full awareness of the natural causes for the malady, you might be indoctrinated deeper into hyper anthropocentric or hyper humanistic thinking, thus moving farther away from embracing

the totality of your being which includes your genetic past and its requirements. In short, *biophagocitic* tendencies, no matter who sells them, rather than a *biophilic* attitude, lurk everywhere and disguise themselves as the panacea YOU need to be whole again.

Finally, fear is the ultimate impediment toward embracing a cynegetic psychology. It is akin to the fear of a domesticated high rise apartment cat that is suddenly placed outdoors without any accommodation time. It is the fear of being physically hurt by something or other. It includes the fear of being lost in the woods, fear of the dark, fear of strange noises, fear of being alone, fear of encountering dangers of any type, fear of encountering strangers, or the fear of being bullied by a mountain cyclist or a fit runner. *Fear is not knowing what something is and in what precise and mature way one can relate to this unknown.* Mature attitudes and stances are gained with experience and knowledge, everywhere. A close cousin of fear is discomfort. If not as unnerving as fear itself, the attempts to insure a 24/7 homeostasis of security and comfort are at least troublesome enough that, ensemble, they prevent us from walking in the rain or snow, or going camping more often because one misses one's Jacuzzi or warm shower, or because one cannot get to the preferred neighborhood's Starbucks coffee shop to drink one's habitual mega Moka-Macciato-topped-with-a-chocolate-covered-coffee-bean. Let's face it; it is usually easier to rest on a comfortable couch eating some pleasurable thing than to be out gardening, digging potatoes under a merciless sun. If some of these situations resonate with you or I, it is because the resonance indicates a symptom as well.

**6. *If LIFE can be said to be archetypically, ideally, naturally represented by wildness, why then do we reject it?***

For all the reasons given earlier plus an additional reason, again, not new. The archetypes of LIFE have changed their masks and clothing and are no longer recognizable or useful as guides for healthy natural values and/or ideas. The ancient-wise supporting casts of archetypal characters we once depended on for meaningful development (the ancient water-earth-wind-fire heroes, our animal totem spirits, and the green men and fairies) do not necessarily fight for a return to ecopsychological balance, nor sacrifice their lives in the pursuit of ecological science. If our ancient archetypes of the hero/heroine, diverse totemic spirit psychologies, the mother goddess, the wise old man/woman, the feminine, the masculine, all desert their original and telluric semiotic mythical function, and we fail to recognize their timeless importance, then we don't understand or trust their lessons either. On the other hand, if the new archetype of the hero is someone who kills, maims, wears expensive jewelry, rapes, and burns forests to a crisp, why would any boy want to grow peas in a pot, or sing a song of respect after killing for food? If the new archetype of the feminine is an impossible body-frame of bones and skin, covered in exotic fur (grown in torturing cages far away from the stores that sell them) and on the lookout for the latest fashion, the Paris Hiltons of the world, why would girls want to get muddy by collecting frog eggs or berries in the rain? If the new archetype of an old wise man is himself driving a Ferrari in his late fifties and chasing after Paris Hilton-type models, when will he teach orienting skills to both boys and girls? If the new mother archetype is a woman put in an impossible situation of having to excel by taking care of her family, being a corporate head, and looking like



Paris Hilton 24/7, how will girls learn to run after butterflies or travel to Antarctica with boys as co-equal companions and friends?

If it can be said that there are archetypes representing the sanctity of LIFE, these might be blood, breath, or even green sprouting things. But when the blood of animals and human-animals is tainted or spilled indiscriminately, and breath willingly consumes smoke or breathes it, and finally, when there are less and less examples of greenness sprouting, or of diverse greenness sprouting unimpeded or unattended, when these things happen and more, everything seems to indicate that LIFE is DEATH. With that suicidal equation in place, teenagers kill or kill themselves and we live for the entertaining moment that will kill us, but it is nevertheless fun. The equation allows for maximum tolerance of atmospheric contamination as an urban norm (or we accept the fact that less affluent communities must pay the price for our relatively clean suburban air) or as a sign of "progress." Finally, LIFE is archetypically and concretely represented in our physical bodies. We can alchemically (Metzner, 1999) express LIFE through our bodies or choose to neglect this process.

#### 7. *What is wrong with a perfectly good and deserted island to escape to?*

Fiction, reality and the expression of our own fantasies create interesting ambiguities on the road to cynegism. Pi, the character boy in the *Life of Pi* (Martel, 2003), was never neurotic in the sense that we have been using the word to describe our shared *Lebensneid* condition. Equally, Brian, the thirteen year-old character in *Hatchet*, another of Gary Paulsen's fine cynegetic stories, also achieves cynegetic transformation (see 4a). Both characters, inspirational examples of Fifth Order cynegism, are young and that gives them a leg up in ecopsychological BECOMING. Fictional also is Tarzan, a child rescued by apes, literally, from the dying text, achieving a complete cynegetic transformation, albeit without a human support base of other cynegetic individuals to create a lasting community. The real Robison Crusoe, Alexander Selkirk, an adult marooned on a perfectly good deserted island, on the other hand, curses his existence until he is able to escape it having only achieved a mediocre identification with his natural spaces. The character that American actor Tom Hanks portrayed in *Castaway* is also obsessed with leaving his small island paradise and equally ignores the developmental gains obtained during his stay. Like my earlier excerpt, he comes back with his own souvenir: a FedEx box in need of delivery. The difference between all these cases is age of course. *The earlier the transformation toward cynegetic mind begins the better chances that it will take root.*

I have personally, failed many times at overnight-types of cynegetic conversion. A recent failure occurred while considering a teaching position in the Bahamas and being told by my potential employer that I should not consider making this move if I was not prepared to bring a lot of cash with me. Affluent teachers were welcomed to apply. There went my opportunity, I thought, of reverting to cynegenic existence<sup>11</sup>. I fantasized

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<sup>11</sup> A prelude to this developmental tradition, at fourteen, I ran away from home looking for a life in Tahiti among glistening bodies and colorful fruit only to realize that I already lived in Venezuela. So began my daring wanderings and brushes with cynegism.

too about moving to a deserted island, jobless and marooned, as the only situation in which I might be able to practice cynegetic existence. But then again, I had a family to consider and their idea of cynegetic progression did not involve such a radical approach. Neither was I sure that I would not end up talking to a ball rather than becoming part of a community of cynegetic buddies. But each failure was a learning experience and a new toughening of the spirit.

One of the opening quotes and excerpts of this paper is also Pi's recollection of sighting a deserted island after languishing on the sea for many weeks. In that book, the island does not turn out to be such an idyllic and permanent paradise. And such is the case with most of our romantic ideas of primeval existence: we believe them to be either personal or utopian versions of benign Edens or heavens-to-be and imagine ourselves walking naked on a bleached white beach or in a luxurious, tame green forest (of course, after having lost our excess weight or after having increased the size of our breasts considerably) browned by a tropical sun to the point that we resemble a local native wearing colorful yellow bandanas. All right, this is my personal cynegetic fantasy but I am sure you have one also. That is not an impossible dream, but that confident naked walk in a real paradise is first earned, perhaps in our backyards, today and tomorrow, by practicing and preparing to be the dark native in a real jungle some day. Apropos, a biography of the famous Arctic and Antarctic explorer Roald Amundsen tells us of how, when very young and growing up in Norway, he would sleep with his window open in order to get accustomed to the intensity of inclement, cold weather. At fifteen he abandoned a career in medicine and embarked on his first great adventure.

As a more general description, the real native wisely stalks and kills, aesthetically and compassionately, to live. LIFE and DEATH dovetail, creating an irrevocable dance, and our part in this existential and inescapable "deal" is to be fully prepared to understand and accept this responsibility. That is why he/she walks with confidence: she/he can procure food at will and will never have to wait for french fries and third rate meat to be delivered by servers who have forgotten all the power songs. *Soylent Green* burgers aside, his/her stride is definitely upright and confident.

## 8. *Conclusion: The Medicine(s)*

It is difficult to find a medicine that everyone can take. It is harder still to find a medicine that, once ingested, can cure us all. But, the instructions to most ecopsychological "pill boxes" I have read commence by describing what sort of individuals could benefit from the "pill." The unfolded bit of fragile paper and miniscule writing begins with the assumption that one lives in a city or the suburbs; that one spends far too much time sitting or driving; that most of one's entertainment or "sports" is watched passively and does not qualify as exercise; and that much of this entertainment is meaningless at best, and psychologically corrosive at worst. The instructions inside the pillbox assume that we are, like children, continually on the verge of being bored (mostly because our zoo cages were never constructed to feed cynegetic needs) and that we are almost totally dependent on others, often in a superficial manner, for satisfying basic survival, emotional, aesthetic, and mobility needs. The instructions say that the

medicine they are offering us is for individuals who have forgotten how to prepare complex meals in the company of others and that the nutritional content of these meals should be varied.

The frail multifold parchment says that wandering, walking, or exploring in natural spaces alone, or with company, without the excuse of having to eat some barbecued thing, or competing in a race to see who gets to the top of the hill first, is medicine. The medicine also warns us to "Beware of the dumb-down world!" It clearly states that a golf park is a playpen and so are many parks that are not self-sustainable as genuine wilderness is. Sand traps may make a golfer very mad but they present no real danger or threat. Indoor gyms cannot replace the reality of frigid winter air while walking in the snow. Halfway through the instructions they assert with confidence that indoor plants are poor substitutes for virginal forests. They say that cats and dogs are not tigers and wolves, particularly if we treat our pets like children. They are confident in declaring that cars are not legs, that elevators are not legs, but that bicycles, on the other hand, are round legs. They repeat many times that micro-waved food is efficient but it does not allow for complex motoric routines that strengthen the hands and center the mind while preparing even a simple salad.

The medicine, they say, is always more exercise; more understanding of life-death circles that feed the biosphere; independence and freedom of personal movement; clean air; clean water; and no noise or noise types and levels that we can control.<sup>12</sup> One could perform a hundred shamanic passes until one passes out but they alone won't make you a warrior. A warrior hunts; a warrior kills for a living. The modern warrior-hunter is also schooled in the complex deconstruction of text. As his/her ancestors in the primaveril wild, he/she understands semiotic complexity and is not fooled by fake text. This also requires having mathematical statistical knowledge in order to make sense of certain types of complexity.

All of these examples, by themselves, are mere decontextualized actions and wishful thinking rituals. They have a better chance of taking hold and of igniting ecopsychological transformation when we surround ourselves, around the clock, with other individuals who are on the same path. Whether totally revisiting cynegetic ways, or by small degrees and steps, we can significantly modify our unnecessarily overcultured habits, or influence our communal leaders toward the deconstruction of a proliferating synthetically constructed city environment; it is the case that actively seeking and creating solutions rather than waiting for a change is in itself progress of some measurable type. Individually or collectively, at least, we might feel better and somewhat reassured that we are on the path toward wellness and ecopsychological recovery. The active engagement in all these facets of life are also models for our children, for their own ecopsychological RETURNING and/or BECOMING. Borrowing from Hermann Hesse again, we are unfinished and incomplete creatures:

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<sup>12</sup> When my students and I were asked to do an analysis of the pattern of complaints logged by the citizens of a Puget Sound area community we found that one of the most common entries were noise of various sorts.

That man is not yet a finished creation but rather a challenge of the spirit; a distant possibility dreaded as much as it is desired; that the way towards it has only been covered for a very short distance and with terrible agonies and ecstasies even by those few for whom it is the scaffold today and the monument tomorrow—all this the *Steppenwolf*, too, suspected. What, however, he calls the “man” in himself, as opposed to the wolf, is to a great extent nothing else than this very same average man of the bourgeois convention

The deconstruction of this false tinsel self has been the guidance of many religious practices for as long as civilization has robbed us of our true nature and enlightened folks have noticed it. I also interpret Hesse’s passage here to indicate that as civilization creates a fictional human being of *bourgeois convention*, it only compresses an ancient *Steppenwolf* mentality that sooner or later re-emerges in its pristine and innocent form, unrecognized and accused by modernity, or is distorted into the absurd or the very dangerous. Discovering and then channeling the *Steppenwolf* amongst the civilized is never easy. In some cases it may simply take the form of arriving at an acceptable truce where the *Steppenwolf* is fed a frequent and consistent diet of wildness. In other situations, dictated by individual temperaments and dispositions, it may mean an outright severance from bourgeois convention and accompanying absurdities altogether and relocation to wildness. Thus this becoming, if it is BECOMING, culminates in a complete reorganization of one’s life, from the inside out.

"... The Caribs are better off than we are."

J.J. Rousseau, *Emile*, Book One, No. 43

## ***Appendix A: Five Cynegetic Trait-Clusters***

***Trait-Cluster I***, or *first order cynegetism*, is reserved for authentic hunter-forager-horticulturalist individuals, past and present, who must defend themselves, procure food, and pass on their culture with a minimum of technology. In Section Two I referred to an idealized ensemble of human values that might emerge from this kind of existence. I called it a *hunter-forager spirituality* based on specific activities and practices such as: stealth, frugality, gratitude, resourcefulness, strength, seasonally meaningful rituals, courage, patience, and perseverance. These, I ventured further, give rise to genuine pride, other values and virtues and then to the concept of morality. Thus morality must naturally emerge from these basic attitudes. Without reading my earlier caveat, this passage and description may sound as yet another romantization of the “primitive”.

***Trait-Cluster II***: Are characters such as the Robinson-Crusoes wanting to return to civilization in a hurry, pseudo hunters like Theodore Roosevelt and the likes, and the occasional vacationers to tropical paradises may very well acquire new and useful perspectives and improve their neuroses by *killing*, somewhat, but they are not true cynegetic individuals if they turn back to civilization or if most of their existence is engulfed by it.

***Trait-Cluster III***: These are the individuals who might who dress in colorful attires, paint their faces blue or red during ball games, get drunk and scream "bloody hell" with the aid of alcoholic tonics, drive on autobahns at 120 miles an hour-- all this in order to feel a bit of wildness inside them. These are understandable behaviors, regrettable circumstances, even the object of our compassion for it could be very difficult for them to recapture the authentic cynegetic, psychological core. These "lords of the flies" that pass me on the autobahn at 120 miles an hour remain the rulers of insects without having attempted psychological individuation.

***Trait-Cluster IV***: This group is represented by the chronic sickness of an ecologically stripped down and dehumanized ape whose longing does not go away even with affluence or moderate life styles, also deserve our compassion, as the persons who can never "let their hair down," who feel dirty in natural spaces, who must wash away the mud of an hour's hike (the most they will ever attempt), or otherwise society will reproach (a Superego reaching out from a "proper" past—*prop* as implying *clean* in French) their "wild ways."

***Trait-Cluster V***, or *improbable/rare cynegetic caricatures*, that is, the Tarzans, the wild-boys and girls of Avignon and other places, are either fictional characters and/or incomprehensible (and even reprehensible) real cynegetic models, but even they began their transformation early in development. They are equally important sources of inspiration or study.

## ***Appendix B: Why is most of humanity accepting living with less, rather than much more, wildness?***

### **4a. *Practical and existential necessity***

Having forgotten how to live in harmony with wilderness and/or natural spaces, having lost a traditional and instructional line with these ways and past, most of us now depend, like infants, on an artificial world and are almost, existentially speaking, indentured slaves to sometimes meaningless jobs, health infrastructures, educational and civil bureaucratic services in order to survive, prosper and to define ourselves; to define BEING and being in the WORLD. *Many of the principal social/urban easy-to-access and convenient services and our interactions with more official social/urban infrastructures (e.g., mostly their human bureaucracies) are themselves the origins of our self-worth and self-esteem, and to the extent that their values are distorted and their services conditional on our servitude and automatic deference, so are the interpretations of our self-image.* These services, and proposed ways of living, are also constantly offered to us through the media and manipulated by institutions to insure comfortable corporate profit margins or promises of prosperity. In tandem, these two forces present (sell) these services and ideas as essential, or valid and "good." We have become akin to zoo animals grown accustomed to a prefab and artificially prescribed environment that even when benign and well intentioned, sacrifices a truer legacy, cognitive complexity, and the psychological fortitude that might emerge from that "wild" legacy. If we generally agree with Karl Marx and others that the quality of *being* depends on our existential doings and actual manipulations of reality, then the signing away of these responsibilities to others means that we have diminished personhood and *being* to a degree commensurable with our dependency on these services. It is ironic that the actual practice of capitalism and soviet style communism, that both ideologies, espousing liberation-paths of different sorts, fell down the same trap and hole making their citizens helpless automaton-manufacturers rather than free-roaming enlightened hunters.

**4b. *Natural and cynegetic values resources are depleted, abused, or misunderstood***  
*The desire, hunger, and cost of maintaining a relative "high standard of living," civilization, "progress," and the affluence that allows increased comforts and temporary psychological patches, are fed by natural "things," systems, and systems and "things" in precarious biological balances. Either dominant cultures (capitalist or communist) have abused and ransacked other "lesser developed" societies and plundered their territories in pursuit of these natural resources with impunity, or many overpopulated territories and a bursting-with-people planet have used up their "free" natural-resources ride, never free to begin with. There aren't enough "things" and "goods," resources, for all people on Earth to maintain the above levels of gluttonous and capricious prosperity, and/or to survive.* When the human population was low and small bands of cynegetic bands were living within diverse natural spaces and seemingly endless ecosystems, even careless humans did not impact dramatically--biospherically and globally. There are fewer and fewer lands to hide in as coyote did, in shame, after eating the forbidden red berries destined for the "children of the future." The psychological and physiological health impact of this senseless appetite has claimed uncountable lives and it produces death and neurosis in seemingly prosperous societies as well as those who disregard these concerns

and avoid day-to-day ecological commonsense and scientific understanding; ecoethics. We are now beginning to feel and realize the ecological and ecopsychological impact of doing what the inhabitants of Easter Island did to their smaller territory, after upsetting their island's ecological stability during generations of egomaniacal religious and political competing propaganda. In short, the original matrix that allows for an embedded, 24/7 cynegetic enterprise is being corrupted.

4c. ***Ideological propaganda that utilizes empty meanings or oversimplifies complex issues***

*Citizens of many nations accept, unquestioned, without proper educational training, intangible labels and poorly understood concepts sold by the dominant ideology, influential politicians, family members, and even misguided scientists. Bad text is accepted at face value. These intangible labels seem to acquire a certain meaning in the lips of and behind the charisma of leaders who are equally in the dark or simply nefarious and greedy. Labels and motivating rallying chants such as "growth," "prosperity," "the future," "nation," "patriotism," "the fatherland," "the motherland," "evil," "foreigners," "traitor," "inflation," "oil (we need more of it—you want more of it)," can move masses into antiecological, anticopsychological, antiorganismic action. We are also at war with the planet every time we are at war with each other through ideological frenzy. In short, any specific agenda, and consequences thereof, for "prosperity" that pits a certain type of "good-for-you-development" against nature (e.g., hard technologies are better, versus, soft-green ones are expensive; or, uncontrolled growth is better than relying on sustainability that insures a good life for most) are sure signs of misguided and/or perverse leadership. If the formula for success always includes the propaganda "wilderness is bad and the civilized/progress is good," then this formula makes even the willing patient a bit cautious in finding a remedy for fear that he/she has turned "wild" in pursuit of a medicine. Not wanting to offend, and being a socially pragmatic and cautious individual--a member of a conforming herd-- individual, he/she accepts the arbitrary and artificial moralized definition rather than the cure.<sup>13</sup> (Chomsky, 1968; and Mannheim, 1936)*

4d. ***Dysfunctional ontological bonding with all the wrong things***

Rampant consumerism, superficial relations, wanton violence, or psychological depression are consequences, as Paul Sheppard suspects, of ecopsychologically defunct development and a wounded psyche. Other than heeding Montessori's, Erikson's, Rousseau's, Freud's and other developmentalists' (and many sensible parents) advice of leaving the civilized behind (cities in particular), during early, middle, and later stages of childhood development for a total immersion with natural spaces, only a deep desire for the natural and to escape from city life, or accidental discovery of ecopsychological truths, or an ecopsychological diagnosis can help in the beginning of this transformation. *The transformation from juvenile patterns of consumption and materialistic and empty-hedonistic fixations can be long and arduous enough, even without a well-defined*

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<sup>13</sup> An admonition from the past might be found in Rousseau's Emile, Book One [24:] *Natural man is everything for himself. He is the numerical unit, the absolute whole, accountable only to himself or to his own kind. Civil man is only a fractional unit dependent on the denominator, whose value is in his relationship with the whole, that is, the social body.*

*ecopsychological wellness goal in sight, judging by mainstream clinical standards. The transformation will have to include recognition of complex behavioral and cognitive patterns, a dysfunctional semiosis and biosemiosis, that will interfere with and impede a trajectory toward wellness.*

#### 4e. ***Individual and/or collective limitations***

Considering that many flavors of nature-affiliation of my earlier simplistic characterizations of cynegetism are possible, then the path toward complete cynegetic wellness will be impossible, very difficult, or a receding goal with obvious improvements along the way, without ever accomplishing a total revamping of the psyche. *In cases of extreme and incurable psychological dysfunction, the total depletion of ecosystems to unsustainable conditions, or even physiological and genetic impediments, it may be impossible for an individual to achieve prosperity of spirit of any kind, capitalistic or otherwise. For all the other reasons stated up to this point, individually or collectively, we may find more opposition than support, more discouragement than solutions, more ignorance than credible and practical information to begin the transformation.* Perhaps many of the variables that are now used to anticipate recovery and healthy adaptation in mainstream clinical practice, can be useful in predicting an ecological transformation. A caveat to this approach will be that most of the variables that might be useful in predicting a recovery originate within a psychological practice that aims at merely patching up individuals toward integration and "adjustment" back into collusive madness. It would be like using therapy only to send the patient back to the insane asylum. Moreover, there simply aren't enough individual teachers and guides working within the ancient legacies and who possess authentic traditional ecopsychological wisdom to go around to instruct us all. There are but a handful of practicing ecopsychologists. We are mostly viewed with suspicion, or as troublemakers, or as heretics, and/or upset the comfortable orthodoxy of mainstream psychology. But even we are at best, novoshamans, and other than having rescued ourselves from a total immersion in insane societies, and having protected ourselves and families from most brainwashing, we lack an authentic cynegetic core: we don't kill for a living, we don't suffer very much in our academic posts, and it is always easier to preach to the converted from a computer screen and oracle than to stand in the cold rain naked, singing a prayer. More beneficial perhaps, but harder to accomplish in a single generation, would be that societies so structure themselves, via well-defined and implemented social support and educational programs, that have a more direct, ecologically beneficial, influence in all manners of wellness. This would include social policy conducive to maximizing the possibility that a bonding with natural spaces or wilderness will take place. That is, preferably, true, *first order* cynegetic adults, must inculcate these norms and ensure that normal development proceeds according to well-defined tracks. In my opinion, the American people missed a decisive historical opportunity (and privilege) by neglecting to elect Al Gore as a genuine representative of this progressive change, and instead made it possible to regress eight years<sup>14</sup> (a century or two in terms of ideology) into further madness and mayhem. But

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<sup>14</sup> It is impossible to quantify the effects, the regression in years, and the consequences of convenient denial of the present American republican administration with respect to a wide range of environmental issues. Whether it is a matter of convenient denial, outright deception, environmental illiteracy, or the fact that a significant number of ontogenetically arrested adult males--who make decisions which impact the entire



this election outcome can be now studied as the logical and expected collective will of a people who might be ecopsychologically ill.

4f. ***The inability to relate to wildness (mistrusting or fearing "Mother Earth")***

What guarantees are there that a child who is learning to walk will be caught in time by her mother before learning the hard way that walking, although exciting and liberating, involves a few bruises? No guarantees whatsoever. *This has always been the dilemma and the continuing challenge of the cynegetically immersed individual: how to interpret the role and function, real or projected-animistic, of the mother "out there" in the daily, yearly, and generational actions and functions of survival. The solution to this challenge is rather simple in my understanding. Life should be as challenging as learning how to walk; thus exciting, liberating, and fraught with the RIGHT type of danger toward a desired outcome: freedom on two feet or racing with the wind at full gallop. That is because only such a life provides our complex cognitive and physical systems with the necessary alimentionation for normal development that can eventually be cashed-in as courage and wholeness. This self-initiated and courageous excitement and sense of liberation, with the additional and mature understanding that all natural things have their hallowed place and are indispensable to an ideal developmental process, is the only assurance that the child or we, on our way to transforming our sickly psyches into cynegetically nimble constitutions, can ever hope for. With a small promise: even zoo tigers can go back to being feral or wild. This is the case because the genetics of our biological constitution ceased to evolve radically (into a new homo species) 150,000 thousand years ago. And even if our transformation is only partial, of the feral kind, at what point, when is the feral thing wild? Is there any need to use the word *feral* anymore if the consequences of running away from madness, from a pig stall, and returning to wildness propitiates a measurable increment of cynegetic wellness? Personally, I would rather be a feral pig than a penned pig even if I can never become a tusky *sangler*.*

4g. ***Religious traditional stances about human nature being special and separate from telos***

*Religion has played and can play a valuable role in bonding the individual and societies to telluric origins. This is good religion<sup>15</sup>. Indeed, many first-nation peoples have/had such religions and their doctrines, mores and taboos act/acted as a self-correcting (Conesa-Sevilla, 2005b), thoroughly tested, and built-in ecopsychological set of principles that almost guarantees normal cynegetic development and thus an authentic affiliation with telos. A bad religion, on the other hand, is anti-nature; anti-wildness; propaganda and ideology supplanting respect for and worship of the organic origins of the human mind and spirit with illusions of grandeur and impossible transcendence. If the spirit emerges from a balanced communion with telos, if ecoethics emerge as a natural consequence of acting "justly," "mindfully" with regard to the entire complexity of life, then this spirit must be GOOD. If, on the other hand, we are promised a surrogate type of tame wilderness-in-the-sky, more of a country club or a harem than an original innocence and responsibility to THIS palpable Eden, then religion is bad and serves no*

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biosphere--lack the cynegetic awareness to assess the complexity of these problems, is not for me to judge. However, their actions and decisions speak for themselves.

<sup>15</sup> See above Section 2: *Wolf Religion Versus Chihuahua Religion*

ecopsychologically real purpose. The god that says to humanity, "You are more than the rest of creation," is a false god and eventually undermines our naturally good psychological balance. The interpretation of this line and bad text as originating in an ultimate supernatural power is a failure to use our reasoning capabilities to sense, perceive, and come to the conclusion that we are just one more species, no more and no less, that has not changed much in the last 150,000 thousand years and which requires the same intact environment in which it developed and needs the ways of interacting with this environment to be healthy, to feel whole, to understand the spiritual life. Coyote or Crow may be better gods because they teach a richer existential story about the folly AND about the stability of continued existence on ONE earth. Once, the myths were GOOD until bad text corrupted it as when old Inuit Oogrük replies to the cynegetic aspirant Russel, in Gary Paulsen's *Dogsong*:

[Russel] What happened to the songs? Why don't we have them anymore?...[Oogrük] We had those songs until the first missionary came. He said they were wrong for some reason or another, like dancing was wrong. At first nobody believed him and we laughed at him...It was not that we were stupid, just that we didn't know about hell. So he told us. About fire and pain and these demons—as he called them—who would tear the strip of meat off us. So, many of the people quit singing and dancing because they feared hell. And even when the missionary went crazy with the winter and we had to drive him out the damage was done. People were afraid to sing and dance and we lost our songs.

### *Appendix C: Lyrics to John Denver's Rocky Mountain High*

Few songs of my generation (I was born in 1955) chart, so clearly and in such pithy manner, my own experiences and searches as *Rocky Mountain High*. I heard it for the first time in 1971, and through the years, it has become a cynegetic hymn and promise. Denver's song touches on the important themes of the recognition of ecopsychological degeneration and of its medicine. I have italicized preferred passages.

He was born in the summer of his twenty seventh year  
Coming home to a place he'd never been before.  
He left yesterday behind him  
you might say he was born again  
you might say he found a key to ev'ry door.  
When he first came to the mountains his life was far away  
on the road and hangin' by a song.  
But the string's already broken and he doesn't really care  
it keeps changin' fast and it don't last for long.

But the Colorado Rocky Mountain high  
*I've seen it rainin' fire in the sky.*  
*The shadow from the starlight*  
*is softer than a lullaby.*  
Rocky mountain high in Colorado.  
Rocky mountain high in Colorado.

*He climbed cathedral mountains*  
*he saw silver clouds below*  
he saw everything as far as you can see.  
And they say  
that he got crazy once  
and he tried to touch the sun  
and he lost a friend but kept his memory.  
*Now he walks in quiet solitude*  
*the forests and the streams*  
*seeking grace in every step he takes.*  
*His sight has turned inside*  
*himself to try and understand*  
*the serenity of a clear blue mountain lake.*

And the Colorado Rocky Mountain high  
I've seen it rainin' fire in the sky.  
Talk to God and listen to the casual reply.  
Rocky mountain high in Colorado.  
Rocky mountain high in Colorado.

*Now his life is full of wonder  
but his heart still knows some fear  
of a simple thing he cannot comprehend.  
Why they try to tear the mountains  
down to bring in a couple more  
more people  
more scars upon the land.*

And the Colorado Rocky Mountain high  
I've seen it rainin' fire in the sky.  
*He knows he'd be a poorer man  
if he never saw an eagle fly.*  
Rocky mountain high in Colorado.  
Rocky mountain high in Colorado.

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